

Issue Number 7

Spring and Summer Activities

One can barely see the three figures moving about in the distance. The land is bare, dry and empty, as if no one could survive there. Not a speck of moisture is visible on the surface. One who expects green meadows would be disappointed. This is Hopi land.

In this large sandy field, the three men are busy working, each with a planting stick, a bag of seeds and thoughts of food for tomorrow and winter months. (This past winter brought less snow, which Hopi depend on for spring moisture.) Planting could have been easier, but the wind and hot sun has dried up much of the moisture. So they must go down quite deep to place the seeds below the surface of wet soil. In our traditional way, each hopes and prays it will rain soon so the planting will be quicker and easier. As he works, the eldest softly hums encouragement and blessing to his seeds. Now and then he shyly glances westward where the rainclouds are building.

A short distance west of them, another group is busy working, hurrying to complete their job before it rains. "Stop your rain songs, Joe, until we finish this job," yelled the foreman jokingly, trying hard to be heard above the earth-moving machine. This is the land the Hopi Tribal Council chairman fenced off for his own stock, even though this area is very dry; hardly anyone could call it grazing land. However, there could be wealth underneath, as was foretold in the prophecies, so it has been leased without traditional approval to the oil company for exploration.

Suddenly a cloud burst--workers scramble for cover. IT lasted just a few minutes as puddles began to flow. "You should not have stopped me boss," mocked Joe, boastfully adding, "drumbeats and foot stomping aren't necessary to make rain so I can drink!"

Outside the fence, the men are disappointed. In spite of traditionalists' disapproval, and the blame of themselves and the dam builders, the dam was approved and built at the insisting of the Hopi Tribal Council chairman. The dam greatly disturbs our prayers. Perhaps it will rain much harder next time. These and other earth dams in Hopi land and elsewhere will break down and be a waste of time and money.

So the time passes on into summer and men tend their plants like newly born infants. We will face all the challenges of nature, wind, animals, and insects, plus keep the weeds removed, or the soil will be sucked bone dry.

Now is the time for Katchinas Ceremonial dances, for rain and blessings, for people's happiness. Clowns usually participate, not only filling the people with laughter, but also to imitate people's behavior, so they can correct their ways. This sacred drama is not understood by many.

As the day nears its end, warrior katchinas of different characteristics signifying different races of people appear as clowns to check if there are any corruptions. Very near the end of the ceremony the clown chief will admit the wrongdoings and request that this be accepted as purification for his children by the warriors, who will return to whip and douse the clowns with water. The clowns then have to sing and dance of their sins or wrong-doings, clowning in the opposite meaning while under the watchful eye of the warrior katchinas. Someday we too will have to do this as prophesied, and it will be up to the purifier what is to be done with those of us who have become traitors to our beliefs. We might have our ears boxed, or even lose our right to the land.

Dollars or Beans?

During the past several months our tempo has increased. Both progressive and traditional factions have been seeking support wherever possible, one through promises of gain, the other through religious commitment, aware that the unrest and difficulties we experience means that somehow our duties are not being fulfilled in accordance with the Great Laws. We seek support and strength from the Great Spirit.

Perhaps we need the help of little *Du-sun-hoe-me-gee*, "dirty mouse." We would have less worries if the "ruling class" would slow down on some of their ideas such as housing projects and adding other religions. These things look innocent enough at first, but most people are unaware that they are really ways to assimilate the Hopi by "painlessly" rubbing out his "Indian-ness."

The effect these things would have on Hopi was already written on the walls before the landing at Plymouth Rock, so when the proposals for a housing project in Hotevilla and a Mormon church on nearby land were announced, we immediately opposed them. "You cannot build there! That's a sacred holding," we told them.

"We still have to have a roof over our families and the wherewithal to feed them. But instead of growing corn and beans, we will be 'growing' dollars with which to keep the family together, as we have already begun doing," the progressive promoters cry.
(*Qua'toqti*, July 1, '76)

They have been seeking information to support their attempt to claim the land for this purpose, not from the traditional leaders who carefully hold the title handed down over many centuries, but from their "Bahanna Traditionalist" backers who were ripe and ready to confirm the favor.

The following letters were written to HUD and LDS headquarters. No response has been received.

P.O. Box 54
Hotevilla Independent Village
Hotevilla, Arizona 86030
May 3, 1976

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
Office-hdqrs of L.D.S.
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Sirs:

We the religious leaders of Hopi land wish to write you directly concerning your members L.D.S. of 2nd and 3rd mesa, who proposed to a chapel between Old Oraibi and Hotevilla Village, headed by your member Mr. Wayne Sekaquaptewa brother to Hopi tribal chairman.

Our representative and Mrs. Mina Lanza chief of Oraibi had lately has spoken with Mr. Sekqaquaptewa and told him not to expand the Mormon church further, the Traditional leaders does not want that. He did not put up any argument nor gave any promises to go along with the wishes of the leaders.

But up till now there is show of persistence regardless who oppose to his desires. It seems unlike good Mormon who should be preaching good thoughts and keep peace among man, rather disturbing the good thoughts that is vital to good brotherhood.

We are not against the churches but it is not right when our own converted brothers and sisters shows disrespect and persist getting their wants without asking, disregarding the sacred bindings that should be respected.

Now looking back to our past, we know foreign religion is always is cause of break down in our ways of life, assimilating into foreign religion had destroyed much of our cultural and religious ceremonial value. What we have left of today we must preserve, with the help of your open mind and understanding this can be done. By adviceing Mr. Sekaquaptewa to halt the procedure, drop the whole idea so all will be well and peace, or we surely will regret that you will hear from us again. Thank You.

Yours Sincerely
Religious Leaders of Hotevilla Independent Village

cc

Mr. W. Sekaquaptewa
The concerned and supporters
for the Hopi cause.

P.O. Box 54
Hotevilla Independent Village
Hotevilla, Arizona 86030
May 3, 1976

Mr. Robert Vasquez
H.U.D. Region 9
450 Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco, Cal. 94122

Dear Sir:

We the Hopi Traditional Religious Leaders of Hotevilla Independent Village on behalf of our people will voice our protest against housing development on our land, outskirts of our village.

At this time the situation is becoming disturbing and alarming because the way proceedings are being conducted, in forceable manner and the proposal not clearly interpreted to the people whether in future be beneficial or will have hampering effect.

Our concern prompts us to write directly to your office, Housing Urban Development, hoping your office will understand and we trust that you will understand and see our rational ground or motives for our protesting before you proceed, best you come yourselves to see and hear first hand of the situation.

Following our brief statements of grounds: (1) That Hotevilla was established for purpose of preserving the traditional ways of life. (2) That we are obligated to the Great Spirit's laws, a duties to take care and protect the land from destructionist. (3) That to protect our ways of life from abusiveness. (4) That project housing and lease is done without our consultation and knowledge. (5) That we are sovereign nation, never been conquered nor our rights taken away by any treaty. (6) That village of Bacabi whom the housing was to benefit will encroach upon our land without our consent. (7) That we are not dominated nor bound by new leadership so-called Hopi Tribal Council. We feel it is out of order to support the housing where they have no jurisdiction.

In past cases tribal council has obstructed its own constitutions for wrongful purposes for their own gain. As an example in part the constitution states. sec. 3, "Each village shall decide for itself how it shall be organized. Until a village shall decide to organize in another manner, it shall be considered as being under the traditional Hopi

organization and kikmongwi of such village shall be recognized as its leaders."

Please consider all above statements carefully and please let us hear from you whether it will be suitable for us to meet and discuss the matters carefully in near future, for we take this as serious matter and must not be overlooked. Thank you.

Sincerely Yours

Religious Leaders of Hotevilla Independent Village

cc

supporters to Hopi cause

Niman Ceremony

One mid-summer morning, the household was very active. Mother had been making "piki" bread and Grandpa and Father had gone to their Navajo friend to trade for mutton. Early that morning Mother started the fire in the pit oven to make the special pudding for the next day. By sun-up both men returned from the field for breakfast and while eating Grandpa complained about the rats and rabbits eating up all his corn and melon patch, doubtful if they would be able to get a meal from it. But it is Hopi way to respect Nature and not get ahead of it through boastful ways, rather accept what it has in store. After all, it may not be as bad as it sounds.

Father and Grandpa spend most of the day until dawn the next day, smoking and praying in the Kiva. Early, before the sun rises, mother awakes the children, reminding them to be good as she heard the katchinas come while they were asleep. She washed their hair with yucca root. "We did not cry or make a fuss, did we mother!" This reminded her of how they disliked hair washing. "You acted very nice and I'm sure the Katchinas will recognize you with clean hair, and let's hope they have made you something as a gift.

Shortly after sunrise, Katchinas enter the village plaza, arms full of toys and cornstalks, blending beautifully, a sight beyond description. Little boys and girls eagerly eyeing the most beautiful ones, as the youngest one exclaims to the oldest, "I bet the one at the end will be given to me," and he replies, "I bet you won't get any since you've been a bad boy lately." "But I helped Mother carry water yesterday and washed my hair," he answered tearfully. After a dance, gifts of katchina dolls and bows and arrows are given out to the lucky ones.

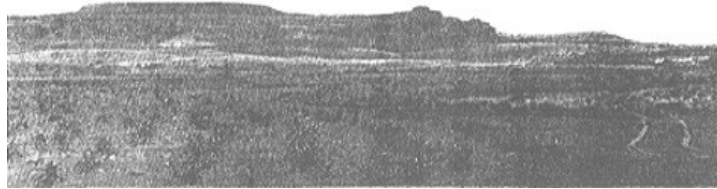
Later at home the children and family admire the presents. The oldest "mana" did not get anything. Maybe later in the day she would receive a gift, but this would be the last, for she was initiated last winter. "Mother, these few ears of corn are not enough for all of us," complained the children. "Perhaps you should take it in the back room along with some corn meal and pray to the corn to give birth, then go outside and pray to father sun. Don't come in until I tell you to," direct mother. Thus as if by magic, a few ears became enough for all including relatives, guests, and friends that will gather in reunion to honor the Niman (going home dance) and send all the Katchinas on a good journey until they

return in mid-winter.

At the end of the day they will be blessed with prayer feathers, in all directions, and be given the messages to take back home. They were told not to wait long, but return in the form of rain, for the land and all living things are thirsty. So ended the Katchina Ceremonial for the summer. A few moments we are sad and silent as though we lost our last beloved friend forever. But we know they will return.

Housing Programs Destroy Self-Determination

A close examination into low cost housing for Indian Tribes, based on experience in Hopi and other nations, reveals nothing worthy of praise. Mostly we find expressions of grief and resentment, fears of meeting the coming monthly bills on the house, and the difficulty of keeping a job according to the white man's system. Of course, flattering remarks are often made about the creature comforts, such as having a waterhole at your fingertips or being able to answer the call of nature in comfort. We envy such an easy life, but the Indians who have gone through the mill have sad stories to tell. Manhattan, which we have heard was bought for a few trinkets, is not very attractive to us now. We have heard that the same terrible life will come to the Hopis who are blindly induced by this so-called "Tribal Council" into accepting new housing.



Many who have accepted such housing, in hope of the rewards of progress, have become trapped by the strange system of upkeep and continual expenses. They have lost their homes and their land through increased assessments they have not planned on. Most important, their tradition and culture is being ruined. Once-happy communities have been scattered out to the cities and towns, homes broken, deprived of many things they wanted to have. The "rights" supposedly theirs as wards of the government have only brought heavier obligations. They're told to stand "on their own feet." The word for this is *termination*.

It is very plain to us that we would rather be allowed to stand "on our own feet," as we have for ages, rather than be dragged off our feet by this system. We may not be safe from this approaching monster, but we must heed the lesson of experience.

It was foretold that Washington, D.C. would have all the tools necessary to settle our right to exclusive use of Hopi land for those who wished to live by the Great Laws without interference. But it was also prophesied that this person of white skin who would come among us might gather us under his wings, feed us and take care of us like a mother hen, only because he sees something underneath us which he wants to get.

Then when we grow big enough to suit his purpose he would adopt us into his fold, and thereafter we would support him as his servants. We must certainly not allow ourselves to become his adopted servants in this way.

We must not experiment with his system within our own land. In order to remain safe our land must be protected so that those who wish to experiment may do so outside, and learn which life is best. Then they will be able to return when they have discovered the truth. If we sell out our own land, we shall have nowhere to return. The Prophecy foretells that Bahanna (the whiteman) would be very persistent, and eventually might force his ways upon us, but should he reconsider and correct his mistakes, he would then decide who will pay and who will not pay.

The progressive faction accuses us of withholding the good things, of keeping our children from a better future, by which they mean the advantages of modern conveniences. They are enticed by gadgets run by electricity and public water for household needs. These things would be good if one could get them freely without danger of involvement in obligations that will later be regretted. Certainly these things seem to promise a nice future for our children, but our knowledge as well as the clear voice of experience in the modern world, teach us the danger of allowing our life to be controlled by outside interests. A person's life too easily becomes ruled by his pocketbook, and by foreign rules, even by jail.

Our readers far and near understand this, and we are grateful for the encouragement we receive in support of our way of life which no amount of money could possibly buy. We have our own land free from foreign taxation, certainly a good future for our children! We have no need to pay rent or bills except by individual choice. We now how to run a happy community without allowing what they call "law and order" into our village. It is not that we claim to be perfect, but we know it is possible for one to correct himself as he becomes older and wiser. That too is a wonderful future, for it does not darken the character of those who choose to fit into our society and respect the Great Spirit's instructions. Yes, there are many good things we are trying to preserve for the future of our children. The best of this is what "progress" wants to destroy.

We regret very much that we find it necessary always to accuse the United States Government for the wrongs done to us. We would not have to point our fingers at Washington if only they would correct these wrongs.

When a Hopi says, "I want the best of everything for my children and those to come," he means, "I want this land for my children, for it can last forever. I want for my children the best food which the land can offer. I want health and happiness for my children and the best life which the land will provide. But I will not force my culture and religion on others, though we have survived for thousands of years, and know our ways must be good."



The shield symbol with its four circles in four quadrants means:
“Together with all nations we protect both land and life, and hold the world in balance.”