A meeting of Dakota Sioux chiefs and U.S. Indian commissioners at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, in 1868. For more than a century, white Americans, and many Indians, have variously agonized or exulted in the belief that Indians were approaching cultural extinction. Somehow, this has yet to happen.

The American Indian

For America's Indians, the U.S. Supreme Court has become a major source of redress. During the last term alone, the Justices handed down seven rulings in cases involving the country's oldest ethnic group; at issue were land claims, fishing rights, and mineral leases. The upsurge in Indian litigation signals a change in tactics by leaders of Indian organizations; they have largely abandoned the violent takeovers and sit-ins epitomized by the 1973 siege at Wounded Knee, South Dakota. Most Indian spokesmen assert that their broader goal is to maintain a distinct "Indian way of life." Yet how to do so is a matter of deep disagreement. How isolated from America's larger society can Indians afford to remain? How much development of the natural resources on Indian reservations should be permitted? Members of the nation's 506 Indian "tribal entities" now debate such questions, even as they suffer from high rates of poverty, alcoholism, and unemployment. Here, our contributors examine the Indians' current dilemmas, their long history, and the ways in which various Indian tribes have or have not adapted to the white man's world.

HERE TO STAY

by Patricia Nelson Limerick

"Tragic Death Ends Sad Lifestyle Shared by Many Indians." So said a headline in the *Denver Post* on December 9, 1984.

It seems that Anthony Patton Burton, an Arapaho-Cheyenne, had walked into the Denver town house of lawyer Robert Calt and removed "something shiny and metal" from a bag. Calt shot the intruder, killing him instantly. In the dead man's hands was a can of spray paint, whose vapors he had been inhaling. Burton, 28, was an alcoholic and a jobless transient. A police spokesman concluded that he "probably just didn't know where he was."

Anthony Patton Burton was by no means a typical Indian, but

his difficulties were similar to those that afflict many of America's estimated 1.4 million Indians. A survey in Denver revealed that 78 percent of the city's 20,000 adult Indians were chronically unemployed. Some 69 percent had incomes below the poverty level. Between 60 and 80 percent were addicted to drugs or alcohol, or were "affected by a family member's problem." At the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, home to nearly 10,000 Sioux, the statistics tell a similar story. Seven out of 10 Rosebud Sioux of working age are unemployed. Roughly one-half of all Rosebud Sioux adults, male and female, are alcoholics.

As they have been throughout modern memory, American Indians are beset by troubles. Nearly 500 years after Christopher Columbus, the aftershocks of conquest are still being felt. That should not, really, be surprising. The most striking fact about Indians in 1986 is that, despite all that has happened to them, North America's aboriginal inhabitants remain visible and distinct in our midst.*

No one really knows how long human beings have lived in North America. Ten thousand years? *Forty* thousand years? Archaeologists disagree. Whenever they arrived, the first people on the continent were migrants from Asia who voyaged across what is now the Bering Strait. That, at least, is the prevailing theory among scholars. In the view of many Indians, this assertion represents yet another imposition: It contradicts the Indians' own histories, and it diminishes the Indians' claims to be *Native* Americans—the country's original inhabitants—by making them into just another variety of immigrant.

Indian people spread throughout the Western Hemisphere and adapted to widely varying local environments. North of the Rio Grande there existed nine major language groups, each divided into numerous, mutually unintelligible dialects. The Indian peoples were nearly as diverse in religion as they were in language. And, while scores of tribes traded with one another, they also fought wars and maneuvered for territory and power.

Most Europeans, note James Olson and Raymond Wilson in

*The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines aborigines as "natives found in possession of a country by Europeans who have gone thither as colonists." Other surviving aboriginal groups include the Aborigines of Australia, who number some 45,000, or 0.35 percent of the population; the Maori in New Zealand, 250,000 strong, or nine percent of the population; and the San of South Africa, whose 45–50,000 members are now scattered across Botswana, the western Kalahari, and Namibia.

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Europeans easily justified their conquest of the Indians: "This savage people," wrote Plymouth Colony's John Winthrop, "ruleth over many lands without title or property; for they inclose no ground, neither have they cattell to maintain it."

Native Americans in the Twentieth Century (1984), "insisted on viewing Native American culture through a single lens, as if all Native Americans could somehow be understood in terms of a few monolithic assumptions." Yet on the eve of its discovery by the Europeans, Indian America was as heterogeneous as Renaissance Europe, perhaps more so.

Life in the Northeast meant summers growing crops of corn, beans, and squash, and gathering berries and roots. Tribal groups, perhaps several dozen, dispersed during the fall and winter for a long season of hunting deer, then assembled in the summer to grow corn, pumpkins, and squash. Like Indian tribes elsewhere, the Wampanoag, Narragansett, and others of the Northeast invested the natural world with supernatural significance; animals and human beings were one in a larger spiritual community. Groups such as the Huron and Seneca placed great store by the interpretation of dreams.

On the other side of the continent, in the Pacific Northwest, Indians lived in coastal villages of roughly six to 12 families, isolated by mountains and distance from farming communities further inland. The waters yielded an abundance of salmon, otter,

seal, and walrus. The forests and meadows were flush with berries and game. Among the Kwakiutl, Kitamat, and similar groups, this cornucopia inspired a respect for wealth and its accumulation. At the core of their religious practice lay the famous "potlatches," when, at great feasts, host groups of Indians would bestow lavish presents on visitors.

In the Southwest, several different ways of life coexisted. The Pueblo Indians lived in compact adobe villages (some with as many as 1,500 inhabitants), farmed intensively (beans, corn, and squash), and carried on an elaborate and demanding religious life. In the same dry part of the continent, the seminomadic Apaches lived as hunters and gatherers, sometimes raiding and sometimes trading with the Pueblos.

On the Great Plains, most Indians inhabited villages clustered along the rivers that drain the interior. The Plains Indians lived by growing corn and beans, supplementing this diet from time to time by hunting buffalo (on foot). Few Indian groups relied overmuch on the buffalo or hunted the animal year-round.

The notion of early pan-Indian unity flourishes only in myth. Indeed, the diversity and sheer dispersion of the Indian tribes—their varied interests and cultures, their assorted alliances and enmities—virtually foreclosed any attempts to unite and expel the first Europeans.

The Europeans arrived, to stay, in 1492. Mistaking the Caribbean islands for "the Indies," Columbus called the Arawak Islanders who greeted him "Indians." The misnomer was soon applied to all of the native inhabitants of the New World.

Furs for Firearms

In both North and South America, the arrival of the Europeans produced an abrupt demographic disaster. The populations of the Old World had had centuries, even millenniums, to adjust to Old World diseases and to develop immunities. When carried to the New World, these same diseases—chicken pox, measles, influenza, malaria, yellow fever, typhus, tuberculosis, and, above all, smallpox—met little resistance. Mortality rates in village after village ran as high as 80 or 90 percent.

Scholars still quarrel over the exact rate of depopulation, but no one questions its significance in weakening and demoralizing the natives and enhancing the power of the invaders. White Americans would come to view their relations with Indians as an inevitable contest between stronger and weaker civilizations. Writing in 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville summed up the prevailing white opinion of Indians: "Heaven has not made them to be-

come civilized; it is necessary that they die." Die many of them did. But the Indians' supposed cultural inferiority had nothing to do with it. Microorganisms and unprepared immune systems certainly did.*

Beyond microorganisms, the exchange between Indian and European involved the movement of plants, animals, and technology. Long before the arrival of the Europeans, the small, primeval horse that once roamed North America—*eohippus*—had met with extinction. The buffalo took its place on the Great Plains. The Spaniards reintroduced horses into the New World. Meanwhile, from the French in Canada and the Mississippi Basin, the Indians first acquired firearms—in exchange for furs.

Exchanging Friendship

The combination of horse and gun made the buffalo easy prey and aided expansionist tribes—the Comanche, the Cheyenne, and the Sioux—in their conquest of the Plains. Moving westward from the Great Lakes, the Sioux dispossessed or subjugated scores of other tribes. As historian Richard White has noted, to many Indians in the West, the Sioux, not white people, "remained their most feared enemy." Most American history books focus on the rearrangements of power during the 17th and 18th centuries among the French and English colonies along the Atlantic seaboard; during the same period, a parallel rearrangement occurred in Indian country, beyond the Europeans' ken.

Ironically, when American whites finally encountered the Plains Indians during the 19th century, they mistakenly regarded the hard-riding, buffalo-hunting, war-bonneted warriors as survivors of a pristine, pre-Columbian society. Painter George Catlin described the Plains Indians he saw as "noble" and "uncontaminated," living in "fearless freedom" with a "soul unalloyed by mercenary lusts." It was not the first time, nor would it be the last, that white men would attempt to construct for themselves a naive *image* of Indianness.

One other crucial exchange took place between Indians and Europeans: the exchange of friendship. Time after time in their initial encounters, the Europeans received a friendly welcome in the New World, even though the Indians at first held decisive advantages over the invaders—in numbers and in control of local food supplies. "The Indian," observed historian Alvin Josephy,

*During the early 20th century, American anthropologists estimated that no more than one million persons lived in North America before the arrival of Columbus. In 1966, Cornell's Henry Dobyns revised that estimate upwards by a factor of 10. Dobyns's numbers are still disputed, but most scholars agree that the figure of one million is far too low.

"made possible the Europeans' first precarious footholds in every part of the Americas." It was the Europeans who *needed* the Indians. The Indians did not, at the outset, need the Europeans. Before long, they did.

One reason was the fur trade. When French mariners and fishermen set up their first outposts on the North American coast, Indians began trading beaver pelts and deer hides for metal knives, kettles, and ornaments; the French eventually pushed the fur trade deep into the American interior. At the same time, the Dutch, later supplanted by the English, carried on the fur trade in New York and elsewhere on the East Coast.

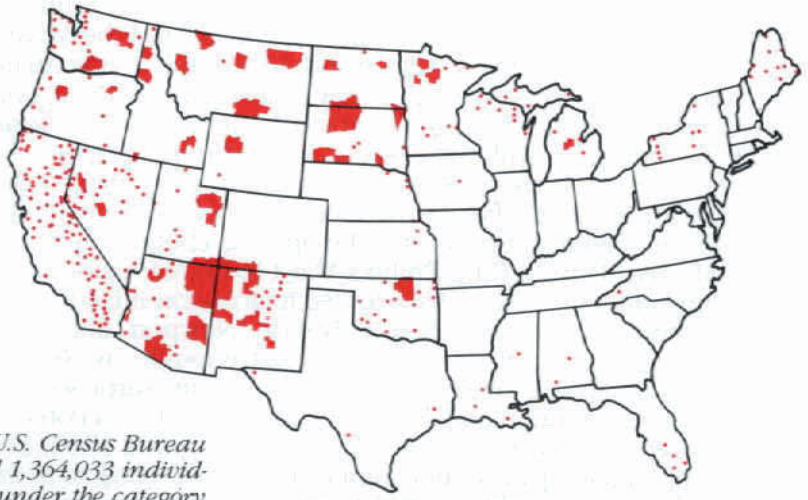
A Wolf by the Ears

During its opening phase, throughout most of the 17th century, Indian participation in the fur trade was not only voluntary but seemed tactically astute. In what is now upstate New York, the six tribes confederated into the League of the Iroquois—the Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, and Tuscarora—became early participants in the trade. When their homelands became overhunted, the Iroquois pooled their forces and expanded into neighboring territory.

But the fur trade had an insidious consequence. It slowly led powerful, self-sufficient tribes into dependence on European manufactured goods; the availability of such goods brought on a decline in native know-how and self-reliance. Certain items—especially alcohol—created an unlimited demand. Unlimited demand prompted purchases on credit. Indians were soon hunting in one season to pay off last season's debts.

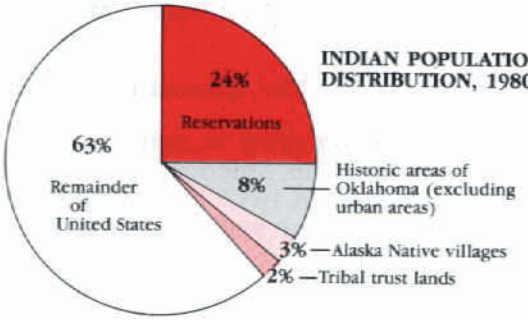
The trade tie was the crucial development in Indian-white relations. Once the pattern of trade was established, Indians were trapped—held by chains of debt and credit. By the early 19th century, groups such as the Iroquois in the North and the Choctaw in the South had discovered that, while the fur trade brought a temporary upsurge in affluence (and influence), it came at a sobering price. "We have a wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him nor safely let him go," Thomas Jefferson said of American slavery in 1820. American Indians could have said the same thing about the fur trade.

With loss of Indian self-reliance came loss of Indian land. Contrary to popular belief, the dispossession of the Indians was not the result of a steady sequential assault on one tribe after another. Rather than a "tide" or "wave" of white people rolling west, a more appropriate metaphor for Euro-American expansion would be a lake pelted intermittently with hailstones—multiple



FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED INDIAN RESERVATIONS

The U.S. Census Bureau listed 1,364,033 individuals under the category "American Indian" in 1980—72 percent more than in 1970. Why the sudden increase? Partly better counting, partly because expectations of new federal benefits influenced respondents' "self-identification." Today, only slightly more than one-third of all Indians live on reservations, on tribal trust lands, or in Oklahoma's "historic areas" (reservations dissolved shortly before statehood in 1907). Most reservations—where the highest rates of Indian poverty and disease prevail—are home to fewer than 1,000 people; ironically, most also count more non-Indians than Indians as residents.



INDIAN POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, 1980

	Unemployment	Median yrs. education*	Median family income	Life expectancy at birth
BLACK	11.8	12.0	$12,674	68.0
WHITE	5.8	12.5	$21,904	74.4
INDIAN	13.2	12.2	$13,700	71.1
HISPANIC	8.9	10.8	$14,716	N.A.

SELECTED SOCIAL INDICATORS 1980

*For ages 25 and over.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Indian Health Service; Bureau of the Census; National Center for Health Statistics.

events sending out concentric rings of consequences. With the Spanish in the Southwest, the French in Canada and the Mississippi Valley, the Russians in Alaska, and the English on the Atlantic coast, North America was deeply involved in trouble borrowed from Europe. Intertribal feuds combined with European rivalries to produce shifting alliances and periodic warfare.

None of the early colonial powers could take Indian acquiescence for granted. After nearly a century of Spanish rule, the Pueblos in 1680 rose up to drive the Spanish completely out of New Mexico. During King Philip's War (1675–76), colonists in New England found themselves forced to abandon inland settlements and retreat to the safety of Boston, Newport, and other towns nearer the coast. Even that was not enough. In 1675, at Medfield, less than 20 miles from Boston, Indians surprised and slew sleeping residents and set houses and barns afire. A contemporary account reported "fires being kindled round about [the people of Medfield], the enemy numerous and shouting so as the earth seemed to tremble, and the cry of terrified persons very dreadful." Such incidents, not surprisingly, established a fearful new image in the white imagination: Indians as "murtherous wretches," as depraved barbarians rather than noble savages.

The Utmost Good Faith

Indian power grew in significance as various tribes found Europeans (and later, Americans) to be useful allies against common Indian foes. In 1637, in New England's first major war, the Narragansetts joined with the English in bloody campaigns against the Pequots. After the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico and Arizona (1692–96), most of the Pueblos would join the Spanish in their fight against raiding Apaches.

The powerful tribes of the Mississippi Valley played a key role in the French and Indian War—on both sides. The war brought home to England's authorities, once again, the importance of Indian good will. To mollify potentially troublesome tribes along the Appalachian frontier, London sought to preclude white settlement in the continental interior, "which cannot fail of being attended with fatal consequences," in the words of the British Board of Trade. In its Proclamation of 1763, the British government formally prohibited white settlement beyond the crest of the Appalachians.

Like many later "solutions" to the problem of Indian-white friction, the Proclamation of 1763 set out to forestall potential conflict by separating the antagonists. But the border could not be policed. Down the Ohio River or through the Cumberland

Gap, the white settlers breached the Appalachians and set out to claim the wilderness.

Leaving behind their Indian allies, the British departed the 13 colonies in 1783. Americans soon discovered that victory in the War of Independence entailed assuming Britain's administrative burdens. Unfortunately, the young government of the United States inherited England's inability to control the frontier. Nevertheless, displaying a cheerful confidence, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and their colleagues took the high road. The new government declared that, in the words of the 1787 Northwest Ordinance, the Indians would be treated "with the utmost good faith." The United States would enter into treaties with neighboring Indians, formerly Crown subjects, as it would with a foreign power, and it would adhere to the treaties it made. These treaties, beginning with the Treaty of Fort Stanwix (New York) in 1784, affirmed Indian title to their lands and gave tribes a unique legal status under the Constitution. To this day the tribes retain that status, its complexities and contradictions frequently addressed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The new Republic's lofty ideals were no sooner proclaimed than they began to clash with reality. The galvanizing issue: insistence by the Indians living in the Northwest Territories that the Ohio River mark the northern boundary of American settlement. American farmers and land speculators, infiltrating across the Alleghenies, paid no attention. When new treaties were ratified to distinguish between white and Indian lands inside the Territories, settlers again ignored the distinction. The Indians—Wyandot, Delaware, Shawnee, and several other tribes—went to war.

Happy Osages?

The Indian coalition scored some impressive early victories against local militia. On one occasion, in 1791, on the border between what are now Indiana and Ohio, Indians ambushed a force led by Ohio's territorial governor, Arthur St. Clair, killing 630 men. This, according to historian Randolph C. Downes, "was the worst defeat ever suffered by [an] American army in proportion to the numbers engaged." It took a federal expeditionary force and Gen. "Mad Anthony" Wayne, a Revolutionary War hero, to buy a measure of peace in the Ohio Valley. Wayne defeated the Northwest tribes at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, near the western tip of Lake Erie, in 1794. Under the Treaty of Greenville, the survivors ceded to the United States two-thirds of Ohio and a large chunk of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan.

Two decades later, in 1811, the Ohio Valley was again

King Philip's Pequots and other Indians launched attacks on 52 Massachusetts towns in 1675–76. Atrocities by both sides marked all Indian wars.

wracked by war as Tecumseh's short-lived confederacy of Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Shawnee, and other woodland tribes rose up in revolt. By then, calls in Congress for a new kind of Indian policy were becoming increasingly frequent. As politicians such as James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson saw it, with a certain grim logic, the Indians would inevitably stand in the way of white settlers until they were physically moved *out* of the way. "The hunter or savage state," Monroe wrote to Jackson in 1817, "requires a greater extent of territory to sustain it than is compatible with the progress and just claims of civilized life and must yield to it."

"Voluntary removal," at government expense, got under way during the 1820s and proceeded in fits and starts. All along the frontier, from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico, one tribe after another was escorted beyond the Mississippi River to reservations in what was then the far West.

Removal encountered the strongest Indian resistance in the Southeast. There, despite a century of white encroachments, a number of cohesive tribes—the Cherokee, the Creek, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Seminole—had failed to melt away. On the contrary, many of them had adopted American practices: private land ownership, commercial farming, even slave-holding. Many of the Indians were literate, and often devout Christians. In 1827, using a writing system devised by the Cherokee intellectual

Sequoia, the Georgia Cherokees went so far as to produce a written constitution. White "friends of the Indian" encouraged the civilizing process with missionaries and money. They spoke of moving the Indians into the American mainstream, where they would lose their distinctive identity and cease to trouble sensitive consciences. "Yes—happy Osages," wrote Thomas McKenney, the first U.S. Superintendent of Indian Affairs, in 1820. "The days of your gloom are about to close."

The peaceful Southeastern tribes embraced much of European civilization but continued to cherish their independence and their ancestral lands. Protected by treaty, both were deemed an affront by white Southerners. Georgia, in the words of one governor, would never "submit to the intrusive sovereignty of a petty tribe of Indians." It was particularly galling when gold was discovered on Cherokee lands. Citing their treaty rights, the tribes refused to move and won backing from John Marshall's Supreme Court in 1832. Georgia held to its course, appropriating Indian land by legislative fiat and encouraging white settlement.

Andrew Jackson, sympathetic to Southern whites and loathe to fracture the Union over the issue of Indian rights, chose to ignore the Supreme Court. Throughout the 1830s, the Army forcibly removed some 100,000 Indians from the Southern states. Ironically, many Northern humanitarians supported the policy of removal, believing that only on faraway reservations would Indians at last be safe from white hostility.

Postponing the Inevitable

The proud Cherokees, in 1838–39, were the last to march along the 900-mile "Trail of Tears" from Georgia to new Indian lands in what became Oklahoma. Trying to save money, the federal government provided inadequate supplies for the long exodus. Thousands of Indians in detention camps succumbed to malnutrition and disease. Many lost their possessions along the way to plundering whites. "The whole scene," wrote Gen. John E. Wool, who was entrusted with removing the Cherokees, "has been nothing but a heartrending one, and such a one as I would be glad to get rid of as soon as circumstances will permit." Some 4,000 out of 18,000 Cherokees died on the Trail of Tears.

Of the Southeast's Five Civilized Tribes, only the Creek and Seminole resisted by taking up arms. The bloody Second Seminole War in the Florida swamps (1835–42) claimed the lives of 2,000 U.S. soldiers and reduced the Seminole population to 500.

Removal made it clear that Washington—not white squatters or speculators but the U.S. government itself—was prepared to

violate treaties with Indian nations. The new, trans-Mississippi Indian territories were meant to be permanent enclaves, but few doubted that the business of drawing up "permanent" borders was merely postponing the inevitable. "In a few years," predicted one Choctaw leader, "the American will also wish to possess the land west of the Mississippi." The sanctity of the new Indian territory rested, after all, solely on the authority of Congress. What Congress had given, Congress could also take away.

During the 1830s, most Americans saw the Great Plains as a kind of desert, unsuitable for white farming and thus ideal as an Indian refuge. That perception was not to last. By the early 1850s, the white migration to Oregon and the California gold fields had drawn tens of thousands of pioneers through Indian territory. Further mineral discoveries prompted an influx of prospectors into Nevada and Colorado in 1859 and into Montana and Idaho during the Civil War. With American settlement on the Pacific Coast, the need for a transcontinental railroad became plain. Mile after mile of track began edging westward, opening up the interior. Meanwhile, a succession of "rushes"—after gold, silver, copper—dispersed the white newcomers thinly over the land, in a way guaranteed to provoke maximum friction with Indians. Recognizing their precarious position, settlers clamored for federal protection from the "savages."

Good-bye to Sitting Bull

The Indian wars of the last half of the 19th century followed the pattern of the earlier wars. Again, this was no simple wave of conquest by the white man but a muddled sequence of agreements, defaults, evasions, postponements, misunderstandings, and fluctuating alliances and enmities—punctuated by bloodshed. The Army, undermanned and underfinanced, did as best it could, accused by settlers of coddling the Indians and by Eastern liberals of needless cruelty. "We are placed between two fires," Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman once complained, "a most unpleasant dilemma from which we cannot escape." Federal troops sought repeatedly to keep whites and Indians apart, usually without success.

The long, fierce Sioux War, which stemmed like the others from an irreconcilable conflict over territory, was triggered in 1854 when an Indian at Fort Laramie, Kansas, shot a white man's cow. A young Army lieutenant, John Grattan, set out to arrest the culprit. Thanks to the work of an inept interpreter, a misunderstanding ensued and a band of Sioux slew Lieutenant Grattan and 30 of his men. The war was on.

In 1866 the Sioux War took an unsettling turn when the Indians succeeded in closing the Bozeman Trail through Wyoming, a main route to the Montana gold fields. After vain attempts to maintain a string of protective outposts, the Army's field commanders gave up. Ten years later, in 1876, at the Little Bighorn in Montana, the Sioux annihilated six troops of cavalry and their commander, Gen. George Armstrong Custer—266 men in all. But Chief Sitting Bull's comment after that episode ("We have won a great battle but lost a great war") proved prescient. Bit by bit, white Americans wore down Sioux resistance. That same year, the Sioux went on to suffer a stunning military defeat at Slim Buttes, South Dakota; Sitting Bull fled to Canada.

Creating the Ghost Dance

The prolonged, often dramatic U.S. wars with the Apache and the Sioux loom largest in the textbooks, but these conflicts were accompanied by many "silent conquests," losses of territory and independence as effectively accomplished by treaty and negotiations as by war. Groups such as the Pawnee and the Crow never fought against the U.S. Army. Indeed, disliking the Sioux and the Cheyenne as much as Custer did, their warriors enlisted as Army scouts. But in the end, they suffered the same fate as the aggressively hostile tribes.

First the Indians of the southern Plains, then those of the North, were pacified and confined to reservations. Their treaty-making powers were abolished. On the reservations, agents of the Interior Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) kept watch on their wards and, because the buffalo herds were gone, distributed rations.* To BIA agents, the opportunity for profiteering—in purchasing and transporting supplies, in leasing or sale of reservation timber and grazing land—was often the most appealing aspect of the job.

The Indians themselves, often deprived of their traditional way of life, fell into frustration and despair. On Sioux reservations the Ghost Dance soon appeared, promising the demise of the white man and the resurgence of the Indian. A new messiah, proclaimed a believer from the Rosebud Sioux reservation, "is going to cause a big cyclone or whirlwind by which he will have all the white people to perish."

Most whites believed that the end of the Indian wars meant

*In 1800, an estimated 60 million buffalo roamed North America, providing numerous Indian tribes with food, clothing, shelter, and tools. As white settlement advanced westward, buffalo came to be hunted not only for food but for sport. A popular pastime on the Kansas-Pacific Railroad was shooting at buffalo from car windows; carcasses were left to rot. By the 1890s, fewer than 20 wild buffalo remained. Today, some 75,000 buffalo exist in the United States, primarily in private herds and in zoos and parks.

an end to the Indian problem. The notion of the "vanishing Indian" had been well established by the early 19th century; the Seventh Cavalry's massacre of nearly 200 Sioux men, women, and children at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in 1890 fixed a date for the final, symbolic disappearance. Confined to their reservations, Indians were certainly out of the public eye. Their numbers—some 250,000 in 1900—were at a historic low. But the Indians were not vanishing, neither as individuals nor as tribes. White desire for Indian land had not vanished either.

The establishment of the reservations had reformulated, but had not resolved, the old questions. What was the future for Indians? Would the reservations remain as permanent Indian tribal enclaves? Or would Indians be assimilated? And if so, would assimilation be voluntary or coerced?

From the 1880s until the present day, presidents and members of Congress would grapple repeatedly with those questions. Pushed and hauled by contrary pressures, Washington would discard the old answers, come up with new ones, return to the old ones, and then ask the questions anew. The policies that resulted were sometimes well intentioned and sometimes not. Today, in 1986, one fact emerges with ironic clarity: A century after peace came to the Great Plains, the conquest of the North American continent remains incomplete.

The treaties made with the Indians, honored in the breach, are still part of the record, still available as a basis for lawsuits. The status accorded by Chief Justice John Marshall in 1832 to Indian tribes—"domestic dependent nations"—is their legal status today. There is still a Bureau of Indian Affairs, the only federal agency devoted to the needs of a single ethnic group. In ways great and small, in ways that fully satisfy no one, Indians have, in effect, become *institutionalized* in American society.

The conquest doomed generations of Indians to a life of dependence, and many to a life of misery. When Indians lost territory, they lost their traditional means of making a living. But the reservations and U.S. law ensured that the Indians would never just fade away, that they were here to stay.

THE NEW INDIAN POLITICS

by Stephen Cornell

On December 28, 1890, near the Badlands of South Dakota, a band of exhausted Sioux Indians, including perhaps 100 warriors and some 250 women and children, surrendered to the blue-clad troopers of the U.S. Seventh Cavalry and agreed to travel with them to the Indian agency at Pine Ridge. The joint party camped that night in freezing weather at Wounded Knee Creek, 20 miles from Pine Ridge. Surrounding the Indian tepees were nearly 500 soldiers and a battery of four Hotchkiss light artillery pieces.

The next morning, the Indian men were told to turn in their weapons. Few obeyed. The cavalrymen began to search the tepees. When they turned up few additional guns, the troops began to search the warriors themselves. Reports of subsequent events vary, but tensions ran high.

A scuffle broke out between an Indian and some soldiers. In the struggle, the warrior, intentionally or not, fired his rifle. That did it. Instantly both Indians and soldiers began firing at each other. Within moments, the Army gunners were pouring explosive Hotchkiss shells into the Indian camp.

Most of the Sioux warriors died in the opening volleys. Others, along with a large number of women and children, were shot as they fled down adjacent ravines. By the time the firing ended, nearly 200 Indians—perhaps more, the estimates vary—had been killed.

The survivors of this slaughter were among the last Indians to come under the direct administrative control of the U.S. government. Confined to reservations, they joined 300,000 others, from coast to coast, in a state of despondent dependency, sunk in poverty, wards of a white man's government that they had learned not to trust.

Eighty-two years later, on the wintry night of February 27, 1973, a group of armed Oglala Sioux from South Dakota's Pine Ridge Reservation joined forces with activists from the American Indian Movement (AIM) and seized the reservation village of Wounded Knee, the site of the 1890 massacre. They did so to protest corruption in the tribal government at Pine Ridge as well as U.S. violations of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty (which recognized Sioux sovereignty over much of what is now the Dakotas, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska). "We want a true Indian na-

tion," said Carter Camp, an AIM coordinator, "not one made up of Bureau of Indian Affairs puppets."

Within 24 hours, a force of 250 Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, U.S. Marshals, and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) police had cordoned off the village. The much-publicized siege lasted 10 weeks, punctuated by exchanges of gunfire that left two Indians dead and several men wounded on each side. In May, after lengthy negotiations, the Indians surrendered to federal authorities. The second battle of Wounded Knee was over.

The 1890 massacre brought one era to a close. The Euro-American advance across the continent was now complete. As Black Hawk, war leader of the Sauk and Fox, had said of himself a half century earlier, "He is now a prisoner to the white men; they will do with him as they wish."

86 Million Acres

The 1973 occupation also represented the culmination of an era. America's roughly 790,000 Indians still lived, for the most part, in considerable misery, afflicted by poverty, alcoholism, high unemployment, and inadequate education. But the days of dull Indian acquiescence were long gone. Beginning in the 1940s, Indians had not only been demanding a voice in federal Indian policy; increasingly, they had appropriated such a voice for themselves, forcing the surrounding society to respond. "*We* talk, *you* listen" was the title of a 1970 book by Sioux author Vine Deloria, Jr. And as they demonstrated at Wounded Knee, Indians did more than talk.

All in all, the path from the Wounded Knee I to Wounded Knee II traced an Indian political resurgence of striking proportions. There had always been, of course, politics *about* Indians. For the most part it was non-Indian politics, carried on in Washington, among the governors of Western states and territories, and among missionaries, reformers, and bureaucrats. The situation today is dramatically different, marked by the emergence of a new and genuinely Indian politics.

In hindsight, the turning point appears to have been the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934. Prior to its passage, two goals had guided federal Indian policy: the acquisition of Indian

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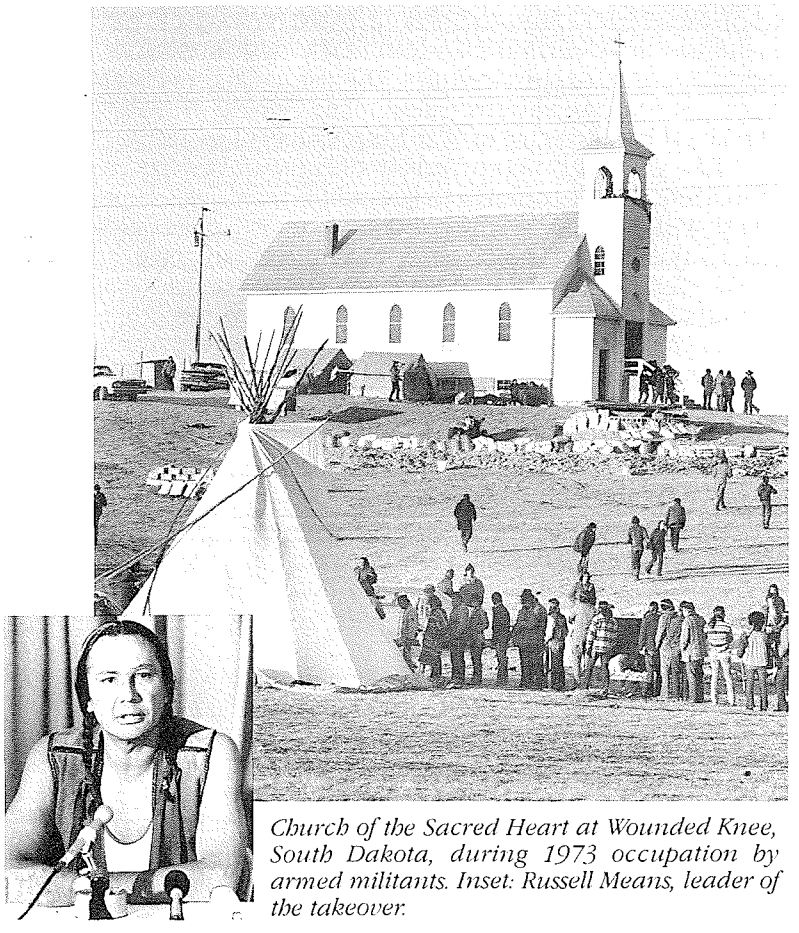


Church of the Sacred Heart at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, during 1973 occupation by armed militants. Inset: Russell Means, leader of the takeover.

lands and the cultural transformation of Indians into Euro-Americans—in a word, "assimilation." Those goals were enshrined in the Dawes Act (1887), which heralded the age of "allotment." Washington broke up much of the tribal land base, withdrawing some property from Indian ownership and distributing other, often marginal, lands to individual tribal members. "Surplus" lands, more often than not the richest, were then sold off to white settlers. Between 1887, when the Dawes Act was passed, and 1934, when allotment ceased, some 86 million acres—60 percent of the remaining Indian lands—passed into the possession of non-Indians.

Allotment, which reached a peak just before World War I, was not merely a means of appropriating Indian territory. It was

part of a concerted effort to break up tribal nations, of which there were—and are—several hundred, each with a distinct history, most still with a distinct culture. This effort, like everything else on the reservations, was overseen by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, established by Secretary of War John Calhoun in 1824.

"The Indians," wrote Indian Commissioner Thomas Morgan in 1889, "must conform to 'the white man's ways,' peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must." On the reservations, BIA officials put Indian children into English-language boarding schools, dispersed village settlements, moved tribal members off communal (and on to individual) tracts of land, and took control of economic resources. Indigenous religious ceremonies, such as the Sun Dance of the Plains tribes, were outlawed.

Waiting for FDR

By the 1920s, white America's appetite for Indian lands (the best of which had already been taken) had begun to diminish. A postwar slump in farm prices helped reduce demand. Combined with the staggering extent of poverty, disease, and other social ills now apparent on the Indian reservations, these circumstances created a climate for reform.

The reform movement can be traced in part to the ideals of Progressivism and to the growing academic interest in the notion of "cultural pluralism" as a plausible alternative to the assimilation of America's ethnic groups. In 1922, when the Harding administration backed the Bursum Bill, which threatened the land and water rights of New Mexico's Pueblo Indians, a number of liberal, non-Indian organizations—the General Federation of Women's Clubs, for example—joined the Pueblos in opposing the legislation. The thriving community of artists, writers, and intellectuals around Santa Fe and Taos supported the protest. Writing in the *New York Times*, novelist D. H. Lawrence claimed that the bill played "the Wild West scalping trick a little too brazenly." The Pueblo leaders themselves, acting in concert for the first time since the Pueblo Rebellion in 1680, declared that the bill "will rob us of everything we hold dear—our lands, our customs, our traditions." After protracted debate, the Bursum Bill was defeated in Congress.

Such protests publicized the Indians' situation. But it was not until Franklin Roosevelt's election to the presidency, and his appointment of John Collier as Indian Commissioner in 1933, that a reform package won approval in Congress.

Collier, a former social worker and educator, and champion of the Pueblo cause during the 1920s, placed great faith in the

power of "community." Native American communities, he was convinced, "must be given status, responsibility, and power." Backed by FDR, Collier led a drive to reorient U.S. Indian policy. The result, in 1934, was the Indian Reorganization Act.

Indian policy did an abrupt about-face. The IRA legislation not only put an official stop to allotment; it actually allocated modest funds for *expansion* of the Indian land base. It provided money (though never enough) for economic development on Indian reservations and subsidies for Indians to set up tribal business corporations. But most important, it allowed Indians into the decision-making process by making explicit the right of any Indian tribe "to organize for its common welfare" and to adopt a constitution and bylaws for that purpose. By 1936, more than two-thirds of the tribes had endorsed the IRA in special elections (although far fewer actually organized themselves under its provisions).

The mechanisms of the IRA—representative government, for example, and the business corporation—were alien to Indian tribes. Even so, during the next few years many groups took advantage of what has been called "the Indian New Deal." The majority of today's tribal councils are one result. For some groups, such as the Papago and Apache in the Southwest or the Sioux tribes on the northern Plains, these councils represented the first comprehensive political institutions in their history. But their powers were limited. As an Apache leader from Arizona's San Carlos Reservation put it, "[BIA] Superintendent [James B.] Kitch was still the boss." Nevertheless, Indian groups enjoyed greater control over their own affairs, including a power of veto over some federal actions. For the first time in half a century, numerous Native American groups could also have federally recognized political organizations that could represent the tribal interests in Washington, state capitals, and the courts.

World War II as Catalyst

Another step followed. In 1944, representatives of 42 tribes founded the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the first major attempt to pull together Indian groups and governments in a single, supratribal organization. In the NCAI and the regional organizations that came afterwards, tribal leaders began talking to one another. The purpose of the congress, which is still active today: "to preserve Indian cultural values; to seek an equitable adjustment of tribal affairs; to secure and to preserve rights under Indian treaties with the United States; and otherwise to promote the common welfare of the American Indian." In 1948,

THE PRICE OF ISOLATION

The poorest county in the United States, with an annual income per capita of $2,841 (in 1982), is not in the Deep South, the Appalachians, or any of the other regions in the United States frequently associated with rural poverty. It is in South Dakota: Shannon County (pop. 11,800), site of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

The poverty of Pine Ridge is shared by many Indians, especially those on the nation's 270 Indian reservations. Roughly 23 percent of all urban Indians and 33 percent of all rural Indians live below the official "poverty line"—compared with 14 percent for the entire U.S. population. In 1980, overall reservation unemployment stood at twice the national average; in some places, unemployment ranged near 80 percent.

Other statistics are even more sobering. In 1982, Indians ranked first in divorce and in deaths caused by suicide and alcohol consumption. Afflicted by poor health, family disarray, and low expectations, more than 40 percent of all Indian students entering high school drop out before graduation. No less important, note James Olson and Raymond Wilson in *Native Americans in the Twentieth Century* (1984), is the fear of many Indian parents that local public schools "alienate Native American children from tribal values." As a result, the percentage of Indians enrolled in schools is the lowest of any ethnic group in the United States.

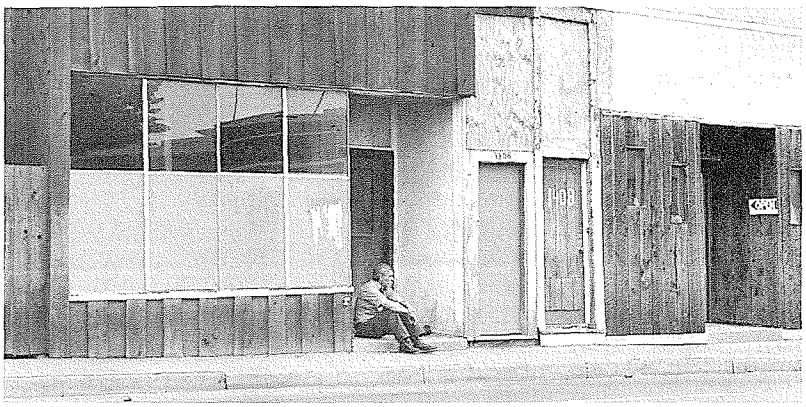
To counter these and other difficulties, Indians on and off the reservations received roughly $2.6 billion in 1984 from federal agencies, notably the departments of Interior, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and Education. A total that includes Social Security payments and food stamps, this amounts to $1,900 per Indian. Yet in a 1983 report, the National Tribal Chairmen's Association claimed that 70 percent of the almost $1 billion allotted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was spent supporting 15,000 BIA employees—or one employee for every 23 reservation Indians.

The Reagan administration has sought to reduce red tape and spur employment on Indian reservations by turning over federal programs to state, local, and tribal governments, and by encouraging private industry to invest

the NCAI and other groups began a campaign designed to secure Indian voting rights—withheld at the time in both New Mexico and Arizona.*

If the IRA gave Indians the legal tools with which to organize, World War II gave many of them the motivation. In what the Interior Department described at the time as "the greatest exodus of Indians from reservations that has ever taken place," some 25,000 Indians joined the armed forces and saw action in Europe and the Pacific. Some 40,000 quit the economic desert of the

*Both U.S. citizenship and the voting franchise came to Indians in stages. Some Indians acquired citizenship through allotment, some through military service or congressional dispensation. In 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act made citizens of all Indians born in the United States, a status that some Indians, then as now, protested as imposed against their will. Until the 1950s, some jurisdictions nevertheless denied Indians the right on the grounds that Indian lands were exempt from taxation.



in Indian communities. Between 1982 and 1984, Congress cut spending on Indians by 18 percent. But because almost 30 percent of all employed Indians work in public sector jobs, federal spending cuts tend to increase unemployment before they do anything else. As Peterson Zah, chairman of the Navaho, pointed out, "We don't have the people that Reagan is calling on—private sector development business people—to pick up the slack."

Those Indians who have prospered have done so primarily by leaving the reservation. Almost one-half of all Indians now reside in cities or towns, where a smaller percentage of Indians than of blacks or Hispanics live below the poverty line.

Yet few Indians adjust to urban life. Most return frequently to their reservations, where they often leave their children with relatives, and where they often choose to retire. Assimilation, the path to prosperity taken by generations of American immigrants, is an anathema to many Indians. "The pervasive fear of Indians," observes longtime Indian activist Vine Deloria, Jr., "is that they will . . . move from their plateau of small nationhood to the status of [just] another ethnic group in the American melting pot."

reservations for jobs in war industries. For many Indians, experiences in the factory or on the battlefront constituted their first real exposure to the larger American society.

The identities of Native Americans have long been rooted in tribes, bands, villages, and the like, not in one's presumed "Indianness." The reservation system helped to preserve such identities and inhibited the emergence of a more inclusive self-consciousness. As a result, Indians, unlike American blacks, have had difficulty forming a common front. World War II brought Indians from different tribes into contact with one another, and with other Americans who thought of them indiscriminately as "Indians," not as Navahos or Apaches or Sioux.

It also forcefully brought home to Indians their second-class

status. One Lumbee veteran told anthropologist Karen Blu: "In 1945 or '46, I applied to UNC [University of North Carolina]. I had six battle stars. They said they didn't accept Indians from Robeson County." In the Southwest, not surprisingly, it was the Indian veterans who went to court to seek voting rights. Former G.I.'s were prominent in the NCAI. In 1952, the *New York Times* reported that "a new, veteran-led sense of political power is everywhere in Indian country."

Such analyses proved premature. There had always been strong opposition to the Indian Reorganization Act, from the political Right and from politicians of all colorations in the West, partly on the grounds that it perpetuated an undesirably distinct status for Native Americans.

After the fading of the New Deal, the status of Native Americans as wards of the federal government seemed to go against the American tradition of self-reliance. Sen. George Malone (R.-Nev.) complained that Indian reservations represented "natural socialist environments"—a charge echoed by Interior Secretary James Watt three decades later. Break up the tribal domains, so the argument ran, remove the protective arm of government, and cast the Indian into the melting pot and the marketplace. Everyone would benefit.

Such, in essence, was the conclusion of the so-called Hoover Commission on governmental organization, which in 1949 proposed "integration of the Indian into the rest of the population." It recommended that Indians leave the reservations and, implicitly, the tribal framework. Assimilation, the commission urged, should once again become "the dominant goal of public policy."

Ending Segregation

By the mid-1950s it was. Under "termination," as this latest turn in Washington's policy came to be called, Congress set out to dismantle the reservation system, disband tribal nations, and distribute their assets among tribal members. What Sen. Arthur V. Watkins (R.-Utah), an architect of the new policy, called "the Indian freedom program" received both liberal and conservative support. Liberal opinion during the late 1940s and '50s tended to view the problems of Indians in terms derived from the black experience and the early days of the struggle to end racial exclusion. Reservations were seen as "rural ghettoes"; termination would put an end to "segregation." As historian Clayton Koppes has noted, this view reflected the liberal emphasis on "freeing the individual from supposedly invidious group identity."

This was exactly what most Indians did not want, but Wash-

ington was not in a listening mood. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dillon S. Myer's orders to BIA employees were explicit. "I realize that it will not be possible always to obtain Indian cooperation," he wrote in 1952. Nonetheless, "we must proceed."

During the summer of 1953, under House Concurrent Resolution 108, Congress effectively repudiated the spirit of the Indian New Deal, stipulating that Indians were to be removed from federal supervision "at the earliest possible time," with or without Indian consent. Under Public Law 280, Congress transferred to California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, and Wisconsin all civil and criminal jurisdiction over Indian reservations—previously under federal and tribal jurisdiction. Some tribal lands were broken up and sold, while many functions once performed by Washington—such as running schools and housing programs—were usually turned over to the states or other agencies.

Picking Up the Pieces

Meanwhile, to spur assimilation, Indians were urged to relocate to the cities. As Senator Watkins remarked: "The sooner we get the Indians into the cities, the sooner the government can get out of the Indian business." In 1940, fewer than 30,000 Indians were city residents; almost three-quarters of a million are today. But the government is not out of the Indian business.

That is because termination did not work. Take the case of the 3,000 Menominees in Wisconsin, one of the larger groups freed from the federal embrace. When Congress passed the Menominee Termination Act in 1954, the Menominee tribe was riding high. Poverty on the more than 200,000-acre reservation was widespread, but the tribe itself had large cash reserves and a thriving forest products industry that provided jobs and income.

With termination the Menominee reservation became a county. Tribal assets came under the control of a corporation in which individual Menominees held shares, while previously untaxed lands suddenly became subject to state and local taxes. The tribal hospital once financed by Washington was shut down, and some Menominees, faced with rising taxes and unemployment, had to sell their shares in the corporation. Before long, the corporation itself was leasing lands to non-Indians in an attempt to raise money. Soon it was selling the land in order to survive. By the mid-1960s the state and federal governments, forced to pick up the pieces, were spending more to support the Menominees than they had before termination. As more than one Menominee asked in frustration, "Why didn't they leave us alone?"

In 1969, faced with disaster, the Menominees began to fight

back, organizing a major protest movement in favor of restoration of federal jurisdiction and services, preservation of the land base, and a return to tribal status. Congress acquiesced late in 1973. The Menominee Restoration Act reinstated federal services to the Menominees, and formally re-established them "as a federally recognized sovereign Indian tribe."

The assimilationist orientation of the termination policy, and Washington's complete indifference to the views of its target population, aroused Indians across the country. They saw in termination the greatest threat to *tribal* survival since the Indian wars of the 19th century.

Termination did not die officially until 1970, when President Richard Nixon repudiated it. As federal and state officials came to recognize that the policy was creating more problems than it solved, protests by Indian groups slowed. Nonetheless, some Indian groups had been irreparably harmed.

In retrospect, the chief accomplishment of termination ran directly counter to Congress's intention: It provided Indians of diverse backgrounds with a critical issue around which to mobilize. At the American Indian Chicago Conference in 1961, re-

Navaho Marines, 1942. Some 3,600 Navahos served in the Pacific during World War II. Navaho radiomen foiled Japanese eavesdroppers by communicating in their native tongue.

called Flathead anthropologist D'Arcy McNickle, the 500 Indians from 90 tribes who gathered for the event "had in common a sense of being under attack." The termination crisis persuaded many Indians of the utility—indeed, the necessity—of united action. Strength would be found in numbers. The category "Indian," invented and named by Europeans, was rapidly becoming the basis of a new wave of minority group politics.

Uncle Tomahawk

The tempest over termination coincided with a second development. Just as the late 1950s and early '60s were a time of change in the black movement for civil rights, they also saw the beginnings of change in American Indian leadership and its activity. In part, the change was one of tactics. There were glimmers of the future in actions by Wallace "Mad Bear" Anderson and other Iroquois in New York State: When the New York State Power Authority in 1958 sought to expropriate a large chunk of the Tuscarora Reservation for a new water reservoir, Anderson and 100 other Indians scuffled with state troopers and riot police, attempting to keep surveyors off the property. During that same year, several hundred armed and angry Lumbee Indians in Robeson County, North Carolina, reacted to Ku Klux Klan harassment by invading a Klan rally and driving the participants away with gunfire. The harassment stopped.

The new assertiveness reflected the emergence of a new generation of Indian leaders. During the 1950s the number of Indians enrolled in college in the United States substantially increased. According to the BIA, only 385 American Indians were attending postsecondary institutions in 1932; thanks in part to the post–World War II G.I. Bill, that number had swelled to 2,000 by 1957. On campuses, off the reservations, educated Indians from different tribes began to discover one another. That sense of discovery is apparent in Navaho activist Herbert Blatchford's description of the clubs that began to appear among Indian college students, particularly in the Southwest. "There was group thinking," he told writer Stan Steiner. "I think that surprised us the most. We had a group world view."

In 1954, Indian students began holding a series of youth conferences in the Southwest to discuss Indian issues. The largest such conference, in 1960, drew 350 Indians from 57 tribes. Some of the participants eventually turned up at the 1961 Chicago conference—and found themselves at odds with the older, more cautious tribal leaders. In *The New Indians* (1968), Steiner quotes Mel Thom, a young Paiute from Nevada who attended the

conference: "We saw the 'Uncle Tomahawks' fumbling around, passing resolutions, and putting headdresses on people. But as for taking a strong stand they just weren't doing it."

Two months later, at a meeting in Gallup, New Mexico, 10 Indian activists—a Paiute, a Ponca, a Mohawk, two Navahos, a Ute, a Shoshone-Bannock, a Potawatomi, a Tuscarora, and a Crow—founded the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). "We were concerned with direct action," recalled Thom. It was time for Indians "to raise some hell."

They began raising hell in the Pacific Northwest. The trouble started during the early 1960s, when the State of Washington arrested Indians fishing in off-reservation waters. Though in violation of state regulations, "the right of taking fish at accustomed places" had been guaranteed by the Treaty of Point No Point and other agreements made during the 19th century between various Northwestern tribes and the United States. In 1964, a new regional organization—Survival of American Indians—joined the NIYC in protests supporting Indian treaty rights. They held demonstrations at the state capital in Olympia and, more provocatively, sponsored a series of "fish-ins," deliberately setting out to fish waters forbidden to them by the state.

Equal Rights

Growing numbers of Indian tribes became involved—the Muckleshoot, Makah, Nisqually, Puyallup, Yakima, and others—and began to assert their claims in defiance of court injunctions and state actions. The protests continued into the 1970s and became more violent. In August 1970, Puyallup Indians in a fishing camp on the Puyallup River exchanged gunfire with police who had surrounded them. No one was injured, but 64 Indians were carted off to jail. A year later Hank Adams, leader of Survival of American Indians, was shot by white vigilantes as he sat in his car on the banks of the Nisqually, near Tacoma.

Adams survived, and the struggle went on. Ultimately, in 1974, a federal district court ruled in the tribes' favor on the fishing rights issue, a decision upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court five years later. But the battle is not over. In November 1984, voters in Washington approved Initiative 456, designed to undermine the Treaty of Point No Point and other similar treaties.

Jack Metcalf, a Washington state senator and author of Initiative 456, says that "the basic point is not fish—it's equal rights." But, of course, the issue *is* fish and other treaty-protected Indian resources. From the Indian point of view, it is an issue long since resolved. In the treaties they signed during the 19th century, they

THE WHITE MAN'S LAW

"You tell us of your claim to our land and that you have purchased it from your State," scolded Red Jacket, chief of the Seneca, in a speech delivered 160 years ago to white speculators near Lake Geneva, New York. "How has your State, which has never owned our land, sold it to you? Even the whites have a law. . . "

White law nowadays has become a key element in each tribe's survival strategy. More than 500 Indians today hold law degrees (versus fewer than a dozen 20 years ago), and virtually all of them grapple with issues of Indian jurisprudence. Those issues involve the nature of tribal government, protection of Indian lands, freedom of religion, hunting and fishing rights, rights to water from specified rivers and lakes, and other matters.

The tangled privileges and prohibitions that govern Indian life could discourage even Felix Frankfurter, who once described Indian law as "a vast hodgepodge of treaties, judicial and administrative rulings, and unrecorded practices." Because Indian law so often rests on treaties made by Indian nations with a foreign government—the United States of America—legal actions brought by Indians often end up before the U.S. Supreme Court.

In recent years, the drive by Indians to assert their rights has been led by the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), whose 11 lawyers work out of an old college fraternity house in Denver, Colorado. NARF was founded in 1970 with help from the Ford Foundation. Now headed by John Echohawk, a Pawnee, its annual budget is roughly $3 million.

NARF has been involved in almost every significant court case concerning Indians during the past 15 years. The group's attorneys helped the Menominee of Wisconsin and the Siletz of Oregon regain their status as tribes; fought for Chippewa fishing rights in Michigan; and established a homeland for the Traditional Kickapoo in Texas. In 1983 alone NARF handled business on behalf of 75 tribes in 25 states.

Three years ago, NARF lost three important water rights cases (*Arizona* v. *California*, *Nevada* v. *United States*, and *Arizona* v. *San Carlos Apache Tribe*) before the U.S. Supreme Court. After many successes, the judicial reverses paralleled the rise of a political backlash sparked by groups such as the Interstate Congress for Equal Rights and Responsibilities. In some states, this movement has successfully contested the Indians' "special treatment" under the law. The Supreme Court of Washington, for example, has charged that the federal government, by treaty, "conferred upon tribal Indians and their descendants what amounts to titles of nobility."

Indians view their legal status not as something the white man gave them but as something the white man left them. That is why the Indian recourse to white justice will persist, seeking white support and reminding us that we are, besides much else, a nation governed by law.

—*Richard J. Margolis*

Richard J. Margolis is currently at work on a book on Risking Old Age in America, *has written widely on Indian affairs and has been an adviser to the Rosebud Sioux and Navaho tribes.*

agreed to give to the United States most of what are now the states of Washington and Oregon as well as parts of Idaho and California. In return, the United States, among other things, recognized forever their right to fish in Northwestern waters.

Indian activism did not appear only in the countryside; it erupted in the cities as well. For many Indian migrants of the postwar period, the move from the reservation to Denver, Chicago, Seattle, and other cities merely replaced one form of poverty with another. Largely unskilled, lacking experience in the non-Indian world, victimized by discrimination in housing and jobs, Indian migrants swelled the ranks of the urban poor.

Landing on Alcatraz

They also discovered that, unlike blacks or Hispanics, they had become "invisible." In the eyes of state and local officials, urban Indians, just like reservation Indians, were the sole responsibility of the BIA. The BIA, for its part, believed that its responsibility stopped at reservation's edge. In 1963, Indians in Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose began protesting BIA relocation policies and the failure of the Bureau to deal with urban Indian problems. They took a cue from the tactics being employed by American blacks. Observed Vine Deloria, Jr.: "The basic fact of American political life—that without money or force there is no change—impressed itself upon Indians as they watched the civil-rights movement."

The two most militant Indian political organizations took root in the cities: the American Indian Movement, founded in 1968, and Indians of All Tribes, which materialized a year later.

AIM first made its mark in Minneapolis, organizing an Indian Patrol to combat alleged police brutality in Indian neighborhoods. It soon had chapters in cities throughout the Midwest. Indians of All Tribes was founded in San Francisco in response to a specific incident. On November 1, 1969, the San Francisco Indian Center, which served the large Bay Area population, burned to the ground. There was no ready replacement for the building or the services that it provided. On November 9, a group of Indians—perhaps a dozen—landed on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, site of an abandoned federal prison, and claimed it for a new Indian center. Authorities removed them the next day. The Indians returned on November 20, now 80 strong. By the end of the month several hundred were living on the island, calling themselves Indians of All Tribes. Wary of public reaction to the use of force, federal officials pursued negotiations for 19 months. Not until June 1971, when the number of Indians on the

Rather than keeping agreements, some anti-Indian groups advocate breaking them. Organizations like the Wisconsin-based Equal Rights for Everyone favor abrogation of all *Indian treaties.*

island had dwindled and public interest had waned, did federal marshals and the Coast Guard retake "the Rock."

Alcatraz was a watershed. It drew massive publicity, providing many Indians with a dramatic symbol of self-assertion. Said occupation leader Richard Oakes, a Mohawk: "This is actually a move, not so much to liberate the island, but to liberate ourselves." During the next five years Indians occupied Mount Rushmore, Plymouth Rock, and more than 50 other sites around the country for varying lengths of time. The wave of takeovers culminated with the seizure of the BIA headquarters in Washington, D.C., in 1972, and the Wounded Knee occupation in 1973. AIM, led by Dennis Banks and Russell Means, was a major actor in both.* All made for vivid television news stories.

*Charges against AIM leaders Banks and Means were dropped on account of misconduct by government prosecutors. Banks was convicted in 1974 of charges stemming from a riot at a Custer, South Dakota, courthouse in 1973. He fled to California and was given sanctuary by Gov. Jerry Brown, who refused extradition. Republican George Deukmejian, elected governor in 1982, was less sympathetic. Banks surrendered to South Dakota officials in 1984 and served one year in prison. He now works as an alcohol-prevention counselor on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in Oglala, South Dakota. Means is currently associated with the International Indian Treaty Council, a lobbying group registered with the United Nations.

The Indian activists, noted Yakima journalist Richard La Course, "blew the lid off the feeling of oppression in Indian country." They also provoked a concerted response from Washington. The FBI and the BIA began an effective infiltration campaign, directed in particular at the American Indian Movement. (AIM's chief of security, it would later be revealed, was an FBI informer.) More than 150 indictments came out of the Wounded Knee incident. Making headlines and the network evening news had its price. Conceded one AIM member in 1978, "We've been so busy in court fighting these indictments, we've had neither the time nor the money to do much of anything else."

Going to the Courts

Radical Indian action has abated since the mid-1970s. But the new Indian politics has involved more than land seizures and demonstrations. Beginning in the late 1960s, the Great Society programs opened up new links between Indian leaders and the federal government. By 1970, more than 60 Community Action Agencies had been established on Indian reservations. Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) funds were being used to promote economic development, establish legal services programs, and sustain tribal and other Indian organizations. Through agencies such as OEO and the Economic Development Administration, tribes were able for the first time to bypass systematically the BIA, pursuing their own political agendas in new ways.

Indian activists have also turned to the courts. The legal weapon is especially potent in the Indian situation because the relationship of Native Americans to the United States, unlike that of any other group in American life, is spelled out in a vast body of treaties, court actions, and legislation. In 1972, for example, basing their case on a law passed by Congress in 1790 governing land transactions made with Indian tribes, the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes filed suit to force the federal government to protect their claims to more than half of the state of Maine. This action led eventually to the Maine Settlement Act of 1980, which deeded 300,000 acres of timberland to the two tribes.

Behind such actions lies an assortment of Indian legal organizations that sprang up during the 1970s, staffed by a growing cadre of Indian lawyers and supported by both federal and private funds (see box, page 125). Indeed, organizing activity of every stripe has marked the past two decades. By the late 1970s, there were more than 100 intertribal or supratribal Indian organizations, ranging from the National Indian Youth Council to the Association of American Indian Physicians to the Small Tribes of

Western Washington, most with political agendas, many with lobbying offices in Washington.

Despite generally low Indian voter turnout, Indians have not ignored electoral politics. In 1964, two Navahos ran for seats in the New Mexico state legislature and won, becoming the first Indian representatives in the state's history. Two years later, 15 Indians were elected to the legislatures of six Western states. In 1984, 35 Indians held seats in state legislatures.

Of course the leverage Indians can exercise at the polls is limited. In only five states (Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and South Dakota) do Indians make up more than five percent of the population. At the local level, on the other hand, Indians are occasionally dominant. (Apache County, Arizona, for example, is nearly 75 percent Indian.) Indians also can make a difference in particular situations. In 1963, after the South Dakota legislature had decided that the state should have civil and criminal jurisdiction over Indian reservations, the Sioux initiated a "Vote No" referendum on the issue, hoping to overturn the legislation. They campaigned vigorously among whites and were able to turn out their own voters in record numbers. The referendum passed. A similar Indian grassroots effort and high voter turnout in 1978 led to the defeat of Rep. Jack Cunningham (R.-Wash.), sponsor of legislation in Congress to abrogate all treaties between Indian tribes and the federal government.

The Finest Lawyers

If Indians lack more than limited political clout in elections, during the 1970s they found new opportunities in the economy. The 1973–74 energy crisis and rising oil prices sent the fortunes of some tribes through the roof. Suddenly, Indian lands long thought to be worthless were discovered to be laden with valuable natural resources: one-quarter or more of U.S. strippable coal, along with large amounts of uranium, oil, and gas. Exploration quickly turned up other minerals on Indian lands. For the first time since the drop in land prices during the 1920s, Indians had substantial amounts of something everybody else wanted. In an earlier time this realization would have occasioned wholesale expropriation. In the political atmosphere of the 1970s, and in the face of militant Indians, that was no longer possible. Now the tribes began demanding higher royalties for their resources and greater control over the development process. The result, for some, was a bonanza. During the 41 years between 1937 and 1978, Native Americans received $720 million in royalties and other revenues from mineral leases; during the four years from

1978 to 1982, they received $532 million.

Most of this money went to only a few tribes, much of it to meet the needs of desperately poor populations. It also had a political payoff. Michael Rogers tells the story of an Alyeska Pipeline Company representative in Alaska, who during the mid-1970s lectured pipeline workers about the importance of maintaining good relations with local Indian and Eskimo communities. "You may wonder why they are so important," the representative told his hard-hats. "They are important because they are a people, because they were here before us, and because they have a rich heritage. They are also important because they belong to regional corporations that are able to afford the finest legal counsel in the country."

What Do Indians Want?

This new Indian assertiveness, in its multiple manifestations, had a major impact on U.S. policy. In 1975, responding to "the strong expression" of Indians, Congress committed itself to a policy of "self-determination," to providing "maximum Indian participation in the government and education of the Indian people." From now on, the government was saying, it not only would attempt to listen to Indian views and honor Indian agendas but would grant to Indians a central role in the implementation of policy.

But self-determination raises an awkward, chronic question. What is it the Indians want?

According to Bill Pensoneau, former president of the National Indian Youth Council and now economic planner for the Ponca Tribe in Oklahoma, what the Indians want is "survival." In his view, it is not individual survival that is of primary concern. What is at stake is the survival of Indian *peoples*: the continued existence of distinct, independent, tribal communities.

Among other things, of course, that means jobs, health care, functioning economies, good schools, a federal government that keeps its promises. These have not been any easier to come by in recent years. Federal subsidies to Native Americans have been cut steadily under the Reagan administration, by about $1 billion in 1981–83. Cancellation of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program cost the Poncas 200 jobs. The Intertribal Alcoholism Center in Montana lost half its counselors and most of its beds. The Navaho public housing program was shut down.

Aside from those with lucrative mineral rights, few tribes have been able to make up for such losses of federal subsidies. With no economic base to draw on, most have found themselves

powerless in the face of rising unemployment, deteriorating health care, and a falling standard of living.

But the survival question cuts more deeply even than this and reveals substantial divisions among Native Americans themselves. There are those who believe that survival depends on how well Indians can exploit the opportunities offered by the larger (non-Indian) society. Others reject that society and its institutions; they seek to preserve or reconstruct their own culture.

There are many points of view in between. Ideological divisions mirror economic and social ones. In the ranks of any tribe these days one is likely to find blue-collar workers, service workers, professionals, and bureaucrats, along with those pursuing more traditional occupations and designs for living. Most tribes include both reservation and city populations, with contrasting modes of life. The resultant Indian agenda is consistent in its defense of Indian peoples but often contradictory in its conception of how best they can be sustained. This proliferation of Indian factions, many of them no longer tribally defined, has made Indian politics more difficult for even the most sympathetic outsiders to understand.

The Indian politics of the 1960s and '70s, both confrontational and conventional, was too fragmented, the actors were too dispersed, the goals too divergent to constitute a coherent, organized, political crusade. What it represented instead was the movement of a whole population—a huge collection of diverse, often isolated, but increasingly connected Indian communities—into more active political engagement with the larger society, seeking greater control over their lives and futures. To be sure, compared with other political and social events of the period, it was only a sideshow. It did not "solve" fundamental difficulties. But in the world of Indian affairs, it was a remarkable phenomenon, surpassing in scale and impact anything in Indian-white relations since the wars of the 19th century, which finally came to an end at Wounded Knee.

TWO CASE HISTORIES

by David Edmunds

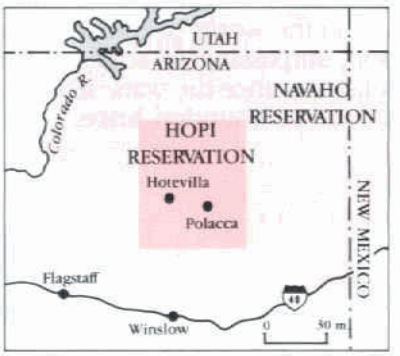
At two in the morning on October 12, 1492, a lookout aboard the *Pinta*, one of two caravels accompanying Christopher Columbus's flagship, the *Santa Maria*, sighted a limestone cliff on the coast of San Salvador, an island in the Bahamas. At dawn, Columbus went ashore and claimed the island for Spain.

Following Columbus's discovery, Europeans came to realize that America was a New World. But they remained abysmally ignorant of its inhabitants, largely unaware, like Americans today, of the diversity of Indian cultures.

The hundreds of Indian tribes in what is now the United States adapted to Euro-American expansion in hundreds of different ways—as they had adapted to expansion by other *Indian* groups during the millenniums before Columbus. Against great odds, most tribes managed to preserve some degree of group identity in exchange for some sort of accommodation with the white majority.

The tradeoffs between Indian and non-Indian continue. What follow are two brief case studies: one of the Hopi Indians, a tribe that has hewed to its traditional ways; and one of the Potawatomis, a tribe that has chosen to change in order to survive.

I: THE HOPIS (ARIZONA)



They are a people with close ties to their land and to their past. Emerging from the ancient Anasazi culture, the Hopis—the name means "the peaceful ones"—have occupied their desert homeland in what is now northeastern Arizona for at least 1,000 years. In July 1540, when 17 Spanish cavalrymen, a few foot soldiers, and some Zuni Indian guides under the command of Don Pedro de Tobar came upon the Hopi pueblo of Kawaika, they found a farming people growing corn, beans, and other vegetables. The Hopi villagers lived in

autonomous pueblos scattered across the southern flanks of several large mesas.

The tribe lacked any centralized government, but the Hopi people shared a language, a culture, and a religion. A network of clans and extended families linked the many villages. The Hopis considered themselves to be the stewards of their environment, and all of the villages joined in a rich ceremonial life that reaffirmed ties to the land, to the spirit world, and to the *kachinas* (represented by masked dancers), who variously personified Hopi ancestors and the powers that bring rainfall, good harvests, and abundance. A yearly cycle of nine great ceremonies, the Hopi Road of Life, was celebrated in solemn, symbolic offerings and elaborate public dances—the Corn Dance, the Snake Dance, the Bean Dance, the Home Dance, and many others. Various secret societies, all-male, were responsible for particular ceremonies. Associated with the dances were rituals performed by men in the underground *kivas*, or ceremonial chambers. Many of these practices remain closely held secrets.

Kit Carson's Sympathies

The extension of the Spanish Empire to the American Southwest brought many changes, but the Hopis, in their high, isolated pueblos, retained much of their traditional way of life. In 1629, the Franciscans established a mission at Awatovi; attempts to spread Christianity to other pueblos met with little success. The Hopis did, however, accept some Spanish technology, substituting metal knives, axes, and needles for the bone or stone implements used by their forefathers. They supplemented their diet of corns and beans with new foods introduced by the Europeans: watermelons, onions, peaches. The Hopis also welcomed European livestock, raising horses and small flocks of sheep.

In 1680, ties such as those the Hopis had with New Spain were abruptly severed when they joined other tribes from throughout northern New Mexico and Arizona in the great Pueblo Rebellion—spurred by repeated Spanish attempts to suppress native religion. The enraged Hopis killed numerous colonists and 21 Spanish priests, poisoning some clerics and hurling others from the mesa tops. Spanish troops eventually were able to reoccupy New Mexico and Arizona, but most of the Hopi villages, secure atop their mesas, escaped the ravages of reconquest. In 1710, Spanish officials admitted: "Since the uprising it has not been possible to reduce them, notwithstanding the efforts that have been made on the part of His Majesty's forces as well as of the religious whose apostolic desires have always had as their aim

conversion of these souls."

A century later, the Hopis would spurn the Mexicans as they had spurned the Spanish. The Americans were another story. In 1850, following the United States' victory in the war with Mexico, the Hopis established relations with the federal government. Why? A relatively pacifist people, they faced frequent raids by the stronger and more aggressive Navahos. They welcomed efforts by the U.S. cavalry to subdue their powerful neighbors. Unfortunately, the same Yankee horsemen who fought the Navahos brought with them smallpox, and during the 1860s a smallpox epidemic swept through Hopi country. At the same time, the Southwest suffered a prolonged series of droughts. Kit Carson, in 1863 commanding a force of cavalrymen against the Navahos, found the Hopis "in a most deplorable condition. . . . Their only dependence for subsistence is on the little corn they raise when the weather is propitious." The Hopi population abruptly fell by almost 50 percent.

The Hopis' territory was shrinking, too. In 1869, Washington created an independent Hopi agency at Oraibi, a pueblo on Third Mesa. Thirteen years later, on December 16, 1882, President Chester A. Arthur signed an executive order creating a 3,920-square-mile reservation in northern Arizona for the Hopi tribe (and, fatefully, for any other Indians whom the secretary of the interior should "see fit to settle thereon"). Meanwhile, the transcontinental Atlantic and Pacific Railroad brought ranchers, miners, and other settlers into the region. Between 1900 and 1910, the population of Arizona nearly doubled (from 122,931 to 204,354), and the new cities abutting the Hopi reservation, including Flagstaff, grew accordingly.

Hopis versus Navahos

The Hopi reaction to all of this was mixed. Some Hopis, led by Lololoma, a leader from Oraibi who had once visited Washington, D.C., cooperated with the U.S. government. Others clung to the traditional way of life, shunning the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Mormon missionaries who flocked to the reservation, and refusing to send their children to the new government schools at Oraibi, Polacca, and Keams Canyon. Led by Lomahongyoma, also from Oraibi, the traditionalists successfully blocked government

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"Mountain Sheep Dance" (1920–21), by Hopi artist Fred Kabotie. The Hopi ceremonial cycle, emphasizing continuity, centers on masked kachinas, *who personify the spirits of ancestors and the powers of nature.*

attempts to "allot" the reservation—that is, to divide its land among its residents, destroying its communal character. After several clashes with Lololoma's followers, Lomahongyoma and his "hostiles" withdrew from Oraibi in 1906 to form a separate village, Hotevila, near Third Mesa. The rift between "traditionalist" and "progressive" Hopis persists.

With the Americans came economic opportunity—for some. The Navaho and Zuni Indians had introduced the Hopis to silversmithing during the 1890s; during the 20th century, the craft grew in importance. As more and more tourists ventured into the Southwest, demand soared for Hopi pottery, a beautiful polychrome clayware characterized by bold, stylized designs. Many other Hopis came to rely on wages earned off the reservation as ranch hands, miners, and laborers.

The Hopis' growing dependence on the outside economy led, inevitably, to a decreasing reliance on raising livestock. Into the vacuum stepped Navaho tribesmen from the surrounding countryside. Outnumbering the Hopis by 20 to 1, the nomadic Navahos began grazing their sheep and cattle on the fringes of the Hopi reservation, bit by bit penetrating further. During the 1930s, worried about overgrazing, the federal government forced *both* the Navahos and the Hopis to reduce their herds of live-

GENEROSITY

In 1967, the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) hired me to help investigate housing conditions on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. With a team of self-described experts, I visited all 22 villages on the reservation, from Two Strike to Milk's Camp, and discovered, among other things, that Rosebud families had much to endure.

Many occupied dirt-floor shacks that lacked adequate heat or running water. Some were forced to sleep, even to cook, in rusted-out car bodies. In winter, the families were virtually defenseless against the frequent blizzards that swept the South Dakota prairie.

Our architectural consultant, a cheerful young man from Chillicothe, Ohio, went from door to door asking astonished Sioux mothers whether they preferred gas stoves to electric stoves; whether they liked bunk beds; whether the children could use a "mud room" for their boots and galoshes.

Few of the mothers could summon answers. I attributed their reticence to the fact that their houses had no gas or electricity, their rooms had no beds, and their children had no boots. But there was another explanation. As a tribal leader admonished us: "You should not ask so many questions. The people think there is a right answer and a wrong answer, and if they give the wrong answer, they will not get a new house." Over the centuries whites have admired Indian silence as the complement to Indian eloquence. But it may also have been a way of avoiding trouble.

Two of the people I met during that Rosebud sojourn were Nancy and Sam White Horse, who lived in a shack atop a barren knoll near the town of Mission. Born around the turn of the century, they had spent most of their lives on the reservation, taking strong roles in tribal affairs and sharing with other members of the tribe in the manifold miseries and occasional improvements that came their way.

Now the arrival of "Washington officials" gave grounds for hope that housing might be the next item slated for progress. "You're not the first to fly out here and look around," Nancy White Horse told me as we stood amid the tall, yellow grass. "Nothing ever comes of it. But I'll tell you what. If you can get some houses built for my people, I'll make you a quilt."

In time, the OEO built 400 houses on the Rosebud Reservation, including one for Nancy and Sam. Nancy was as good as her word. The quilt she

stock, but the Navahos continued to usurp pastureland formerly used by both tribes. When the Hopis complained, the Navahos pointed to the language in President Arthur's 1882 executive order establishing the Hopi reservation and sanctioning the presence of any other Indian tribe that the interior secretary saw fit "to settle thereon."

The Hopi-Navaho dispute continues. In 1962, federal courts decreed that many of the contested lands should be deemed a "Joint Use Area" open to both tribes, a decision that pleased neither. The 1974 Navaho-Hopi Land Settlement Act provided for

sent was a brilliant patchwork of red, orange, and white, with a large green star at the center.

It was hardly surprising that the bargain Nancy struck with me should benefit the whole tribe—"If you can get some houses built for my people"—rather than herself alone. In Indian country people tend to move forward in concert. Their individual struggles become a war of all on behalf of all. Nor was it unusual that out of the tatters of her daily life she should strive to fashion a gift of great beauty. That, too, went with the territory. In a culture with few commodities and virtually no market, creative generosity can flourish.

Do the Indians perhaps know something that we do not—not, to be sure, about getting ahead, but instead about *not* getting ahead? Is it possible that life is more fruitfully and magnanimously lived in the Indians' circular way (the turning of the earth) rather than in our accustomed linear fashion (onward and upward)?

Recently I returned to Rosebud for the first time in a dozen years. It took me a while to find Nancy White Horse because she had moved to a new neighborhood, a place named in honor of her husband, who had died a few years previously: the Sam White Horse Housing Project. Nancy's face had more wrinkles than I had remembered, and she walked very carefully now, but otherwise she seemed unchanged, and certainly undiscouraged.

"What happened to your other house?" I asked. "The one that we built for you?"

"Oh," she said matter-of-factly, "there was a fellow who needed a place to live. So I gave him my house."

I thought of John Wesley, that troubled missionary who learned something in the 18th century that we may have forgotten in the 20th. Homeward-bound to England, Wesley gazed at a tossing sea and wrote in his diary, "I came to America to convert the Indians. But oh, dear God, who will convert me?"

—R. J. M.

the equal partition of these lands. Within a few years fences stretched across the desert, supposedly protecting the remaining Hopi lands from further Navaho encroachment. They did not.

By 1980, the Hopi population numbered about 9,000 while that of the Navaho approached 170,000; more than 2,000 Navahos were permanently settled on lands once designated as being under the jurisdiction of the Hopi. (Fewer than 100 Hopis were on Navaho lands.) Many Navahos have refused to relocate. As one Navaho woman put it during the late 1970s, "If I was beaten unconscious or put to sleep, then maybe I would be taken to the

place where we are supposed to move to. But it would not be of my own will, and as soon as I was awake I would get up and come back to this place."

The Hopis quarrel not only with the Navahos but also among themselves—in particular, over the mining of coal and other mineral resources. Since 1936, the Hopi progressives have controlled the Hopi Tribal Council, in large part because Hopi traditionalists have boycotted the council elections. Backed by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the council in 1969 granted the St. Louis–based Peabody Coal Company the right to strip-mine coal from Black Mesa, in northeastern Arizona. The mines opened in 1970 and have brought some $500,000 in annual royalties to the tribe.

Hopi traditionalists bitterly oppose the mining. They regard it as a desecration. As one group of traditionalists stated: "We, the Hopi leaders, have watched as the white man has destroyed his land, his water, and his air. The white man has made it harder for us to maintain our traditional ways and religious life. . . . We cannot allow our spiritual homelands to be taken from us." During the 1970s, as Indian activism increased nationwide, so did opposition among the Hopis to the mining operations at Black Mesa. Thomas Banyacya, David Monongye, Mina Lanza, and other traditionalist leaders enlisted legal counsel to challenge the lease agreements. So far, the tribal dispute remains unresolved in the courts, and the coal mining goes on.

Dolls for the Tourists

Today, like other Indians, the Hopis are beset by a high unemployment rate—in excess of 25 percent on the Hopi reservation. Those Hopis who do work are generally low-income herdsmen and farmers. Others make a living from crafts, perhaps fashioning pottery or *kachina* dolls for the tourist trade. A few Hopis have jobs in the coal mines or elsewhere in the private sector. They, together with Hopis employed in white-collar jobs by the BIA, account for many of the roughly 500 members of the tribe who have incomes higher than $7,000.

But the Hopis do not necessarily view their condition as a "plight." Perhaps more than any other tribe within the Lower Forty-Eight, they have been able to preserve their traditional way of life. Unlike most other tribes in America, they have continued to occupy their ancestral territory, atop the same mesas as their forefathers. They keep alive many of their religious traditions. They disagree about whether (and how far) to enter the white man's world. But that disagreement, too, is of long standing.

II: THE POTAWATOMIS (OKLAHOMA)

Their surnames are Peltier, Levier, or Beaubien, and they always have been masters of accommodation. When French fur traders met the Potawatomis during the mid–18th century, these adaptable people, "the keepers of the fire," were hunters, fishermen, and farmers by the shores of Green Bay, in modern Wisconsin.

At the time they numbered about 2,000.

To obtain French goods, including guns and knives, the Potawatomis served as middlemen between French fur agents, such as Robert de La Salle, and distant Indian tribes. French Jesuits preached among the Potawatomis, winning their souls for Christ and their hearts for King Louis. Many members of the tribe intermarried with Creole French settlers in the Great Lakes region. During the French and Indian War (1756–63), fighting the English, the Potawatomis called themselves "Onontio's [their name for the governor of New France] faithful." Their warriors supported the French siege of Fort George in New York. They also participated in the rout of Gen. Edward Braddock's redcoats in 1755, near modern Pittsburgh—a battle that George Washington survived.

When the French did not prevail in North America, the Potawatomis promptly shifted their allegiance to Great Britain. Meanwhile, they spread their villages across southern Michigan and northern Indiana. The American Revolution divided Potawatomi loyalties, as did the War of 1812; some tribesmen profitably aided both Americans and British. Throughout, the intermarriage of Potawatomis and whites continued, producing mixed-blood leaders such as Capt. Billy Caldwell and Alexander Robinson, Chicago fur traders who would later guide the tribe.

During the decades following the War of 1812, American settlers swarmed across Indiana and Illinois. It was the era of removal, and the Potawatomis were forced to cede large areas of their homelands to the United States. Like most other Indians, the Potawatomis rarely received full value for their territories. But they became adept at securing the best possible terms. In 1832, they signed three treaties with Washington that surrendered more than 780,000 acres in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan—but

A member of the Potawatomi tribe pumping gas outside the tribal store in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Of the 11,568 Potawatomis recorded in 1979, only 2,928 had more than one-eighth Potawatomi blood.

in return they received an annuity of $50,000 for 15 years and manufactured goods worth approximately $250,000. Looking back on the deal, federal negotiators in 1833 acknowledged that "these half-breeds have soon learned how to vex their agents."

Following the land cessions, most Potawatomis were removed west of the Mississippi, where, in 1847, they accepted a reservation encompassing more than 500,000 acres near what is now Topeka, in east-central Kansas. There, on prairie land watered by the Kansas River, they erected their log cabins, planted their gardens, and ventured westward from time to time to compete on horseback with the Sioux, the Cheyenne, and other Plains tribes for the diminishing herds of buffalo. Although the Plains warriors resisted the Potawatomi intrusion, the newcomers, using military tactics they had learned from the British, readily defended themselves.

They were not so successful, however, against the flood of white settlers who gradually overran their lands. In 1861, a majority of the tribe agreed to the allotment of the Kansas Reservation. Pressured by land speculators, most Potawatomis, perhaps 1,500 of them, soon sold their property, accepted U.S. citizenship, and jointly purchased a new reservation in east-central Oklahoma, near modern Shawnee. About 500 members of the tribe refused to participate in the allotment process. Known as the Prairie

Band, they settled on a small reservation in Jackson County, Kansas, where the tribe can be found today, 1,326 strong.

In Oklahoma, the progressive, or Citizen Band, Potawatomis shared land with the Absentee Shawnees, descendants of those Shawnees who had fled from Ohio during the late 1700s. In 1890 the Oklahoma reservation was itself allotted; each Potawatomi received a plot within the former reservation. Surplus lands were opened to the white public during the Oklahoma Territory "land run" of 1891, and the tribe shared in the proceeds.

As their tribal acreage diminished, the Potawatomis gradually became more acculturated. In 1876, the Order of St. Benedict founded Sacred Heart Mission on lands donated by the tribe near Asher, Oklahoma. The mission opened two Indian schools, including St. Benedict's Industrial School, founded in 1877, and St. Mary's Academy (1880–1946). A new generation of educated Potawatomis established flourishing farms and ranches. Some became retailers, like G. L. Young, whose general store at "Young's Crossing" formed the nucleus of what is now the business district of modern Shawnee (pop. 26,506).

An Entrepreneurial Spirit

Like their white neighbors—and relatives—the Potawatomis endured the devastation of the Dust Bowl years. With other "Okies," many left their homes for a new life in Texas, California, and elsewhere. About one-half of the 11,600 Citizen Band Potawatomis are in Oklahoma, and some 2,500 still live in and around Shawnee. The rest are dispersed among all 50 states and several foreign countries. In Oklahoma, the Potawatomi occupational profile resembles that of any rural town's population. Unemployment is low compared to that of other tribes: 11 percent.

An elected five-man tribal council and an elected business committee oversee the affairs of the Citizen Band. John Barrett, the current tribal chairman, attended Princeton University and holds a graduate degree in business administration from Oklahoma City University. All told, some 40 employees make up the Citizen Band payroll, with jobs as diverse as publications editor and museum curator. Every summer tribal officials supervise federally subsidized job-training programs for 150 Indians.

Using tribal lands near Shawnee, the Potawatomis recently established an "enterprise zone" designed to attract business and industry into their community. Under the federal Tribal Government Tax Status Act (1982), the Potawatomis and other Indian tribes can offer private industries reduced tax rates if these firms locate within the tribal jurisdiction. Tribal lands are also exempt

from state sales taxes. Potawatomi leaders believe that they can attract Oklahoma businesses by charging lower taxes than the state. The revenues would be used to finance the tribal government, to purchase new tribal lands, to provide additional social services for local Potawatomis.

Negotiations with several major companies have already begun. In June 1984, the Potawatomis opened their own "trading post" on tribal lands. Because they charge no state sales taxes, the Potawatomi entrepreneurs can offer some commodities, especially tobacco, to Oklahomans at substantial savings. The one-story trading post currently takes in more than $200,000 a month in cigarette sales alone.

Accompanying the rise of the Potawatomis as a corporate entity has been a further dilution of their ethnic identity. Since 1961, when the tribe voted to restrict membership to those with more than one-eighth Potawatomi blood, the number of "pure" Potawatomi has continued to decline. Now, the tribal council is considering opening up tribal rolls to those with less than one-eighth Potawatomi ancestry. Few of the Citizen Band, however, wish to forgo the economic advantages that acculturation has brought them. Speaking of his tribe in 1984, John Barrett observed that "we have left the age of government programs and support.... Tribes unable to stand on their own two feet are going to find themselves fading into the background."

In retrospect, the varied responses of Indian people to European and American society have produced tribes no less diverse than those that originally inhabited the United States. But different as tribes such as the Hopi and the Potawatomi may be, each must contend with the same economic realities.

The Hopis share the dilemma of more traditional tribes whose larger land base offers the prospect of oil or mineral development. Hopi traditionalists may oppose the desecration of their homelands, but history suggests that the pressures for development, from both within and without, are difficult for any tribe to withstand. With much less land, the Potawatomi have attempted to use their unique legal status as Indians to enhance the economic position of their tribe. Whether they succeed in doing so remains to be seen. For both the Hopis and the Potawatomis, however, one thing is certain: Without gaining additional financial strength, the Indian people will be increasingly unable to control their own destinies as communities.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

THE AMERICAN INDIAN

The power of Indian oratory has long astonished non-Indians. Increasingly, many talented Indians are now turning from the spoken to the written word. They are producing a tough brand of poetry, fiction, and commentary worthy of the oral tradition from which they spring. Although much of this literature is centered in Indian country, it is sufficiently plain-spoken to be appreciated by all Americans.

The Native American Renaissance, to borrow the title of Kenneth Lincoln's study (Univ. of Calif., 1983), has been aborning for some time, helped along by a new generation of college-educated Indians.

An essential bridge from spoken to written language was provided half a century ago in South Dakota by Black Elk, the Oglala Sioux prophet (1863–1950), and by his tireless interlocutor, the late John G. Neihardt, the Nebraska poet and scholar who took down Black Elk's words.

"Always I felt a sacred obligation to be true to the old man's meaning and manner of expression," Neihardt wrote. "I am convinced that there were times when we had more than ordinary means of communication." Neihardt was able to translate Black Elk's visionary philosophy into the rhythmic English of **Black Elk Speaks** (Morrow, 1932, cloth; Pocket Books, 1982, paper). "For what is one man," Black Elk asks at the outset of his narrative, "that he should make much of his winters, even when they bend him like a heavy snow? So many other men have lived and shall live that story, to be grass upon the hills."

The book was first published in 1932 and was acclaimed by practically no one. But 40 years later, to Neihardt's astonishment, it exploded into popularity, thanks in part to a 1971 appearance by Neihardt on television's *Dick Cavett Show.*

Along with the Black Elk revival came a new breed of Indian writers untroubled by any need for white go-betweens. Scott N. Momaday, an Oklahoma Kiowa who studied at Stanford with poet Yvor Winters, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1969 for his lyric novel, **House Made of Dawn** (Harper, 1968, cloth; New American Library, 1969, paper), the story of a young Indian named Abel caught between the white man's world and the ways of his tribe.

Another bittersweet coming-of-age novel, James Welch's **Winter in the Blood** (Harper, 1974), appeared a few years later. A Blackfoot-Gros Ventres from Montana, Welch fused Indian alienation and existential anguish. "I was as distant from myself as the hawk from the moon," says the narrator.

Other writers followed with variations on the same theme. Fred Kabotie's powerful autobiography, **Fred Kabotie: Hopi Indian Artist** (Northland, 1977), suggested that it was possible to combine tribal fidelity and American-style success. Kabotie won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1945. John Fire Lame Deer echoed Black Elk in **Lame Deer Seeker of Visions: The Life of a Sioux Medicine Man** (Simon & Schuster, 1972, cloth; 1976, paper), with Richard Erdoes assuming the role of interlocutor previously played by Neihardt. During the mid-1970s, the remarkable short stories of Russell Bates, like Momaday a Kiowa, began appearing in the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*.

But it has been the poets, by and large, who have achieved the grander eloquence. The new Indian verse can be described as assertively bicultural,

AMERICAN INDIANS: KEY STUDIES

GENERAL SURVEYS: **The American Indian and the United States** (Greenwood, 1973) by Wilcomb Washburn: the basic reference work. Alvin Josephy, Jr.'s **The Indian Heritage of America** (Knopf, 1968, cloth; Bantam, 1969, paper) is a sympathetic but unsentimental overview. **The American Indian Wars** (Harper, 1960) by John Tebbel and Keith Jennison is possibly the most even-handed volume in that area of Indian history. Jennings Wise's sardonic **The Red Man in the New World Drama** (Macmillan, 1971) was viewed as an unorthodox, revisionist account of red-white relations when it first came out in 1931. The last volume of Edward S. Curtis's Indian photographs appeared around the same time. They can be found in **The North American Indian** (Aperture, 1972).

TRIBES AND CHIEFS: **The Book of the Hopi** (Viking, 1963; Penguin, 1977) by Frank Waters: an exhaustive dossier on the Southwest tribe. Ruth Underhill, in **The Navajos** (Univ. of Okla., 1956, cloth; 1983, paper), takes a look at America's largest tribe. See also **The Eastern Band of Cherokees** (Univ. of Tenn., 1984, cloth & paper) by John Finger, and **Spotted Tail's Folk: A History of the Brulé Sioux** (Univ. of Okla., 1961, cloth; 1974, paper) by George E. Hyde. **Joseph Brant, 1743–1807** (Syracuse Univ., 1984), the great Mohawk leader, is the subject of Isabel Thompson Kelsay's prize-winning biography; Mari Sandoz provides a profile of another famous Indian warrior, **Crazy Horse** (Knopf, 1942; Hastings, 1975), in an early work that still holds up well. Peter Matthiessen's superb **Indian Country** (Viking, 1984) offers chapter-length portraits of more than a dozen contemporary Indian groups.

MISCELLANEOUS: **Textbooks and the American Indian** (Indian Historian Press, 1969), edited by Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry, challenges the standard portrayal of Indians in American schoolbooks. **The Rights of Indians and Tribes** by Stephen L. Pevar, an American Civil Liberties Union handbook, is a clear and comprehensive guide to the legal complexities. **Voices from Wounded Knee**, published in 1973 by *Akwesasne Notes*, a Mohawk newspaper, is perhaps the best expression of Indian militancy during the late 1960s, early '70s. The book (written collectively, of course) has no named author. It is now out of print.

blending casual "Americanese" with old-fashioned Indian formality. In content, it confronts the dilemmas of life and loyalty that all Indians face. The city of Chicago, writes Wendy Rose, a Hopi-Miwok, "is a mystery to me" with its "alien promises/ served on toothpicks/ in the cocktails. . . ."

Along with their talk of cars, beer, and postindustrial angst, contemporary Indian poets summon up a lode of tribal memories. Grandparents and elders are extolled. Heroes like Sitting Bull and Geronimo make dramatic cameo appearances. A major aim in such poems, one guesses, is to invoke a coherent Indian past in order to cope with an anomic Indian present. "We have walked away from history," complains Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, a South Dakota Sioux poet, "and dallied with a repetition of things/ to the end of the

bar and the booze. . . ."

The Indian poetic revival came of age during the mid-1970s, with the appearance of **Riding the Earthboy 40** (Harper, 1976) by novelist James Welch, and **Going for the Rain** (Harper, 1976, cloth & paper) by Simon Ortiz, an Acoma Pueblo from New Mexico. The books bear marks of the still-reigning Indian sensibility, which tends to be ironic and skeptical of values other Americans may cherish or take for granted.

In a poem called "Harlem, Montana: Just off the Reservation," Welch tells of "the three young bucks who shot the grocery up,/ locked themselves in and cried for days, we're rich/ help us, oh God, we're rich." In such poems, national holidays evoke unexpected sentiments. As Ortiz writes in "The Significance of a Veteran's Day": "I happen to be a veteran/ but you can't tell in how many ways/ unless I tell you"—which he then proceeds to do in a typically Indian manner:

Caught now, in the midst of wars
against foreign disease, missionaries,
canned food, Dick & Jane textbooks,
IBM cards,
Western philosophies, General
Electric,
I am talking about how we have been
able
to survive insignificance.

Only a few Indian poets have been lucky enough to find big-name publishers. Most have had to settle for not-so-main-mainstream literary reviews, such as the *Blue Cloud Quarterly*, published by the Blue Cloud Abbey in Marvin, South Dakota.

For a dozen years, under the editorship of Brother Benet Tvedten, the *BCQ* has devoted itself exclusively to the work of Indian poets. If the Indian voice today has been able to "survive insignificance," much of the credit goes to Brother Tvedten and his lively journal, which has displayed the talents at one time or another of virtually every Indian poet writing today. The list includes not only the voices of the 1960s but some fine younger poets of the late '70s and '80s. Among them: Maurice Kenny and Karoniaktatie, both Mohawk; Ralph Salisbury (Cherokee); G. Jake Bordeaux (Lakota); Charlotte deClue (Osage); J. Janda (Sioux); and Adrian C. Louis (Paiute).

The Sioux of old looked upon the bison as a gift from the good spirit, and after the bison had disappeared, the Sioux prophet Black Elk understood that "from the same good spirit we must find another strength." Before the massacre at Wounded Knee, he dreamed of leading the Sioux in that search, but the vision finally turned sour: "... the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead."

Now Black Elk's literary heirs grope for words, *English* words, that will mend the hoop and restore the center.