

all delighted with the result and I think Secretary Adams should be commended for taking this step."

Researchers do not speak with the same enthusiasm, or with a united voice. Indeed, while the Native American leaders have been expert tacticians in the campaign for reburial, researchers have been far more passive, essentially reacting to events rather than developing a plan of their own. When the demands for reburial first appeared, anthropologists offered a few limited concessions. Some hoped the trouble would go away if the publicity faded. Even now, many resent the fact, as Smithsonian anthropologist Douglas Owsley says, that the media give the controversy so much play. But in fact the rhetoric on both sides left little room for compromise, and there were few attempts until recently to develop a generally accepted or "correct" way for big institutions to respond.

"Right now our position is that we don't have one," says Randolph Fillmore, a staffer at the American Association of Anthropologists. The AAA has created a commission chaired by Nancy Lurie of the Milwaukee Public Museum to look into the subject. It will report back next year and members will vote on a policy in November 1990. But by then, presumably, the law will be passed and the federal precedent will be established.

An executive group of The Society for American Archaeology articulated a policy against reburial in 1983, and, according to anthropologist Larry Zimmerman of the University of South Dakota, the group "lobbied continually against legislation in Congress" that would have required reburial. But in 1985, the SAA began moving to a more lenient stance, speaking of the need to respect the feelings of indigenous people and offering to negotiate with aggrieved persons if they represented next of kin or could demonstrate genetic affiliation with remains in collections. According to the immediate past president of the SAA, Dena Dincauze of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, "we hope issues will be settled locally, on a case-by-case basis, with no overarching principles" established.

On the other hand, the council of the American Association of Museums has followed a more accommodating line since January of 1988. It urges museums to consider releasing human remains and grave goods if they appeared to have been acquired in an unethical way. It even suggests that museums consider releasing early (pre-Columbian) human remains on request, "unless there are compelling and overriding reasons to retain" them.

The group that may have gone furthest toward accommodation is the World Ar-

chaeological Congress (WAC), which split from the International Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Scientists several years ago, calling it dominated by white American and European interests. At an intercongress meeting in August organized by Larry Zimmerman, members of the WAC met with leaders of indigenous peoples to hammer out six principles reflecting the idea that the "dead have some say in this," as Zimmerman puts it. About 220 people gathered in Vermillion, South Dakota, producing a "Vermillion Accord." It speaks of the need to respect the wishes of the dead and of local communities "wherever possible, reasonable, and lawful." It also speaks of the need to respect the scientific research value of human remains—"the first time I have seen indigenous people recognize that there are legitimate scientific and research needs," says Zimmerman.

But the accord that Zimmerman regards as a great advance is seen by others as a futile attempt at appeasement. The WAC is just "a political action group in favor of reburial," according to Clement Meighan, a vocal anti-burialist. Meighan is founder of the 450-member ACPAC, which is prepared to go to

court if necessary to stop the dismantling of collections.

"The museums are under pressure from politicians, but they don't really want to give anything away," Meighan says. "Every concession made so far has been met with another demand." The activists have gotten their way, Meighan claims, by intimidating curators and cajoling political leaders in what appears to be a promiscuity crusade.

Meighan and others who confront the reburial campaign directly fear that once it gets rolling, there will be no logical stopping point. Soon, he predicts, universities will have to clip all photos of aborigines out of its library books, because some people believe the camera captures one's soul. The activists refuse to place an age limit on the material that they claim should be reburied. Thus, Meighan predicts that America's anthropological collections could be emptied unless the campaign meets resistance.

No doubt this forecast is overdrawn for effect, but it indicates the passions that reburial has aroused. It also suggests, as Dincauze says, that there may never be a consensus on a subject so charged with emotion. ■ ELIOT MARSHALL

White House, Congress Push Computer Plan

When the White House last week released a major plan to promote high-performance computing research and the construction of a national high-speed computer network, it gave an important boost to legislation with similar goals now being considered by Congress. The likely upshot: a big budget increase could be in store to preserve U.S. leadership in state-of-the-art computing.

The federal government currently spends about \$500 million annually for research and development in high-performance computing. The new interagency plan, outlined in a report, "The Federal High Performance Computing Program,"* would supplement this budget over 5 years by \$1.9 billion, beginning with \$150 million the first year and gradually increasing to \$600 million the fifth year. The plan, however, does not specify budgets for individual agencies.

Nearly a fifth of the budget increase would be spent to beef up an existing national computer network. The agencies are proposing to create a network that can transmit data at 3 billion bits per second, 60 times faster than the 45-million bit network that the National Science Foundation expects to phase in by the end of fiscal year 1990. The expanded network would facili-

tate transmission of the huge amounts of data generated by increased supercomputer use in government and university labs.

Under the interagency plan, hardware and software R&D would receive equal funding. The proposal also promotes new applications of high-performance computing in research areas including the human genome, superconductivity, and the design of drugs and semiconductors.

The interagency proposal won praise from Senator Albert Gore (D-TN), who last spring introduced legislation with similar provisions. The reason for the likeness is that the Gore bill and the interagency plan are both based on a federal report released 2 years ago that recommended expanding R&D in high-performance computing.

It's too soon, however, for computer researchers to start lining up for funding. Gore predicts that his bill will pass the Senate by the end of the year, but the House is just beginning deliberations on the legislation. In addition, the interagency plan does not have the official backing of the White House budget office. "This report is designed for agency-level planning purposes" alone, the document says. But federal agencies plan to use the report to lobby for new funding starting in fiscal year 1991, a process that began the day after the plan was announced. ■ MARJORIE SUN

*The report was released by the Office of Science and Technology Policy, 8 September 1989.