



1900ce Niman Dance in Hopi Land

Issue Number 30

WORDS OF THANKS

The Hopi, over the years, are fortunate in meeting and making contact with many people from domestic and foreign countries. Many of you we know only through your letters. Many of you came to visit us to see firsthand our situation with the forces of opposition when we needed the most help. Your letters and petitions have helped much in taming our problems. We hope our way of life becomes more stable as we approach what the future holds in store for us and the whole world. At this time we give thanks to all those who helped us, we are truly grateful.

Over the years we gave our best of efforts in giving those who come our hearty reception. All we expect from the visitor is to respect our village, our people and also the surrounding shrines. We hope you will also show respect by obeying the rules of the village.

If one is fortunate in coming to Hopi land at the right moment, one can freely witness the Sacred Ceremonial dances and share the happiness and prayers.

THE CRISIS OF THE PAST AND TODAY

Time seems to be moving faster in Hopi land and elsewhere. Sometimes we feel that we are keeping up with it, then sometimes we are not. Often the thing may look positive which would benefit man towards freedom and hope. Then suddenly the same thing becomes negative, darkness without hope. We mean the future of people and the earth. We can only say this: maybe this is part of the cultural revolution which will go away when the global society becomes stable.

Perhaps most people frown on Hopi because of their doomsday prophecies. Such as when the first gourd of ashes (Atomic Bomb) was dropped on Japan, killing many innocent people in a few seconds. The Hopi had knowledge that this would happen someday, so we were not much surprised that this came about. Rather Hopi took it as a sign that things were getting out of hand. As instructed Hopi promptly gave warning to the world that this powerful weapon must not advance further. If it did mankind and all life would face disastrous consequences. Sadly, no one heeds the warning so we keep marching on thinking of it as our defence measure.

THE COMING DRAMA

Today, once again, the world is facing a new crisis. This is a war of retaliation against terrorism. A war to save the innocent and to punish the guilty. But who is innocent and who is guilty? Well, this depends on how you look at it. Life would be good if all men were innocent. Let us focus on minorities and figure who is guilty. Minorities such as the Native people of both North and South America and elsewhere. We believe militarism is born out of injustice, poverty and ignorance where absolute government refuses to hear the grievances of minorities or to help in resolving problems. So the people resort to violence, demonstrations and even terrorism or other recourses then they see no other way to be heard. What can we do when our world leaders and the people are acting like fools in attempts to solve the problems confronting us. Once again we will quote the prophecy of our elders. We hope it will interest you so that you will be more aware of it as it has been happening for some time.

According to prophecy, that the day will come when people in high places will be hunted and vice versa the lowly hunters will be hunted. This will get out of control. The hunting will gather strength and spread far and wide. This situation might even erupt on our land. Finally, this will lead us to a Biblical version of Armageddon (the Hopi version is closely related). A final decisive battle between good and evil. This will occur under one God or Chief. They dare say (the prophets) we will speak one language and that this will happen in Hopi land, in the village of Oraibi. This will be where the new life plan will be drawn, in the pattern and cycle of religion. Here also a final decision will be

made for the wicked. They will be beheaded and speak no more. If this does not materialize there will be total destruction through the acts of man or nature. Then new life will begin from a girl and a boy.

This is a frightening prophecy and will not be supported by many, but one can always take it as a theory.

As everyone knows there are wise elders in every society. These elders know much about the past history of mankind, their successes and downfalls have been passed down to them from thousands of years. The lessons they have learned have much value.

HEALING THE ILL

In our last issue we put in some of our planting methods. Here is another subject often asked about by outsiders, that is the Hopi way of healing illness. The fact is that before Bahanna came there were few sicknesses Hopi to the Hopi. Since the modern world came, many new diseases and illnesses were introduced. Healing became more difficult for the Hopi medicine man. Now, often the bahanna doctor and Hopi medicine man depend on one another. When the Bahanna methods fail the sick can go to the Hopi methods and vice versa. By tradition not anyone can be a medicine man. There are religious orders which usually heal by ritual. One group cannot use the methods which belongs to others for they are closely guarded. By tradition the Badger Clan are general healers but can recommend to other healers those conditions that he can't handle. Herb medicines are also closely guarded. Home remedies can be used by anyone if one recognizes the right herbs. Then there is the bone doctor who fixes broken and dislocated bones. The Hopi medicine man does not go to school to learn. They are gifted and well recognized. Therefore the quack medicine man is uncommon. It is hard for any outsider to learn. Often wrong information is given just to get rid of a too persistent student. Good luck.

CONCLUSION

Summer is here, the fields are green with growing crops, ears of corn begin to appear on the stalks, mellons and beans appear on the vines. As you walk among the plants talking and singing a good feeling of pride and happiness fills your heart. You can now say the labor you put into it will produce some harvest which will keep the wolf away from your door.

There is the sweet corn that planted earlier which is ready for a good meal, but you don't dare touch it yet because you know this is for a special occasion which is only a few days away. Everyone hustles around preparing for the Niman Ceremonial (home dance).

Women are readying the food to feed the guests. Maybe for relations or friends from neighboring villages, maybe even from far away cities. The men folk spend much time in Kiva, smoking and praying for success (that their efforts are) not in vain.

Both young and old are waiting anxiously, especially the children. They were told that if their behavior is good the Kachina friends will bring them gifts of melon, fresh corn, dolls, or bows and arrows.

Finally the day has arrived. Kachinas come in with beauty. The children receive their gifts with joy and happiness. In like manner the grown ups are happy to enjoy the day watching and listening to songs. This is the time when all hateful moods and attitudes are forgotten. Time to turn to love one another. This closes the Kachina dances for the summer. Good day.



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.”
