

Indian Nations, American Citizens

Ted Zuern, S.J.

Today the native American population shows the influence of its own traditions and of developments within the United States.

Frequently, these two strains are in conflict.



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Indian Nations, American Citizens

Interior Secretary James Watt bluntly criticized Indian reservations as the failures of socialist government during a television interview in 1983 and was surprised to find that he had lit an explosion of indignant protests throughout American Indian country. Incessant calls from incensed callers tied up the telephone lines at the Department of the Interior. Secretary Watt made a hurried visit to the executive council of the National Congress of American Indians, which was meeting in Washington that week, and apologized for the hurt his remarks had caused. Nonetheless, the council and the National Tribal Chairmen's Association approved resolutions asking for his resignation. As Secretary of the Interior, he is the person most responsible for Federal relations with American Indian tribes. Because he has that responsibility, Indians across the land suggested formation of a new Indian organization named "Kilowatt."

Now as the smoke of accusations settles, a consideration of what relationship the United States has to Indian tribes is in order. What is the relationship between American Indians and the Department of the Interior? What distinguishes American Indians from other cultural groups within America's cultural pluralism? Do American Indians possess rights that are distinct from those of other Americans?

American Indians' Relationship to the United States

One hundred and fifty years ago Chief Justice John Marshall, from the bench of the U.S. Supreme Court, observed that the relationship between the United States and American Indian peoples is probably unlike any other relationship in the world. The significance of his observation has seldom been appreciated, much less been used as a principle of Government policy. Popular thought developed the myth that Indians would vanish.

When they did not vanish, popular opinion listed them among “the minorities.”

During his interview, Secretary Watt seemed unaware of Chief Justice Marshall’s observation. He seemed to assume that the United States had given to Indian tribes the reservations on which they live. The fact is that Indian reservations are lands which Indian tribes reserved for themselves when they were forced to transfer by treaties the vast majority of their lands to the United States. In some instances, tribes lost all their homelands and did receive from the Federal Government land that had been acquired from other Indian tribes. The United States, in return for the millions of square miles of land it had received from the tribes, promised them assistance to compensate for the loss of their land and so enable them to provide for community needs. The United States agreed that these promises were to endure “as long as rivers flow.”

No such promises were made to any other cultural groups within the United States. Moreover, the promises made to Indian tribes were not based on the Indians’ distinctive culture, nor on their distinctive race. A government to government commitment had been made and sealed in international treaties.

The international quality of Indian treaties has been questioned many times. But, as Felix S. Cohen, America’s most respected authority on Federal Indian law, stated in his *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*: “That treaties with Indian tribes are of the same dignity as treaties with foreign nations is a view which has been repeatedly confirmed by the Federal courts and never successfully challenged.”

The 1852 decision in *Michigan of Turner v. American Baptist Missionary Union* found: “It is contended that a treaty with tribes has not the same dignity or effect as a treaty with a foreign and independent nation. This distinction is not authorized by the Constitution.

Since the commencement of the Government, treaties have been made with the Indians, and the treaty-making power has been exercised in making them. They are treaties within the meaning of the Constitution, and as such, are the supreme law of the land."

Indian tribes clearly possess a sovereignty distinct from that of the United States. In his *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*, Mr. Cohen states: "The whole course of judicial decision on the nature of Indian tribal powers is marked by adherence to three fundamental principles: 1) An Indian tribe possesses, in the first instance, all the powers of a sovereign state. 2) Conquest renders the tribe subject to the legislative power of the United States, and, in substance, terminates the external powers of sovereignty of the tribe, e.g., its power to enter into treaties with foreign nations, but does not affect the internal sovereignty of the tribe, i.e., its power of local self-government. 3) These powers are subject to qualification by treaties and by express legislation of Congress, but save as thus expressly qualified, full powers of internal sovereignty are vested in Indian tribes and in their duly constituted organs of government."

As recently as January 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right of the Jicarilla Apache tribe to collect a severance tax on minerals extracted from its reservation lands. The Supreme Court specified that the tribe possesses the sovereign power to levy that tax. The United States had overpowered Indian tribes, including the Jicarilla Apache, but had not destroyed their governments. President Reagan on Jan. 24, 1983, explicitly stated that a "government-to-government" relationship has always existed between the Federal Government and American Indian tribes.

The fact that Indian tribal nations are located within the boundaries of the United States apparently confuses many. They tend to disregard the significance of tribal governments. They do not grasp Chief Justice Mar-

shall's observation about the unique relationship between the United States and Indian tribes.

Only in this century United States citizenship was granted to all American Indians. During the first century of the United States' existence a child born to Indian parents within the boundaries of this country was not recognized by the U.S. Government as a citizen of this country although a child born to foreign parents in this country was so recognized. The only citizenship American Indians possessed was that of their traditional nation, tribe or pueblo. The United States recognized that citizenship. Indians recognized that citizenship, although they considered themselves more as members of their peoples.

Indian Culture in U.S. Cultural Pluralism

Finally, in 1924 by an act of Congress United States citizenship was granted to every American Indian. Prior to that date, Congress in piecemeal fashion had granted American citizenship to somewhat more than half the American Indians in this country. However, Congress granted U.S. citizenship, not in response to a universal petition by American Indian groups but as a move to absorb Indians into the mainstream of American life "where they would do better." Although Congress could grant American citizenship, it had no power to abrogate tribal citizenships which were far older than the United States. The effect of such Congressional action was to make American Indians members of that select group, Americans who possess dual citizenship. Today American Indians are by birth citizens of their traditional nation, tribe or pueblo and also citizens of the United States.

However, the granting of United States citizenship to every American Indian in 1924 did not bring all Indians into the flow of American life. Some states schemed to prevent Indians from registering to vote. Legal battles had to be fought against state regulations

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that kept Indians from the polls. Some had to wait until 1948, more than 20 years, before they could vote.

Tragedy has been compounded by the failure of Federal and state governments to appreciate the cultural integrity of American

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Indian peoples. Indians were seen to be different and so were judged to be inferior and in need of cultural change. Actually for more than 20,000 years, a time span far longer than the modern national identities of Europe have existed, Native American peoples lived with dignity and meaning in their lives without guidance from persons of alien cultures. In fact, Indians helped the first European immigrants to survive on this continent.

However, the ideals of “Manifest Destiny” limited many Americans of European ancestry in appreciating Indian values and social structures. They believed that native peoples could find meaning in their lives only if they were transformed into persons with assumptions, attitudes and expectations identical to their own. They believed, without grasping the values, structures and goals of native cultures, that American Indians had “to rise” from what they called “pagan savagery.” Tribes of hunters that followed roaming herds were permanently located in one place. Men who hunted were forced into agriculture despite the cultural assignment of that work to women. They were not allowed to be themselves.

They were forced to behave as though they had become members of another cultural tradition. They had been driven into a living death because, in being forced to deny their culture, they had been forced to deny themselves. The United States’ greatest crime against American Indians was pressuring them

to deny their cultural identity. Individuals and societies can change their traditional values and social structures, but those changes must be chosen, not imposed. Individuals and communities must want to make the change. They alone have the power to make those changes effectively.

‘What can be said of . . . efforts to “civilize” and “Christianize” the Indians so that they might “be like us”?’

Unlike the American Indians who wanted to remain in the traditions of their ancestors, others came to these shores seeking to change their lives. They wanted to become a new people. The most notable exceptions, of course, were those forcibly transported from Africa to this land. But even they were granted United States citizenship more than a half century earlier than American Indians. Yet, as with the Indians, they were often denied the right to vote.

American Indians, then, possess cultural traditions that distinguish them from the mainstream of American culture, and they have been joined by many culturally distinct immigrant groups. Cultural differences distinguish American Indians but do not place them in a unique category. They fit into the pattern of America’s cultural pluralism. But their most significant difference is that they retain their tribal citizenship, whereas immigrant Americans renounced their original citizenship.

Distinctive American Indian Rights

Many assume that racial difference underlies the claims American Indians make for their specific rights. In truth, race has never been the basis for the special trust responsibility of the United States to American Indian tribes.

Nevertheless, the American sin of racism has wounded American Indians. The United

States Commission on Civil Rights stated in its 1981 publication, *Indian Tribes, A Continuing Quest for Survival*: "This racism has served to justify a view now repudiated, but which lingers in the public mind, that Indians are not entitled to the same legal rights as others in this country. . . . At one extreme the concept of inferior status of Indians was used to justify genocide; at the other, apparently benevolent side, the attempt was to assimilate them into the dominant society. Whatever the rationale or motive, whether rooted in voluntary efforts or coercion, the common denominator has been the belief that Indian society is an inferior lifestyle." "At times this conviction was stated explicitly by men in public office, but whether expressed or not, it generated decision and action," adds D'Arcy McNickle in *Native American Tribalism*.

Possibly roots of racism are found in Chief Justice Marshall's description of Indian tribes as "domestic, dependent nations" whose relationship to the Federal Government resembles that of a ward to his guardian. Marshall wrote: "Though the Indians are acknowledged to have an unquestionable and, therefore, unquestioned right to the lands they occupy, until that right shall be extinguished by a voluntary cession to our Government, yet it may well be doubted whether those tribes which reside within the acknowledged boundaries of the United States can, with strict accuracy, be denominated foreign nations. They may, more correctly, perhaps be denominated domestic, dependent nations. They occupy a territory to which we assert a title independent of their will, which must take effect in point of possession when their right of possession ceases. Meanwhile, they are in a state of pupillage. Their relation to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian."

"Pupillage" and "resembles . . . ward to his guardian" have nuances of condescension,

although Marshall recognized Indian tribes as nations. Frequently, the word “resembles” has been overlooked and the term “wards of the government” has been used. Marshall did not say that Indians were wards, but he believed that tribal governments had lost some sovereign powers when they signed treaties with the Federal Government, which, consequently, accepted special trust responsibilities toward them in order to compensate for the limitations conquest imposed.

Recognition of Federal responsibilities was indicated in 1974 in *Morton v. Mancari*, a lawsuit in which the plaintiff challenged the statutory policy of “Indian employment preference” in the Bureau of Indian Affairs as constituting discrimination on race. The Court found that “Indian employment preference” is granted to Indians “not as a discrete racial group, but rather as members of quasi-sovereign tribal entities whose lives and activities are governed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (B.I.A.) in a unique fashion.” The decision rules out race as a foundation for Indian-United States relations, but indicates anew the problem that Chief Justice Marshall, Secretary Watt and others have in trying to describe that relationship.

It is unfortunate that so frequently an attitude of superiority characterized the dealings of Europeans and their descendents with American Indians. That attitude existed long before the United States was conceived. In the mid-18th century Benjamin Franklin approved Archibald Kennedy’s description of Indian traders as a “tribe of harpies” who have “abused, defrauded and deceived those poor, innocent, well meaning people.” Have U.S. Government agents “abused, defrauded and deceived” American Indians less? What can be said of their efforts to “civilize” and “Christianize” the Indians so that they might “be like us”? Franklin had insights beyond most of his peers and successors. He wrote, “Savages we call them, because their manners

differ from ours, which we think the perfection of civility; they think the same of theirs.”

Seldom has the spiritual depth of American Indian traditions been grasped by those who are not Indian. The Indian sense of commitment and responsibility to one's community hold answers that modern America needs. But different cultural approaches to the fundamentals of life seem never to meet.

Almost 20 years ago during the Office of Economic Opportunity's war on poverty, the personnel committee on the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation in South Dakota met to select an applicant for a Community Action Program social outreach position at Wounded Knee. After viewing a stack of applications, one of the non-Indian committee members suggested an applicant who impressed him as fulfilling all the requisites for the job. One of the Indian committee members responded, “I agree. He has the largest family.” Washington had prepared a program. Indians used it to meet a basic community need.

The history of Federal Indian policy reveals how difficult the Federal Government finds accepting American Indian peoples as the competent and capable persons they are. The belief that Indians are incapable of making adequate decisions for themselves is the worst form of prejudice because it judges Indians to be personally inadequate, not to say incompetent.

Today, American Indians experience influences that their ancestors could not have imagined. Modern technology influences them as it influences peoples everywhere. The disruption of traditional lifestyles, however, has not eliminated the spirit of their cultural traditions. Basically, cultures are spiritual. They are inner forces that direct the action and style of the peoples they vitalize. Many modern Indians are able to bridge the river of cultural differences from their ancestral ways to those of modern mainstream America. They live with traditional values in their hearts, but they know their way in American society.

For others, however, the disruption of traditional lifestyles has caused physical and psychological illnesses which complicate their communities' social, economic and political development. They feel threatened by America's dominant society. They will suffer into the future if they are made to feel that their culture and race are meaningless in mainstream America.

American Indians did not seek to sign treaties that gave their homelands to the United States. Nor did they seek to become citizens of the United States. The Federal Government, which thought it knew what was best for them, made both decisions. Those decisions cannot be undone without causing greater pain and injustice. The United States recognizes American Indians as its citizens with all the rights of citizenship. It also recognizes their tribal citizenship with the rights of that citizenship. To them it has made solemn promises which it never made to other groups. As Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black stated in *Federal Park Commission v. Tuscarora Indian Nation*, "Great nations, like great men, should keep their word."

Indians Today

In the late 1960's, American Indians began to proclaim openly that it is good to be Indian. They entered Federal courts confidently seeking justice for the violations of those promises that were to endure "as long as rivers flow." The last 15 years have not been long enough to correct two centuries of betrayal and despair.

Secretary Watt complained that the failures of the reservations resulted from political "liberalism" and could be cured by political "conservatism." He seems to forget that such a "conservative" approach was used during the Eisenhower Administration when the Federal Government terminated Federal recognition of many tribes and relocated thousands of Indians in urban areas without adequate

support for the cultural changes demanded by such geographic changes. The failures of these programs have forced the Federal Government to recognize anew many of those "terminated tribes" and to extend Federal assistance to Indians inadequately adjusted to urban life.

'The fundamental cross-cultural problem is that members of one culture tend to use their standards in judging the actions of members of another culture'

Watt does well to encourage Indian self-determination, but successful self-determination will not come by removal of Government assistance so that Indians are totally on their own. That approach failed under Eisenhower. Those American Indians who have not adequately met the demands of modern American life should be allowed with Federal assistance to choose the adjustment that they know will better their lives.

Each culture has its own world-view. The fundamental cross-cultural problem is that members of one culture tend to use their standards in judging the actions of members of another culture. Government officials must break the barrier that their own culture has placed around them so that they can grasp the significance of actions within the Indian traditions. Each Presidential administration attempts to solve "the Indian problem" rather than the problem of cross-cultural relations. Answers are sought for the question, "What would I want if I were an Indian?" rather than for the question, "What would an Indian do if he were in my position?"

Government officials and tribal members are both disheartened by repeated examinations of the consequences of social eruptions rather than the causes of those eruptions. Meanwhile, the general public experiences a certain confusion as it seeks to draw answers

from the facts of distinctive race and culture and fails to see American Indians' dual citizenship.

Yet within the past 15 years more than 500 Indian men and women have become lawyers. More have established themselves effectively in the business and professional world. U.S. Senators were amazed last year at an oversight hearing during which Indian economists suggested new approaches toward economic development on Indian reservations. There was a remarkable suggestion about using the more than a billion dollars, which the B.I.A. holds in trust for American Indians, to fund a development institution for Indian reservations that would have such management capabilities as are found in the International Monetary Fund and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

These Indian professional and business people bridge the gulf between their cultural traditions and mainstream America. However, the majority of America's native peoples are not in that position. Some still are "wandering between two worlds; one dead, the other powerless to be born." The last U.S. census counted over 1,400,000 American Indians, but today's Indian population is young. More than half of its members are under 25 years of age. Over a half million live in large urban areas, but all are keenly aware of their cultural heritage.

They have been formed under the influences of their Indian traditions, past developments within the United States and conflicts between the two. They need educational opportunities. Their education must recognize and support their Indian identity and also enable them to command respect in the modern world. They must be allowed to make the choices in their lives. To force them against their choices is to continue the failure of which Secretary Watt complained.

When the Indian tribes were forced to transfer their lands to the United States, they

were promised assistance so that they could provide for community needs although they had lost most of their resources. That assistance came with controls and restrictions beyond anything they could have imagined. Today, American Indians who have established themselves socially and economically in modern America are not seeking that assistance, but many still need that assistance so they may control their lives. That assistance must not be given as to an underprivileged minority but to Indian citizens who are at the same time citizens of the United States.

‘Today’s Indians know their cultural traditions. They also have good insights into the operation of modern American business and politics’

Although the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Justice, Energy and others have responsibilities for American Indians, the B.I.A. in the Department of the Interior remains the Federal agency most responsible for fulfilling the special trust responsibility of the United States toward American Indian tribes. Historically those responsibilities have included protection of Indian land, water and mineral resources, hunting and fishing rights and assistance with health, educational and social programs.

Indians now seek greater control of the planning for their future although they often lack adequate resources for the implementation of those plans. It seems appropriate for the B.I.A. to relinquish the supervisory role it has assumed and take on a consultative posture. Today’s Indians know their cultural traditions. They also have good insights into the operation of modern American business and politics. They need assistance in working out plans for their people rather than receiving programs already prepared for them.

Probably too many decisions are made at the central office in Washington, D.C., and the intermediary area offices located across the country. Local tribal presidents and tribal councils, with the encouraging support of local B.I.A. superintendents on the reservations, could plan more effectively for the local reservations.

The effectiveness of a government bureau or any other agency depends more upon the spirit that animates it than on the structures established within it. A spirit of consultation with the tribes, confidence in the inherent capacity of the tribes to know their objectives and consistency in relating to the tribes, should characterize the B.I.A. Problems will arise even with these characteristics, but more successes can be expected than without such a spirit.

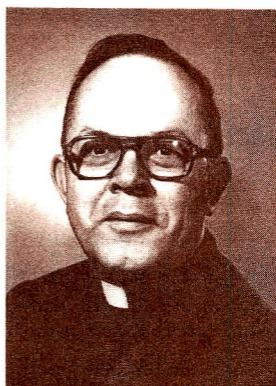
Significant social changes in cross-cultural relations seldom take place within five or ten years. Consequently, programs established with local leadership must be given time to develop. The frustration experienced by tribal peoples when Federal relations change with the inauguration of every new President prevents effective cooperation between the tribes and the Bureau.

Effective Indian leadership is developing. More Indian men and women hold positions within the B.I.A., but, frequently, higher Government authorities are culturally insensitive in relating to that Indian leadership. In 1982 the B.I.A.'s evaluation of the Ancient Indian Land Claims Settlement Bill was rejected by the Office of Management and Budget. Indians from the Bureau were not allowed to testify at the House and Senate hearings on the bill. Instead, the Interior Solicitor General testified with recommendations that contradicted those of the Indian leadership in the Bureau.

American Indians deserve to be consulted with confidence and consistency. They should not be led but offered encouraging assistance by the Federal Government.

Almost 30 years ago in the Yale Law Journal Felix Cohen wrote: "Like the miner's canary, the Indian marks the shift from fresh to poison air in our political atmosphere Our treatment of Indians, even more than our treatment of other minorities, reflects the rise and fall of our democratic faith."

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Father Ted Zuern, S. J., has 30 years experience in social, pastoral and educational ministry in various American Indian communities. Since 1979 he has been Assistant to the Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, Msgr. Paul A. Lenz. He directed 1975-79 the Office of Indian Ministry of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis. In South Dakota, 1968-74, as director of Holy Rosary Mission on the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation, he was responsible for bi-cultural development of Red Cloud Indian School and for establishing the annual Red Cloud Indian Art Show; 1961-68 he was assistant director, then director, of the Mother Butler Indian Center in Rapid City; 1959-61 he served on the staff of St. Francis Mission on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation. At Mayetta, Kansas, 1957-58, he administered Our Lady of the Snows parish on the Potawatomi Indian Reservation. He was ordained in 1957, but prior to ordination had taught at the St. Francis Indian School on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation.

Statistical Analysis

Population and Location

Prior to 1492 in what are now the 48 contiguous states of the United States of America, the American Indian population is estimated to have numbered more than 2,000,000 persons. Four centuries later, after the ravages of disease and war, the 1880 Indian population was approximately 250,000 persons. In 1970 the U.S. census recorded an Indian population of 827,268. In 1980 the U.S. census recorded 1,418,195 American Indians living in the United States.

The dramatic increase of 72% in the American Indian population between 1970 and 1980 is explained by at least two factors. First, political and social activities during the 1970s resulted in American Indians taking open pride in their cultural identity so that they identified themselves more readily as American Indians for the census record. Secondly, the infant mortality rate among American Indians had decreased significantly. Moreover, the birth rate among American Indians was 31.8 births per 1,000 women of childbearing age as compared to the national average of 16.0 births. Over half the American Indian population is now under 25 years of age.

In 1980 the total U.S. population was 226,504,825. The total American Indian population, including Eskimos and Aleuts, at 1,418,195, was about 0.6% of the total United States population. By contrast other population groups in 1980 were: Blacks, 16,500,000; Hispanics 14,600,000; Asian and Pacific, 3,500,000.

The United States through the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Department of the Interior officially recognizes some 260 Indian tribes, nations and pueblos and some 200 Alaska native villages. In 1981 the Bureau listed 734,895 persons as members of these tribes and villages. They totaled a little more than half of the 1980 census and lived on reservations that occupy 52.4 million acres of

land or about 2.5% of the more than two billion acres originally occupied by their ancestors. More than 97% of their land was transferred, usually under pressure, to European nations and after the American revolution to the United States.

These 734,895 persons live in 27 states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

More than one half million Indians live in the large cities of America or in rural areas that are not federal Indian reservations. They do not receive services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs although the Indian Health Service, and the Administration for Native Americans, located in the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Indian Education in the Department of Education, provide some assistance to these Indians in urban areas and to tribes not officially recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Navajo tribe is the largest community within the United States with a membership of approximately 160,000 persons. On the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation in South Dakota the Oglala Sioux tribe has a population of some 13,000 persons. This is the second largest Indian community on a reservation in this country, but many Indian communities in large cities have more members than the Pine Ridge community. Currently, Los Angeles with 48,000 Indians from many tribes has the largest Indian community in an urban area.

History

The early contacts between American Indian tribes and European settlers resulted in an increased prosperity for the tribes, at least in the European sense of prosperity, as the Indians traded for manufactured goods. However, the decline in game and furs and the reduction of land acreage reduced tribal prosperity in both the Indian and the European sense.

The Continental Congress ratified a treaty with the Delaware tribe before the Articles of Confederation were adopted. Since then more than 300 treaties have been signed between the United States and individual Indian tribes. After 1871, however, no more treaties were signed. Instead, agreements between the tribes and Federal agents were presented to the U.S. Congress for votes of approval.

In 1824 the Bureau of Indian Affairs was established in the War Department. It was transferred in 1849 to the Department of the Interior where it remains the primary trust agency of the United States for the American Indian tribes.

In 1830 many Cherokee and other tribal groups were forcibly marched by order of the United States from their traditional homelands east of the Mississippi River to "Indian country" west of the river, now the state of Oklahoma. Thousands died on those marches. Ironically, the argument frequently advanced for such relocations was the belief that Indians would be better off removed from the corrupting contacts with white people who were moving into their eastern lands.

After the Mexican War of 1848 the United States steadily took control of the western Indian land and eventually established Oklahoma as a state which has traditionally had the largest Indian population. Now, California with the vast number of Indians relocated within its borders has the largest Indian population. Meanwhile, the Indian wars were fought in the west against many tribal groups until the frightful massacre of more than 250 Sioux at Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890.

In 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act in an attempt to give tribes a political structure which was thought capable of allowing tribes to take greater control of their future. It provided for the establishment of tribal governments structured with tribal chairmen, tribal councils and tribal courts.

However, all tribal legislation has to be approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Today, the structures of tribal governments vary, but all use some form of electoral system to select tribal government officials. Such procedures are decidedly different from the traditional method of determination by consensus.

Health

During the last century as Indian tribes were forcibly restricted in their movement across the land, they were made more dependent on the Federal Government for their survival. They experienced a radical change of diet as they were denied opportunities to hunt wild animals, to fish and to gather wild fruits and vegetables in their traditional manner. The Federal Government delivered cattle and processed foods to them in return for the land which they had surrendered to the United States. Sometimes the food supplies were inadequate or late in being delivered. On occasion delays in deliveries of food were used as a force to make tribes comply with Government demands. At other times the food and other supplies were substandard. Indian health suffered.

By the end of the last century tuberculosis had become a very serious threat to life for many Indian tribes. Diabetes also became more of a health problem and continues to be so to the present. On the Gila River reservation in Arizona over 50% of the population today over 35 years of age suffers from diabetes. The infant mortality rate increased until it was higher than that of any other population group in the country.

However, during the past quarter century advances in medication have benefitted American Indians as well as other Americans. There has been a 91% drop in the tuberculosis rate among Indians. Infant mortality has decreased 77% and maternal mortality has declined by 84%. Diabetes, however, has not been reduced. The national average for diabetes is

10 cases per 100,000 persons, but among Indians the rate is 22.8 per 100,000 persons.

Accidents cause the greatest number of deaths among American Indians. Annually, for every 100,000 Indians 140.7 die from accidents, whereas the national average is 23.7 deaths. Death from alcoholism annually averages 57.3 cases per 100,000 persons for Indians while the national average is 23.7. The cultural frustration experienced by so many Indian persons rather than diseases account for these leading causes of Indian deaths.

Income

A 1983 report contrasts "Indian and White" incomes as follows:

	Indian	White
Income under \$10,000 per year	36%	18%
Income of \$10,000 to \$19,999 per year	32%	29%
Income of \$20,000 or more per year	32%	53%

Approximately one third of the American Indian population is found in each of the three income categories while more than half of the white population is found in the highest income classification. It is important to recognize that within the American Indian community a professional and business class is steadily increasing. In the 1960s about twenty-five Indian men were attorneys. Now, more than 500 Indian men and women have graduated from law school. There are about 50 Indians who have become medical doctors, and the number of Indian men and women in medical schools today promises a larger number of medical professionals tomorrow. More Indians are continually filling positions in business and government agencies.

While increasing numbers of American Indians achieve comparable economic and social status with mainstream Americans, many manifest a traditional concern for all members of the national American Indian community.

Many show an active concern about the social and economic needs of the majority of their brothers and sisters. They give promise of being the leaders of the American Indian community amid the challenges of modern America in establishing more opportunities for all first Americans.

**States Listed According to
Their American Indian Population
(1980 U.S. Census)**

1. California 201,311	16. North Dakota 20,157
2. Oklahoma 169,464	17. Florida 19,316
3. Arizona 152,857	18. Utah 19,256
4. New Mexico 104,777	19. Colorado 18,059
5. North Carolina 64,635	20. Illinois 16,271
6. Alaska 64,047	21. Kansas 15,371
7. Washington 60,771	22. Nevada 13,304
8. South Dakota 45,101	23. Missouri 12,319
9. Texas 40,074	24. Ohio 12,240
10. Michigan 40,038	25. Louisiana 12,064
11. New York 38,732	26. Idaho 10,521
12. Montana 37,270	27. Pennsylvania 9,459
13. Minnesota 35,026	28. Arkansas 9,411
14. Wisconsin 29,497	29. Virginia 9,336
15. Oregon 27,309	30. Nebraska 9,197

Indian Populations—(Continued)

31. New Jersey 8,394	42. Connecticut 4,533
32. Maryland 8,021	43. Maine 4,087
33. Indiana 7,835	44. Kentucky 3,610
34. Massachusetts 7,743	45. Rhode Island 2,898
35. Georgia 7,619	46. Hawaii 2,778
36. Alabama 7,561	47. West Virginia 1,610
37. Wyoming 7,125	48. New Hampshire 1,352
38. Mississippi 6,180	49. Delaware 1,330
39. South Carolina 5,758	50. Dist. of Columbia 1,031
40. Iowa 5,453	51. Vermont 984
41. Tennessee 5,103	

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Indian Populations—(Continued)

17. Kansas 15,371	35. North Dakota 20,157
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32. New Mexico 104,777	50. Wisconsin 29,497
33. New York 38,732	51. Wyoming 7,125
34. North Carolina 64,635	