

sated for. This claim for compensation was made by the Indians prior to any claim that they should be given the ownership of some 50,000 acres in the area. The traditional and constitutional way for compensating the citizens of this Country who are deprived of their land by governmental action is to pay them for the land. This has already been done. Their ceremonial use of the land has not been interfered with. Are they to receive both compensation and the land itself?

If the purpose of the bill is to allow the Taos Indians to use the land as they have used it in the past, then obviously, there is no reason to change its ownership. If, on the other hand, its intent and purpose is to exclude the public from the land as is the inference from The New York Times editorial circulated by the Pueblo Council, then we submit that it is an improper purpose and that the Senate of the United States should not be a party to such action.

The New York Times editorial would lead one to believe that the land claimed is all within the boundaries of the Carson National Forest as established in 1906. This is not true. Several thousand involved acres were privately owned until they were acquired by the Forest Service in 1950 by land exchange. Several thousand additional acres were acquired by the Forest Service through land exchange with the State of New Mexico in 1952.

We strongly urge this subcommittee to reject HR 3306 and keep the land in the ownership of the public where it belongs.

STATEMENT OF DR. EDWARD H. SPICER, PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Mr. N. Preston Gunter has given testimony before a Senate subcommittee which completely distorts the nature of the religious life of the people of Taos Pueblo. He has given this misleading testimony as though his authority were my book, *Cycles of Conquest*.¹ Because his confused statements have gotten beyond the hearing room, as in the New York Times news story of September 21, 1968, I feel I must point out that Mr. Gunter's opinions about the Taos religion have no foundation in anything that I have written.

Mr. Gunter says that "It is an established fact that the Taos religion is a Peyote cult." On the contrary, the established facts are, as I have written on page 536 of *Cycles of Conquest*, that ceremonies of the Native American Church (which include the sacramental use of peyote) were introduced among some residents of Taos in the 1890's. The leaders of the traditional Taos religion flatly rejected the Native American Church and its rites.

The religion of the great majority of Taos people is a body of belief and ceremony which was in existence hundreds of years before the founding of the Native American Church. The beliefs about the origins of men and their relationship to the natural world include specific ideas about the importance of the Blue Lake Area. The region is a sort of Holy Land in the traditions of the Taos people. The Pueblo of Taos has been increasing in population during the past fifty years, and as this has happened the number of adherents of the traditional Taos religion has increased. It is decidedly not "declining", as implied in the testimony, but on the contrary is a vital religion today.

STATEMENT OF ELLIOTT S. BARKER, SANTA FE, N. MEX.

Mr. Chairman: I am Elliott S. Barker, of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The opportunity afforded to present a statement at this hearing on H.R. 3306, and to point out the many reasons why this Bill should not pass is greatly appreciated.

May I say that I am no new-comer to the New Mexico Scene, nor am I prejudiced in any way whatsoever against American Indians or other minority groups. I went to school with Negroes, Indians and Spanish Americans. Perhaps a brief resume of my background will be helpful to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the members of this honorable Committee, in evaluating my statement of facts and conclusions:

In 1889, at the age of three, I came to New Mexico with my family overland in covered wagons. My father homesteaded in a canyon in the foothills of the

¹ University of Arizona Press, 1962.