

They say they have received neither the money or the title to the land. This is a distortion of the facts. The records show that all but \$23,724.57 of the above sum has been expended for the benefit of the Taos Pueblo. The words of the act were that this money was to pay for loss of lands and water rights. It also was so written that acceptance of any of the funds was contingent of acceptance of it all and constitutes settlement of the claim in full. The Indians claim that the money settlement applied only to a so-called western area and did not apply to the eastern area, the Blue Lake area. This is pure distortion because until they were asked to sign the 1933 agreement, the Blue Lake area does not appear in any of the records. They say the area was not described, but the areas in contention were described, and even though the description was not in much detail, and were in general terms, there is absolutely no doubt that the Blue Lake area was not included.

The Indian Claims Commission, whose duty it was to investigate these matters in 1965, did a poor job. They did not thoroughly investigate the old records. They did not investigate the intention of the legislation as to just what it was supposed to accomplish. They simply did not put their investigation into the proper perspective, and most important of all, they took the Indians' word for things that don't check out. Just because the Indians said they had not been paid for this land, and just because they said they used this land, they took their word for it. They did not look at the records nor did they study the writings of early historians in the area and, worse yet, they did take as uncontestable the words of self-styled authorities whose position has long been known to be completely biased on the Indian side of many controversies. Where there are so many writers on the subject, I see no reason to accept the word of one particular individual without checking and comparing. The records indicate that one person practically single-handedly swayed the whole investigation to favor the Indian side. Other qualified witnesses were not given the opportunity to testify or, their testimony when in conflict with the so called expert, was not verified.

I submit that the Indian of today has learned well the ways of the white man and with a few white men standing to gain personally from such claims guiding them, the Indians are no different than any other special interest group striving for a particular end. I would point specifically to the agreement last year between the Taos town council and the Taos Pueblo over land on which to build a flood control dam. The Pueblo would not yield the easement until the town council agreed to make a statement in writing supporting the Blue Lake claim. The Pueblo was interested in buying the written statement, not the lives and welfare of the Taos residents in the path of potential flood waters.

I bring these points out to support another statement I wish to counter. The statement that the Indians are trying to accomplish behind a religious facade what they could not possibly accomplish by other means. In his prepared statement, Stewart Udall covers this point and he says we reject this argument because it reflects on the integrity of the Pueblo. I suppose this is true and the integrity of the Pueblo is intact, but certainly the integrity of their advisors, the integrity of the investigators, and the integrity of their clever writers and all the collection of "do gooders" involved in this issue is so clouded that it takes "X-Ray" vision to see the narrow thread of truth running through the whole controversy.

The secrecy factor in the Indian religion is very convenient. It may be true, but none-the-less convenient, to support their claim. The whole thing then boils down to the fact that if you accept this explanation you don't really know. In the beginning, the Indians told the white men about his ways but, because he was laughed at and ridiculed, he quit letting anybody know about his religion. The Taos Indians, the same as others, did in the beginning, tell the early white visitors to the area, whom they considered to be friends, about these various religious rites. Many volumes have been written about the various Pueblo religions including the Taos Pueblo. Strangely though, almost all of the books on the shelves of the various libraries around the state have disappeared. A few in locked cases still survive and to read them does not leave any doubt in a reader's mind why the Indian tribe wants to keep his religion from the public eye.

It is an established fact that the Taos religion is a Peyote cult. Originating in 1890 and learned from the Plain Indians. This Peyote cult is referred to as the Native American Church in the book "Cycles of Conquest" by Edward H. Spicer, of the University of Arizona Press.

Spicer explains that Taos was the first tribe in New Mexico to show interest in Peyote. The use of Peyote has caused division in the tribe for years. The Native American Church has continued to grow and spread the use of Peyote,