

*Report
Navajo & Hopi
By Gen. H. L. Scott.*

(COPY)

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BOARD OF INDIAN COMMISSIONERS

Washington, D. C.
October 15, 1921.

Sir:

The Moqui Reservation, in northern Arizona, has the Western Navajo Reservation as its western neighbor, the Navajo Reservation adjoins it on the east; the Leupp (Navajo) Reservation touches it on the southwest and the Butte country, occupied by public domain Navajo, lies to the south. It has an area of 3,863 square miles and is occupied by 2,236 Hopi Indians and 2,700 Navajo. The agency is located at Keams Canyon, 85 miles from the nearest town on the Santa Fe Railroad and it is one of the most isolated of the Indian Service units. The superintendent, Mr. Robert E. L. Daniel, has one of the most perplexing of Indian problems on his hands. This is caused by the presence, within one reservation, of two tribes whose mental and physical characteristics, and social and industrial conditions are far apart. The result is the relations between the Hopi and Navajo are antagonistic to a degree which makes it impossible for the superintendent to maintain law and order without adequate police - and this he has not been given by the Department.

In 1882 an Executive Order set apart 2,472,320 acres of land for the Moqui Reservation, for the use and

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occupancy of the Hopi and such other Indians as the Secretary of the Interior might designate. At that time some one with a ruler drew on a map a parallelogram, which represented an area, approximately, 75 by 55 miles for a reservation, without the least regard to topographical and ethnological conditions, and mis-named it the "Moqui" Reservation. The Hopi call themselves "Hopi-tuh", or "peaceful ones." The Navajo derisively nicknamed them "Moqui" which, in their language means "dead ones" and this term of derision was officially selected by the authorities to serve as the name of a reservation set apart principally for the Hopi Indians.

It is quite apparent that in 1882 the authorities in Washington either were densely ignorant of the situation in this country at that time or were utterly indifferent to it and by laying out the reservation with a desk ruler and an utter disregard of the welfare of the Hopi, they laid the foundations for trouble and suffering which have developed a situation that calls for immediate remedial action by the Indian Office.

While at Keams Canyon a Hopi Indian handed me a carbon copy of a letter which had been sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It presents the situation from the side of the Hopi so well that I am placing it herein. The letter reads as follows:

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"To Hon. Commissioner of Indian Affairs: We, whose signatures and thumb-marks appear below are Hopi Indians, representing the tribe, residing on five mesas, in villages, under the Moqui Agency.

"We have lived here all our lives as self-supporting people. We have watched the encroachment of our neighbor, the Navajo, upon our reservation from year to year. The land of our fathers and fore-fathers is being taken from us. This land originally belonged to us.

"The history of the United States states that the early Spanish conquerors found our fore-fathers all through this country and at these present villages. It is true that a few Navajo were residing upon this territory when it was made into a reservation, but since that time thousands have come in and settled.

"We have flocks of sheep and herds of horses and cattle but the past years have been exceptionally severe on our stock, due to overgrazing.

"What are we to do if this condition continues? How can we and our children progress when our land is taken? Many of our good and noble Government men are deeply interested in our welfare and we are looking for the time when this reservation will be determined for the Hopi.

"We request that if there is any possible chance for our representatives to appear before you and the Committees of Congress, to explain our condition and the

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great necessity for assistance to our race, we will be very grateful. We are grateful to the Government for what has already been done in our behalf and we will be more so when this request of ours is given consideration. To you we look once more for assistance."

The Hopi live in villages on top of high mesas and some of their houses antedate the landing of Columbus. Their villages are strongholds which they built to escape inroads of the Ute and Navajo. They are an inoffensive peace loving people. Their little farms lie in the valleys and, unlike the Navajos, they bring in their cattle and sheep to corrals near the villages. They are a people of fixed habitation whereas the Navajo are semi-nomadic following their flocks and herds through miles of country.

This whole land is semi-arid and a large portion of it is absolute desert. The Navajo are aggressive and independent. There is no doubt that the majority of those on the Moqui Reservation have come in from all sides with a deliberate purpose of taking the grazing land which rightfully belongs to the Hopi. When a Navajo sees a Hopi with anything he wants, he takes it, and there is no recourse. If a Hopi is using grazing land which the Navajo wants, he will drive the Hopi off, scatter his stock and force him to draw back to the narrow area adjacent to the Hopi villages. The Hopi declares that the Navajo steal

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their stock and run them off to other parts of the country and sell them and if a Hopi has horses running in their neighborhood the Navajo will rope them, use them all day to round up their own stock and turn them loose, thus saving their own horses.

For years this preventable situation has continued. In 1911 I was sent by President Taft to Keams Canyon with troops to enforce some regulations of the Indian Office. I then found the Navajo encroaching on Hopi land and mistreating the Hopi Indians. The agent, at the time, was given but three policemen, too poorly paid to attract the right men with which to maintain order on a reservation which has the area of an empire. I then recommended that he be given twenty-five well paid policemen with a white chief. The number was increased to eight without change of compensation, which number has lately been reduced to six.

This statement is enough to show the absurdity of any expectation that the superintendent can keep order. The reply to my question as to whether orders were obeyed was that "orders were not sent out as they were not respected nor cannot be enforced." The superintendent consequently is powerless to maintain the dignity of his office, with the result that the authority and dignity of the Indian Office and of the United States are made a mock of over a large section of Arizona.

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The Hopi looks in vain to the Department for protection for although aware of this condition for many years the Government has continued to neglect its duty in providing a remedy. There were, undoubtedly, a few Navajo living on this land before the reservation was set apart for the Hopi, who had some rights of occupancy, but the many Navajo who have come in since, in defiance of orders, should be put off and kept off the Hopi Reservation by force, and the Hopi protected in their rights.

The superintendent maintains he should have a squadron of cavalry stationed at Keams Canyon. It might be well to have such a force present at the eviction of trespassing Navajos, and for a short time after until tranquillity is restored, but the Navajo, when treated with justice, are a well behaved people. There is, however, a large floating element from other reservations which has come into the Keams Canyon jurisdiction which occasionally makes trouble. In my opinion a white chief with twenty-five well paid police will be sufficient in ordinary times. As it is now only six insufficiently paid policemen are allowed by the Department to maintain order on 5,863 square miles. These men are paid but \$20 a month, with \$10 additional to the chief. They are all Indians. The agent is only allowed sufficient subsistence to maintain but one or two of these men. At the salary

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given no Indian who is self-supporting will take the position of policeman, with the result that it is not possible to get dependable men.

It is estimated that the stock on this reservation numbers 100,000 sheep, 30,000 goats, 15,000 cattle, 10,000 horses and 2,000 burros. The Navajo Indians own the greater part of the sheep; the Hopi owning in the neighborhood of 20,000 head. The average Hopi band runs from 20 to 100 sheep, while the average Navajo band numbers from 300 to 500, with a number of family bands of from 1200 to 2500. The Navajos do not have large herds of cattle but several of the Hopi Indians graze herds running up into the hundreds.

Because of the limited amount of water developed on the reservation, the stock now on the reserve, is all that can be cared for. The range adjacent to watering places is over grazed. The Navajo have gradually closed in on the Hopi grazing land until the Hopi is unable to increase his holdings for the Navajo follow the best water. When the range fails to supply them with water the Navajo move to the sections usually grazed by the Hopi, crowding them until they are compelled to withdraw to a few areas close to the villages where they can watch their stock and care for them.

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The home of the Hopi Indians is in a fixed place and he works from that point only, while the Navajo is satisfied to make his home anywhere that his herd may happen to best find water and good grazing. It is not to be wondered at that the Hopi Indians are growing more and more disheartened as, helpless, they see their neighbors crowding them without hindrance from the Government. The Indian Office should take hold of this situation with a firm hand - the policy of following the line of least resistance is leading to the ruination of the Hopi tribe.

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