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on Campus

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Locale: UWM

Subjects: ~~Indian Students on Campus~~
~~Current Problems~~ Contemporary Political Problems

General Opinions
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MISCELLANEOUS
UNM Conference on Minorities on Campus
Conroy Chino
December 14, 1969
By Michael Husband

INDIAN STUDENTS
ON CAMPUS
CURRENT PROBLEMS

- Q. You people talk quite a bit about the problems...what would be some of the ones that you would mention?
- A. I guess it would be...there was a point that he pointed out, well alot of it is a lack of identifying to certain aspects of the university like there aren't many Indian faculty members or administrators and this kind of throws you, who can you associate with except the students themselves, and I just think that the effects on Indian students is the fact that statistics show over 50% of freshmen students drop out, drop out after the first year...and out of those, I think that high school...well I could just figure, there isn't very much preparation on the part of the students to cope with the college life and college curriculum... which causes the drop out rate and also reflection upon the educational process, the educational system New Mexico has...
- Q. Can you think of specifics?
- A. Well, I guess...
- Q. Well, let me ask you in a different way...how many... you may not have this information, but how many Indian students are there at the university?

- A. There are over 100 students right now...
- Q. Do you have any idea what percentage of the population in New Mexico, the Indians constitute...I don't have any idea at all...
- A. No, I haven't...
- Q. Do you have any idea...but I am sure that it is more than 15,000 and I am sure that it is more than that.
- A. What the University seems to do or does do is the fact that 50% of Indian students seem to forget tribal ways...or that is where the white society turns...says you are a successful Indian and it shouldn't be that way...University shouldn't intimidate its groups...they should know who they are and this is what is done to them...
- Q. This is something that I have heard talked about quite often...how exactly, I know that when you go to the University...I know that there are certain requirements that you have to meet and I am just curious...how we can just kind of bend that a little bit...if that would be a good word to use in order that we might not lose identity of the cultures that come in...
- A. It is very difficult for Indian students...when I use the term "Indian" you know like...I think they have been categorized too much...Indians have been categorized too much... to take in all the tribes...

but each tribe is different...like Navajos are really different from the Pueblos...as Indians and religion ...is different in the different tribes and to try and say...that to bring in, say Indian, you have to bring in a different...do you understand...?

Q. Yeah, I think I do...

A. And so...specific needs have to be on an individual basis...

Q. Do you think that something like this might be achieved by perhaps a community council for Indian students going to school at the University...somebody that they can go to...I don't know exactly...I was just trying to throw out a possibility...you know... see what kinds of things might come out of there...

A. I don't know...but what I wanted to see was what we were talking about...a relevancy within the University...like a curriculum and one thing I guess that has tried to rub off the image that everybody has, about the Indians...I mean they have this dumb Indian image...you know and like nobody...

Delfin Lovato & Seferino Tenorio (Santo Domingo Pueblo)
Paul Tafoya (Santa Clara Pueblo)
NEED FOR ALL-INDIAN TELEVISION PROGRAM
December 14, 1969
By Michael Husband
Side One, continued

Tonight we are going to discuss in this program, the

various things with regards to the organization objectives and benefits of the program and will eventually get into the series of discussion specifically on Indian affairs in general...Indian organizations and tribal government. At this time I would like to call on Del to give us a brief summary of the objectives of this program and what we hope will be the results of this program.

Thank you, Joe...I will start on my remarks...first of all by saying that I realize that many of the people are generally aware of the program and the basic objectives of the program and some of the things that we hope to do. However, the Program Committee felt that for the benefit of those people who are not aware of the program, we would like to briefly discuss some of the things, the goals that we would like to accomplish... As you might know, the idea of an all Indian TV program is not entirely new. Various Indian organizations and individuals in the past have tried and in some cases had slight success, to put on this program, both on TV and on radio. I think a good example of this was ? several years back...the program itself has a variety of possibilities. To simply say there is a great need for such a program, I think, would be enough,...however, I feel that there are other factors involved in which should be discussed

here. As you are well aware that our Indian people are facing some serious problems in the area of Indian legislation, water right, representation of school boards and other issues that we tried to have tremendous impact on the Indian people today and future generations to come. Therefore, I feel that it is important that we as Indians and individuals and members of our respective tribes can consider it an effort to inform our people and get them involved in some of these problems... Thus, I feel that that is one of the primary objectives of our program... to inform and educate the people of the many problems... and issues on both the local and national level...that are facing them. This type of communications we hope will provide not only for a better informed Indian population, but also for a much better involved...another important aspect of our program I feel is that of educating the non-Indian community regarding the Indian problems, aspirations and goals... We find that even with the many years of the Indian community, non-Indian community living close to the Indian people, the large segment of the non-Indian community, lacks any real knowledge of the Indian culture, the real government and religion as a whole. This misunderstanding and lack of information, regarding Indians, I feel, has many kinds of ? Indian legislation and many losses we have had adversely affected the Indians. We find that even today right here

in our own state...many non-Indians still feel that the Indian does not pay any taxes, some people still feel that the Indian people get a monthly check from the federal government...this is to say nothing of the fears that have been expressed by some tourist in the past who ask if they are safe, afraid of being massacred or hit and scalped...which they ? . We hope that this type of a program will eventually lead not only towards a better Indian community, but more educated, and eventually to establish a better communication between the Indian community and the non-Indian community as well. The gentlemen here will adequately summarize the other areas which we feel that our program can provide towards a better-informed Indian community.

Thank you very much, Del...I know that you very nicely covered this particular summary...let me check this thing out as we...come about... ? There is Paul, who as been quite active more recently, in Indian affairs...he is also very much involved in Indian organizations...and National Congress of American Indians...and I would like to ask him to see what he can give us with regards to Indian organizations.

Thank you... In relations as to what Mr. Lovato has

stated...I would like to briefly give some examples as to the type of benefits that this program such as this would bring to the nations of American Indians as well as to those who have some concern and reactions in them. The American Indians today compose a number of more than 650,000. On this total, more than 400,000 live on reservations in 27 states...the rest are urban or non-reservation Indians living in 20 states across the country. We know that American Indians are in many ways at a turning point in their history...acculturation of the non-Indian society has been slow and painful and it has also been in general, unsuccessful. Many factors have contributed to the present situation of the Indians and it is these factors that we hope to discuss in these programs... We know that a better education and employment opportunities are some first priority needs...along with these many tribes are concentrating their efforts in the over-all social and economic developments on their reservations. Some significant progress has been made along these lines ...and towns and developments are appearing in many places... For example, later on in the series of our programs, we hope to have Governor Rober Lewis from Zuni Pueblo give a presentation from development on his reservation. This is a development that has come to be considered one of the major developments...in the country, on

a fifty five million dollar budget. The Red Lake Chippewa tribe of Minnesota has also been very successful with the development of their reservation, Colorado River tribes of Arizona...have been making major developments which improve water resource developments along the river. The Inter-tribal Council of California and other Indian organizations in California are currently assisting tribes in that state with major land and native resources in project. The National Congress of American Indians were involved with technical and financial assistance from the western community and economic developments for some small reservations throughout the country. These are but a few of the examples of the significant progress being made with some tribes in the nation...and at the present time we are making plans to have some of these people who are involved in the developments of these projects and to share with us their experiences and knowledge. On the other hand we must not overlook the fact that while there have been some significant progress made, the diminishing and solving the problem are still considerable. In relations to these, we will be discussing such problems as that, as the Colville tribe and their encounter with the treat of termination, an issue which is of concern to all Indian tribes. The Alaskan natives in their quest to regain 40 million acres of land ?

5 million dollars as compensation for this land which will be taken from them... Our own New Mexico Taos Pueblo's plea for restoration of Taos Pueblo's Blue Lake for their use ? we will also be discussing the problems encountered by 250,000 urban or non-reservation Indians...of whom most are in very poor social and economic circumstances...and do not receive any federal services and benefits such as reservation Indians do. Consequently, then we will be discussing the victories and progress...as well as the problems encountered by some organizations such as American Indians United whose main concern is for the welfare of non-reservation Indians... and National Indian Youth Council who speak for a great number of American Indian young people. We will be discussing issues of mutual concern to all...tribes and such will include, water rights, fishing and hunting rights and the important opportunities for American Indians and so in the final analysis we hope to have provided necessary information and opinions as well as experiences...which will aid us, as American Indians as well as the general American American public...to better understand the circumstances and need as American Indians can be...

Thank you very much, Sef...and we are very fortunate to have a fellow who I have known for many years...who has

been involved in tribal affairs and of course, he is the former governor of Santa Clara Pueblo...he did have a great deal to do with the constitution of the All-Indian Pueblo Council and is quite knowledgeable in tribal government and at this time I would like to call on Paul Tafoya from Santa Clara Pueblo...and would like for him to speak on tribal government...

Thank you, Joe...I think for the very first time that we have found a means of communications within our own people within our own pueblos...communicating with our own people. What I would like to talk about this evening is the area of tribal government, its relationship with its people and I think it is very, very important that the tribal members of any tribe should have accurate information. I think that this program will provide such information, will improve the communication system within the tribal government and it is very important to have this open communication. I feel very strongly that to get the full support, the support every tribal government within every tribe... they should have full understanding on matters, current issues, current legislations, current federal program... they need all this information...and I hope that we will find people that will get on this program and give you this information...I for one, would like to see every

Indian Pueblo get on its feet and move forward...but I also found that we need understanding...we need to be in communication with our people... there are programs... available today, available to every Indian tribe in the Nation, but again we must have the cooperation within your own tribe. This is very, very important...this program will bring such resource people, people that actually formed a policy...people that are directly responsible for the financial assistance which is greatly needed. We hope to find this type of people and come to our program. I think we need to know what every tribe is doing throughout the country, not only in the state. I think we need to know what the Pueblo of Zuni is doing, what the pueblo of Taos is doing and what the pueblo of Santo Domingo is doing...and what our own pueblo of Santa Clara...I think we need to exchange our ideas...I feel that this is a way of doing it...this is a way of exchanging ideas and I am sure...that it is going to help...it will also help the tribes here, the policies or in the decision making area...and there are matters coming before the tribe that involve the Indian people directly for example...the Civil Rights Act, 1968, which one pueblo might support some of the contents and others, part of it and who knows...maybe some Indian people would support the Act itself...100%, I don't know... With this program

and the type of people that I think we will get...I think they will be an assistance to our council...in helping aid to make that final decision, if they support such a program or not...I think everybody needs to hear what every tribal government might be thinking about...and I think that we all are in the same boat...that our goal is to help our Indian people to advance, to better themselves, to better the community and I think this is our goals directly...and so therefore, I am very happy that I am part of this program committee and I will certainly do my job and will look for such people that will help and advance our people.

Thank you very much, Paul. It is very interesting to note the comments that the various committee members here have indicated with regards to the objectives and the goals for this program and especially with due respect to our tribal leaders, the chairman...presidents or what have you...of each pueblo and others who have contributed so much to Indian affairs and helping their people to try and understand and also to try to do something in order to make a happy and satisfactory living for the people of the pueblos as well as the reservations and those who are perhaps located in urban areas. But the interesting point here that in respect to our tribal leaders...we

have them in the goal of leadership is the fact that the idea is to give those who have original ideas and thoughts ...sometimes these people are not recognized and I am glad that this program will bring about some of these individuals and we will know first hand what the possibilities and also information to our people... Now I think that perhaps all of us might get into a session with respect to what else that we might be able to get from this also...program, thus in contrast with things that are already happened in the non-Indian world...and with respect to the current issues in Indian, would anybody care to comment on this?

I think this issue involves the very fact that right now living in a society, people are ? not only advancement in technology, but also in human relations. I think one of the main areas of weakness that we find also in the Indian society, or Indian population, is the fact of communications. I think this has been brought out and has been involved here tonight. However, I think this is one of the...if anything comes out of this program I hope it will be the fact that the people themselves on the reservation do get the information from this program hopefully...

Of the more younger kind of movement that is going on in the non-Indian world...I think it is also an interesting thing and exciting thing that is going on in the younger element on the reservation as well as those technically that we have sort of assimilated into the non-Indian world in educational conferences...and I think at this point maybe, perhaps, it would be more, appropriate for this ? in that area...and ? to say...

Well, one thing that we know is that the population of the urban Indians is increasing at a great rate...and part of the reason is because the younger people have to move away from the reservation because of the lack of jobs and the opportunities aren't there for them to utilize what education they get through college and vocational-type of school, but we know that they are aware and they speak up on the issues that are affecting their own Indian tribes...and one of the major things that they are faced with is to make a decision of what to do, what can we offer what can she offer to their own tribes...I think that many of the students here that go to college find and are thinking about their people and aren't really acculturated to the extent that they have forgotten their people at all... We see alot of demonstrations and alot of riots in the

country...you hardly find the Indian youth at all... The respect for the elders...they have the respect for who they are and they know that they have the culture that they can relate to and this is a major thing on the college campus today...and we know that on the University of New Mexico campus...the Kiva Club has been talking more and we're planning to set up some Indian cultural centers... for these students so they can realize some of the cultural assets that they have...

Yes, that is an interesting point...that fact that we talk about the old and the young in there and the fact that we sometimes ? and here again, we are awfully concerned with the elders and we can't blame them for not understanding some of the new issues and things that are happening on the reservation...you can't blame some of our older people even if the younger people are not understanding some of the complications that enter it...the various programs that will benefit them and so you have ? and yet at the same time we have to cope with this kind of situation...and so I think that Paul will give us something in respect to giving something to the elders in respect to some of these things...

Well, I think that I would like to make a few remarks...

Is the fact that so many of the tribal leaders are really stressing to their people to register to vote...I think this is something that is very important that we should get that information. We can get this particular issue, voter registration is today very, very important...we found that to be very true. We found that, that vote, your individual vote really means something. We found that this, very difficult relationship between the political parties within the state...things that you want... things that you can't get...and sometimes you have to go around the long ways... So I would encourage all of our listeners this evening to think twice in voter registration... Go out and register and vote. As you know, 1971 will be an election year...so let's all get out there and do our part...

Thank you, Paul. Now the fact that we have covered just about the whole ? of Indian affairs...I wonder if anyone would comment on anything...perhaps they have reserved for about a half a minute...that is about all we have left...

Joe, I would like to make this one statement. A very interesting thing happened yesterday...the Congress repealed an amendment to the OEO policy, and one thing that was especially of importance to the Indian tribes...to get

federal funds through the Indian Desk in Washington. But one thing though, the federal money was going to go to the state and this would help some problem with the state jurisdiction and I thought that was things that through this type of a program we could probably inform the people of what is really happening around...

Yes...

And Joe, another thing...I think we need to get information from the pueblos from the tribes and various communities as to what activities are taking place and I think it would certainly be appreciated for this information to come in to this station because we like to make this type of public announcements...it is very important...

I think that this is wonderful...I think that anyone out there in the Indian audience as well as the non-Indian audience, anything relevant to Indian activities...at the University of New Mexico...in education, he was heard in the last few weeks...current issues that have been happening in the various school districts and some of this will be covered and very hopefully we will be able to cover all other areas adequately come in on a series of programs on the other ? result in communications between

the teachers, the parents...and the school boards are kept on good order and faithful respect for each other, whether you are anglo, Spanish or Indian, that we will not misunderstand and that we can work together as far as communications... The smoke signals between miles are keep free the heart, temper, power gives love and lends wisdom to men's actions in behalf of all our children...

END OF INTERVIEW