

cussion is of such importance to the Pueblos that they made an all-out effort to send me.

For many centuries our Pueblo has been located on the warm and sunny banks of the Rio Grande in New Mexico. We were a closely knit community having an organized government long before the white man touched the shores of this part of the world. First came the Spanish, then the Mexican Government, and finally that of the United States to reign as the supreme sovereign. However, each in turn, after long and careful consideration, found our system had merit and insured to us the privileges of self-government in our traditional way. As a measure of this assurance, each government presented us with a "cane." No possession of our Pueblo has more significance or meaning, for our ancestors were given these with the solemn commitment that we could continue to retain the government we had and we have without fear of encroachment of reprisal.

But now we are faced with legislation such as that proposed by parts I and II of S. 1843. We are gravely concerned over this legislation, for we feel that should it be adopted and invoked among the Pueblos, our form of government as we have learned to know it and cherish it over these many centuries will at long last fall.

Our system of justice through law and order is so interwoven with the rest of our government, our heritage, and our way of life, that to have it controlled by outside influences will, in our opinion, destroy it.

This is not to say that we are opposed to the basic freedoms and liberties prescribed by the Bill of Rights and as set forth in section 102 in S. 1843. We believe that the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico have long cherished and enjoyed these same rights and privileges without fear and encroachment by their Pueblo leaders. Almost without exception, we think the truth of this statement will be brought out by our nearly 30,000 members. But to now have the burden placed upon our system of appearances of trained attorneys and review by the Federal courts would be to impose us people who have little or no understanding of our system of government and justice.

It is for the foregoing reasons that I appear here today, Mr. Chairman, and respectfully join in the comments made by our chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council. I respectfully petition that the Pueblos be excluded from the provisions titles I and II of the S. 1843 and all similar measures.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Atencio. Of course the people of the Pueblos realize that they are accepting one of the freedoms of our country at the present time as they appear before Congress to make their position known and petition Congress; is that correct? And except for this question of jurisdiction within their own area, they respect all other of our constitutional provisions including the Bill of Rights?

Mr. ATENCIO. That is true.

The CHAIRMAN. Who notified Governor Calabaza and his people that there might be some rights that they presently have that were jeopardized by this legislation?

Mr. ATENCIO. Mr. Chairman, under the All Pueblo Council, we get together each month, since time immemorial, and we discuss the legislation that affects the Pueblo Indians. We have a constitution,