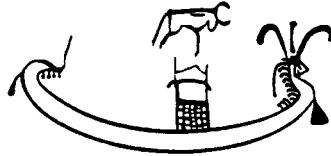


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Included in this issue:

NEH to Fund "The First Egyptians" Exhibition

Plans and Groundbreaking for the Hierakonpolis Expedition Center

Nekhen News Updates: The Comprehensive Monograph Series, A Hierakonpolis Lithics Conference, and More

Pathways of the Past: Ancient Trails of the Eastern Desert

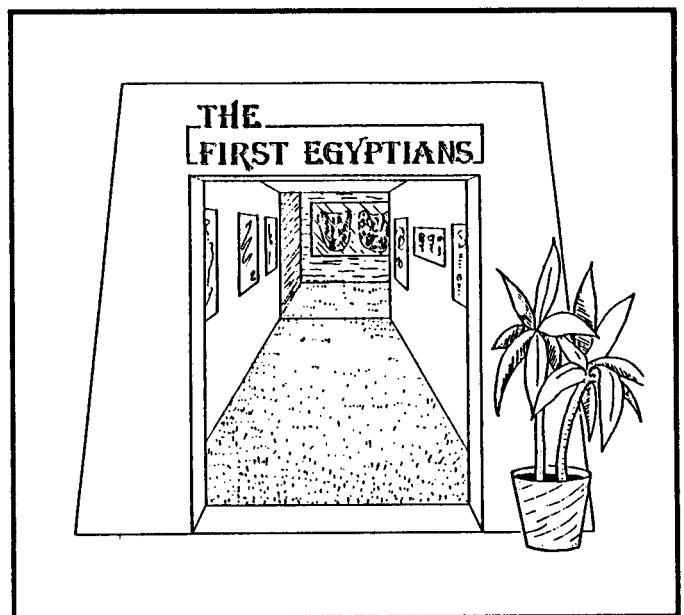
The Truth About King Narmer ...

NEH to Fund "The First Egyptians" Exhibition

The National Endowment for the Humanities has agreed to fund "The First Egyptians," our major museum exhibition on the roots of Egyptian civilization. All the plans we presented to you in the last issue of **Nekhen News** can now be put into action, and the knowledge that has come from the work at Hierakonpolis and other early Egyptian centers will be spread to millions of Americans as the show will travel from coast to coast over the next three years.

Of course, much hard work lies ahead. The objects to be shown, which are drawn from institutions around the world (including England, Canada, and the USA), must be prepared for exhibition and then packed and shipped to the McKissick Museum here at USC. Meanwhile, cases for the artifacts must be constructed, walls painted, carpets laid, photos enlarged for murals, text panels researched and written, a catalogue must be published, and much, much more. All of this must be completed by next April when the show will officially open at the McKissick. Amidst all this activity, momentum is building; everyone involved is excited, enthusiastic, and confident that this exhibition will have a major impact across America.

"The First Egyptians" should be coming to a museum in your region. As we described in the last **Nekhen News**, the show will open at the McKissick



Artist's rendering of the entrance hall to "The First Egyptians" exhibition.


"The First Egyptians" — The Preliminary Schedule

McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina Columbia, South Carolina	<i>April 8 to June 19, 1988</i>
Milwaukee Public Museum Milwaukee, Wisconsin	<i>July 15 to October 1, 1988</i>
Denver Museum of Natural History Denver, Colorado	<i>October 24, 1988 to April 11, 1989</i>
Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Los Angeles, California	<i>May 9 to August 1, 1989</i>
Cleveland Museum of Natural History Cleveland, Ohio	<i>August 22 to November 14, 1989</i>
National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Washington, DC	<i>November 20, 1989 to March 15, 1990</i>

Museum in Columbia, SC, in April of 1988 and will then fill venues from Los Angeles to Washington, DC, between June 1988 and March 1990. To help you select the time and location most convenient for you, the preliminary schedule is provided.

Keep your calendars open next April; the Friends of Nekhen will be receiving special invitations to the opening festivities in Columbia. We hope to see as many of you here as possible.

Nekhen News Updates

 Work towards the production of our **Comprehensive Monograph Series** is now underway. This report will present detailed descriptions and interpretations of the last decade's work at Hierakonpolis. Because of the enormous quantity of data generated over this period, the publication will consist of a number of separate volumes, beginning with the History, Ecology, and Chronology of Predynastic Hierakonpolis. Subsequent volumes in the series include the Predynastic settlement system, the mortuary system, the ceramics, the lithic industry, and a volume which will summarize the Predynastic human adaptation and the rise of the state. The publication schedule has not been finalized, but it is hoped that the first volume will be completed within a year's time.

Many members of the expedition staff will be contributing chapters to the monograph series; multidisciplinary work leads to multi-authored reports! In addition, Catherine Cockshutt Smith has joined the Hierakonpolis Expedition staff to help coordinate the research and production of the series. With all this input and varied interpretive insights, the comprehensive report series should represent a major contribution to both Predynastic archaeology and our understanding of the rise of the state.

Construction Begins on the Hierakonpolis Expedition Center

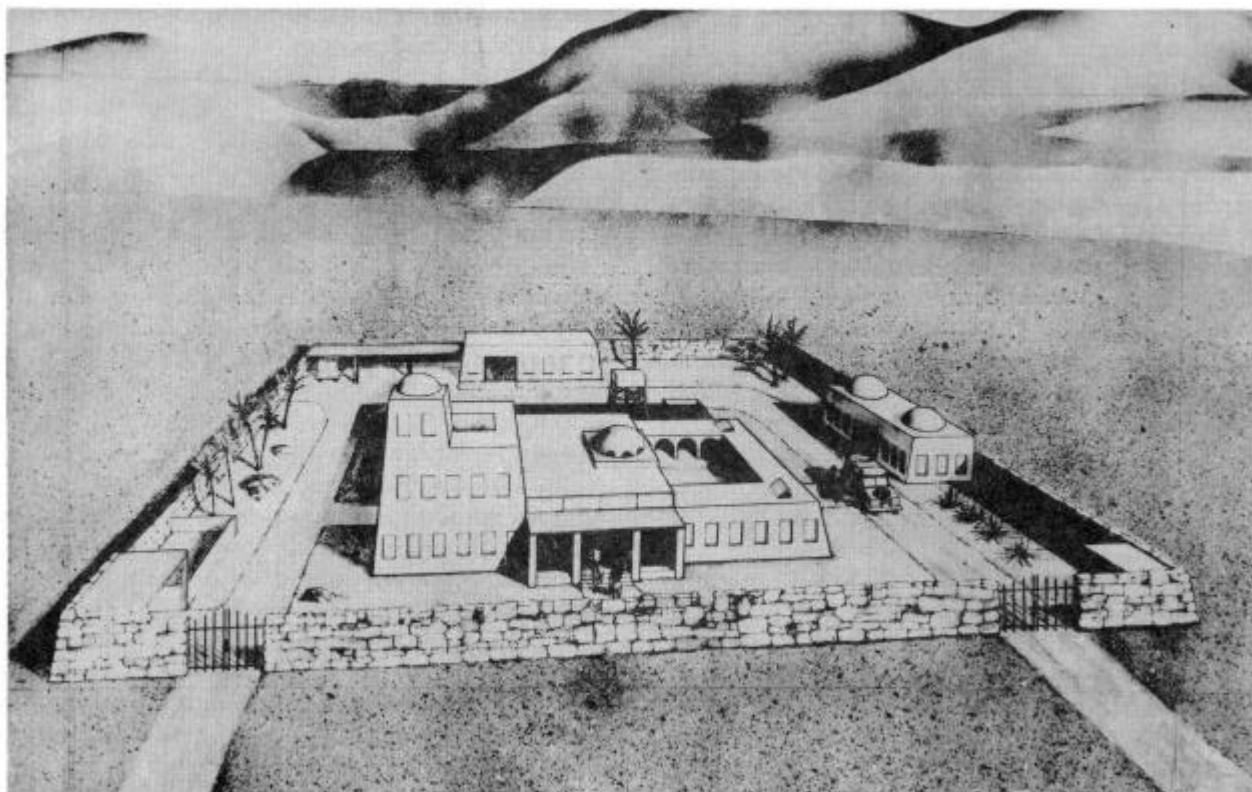
It has been a long-term goal of the Hierakonpolis Research Project to build an on-site expedition center. Such a facility would be an invaluable aid to the archaeological, human biological, geological, zoological, and botanical studies that make up the Hierakonpolis Expedition. Now, thanks to donations from the Friends of Nekhen and a generous land grant from the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, construction of the complex can begin.

The center will be built from a combination of local and modern materials in an architectural style appropriate to rural Upper Egypt. Effort has been made to retain the beauty of local building traditions whilst incorporating the modern conveniences necessary for research.

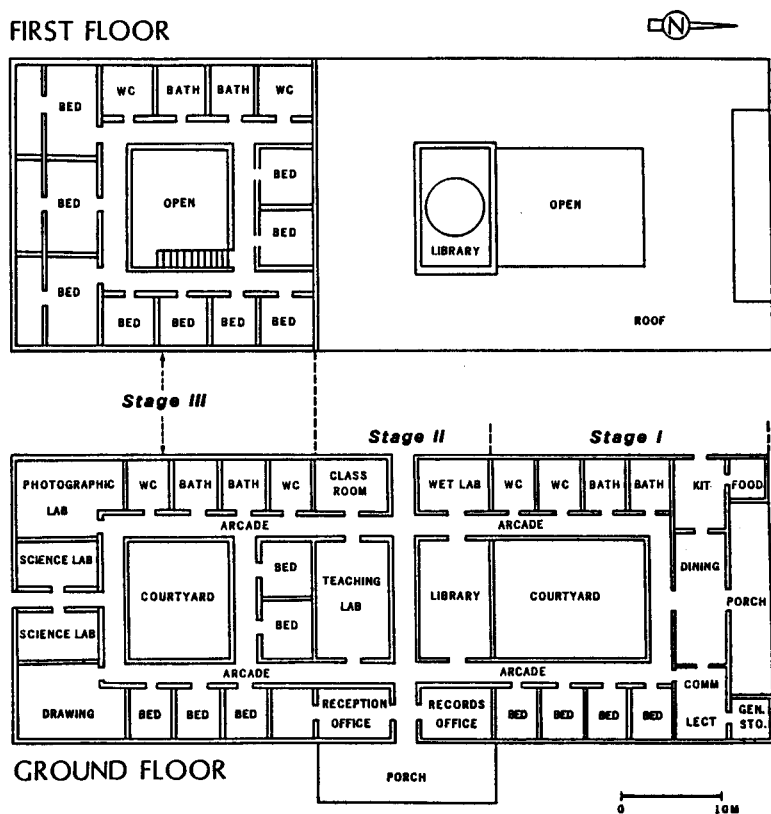
Construction will occur in four stages and each stage represents a distinct section of the complex, as the floor plan indicates. Using this multi-stage construction plan, we can complete the expedition center in phases as the funds become available.

We have already secured enough funds to begin Stage I this year. This stage involves digging a well and erecting a water tower, purchasing and installing pumps and generators, constructing one living and dining module, and building the exterior compound wall which will completely enclose the expedition center. With ground breaking this July, Stage I should be completed by March of 1988.

Stages II, III and IV will involve the construction of several storage areas, suites of research laboratories, a library, and additional housing. Although we are still in the process of securing funds for Stages II through IV, we feel the construction which began this July is a major step toward our goal of a permanent expedition center and will encourage future assistance from individuals and organizations interested in solving the mysteries of Egypt's most ancient past.



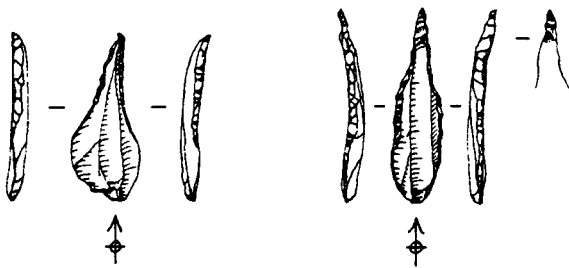
The Hierakonpolis Expedition Center; rendering by ESRI Senior Cartographer and artist Cynthia L. Heaton.



Floor plans for the Expedition Center. Note the different stages of construction. Stage IV, not indicated here, will consist of additional storage facilities and outbuildings.

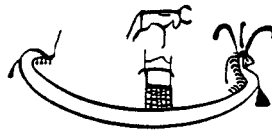
More News

☉ **Dr. Hoffman** spent two weeks in Egypt in early July. His short trip (in the heat of the summer!) served several important purposes. First, he organized the Stage I construction of the Expedition Center, oversaw the groundbreaking and toasted Hierakonpolis Expedition geoarchaeologist Hany Hamroush as he sampled the first water drawn from the center's well. In addition, Dr. Hoffman set in motion the permits and paperwork for our next field season—which will begin in November. This whirlwind visit landed Dr. Hoffman in London in time for a two-day colloquium at the British Museum entitled *The Beginnings of Egyptian Civilization*, which was held July 27-28th. July was hot and hopping!



☞ From May 15th through 21st of this year several members of the Hierakonpolis Expedition staff convened for a **Lithics Conference**. Dr. Michael Allen Hoffman hosted the meeting in Colonial Beach, Virginia, which was attended by Dr. Diane Holmes of the Institute of Archaeology in London, Ms. Janet Long of the University of Washington, and Dr. William McHugh. The conference, which was supported through a report preparation grant from the NEH., addressed three important issues. The first concerned conventions for stone tool typology. The group discussed—and sometimes hotly debated—the different levels of categorization to be used in classification and analysis and also considered both the general and specific terminology to be employed. Attention then shifted to comparisons between Amratian, Gerzean, and Protodynastic domestic lithic assemblages at Hierakonpolis. Discussion centered upon contrasts between the three time periods and upon the methods used to evaluate these contrasts. Finally, the team prepared an outline for the lithics volume of the **Comprehensive Report Series**, in which all their data and findings will be presented.

In September, the Hierakonpolis Expedition will host another working conference, this time on the ceramics from the site. Stay tuned for details of this meeting in the next **Nekhen News**.



Geoarchaeologist Dr. Hany Hamroush (center right) and Dr. Michael A. Hoffman (center left) toast the Expedition Center's new well—with the first water sample (photo courtesy of Roxie Walker).

Pathways of the Past

by Stephen K. Perry, PhD

Geologic Consultant to the Hierakonpolis Expedition

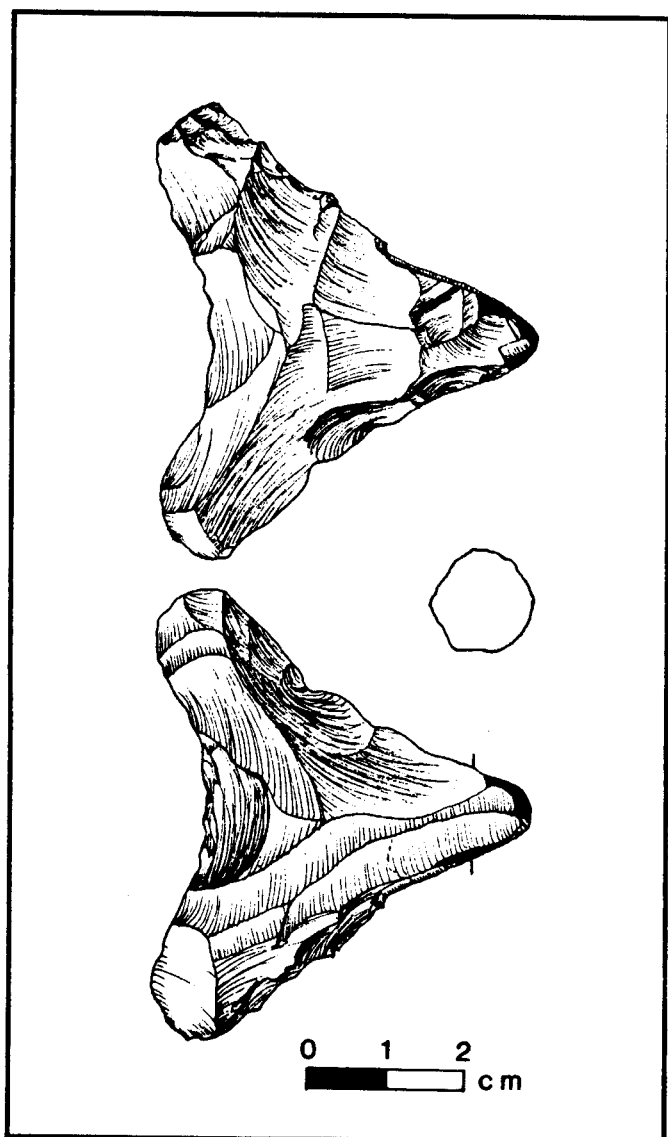
I first noticed the trails in 1981. I had been hiking the rugged cliffs of Gebel el Zeit (Oil Mountain) on the west bank of the Gulf of Suez and was looking for a lunch stop. For some time I had been following a path worn into the desert's gravel cover. The loose stones had been kicked away from a meandering band about a foot wide. The path was sunken into the surface slightly. I went down a slight rise and then saw a spot by the trail just a little more sheltered from the ever-present wind. As I stopped there, I saw pieces of chert littering the ground, dark patina mantling the wind-polished facets of Levallois flakes, denticulate scrapers, and less distinctive artifacts.

My lunch stop, with its sweeping view of wadi floor 1000 feet below, the distant Gulf, and the faint peaks of the Sinai, had last been used by Middle Paleolithic hunters. Sitting on the cliff edge, I ate my canned mackerel and *eish* (bread). Then I stood, re-entering the domain of the wind, and proceeded along the path. Over the next rise it flowed gracefully across the barren landscape and then abruptly ended at the cliff edge. My trail disappeared into space.

I got out my telescope. Far along the cliff, I could see the path continue, emerging again on the gravel surface. I looked at the cliff, at the wadi, at my air photos. This was not the result of recent collapse of the cliff face—there was no debris below. The trail had been destroyed by the normal, slow process of cliff-edge retreat. As I traced out the path, where it survived, I noticed more sites of Middle Paleolithic age (ca. 120,000-40,000 BC) and came across a few scatters of the long blades of the Late Paleolithic period (ca. 35,000-12,000 BC), but no younger artifacts. The trail came and went along the cliff edge. Between its segments only faint traces of travel by others were visible. Clearly, I was walking the route of the ancient ones who hunted the shores of the Gulf of Suez when the Pyramids were not even a distant glimmer on the horizon of the future. I was walking the pathways of the past.

As mentioned in the previous issue of the *Nekhen News* (Gawarecki, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 7-8), we have been working intermittently on the neotectonics and pre-history of the Gulf of Suez for the last few years. We find moderately numerous, essentially undisturbed sites of Late Paleolithic age, numerous Middle Paleolithic sites exhibiting a little more disturbance, and displaced scatters of Early Paleolithic choppers and handaxes. Occasional Neolithic and Pharaonic finds attest to continuing passage of ancient peoples through the area, but the older sites are far more prevalent. These tools, and the time periods they represent, suggest that the climate of the Gulf of Suez was more allied to that of the Levant than to the rest of Egypt during the Paleolithic.

The traces of ancient man are intimately related to the landscape and reflect the choice of sites at the time,



Flint winged drill from the Late Amratian settlement at Locality HK29. Illustration by Dr. Diane L. Holmes, Lithic Analyst with the Hierakonpolis Expedition.

In Memoriam

We regret to announce the recent passing of Professor Klaus Baer of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. Professor Baer was the senior staff Egyptologist of the Hierakonpolis Expedition. He first worked at the site in 1969, studying the Second Intermediate Period tomb of Horemkhawef (ca. 1625 BC) and continued his epigraphic research in 1978 at the late Ramessid tomb of Hormose (ca. 1080 BC). In the field Klaus Baer's great fund of knowledge was always a source of stimulation while his ready wit provided a constant source of entertainment for our staff.

Although ill health prevented Professor Baer's return to Hierakonpolis after 1978, he continued to encourage members of our staff and to support our research efforts in his capacity as President of the American Research Center in Egypt. His untimely passing leaves all of us with a sense of deep personal loss and we join in offering our condolences to his wife, Dr. Miriam Reitz.

the survival of those sites, and the continuing modification of the landscape by the forces of wind, water, and continuing deformation. The Gulf of Suez lies in the axis of a depressed trough between the eroded highlands of the Eastern Desert and the Sinai Peninsula. This is the Suez Rift, the northernmost extension of the Red Sea Rift. Southward, this system of troughs passes into the great East African Rift system, where man possibly evolved. To the north, the Suez Rift fades out as it approaches the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Tectonic movements are now concentrated along the Dead Sea-Gulf of Aqaba transcurrent fault system in the Levant and the Red Sea, to the south.

Three primary groups of rocks form the surface exposures in the Gulf of Suez. The oldest of these is the Precambrian basement. These rocks are resistant to erosion and hold up bordering highlands and the crests of the small ranges within the rift. The second group includes the prerift rocks. These formed as part of a quiet continental margin. Sandstones, shales, and carbonates are present. Chert and flint sourced from nodules in the thick carbonates provided most of the

material for stone tools in the area. The final group contains the synrift rocks. These were laid down in the gradually subsiding trough of the Suez Rift during the last 20 million years. Marls, shales, sandstones, limestones, thick evaporites and, finally, extensive gravel beds are present.

While the almost uniformly resistant basement rocks form complexly weathered highlands, the prerift rocks are alternately resistant and easily erodable, creating a cuesta-form landscape where they are exposed. Finally, the synrift rocks are soft, and their existing morphology is largely a result of more recent earth movements or of cutting by the intermittent streams of the desert. As the banks of the Gulf have eroded, the streams have meandered back and forth. The record of this erosion is preserved in the wide, perched gravel plains and in bordering flights of stream terraces at increasingly lower elevations. The wadi floors of today are the cutting edge of this erosional stripping.

Over bedrock, few traces of paths are seen. Sometimes the crest of a hill will have been cleared in a



Narmer, a local kid, worked his way up...

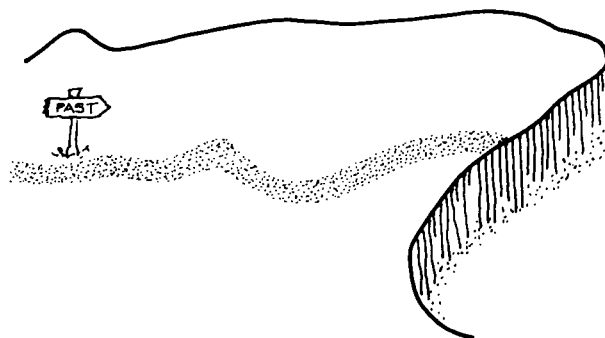
To become the Kingfish after seizing control in a hostile takeover.

circle, or cairns will mark a faint band of slightly disturbed scree. These circles and monuments often show marked wind erosion that has occurred since the stones were reset by man, a sign of the great antiquity of these structures. Windscreens are also common locally and show extensive sandblasting. Scatters of artifacts, often of Middle or Late Paleolithic date found in association with these structures, lend support to suspicions that these areas record very ancient activities.

The rocks of the prerift succession usually preserve nothing. They dip substantially and erode too easily along their steeper exposures to preserve any but recent paths. The rocks of the synrift succession stand in contrast to this. They do not dip so steeply, and their flatter surfaces are frequently covered with scree, which preserves all traces of disturbance except those near active drainages. The trails at Gebel el Zeit were best preserved over the synrift rocks and their gravel mantle. These trails range from faint traces across highlands, through well marked but abandoned paths across highlands onto terraces and across the desert, to major, actively used paths whose upland portions pass by ancient sites. It is conceivable that some of these trail

segments were first trodden over 100,000 years ago and have been used intermittently ever since.

Ancient highways abound in other areas of the world as well. Here in North America we have examples from the east where major paths ran up and down the Appalachians, from the west where the Pueblo Indians of Chaco Canyon built roads radiating out like spokes from their large town centers, and from our own settlement of the west where our wagon ruts will be visible for millenia to come unless we destroy them. So watch carefully when you walk—the trail you follow may be one of the pathways of the past.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Friends of Nekhen

I would like to help the Hierakonpolis Expedition by joining **The Friends of Nekhen**. In return for my tax deductible contribution, I understand that I will receive a membership certificate and card, badge, and **The Nekhen News**, and that I will be entitled to travel discounts with expedition tours and reduced rates on expedition publications and Egyptian archaeological slide sets.

Please enroll me as a member of **The Friends of Nekhen** in the category checked below:

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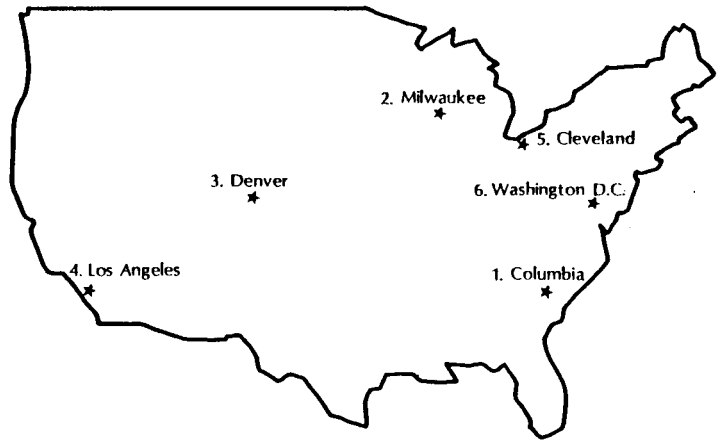
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