
Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

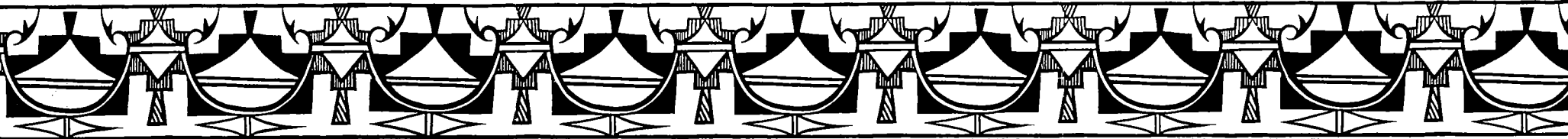
This marker identifies the place of a publication.

Publications have not been scanned in their entirety for the purpose of digitization. To see the full publication please search online or visit the Clinton Presidential Library's Research Room.

P JEBLO OF ACOMA

ACOMA Sky City

Oldest Continuously Inhabited City in the United States





P.O. BOX 309
ACOMA, NEW MEXICO 87034

PUEBLO OF ACOMA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

TELEPHONE 505/552-6604
FAX 505/552-6600

April 23, 1998

Roberta W. Greene
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of the First Lady
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20500

Re: The Millennium Program and the San Esteban del Rey Mission,
Pueblo of Acoma

Dear Ms. Greene:

I am writing to express Acoma's strong support for The Millennium Program and to offer what assistance we can in assuring its success. I would also like to invite the First Lady to visit Acoma and experience Acoma's famed hospitality!

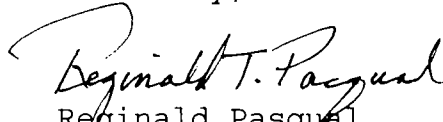
The Acoma People have a keen sense of history. Acoma Sky City, located on top of a 400-foot mesa, is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the United States. The people of Acoma have lived in the Southwest since time immemorial, with archaeologists dating Acoma Sky City to at least 1150 A.D. We have worked hard to preserve our traditional culture, including our native language, even while choosing at times to adopt and to adapt to our ways elements of European culture. We understand the value of honoring and remembering the past while we work to assure the vitality of our community both today and in the future.

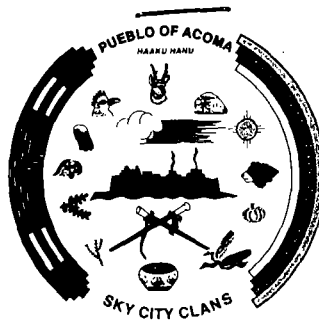
One of Acoma's great cultural and historic treasures is the San Esteban Del Rey Mission. Originally built in 1629, with various additions and modifications over the last 350 years, the Mission Church has been recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a site of great historic and cultural importance. At thirty-five feet in height, and 110 feet in length, with nine-foot thick walls, the Mission Church dominates the Acoma Sky City landscape. It is a place that is still used by the people of Acoma for religious activities. We understand that the National Trust for Historic Preservation has identified the Mission as one of several historic properties for possible inclusion in The Millennium Program.

There are many other places at Acoma which we believe would be of interest to the First Lady including our Head Start Center, Elder Center, Acoma Sky City Community School (K-8th Grade), Acoma Behavioral Health Services, pottery workshops, and our economic enterprises. Attached is a more descriptive list of these places. You should also know that this year Acoma will be celebrating the 400th Anniversary of Spain's acknowledgment of Acoma's right to select its own leaders. We will be holding special events to celebrate this recognition of our sovereignty. It would be a great honor for Acoma if the President and the First Lady could attend our festivities. Please let us know how we could best explore this possibility.

Thank you for this opportunity to introduce you to the Pueblo of Acoma. We appreciate the support of the Administration for Indian Country and greatly look forward to working with you on The Millennium Program. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,


Reginald Pasqual
Governor



PUEBLO OF ACOMA
"THE SKY CITY"

Reginald T. Pasqual
Governor

P.O. Box 309
Pueblo of Acoma, NM 87034
Phone (505) 552-6604
Fax (505) 552-6600

GREGORY A. SMITH
ATTORNEY AT LAW
1918 18TH STREET, NW, SUITE 24
WASHINGTON, DC 20009-1740

TELEPHONE: (202) 265-1551

E-MAIL: NATIVEAMERICANS@COMPUSERVE.COM

TELECOPIER: (202) 265-4901

MEMORANDUM

TO: D. Bambi Kraus, President's Initiative on Race

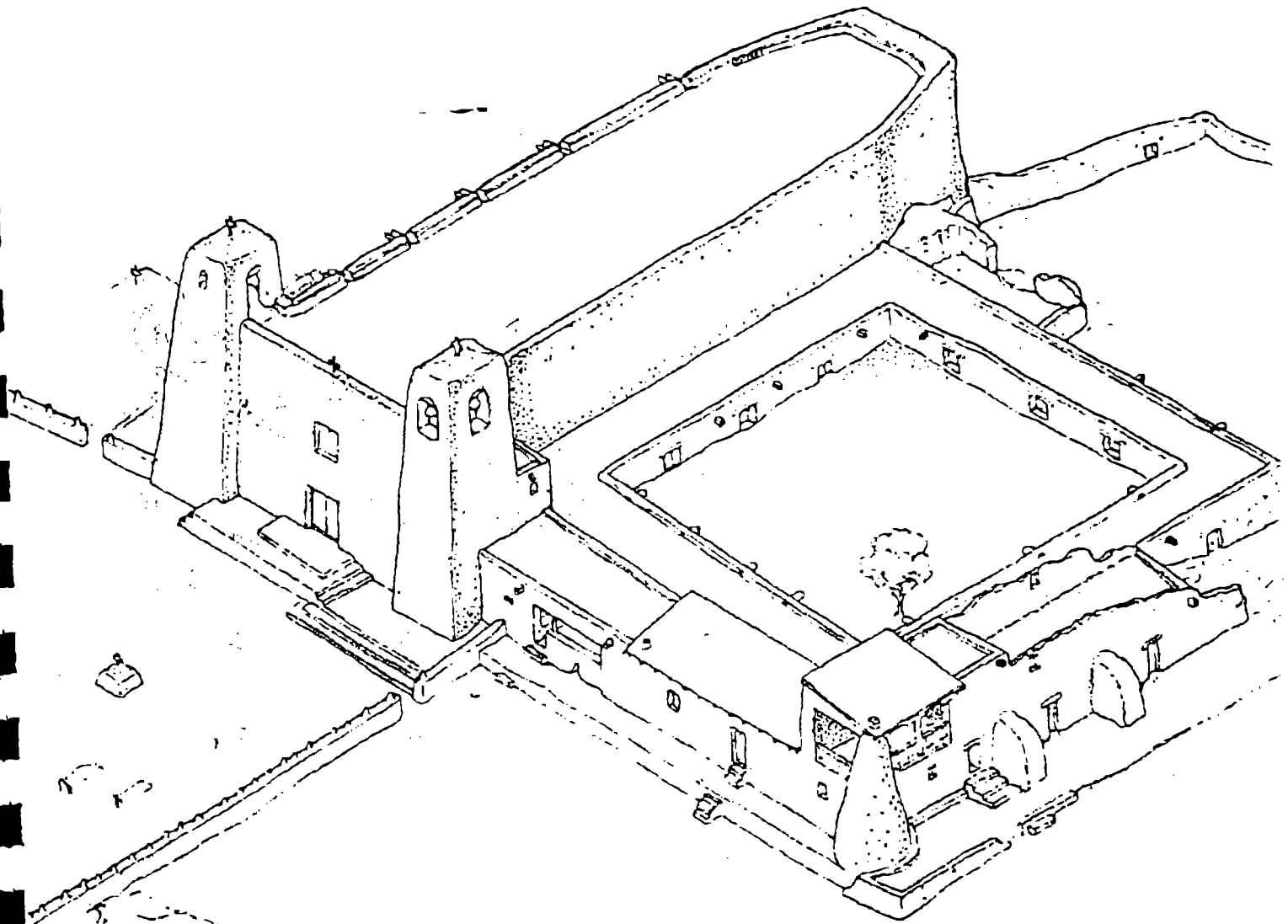
FROM: Gregory Smith

RE: Possible Sites for the First Lady to Visit
at the Pueblo of Acoma

DATE: April 23, 1998

Here is a short list of possible sites at Acoma for the First Lady to visit:

- o **Acoma Sky City:** Located on top of a 400-foot mesa, Acoma Sky City is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the U.S.
- o **San Esteban del Rey Mission:** The Mission, located on the mesa top, was originally built in 1629. Identified by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a project for The Millennium Program, the Mission Church is still used by the People of Acoma for religious activities.
- o **Head Start Center:** The Head Start Center is pivotal in Acoma's efforts to give its youth the best possible start in life. The Center currently serves 77 children.
- o **Elder Center:** Honoring elders is central to Acoma belief. The Elder Center reflects this commitment. The Elder Center offers, among other things, a meal program (including outreach to home-bound elders), recreational activities (such as bingo and field trips), as a Senior Olympics program.
- o **Acoma Sky City Community School (K-8th grade):** A modern facility located off the mesa.
- o **Acoma Behavioral Health Services:** This program deals with issues such as alcoholism, child neglect and mental health services.
- o **Potters:** Acoma is famous for its pottery. The First Lady may enjoy visiting a potter's workshop.
- o **Economic Enterprises:** Acoma operates several economic enterprises including a tourist center, museum, store and gaming operation.



San Estevan Rey

Historic Structure Report

8H

(1980)

Page 1

of many of the original wood members, carved and painted in a manner which has not continued as a tradition, is unfortunate; as is the collapse of the baptistry. Even more harmful to both the beauty and the authenticity of the building is the loss of the transverse clerestory. And yet even as it stands today, San Estevan Rey preserves much of the original feeling and detail of the Franciscan mission church, both within and without.

The Pueblo of Acoma stands on a sheer sandstone mesa rising 220 feet above a valley floor, some 50 miles directly west of the Rio Grande and ten miles south of the route of Interstate Highway 40, in Valencia County, New Mexico. The church of San Estevan Rey, constructed before 1644 on the same mesa, belongs to the Pueblo of Acoma* and is used and maintained by the Tribe under the jurisdiction of a group of religious and ceremonial leaders. The nave is used only a few times a year for the celebration of the Mass, but remains significant in the religious life of the Acoma people. Tourists are admitted to the nave, and the church is an important tourist attraction.

The south wall of the nave of San Estevan Rey has been seriously damaged during 1978-79 by a serious leak at the parapet over the easternmost window, and a smaller leak at the corner where the parapet meets the south tower wall. *Stabilization* of the south wall is urgent. *Preservation* of the structure through maintenance of the existing historic fabric is the primary goal of this report. The central problem of preservation is the non-destructive protection and the maintenance of the adobe structure itself.

FOREWORD

The Church of San Estevan Rey. In the present age of advanced science and technology, looking back on the past in terms of its primitive technology, we tend to understand great works such as the Pueblo and church of Acoma less as works of sophisticated conception and fine execution, than as amazing physical accomplishments. The transportation of the materials, adobe, stone, water, and timbers, from great distances and up the steep and twisting trails to the top of the great rock of Acoma; and the erection of the massive walls, the lifting of huge timbers for the roof, the construction of all the members of the building with carved and painted timbers and laboriously constructed doors and windows were an enormous physical task. The greatness of the effort attests to the beauty and grandeur of the conception of the church and to the power of its designer to inspire its builders with an understanding of the power and beauty of the creation for which their work was spent.

The simplicity and the size of the church, great unadorned walls and simple towers rising again from the top of the jutting sandstone mesa, echo the gestures of the landscape of the entire valley, where the other, Enchanted, mesa stands solitary to the eastward, and the penol of Acoma is accompanied by a group of beautiful but smaller sandstone pillars. The color of the building, whether its adobe plaster is intact or the stone or adobe of its walls is uncovered, blends with the pale buff of the mesas, and the strong sunlight brings out its dramatic masses.

As an example of its type, San Estevan Rey is historically significant not only because of its continuity and good state of maintenance and preservation, but also because of its fineness and completeness. The loss

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE OF THE CHURCH

Church. There is no written description of the church dating from the time of its original construction. There is the brief account of Diego de Vargas of 1692, in which he mentions the clerestory windows, and we are fortunate to have the detailed description written by Fray Francisco Atanasio Dominguez in 1776, more than a hundred years later, and after the Rebellion and Reconquest. The rebuilding early in the eighteenth century, with the drastic exception of the clerestory light, was accomplished with essentially the same technology and traditions as the original construction, and much can be postulated from following Dominguez' description.

Dominguez gives dimensions of the building which were very close to those recorded in 1934 in the Historic American Buildings Survey drawings, though Dominguez estimated the ceiling height of the nave and chancel as some ten feet greater than the Survey measurement of 30 feet. The church then as now consisted of the long nave and trapezoidal chancel typical of Franciscan mission churches of the region, with the two projecting towers on the east facade, the northern one carrying the two bells. Dominguez describes the baptistry, entered through a doorway under the choir loft on the south side, as "very spacious" with a window to the east. The door under the choir loft in 1776 was of two leaves, with gratings. The sacristy was "joined to the church on the Epistle side" (north), but opened into the cloister rather than directly into the church. Dominguez mentions the choir loft, entered by the stairway from the convento, with its window over the main door. The enclosed stairway from the convento probably was originally finished with stone steps.

Another stairway whose existence had been forgotten, from a door at the second-story level to the roof of the church through the south tower,

was discovered and reconstructed, and its door reconstructed, during the repairs in 1926. It is likely that the door to the spiral stair opened onto the roof of the baptistry - or as Kubler speculates, into a second story, possibly a loggia. Archaeological investigations might reveal whether the baptistry was part of the structure prior to 1641, but it will probably never be known whether the towers were completed before the reconstruction circa 1700, nor precisely how the original roof was constructed. The original structure was all of adobes, and undoubtedly plastered with adobe plaster. We cannot know whether the completion of the towers predated Reconquest, but the date of 1710 on one of the pair of bells implies the towers' existence at least that early. The existing towers, completely rebuilt with stone in 1927, are designed to restore a postulated original appearance based on the eroded remains visible in the earliest photographs. It is possible that the original parapet was crenellated as was not uncommon (see "Later Descriptions and Photographs"), with wooden canales protruding at several points on the south side to carry water away from the building.

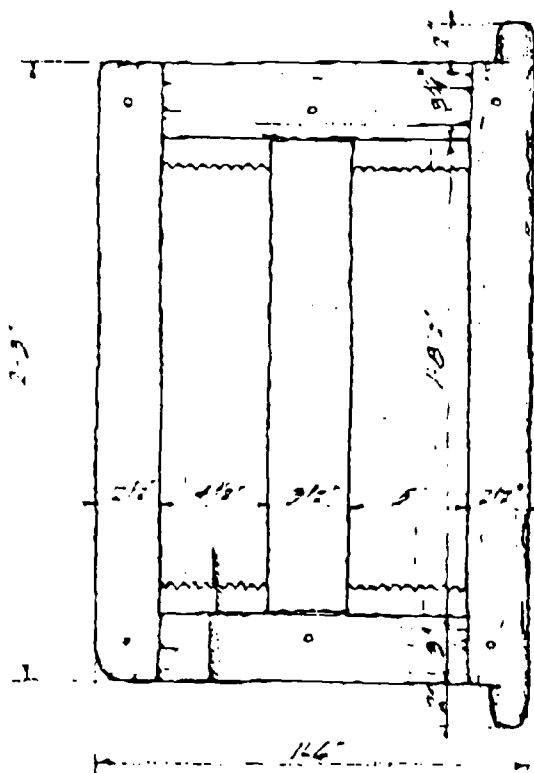
De Vargas, when he visited the mesa in 1692, referred in his description of the church to "windows and clerestories", and the church when built undoubtedly had a typical clerestory window between nave and sanctuary. Dominguez mentions three windows with gratings, facing south. As he also tells us that in 1776 there was no clerestory, the height of the roof being the same in nave and chancel, it seems likely that a third window, in the chancel, was introduced to increase the light after the clerestory was removed in a reconstruction of the roof, possibly as early as 1700. This third window is still visible, though it has been filled in; its lintel is slightly lower than those of the nave proper, which further suggests a separate date for its construction and substantiates the probability that the original design was the customary one, with two windows in the nave and the chancel lit only by the clerestory.

All the original windows were undoubtedly smaller than the existing large openings; it is likely that the locations, high on the south nave wall, were the same. The window in the choir loft is probably much as it was originally, though the existing frame and shutters are of later construction.

The original windows would have been framed with hand-cut and probably carved and painted timbers, and equipped with wooden grilles. Shutters protected these windows. A carved pintle door which was in use in one of the dwellings in 1934 and is delineated in the HABS drawings of 1934 (see Figure 2), could have been one of the original shutters.

The entrance door dates either from the original structure or from sometime in the 17th or 18th century, and is a fine example of a Spanish pintle door. In some of the earliest photographs, the door and the window above are outlined with white mud plaster. The same type of decoration, white plaster surrounding windows and doors, is visible in photographs of pueblo dwellings, and may reflect a very old tradition of decoration. Wooden elements, such as doors, window frames and shutters, and balustrades and exposed corbels such as those of the mirador, were probably painted with a variety of colors made from locally available pigments.

Interior steps between nave and chancel, and the additional step and the altar



*- CARVED PANEL DOOR -
SCALE - 1/2" = 1'-0"
NOW IN USE IN PUEBLO, - WAS
PROBABLY A WINDOW SHUTTER
FROM CHURCH OR CONVENT.*

Figure 2.

itself, are built of adobe, forming a massive structure contiguous with the floor. When Dominguez visited San Estevan Rey, there were six steps from nave to chancel, made of carved timbers. These may not have been the original timbers, but it is likely that the steps were originally designed to receive such ornaments. Dominguez describes the altar as having three ledges above the gradine, with a painted wooden niche on the highest, holding the figure of St. Stephen. The wall was painted with arches in earth pigments, framing the niche, paintings of saints, paper prints, and a buffalo hide ornamented with a cross and flowers in gilt and colored paper. The existing reredos of carved wood has been overpainted with harsh colors in recent years, but retains the original inscription, "Del Sor Alcalde Mallor Dⁿ Jose Man. Aragon Ano 1802". Probably when it was given, two of the ledges above the gradine were removed to make room for it. One ledge remains on which the niche of the santo rests; this niche is not the original one which Dominguez says was bought along with the santo. The adobe altar with a stone "given by the King" is no longer present.

The choir loft has been largely rebuilt, element by element, with modern materials. The original structure would have had round or hand-squared

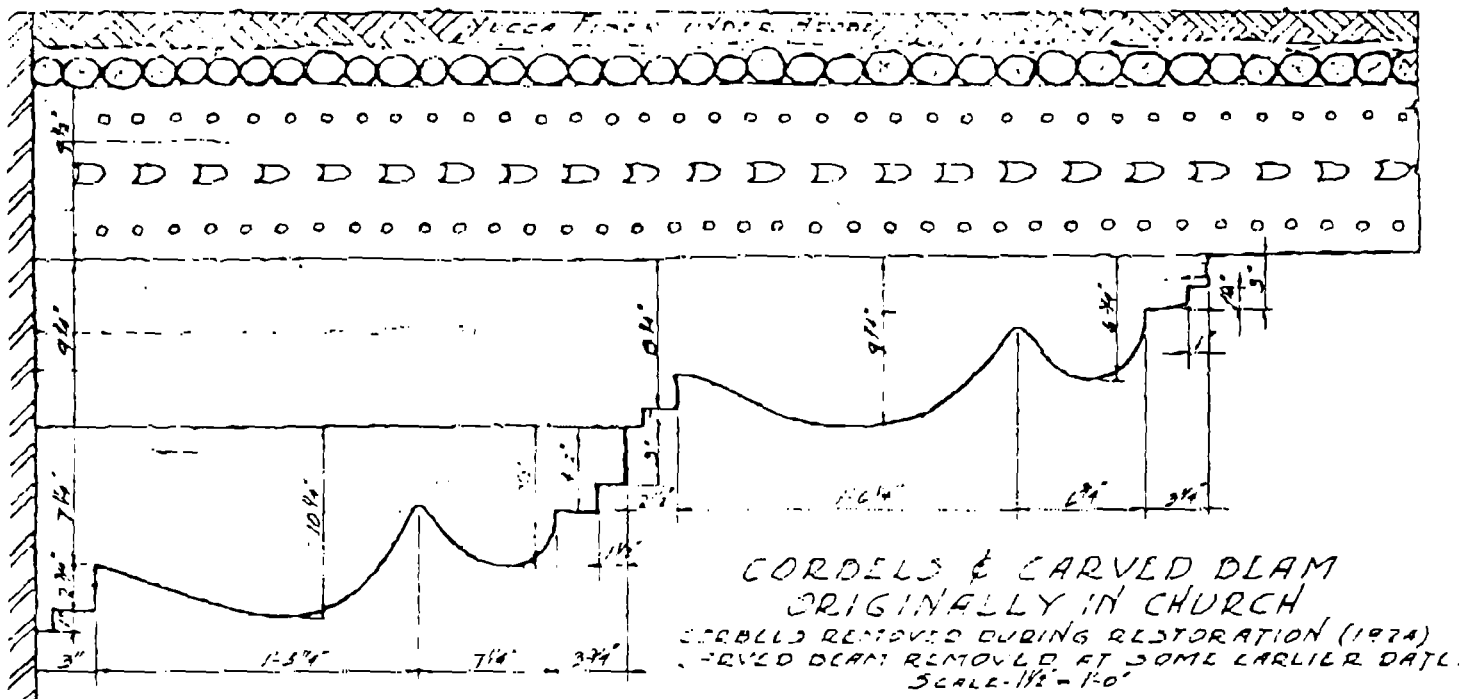


Figure 3.

timbers, which Father Dominguez described in 1776 as embellished with carvings; the columns may have rested on stone bases as the existing ones do. The existing corbels are from the seventeenth or eighteenth century. The ancient balustrade may have been cut on the same pattern as the altar rail, but the HABS drawings of 1934 include one showing another old baluster, found in the pueblo, which could have been from the choir loft of the 1600s. The choir loft floor would have been built like a roof, with latias or tablas laid across the beams, and a floor of packed adobe above.

The corbels under the roof vigas are ancient, though the latter beams have been replaced many times. The ancient structure undoubtedly had squared and carved beams, remnants of which, re-used in pueblo structures after the Rebellion, are still to be seen here and there in the pueblo (Figure 4). In 1927, M. K. Sedgwick described the ceiling as being made of yucca latias laid in a herringbone pattern and painted blue, red, and yellow, and this may have been the continuation of a very ancient tradition. The original ceiling may well have been of such latias, colored with the available earth pigments.

The nave had no furnishings except for the confessional; Dominguez does not even mention sconces for candles such as now exist in the walls, nor does he describe any paintings or ornamentation of the walls of nave and chancel other than the arches painted to frame the ornaments of the wall above the altar. The adobe confessional, he says, "resembles a bookstand". The existing confessional is a small masonry booth attached to the wall. Whether this structure could be said to resemble a bookstand of the eighteenth century, or what other form may be implied, remains a mystery. The original floor was of packed earth, on which the worshippers spread their blankets to sit or kneel.

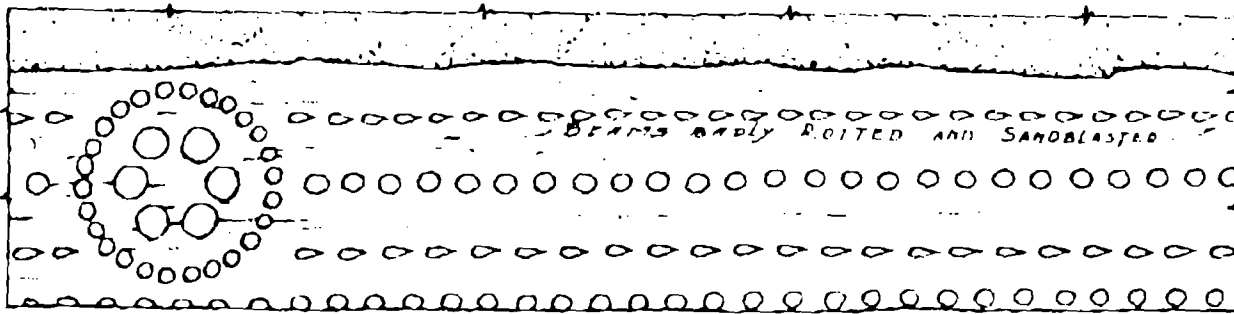
The coloring of the upper walls white, with a dado of pink below, follows an old tradition. Bourke in 1881 described paintings on the lateral walls (see "Brief History"), but by 1927 there was no ornament but the pink dado. The extent of paintings known to exist under later layers in the convento, and the local tradition of unusually extensive mural painting

in some types of pueblo buildings, suggest the possible existence of painted decorations within the original church proper. Only archaeological investigation can determine what painted ornament may have been applied in the earliest period. Probably the wooden members were painted, including the savinos or tablas of the ceiling and of the choir loft soffit, which might have been colored in a geometric pattern similar to that of the ceiling still in existence in the church at Laguna Pueblo. All the original pigments, of course, were those which could be made from local minerals and plants.

The most significant feature of the original nave interior which is now missing is the quality of light. The loss of the transverse clerestory window does not strikingly change the form of the exterior, but within the nave changes the entire interior drama. This type of clerestory is formed by making the chancel roof higher than the nave roof, and opening the resultant long narrow rise. To the same purpose, these churches have the entrance, and thus the clerestory window, facing east, so that the morning sun shines into the chancel. The nave, meantime, is lit only by the two small and high windows on one wall, so that the eye is drawn immediately to the chancel with its paintings and altar furniture.

Convento. The recent restoration of the convento, while archaeological investigation was done at the same time, was not based on archaeological or historical research as to the most ancient arrangement of the rooms, and does not pretend to be a historical reconstruction. Excavations designed to discover old plans, in conjunction with Fray Dominguez' invaluable description, could make it possible to restore the sacristy and kitchen which were on the west side of the cloister. The cloister stands apparently on its ancient foundations, and the latrine which Dominguez mentions in the northeast corner has been rebuilt in stone masonry.

The stair to the choir loft, the little room next to it, and the porteria apparently retain their ancient form. The beam above the porteria door is one of the oldest carved timbers still extant (Figure 5). Throughout the convento, the original structure probably had packed earth floors, square



• BEAM ON EAST SIDE OF CONVENTO •
 PROBABLY THE ORIGINAL LOCATION
 SCALE - 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

Figure 5.

hewn vigas, and ceiling of savinos. At least some of the grilled windows were glazed with selenite panes, as some existing grilles grooved to receive this glazing were still in the convento in 1934. Shutters and doors were made of mortised and tenoned panels and hinged on pintles. All the woodwork was probably painted as well as carved. Evidence of extensive murals on the cloister walls was found and recorded by Marshall in 1975, but further archaeological investigation would be required to discover whether murals existed in the earliest period.

The stairway in the northeast corner, and the mirador above, correspond today in general structure to Dominguez' description. The frame, and the stile with the pintle but not the rest of the old door to the sala, the second-story room west of the stairway, still exist, though this room is in ruins and almost vanished. Dominguez says "Father Pino made it all" (Fr. Pedro Ignacio Pino, at Acoma 1745-67), which may refer just to the sala, but more likely refers to the stairway, which Dominguez says was fitted into what was once a small cell, and to both second-story structures, so that although these especially picturesque elements retain some of the oldest existing woodwork in the convento, they were not part of the original structure. Dominguez describes the steps as made of bricks and having a railed bannister, as well as a gate and a rail at the top. In early photographs, a typical stepped buttress shelters the north side of the opening onto the convento roof.

28

In the mirador, benches in 1776 were mounted on corbels set into the south and west walls. In 1934, the HABS team observed the niches remaining where these had fallen or been removed, and were told that the niches were used by the children as lockers for clothing when the room was used for a schoolroom. The mirador baluster is probably the original one, but the roof has been repeatedly rebuilt. The old corbels which still adorn the exterior wall are cut with a saw, and probably date from the early twentieth century.

LATER DESCRIPTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Except for Fr. Domingez' detailed description of 1776, the written record of the Spanish and Mexican periods yields only a few clues to the physical appearance of San Estevan Rey, and no early pictures exist. During the late nineteenth century, a few descriptions such as Bourke's of the painted walls of the nave add a little to our knowledge, but after 1890 photographs become the most important documents of the building's history. The reports of Riley and Reuter on the reconstruction project of 1924-27, M.K. Sedgwick's description in Acoma, The Sky City, published in 1927, and the Historic American Buildings Survey of 1934 are the other important 20th-century documents.

More probably remains to be learned of San Estevan Rey through physical investigations than from documentary sources. So little has been recorded about the structure or about the life of the people throughout the last 350 years, that the story which the buildings themselves and the earth around them can tell would constitute a significant portion of Acoma history.

The only archaeological studies which have been done are W.S. Stallings' tree-ring investigations of the thirties, Alfred E. Dittert's investigations in the vicinity of the church in the fifties, and Michael Marshall's study done in connection with the reconstruction of the convento in 1975.

The earliest photographs date from about 1890. A Ben Wittick photograph of about this date (Figure 6), taken from some distance to the northeast and showing ruins of the Council House as well as the cemetery wall, church, and mirador and sala of the convento, shows all the adobe walls much weathered except where white plaster is applied across the facade between the towers up to the door lintel. (That this plaster was in fact white

30



Figure 6.

and not another color lighter than the rest of the adobe, is confirmed by Reuter in 1927, who mentions it in connection with the repair to the east wall.) A narrow band of white also outlines the window of the choir loft. Two cones, similar to those still existing on the cemetery walls can be seen on the north wall of the church. By 1899 when Adam Clark Vroman photographed the church (Smithsonian 2110 - a,b,c; not reproduced), the Council House had been rebuilt. In Vroman's images, stone rebuilding of the north tower is evident; this tower carried the two bells, while the south tower had been allowed to erode away. Two cones are still visible on the parapet of the north wall. In a photo at 1902 by William Henry Jackson (Figure 7) such cones are visible on the parapet of the south wall and at the center of the facade. These may be attenuated remnants of an

68

end. When the church was built, morning light flooded into the chancel. The nave, lit by the two windows which were originally smaller than the existing sash windows and screened with rejas, was relatively dark. The visual drama was focused on the richly ornamented altar and reredos. As the church exists today, the grandeur of its space is exhilarating, but muted by the dimness at the chancel end of the nave.

In preparation for the celebration of St. Stephen's Day on 2 September 1979, the damaged interior wall was patched and plastered. At the same time the then existing choir loft floor of one-inch boards was removed and replaced with a new floor of 2" x 6" tongue-in-groove boards. The columns carrying the beam of the choir loft are encased in boards with simple moldings, and stand on stone bases (See Figure 12). The fascia is covered

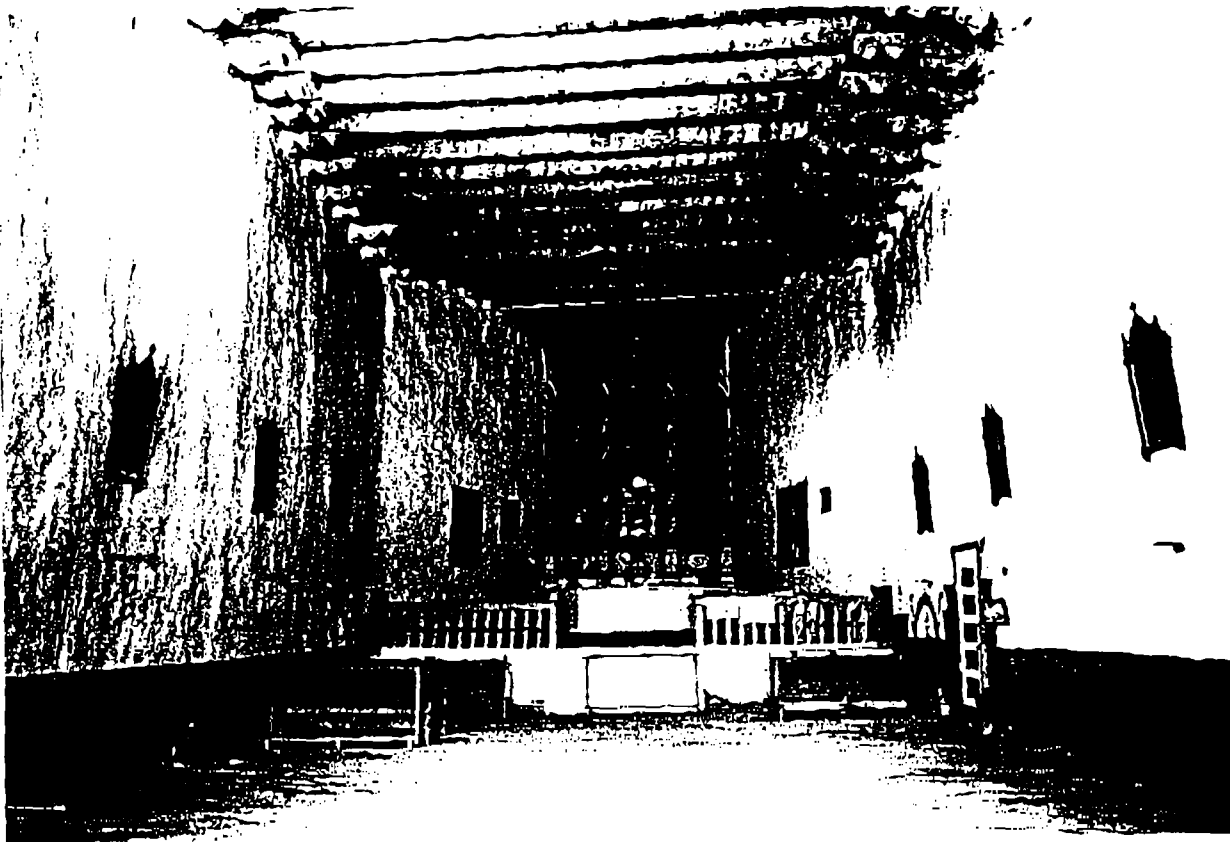


Figure 18

50

booth of adobe standing about halfway down the nave on the north side. The pintle door between nave and cloister is covered on the nave side with a five-panel manufactured door installed upside down.

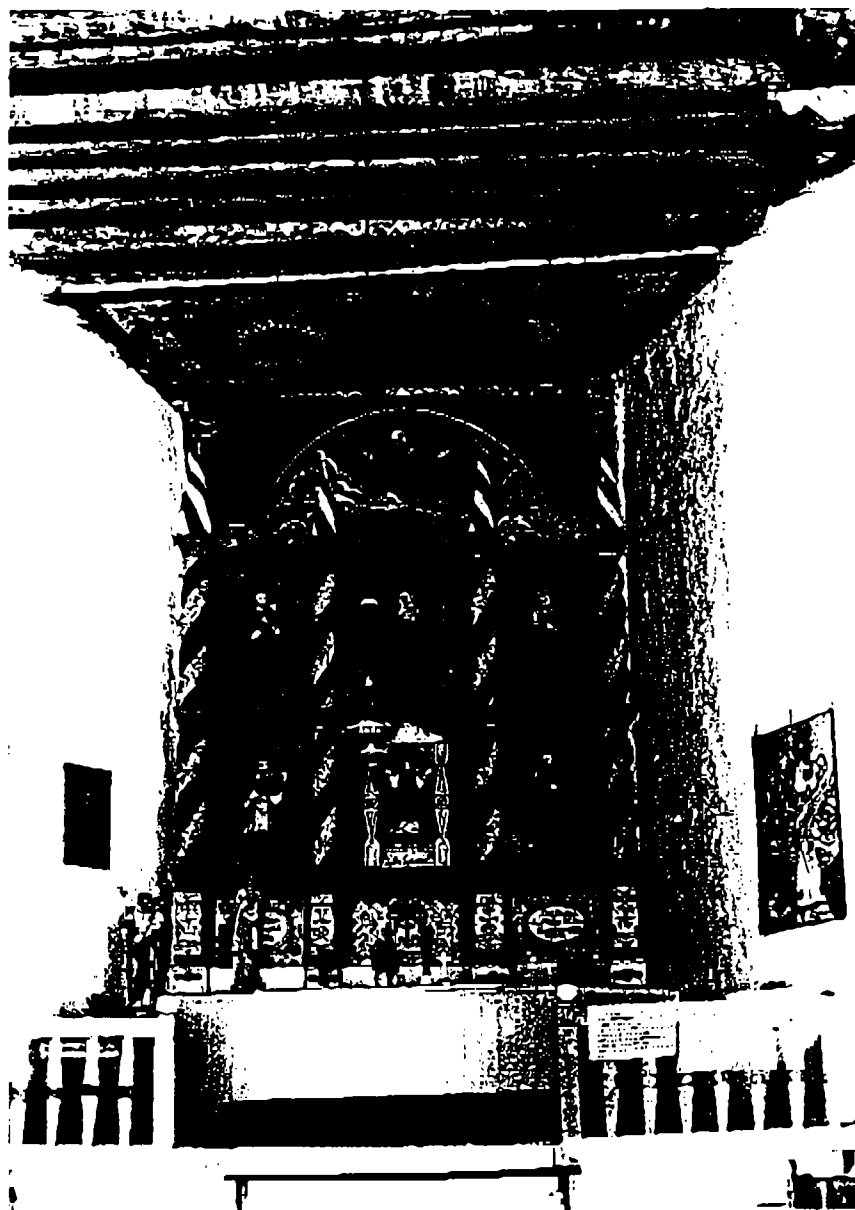
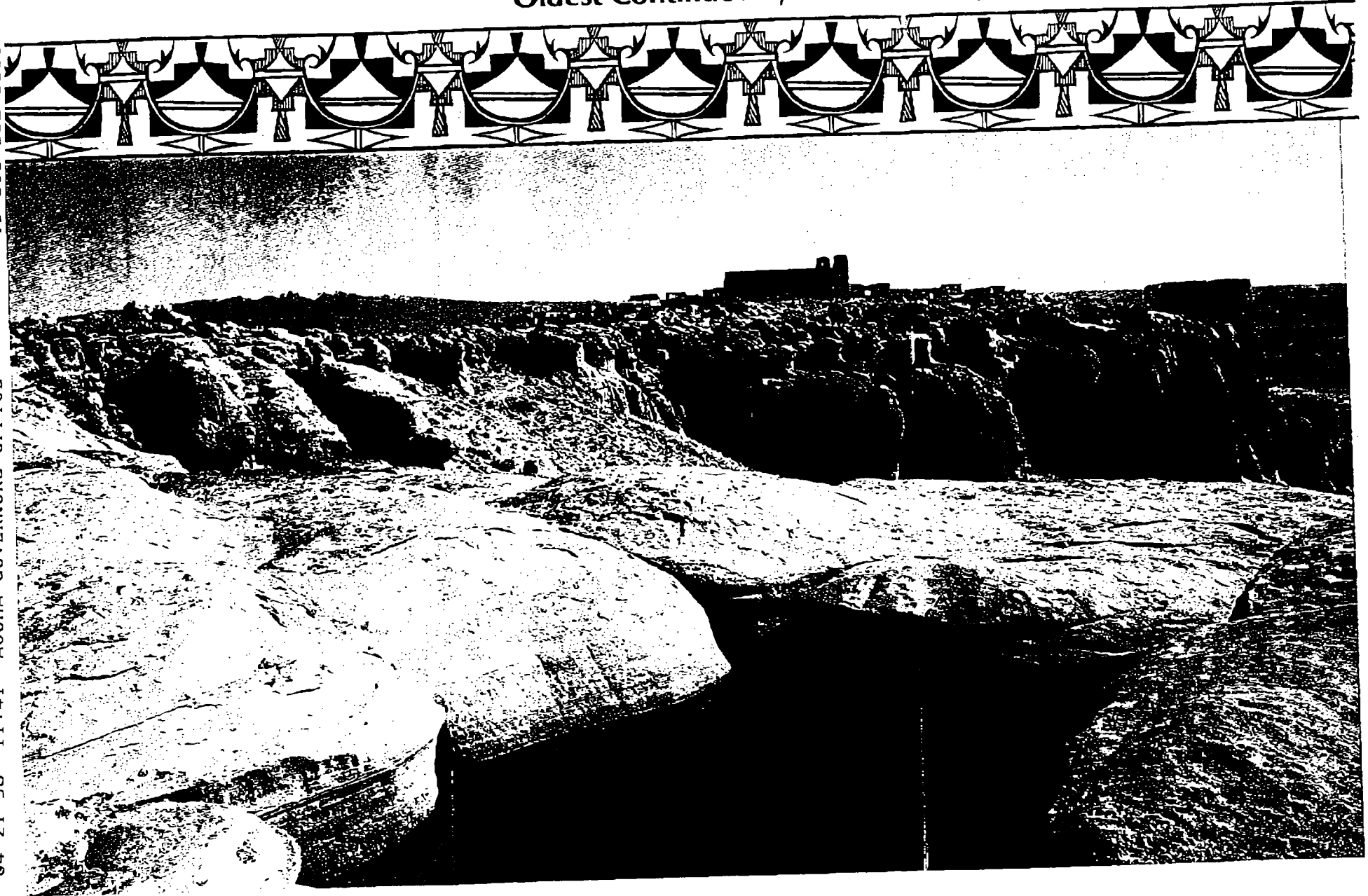


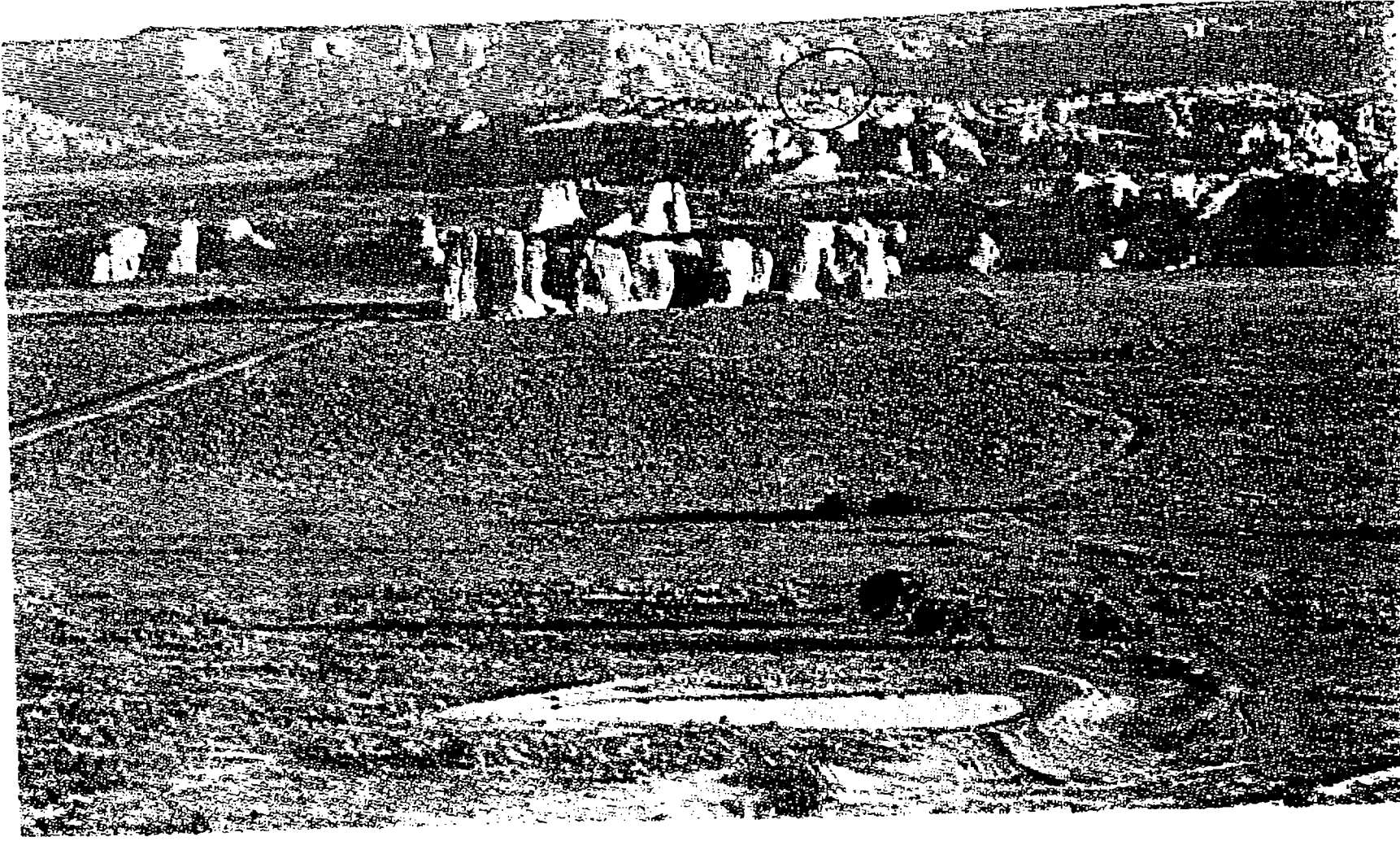
Figure 20.

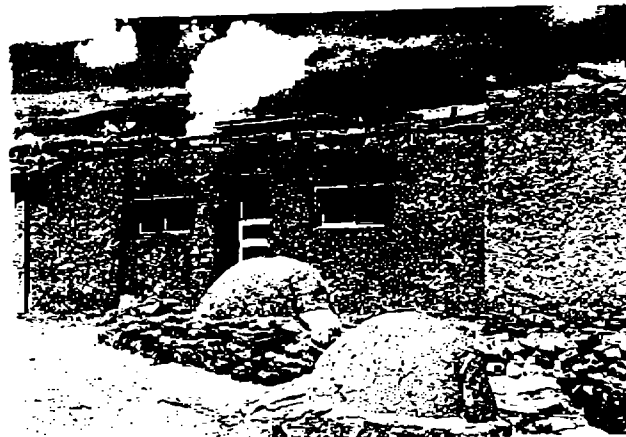
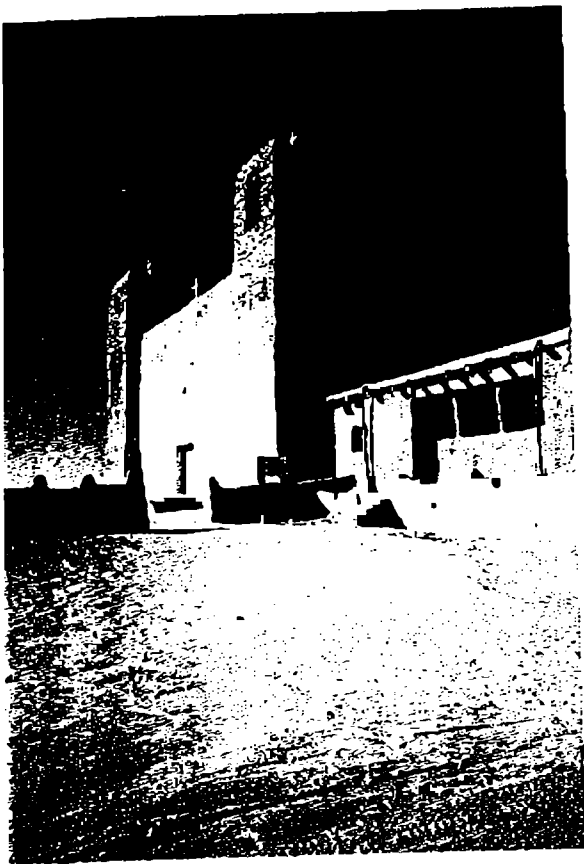
PUEBLO OF ACOMA

ACOMA - Sky City

Oldest Continuously Inhabited City in the United States







ACOMA "SKY CITY"

Francisco Vaques de Coronado's army visited Acoma in the year 1540 and became the first white man to enter Sky City. He described Acoma as:

"One of the strongest ever seen, because the city was built on a high rock. The ascent was so difficult that we repented climbing to the top. The houses are three and four stories high. The people are of the same type as those in the province of Cibola (Zuni) and they have abundant supplies of maize, beans and turkeys like those of New Spain (Minge 1976:4).

Many people consider the location of Sky City as an ideal site for defense against enemies. The oral heritage of Acoma tells of the origin and migration of Acoma people in search of HaK'u. Acoma (pronounced either eh-Ko-Ma or Ah-Ko-Ma) is derived from the Keresan word HaK'u. It was prophesized from the beginning that there existed a place ready for the people to occupy. HaK'u means in a sense to prepare or plan. Recently, archaeologists theorized the occupation of Acoma to A.D. 1150.

★ Call For Information



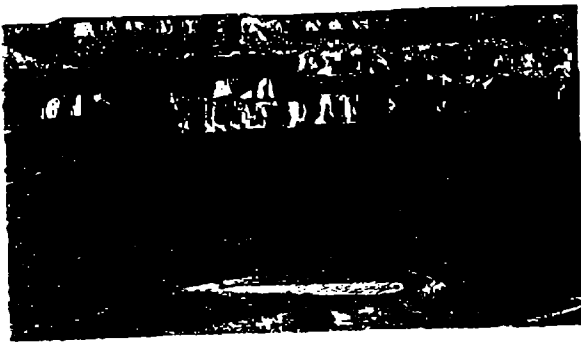
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Acoma hosts a number of festivities during the year. Those which are open to the public can be viewed during the days listed but cameras are not allowed.

Acoma tradition draws people back to old Acoma at intervals throughout the year. Though Acoma has always been inhabited, nearby settlements which started out as farming villages have become permanent homes for the people. These neighboring communities are known today as Anzac, Acomita and McCartys and are located 14 miles north of Acoma along Rio San Jose and Interstate 40.

The days on which people return parallel traditional celebrations. One such example is the annual Saint Estevan Day Fiesta of September 2, on which day the patron Saint of the Pueblo is honored. Acoma Pueblo hosts the following events throughout the year:

February	-Governor's Feast at Old Acoma.
May	-1st Sunday, Santa Maria Feast at McCartys.
August 10	-Fiest Day in Acomita-Saint Lorenzo's Day.
September 2	-Harvest Dance & Annual Feast of San Estevan at Old Acoma.
December 25-28	-Christmas Festivals at San Estevan del Rey Mission at Old Acoma.



6/3. Sec. Dev. / Doing Bus.
Potus / Conference at WH
+ VISIT to Reserv.

May - VP event -- Indian
country + the Net

March 6, 1998

Sept. Potus + F1stus to

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: Mickey Ibarra
FROM: Lynn Cutler
CC: Vice President
Erskine Bowles
Sylvia Mathews

reservat -- -- W
VP + Cabinet in
other places

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Government Agencies' Reports on Indian Country

Attached is an executive summary of Government Agencies' and Departments' Reports on Indian Country. This analysis was done over the course of several months in response to a memorandum dated May 23, 1997, from Erskine Bowles and Bruce Reed requesting each Department and Agency to give a synopsis of their approaches and activities relating to Indian Country. That memorandum was completed in order to follow-up on progress resulting from your April 29, 1994, Executive Memorandum ensuring Government-to-Government Relations with Indian Country.

It is critical that we understand where we have made progress and where we need to focus more effort in order to improve our relations, activities and programs with tribal governments. It is my hope that this summary is one step in ongoing outreach efforts to this community.

We can make a difference in the lives of Indian children, who are too often living in poverty so grinding and isolated that hope becomes a rare commodity. A lack of pride and knowledge about their rich culture, heritage and religion further hampers those who attend public schools -- you will see this reflected in the statistics about education.

I know that you care deeply about Indian Country and that helps me to continue this work. I am available for any questions you may have.

Nat'l Assoc. of Retired tel Folks -- will come
in & visit the Schools

add Ind. issue to speeches / events, etc whenever
appropriate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Status of Government-to-Government Relations between the United States and Tribal Governments

On April 24, 1994, President Clinton issued the Executive Memorandum on Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments, which recognized the unique status of Indian tribes as governments reflected in the United States Constitution, treaties, statutes, executive orders, and judicial decisions.¹ The Executive Memorandum directs all departments and agencies, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, to work with tribal governments within a framework of government-to-government relations concerning tribal government, treaty rights and trust resources. By directing *all* departments and agencies to work on a government-to-government basis with Indian tribes on issues of tribal self-government, treaty rights, and trust resources, the Executive Memorandum transformed the way that the Federal Government works with Indian tribes. The Domestic Policy Council's Interagency Working Group, which meets quarterly, was established following the Executive Memorandum. Many initiatives have emerged from this working group.

The Native American population is one of the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised in American society. By any socioeconomic measure, Native Americans trail the general U.S. population. Native Americans have the highest unemployment rates (80% on some reservations), the lowest family incomes, and highest percentages of people below the poverty level (31%). The Oglala Sioux men of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota live an average of 56.5 years, the shortest life expectancy of any group in the country. Also on the Pine Ridge Reservation, nearly half the population has a problem with alcohol, which is the fifth leading cause of death among Native Americans.

The Executive Memorandum has fostered improved working relationships, coordination and communication between agencies and tribal governments. Several agencies have established offices, or designated staff within existing offices, to ensure that work on Native American issues proceeds within a government-to-government framework. Agency personnel receive training on the unique governmental status and rights of Indian tribes and frequently meet with tribal leaders, both in Washington and in tribal communities. Also, Cabinet officers now appear at national meetings of tribal governments to consult face-to-face with tribal leaders.

In addition, the Administration also has secured important legislation supporting Indian tribes and has successfully opposed legislative proposals that would undercut tribal self-government. For example, the President signed the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act into law and successfully fought back a recent effort to eliminate tribal

¹ Executive Memorandum on Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments, 59 Fed. Reg. 22951 (1994).

sovereign immunity.

On May 23, 1997, the White House Chief of Staff and Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy requested agency reports on the implementation of the Executive Memorandum. This report summarizes agency responses and includes recommendations to improve government-to-government relations and enhance tribal self-government.

From the Department of Agriculture to Veterans' Affairs, departments and agencies are working actively and effectively with tribal governments. Some highlights of their work include:

- The Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has established 33 full-time and 73 part-time offices at tribal headquarters to facilitate tribal access to NRCS programs.
- The Small Business Administration's Office of Native American Affairs has established seventeen Indian reservation-based Tribal Business Information Centers to provide technical assistance and business and program information for small businesses. In FY98, \$20 million has been dedicated to the promotion of small business initiatives in Indian Country.
- The EPA established an American Indian Environmental Office, adopted a Nine Point Plan to strengthen EPA tribal operations, and increased resources for Indian country environmental protection from \$36 million in FY94 to \$137 million in FY98.
- HHS's Indian Health Service transferred over \$730 million in FY95 to Indian tribes and tribal organizations to support tribal health delivery programs. This funding is crucial for many reasons. Diabetes is virtually an epidemic in Indian Country and is the sixth leading cause of death. In Indian Country, women die of cervical cancer at twice the rate of non-Indian women and have the worst breast cancer survival statistics of any ethnic group because of late detection and difficulties in obtaining adequate care. Indian infants are twice as likely to die from sickness or injury and die of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) at 1.8 times the rate of non-Indian children. HHS also has formed the Tribal Colleges and Universities Working Group in response to the President's Executive Order 13021 - Tribal Colleges and Universities.
- The Administration and the Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") secured passage of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, which promotes tribal self-government by authorizing direct block grants for Indian housing.
- The Department of Interior has instituted formal written policies requiring every bureau and office to incorporate trust protection procedures into all planning and operations.

- Since 1995, DOJ's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office has made over \$43 million in grants to 143 tribal law enforcement agencies to fund over 570 police officers in Indian communities.
- The Department of Transportation ("DOT") is seeking passage of the National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act, which would require states to consult with tribal governments in developing transportation improvement plans, and would provide a modest increase to \$200 million annually for Indian reservation roads. Currently, car accidents are the third leading cause of death on reservations -- a combination of alcohol abuse, the widespread problem of unpaved roads, and the lowest rate of seat belt usage. On the Pine Ridge reservation, fatal car crashes are four times more likely than anywhere else.

As these programs demonstrate, the Executive Memorandum has revitalized the nation's respect for Indian tribes as "domestic dependent nations" and renewed its commitment to honor the treaty pledges that guarantee tribal self-government.

Recommendations

Based on information supplied by the Agencies, key recommendations to improve government-to-government relations and enhance tribal self-government through both departmental policies and support for initiatives include:

Improvements to Agency-Tribal Relations

- Department Policies on Government-to-Government Relations. All departments and agencies that have not adopted a formal policy to implement the Executive Memorandum should consider adopting such a policy. Departments and agencies should also consider whether to incorporate their specific policies on government-to-government relations into their regulations and operating manuals.
- Staff Assignments and Coordination. Departments and agencies should designate intergovernmental affairs or other central office staff with the responsibility for coordinating agency implementation of the government-to-government relations policy.

Initiatives to Support Tribal Governments

- Education. Given the Administration's emphasis on education and the unique Federal responsibilities to promote Indian education, the Administration should consider efforts to increase funding to Indian education programs and to enhance educational programs on Native American languages and cultures. Currently, 95% of Indian children are in regular public schools. Native American students have the highest dropout rate of any racial/ethnic group (36%) and lowest high school completion and college attendance

rates. According to the 1990 Census, only 2/3 of Indians age 25 and older are high school graduates of higher. For bachelor's degree or higher, this percentage is 8.9.

- Economic Development. An important goal of the longstanding Federal Indian Self-Determination Policy is economic self-sufficiency for Indian tribes. An interagency summit is scheduled for spring to plan an economic development initiative for depressed areas of Indian country.
- Indian Children and Youth. There is a growing disparity in the health status of Indian children and youth compared to other American youth. Of the 1.43 million reservation Indians, nearly 500,000 (29%) are under the age of fifteen. 38 percent of Indian youth live below the poverty level, more than twice the national average. The suicide death rate for Native youth (31.7 per 100,000) is nearly 2 ½ times the corresponding rate for U.S. All Races (13.0 per 100,000). HHS is developing an interagency initiative for Indian children and youth to promote the physical, mental, social, economic and environmental well-being of Indian children and youth.
- Indian Country Law Enforcement and Tribal Courts. Given the significant concerns about rising crime rates on Indian lands, the Department of Justice, in cooperation with the Department of Interior, is considering steps to enhance law enforcement and tribal courts in Indian country. Funding is crucial as 61% of juvenile delinquents confined by the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 1994 were Indians and reservation homicide rates are soaring.
- Indigenous Peoples. Currently, the U.N. and the Organization of American States ("OAS") are considering various declarations on the rights of indigenous peoples. The Administration should carefully consider these efforts, which would offer an historic opportunity to promote understanding and respect for the rights of Native Americans, and indigenous peoples in the Americas and throughout the world.

April 17, 1998

Agenda

POTUS Native American Event

- Venue and Timing Options
- Policy
- Related agency involvement (Interior, Justice, etc)

PIR - Native American Issues

- PIR Outreach Generally
- Future PIR events - Native American events, Native American Inclusion
- Talking Points

White House - Native American Issues

- General Issues

5/6
Executive Committee meeting. They wish to discuss budget, tobacco, and ISTEA issues. We are pursuing this request with the appropriate offices.

- We facilitated a meeting for Monday, April 13, between Governor Mel Carnahan (D-MO) and HHS Secretary Shalala on Missouri's Medicaid waiver. Governor Carnahan is anxious to receive approval for his children's health waiver proposal. Following a conference call on Friday, April 10, between HHS and State of Missouri officials, it appears that an agreement will be reached.

Mayors and Municipal Officials

- Mayor Kurt Schmoke (D-Baltimore, MD) held a press conference on Thursday, April 9, regarding the HUD Inspector General's announcement to investigate the housing authorities in Baltimore, San Francisco, and New Orleans. Prior to his press conference, I spoke with the Mayor. His concerns have been shared with OMB Deputy Director for Management Ed DeSeve. This matter was referred to the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency as a result of a letter of complaint from Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-Baltimore, MD).
- The Vice President is going to New Orleans on Thursday, April 16, to speak to the National Conference of Black Mayors.
- At the request of your friend, Judge Buddy Villines, Lynn Cutler met with representatives of the National Association of Regional Councils. They presented some impressive material on regional planning. We are connecting them with the Vice President's Community Empowerment Board.

Indian Country

We are working on several ideas for economic development in Indian country. One of them will be the first "Doing Business in Indian Country" conference. The planning group includes several federal agencies, and is the product of the White House Interagency Group on American Indians and Native Americans.

We received several calls from tribal leaders regarding pending tobacco legislation. There are moves to insert taxation on tribal lands into the legislation.

Insular Affairs

- Jeff Farrow, Co-Chair of the White House Interagency Working Group on Puerto Rico, chaired staff meetings with advocates of clemency for 15 residents of states of Puerto Rican origin convicted of crimes committed to encourage the granting of independence to Puerto Rico. Twenty-two thousand petitions from the New York region were delivered in

"This is important to me - I should visit an Indian reservation to emphasize."

* econ(omic) development including micro credit *

Pine Ridge Reservation

South Dakota

Head Start Program

- Integrating culture and language into curriculum
- *Ms. Iron Cloud - contact*

Health

- Pine Ridge has new hospital facility
- Premier OB/GYN clinic for Native women
- *Michelle Coats - contact*
- Alcohol Rehabilitation program on reservation
- *Mr. Pourier - contact*

Oglala Lakota Tribal College

- Part of Tribally Controlled Community Colleges
- Very successful programs
- *Tom Shortbull, Tribal College President - contact*

Ateyapi - ("They Call Me Father")

- Organization of Indian men that strive to be role models for younger Native men that incorporates traditional and community involvement
- Based out of Rapid City, South Dakota, an urban Indian community
- *Bruce Long Fox, Director - contact*

KILI

- Native American radio station on reservation
- *Bryant High Horse - contact*

Shannon County Public Schools

- After school programs in traditional arts and dance with all schools in county (K-12)
- *Maurice Twiss, Director - contact*

Cedar Pass Lodge

- Tribally owned and operated enterprise
- Hotel/restaurant in Badlands offering trail rides, canoe trips, etc.
- *Cindy Hornbeck - contact*

Lakota Fund

- Privately funded organization offering seed money grants to small businesses

Rosebud Reservation

South Dakota

White Buffalo Calf

- Native Women's Domestic Violence Shelter
- Operating since 1980. Offers counseling and support services to Native women.

Head Start Program

- Integrating language and cultural traditions into curriculum
- Offering bilingual language program incorporating Lakota language
- Anna Bordeaux - contact

Education

- Recently built new middle school
- Nancy Keller, Principal: success story! Tribal member that received Master's degree from Sinte Gliska Tribal College and went on to current position.
- St. Francis Indian school programs
- Anna Bordeaux - contact
- Sinte Gliska Tribal College
- Lionel Bordeaux, President - contact

Health

- Community Health Representative (CHP) program: tribal member health liaisons that are located in each community on the reservation and assisting in the delivery of health services.
- Jess Clairmont, Director - contact
- Dr. Lorenzo Starr, tribal member on staff at hospital (success story!)

Economic Development

- Howard Valandra: tribal member that owns First Nations Technology, a computer company.
- Patsy Valandra: tribal member that owns store/business on reservation.

TALKING POINTS FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

Q: In the most recent Advisory Board meeting in Denver, some members of the American Indian community protested the forum because the Board itself does not have an Indian. How has your Initiative handled the lack of Indian representation on the Advisory Board?

A: The Advisory Board has engaged, and will continue to engage, American Indians in this national effort to have a conversation on race. In every Advisory Board meeting that has been held, American Indians have made a contribution. Board members have also attended special forums to specifically hear from Tribal leaders and learn about issues that affect Indian country. In addition, the Initiative has identified several promising practices taking place in America that focus on American Indian issues.

Q: It has been rumored that members of the American Indian community will be protesting at future Advisory Board and Initiative events because there is not an Indian on the Advisory Board. How do you foresee the Initiative dealing with these protests?

A: One of the major goals of this Initiative on Race is to engage people of all races and nationalities in forums where they can meet and talk about their personal and professional experiences. Because of the very personal nature of some of these discussions, I expected that this national conversation on race would not always be easy. There has to be room for dissent and contrasts in style and substance. It would be my hope that such protests would move beyond the point of not having an Indian on the Advisory Board, and that such individuals would stay and educate the rest of us on their problems and contribute to creating a vision of one American in the 21st century.

Q: Your administration has repeatedly stated that there is a government-to-government relationship between American Indian Tribes and the United States. How is this special governmental relationship included in the work of the Initiative on Race?

A: It is a fact that American Indians are unique and have a special governmental relationship with the United States. This special relationship is based on the U.S. Constitution, treaties, statutes and court decisions over the past 200 years. No other people in this country have a land base of over 56 million acres in mostly reservation land held in trust and about 40 million acres in Alaska. In 1994, this special relationship was reaffirmed in my meeting with hundreds of Tribal leaders from across the country and my Executive Memorandum to all Executive Departments and Agencies that directs them to engage in continuing relations with federally recognized tribal governments.

Although this type of policy work may take a few years to appear, it is my goal that the federal government will institutionalize consultations and working relationships with Indian Tribes through my administration. Because of the unique governmental

relationship with American Indians, the staff and Advisory Board members of the Initiative on Race are working closely with my senior staff at The White House in formulating policies.

Q: What exactly has the Initiative done for American Indians and Alaska Natives?

A: There are several ways that American Indians and Alaska Natives have been integrated into the work of the Initiative. First, Indians have participated as panelists at Advisory Board meetings that discussed stereotypes, poverty, labor, and higher education issues. Secondly, the Initiative has hosted two special Tribal leaders meetings, one in Phoenix and the other in Denver. Advisory Board members have also participated in regional and national conferences hosted by American Indians and Alaska Natives. And during the Initiative's recent national effort to encourage colleges and universities to sponsor race dialogues on campus, several Tribal colleges participated.

Currently, there are two Indian people who work with the Initiative, one who serves as a full-time staff person who works specifically on the Initiative's outreach and policy efforts, and another who is a senior consultant to the Advisory Board.

ACTIVITIES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN INDIAN COUNTRY

President's Initiative on Race

April 3, 1998 (9:54am)

"One America in the 21st Century: The President's Initiative on Race," is engaging people to help us respect each others' differences and yet be a united America. Through dialogue, study and action, Advisory Board Members and staff are working to increase the understanding of race, and propose and promote policies and solutions that can make a difference.

Creating a Dialogue in Indian Country

Two Indian meetings with Tribal Leaders have been held to hear specifically from Tribal governments. In addition, Advisory Board Members and staff are conducting outreach around the country and starting the dialogue on race in Indian country by attending, presenting and gathering information from various regions of the country.

- In Denver on March 23, 1998, a special meeting was held for Tribal leaders in the region, along with the leaders of several national Indian organizations. Participants were asked to present their views on **Race and Stereotypes**, and any other topics of concern to their communities. Written testimony was submitted by the Hualapi Indian Tribe and the Jicarilla Apache Tribe that describes how racial attitudes have affected their tribal rights and responsibilities, which is directly related to their land base and sovereign status.
- In Phoenix in January 13-14, 1998, the full Advisory Board heard concerns from over a dozen Tribal leaders from the southwest, primarily on the topics of economic opportunities and any barriers American Indians may experience. Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman joined the Advisory Board Chairman Franklin, Board members Linda Chavez-Thompson, Angela Oh and Governor William Winter, and Initiative Executive Director Judith Winston in this meeting. Specific positive results of this meeting included several recommendations made by Chairman Franklin to President Clinton:
 1. That a major, independent assessment be funded of the fairness and effectiveness of all Federal program resources intended to assist Tribes with their economic future.
 2. That the Federal government make every effort to address barriers to economic opportunity by facilitating meetings between Tribal government representatives and major lenders and investors.
- Advisory Board member Linda Chavez-Thompson gave an address to the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) during its annual Impact Week that was held in Arlington, Virginia in February 1998. USET is comprised of over 23 Tribes in the northeast and southeast of the United States. Board Member Chavez-Thompson provided general information about the Initiative, shared information on how American Indian tribes are included in their work, and encouraged USET tribal members to participate in the dialogue.
- During the National Congress of American Indians Annual Conference that was held in Santa Fe in November 1997, Advisory Board members Governor William Winter and Angela Oh and Executive Director Judith Winston met with approximately 45 Tribal leaders. The participants discussed how to maximize American Indian participation in the Initiative. Key themes emphasized during this meeting were tribal sovereignty and the need to educate other Americans about Tribal governments and Native values. The group also suggested regional meetings with other Indian communities, which led directly to the Phoenix meeting above.

(over)

Participation of Indian Experts in the Study of Race in America

As part of the Advisory Board's monthly meetings being held around the country, there have been a number of different forums that have provided an opportunity for the Board to hear from community participants on racial issues in their areas.

Indians who have participated in this sharing of research and knowledge at the Advisory Board meetings include:

1. Bill Gollnick (Oneida Nation of Wisconsin), who was an expert panelist to address the topic of ***Race and Stereotypes*** (Denver, Colorado, March 1998).
 2. C. Matthew Snipp, Professor of Sociology at Stanford University presented a statement about the unique problems of ***Race and Poverty*** in Indian country (San Jose, California, February 1998).
 3. Lorenda T. Sanchez, executive director of the California Indian Manpower Consortium, who was a panelist to address ***Race in the Workplace***. (Phoenix, Arizona, January 1998).
 4. Dr. Joe McDonald, president of the Salish Kootenai College, who provided the Advisory Board with information on his tribal college at the College Park, Maryland meeting (Nov. 1997) that focused on ***Race in Higher Education***.
- As part of an overall research effort by the Initiative, the National Academy of Sciences will be commissioning a paper on American Indian issues.

National and Community Action

- President Clinton met with various civil rights leaders in Washington, DC, in January 1998 to obtain their input on race in America. John Echohawk, executive director of the Native American Rights Fund participated in this event. He talked about the concerns of the American Indian community, including issues of the legal and political status of American Indians and Alaska Natives.
- Promising Practices: The Initiative is identifying promising programs and activities from around the country that are helping to improve race relations or reduce racial disparities. Several Promising Practices focus on American Indian issues: (1) Phoenix Indian Center, Phoenix, Arizona; (2) Wind River Initiative, Laramie, Wyoming; (3) Cradleboard Teaching Project, Kapaa, Hawaii; (4) United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Several Advisory Board members visited the Phoenix Indian Center.
- Past and future special projects sponsored by the Initiative have included American Indians and Alaska Natives whenever possible. The Initiative is sponsoring a nationwide ***Campus Week of Dialogue on Race***. Several Tribal Colleges are participating in this event, as well as over 500 other colleges and universities. The Initiative is sponsoring a ***Religious Forum*** that will include Native traditional leaders, who will be invited to participate.

The Initiative has hired one full time Indian staff person in Washington, DC, and has retained the services of another as a senior consultant to the Initiative.

D. Bambi Kraus is a Tlingit Indian who recently joined the Initiative staff as Senior ~~Outreach~~ Advisor. Her family is from Kake, Alaska. Just prior to joining the Initiative, she was the executive director of Keepers of the Treasures, a national Indian non-profit organization devoted to the preservation, affirmative and celebration of Native cultures. She has over 14 years of experience in national Indian affairs since graduating from Stanford University in 1982.

Laura Harris is an enrolled member of the Comanche Nation and serves as a Senior Consultant to the Initiative, who is responsible for advising the Advisory Board and staff on American Indian issues. She currently serves as the executive vice president of Americans for Indian Opportunity in New Mexico and has a long history of working in politics and issues concerning American Indians.

TALKING POINTS:
INCLUSION AND STRATEGIC OUTREACH TO INDIAN COUNTRY
April 3, 1998 (9:53am)

- A. The U.S. Government has a special relationship with American Indians that is based on their status as sovereign entities. This relationship is based on the Constitution, treaties, statutes and court decisions. Therefore, the Federal government relates to American Indians on a Government-to-Government basis.

To help explain the concept of sovereignty, here is an excerpt from the Hualapai Indian Tribe written statement delivered to the Initiative during the March 23, 1998, Tribal leaders meeting in Denver:

The United States Army waged a war against my Tribe and marched us on our own "trail of tears." The President and Congress established the Hualapai Indian Reservation by the Executive Order of January 4, 1883, the Executive Order of June 2, 1911 and Public Law 93-560 (December 30, 1974). The United States government then took the rest of our historic homeland and gave it away to white settlers or declared it public land. Today the Hualapai Reservation encompasses approximately one million acres in Arizona, across the Colorado River from the Grand Canyon National Park. The United States holds the land in trust for the Hualapai Indian Tribe - a sovereign nation existing within the State of Arizona. As a sovereign, we are not subject to the laws of the State of Arizona, but as a dependent sovereign, we are subject to the Congress of the United States and the federal government.

- B. In April 1994, President Clinton reaffirmed this special relationship in a Washington, DC, meeting with hundreds of Tribal leaders. The Administration is committed to defending against any efforts to undermine tribal sovereignty. The President's Executive Memorandum to all Executive Departments and Agencies directs them to engage in continuing Government-to-Government relations with federally recognized tribal governments. One other major outcome of this historic 1994 meeting and Executive Memorandum was the creation of the White House (Domestic Policy Council) Working Group on Indian Affairs.
- C. In addition to the Working Group on Indian Affairs, the White House created the one-year President's Initiative on Race, whose mission is to begin a dialogue on race in America. The purpose of the Initiative, *"One America in the 21st Century: The President's Initiative on Race,"* is to help us respect each others' differences and yet be a united America. Through dialogue, study and action, Advisory Board Members and staff are working to increase the understanding of race, and propose and promote policies and solutions that can make a difference. Issues and concerns of American Indians are included within the scope of this Presidential Initiative.

To give you an idea of how racism affects American Indians, here is an excerpt from the Hualapai Indian Tribe's written statement delivered to the Initiative during the March 23, 1998, Tribal leaders meeting in Denver:

I wanted to touch on a few key points for an understanding of how racism manifests itself against Indian tribes ... As Indian people, we have survived years of persecution – in what can only be understood today as a combination of racism and greed – because we have survived as a Tribe. Our sovereign status is, therefore, not only a political status, recognized from the earliest days of European settlement in the United States, it is also key to our existence as Indians. Accordingly, the most virulent and destructive form of racism faced by Indian people today is the attack on our tribal sovereignty. Racism may manifest itself differently depending on who is being attacked. Blacks are attacked on the basis of their skin color, Latinos on the basis of the language they speak, and tribes on the basis of their sovereign status.

- D. Rather than waiting until the end of the Initiative, Advisory Board Members, Cabinet Members and White House staff are making policy recommendations related to the work of the Initiative that are a direct result of hearing from Indian country. For example, as a result of the Phoenix Tribal Leaders Meeting in January 1998, the Advisory Board recommended to President Clinton that:
1. The Federal government make every effort to address **barriers to economic opportunities** in Indian country by facilitating meetings between Tribal government representatives and major lenders and investors.
 2. A major **independent assessment** be funded of the fairness and effectiveness of all federal program resources intended to assist Tribes with their economic future.
- E. In the area of special outreach to American Indians and Alaska Natives based on their special sovereign status, the Advisory Board has engaged, and will continue to be engaged, in several meetings to hear directly from tribal leaders. As part of the Advisory Board's monthly meetings being held around the country, there have been a number of different forums that have offered an opportunity for the Board to hear from local community participants on racial issues in their areas. American Indians have been included in these meetings, either as expert panelists or as participants.
- F. Past and future special projects sponsored by the Initiative have included American Indians and Alaska Natives whenever possible. For example, several tribal colleges are participating in the Initiative's special project, "Campus Week of Dialogue," to be held April 6-9, 1998.
- G. A senior White House official, Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Lynn G. Cutler, has the responsibility of working with American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages, as well as Indian associations and organizations.
- H. The Clinton Administration has appointed American Indians and Alaska Natives to several high ranking positions within the Federal agencies. **Carrie Billy** works at the Department of Education and is working to implement the mandates outlined in the Executive Order on Tribal Colleges; **Jackie Johnson** was recently hired in the Office of Public and Indian Housing at the Department of Housing and Urban Development; **Mary McNeil** works at the Department of Agriculture; and **Karen Atkinson** works in the Department of the Interior.

NOTE: Also attached to these Talking Points are four (4) pages of health and other socio-economic statistics of American Indians and Alaska Natives that depict and describe the poor and dire conditions in Indian country.

Native American Statistics

In 1990, through the Census Bureau's system of self-identifying, there were 1,959,234 individuals identified as Indians, which includes Alaska natives. The Native American population is one of the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised in American society. On virtually every indicator available, they rank at or near the bottom compared to other ethnic/racial groups.

Native Americans have the highest unemployment rates (80% on some reservations), the lowest family incomes and highest percentages of people living below the poverty level. Almost half of young Native American children live in poverty.

Indian women do not receive adequate screening for breast cancer. They have the worst survival statistics than any ethnic group because of late detection and difficulties in obtaining adequate care. In addition, Indian women die of cervical cancer at twice the rate of non-Indian women.

Up to 85 cents of every dollar generated on-reservation is spent off-reservation. In spite of recent growth in Native American-owned businesses, one quarter of all jobs on reservations are staffed by non-Natives, and up to half of full-time reservation jobs are federally funded.

Key Facts Concerning the Status of American Indians and Alaska Natives

- 31% of Indians live below the poverty level, compared to 13% of the total population.
- Oglala Sioux men of the Pine Ridge Reservation live an average of 56.5 years, the shortest life expectancy of any group in the country, similar to ones seen in sub-Saharan Africa.
- On the Pine Ridge Reservation, fatal car crashes are four more times more likely than anywhere else. Infants are twice as likely to die from sickness or injury.
- Diabetes is virtually an epidemic in Indian Country and is the sixth leading cause of death for Native Americans.
- Car accidents are the third leading cause of death on Indian reservations.
- On the Pine Ridge Reservation, nearly half the population has a problem with alcohol, fueling the reservation's soaring rates of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, suicides, and accidents. Alcoholism is the 5th leading cause of death among Native Americans.
- According to the 1990 Census, only 65.3 percent of Indians age 25 and older residing in the current Reservation States are high school graduates or higher. For bachelor's degree

or higher, this percentage is 8.9.

- In 1990, 16.2 percent of Indian males age 16 and older residing in the current Reservation States were unemployed, compared with 6.4 percent for the U.S. All Races male population. For females, these percentages were 13.4 and 6.2, respectively.
- According to the 1990 Census, the median household income in 1989 for Indians residing in the current Reservation States was \$19,897, compared with \$30,056 for the U.S. All Races population.
- The American Indian and Alaska Native birth rate for 1991 - 1993 of 26.6 births per 1,000 population was 67 percent greater than the U.S. All Races birth rate for 1992 of 15.9, and 77 percent greater than the rate for the U.S. White population (15.0).
- The two leading causes of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives (1991-1994) and the U.S. All Races and White populations (1992) were diseases of the heart and malignant neoplasms. This is a change for the Indian population; accidents had been the second leading cause of death.
- Of all American Indian and Alaska Native people who died during 1992-1994, 30 percent were under 45 years of age. This compared to 11 percent for the U.S. All Races population (1992).
- The age-adjusted death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives dropped from 188.0 in 1972-1974 to 83.4 in 1992-1994, a decrease of 56 percent. However, the rate is nearly triple the U.S. All Races of 29.4 for 1992.
- The age-adjusted suicide death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives for 1992-1994 was 16.2 deaths per 100,000 population compared with the U.S. All Races rate of 11.1 for 1992, a ratio of 1.5 to 1.
- The age-adjusted homicide death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives in 1992-1994, was 14.6 deaths per 100,000 population compared with 10.5 for the U.S. All Races population in 1992, a ratio of 1.4 to 1.
- The age-adjusted alcoholism death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives in 1992-1994, was 38.4 deaths per 100,000 population or 5.6 times the U.S. All Races rate of 6.8 in 1992.
- The age-adjusted diabetes mellitus death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives in 1992-1994 of 31.7 was 2.7 times the U.S. All Races rate of 11.9 in 1992.
- The age-adjusted tuberculosis death rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives is 2.1 deaths per 100,000 population in 1992-1994. The Indian rate is still 5.3 times the U.S. All Races rate of 0.4 for 1992.

Key Facts Concerning the Status of American Indians and Alaska Native Youth

- Of the 1.43 million Indians living on or near reservations, nearly 500,000 (29 percent) are under the age of 15.
- Native American students have the highest dropout rate of any racial/ethnic group (36%) and lowest high school completion and college attendance rates of any minority group.
- Indian infants die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) at a rate 1.8 times the rate for U.S. All Races infants, 2.1 compared to 1.2.
- 13% of Indian deaths pertain to ages under 25 compared to 4% for U.S. All Races.
- 45 percent of Indian mothers having their first child are under age 20, compared to 24 percent for U.S. All Races mothers.
- 33 percent of the Indian population is younger than 15 years in contrast to 22 percent for the U.S. All Races population.
- 38 percent of Indians aged 6 to 11 years live below the poverty level, more than twice the number for the U.S. All Races age group (18 percent).
- 61 percent of juvenile delinquents confined by the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 1994 were Indians.
- The death rate for Native American youth (142.0/100,000) was 59% higher than the rate for white youth.
- The alcoholism death rate for Indians 15 to 24 years of age is over 17 times the comparable rate for U.S. All Races, i.e., 5.2 versus 0.3.
- The accident death rate for Indians aged 5 to 14 years is nearly double the corresponding U.S. All Races rate, 17.1 to 9.3.
- The suicide death rate for 15 to 24 year old Indians is 2.4 times the corresponding rate for U.S. All Races, 31.7 to 13.0.
- Homicide is the second leading cause of death among Indians from 1-14 years of age and third for 15-24 year-olds.
- More than 180 gangs have been identified in Indian Country.

CAUSES OF DEATH

Native Americans are more likely than Americans in general to die of alcoholism or car accidents. Leading causes of death:

American Indians/Alaska natives

1. Heart disease
2. Cancer
3. Car accidents
4. Other accidents
5. Alcoholism
6. Diabetes
7. Stroke
8. Pneumonia/influenza
9. Suicide
10. Emphysema/bronchitis

U.S. total

1. Heart disease
2. Cancer
3. Stroke
4. Emphysema/bronchitis
5. Accidents
6. Pneumonia/influenza
7. Diabetes
8. HIV infection
9. Suicide
10. Homicide

NOTE. American Indian data are from 1992-94; total U.S. data from 1993.

SOURCE. National Center for Health Statistics

THE WASHINGTON POST