

Blue Lake is very hard to reach, being the farthest lake from the parking areas on the edge of the wilderness. Fishermen going to Blue Lake would have to pass by a number of other lakes that *are* stocked and which provide much better fishing.

The remaining fish in Blue Lake are very small and are not worth the arduous trip necessary to reach them; nor is it worth the risk of being caught by the Forest Service or by the Indians. Finally, there are prominently placed signs at Blue Lake which declare the area closed to camping by non-Indians. Why so-called "white trespassers" who are sneaking into a place they know they are not supposed to be, would draw attention to themselves by boldly running a power saw, chopping down trees, and building fires is beyond me—especially when at any moment, they could be caught.

I did not suggest, as Mr. Schaub claims I did, that the ownership of the watershed reflected only the wishes of a few old men. "A few old men" are their words, not mine. In light of the strong denial, perhaps there is something to it. My statement was: "I would venture to say that if the people of Taos Pueblo could be polled without fear of harassment by the council, the majority would choose the money that is coming to them for loss of their lands in the city of Taos and for the 130,000 acres of alienated Indian lands." The statement is based in part on the fact that only a few Indians would gain any benefit by ownership of the area. The limited benefit would accrue mainly to the 25 livestock owners (accepting the Indians' figure). More land would be acquired and the restraining hand of the Forest Service on over grazing would be removed. It is not surprising that Miss Bernal, a niece of the Tribal Secretary, Paul Bernal, would support that faction of the Pueblo that wants Blue Lake.

The permit on the Blue Lake area is tantamount to ownership. The evidence indicates that the Forest Service is striving to protect the Indians' privacy, and the Indians will be paid for the land in accordance with the Indian Claims Commission's findings. Essentially under the present arrangement, with the exception of grazing, the Indians can have their cake and eat it too.

I would like to reiterate one point upon which the Indians and my Association agree. That point is that we oppose the compromise legislation which would convey 3,150 acres to the Pueblo de Taos either by deed or in trust. It is our opinion that the precedent would be the same as that established by passage of H.R. 3306. Also we believe that justification for granting 3,150 acres is lacking just as it is lacking for granting 48,000 acres.

Nowhere in my earlier statement did I say that Forest Service pilots were spying on the Blue Lake area. The pilot I referred to is with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. His flights are not specifically to Blue Lake, but over the vicinity while in transit to other points. If flights by Game Department or Forest Service aircraft become a vital question, then a check of the aircraft log books should settle the matter.

Mr. Schaub's allegations that my statements clearly reveal the practice of certain Forest Service employees of spying upon the Indians for purposes of determining the extent of their use of the watershed is unfounded. Such an allegation is just one more example of the stretched, bent, and twisted interpretations of Forest Service actions and intentions that the Indians and their attorneys have had to employ in order to develop their otherwise non-existent case. The Indians have failed to cite one instance when their religious ceremonies were interrupted or spied upon by outsiders.

A number of the Taos Pueblo Indians may indeed sincerely believe that the Forest Service is threatening their religion. Columbus may have sincerely and deeply believed that the world was round, but his beliefs had to be proven correct before the world changed its maps. Similarly, a water mirage in the desert, no matter how sincerely attested to by the person who sees it, does not justify a federal flood control project. Wisely, the subcommittee has sought facts which would substantiate the Indians' allegations before it would commit the government to such far-reaching steps as those contained in H.R. 3306.

I stand by my earlier statement that the facts just don't substantiate the Indians' claim that their religion is being threatened by continued Forest Service administration of the Blue Lake area. The hearing record will show that the only use of the Blue Lake area by non-Indians consists of an average of only six, I repeat six permits per year. It should be stressed that the Pueblo approves those permits. When afforded the opportunity, the Indians could cite not one single instance when the Forest Service issued a visitor permit over the objections of the Pueblo authorities.