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AUSTRALIA: LAND RIGHTS BILL WOULD DENY COMPENSATION TO WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES

Aboriginal reserve land could be taken from Aborigines without compensation if miners were granted a mining lease on it, under a draft Western Australia land rights bill. The bill, if made law, would mean the State's Aborigines would have fewer land rights than any other Aboriginal group in Australia said Mr. Bob Riley, the Chairman of the National Aboriginal Conference. Mining and pastoral interests were offered extraordinary protection under the draft bill, which went far beyond denial of Aboriginal power to veto mining on Aboriginal land, he said. The very prospect of mining would now make land unavailable for Aboriginal claim, he continued.

A copy of the 170-page draft bill has been obtained by The Age, but is still to be publicly released by the Burke Labor Government of WA. It provides for the establishment of an Aboriginal land tribunal with limited powers - and with an obligation to lay down strict conditions to protect mining interests in granting any land to Aborigines. This includes any mining interests created after the Aboriginal application for land. "The effect is to give miners the right to decide what land Aborigines can claim," Mr. Riley said.

Aboriginal reserve land could cease to be Aboriginal if any miners were granted a mining lease or licence over the ground or if it were declared a petroleum production area. Mining and petroleum tenement areas could be excised from Aboriginal reserve land under the draft bill. Land already the subject of mining lease, licence or petroleum claims, or even applications, would be unavailable for Aboriginal claim. This would remove vast areas of WA from the prospect of Aboriginal ownership, Mr Riley said.

The draft was prepared by a committee set up for the purpose by the Government. It consists of representatives of the Australian Mining Industry Council, the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, the WA Chamber of Mines, the Australian
Petroleum Exploration Association, the Primary Industries Association, the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Commonwealth Government and the State Government-appointed Aboriginal Lands Trust and Aboriginal Advisory Council.

The committee was boycotted by the National Aboriginal Conference after the State Government rejected the key recommendations in the report by Mr. Paul Seaman, QC, who said Aborigines should have the power to veto mining on Aboriginal land. The draft bill provides for Aboriginal land companies as the basic land holding groups, with strict limits on Aborigines' power to sell or mortgage their land.

In a significant departure from the Seaman recommendations, the draft bill would allow resumption of Aboriginal land for public purposes, subject to approval by Parliament. This would mean WA Aboriginal land tenure would be considerably less secure than equivalent land in the Northern Territory, Queensland and South Australia. Aborigines would be denied the right to apply for hunting, fishing and foraging access permits over land which was the subject of a mining lease or licence - or even land for which a mining lease had been sought. Aborigines would be denied the right to use their land for pastoral purposes unless this was approved by the (Government-appointed) Pastoral Board. There is provision for a $1000 fine for breach of this condition.

A spokesman for the WA Mines Department said more than 10 million hectares of Western Australia was now subject to claim or pegging by mining groups. "Our worst fears are coming true," Mr. Riley said, "Our only hope now is action by the Federal Government to override this WA legislation and stand by its own Aboriginal land rights policy. The Federal Government has already said the WA model will be the basis for national Aboriginal laws. If this model is followed, the effect would be to weaken all existing land rights legislation.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Hawke, has already made it clear his Government will not interfere. A WA Government source has said it was not yet clear when the draft bill would be introduced into the State Parliament. It is not likely though that any amendments will favor Aboriginal interests, given the composition of the drafting committee.

On October 28th, 1984 a group of Kaingang people from Toldo Chimbangue arrived at Brasilia completing their "March for Land". These members of this community in the Municipality of Chapecó east of Santa Catarina State, were demonstrating against the constant delays in receiving officially the rights to 2000 hectares of their land which is presently occupied by colonists. The demonstrators have made it clear that they will remain in Brasilia until they receive a definitive solution to their case.

Toldo Chimbangue is situated on the right bank of the river Ipiranga. At the end of the 19th century there was a fraudulent demarcation of lands in the area, titled as a farm called Fazenda Barra Grande which eventually got into the hands of a company called Empresa Colonizadora Luce, Posa Ltd. In spite of this the Kaingang had access to 2000 hectares of their land until 1948 when the company began to sell land to colonists who were moving into the region.

During the 1950s the influx of colonists into the area and direct threats against Toldo Chimbangue led to the Kaingang being forced to move up to the banks of the river, away from their cemetery which marks their right to the area. At this time the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (SPI) recognised the Kaingang as an indigenous group and denominated the area for them. At one point the Company ECLR actually tried to get the SPI to remove the Indians. Although they did not succeed, conditions deteriorated for the Kaingang to the extent that by 1973 only held 105 hectares of their land and had to give half their produce to the illegal "patron" of the territory.

Throughout the 1970s more pressure was put on the Kaingang by the colonists. Along with their inspiring centenarian leader Francisco Marcelino Rokkh, they resisted death threats, the burnings of houses and destructions of their fields. In 1982, however, they resolved to organise themselves to recuperate their lands and face the violence. In 1982 and 1983 they put their claims and complaints to FUNAI demanding that they fulfil their obligation to demarcate the lands. The more the Kaingang protested the more serious the situation became for the community.

However FUNAI delayed even more and did not pass the administrative process to the Interministerial Group which was created by Decree No.88.118/83. According to this law, the demarcation of Indian lands has to be formulated and proposed to the Interministerial Group (made up of organisations such as FUNAI, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministério Extraordinário para Assuntos Púndiários (MEAP) not renown as a supporter of indigenous land rights). The Group are expected to take into consideration the desires of the non-indigenous inhabitants of a proposed demarcation area.
On July 5, 1984 tired of waiting for a response from FUNAI, the Kaingang sent a letter to the President of the Republic (see also IWGIA Newsletter 39 pp59/60). They demanded their 2000 hectares land area. At the end of July an offer of 137 hectares by FUNAI was opposed by the colonists who said the Kaingang should have only 122 hs. At this point FUNAI approved the policing and arming of the colonists in the Kaingang area in order to "protect" the non-Indians. Tensions in the area reached such a pitch that the March for Land took place. On arrival at Brasilia they petitioned Diputado Mário Juruna for his support and have remained in the capital.

As a result of the march FUNAI hurried their submission to the Interministerial Group. Although MEAP took the 122 hs. agreed by the colonists as preferable, the decision appears to be that the colonists will receive 1,500 hs. and the Kaingang 500 hs. This decision came at the end of November and effectively means that the Kaingang will receive only one quarter of their land demarcated. With this decision and the area cordoned off with armed police and colonists, the situation is even more tense.

FUNAI, which is now headed by a military President, Nelson Marabuto Domingues has not been supportive to the Kaingang claim in this affair. It is still unclear why FUNAI delayed the submission of the Kaingang or even what they stated in their proposal to the Interministerial Group. The heavy policing of the Kaingang territory and the arming of white colonists has increased tension in an already uncertain situation. However, what still remains is the necessity of recognising the 2000 hectares of Kaingang land and the resettlement of the non-Indian occupants in other lands of Santa Catarina State.

Sources: CIMI dossier
Porantim, Dez.1983

CANADA: INUIT WORK TO REMOVE CARIBOU DROWNED IN THE CANIAPISCAU RIVER

During the last weekend of September, the community of Kuujjuaq in Quebec was alerted to the discovery of thousands of dead caribou littering the shores of the Caniapiscau and Kuujjuaq rivers. More than 10,000 caribou, mostly cows but with many bulls and calves among them, had drowned while crossing the Caniapiscau River. The local people believe that the extra water released through the spillways of the Hydro-Quebec dam upriver raised the water to spring runoff levels and swept the animals over the Limestone Falls to their deaths.

A wildlife technician who has followed the herd since 1967 said: "Caribou are gregarious animals. They follow their leader. We figure that what happened is that part of the great herd, about 50,000 of them maybe, arrived at this location just above the falls. The first ones swam over to an island in the middle of the river and the rest just followed them. They must have kept coming and coming, forcing the others off on the other side of the island, into the water and over the falls. The whole thing must have happened on about four hours."

From the time the deaths were discovered, local Inuit waged a battle against time and weather to clean up the carcasses. It was decided that the problem was not how to dispose of the caribou. (Mark Gorden, vice-president of the Makivik Corporation representing the 5,500 Inuit in Northern Quebec had been inundated with requests for the carcasses.) The problem was getting the bodies out of the river, off the beaches and preventing pollution from decomposition. At the same time it was necessary to construct fences near Limestone Falls to prevent such a disaster happening again. The fence is a sore point for Mark Gorden. "We asked the Government for a metal fence six years ago - to be put up to prevent a disaster such as this one. But the Government just laughed at us," he said.
About 160 Inuit took part in the clean-up operation with back-up support from the Quebec government. The Inuit have been working to disentangle the bodies of the caribou and drag them away from the river from where the bodies have been taken away by helicopter. An attempt to pay a salvage company to tow the carcasses downriver to the town has been criticised on economic and environmental grounds and to date the work has remained in the hands of the Inuit themselves.

Two questions have arisen since the disaster, the first is who was to blame and the second is the impact it will have on the Inuit communities of the region. Hydro-Quebec say that they were not responsible for the loss of the caribou. They say that the high water level was caused by an unusually heavy rainfall during September, double the average for this period. However biologists and environmentalists working in the area say that by opening the spillways at the giant James Bay hydroelectric project, 450 kilometres upstream, Hydro-Quebec turned the Caniapiscau River into a raging torrent and set up the conditions for the tragedy at the falls.

Michael Barrett, an environmental specialist for the local Kativik municipal government, agrees. He says that all summer Hydro-Quebec has been opening and closing spillways, causing fluctuations in the level of the river. “Local townspeople noticed during the last two weeks in September that the river was unusually high. The Inuit immediately called Hydro-Quebec officials at the James Bay project and asked them to cut the flow of the water, which they did immediately.” It was too late however and although the level dropped upstream the Limestone falls were not affected. If the rainfall was entirely to blame there would have been a greater rise in the local rivers.

Biologists for Quebec’s fish and game department have downplayed the significance of the loss of 10,000 caribou, saying that it represents only about 3 per cent of the herd. This is one way of putting the loss into perspective, but there are
Maps of the area where the Caribou disaster occurred (Tagralik)

Mark Gorden has pointed out that the loss represents double the number of caribou taken by Northern Quebec Inuit in a year. Others have said how the herd will not increase in size this year and the loss is the equivalent of a whole year's harvest.

Some biologists employed by Hydro-Quebec say that the herd was too big anyway but biologist Frank Barnfield who has studied caribou and reindeer around the world says that the area could support a far larger quantity of caribou than at present. Another biologist, Stuart Luttich, said, "I don't think the loss of 10,000 animals is going to destroy the George river herd, but let's not get relaxed in our attitude and say we can afford to lose another 10,000 tomorrow. It doesn't take too many ten thousands to add up. It's a total waste of a natural resource and we have to take it seriously."

Jean-Claude Leclerc said in Le Devoir on October 5th: "This disaster is not totally irreparable and it is not too soon to draw from it a practical warning and a few lessons in management. Hydro has learned to respect the native population a little. But as in the case with most other private or public enterprises which are involved in exploiting resources in the North, it is still far from putting the experience of the local people to good use. Instead of burying its head in the sand, Hydro should above all honestly recognize its mistakes and shortcomings.

"The old cows that were leading the caribou herd at the time of the fatal crossing could not change their instinct from one day to another. Yet, we might ask more of the old bulls who direct Hydro-Quebec and of all those who will, in the coming years, intervene a great deal in this promising and coveted territory which they poorly know or hardly care about.

"The main problem still lies not in the nature of the North, but in the thoughtlessness of southerners who are moved by the loss of some caribou but who overlook the fate, also
"In the old times there were no lakes. There were many Nele (shamans). Everything was of gold: birds, trees and stones—all of gold. When the Spaniards came the Nele called on Mara, the thunder man and said to him, 'let us make a lake in which to put the gold.' Then the thunder sent lightning and these fell 20 metres under the ground and so lakes were formed. Before the Spaniards came the gold was guarded in the lake by the thunder which made water courses too. The Nele called the animals such as the jaguar, water fowl and also the peccaries to look after the lake because the Nele had received an order from God saying that the gold in the lake should be kept safe from robbing by the Spaniards.

"Five years ago some North Americans came to make a canal for drying the lake and taking the gold. But they couldn't do it. They decided to look in the middle of the lake and sent to Balboa for some canoes. When they reached the middle there was so much water that they had to return. The animals who guarded the lake emerged. The Americans shot at them but they couldn't kill them."

(Alfonso Díaz Granados, Cacique Cuna-Capitán)

In the region of Darién (Department of Chocó) there is a community called Arquía, which is the largest of the three small indigenous Cuna populations living in Colombia. At present about 200 people have managed to survive and continue to live in the community. However their situation is so deplorable and miserable that possibly this figure has no meaning and their cultural and ethnic identity is already a thing of the past.

"Since the times of the conquest our indigenous peoples began to suffer and to lose their belongings and their land. They lost the fight for land even though we are the original inhabitants of Colombian territory." This is how one of the indigenous community members put it, who with the other inhabitants decided to send once again a communication to the President of the Republic "father of these lands" as he is called by the Cuna. The message is to inform him of their terrible
circumstances and their hope for recovery - initially that of "mother earth" their base and sustenance and then of their race and culture which has been present in the region since time immemorial.

As someone ought to be "owner" of the land, who better than they who have been born on it, lived on it and needed it to survive long before those who call themselves owners now? It is not surprising that the previous letters sent urgently to the Governor and President never reached their destination. Strangers, acting as intermediaries, have come to the community for their own interests and with orders to obstruct and prevent justice to the extent of murdering the indigenous inhabitants. This has happened to those members of the community versed in legal documents and who have begun to succeed in gaining some rights for the survival of the tribe.

In spite of acculturation, the Cuna of Colombia still retain their own beneficial concepts with regard to their way of life and work. They say that beneficial or harmful acts are dispensed equally by a superior being they call "God". Although the concept of "God" is an alien element forcibly adopted as a result of missionary acculturation, it has been mixed and interwoven with symbols found in their traditional mythology and past beliefs. An example of this can be seen in the following passage from Cacique Alfonso Díaz Granados again:

"If we in Arquía do any harm or rob whether in Pája, San Blás, Colón, Panama, Medellín, Bogotá or anywhere else, this is all noted down and sent to God. If the people are bad a dangerous wind, rain or earthquakes will come from God to punish them. If people have been good, good winds come enabling them to live well. We sing to advise families to treat each other as brothers. A bad person who dies loses his way to the sky but a good person goes directly. We are the inheritors of the original people and so we are not destined for hell and God tells us that we must not harm, rob or injure others so that we can go to the sky."

The values and feelings of respect, love of life and correct behaviour which does not harm others, are still fundamental even though the Cuna, like anyone else, deviate from them.

Indigenous peoples possess a wealth of knowledge and unique values yet they are considered ignorant, savage or primitive, worthy only of compassion and charity from dominant societies. In fact the real ignorance belongs to those who think they know the indigenous reality and its problems while not knowing, their values, thoughts and traditions. These people try to introduce concepts, laws and objects into their culture which only confuse everyone. What is ignorance is to draw indigenous people away from their own nature and authenticity, and force them into a world where they cannot participate on their own terms.

"The Cuna have had intense contact with forces of acculturation. This contact has managed to decimate a people, once very numerous and to introduce many new elements into the culture. The most obvious changes are apparent in the material culture, nevertheless the settlements which remain have retained cohesion and a pride in membership of the group. Many foreign elements have been assimilated into the mythology about which Jorge Morales says: 'The Indian has made use of the whole Christian complex brought by Catholic and Evangelical missionaries but have given it a functional significance pertaining more to their notions of prestige than to religious structures. With regard to religion, the series of beliefs which have come into the society have had to be syncretized to the traditions, modifying them and being modified by them but without creating any new styles of religious behaviour which are markedly distinct. The Cuna do not accept that there is a gulf between human beings and animals as Christians believe. Animals not only have a purba(soul) but these are like those of humans.'

"We suggest that mythology is one of the areas of Cuna culture which has incorporated the greatest quantity and diversity of foreign elements. If we were asked to explain this proposition, we would say that the incorporation of material into the mythology without any notable change in the general structure is a means of defending other areas of the culture where changes and hasty or radical adoption of alien
traits could be dangerous for the preservation of the group as a culturally independent entity. This incorporation and re-formulation within the mythology would act as a form of defence against attack from the outside world. Without overloading the point we could cite the following example.

"There was, some time back, a missionary, one of several who visited the region, who was carrying out evangelical work in Arquía. Her visits to the dwellings were well received, the Spanish speakers enjoyed discussions with her, the books she lent out were read and according to what Don Alfonso told us we can say that she was accepted to some degree. But when she tried to convince the people that they should not drink chicha in their fiestas she was simply ignored, and when she tried blatantly to make them burn their nuchu (wooden figurines) the reaction of the group (especially the Ina tutedi) was hostile." (From Leonor Herrera and Marianne Cardale de Schrimff, Arreglos y Comentarios, Revista Colombiana de Antropología Vol. XVII.)

Arquía was decreed an indigenous reserve during the government of Alfonso López Pumarejo. Initially it consisted of 10,000 hectares but in the past few years it has been reduced to 2,343 ha, 5,558 mts². At the present time all the boundaries of the reserve have been violated. Invasions by colonists and landowners have increased to the extent that now some 200 indigenous Cuna are living in an area of only 500 hectares. There they have to carry out all the functions of a community without being able to supply their basic needs - land which has been reduced five times! All this is in spite of having land which is legally theirs.

So difficult and alarming is the situation that the Instituto Colombiano de Reforma Agraria (INCORA) ought to purchase lands for the colonists and other invaders to settle on. Indeed it has promised the indigenous people several times that it would come and sort out the situation. But while INCORA delays, the colonists are robbing the indigenous inhabitants of their
products, domestic animals and other property and if anyone reacts to this they are openly killed. Apart from this, strangers who come into the zone are illegally cutting down the forests, setting fire to the rainforest and polluting the river where the Indians obtain both food and water. In addition they have hemmed in the lands so much that the indigenous inhabitants are left without access to the medicinal plants which constitute the basis of their health and tradition. Their cotton cultivation is disappearing, forcing them to buy clothes and textiles in commercial areas.

The missions, on the other hand, have undertaken their eradication of the culture and traditions of the Cuna. Their work represents one of the most complex of all the controversial influences the Cuna have had to endure. Originally, beliefs had been handed down in ceremonies where the tribal elders (considered the most influential and respected in the community, unlike our own society) taught to the new generations the rich variety of traditions, myths and symbols in a ritual song called Lereo. Since then the different missions have imposed: the enclosure of land, changes from the traditional ways of life (dress, food etc) which are considered indecent or unacceptable by the "real God", the introduction of texts and tools designed to make them participate in the consumer society...The missions have left the Cuna without any help in solving their fundamental problems such as rights to land which determines the existence of the community and what remains of their culture.

There they are left, abandoned and forgotten in a place which is not yet an indigenous reserve, nor natural jungle - a place where there will soon be no Indians, plants or animals. The life of these indigenous people, our fellow countrymen, is at present a drawn out agony, which is for the most part silent. We are witnessing a physical and cultural crime against a people whose history and life in this unique and forgotten face of Colobia will become irretrievable.
We know that it is not just the Cuna of Arquía who are suffering in this way, but also people of Cuti and Caiman Nuevo and the Katio, the Emberá, the Noamá as well as the hundreds of communities and thousands of indigenous peoples who live on lands which should be recognised as their own lands. These peoples are being persecuted and exterminated by a continuous attack which White man began and continues without feeling, respect nor understanding of the importance of enabling human life and nature to co-exist. Nature is fundamental for the Indian, the Indian is part of nature, together they live in the harmony of the ecosystem, a harmony lost to "civilised" man.

When will we accept that our ethnic values which still exist in living cultures are being physically and morally exterminated along with our natural resources? Can we allow the continuation of this decline and extinction of values which have lasted for centuries - values which we have been privileged to know and learn?

We live in a country which still possesses treasures of great value but which cannot be assessed by material means. The attraction of power and its results have been destroying all this and one day nothing will be left. Where will the Indian and his jungle be then? Maybe buried in the mountain of progress which brought only misery and destruction.

International Petroleum (Colombia) Ht. Intercol chose the field of missionary and anthropological work to found the International Eucharistic Congress. This congress promotes the work of all missionaries who through evangelisation are contributing to the development and progress of the indigenous people of Colombia and it is creating an anthropological museum about our native tribes which will function under the direction of the Ethnia Missionary Anthropological Centre. Is this the way in which our once living cultures will end up - objects in a glass case?

EAST TIMOR: DECLARATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR

Document from FRETILIN, Lisbon December 7th 1984

It is precisely 9 years today that East Timor was violently and illegally invaded and occupied by foreign forces - during the first days after the invasion the Indonesian army murdered thousands of Timorese. However, in spite of this brutal repression which has gone on and been intensified throughout these years, the Djakarta regime has not been able to overcome the resistance of the people of East Timor under the guidance of FRETILIN.

The whole world today knows of the constant violations of Human Rights by the Indonesian military in East Timor. These violations have taken such proportions that they can be considered as one of the greatest genocides of recent history. It will never be too much to denounce this day-to-day of imprisonments, torture, disappearance, executions, religious and cultural repression and the destruction of the basis of survival of the Maubere people (East Timorese).

We all know and it has been admitted by the International Community, that if the people bear with all these sufferings it is because they are inspired by a just and deeply rooted aspiration, their inalienable right to self-determination and independance and because they have faith in their capacity for organized resistance to the Indonesian military occupation.

At the end of nine years it is becoming clearer to Djakarta that a military solution is not possible for the East Timor issue. It is therefore necessary to find a political solution.

All other parties involved in the conflict are also in search of a political solution: FRETILIN, the struggling force of the Maubere People and Portugal as the administrating power, with the support of the United Nations. The U.N. General
Assembly in 1982 trusted its Secretary-General with an important mission (to improve the situation in East Timor).

There are two fundamental principles recognized by Portugal, by FRETILIN and by the U.N.: the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and the need to hold talks with "all the interested parties". On this basis, it is possible to hold talks that will enable the finding of a solution which will respect the rights of the people of East Timor and the principles and laws adopted by the International Community.

We are happy to note the public stands taken during the last months by politicians, religious authorities, non-governmental and Church organizations and groups while expressing their concern for the continuing illegal Indonesian military occupation of East Timor and the violation of the most elementary Human rights and rights of the People to contribute to break the isolation to which the Maubere People have been forced, and reinforce the solidarity between peoples.

For years the signatories of this Declaration have been following the struggle of the people of East Timor against Indonesian occupation, for the right to self-determination and independence, and in spite of the blockade imposed by the situation in the territory of East Timor for the evolution of the issue at the international level.

They can therefore REAFFIRM
- that no solution to the conflict can be found without taking into account the freely expressed will of the people of East Timor;
- that FRETILIN, as the fighting force, manifestation of the resistance of the people of East Timor, must participate in any negotiations to be undertaken between the interested parties;

- that since it is not possible to obtain a military victory, Indonesia will be more willing to negotiate if there is greater international pressure.

They hereby launch an appeal to all people, organizations, political forces and Governments in order to

DEMAND
- the end of the war and an agreement for cease-fire;
- the end of the violation of Human rights in East Timor;
- free access to East Timor for humanitarian organizations, churches, observers and independent journalists;
- an earnest and effective commitment of the International Community and particularly of the parties directly involved in the conflict, to apply the international principles and laws and the right to self-determination of the Maubere People.
GUATEMALA: THE PRESENT SITUATION

In this paper MAYAS are making known the present situation in Guatemala where the system of Government does not recognize the rights of the Indians. Indian liberty is not acknowledged neither their particular forms of democracy whose roots can be found in their origins, in their communal ownership of land and in the development of their ancestral culture.

The indigenous people of Guatemala are being attacked in distinct ways which centre round one constant aim: their total elimination. In the last seven years, the Maya people have known what it is to count deaths and subtract from their numbers the lives of their best men. Their language is increasingly adopting more negative terms, affecting the Indian conception of life where people who have great self-respect are facing the threat of extinction.

Over the months of July and August, events show how the régime of General Oscar Mejía Victores and the privileged minority continue to use the classic linguistic tricks to cover up the enormous crimes they are committing. They receive the full support of the State with its ever more refined means of repression to stifle any attempt to defend the rights of the people. With the presence of four Indians in the "New Constituent Assembly", the Government is trying to feign the existence of some participation, but it is only a means to legitimate the "beginnings of democracy", to continue cheating the population and manipulate international opinion. Nevertheless, MAYAS has managed to obtain the following information.

1. Economic Situation

In spite of favourable climatic conditions, in many areas the basic grain harvests have not been sufficient. This is because of the restrictions on agricultural activity caused by the order of the civil patrol, by the forced concentration of the population and of the lack of sufficient land. These factors have caused much unemployment, but contributing even more has been the exodus of the rural population because of the violence and selective elimination of the people.

There is an absence of social programmes with the exception of the "model villages" which function as showcases, attracting and deceiving people. However there is large investment in arms production such as tanks, armaments and weapons which are made in factories with the aid of Israeli government advisors. The material is needed by the Guatemalan army but is also sent to El Salvador and Honduras. There is a common market of ordnance in the area for counter-insurgency.

On August 15th the Northamerican Congress informed the Guatemalan Chancellor Fernando Andrade of the approval of a $20 million loan. Counting the support of financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the International Development Bank and the Banco Centroamericano de Integración the total comes to $350 million. At the same time the Government is considering increasing indirect taxation including value added tax with the aim of paying off its debts to the very same institutions.

2. The Political Situation

Political solutions to the crisis are shown to be superficial and directed in the interests of the military and the conservative parties who plan and carry out what they call "open politics" which is really the denial and elimination of any real popular participation. In the recent "elections" for the 1st Constituent Assembly, the apathy and mistrust of the majority of the population was clearly in evidence. People know that the régime only gives violent responses to political and social problems. In the villages the highest authority
is the military and the commander of the zone or the detachments are those who decide and determine the solutions to all problems.

In the "open politics", the Partido Unión del Centro Nacional has been given the task of putting into practice a "new language on behalf of the Indians". It has been told to form a Confederación Indígena Nacional de la Unión del Centro (CINUC) and insistently offers Indians "participation" in government programmes. Many Indigenous people have accepted the Confederation out of fear of repression and as it is unable to express the views of the Indian people it is condemned to be an instrument like the Civil Patrols. The ultra-right party Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) is the instigator of the Civil Patrols. The other parties can offer no alternative to the Indian people.

The pressure over the Civil Defence Patrols (PAC) is a heavy weight on the villages and people. All men are expected to participate, sometimes twice a week and in other villages for whole weeks at a time, enduring cold, heat or rain etc. In most of the conflict areas, the patrols have been given the idea of fighting their "enemy" within the villages, but at the same time they resist going into the highlands as they do not want to be forced to kill their own brothers. Those who do not mobilize themselves from a village are forced to do road works at night. In places where there is an apparent calm from the violence, the PAC is suspended for several days while the army carries out some kidnappings, thereby provoking the reactivation of the patrol. There are no civil patrols in the capital.

Within the army one can distinguish two lines: a hard line or "Kaibilista" and a line of "Civic Action". The latter carries out the ideological fight and its work consists of a jumble of teachers, medics, social workers and promoters of bilingual work. All speak the language of struggle and have knowledge of psychology and "popular culture". Indigenous girls have been seen armed and in military uniform talking in the villages about feminine liberation. Yet in the military bases women are strictly controlled. Some have been captured, some under amnesty and others have been given tasks such as domestic service, "literacy work" and control over the activities of the people. Most of the women are constantly subject to violations.

With respect to life in the villages it is possible to emphasize the following situations:

a) The people in all the villages have been concentrated there by the army. Many times this has happened after burning down their farms in the hills.

b) There are several strategic villages where the army has concentrated the population of various villages in key positions. They are faced with a military presence, pressures, mistreatment and an almost complete lack of help. They are communities who are living under a structure which has been imposed and is alien to their culture. They find themselves in a situation of misery, sickness and among some with no spirit left to improve their lot.

c) The "model villages" are few and well placed to receive facilities such as water, light and stores etc. The inhabitants are ex-collaborators of the guerrilla forces and all the ideological work of the army is concentrated on them to win them over and to attract others. Each family receives support, their own house with corrugated iron roofs and good sized plots of land. There is a fixed military presence and absolute control over all aspects of life. The people cannot leave the villages.

In the areas which are considered to be in conflict, namely where a population have sought refuge in the hills, there exist patrols of both the PAC and the army. People who are captured or who surrender go through a long process of brainwashing. Those who flee, even if they are women or children,
are killed. In this sense the massacres are going on even though they are not noticed by the people in the towns and cities. The rest of the territory is being affected by the repression and the ever more increasingly difficult conditions of life. There exist more than 100,000 orphan children who lack any assistance. Constantly some of these are being taken from their communities by the authorities to be used in their publicity campaigns of "social benefits". Most of these children prefer to live in their communities, facing the lack of food, caused, among other things, by the forced displacement of the persecuted indigenous menfolk. This has left many widows or single women unable to carry out agricultural tasks, housework and caring of children all at once, thereby forcing them into conditions of terrible injustice.

In addition there exists a private institution known as APROFAM. This institution sterilises indigenous women through deceptive programmes based on the pretext that there is a rapid increase in the population. In their publicity they point out that Jesus Christ was not a population expert and that "he had made a mistake" when he said "go forth and multiply". This has brought strong reactions from the Guatemalan church, naturally, as well as rejection from the people. All this has been taking place at the same time as the International Conference on Population in Mexico.

Another thing is the pressure on displaced people within Guatemala and refugees abroad to return to their places of origin. This is clearly shown in the laws which were approved at the beginning of July where it was established that lands which are abandoned for more than 3 years will pass into the hands of the State or be transferred to the people who are working them. Another legal recourse which the Government is using to take away land from the indigenous population! When the people are not on their lands, it is not because they do not want them but because of the very conditions of repression and extermination which exist in the countryside. In spite of this the laws have been introduced under the heading "security and development".

In recent weeks, there have come reports from strategic positions in the mountains that the guerrilla forces have caused losses among the army. These events have taken place in the eastern part of the country in the Departamento San Marcos. The army is, in response, mobilising 9,000 soldiers and forcing 1,000 PAC civil patrols to operate in that same zone.

At the same time, Sr. Visconte Colville Culross, special envoy on human rights at the United Nations, has reported that killings and kidnappings are still taking place openly in Guatemala constituting a daily problem and that these events are carried out by the governmental security forces.

3. Reaction from the People
Over the last year one can see that the situation of conflict in the villages has led to a great deterioration in community life and a great loss of social cultural and religious values:

- There is an atmosphere of individualism and mistrust, community work and welcoming spirit have gone into decline.
- Religious festivals are again becoming drinking bouts where the real meaning becomes confused.
- In communities where leaders have disappeared, the new leader comes to prominence often as a result of his local political power (i.e. as head of a civil patrol or a commission in the army etc.).
- It should also be mentioned that the military "authority" is trying to break up the natural unity of the indigenous peoples through the introduction of foreign elements into the communities (i.e. families from other ethnic groups, mestizos, evangelicals and other religious sects etc).
- In many areas there is great complaint about the suffering caused by the heavy obligations to the PAC civil patrols.
The army has considerably increased its capacity for psychological warfare. Little by little they are managing to infiltrate the minds of the people with their anti-communist ideology and emphasis on national security.

This situation does not mean however that the indigenous peoples of Guatemala are completely accepting these impositions. Desperation and anger can be seen in the villages because the people know who their oppressors are.

The organisation MAYA demands before the IV Assembly of Indigenous Peoples:
That it declares there should be a total cessation of violations against the indigenous peoples.
That it condemns the inhuman attitude of the government of General Oscar Mejia Victores.
That it draws attention to the situation in Guatemala at the United Nations and other organisations which struggle for democratic rights.
That it invites popular and progressive organisations to analyse the indigenous problematic to contribute to the development of the national liberation process.
That the World Council of Indigenous Peoples seeks adequate means to become the spokesman for indigenous Guatemalan refugees in Mexico and to intervene nationally and internationally to improve the situation of the Guatemalan refugees and prevent these indigenous people from being deported or repatriated involuntarily.

INDIA: TIGERS VERSUS PEOPLE

Ramdeo was collecting leaves in the “Karo” forest when a tiger attacked him, leaving him senseless with deep injuries all over his body.

In Betla village, Palamu, Bihar, Nural Hassen was telling the unwritten history of the “famous” Betla Tiger Reserve. A big crowd around us seethed with anger and resentment against the internationally acclaimed project Tiger, launched in April 1973, to save the tiger from extinction. They said, “We all had our land in the project area. Before the project, we were promised many things, rewards, compensation, employment. But it was a farce. Instead of gaining anything, we are now always in danger of attack by “project animals”.

The first all-India tiger census was taken in 1972, and found less than 2,000. This alarming decrease caused international concern. Tiger hunting was banned in 1970, and the tiger was declared India’s national animal. The Wild Life Protection Act was passed in 1972 applying to several endangered species. The tiger at the peak of the jungle food chain merited special attention and in 1973 Project Tiger was launched. Initially eight tiger reserves were established (a few others were added later), with a central government grant of Rs50 million (US$6 million). The World Wildlife Fund and the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources collaborated with equipment and expertise.

The tiger reserves had core and buffer zones: all forestry operations and human interference were banned in the core and buffer; these settlements with their farmlands were enclosed right within the forests. Wild animals strayed into these areas.

The villagers, too, were often unaware that killing certain species was banned. This led to inevitable conflict with the authorities.
In April 1980, in the Similipal reserve in Orissa state, 141 tribals were arrested as police swooped down on a traditional mass hunt, seizing 170 bows and 400 arrows.

In the Kanha reserve, in Madhya Pradesh, 20 villages with a population of 40,000 have been shifted outside the reserve area, but such rehabilitation is difficult and expensive. In the Periyar reserve in Kerala state there are even private cardamom (the high-priced spice) estates, the influential owners having successfully resisted shifting.

How have the forest dwellers, the forests and the wild animals been affected by Project Tiger? Let us look at one of the reserves more closely. Palamau on the western edge of the Chotanagpur plateau in Bihar state includes 50 villages in the Betla tiger reserve consisting of 92,800 hectares (230,000 acres). Ten of these are forest villages, and three are in the core. The dry, deciduous forest is dominated by bamboos and sal (Shorea robusta). There are tigers, leopards, elephants, gaur (the Indian bison), boar, chital and sambar (two species of deer).

The Betla reserve is now a great tourist attraction and draws over 20,000 visitors annually, mostly middle-class urbanites from West Bengal. However, since the reserve was set up in 1974, the villagers have lost all their means of livelihood one by one. No one knows how many villagers have been killed by project animals. When projects assume that villagers are enemies of nature, the first priority is to deprive them of their rights for the preservation of wildlife.

Three kms from the Betla tiger reserve in Pokhara village, Jaida was seriously injured by a tiger. She pledged her land for the treatment in Daltonganj hospital. In Giani, the wife of Bhela Singh was killed by a wild elephant. In Chachani, Harishankar was shot dead by a forest ranger who alleged that he had gone into the forest to cut bamboo. In Mundu, a ranger cut off a leg of a labourer because he refused to part with his axe. According to a Jharkhand party activist, on 16th September, 1978, three dead bodies of tribals were found in the pond of the Betla range officer. Last year near Sabarwa in Fulwaria village, forest officials misbehaved with Adivasi women and protesting members of their families were beaten up.

The villagers' land in Daltonganj is in the clutches of money lenders. Bonded labour is widely prevalent, specifically in project areas, the villagers' crops are frequently damaged by the project animals. Say the villagers in hopeless resignation, "It is the same story, the elephants will come and we shall not have a single grain to eat". Under the project, the authorities say that they spend Rs20,000 (US$2,500) a year for kerosene flares and crackers to scare away animals from the settlements. The villagers say: "In the old days the animals could be frightened off by beating a drum. But now they just stand and stare."

The people say that they get torches and firecrackers too late — sometimes after two or three days and so little kerosene that it will not wet a piece of cloth. The villagers sow wild thorn around their crops to protect them from grazing animals. The enclosures are sometimes made of bamboo but neither is it available in sufficient quantities to the villagers nor are they allowed to collect bamboo from the forest. According to government estimates, every year the project animals destroy crops worth 25-30 thousand rupees, yet there are no provisions for crop protection and insurance.

While project tiger has succeeded in increasing the number of tigers, it has also pushed the populations of wild species, especially the wild boar, to abnormally high levels. In such an environment no law other than the law of "might is right" will prevail. However, the jungle law grants its "citizens" an equality of opportunity in the exercise of might which has been denied to human beings. A case in point is the story of Yusuf Mian who killed a snake to save himself — he
was fined Rs40/- by the project officials. Killing of domestic cattle by wild animals is another major problem. The compensation for killed domestic cattle is half the price of the animal. The method of determining the price is purely arbitrary, and a long-drawn affair.

In the Giani range, villagers employed by the forest department get only 2-3 rupees against the stipulated Rs7/-,. Often their wages are withheld and they are made to do different kinds of work without pay. Kendu leaves, used in bidi manufacturing, are collected by the people who get a paltry Rs2-3 for 100 pola; while the government, in close contact with contractors and traders, is making huge profits — in the Giani range itself, the Government collected Rs2,543,565.14 as revenue whereas in 1969-70 it collected Rs1,602,347.66. Yet the foresters do not allow the villagers to graze their animals even in the buffer areas. They confiscate their animals and put them behind enclosures. In project Tiger villages, the forest departments have launched a "case drive". In every village, many cases have been brought against the inhabitants. Jangi Mian of Pokhrikala described some of these. The forest department brought a case against many villagers on the allegation of killing a deer. But in court it was proved that the deer had been killed by a bullet. In Betla village, many inhabitants have been fighting a case, also involving the killing of a deer, for as long as seven years. Three boys of Betla village — Allaudin, Rashul and Sakhar have been in jail for a year. On payment of money, forest officials silently withdrew the case. Their threats of imprisonment and arbitrary fines keep the villagers under their control.

What is project Tiger? What are the rights of the villagers? What is the government's policy on conservation? Project Tiger from its inception to its implementation has not been linked to the needs of the people directly affected by conservation efforts. Project Tiger is typical of the government's attitude towards conservation which is to save a handful of animals for the sake of international prestige while depriving villagers of their right to exist.

(Sources: Two articles entitled "Tigers versus People"; one by Sumi Krishna Chauhan, published by Earthscan in 1981 and the other by Mahesh Ranga Rajan from 1983.)

Santal people outside their house (Photo: Kampen for at overleve).
The International Indigenous Youth Conference is being planned partly in celebration of 1985, which has been officially designated as "International Youth Year" by the United Nations General Assembly. The Conference is also one of the many events planned to commemorate the Centenary of the North West Resistance of 1885, the last armed struggle of Canada's Aboriginal people for just and equitable treatment. Although that battle was lost, the struggle continues to this day and the Youth of the world's Indigenous nations will carry it into the future.

In discussing the situation of the Youth, United Nations Document A/3A C.209/2, of 17 March 1981, emphasizes the need for more and better opportunities for young people for meaningful participation in all areas connected with the development of society, at the local, national and international levels. The general guidelines for national actions for the Year include a recommendation that exchange visits between youth of different countries should be facilitated to increase mutual understanding among people and to contribute to the education of Youth. Among the specific proposals is the recommendation that rural, non-organized and less advantaged youth should receive special attention.

With this in mind, the Indigenous Youth of Saskatchewan anticipate hosting Indigenous youth delegates from around the world at an International Indigenous Youth Conference. The Youth recognize that it is only with Peace and through participation that appropriate development, of ourselves and of our societies, can take place which will restore Indigenous people to self-reliant, productive nations in the brotherhood of all people. Therefore we believe it is appropriate that we join hands with the International Community as represented by the United Nations and with our Indigenous brothers and sisters around the world in working together to ensure the success of that future struggle. Such a conference affords for us and for other Indigenous Youth, an ideal opportunity to exchange ideas, examine solutions and plan strategy. It affords us an opportunity to become more informed about our history and about the history and progress of our struggles and to develop the leadership skills we will require when we reach the point in our development when the responsibility for the struggle will fall on our shoulders.

The Indigenous Youth of Saskatchewan extends an invitation to all Indigenous Youth to attend this conference. We are in the process of attempting to finance two delegates from each of the 37 countries, but we urge those of you who are in the position to secure your own funding to do so. We would like two official delegates to contact their regional office, as represented in the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) so that contact within each country can be established.

For further information please contact:
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NICARAGUA: NEW MISKITO ORGANISATION AND DIALOGUE WITH GOVERNMENT CONTINUES

On July 22 this year a new Miskito organisation was formed in Puerto Cabezas. Its first Assembly was attended by 350 representatives from 63 Miskito communities. They elected Fornes Rabonias from Rio Coco as chairman and a board of six members with various tasks. The organisation MISATAN is a non-government organisation with an 11 point programme:

1) Unification of Miskito families.
2) A political and educational programme on a national and international level to stop the misuse of the Miskito people and to gain peace in Nicaragua.
3) Find solutions to the land question.
4) To get Miskito accepted as a national language and to put more efforts into bi-lingual education.
5) Stimulate the Miskito population to work for the benefit of their own communities.
6) Develop patriotism and national unity without assimilation.
7) Increase participation of Miskito in development plans.
8) Encourage participation of Miskito in tasks concerning them as a group.
9) Let the resources of the zone benefit the local communities.
10) Guarantee Miskito cultural heritage in its different manifestations.

"Raise the banner of the struggle among the indigenous peoples through solidarity by establishing political, social and cultural relations."

MISATAN were elected onto the executive of CORPI (Coordinadora de Pueblos Indios) in Central America at their June Assembly and were also present at the World Council of Indigenous Peoples Assembly in Panama in September. There MISATAN put forward its position as independent of, but working in dialogue with the Sandinists. The proposals of MISURASATA to the Government centre around the notion of self-autonomy rather than any independence. They are not in favour of a reservation and the Miskito do want to participate in the State.

MISATAN expressed interest in talking with the leadership of MISURASATA and so at this stage there is still some room to enable an agreement in which the two Miskito organisations and the Sandinist government might participate.

In the November elections in Nicaragua three indigenous representatives were elected into the Constituent Assembly. Hazel Lau who was a leading member of MISURASATA but has remained in Nicaragua throughout the troubles was one of these (see interviews in IWGIA Newsletter No.37 and 38). Dorathia Wilson was also elected (see interview in No.37). The third person elected to the Assembly was Minerva Wilson who is the secretary for international contacts of MISATAN.

Sandinist government to grant amnesty to Brooklyn Rivera and MISURASATA and encourage their return to Nicaragua from Costa Rica. The desire for dialogue is there on both sides but the need (in September) was to get enough trust to meet. Since then there have been two meetings between MISURASATA and the Sandinists. The proposals of MISURASATA to the Government are to guarantee Miskito cultural heritage in its different manifestations.

At the same time, the WCIP Assembly was visited by a group from MISURASATA in Costa Rica. In an interview with the IWGIA representatives, Samuel Mercado Sanders put forward their perspective. He spoke of the recent offer of the
Question: How are you going to unify Miskito families?

Rabonias: For instance, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees might make it possible to transfer some Miskito from Honduras. The counter-revolutionary leaders do not want the Miskito in Honduras to leave. There are still some 15,000 people there. So, we are trying to support UNHCR and get international solidarity. Whenever I am asked what is the main problem for the Miskito, I always answer that it is to get peace. This is the main objective of our organisation. This is what all Nicaraguans want. It is for this reason that we are in Europe now.

Question: What has MISATAN done in the two months of its existence?

Rabonias: I have been abroad almost a month, but the main achievements up to now are: 1. We have got land titles for 5 communities and the Government wants to hand over 22 more. But we told them that there are still problems within the communities which must be solved first. And the people agree with us. But there are still many Miskito who don’t trust the organisation as they are afraid that the same thing will happen as happened to MISURASATA. 2. We have received returning Miskito, to give them support and tell them their rights. They may live in Tasba Pri or return to their communities. If they have nowhere to live, we support them, give them food and let them sleep in our office until we find a solution.

Question: Is there any possibility of a return to the Río Coco?

Rabonias: If we have peace, if there is no war with Honduras or Nicaragua, then we have freedom. As Comandante William Ramírez said to the assembly: The Río Coco zone is for the Miskito. They may return, but only in liberty, when there is no war. As Miskito of Tasba Pri, we agree. This is logical for us.

Question: But what will you find there along the banks of the Coco? The communities are destroyed and you will have to start all over again.

Rabonias: Yes, for instance, all the fruit trees are dead and nothing remains. That is why several families are planting fruit trees in Tasba Pri and when they return they will encounter the same problem again. The Sandinist Front said: if you wish to return and all is peaceful -then return. Those who do not can remain in Tasba Pri. So it’s for the people to decide where they wish to live. If they remember the difficulties they had in Río Coco they will remain in Tasba Pri. The young people and children seem more happy in Tasba Pri where communications are better. However the old people see it differently. They have abandoned their crops and animals and have been accustomed to living along the Río Coco where they could fish and have more space.

Question: How do you see the fact that many people on the Río Coco had already been moved there in 1960 from the Río Patuca? Perhaps it is only logical that they don’t feel too confident about the subsequent move to Tasba Pri?

Rabonias: During the Somoza era, the people from lower Río Coco were moved to La Tronquera and Tasba Raya. They were left there without food, financial support or anything. All they had was a little house and most of them wanted to return. Many did so. In Tasba Pri, on the other hand, we got a year of food supplies, bank loans and houses. This is the difference between relocation under Somoza and now.

Question: What do you think the people in Tasba Pri want - is it true that they all want to return?

Rabonias: In Sumubila there are many who want to return,
especially among the old people. They are from the Río Coco, they were born there and this is why they want to return. They want to see it again. But the young people understand the situation better and for this reason they participate in defence and with the militia. They know what the situation really is like - how the contras come in and kill their families. The older people are not so interested. They stay by themselves in their houses, thinking and talking to their spouses agreeing that life was better on the Río Coco. Many don't want the dead to be left in Tasba Pri as the site is not permanent. After the attack on Sumubila in April they took the dead to Puerto Cabezas.

**Question:** What are the identifying cultural traits of the Miskito?

**Rabonias:** In old times we had our own culture, but little by little it was eroded or changed into a different form. Nowadays the young and the students are more interested in finding out about our lost culture. Within MISATAN we have a person responsible for cultural matters. We are recording the language in the way it is spoken - it is a mixed language with Spanish and English influences. You find the same sort of thing in our dances, our cooking and material culture.

**Question:** And what about land? Many indigenous peoples identify themselves strongly with the land.

**Rabonias:** At present, MISATAN is urging the Government to give land titles to every community which wants them. On August 25th 5 titles were given to 5 communities enabling them to have sufficient land. We, as MISATAN, are going to follow this up so that no one gets bad land and that the families are in agreement. The Miskito are very concerned about their titles so that they can cultivate and make the best use of their lands. If, for instance, we find wood away from a settlement and if a company says that it wants to cut it, and the community agrees, then the company should pay the community
for each tree cut. This would be income for the community to build a school or something else. As an organisation, MISATAN is supporting the people ensuring that the Government fulfills its promises.

**Question:** How are you organised within the communities to make decisions?

**Rabonias:** There are two representatives. One from MISATAN who presents the problems of the community in the Assembly. There are now representatives of MISATAN in almost every community on the Coast, the Savannas right to Tasba Pri. The representative also co-ordinates community decisions. The second representative is a government delegate. In some communities the government representative is also the MISATAN representative. However in principal, these are not the same persons.

**Question:** Are you identified with the Government?

**Rabonias:** Yes, because we appear as their advisors. But we are autonomous and only the people may make a decision. MISATAN is a non-governmental organisation. There are indeed members who identify themselves as Sandinists, but we are fighting for the rights of the Miskito. Earlier we did not know who was talking to the Government or to the world.

**Question:** Is this the main difference between MISATAN and MISURASATA?

**Rabonias:** Yes, MISURASATA was also an organisation for the Miskito, but the Sumu and Rama were also integrated. I was not involved with MISURASATA. I worked with ATC (Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo Sandinist agricultural labourers union) in order to get bank loans for the people on the Río Coco. But I didn't know MISURASATA's political line. I did not know their programme - nor did the people. The people did not know anything about the separatist "Plan 81". Some say that Steadman Fagoth was a leader for the Miskito but today the Miskito people are divided by the same Fagoth. Thousands have fled to Honduras, among them my mother, and they cannot return to Nicaragua.

**Question:** Are there any contacts between MISATAN and Brooklyn Rivera in Costa Rica?

**Rabonias:** There is no dialogue. We do not see Brooklyn as a leader. Frankly, I don't know what the conflicts between him and Fagoth are about. If Brooklyn were to return to Nicaragua it would be easier. He has been offered an amnesty. As a Miskito, I know that there is a difference in the position of Brooklyn and Fagoth. With the attack on Sumubila in April, it became clearer that the enemy is Fagoth. He is bringing about deaths and kidnappings within his own family. The people do not want Fagoth to return, but Brooklyn does not want to make any more trouble.

**Question:** If you want peace, why don't you take the initiative to talk with Brooklyn Rivera?

**Rabonias:** We don't know what Brooklyn wants. We want all Miskito to return to Nicaragua. Armstrong Wiggins too wants to return, as he told Oscar Hodgson in Geneva. If he wants to return to Nicaragua to work for the Miskito people, we are free, as the Miskito organisation, to tell the Government that he should enter the country freely, just like the other Miskito who enter Nicaragua. On August 28th, 8 Miskito from Honduras entered my office. They handed themselves over to me, not to the military. We made them identification cards and made them welcome. The problem is that most of the Miskito outside Nicaragua do not know that MISATAN exists.

**Question:** Where do the leaders of your organisation receive their directives?

**Rabonias:** Leaders of MISATAN, like myself, analyse the situation directly with the people. I have to talk directly with the people. We talk about the present situation, ways in which
the organisation can advance and how we can find solutions to the existing problems. So the people pass the information and MISATAN can try and solve the problems they present. We then present the problems to the Government or to the relevant institutions.

**Question:** How is the population of Zelaya Norte going to participate in the elections?

**Rabonias:** That is very simple. The Miskito know little about the political parties even though 95% have registered for the elections. Perhaps the 5% who have not registered are those still in Honduras. For the Miskito there are only Sandinistas and contras. Until the day I left no party had visited the area. There is not one leader who has come to talk with the Miskito in Tasba Pri or Tronquera. These political parties only work in Managua. For the Miskito, the Sandinist Front is the only party they know.
Integral to the apartheid regime's 'total strategy' is the forced relocation of millions of black people from 'white' areas to impoverished and overcrowded 'homelands'. So far, more than three million people have been moved, and another two million are due to be moved in the next few years. Here we reprint excerpts from the report on relocations prepared by the South African Council of Churches and Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference which was presented to the UN Secretary-General earlier this year. It traces the transformation of bantustans from reservation to 'homeland'. This particular version has been published in Socialist Affairs.

Despite what many South Africans believe and are still taught, the first inhabitants of the country were black. Bantu-speaking peoples were settled in South Africa well over a thousand years ago. When the first whites sailed round Africa in the late fifteenth century, many if not most of today's Bantu-speaking peoples of Southern Africa were already settled in areas suited to herding and agriculture. Successive governments in South Africa have ignored this fact, and have helped to spread the myth that black and white arrived in the subcontinent simultaneously.

In 1652, representatives of the Dutch East Indes Company arrived to establish a refreshment station for ships travelling to and from the East. Before long, permanent settlers started establishing farms and centres of trade. Their first encounter with the indigenous population was with the Khoikhoi people (Hottentots), who were mainly herders as well as hunters and cultivators. The second group they encountered was the San (Bushmen), who were hunters and gatherers.

Both Khoikhoi and San peoples valued the land highly as the basis of their subsistence. The settlers, however, disregarded the rights of the "Khoisan", and seized the land for their own.

The first war between the whites and the Khoi over land erupted in 1659, and there was violent conflict in every decade of the following century. But by the mid-eighteenth century, the original trading relationship between the settlers and the Khoisan had become one of master and servant. Having lost most of their cattle and land, the Khoisan were forced to work for the whites. The whites added to this labour force by getting slaves shipped in from Java, the East Indies, Madagascar and Mozambique.

As the whites moved northwards in search of land and labour as well as political autonomy and goods to trade, they encountered a third group of people: the Bantu-speaking communities. These were more organised than the Khoisan. They were herders and agriculturalists. Their land was communally owned and their production was dependent on the labour of members of the household. Many of them correctly perceived the whites as a threat to their resources and their political independence, so the nineteenth century was also a period of bloody warfare.

Africans were certainly aware of the measures designed to transform them from cultivators into labourers. These included the conquest and incorporation of the remaining independent African societies such as those of the Zulu, the Pedi and the Pondo in the late nineteenth century.

Linked to this, there was a barrage of measures against the peasantry, such as anti-squatting legislation, land restrictions and state support for white farmers. In addition there was, of course, the imposition of hut, pole and labour taxes, as well as the tightening of pass and vagrancy laws. These assaults on the African population were so successful that the Witwatersrand mine labour force soared from three thousand workers in 1887 to over one hundred thousand Africans in 1899. This was the beginning of the migrant labour system, which has lasted to this day and which forms the basis of the lives that millions of South Africans lead.

The provisions of the notorious 1913 Natives' Land Act illustrate well the way in which white mine owners and farmers
set about creating a black labour force. Firstly, the act reduced the African's rights to purchase or hire ground outside certain reserved land areas. Secondly, with rulings such as that forbidding sharecropping in the Orange Free State, it aimed to reduce the farm labour shortage by making the peasants on farms into labour tenants or wage labourers. Thus by rigidly restricting the land which blacks could work on their own account, the act contributed to the on-going process by which black cultivators and peasants were being transformed into labourers for white mine owners and farmers.

Yet it is important to note that this act did not completely strip Africans of their land. By setting aside the reserves, employers were able to force the families of migrant workers to support themselves in the rural areas, and to pay the migrant workers wages which were barely adequate for themselves alone. They were also able to shift the burden of social welfare - the care of the unemployed, the sick, the aged and the children - to the reserves. In addition, they were able to set up influx control, and to reduce the risk of urban unrest by forcing blacks who were not workers back into the rural areas.

Thirty years later, however, the rural areas were grossly overcrowded and overutilised. There was also a growing problem of landlessness. The 1932 Native Economic Commission decried their state of underdevelopment, and warned that the reserves were accommodating indebted, malnourished and impoverished people.

Because of this, the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act, increased the area of the reserves from 7% to 13% of the land area of South Africa (this was a long delayed promise of the 1913 act). The reserves had to be small enough to force Africans out onto the labour market, but large enough to fulfil economic and political functions for the employers of migrant workers.

Map of South Africa's "Black Homelands" (Socialist Affairs)
Even so, the land available to Africans was still not nearly enough for their needs. At the time of the 1946 strike of 60,000 black mineworkers over wages, the vast majority of migrants to the mines did not have land in the reserves. So as it became increasingly difficult to supplement low urban wages with rural production, migration to the towns soared, especially around the years of the second world war. Since the government and employers were not prepared to spend money on facilities and services for these new urban dwellers, squatter settlements mushroomed. A militant trade union movement also developed. Black workers were publicly showing that they would no longer tolerate starvation, urban wages and urban influx controls when the situation in the countryside was so risky. There was also a mass political movement, in the form of the African National Congress, that was gaining strength.

In response to these challenges, certain concessions were considered. In the 1930s and 1940s there was a dramatic change in the structure of the South African economy. The contribution of industry to the national income outstripped that of agriculture in 1930, and overtook mining in 1943. Large-scale industrialists (who often had foreign links) were less dependent on cheap migrant labour, and more interested in developing a stable, better skilled and more efficient labour force. So they discussed a series of compromises in the 1940s, including the relaxation of pass laws, the recognition of African trades unions, and the encouragement of permanent urbanisation of blacks who worked in the cities.

This, however, did not happen. When the National Party came to power in 1948, it concerned itself more with the interests of farmers, struggling Afrikaans, industrialists and white workers, rather than with those of large-scale employers. There were acute black labour shortages suffered by those unable to offer the wages and conditions that the bigger manufacturers were able to offer. This problem was tackled in a number of ways. Firstly, certain legislative and administrative measures were implemented to speed up the process of transforming tenants on farms into wage labourers. Secondly, influx and efflux controls were tightened and labour bureaux were established. So although the reserves had effectively lost their economic function of supplementing low urban wages, they gained the role of acting as control posts through which labour was channelled to unpopular, low-wage sectors. At the same time the apartheid policy intended to rid the urban areas of as many Africans as possible, allowing only those who worked in towns to remain. The reserves were to be resuscitated as the ‘homelands’ of the African population, and as the areas where people were to exercise their political rights.

This political function of the reserves existed since the nineteenth century, but was greatly expanded. As the protest and membership of the Congress Alliance soared in the early 1950s, the state began to cast around for alternative forms of political leadership for blacks. It began to build up the administrative and repressive powers of chiefs and headmen located in the bantustans, and to give a tiny group of black traders and farmers a stake in the economic status quo. This process has today culminated in the so-called ‘independence’ of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and the Ciskei. These are under the leadership of an alliance of ‘traditional’ leaders and a black middle class desperately promoting ethnic values.

Thus the policy of ‘divide and rule’ is now promoted through emphasising ethnic rather than racial differences. The whites - whether they speak English, Afrikaans, German or Portuguese - are taken as one ethnic group. Africans, however, were divided into eight such groups in the 1950s, and since then two more have been discovered. There are now 10 ‘homelands’ in South Africa.

Massive population increases in the ‘homelands’ over the last ten years indicate the importance of another function...
which 'homelands' continue to fulfil: that of accommodating Africans who are not labourers. The apartheid government used several measures to make this happen. Most important was the implementation of the relocation programme, which meant that millions of blacks were to be moved out of the urban and 'white' agricultural areas to the 'homelands'. Along with this a plan was formulated to try to revive the economic capacity of the 'homelands'.

This plan took shape with the report of the Tomlinson Commission in 1955. The commission report spoke of widespread poverty and of the fact that virtually none of the bantustan population could make a living in these areas. Their solution was twofold: on the one hand to improve the agricultural capacity of the bantustans through a policy of betterment, and on the other hand to establish industries in these areas.

These two recommendations were difficult to implement — and the government rejected them on grounds of the large expenditure they demanded. But betterment and industrial development slowly went ahead. Betterment involved the division of all areas into separate residential, grazing and arable areas. This meant that many households whose fields and homesteads were close together would have to move physically in order to fit in with the new system. The implication of this was relocation on a large scale for the rural population. In addition, in the process of reorganisation many thousands of people lost all access to land.

The policy of industrial development was also problematic. Industrialists did not want to move out into barren areas far from adequate transport and other facilities, so concessions had to be offered to them. These included exemption from minimum wage legislation in South Africa. This means that wages could be extremely low, and the bantustan populations, out of dire economic necessity, were forced to accept employment and these starvation wages. As late as 1980 people working in Babelehi in Bophuthatsawana were being paid as little as 5 rand per week for factory work!

The bantustans have become increasingly relevant in the last 25 years in their function of accommodating Africans who are not labourers. This new importance can be related to changes in the South African economy. Partly due to measures taken by the National Party in the 1950s, agriculture has changed from a backward sector suffering from chronic labour shortages to a relatively mechanised, capital-intensive sector dependent on a small number of permanent wage-workers. Like most industrial enterprises - which have themselves become increasingly monopolised and dependent on foreign investment - farming concerns and agribusiness have been more and more concerned that there should be semi-skilled workers available. They do not want a mass of cheap unskilled labourers. As a result, a rising rate of black unemployment has become endemic to South Africa over the last 20 years. Although unofficial estimates put the number much higher than the figure of 1-1.85 million African unemployed in 1976 (10-2-18.6% of the labour force), even these scaled-down estimates have caused business people and state officials considerable concern. Their fears of urban unrest, and their desire for streamlined profitability, explain why 'surplus' blacks - the unemployed, the old, the sick and the children - are to an increasing extent being dumped in the rural peripheries of South Africa, out of sight and all too often out of mind.

Thus the main role played by the reserves has changed dramatically over the last one hundred and fifty years. In the nineteenth century, they served primarily as military buffer zones and as sites for a growing peasantry. From the discovery of diamonds and gold to the middle of the twentieth century, they served largely as labour pools with the added advantage that families at home theoretically supplemented urban wages which were barely adequate for the migrant worker himself. And from the 1950s, they have served as sites for canalising labour, for redirecting political consciousness
into ethnic channels, and for receiving blacks not needed by white employers.

As these changes in emphasis have occurred, conditions of life in the bantustans have declined continuously for most of the people. Today, the bantustans are characterised by mass unemployment: by poverty so desperate that the position of the residents is worse than that of the inhabitants of any other part of Africa except perhaps the Sahel countries. They are characterised by outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, bubonic plague and typhoid, and malnutrition so far advanced that about a fifth or more of the children die before the age of five. In contrast to what occurred in the 1940s, the privileged urban blacks are granted access to basic health services. But the majority of the African population face the much worse prospect of being trapped in the bantustans in a vicious cycle of unemployment, starvation and despair. This is the cycle into which 'surplus people' are continually being dumped.

It should be clear that forced removals and relocation are closely linked to the existence of the bantustans. We have seen how the bantustans have developed. Firstly they were a consequence of the seizure of African land. Secondly they were 'reserved' for Africans by the 1913 Land Act so that migrants' wages could be low, supplemented by some agricultural production. Later the bantustans became a tool for controlling the rate of urbanisation in 'white' South Africa, and for moving unemployment away from 'white' farm and industrial areas, which were being increasingly mechanised. Finally the bantustans have been used to try to divide and defuse African nationalism and resistance in general.

All these functions of the bantustans relate to the control of the Africans in supposedly white areas. Forced removals to bantustan relocation camps fit exactly into this function. Without the existence of these bantustans, relocation would be very difficult for the government to carry out.
The racist definition of South Africa's land area prevents Africans from getting full land rights in most of the country. So they can be removed. The bantustans provide a geographical location in which removed people can be placed, and confined through passes or passports and influx control laws.

The immorality of removals is compounded by conditions in the bantustans and it is very clear that these removals are very harmful to most of the relocated people's economic interests. We also need to consider what function the bantustans have at present. This will help to evaluate the type of life into which relocated people are being moved, and the general legitimacy of the bantustans, especially as relocation attempts to legitimise the bantustans through causing most Africans to live in them. In 1960, 40% of Africans lived in the bantustans; in 1980, 53% did as a result of relocation.

The idea that the bantustans are the areas where the African population supports itself has been revived once again. This time there is no pretence that the majority of the people can live off the land. There is acceptance that remittances are a major source of income. Social welfare facilities are made the responsibility of the bantustan. Pensions and disability grants are paid out by bantustans and unemployment insurance is paid there. But as any bantustan dweller knows, the time taken for people to get their money, and the meagre amounts that are available, mean that this function is not carried out in an efficient and adequate way.

The bantustans rely for most of their income on grants from the central government and when inadequate money is allocated, the needs of the majority of the population for schools, housing and other services and facilities are always allocated the smallest amounts. This inadequate allocation of funds brings us to another economic function.

When the idea of political independence for the bantustans was developed, it was intended to divide and rule South Africa's people on a number of levels. The most obvious is the balkanisation of South Africa as a whole, but also internal division on the basis of access to wealth and resources has become increasingly important. And here it is the vast majority of people who are the losers.

The rule of Pretoria-controlled bantustan leaders is propped up by their own bureaucracy, army and police forces. For them to feel that their job of 'governing' millions of poor, even starving people is worthwhile, they have to receive very good payment. The bantustan civil service salaries are relatively high, and there are numerous perks, such as shares in development corporation industries; preferential access to trading licences, large houses at subsidised costs, and expensive cars. As a result, a class of people is emerging who are loyal to the bantustan rulers and who can be relied on to support the status quo and repress the local populations if necessary.

We mentioned earlier that the industrial decentralisation policy has not been as successful as was hoped. But recently there has been a new development in some bantustan areas. This is the entry of giant companies into particular sectors, mainly those dealing with agricultural production and processing of commodities such as sisal, cotton and tobacco. These enterprises are often highly mechanised and sometimes pay workers badly. Through this penetration of big business into agriculture, the local people are still exploited while making a handsome return for the companies. They have even less control over their economic lives than before.

As explained earlier, one of the major economic functions of the bantustans has always been the supply of labour to the major sectors of the South African economy. With growing unemployment in urban areas, this has recently become a function that is declining in significance. The Rieker Commission, set up to report on matters related to the influx control in the
wake of the 1976 uprising suggested a local labour preference policy to reduce the numbers of urban unemployed and to try and reduce the numbers of people in urban areas. The implementation of this has meant that fewer and fewer migrants are likely to be recruited to work in urban areas. Because town and city residents do not see the unemployed masses in the 'homelands', being out of sight, they are out of mind.

It is still possible for some people from the bantustans to find forms of work in or near urban complexes. The bantustans still supply considerable labour to the mines and to the sectors of employment least popular with urban dwellers, eg. the railways, municipalities, farms and foundries. Bantustan labour is being used to do work that nobody else will do.

In addition, the mines have stopped using so much 'foreign labour' and instead are using labour from the bantustans. So miners are being recruited from the Transkei and Lebowa, for example, instead of Mozambique or Malawi. The ease with which migrants can be recruited and dismissed is also used by employers and the government as a threat to workers not to go on strike. The government is creating a class of 'commuters' who live in the bantustans and travel to work in the common or 'white' areas on a daily basis. This has the advantage of ensuring a supply of literate, settled and semi-skilled labour for the white economy. But the social costs of their production are shifted to the bantustan government. In terms of privileged access to jobs, this commuter group comes just behind those with urban rights. Restrictions similar to those in force in white areas, but imposed by bantustan authorities, prevent people from the more remote areas moving to the commuter dormitory towns.

Clearly the economic function of the bantustans has changed dramatically since the early years of the century. Where they once subsidised the payment of cheap wages to migrants on the basis of their families' agricultural activities, one of their major functions now is as dumping grounds for the unemployed, the aged and the sick - in short, for all those people who are not useful to industry or other big concerns in urban areas.

There has also been a shift from their pre-dominantly economic function to their present role, designed to secure political control of the rural population. The mass influx of people into the bantustans as a result of the government's relocation policy has intensified this need for political control and at the same time further undercut any potential for economic viability of these areas.

Uprooted: Modderdam residents being relocated.(Photo Socialist Affairs)
IWGIA has recently received some very disturbing reports from Venezuela about the fate of a group of the Piaroa people who live in the Valle de Guanay in San Juan de Manapiare, Territorio Federal Amazonas, Venezuela. In this valley there are 30 families who live in communal houses. They subsist from hunting, fishing and a mainly subsistence agriculture as do the other Piaroa.

In the same valley is a farm called San Pablo which is the property of one Hermann Zingg who came into the region in 1972. From the time of his arrival he has instigated conflicts with the local Piaroa with the object of trying to gain more of their land. He and other land owners have blocked off large areas of land preventing access for the Piaroa to their natural resources.

Over the years the situation has deteriorated to the extent that at 2 pm on June 17th this year several Piaroa were beaten and tortured. On this day, a group of Piaroa were burying a person who had been killed by a snake-bite. To do this they had to cross the land of Hermann Zingg whereupon they were accosted and fired on. Some managed to flee but three were captured. One of them, a pregnant woman was freed but the other two were tied to the tail of a horse and dragged to Hermann Zingg’s house. There they were tied to a table leg for the rest of the day.

On the following day Hermann Zingg arrived in a DC3 plane along with a Special Commission of the DISIP (Venezuelan political police), commanded by Comisario Granados Faries, who broke into the Piaroa houses and caused terror with their threats and show of modern weapons. The police tied the captured Piaroa to a tree and began to torture them by wrapping twine around their necks and putting a gun to their ears and mouths. The political police could go no further.

A Map of Piaroa and neighbouring Guahibo territory (Antropologica 39)
due to the arrival of some members of the National Guard who took the captured Piaroa to Puerto Ayacucho and released them.

The events which took place among the Piaroa have caused some outrage in Venezuela and a commission of investigation was set up to look into the problem. However several people including Churchmen have cast doubt on the objectivity of the commission considering the close links between Hermann Zingg and certain people in and close to the Government.

The Piaroa outrage is but one example of practices which have been carried out by other landowners in Venezuela. These people have been trying to usurp the lands of the indigenous population. There have been reports of genocide and the disappearance of entire communities such as happened in those places today known as Los Altos on the Río Apure and Hato la Ribereña.

In response to this information IWGIA sent the following telegramme and is publishing the next article written by a Piaroa about the situation in Valle de Guanay.

To Minister of Justice Sr. José Manzo Gonzalez and the President of Venezuela, Sr. D. Jaime Lusinghi:

The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) protests at the serious situation confronting the Piaroa people of Valle Guanay in San Juan de Manapiare territorio federal Amazonas STOP We vehemently protest at the tortures inflicted on indigenous Piaroa on June 18 1984 by members of Special Commission police body DISIP at the hand of Comisario Granados Farias and with Hermann Zingg who spread terror and fear in Piaroa communities STOP International Community closely follows the development of the situation facing the Piaroa people STOP Copenhagen 27/9/84

Source: Information from Diputado David Nieves, Camara de Diputados Venezuela.

VENEZUELA: I'LL BUY THESE LANDS, PIAROA AND ALL

A Message from the Piaroa People of the Venezuelan Amazon to the Peoples of the World.

A Problem of Land possession

The present problem confronting the Piaroa people of Caño Vera-Guanay in the Venezuelan Amazon is land possession. All over the world landowners operate in the same way, and with the same cunning try to snatch away our right to land and to life. There is something we want to clearly state here. It is not possible to defend culture and the right to life without defending land; neither is it possible to defend land without the right to life and culture.

Enemies of indigenous people almost always try to present the Indian as an "animal" in order to deny him the right to land; they say he is a "savage", "primitive" or that we are a "human zoo" as one respected Venezuelan intellectual has said. If we live in accordance with our customs then we are seen as a type of "living museum", embaled by anthropologists and other Indian specialists. We are not accepted and we are not wanted to have respect for our culture, way of life or mode of thinking and feeling. This is because we are different from those who stand against the Indian and so they make out that we cannot think, that we are "irrational". If we walk in traditional dress they say we are "naked", but if we go about in trousers they say we are Indians.

If we speak our language then we are not considered to have "civilisation". There is no word more dangerous than "civilisation" and "to civilise" when it is used with evil intent. If we hunt and sow plants, it is said that the Indian is lazy and does not work and if we move site so as not to destroy the land where we sow and hunt, then we are said to lack culture. Mestizo or White Europeans who come from Caracas the capital, to the Amazon regions say that they are going to make our lands habitable. But we have lived on these
lands for thousands of years without destroying them. Only
White man will make them inhabitable because his false progress
and development will destroy all in its wake.

To cover up our existence in the Amazon it is said that
they are "nobody's lands" and are "unpopulated" or containing
only a few people. The conquerors and colonisers who wish to
snatch away our lands have to convince themselves and others
that Indians are not really people. It is for this reason
that the Piaroa say: you cannot defend the right to land with­
out defending the right to culture and life. But there is no
right to life and culture without lands. And so it is for this
reason that land is so important - because in it rests life,
and from it alone has risen our culture, our own civilisation,
our rights to language and our exchanges with other peoples
and different cultures.

Present Problem of the Piaroa

For the first time the name of our people has been rush­
ing like a whirlwind through the world. For the last four
months the Piaroa have been national and international news.
This is thanks to Srr. Hermann Zingg, a landowner who has taken
possession of more than 8000 hectares from the Valle de Guanay,
and is trying to get hold of the whole valley - an area of
50,000 hectares which has been granted a collective land title
by the Instituto Agrario Nacional. The IAN has on several
occasions refused to recognise his false claims to Piaroan
lands, but as he is rich and powerful he has simply taken the
area over. As if we were some animals, he has had the audacity
to offer to buy the Valle de Guanay "Piaroa and all". He has
a ranch called San Pablo although there is nothing of the saint
in him. The Piaroa have received all sorts of offence and
physical abuse since this gentleman arrived. The Fiscalía
General of the Republic has been able to prove these examples
of ill-treatment. Some of our brother Piaroa have been tied
to the tail of a horse, just as the Spanish conquistadors did
in the 16th century. The most basic human rights have been
to the extent of a young Piaroa girl being violated.

For the first time Venezuelan public opinion and the majority Mestizo population are supporting us in our struggle against Hermann Zingg. Piaroa have spoken on television, in the street and in the press. The people have said: "these lands belong to the Indians, the Indians are the first inhabitants of Venezuela". But soon, very soon the slander has begun to take over. So it is said: "These Piaroa were always peaceful, why are they become violent now?" They then give themselves an answer: "If they have become violent it is because there are 'communists' behind them".

But the answer is much more simple. We Piaroa open our doors to everyone who visits us. We say, "good, come as visitors". So they come and say to us: "now we are the owners here, if there are Piaroa still left here, I buy them too". And still they want the Piaroa to remain peaceful? Our history as told to us by our elders teaches us that peaceful people became violent when their lands were stolen and when they were denied rights to life and culture.

When Guaicaipure lived there were no communists. Nevertheless Guaicaipure made a great alliance of caciques and indigenous peoples to face the Spanish conquistadores of the 16th century. We have our own voice and we make our own action because indigenous people have their own politics which is of no colour. We do not need anyone from Caracas to come and tell us how we should do things. But whoever does not know the Piaroa and is mistaken about us says that we neither think nor reason. This is what a diputada told me at Hermann Zingg's farm.

Slanders against the Piaroa

Certain newspapers in Caracas have hurled a violent campaign against the Piaroa and their friends. They say that it is dangerous to speak of self management and self determination, that we wish to form independent republics and that we are against national sovereignty. But what is curious is
that they also say that we are the first and most legitimate
Venezuelans. But then who listens to us? Why do they continue
to present us as dangerous? No one has opposed invaders of
these lands over the last 500 years more than we have. No one
has struggled more than we to defend this territory. And still
they view us with mistrust. In contrast some foreign mission­
aries who have been invading our lands since 1946 are seen as
more strongly allied with Venezuelan nationality then ourselves.
They are not suspicious of them.

The enemies of indigenous people have confronted the Gov­
ernment itself. They have attacked the Instituto Agrario Na­
cional, the Federación Campesina, the Procuraduría Agraria Na­
cional, indigenous movements and even the church, military and
the press. They have also attacked international indigenous
and support organisations: Consejo Indio de Sur America (CISA),
the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), Instituto Indi­
genista Interamericano, Survival International, Barbados I
& II and others including IWGIA. It is understood that every­
one can have international relations: students, workers, peas­
ants, but indigenous people, no. All the political parties
have international organisations which help them. But they
are afraid of world-wide relations between indigenous peoples
because whatever crime they commit against us will become
known immediately the world over. This is the reason why they
are afraid of us. It is very important to continue giving
support to international indigenous organisations but without
losing touch with work on a community level.

With regard to my participation at the IV World Assembly
of Indigenous Peoples I would like to say that I am proud to
be present with you with the support of the Piaroa communit­
ies. For this reason I have not come to speak in my own name
but in the name of we, the Piaroas. What would I be doing here
without the consent of my people, talking and talking like a
parrot without having the voice of my people? This would be
very sad for me. For me the pride is not to be a national
or international representative but to speak as the spokesman of my own communities. This is the real indigenous person. The rest is superficial. These international organisations will only have value and respect is we have power from the grass-roots. And so only in this way can we confront daily all these slanders.

Final Recommendations

- With regard to the attacks on the Piaroa people by such powerful enemies in Venezuela, we seek the solidarity of the IV Assembly and of all international organisations, especially the Indigenous Movements.

- The Piaroa organisation would like to put its entry into CISA and the WCIP to its Congress in October which it is hoped will be attended by representatives of the two bodies.

- We know that the struggle of the Piaroa people has not finished. We have some good support from the Venezuelan people to throw out the usurper from our lands. However we are facing a misinformation campaign which is big and powerful and which is inciting racism and total disregard for the basic human rights of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon by what is called the "Conquest of the South". In this sense we recommend:
  a - That the indigenous people of the whole world keep a state of alert in relation to the work of Hermann Zingg and other alien interests against the Piaroa.
  b - That if the Piaroa lose this struggle and injustice takes place, the international indigenous movements will keep going an active and permanent denunciation.
  c - That international indigenous organisms finance the immediate publication of all the proceedings of the Piaroa against Hermann Zingg with the aim of having a detailed vision of the problem. This publication will bring together all the information which has appeared in the national press of Venezuela in favour of and against the Piaroa.

USA: THE CLAIM OF THE LEGITIMATE PIT RIVER INDIAN TRIBE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Greetings from the Legitimate Pit River Indian Tribe.

We speak to you through this paper to tell you the story of our grievances against the United States government, to talk of our demands that the government corrects the wrongs that have been done to our tribe.

We are the Pit River people, who have lived since time immemorial in the mountains and rivers of what is now called Northeastern California. Our ancestral territory is almost square, about a hundred miles on a side, bounded roughly by Mount Shasta on the west, Mount Lassen on the south, the Warner Mountains that border California on the east and the Oregon border on the north. This is our hundred mile square.

Our tribe contains several autonomous bands. Representatives from each band make up the tribal council; this form of government has been continuous since our ancestral times.

Principles of the Pit River Case

Illegal taking of our land

This is our case. Hear and judge. The U.S. government took control of our land in a way that was not only immoral and trampled on our human rights, but also illegal even according to its own laws.

As a humane and spiritual people we are sad and outraged at the immoral things done to our ancestors and to us. Yet we do not appeal to the government on moral grounds for it is clearly not a government concerned with morality. But we do demand the U.S. government follow its own laws. For if it has no morality and does not follow its own laws, then what is it? Only a machine for oppression? Only a machine to carry out the will of the big capitalist corporations, whose purpose is to make money, regardless of the cost to the land and animals and plants and people?
Pit River Demands

The Pit River people's true concern is with a higher law. Our law is to live on the land to take care of it and all the animals and plants on it, just as our ancestors did and as the Grandfather puts us here for. This role is the basis of our entire culture— to be stewards of the land, not to "have dominion" over it. We insist that the U.S. government allow us to continue our culture.

So we make these demands of the U.S. government:
1. that the government recognize once and for all in a court that the Legitimate Pit River Tribe has sole legal title to the hundred mile square;
2. that the Legitimate Pit River Tribe be settled with by fair and just compensation for the lands illegally taken from us, and that we be allowed to regain control and use of a portion of our ancestral lands that will provide for our tribe's needs;
3. that the Legitimate Pit River Tribe be paid retribution for the many past wrongs done to our people and for the extreme damage done to our land; and that we be provided with the means to rebuild the vitality of our culture, since past and present wrongs by the government have dissipated the spirit and hope of many of our people.

Brief History of our Fight

Legal basis for Pit River Title

After the U.S. beat Mexico in war, it got Mexico to sign over title to California in 1848 in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. But this treaty contained provisions which specifically stated that the Indian tribes in California had legal title to the land they inhabited because of their "immemorial use and occupancy".

Because of these treaty provisions, the U.S. Congress and the President ordered (by the Act of September 30, 1850) three agents to go make treaties with the California Indian tribes for the purchase of Indian lands. The very passage of this law acknowledged that Indian tribes, including the Pit River Tribe, had legal title to their ancestral lands.

A treaty was never made with the Pit River Tribe. Moreover, the 18 treaties which were made with other California tribes were never ratified but instead rejected by the U.S. Senate in July 1852 because of lobbying by the California legislature.

The California legislature had an altogether different scheme in mind. In 1851 it passed the California Land Registration Act, which said that all private land in California had to be registered with the state in San Diego. Needless to say, no effort was made to notify most Indians of this law, and the Pit River Tribe never registered our land. Then on March 3, 1853, the legislature passed another law which declared all unclaimed, unregistered land to be public domain and open for white settlement.

This law clearly violates the U.S. Constitution, which says, Article XIV, Section 1: "...nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law..." The U.S. government itself admitted this about 100 years later. In 1959, the U.S. Indian Claims Commission concluded that "...said eleven bands or groups of Pit River Indians were each deprived of their land titles by the defendant (i.e. United States of America) on March 3, 1853, without compensation having been paid therefore..."

Attempts at Tribal and Cultural Genocide: 1853-1934

After this legal trickery, the government began efforts to actually kill our ancestors and our culture, since we stood between them and unchained exploitation of our land. The murders of American Indians, including the Pit River Indians, by the U.S. Army and the white settlers during the last half of the 19th century is so well known and documented that it does not need to be retold here.
Our elders today were told of these tragedies directly by those involved. Of how even the few survivors lived the life of hunted strangers in their own homeland. Even the white man has written these horror stories.

Cultural Genocide

After prolonged efforts at tribal genocide, a new strategy of cultural genocide was tried. Called the "assimilation policy" by the U.S. Congress, its purpose was to bring Indians "into the mainstream of American society." Indians were promised housing and health and education programs and land allotments and rancherias on which to live.

The plan would have prevented us from continuing our traditional hunting and gathering lifestyle and most of our cultural ways, but hardly any programs or land were ever forthcoming anyway. For example, today only six small (about 40 acre) rancherias out of our original 31 million acres have been set aside, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs - not the tribe - has control over access to and use of this land.

Indian Reorganization Act

In 1934 the U.S. passed the Indian Reorganization Act, supposedly to abandon assimilation and encourage tribal control of Indian affairs. But to go under IRA, a tribe had to terminate legal titles to its land, accept control of programs by the BIA - never a friend to the Indians - and form a government similar to the U.S. government. Thus the IRA only continued the policy of cultural genocide. So, the Pit River Tribe formally rejected the IRA, in favor of retaining our legal title to the land, our sovereignty, and our traditional form of government.

It is true that some theretofore Pit River Indians did accept the provisions of the Act. They did this in 1935 and in 1941 got formed by the government into the Pit River Home and Agricultural Association, so they could occupy the 9000 acre XL Ranch near Alturas. This Association and ranch continue today, although the government recently took away the Association's legal status as controller and beneficiary of the ranch and gave it to the BIA. Now people have to apply, be approved, and pay rent to the BIA to live on "their" reservation. So much for Indian self-determination.

Attempts to buy us off cheap: The Indian Claims Commission

Because of continuous protests, the U.S. government established the Indian Claims Commission in 1946 to settle land matters with Indian tribes. In 1959 the Commission ruled that the Pit River Tribal lands had been taken illegally. We thought this was a great day, for our people would finally have our day in court. But this was not to be.

The 1963 Fraud

In 1963 arguments commenced before the Commission through our attorney named Louis Phelps, whose written contract with our tribe specifically said that the lawyer could not under any circumstances agree to a compromise or a settlement or a consolidation of our case with the cases of other California Indian tribes. But Phelps, the BIA, and the Claims Commission agreed to consolidate the Pit River Tribe's claim with the other California claims and to make a compromise offer by the Commission of 47 cents an acre to California Indians for all the lands illegally taken from them.

We were flabbergasted. We screamed loudly to the Commission that this agreement was not only unjust but also illegal, because Phelps did not have the authority to make such an agreement, as shown by our contract with him. But the BIA decided unilaterally that the agreement would stand because Phelps was the "attorney of record". This was clearly wrong, but that's what happened.

Then on September 28, 1963, a vote on this offer of 47 cents/acre was held in Alturas, California. The tribe defeated the offer by voting no. Again we thought this was a great day. But again it was not to be. For again the BIA stepped
in with its fraudulent coyote tricks.

About 200 of the 590 enrolled Pit River Indians had voted in Alturas. Saying that this was not enough people, the BIA said an absentee mail ballot had to be done. Again we were flabbergasted and outraged. No minimum number of people had been established before the vote. No one except the BIA said it wasn't enough votes.

Then there were many irregularities in the mail ballot­ing. And guess what? When the mail vote was counted by the BIA, the offer of 47 cents/acre had been voted in by a margin of 24 votes.

We protested this action loud and hard but were not heard. In 1964 the U.S. Claims Commission ruled that the Pit River Tribe (and other California tribes) be paid 47 cents an acre for our ancestral lands. An astonishingly and blatantly unjust settlement.

The 1972 Payment

When the payment was finally made in 1972, our lawyer at the time, Aubrey Crossman, advised our people to apply for and accept the payment of about $660 per person, claiming that “for the first time in U.S. history, Indians could accept payment for their land without automatically terminating their rights to title”. We did not believe this and urged boycotting the payments.

In the end many of our people applied for and accepted the unfair payment, some believing, as Crossman had said, that they still had Indian title, and others believing that the legal fight was finally lost and getting a little money was better than getting nothing at all. A few years later many of these people accepted the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and formed the Provisional Pit River Tribal Government in Burney, California.

But we are the Legitimate Pit River Tribe. We never applied for or accepted any of the fraudulently arranged and totally unjust payment from the U.S. government for our land and, as such, have never terminated our legal title to our entire ancestral territory. We insist that the U.S. government recognize this title, and we demand a homeland for our people.

Our struggles in the 1970s

By 1970 we had begun to feel that we had little recourse to see justice done. So we decided to take actions specifically planned to raise in court the issue of our legal land title.

Big Bend Occupation

In June, 1979, we began the first of four occupations that we carried out during the 1970s. Many of our people went and occupied land near Big Bend controlled by Pacific Gas and Electric Co., the largest privately owned, for-profit utility company in the United States.

32 people were arrested for trespassing. The 7 arrested inside PG&E’s resort cabins were convicted but the 25 arrested outside were acquitted. Those acquittals showed again that the government had never legally acquired title to our land.

Four Corners Occupation

We also occupied a spot called Four Corners, held by the U.S. Forest Service, figuring our arrest there would bring a very clear contest between the tribe and the government over legal title. After a week, about 50 federal, state and county police came and in the confrontation beat up many of our people, including old people. Some were arrested for destroying government property (cutting down trees), for assaulting federal officers, and for resisting arrest, but no one was arrested for trespassing. So these cases do not affect our cause.

After the Indians charged with assaulting officers were acquitted, the tribe countersued the federal, state and county governments and the police involved in beating up our people.

We also brought civil damage suits against several large corporations for illegal occupation of our lands. Several years
later the attorney Grossman, without the knowledge or author-
ity of the tribal council, dropped these civil suits, which
has been very harmful to our fight since then.

Occupation at the Cove

In 1971 we occupied another parcel of PG&E-controlled
land near the Cove on the Pit River. Although we built build-
ings and camped on this 900 acres, the police did not arrest
us. So eventually we ceased this occupation.

After the attorney Grossman dropped the civil suits in
the mid-1970s, we once again had to take action to get our
case back into court. So, in 1977, we again occupied the 900
acre place at the Cove. This time PG&E got us charged with
destruction of property and loitering, but not trespassing.
The judge ridiculed our demands that PG&E prove legal title
in the court proceedings, insisting that this issue had been
resolved by the 1972 payments, and the fact that our civil
damage suits had been dropped. We are now appealing this
decision, and we continue to occupy the Cove.

Our struggle now

At this point our legal recourse is limited. But there
are some legal options that still can be tried.

Also we must defend ourselves against the continuous
offensiveness of the U.S. government. For example one member
of our tribe, Melvin Elmore established an Indian homestead
on our land, and, following the established procedures, not-
ified the BIA. Now 5 years later, the government is trying
to evict him and his family and has sued him for the "damages"
of cutting trees, building his house, and cleaning up the road
to his home. Why? Because some private concern has applied
to build a hydroelectric power plant at this place so that
they can make money.

The government could have followed its own laws by offer-
ing to buy the parcel or even trade with him for another par-
cel. But legal and fair dealing has never been the govern-
ment's way, especially with Indians. They care more about the
money that can be made from an electric plant than about a
family. So they are trying to just throw these people out on
the road. But when the case was brought to court earlier
this year, a summary judgement was given in favour of the
United States on the basis that all claims with the Pit River
Tribe had been settled and compensation paid neither of which
is true. The case is to be brought to appeal but financial
constraints on the Pit Rivers Tribe makes this very difficult.

The case must be fought because if it is lost our tribe
will be deprived of any further attempt to get justice from
the United States. We will and must continue to fight for
our rights and to regain a homeland for our people where we
can once again live in peace and freedom. We must do this
for this is our right and this is our home.

We have spoken.

Council of the Pit River Indian Tribe
Chief Charles Buckskin, Aporige Band, Lillian Lego, Achomawi
Band, Marie Lego, Madesi Band, Willard Rhoades, Itsawai Band
and Cecelia Wilson, Ilmawi Band.

Contributions to the Legal Defense fund of the Pit River Tribe
should be sent to: Legitimate Pit River Tribe Legal Defense
Fund,
Box 52,
Montgomery Creek, California 96065
WEST PAPUA: PLANNED RELOCATION OF THE PAPUAN POPULATION

In April, 1984, a document was issued by Brigadier-General Meliala Sembiring, military commander of the 17th/Cenderawasih Divisional Command, outlining a plan to relocate the Papuan population of West Papua (called Irian Jaya by the occupying Indonesians). The following article from TAPOL Bulletin summarizes the Sembiring plan which clearly envisages a comprehensive upheaval of West Papuans in the interests of Indonesia's security objectives. The "smiling", anthropological approach is a cover for direct and invariably brutal military intervention in all aspects of people's lives. His plan to create controlled population settlements is also evidence that the army's efforts so far to annihilate the OPM (Free Papua Movement) have got nowhere.

Sembiring starts by stressing that the region and society in Irian Jaya is "completely different" from the rest of Indonesia. Its special features are: "dense jungle, high mountains and marshes, a great diversity of tribes, each with its own distinct customs, (a region) sharing a border with a foreign state whose people are of the same race as the people of Irian Jaya (Papua New Guinea), and, most important of all, the continued existence of the GPK" ("security disruptor gangs", the army's designation for the OPM).

To cope with these special conditions, the 17th/Cenderawasih Division has, since mid-1982 implemented a special type of territorial management in Irian Jaya because the "wrong approach" could "obstruct the development process and disrupt regional stability". The "right approach" involves "socio-anthropological, socio-religious and socio-psychological approaches".

Centres for Social Development

The section of Sembiring's plan on the relocation of the population is worth quoting in full: "The basic strategy for restoring security in Irian Jaya is concentrated on separating the people from GPK, inculcating a spirit of non-co-operation/resistance among the people towards the GPK, localising the security-disruptors, striking out at those disruptors who persist in consolidating and rehabilitating the region.

"The smiling policy implemented by the 17th/Cenderawasih Division before the middle of 1982 was the first step in our efforts to detach the people from the influences of the GPK separatist idea, and this policy must be further developed by means of more basic management. Territorial smiling reflects a territorial attitude guided by the eight duties of the Armed Forces. Territorial smiling means acting with human feelings and outlooks, honest openness and friendship from the (army) apparatus towards the people in its area. This can in practice be done by face-to-face encounters, house visits, especially in the more remote regions, and other such family activities.

The next step which is now needed is to separate the people from the GPK, mentally and physically, by setting up Centres for Social Development (Pusat Pengembangan Masyarakat) or PPMs, that is to say, setting up settlement locations especially in the more remote regions, taking account of local customs, religious beliefs, life-styles, historical background, inter-tribal relations, and the aspirations of the local community. A programme to raise living standards and improve social and economic conditions is a powerful magnet to attract the people in the vicinity to settle in the PPM locations so as to detach them from the influences of the GPK separatists."

Forming opinion and creating a national identity

Sembiring then sets out to explain the need for a vastly expanded programme of Pancasila indoctrination (P4) "to cultivate national pride, self-respect and broaden people's horizons so as to create a consciousness of being (part of) a nation, part of the Indonesian state, and to defend the state". The trouble is, he admits, that the Pancasila ideology has not yet taken root because of "the simplistic way of thinking of the population". The number of people being subjected to
P4 indoctrination is far from adequate to keep pace with the growth of the population, so the territorial apparatus (i.e. the army) must "socialise" the Pancasila, simplify it in terms familiar to the people. The army must employ the "tutor system" so as to penetrate more effectively; once they can function as "leaders and guides" they will be able to follow through with "territorial management".

Territorial management (pembinaan territorial/wilayah) is part of the army's basic "defence" doctrine called perang wilayah dan pembinaan wilayah (territorial warfare and territorial management) which asserts that the type of warfare the Indonesian army must prepare for is guerrilla warfare against internal or external enemies. Hence the need for the army, at all times, to organise "total people's defence" (hankamrata) by means of its "management" of society right down to the lowest units.

Turning to the lack of skills among Papuan youth, which results in widespread unemployment, Sembiring stresses the need for vocational training to be provided through the PPMs, with projects organised by World Vision International and the Department of Social Affairs.

"Cultivating a national identity in society will certainly make society resilient, ideologically, politically, economically, socially and culturally and in defence... (all of which is) the basis for people's resistance to the separatists." Sembiring claims that this special "territorial management" has already helped to isolate the GPK, forcing some of them to surrender, though others are still persisting. He claims that since 1982 (when it should be noted, the army was claiming that the OPM was already a "spent force"), 593 OPM leaders have surrendered or been captured, together with 5,886 supporters.

After giving the names of the OPM members who are now active along the border or in refugee camps in Papua New Guinea, Sembiring claims that the OPM president, Efraim James Nyaro, has twice, through the intermediary of the Bishop of Vanimo, John Holdridge (sic), offered to hold negotiations - "but we were forced to reject this because it implied recognising him as 'president'". However, Sembiring concludes, somewhat optimistically in view of the recent experiences of Indonesia's verification team at the refugee camps in PNG where members were attacked by the inhabitants, "we shall generously and openheartedly welcome back the border crossers as Indonesian citizens if they consciously return to the fold of the motherland".

WCIP: WORLD COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HOLDS ITS FOURTH ASSEMBLY

The Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples took place in Panama between 23 and 30 of September 1984. There, almost 300 indigenous representatives from 23 different countries met at the luxurious Altapa Convention Centre to meet, discuss issues relating to self-determination and elect new officers.

The Central American regional organisation Coordinadora Regional de Pueblos Indígenas (CORPI) were in charge of the arrangements of the Assembly while the hosts were several hundred indigenous people from Panama itself, principally Cuna, Guaymi and Emberá. They were especially welcoming and their traditional dress provided colour to the proceedings. Most evenings saw some cultural event where the Cuna and other representatives entertained and demonstrated their dances, songs and dramatic works.

The Assembly opened and closed with formal ceremonies attended by the outgoing President of Panama, Jorge Illueca and his successor President Nicolás Ardito Barletta respectively. The protocol of inviting these Presidents seemed somewhat incongruous in the light of the problems facing the indigenous peoples of Panama. The Guaymi have been fighting for years to approve the creation of a comarca. This is an area of land where not only are indigenous rights to land recognised but also social and cultural self-determination. Although the Cuna of San Blas and the Emberá have comarcas even these are not complete. All groups are trying to resist the incursions of colonists. The incongruity was not lost on the representatives, many of whom marched several miles to the centre of Panama City on September 26th to demonstrate at the Panamanian government's treatment of the indigenous peoples of the country. Delegates from all regions took part in the demonstration, including the then WCIP President José
Carlos Morales.

Other full sessions of the Assembly consisted of the regional reports, discussions and voting on resolutions and the elections. For four days the Assembly split into 8 work groups which put forward proposals for resolutions and their respective reports. Perhaps the most intense aspect of the meeting took place outside the official gatherings where at formal and informal meetings representatives discussed information and debated policy tactics in the apocryphal "smoke-filled rooms". The vast range of topics covered in all areas of the Assembly can be seen in the cross-section of statements and resolutions released after the conference. Some of these are reproduced after this article.

The first day of conference business (the 24th) was taken up with introducing the delegates and presenting the reports from the five WCIP regions whose representatives recounted their activities over the last four years and their present orientations. The salient points from the reports were:

1) **Nordic Sami Council**
   - The Nordic Sami Council represents Europe in the WCIP.
   - It acts as a co-ordination body for Sami from Norway, Sweden and Finland and holds a conference every three years. The five points of its programme are:
     a) developing a Sami political programme;
     b) developing a Sami environmental programme;
     c) promoting education in Sami and Sami writing;
     d) fighting for the right for free state border crossing;
     e) protection of Sami rights to land and water.
   - The Nordic Sami Council co-operates to see that states acknowledge responsibility to their national and international rights to natural resources and to ensure the Sami way of life.
   - It has been working recently in providing liaison facilities for the WCIP in Geneva and it has found funds for a WCIP office there where a person is currently employed.

2) **Pacific Region**
   - The first act of the Fourth Assembly was to change the South Pacific region consisting of Australia and New Zealand to "The Pacific Region" which includes all Pacific Peoples. The report was a survey of the problems in the region taking as its starting point four aspects of colonial occupation.
     a) **Indonesian Occupation: East Timor and West Papua**
        - In these countries the killing and terrorising of indigenous people is part of a sustained programme of control, geared to replace the existing population with the invading culture as quickly as possible. This constitutes a horror of unimaginable proportions consisting of mass killing, relocations, loss of traditional ways of life, hunger, disease and the additional problem of transmigration. The violation of human rights and denial of self-determination has been largely ignored by the outside world. "Inevitably, the most co-ordinated groups in these countries are the resistance movements - FRETILIN and OPM, and it is these groups who have been accepted as members of the WCIP".
     b) **French Occupation: New Caledonia and French Occupied Polynesia**
        - French colonisation is classical colonialism, exploitation of a country's resources, dependence on the invading country and inundation by a transplanted culture. However in this case cultural control is still at a point where it can be arrested. France annexed New Caledonia 130 years ago forcing the indigenous Kanak people onto reservations. However even more destructive was the racist system of forced labour instituted between 1903 and 1945. The Kanak Independence Front is striving against French recalcitrance to gain independence soon. In Polynesia the independence Comite Pouvanna movement is gaining much support in its struggle against nuclear testing. The significant factor in French occupied countries is that the representation of the people is at a political party level.
     c) **English Occupation - Australia and New Zealand**
        - In Australia the National Aboriginal Conference is carrying
out the task of representing Aboriginal opinion to the government and working to bring about self-determination both from within and outside the system. In New Zealand the Maori political party Mana Motuhake aims to gain the four allotted seats in Parliament. Both Australian and New Zealand have these government funded, though autonomous, elected bodies which are now working for the recognition of sovereign identity of the people and their ownership of land.

d) American Occupation: Micronesia and Hawaii

America's view of itself as the land of the free does not extend to those it wishes to dominate for its own strategic reasons. Micronesia became a Trust Territory of the United Nations administered by the US in 1947. They are divided into four states: the Marianas (which have agreed to Commonwealth status with the US); the Federated States (Yap, Truk, Ponape and Kosrae) and the Marshall Islands (which have approved a US 'Compact of Free Association'; and Belau which has been saved from losing its self-determination and independence by voting four times to reject the US and their plans for nuclear bases. The occupation of Hawaii was done by a US unilateral declaration and legally indefensible coup by resident American businessmen. The people of Hawaii today are not just talking about their human rights as indigenous people but about their right to independence.

The report of the new Pacific region of the WCIP presented a broad overview of the situation in the area and emphasised the differences of experience and organisation which were united in similar problems of occupation, a unity of spirit and a hoped for unity of action.

3) South America

The WCIP regional office for South America is the Consejo Indio de Sudamérica (CISA). In 1981 it began its work as an international forum for the peoples of South America. Its first activities have been to project itself into the countries and organisations of the region. The range of problems facing

Traditional Cuna dancing took place in the evenings (Photo: Jørgen Brachner Jørgensen).
the different peoples of South America and the variety of strategies necessary for the indigenous struggle have led to difficulties such as those encountered at the 2nd Congress at Tiwanaco, Bolivia in March 1983 as a result of which there were changes in the executive.

The report told of the problems facing the Mapuche people of Chile where the government has been extremely repressive. The indigenous organisation Ad-Mapu has been formed by Mapuche to protect their rights. In Argentina, the Centro Kolla have an advisory place in the government on cultural matters, but the indigenous peoples are still not equal before the law to the rest of the population. In Bolivia the strategy of forming an Indian political party has resulted in 2 indigenous members of Parliament. Like Bolivia, Peru has a majority of indigenous people and yet cultural discrimination is rife. In addition Peru is suffering from being caught between the actions of the government and the attacks of Sendero Luminoso, a Maoist guerrilla movement.

In recent months distressing reports have come from both Colombia and Venezuela on the actions of the government against the people of Cauca and the Piaroa people respectively. Both these cases involve violent actions of landowners against the indigenous population who have received no effective government support. In Ecuador the role of the mission organisation World Vision is one of their most serious problems. In Brazil, the rights of the indigenous population has been increasingly eroded by governmental decrees and laws as well as the detrimental action of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). The rise to prominence of Mário Juruna into a seat in the Brazilian Congress has been one of the more significant moves in Brazilian indigenous affairs over the last four years. In addition the rise of the organisation UNI (Union of Indigenous Nations) has opened up the possibility of direct indigenous representation and self-management.

The next groups of indigenous peoples in South America interested in participating internationally are those of Surinam and French Guyana. The report ended with a plea for the recognition of the word "Indian" as to be something of which indigenous peoples should be proud. There should be no compromise with governments, religious practitioners or any movements which are not in the interest of the Indian. It is up to the Indian to create his own government and show the world his own reality.

4) North America

The report from the North American region was divided among the various organisations present at the Assembly. The Native Council of Canada described the different indigenous groups in Canada, the status Indians who come under the Indian Act, the non-status Indians and the Metis. All three groups are to be effected by proposed constitutional changes and proposals for native self-government which the Canadian authorities are preparing. The difficulty has been trying to get the indigenous perspectives heard by the Government. The problems of the Metis were especially brought out because they have no rights as the Government tries to use the racial rather than ethnic definition of indigenous. The Assembly of First Nations stands for rights based not on tribalism but of nationhood. The history of the Canadian and US Indians demonstrates a history of common solidarity against outside threats and it is this solidarity which they strive to preserve in the fight for the rights of the nations.

The National Congress of American Indians described the importance of the harmony between man, nature and the spirit world and how the indigenous struggle was not only for people but for all living things. The treaties with the American Indians were between equal nations and although valid in international law have been violated by the United States. Sovereignty is not something to be gained, it is something you are born with. Whereas the US government tries to white-wash the
exploitation by talking of 'government-to-government' relations, the practical improvements for the Indian Nations has been nil. In a point put forward also by the American Indian Movement, it was explained how the controlling powers in the USA are not responsible enough to be looking after the environment which they are destroying with nuclear tests and threats as well as industrial pollution. The winning of the indigenous struggle will be a gain for all mankind.

5) Central America

In Central America, indigenous people are still the poorest and most exploited sector of society. The repression by governments has been economically, through the snatching of resources to repay international debts, or else politically by heavy repression such as can be seen in Guatemala. CORPI is working to protect indigenous rights in Central America. The encroachment of capitalist society onto indigenous peoples most frequently takes the form of gaining control of land and parcelling it out. Control over the indigenous populations involves cultural destruction, denial of indigenous problems and attempts to assimilate the people into the state.

In Belize the Government is threatening to take possession of their reserved lands and CORPI is supporting the Toledo Movement to fight for their rights. In Costa Rica the law which stands to favour indigenous peoples is not put into effect and discrimination is as strong as ever. In Mexico the respect of property and community land as well as the struggle to preserve language and culture are paramount preoccupations of the indigenous inhabitants.

Undoubtedly the greatest problem facing indigenous peoples in Central America is found in Guatemala where ethnocide and genocide are a part of the Government's mode of repression. The problems facing the refugees in Mexico and solidarity with the indigenous people of Guatemala was to become one of the principal concerns of the Assembly. In Nicaragua the new organisation MISATAN is fighting for reunification of the
Miskito family, recognition of land titles and cultural and linguistic recognition. They are against all US involvement in Nicaragua and CORPI supports their opposition.

The CORPI report ended with a look at the indigenous problems in Panama particularly the Guaymi demands for their own comarca and the Cuna and Emberá demands for the completion of theirs. Overall the report made the following observation for the future. That CORPI would maintain its organisation, increase contacts with indigenous groups, work on self-organised indigenous development projects and to develop contacts with other popular organisations in the area.

After the regional reports, the President José Carlos Morales gave a report on the World Council talking of its development and its need for every-increasing accessibility. The reason for the move of the Secretariat from Lethbridge to Ottawa was to make the organisation closer to the international community. The World Council was entering a phase where the earlier consolidation was over and it could now put itself forward as an irresistible force in the world fighting for indigenous rights and access to socio-economic resources.

Following this report there was an address from the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) who talked of the development of indigenous movements in the Arctic. Since the 1970s the Inuit peoples of Alaska, Canada and Greenland have been working together in the fight against common threats to their resources and culture. There is interest in the ICC for becoming members of the WCIP and the Alaska Native Review Commission which the ICC set up under Judge Berger to look at the injustices facing the indigenous peoples of Alaska was itself co-sponsored by the WCIP in 1983. A resolution for the ICC affiliation to the WCIP as the Arctic region has been adopted and now all remains is for the current status to be formalised. To date this formalisation has not taken place.
The four central days of the Fourth Assembly were taken up with discussions of specific topics in work groups. There were two sets of four topics. The objective of each work group was to hear statements from the different regions as to how they view the problem and from the subsequent discussion to develop proposals for resolutions which could then be debated and possibly passed in the general sessions to be held at the end of the week. The subject matter of the respective work groups was as follows:

A1) Economy and Indigenous Peoples

This work group looked at issues such as land ownership and the notion of communal holdings which is the basis of much indigenous production. In addition the problem of governments controlling markets to the detriment of indigenous living standards was discussed and the need for enabling indigenous peoples to discover new markets. The advantages of diversifying crops and fighting for the principle of free harvesting, without control from outside bodies were also investigated by the work group.

A2) World Peace and the Arms Race

There was much condemnation of nuclear testing and power in this work group, but the discussion centred around the extent to which indigenous peoples should see themselves in alliance with other oppressed peoples in a national context. The debate engendered here was very much in evidence in other work groups with a split between those peoples of Central America and the countries in South America where there is no mass Indian movement, who support alliance, in opposition to representatives from Southern Andean countries who advocate more the participation of Indians in government through their own political movements.

A3) Ethnocide and Indigenous Cultures

Each WCIP region and where possible each nation made a statement on how indigenous cultures are being destroyed by the state, international and national business and religious organisations. Ethnocide was considered to cover four areas: indigenous religion, language, art and social organisation. One of the points which returned throughout the discussion was the inseparability of the issue of land rights from the threats facing culture. It was of paramount importance that indigenous peoples fight for their rights on all these fronts, stressing above all land and language for so much rests on these two things.

A4) Indigenous organisations, Nations and States

This work group covered some of the issues mentioned above but concentrated on the role of nation states in supporting genocide and ethnocide of indigenous peoples. The role of the United States in Central and South America was discussed and the willingness of so many governments to allow into indigenous territory religious and cultural sects which present a threat to indigenous spiritual life. The Summer Institute of Linguistics was singled out here. One of the most important aspects also was the need for nation states to recognise the self-government and self-determination of indigenous peoples and that only through indigenous self-organisation can this goal be achieved.

B1) Protection of Life, Land and Culture

The inter-relationship between various aspects of indigenous experience provided the orientation for this group, such as the connection between land and spiritual life, the notion of cosmic harmony reflected in human behaviour and the need to preserve and protect this harmony. Threats from seeing land as a commodity, human labour as something which can be bought and sold and the desecration of sacred art works by their exhibition as exotic novelties were all examples of the types of issues this topic raised. The need for indigenous peoples to take the presentation of their own lives and cultures into their own hands, particularly through media such as film-making was put forward as an important aspect of self-protection.
B2) Covenant of Indigenous Rights

The objective of this work group was to look at the draft convention of indigenous rights which had been drawn up at the Third World Assembly in Canberra, Australia and see whether it could be ratified in Panama. A revised draft was presented by the Sami delegation and discussed. Issues such as the distinction between internal autonomy and self-determination took place in addition to the role of customary laws of indigenous peoples within the limits of internationally recognised human rights. Rather than produce a third draft convention so soon, the work group decided to produce a declaration of principles which should provide the basis of a new convention to be brought to the Fifth Assembly for possible ratification. These principles are reproduced later.

B3) Structure and Function of the WCIP

This work group looked at the future organisation of the WCIP. Several different proposals were put forward but it was decided that there was not sufficient time to provide the necessary analysis. The work group therefore defined the roles of the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the 5 elected Regional Executive members who constitute the Executive Council. This Executive Council will sit as a commission to carry out this analysis which will be presented regionally before the Fifth Assembly and will provide the basis for discussion at that meeting.

B4) Indigenous Organisations and Liberation Movements

The debates in this work group centred around several important issues. There was heated discussion of the Indianist versus Alliance argument, mentioned in another group, and the role of violence in the struggle for liberation. Each indigenous nation present gave a detailed account of political and spiritual liberation in their part of the world and these various perspectives were synthesised into a document which was voted on by the full Assembly. This comprehensive resolution is reproduced later.
contacts and make plans, while some were fortunate enough to travel to visit some of the indigenous peoples of Panama at
their homes.

Talking to some of the participants and observers as to their overall view of the Assembly a variety of opinions emerged. Some disapproved of the luxurious surroundings which in spite of the advantages of facilities had forced some observers to live out because of the high cost. On the other hand people were impressed by the wide range of the subjects debated and the attention given to so many specific indigenous peoples' problems in the resolutions.

It is always a moving experience to see so many people from such a broad spectrum of cultural backgrounds meeting and discussing together and it was particularly pleasurable for the IWGIA representatives present to make contact with so many friends of the organisation. We would like to send our best wishes to all of them. IWGIA would also like to express its appreciation of the work of the ex-President of the WCIP José Carlos Morales and congratulate the new officers of the organisation, Clem Chartier, Hayden Burgess and Donald Rojas Maroto.

One evening, while talking with a group of indigenous representatives, one of them brought up the question of the use of international conferences such as the Fourth Assembly of the WCIP. After all, what was the point of producing a long list of radical resolutions if everyone went away and forgot about them. "Surely," he said, "the resolutions are just the beginning and we should all strive to put them into effect. We need actions as well as words..."

* * * *

The resolutions set out on the following pages are not complete but aim to give a cross-section of the specific and general resolutions submitted to the Assembly and later released.
Specific Resolutions

Central America

Panama

WHEREAS,
- That the WCIP has as a principal objective to secure political, economic and social justice for indigenous peoples and to establish and reinforce the concept of indigenous and cultural rights;
- That Panama is a signatory to various international agreements which support the fundamental rights and self determination of peoples;
- That the Guaymi people is at present victim of a slow but effective physical and cultural extermination, caused by cattle ranchers, multinational corporations, large landowners and government projects;
- That the Guaymi people has been in negotiations with the Panamanian government for 8 years to achieve the legal delineation of their territory, as the only way to guarantee the physical and cultural survival of the Guaymi, and that to the present there has been no progress in these negotiations;

BE IT RESOLVED:
1. To support and aid the just struggle of the Guaymi people for their survival and self determination.
2. Demand from the Panamanian government the immediate passing of a law defining Guaymi territory and which takes into account the authentic aspirations of these people, including, a. the definition of the limits of the Veraguas Area, following the proposition of the Guaymies, the Buglés and poor peasants, b. the right to decide upon the use of natural resources in their territory as the base of their development and self determination, c. respect for articles of law previously negotiated with the Guaymi leadership, any law presented to corresponding legislative bodies must include the above-mentioned points.
3. Declare the problem of the Guaymi territory to be a priority case before the United Nations Sub-Commission for the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, so that this commission can make recommendations pertaining to the case.

Proposed in the city of Panama, the 29th day of the ninth month of 1984.

Guatemala

Whereas the policy of systematic extermination of the indigenous peoples by the military regimes of Guatemala continues and increases under General Mejia Victores;
Whereas this genocide has orphaned more than 100,000 Indian children, and whereas atrocious acts of rape have been committed against both women and men;
Whereas the United States has given all types of economic and military aid to this regime;
Whereas the present government has implemented diverse laws of expropriation of lands from the indigenous peoples, apart from using the so-called "scorched earth" policy;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT
1. - We demand that the United Nations condemn this regime and that it demand the end to all types of violations of human rights committed against the indigenous peoples; fundamentally the respect for their lives.
2. - We recommend that the United Nations and international solidarity organizations, keep under close observation the situation of the orphans of this war which is against the people of Guatemala in general and especially against the Indian majority.
3. - We recommend the same international organizations above-mentioned to observe closely and give assistance to the situation of the refugees of this war, taken in by Mexico.
4. - We condemn the United States for military, economic and other forms of aid given to the said regime.
5. - We demand that the regime of General Mejia Victores halt the implementation of the laws of expropriation of lands from the indigenous people; that it halts the act of genocide by the scorched earth policy which does irreparable harm to the human habitat.
6. - We condemn and demand the dismantling of the so-called "Strategic Villages" in order to gain liberty for the communities submitted to this project.

Also:
1. Be it resolved that the WCIP declares itself in opposition to the practice of US AID, which in the name of helping the Indians and "ladino" farmers, sends economic aid to the national government, which is in fact using it to exterminate this same population and their natural resources.
2. We demand that the strategic and model villages be eliminated as soon as possible, so that the Indians and poor "ladino" farmers can develop their communal economies without interference from the Government or multinationals.
Nicaragua

The Miskito indigenous organisation "MISATAN" (Miskitu-Asla-Takanka-Nicaragua), requests the support of the WCIP, to call upon the world, humanitarian and human rights Organizations, and to friendly governments for their support in the peaceful negotiations with the governments of Honduras and Costa Rica.

We request solidarity and support with regard to the struggle for the reunification of our families, that we, as Miskitos began, and which is the desire of the Miskito people of Nicaragua.

Brothers and sisters, our organisation extends a sincere invitation to you to form part of a commission which would be a product of this IV Assembly, to visit our country, Honduras and Costa Rica, in order to get acquainted with the Miskito reality, and be able to act as spokesmen who can transmit our main objectives: the reunification of our families who have been separated from us for the past 3 years and who now wish to return to Nicaragua.

Thank you. Miskitu Asla Takanka Nicaragua.
Signed Rufino Lucas Wilfred Secretary of Legal Matters MISATAN

Also:

MISATAN requests that the IV Assembly of the WCIP declares itself opposed to direct or indirect intervention in Nicaragua, as well as the military bases which have been constructed in indigenous communities in Honduras and requests indigenous non-governmental organisations to form an investigative commission pertaining to the situation of indigenous Miskito and Sumu of Nicaragua who are in Honduras and Costa Rica and also requests the presence of the WCIP in the CONTADORA group.

Movement of National Liberation Indigenous organisation and Liberation - Nicaragua - MISATAN

Belize

 Whereas the communal lands (Indian Reservations) of the Mayas of Belize is the basis of their existence and well-being:

Be it therefore resolved that this IV General Assembly of the WCIP take positive action to promote technological research and recommend diversification of produce.

Be it further therefore resolved, that this IV General Assembly seek ways to find markets and funding from friendly institutions and governments of the world to help elevate the conditions of our Indigenous People.

South America

Argentina

The Argentinian delegation proposed that the WCIP:

Recommend that the Government of the Republic of Argentina facilitates a broad participation of Indigenous Peoples in the elaboration of national laws regarding indigenous communities on the following items:

Recommend that non-governmental organizations which are linked to Indigenous Affairs in Argentina, support the legitimate claim of the Indigenous Nations of Argentina.

Brazil

Our government does not acknowledge international norms, it makes its own laws without respect for indigenous peoples, for their rights and their forms of organization.

Decree No.6001, known as the "Indian Statute", regulates relations between the Government and the indigenous community. Through the "National Indian Foundation" (FUNAI), the government practices a policy of control and of occupation of indigenous lands.

Despite the fact that Decree No.6001 recognizes the obligation of the Government to delineate indigenous territories, 70% of these lands are in a kind of legal limbo; which facilitates an indiscriminate exploitation of the natural wealth of these areas, to the profit of outside economic interests.

The mining decree

Recently, the Brazilian government passed a further law that opened indigenous territories to exploitation of mineral resources, which was actually contrary to the existing Brazilian constitution.

The Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI) is struggling to obtain the passing of a law that would declare "mineral reserves". With such a law these areas would obtain some sort of guaranteed legal status.

We are conscious that only as a politically organized group we will have the strength to force respect for these legal concepts.

UNI
Whereas the government of Brazil does not recognize the minimum human rights of the indigenous population of the country, to the point of assigning them to the legal status of minors, and
Whereas these populations have no power of decision over matters which affect their lives, and who are prevented from receiving international solidarity and assistance, and
Whereas the Brazilian government has decreed open to mineral exploitation new indigenous territories,
BE IT RESOLVED THAT the WCIP take action as follows:
1. Demand that the government of Brazil recognize the basic human rights of the indigenous people, and recognize their organization, the Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI), in accordance with agreements signed by all civilized nations of the world.
2. Demand as well, the right of these populations to political and administrative autonomy, respect for their culture and traditions within the framework of the nation-state.
3. Demand, as well, respect for indigenous territories, which means suspending the Decree which permits the exploitation of minerals in indigenous territories.
4. Demand greater representation of the indigenous people in the Brazilian National Congress, through the amending of the Constitution to include this representation.
Also from UNI:
1. We request that the WCIP support our struggle together with the Pataxo-Ha-Ha-Hae people, in the south of the state of Bahia, threatened with destruction by the authorities and economic interest groups who have them encircled in a small village within their legal territory, under armed guard as though in a concentration camp.
2. We request that this Assembly of the WCIP manifest its strong position against any and every threat to the Pataxo people in the southern region of Bahia, Brazil.
3. We request that this Assembly of the WCIP manifests its support for the Krenak people, who are fighting to recover their land occupied by land-holders in the region of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Colombia
Special Request by the WCIP for:
The demilitarization of the region of Cauca in Colombia, the recognition of Indian rights over their lands and the appointment of civilian mayors instead of military ones.
Ecuador
Resolution proposal from Ecuadorian delegation for:
1. The application of the Agrarian Reform and the handing over of lands in a communitarian form.
2. The mapping out and legalisation of indigenous lands in the Amazon region.
3. We condemn the take-over by wood and oil companies of indigenous lands.
4. We demand that the Government definitively expels Visión Mundial and other religious sects which divide indigenous people.
5. We condemn the intervention of the United States in Central America and the Caribbean.
6. We express solidarity with peoples who struggle for their fundamental human rights.
7. We ask that the guerrilla movement known as "Sendero Luminoso" (Shining Path), be condemned for their presence in, and their destructive actions on the Peruvian Indian community.

Venezuela
Statement to indigenous brothers, delegates and observers:
A few days before the opening of this great event, we in Venezuela faced a new assault against our peoples. The complacency of the State respecting the aggression towards our Piaroa brothers in the Federal Amazon territory has been noted, considering the absence of any official denunciation of the matter. We have raised our voice of protest in front of the President, the Congress of the Nation, the general public and to official organizations involved with indigenous policies. This has been the motive for the persecution of some of our brothers in the indigenous cause, targets of a campaign to discredit them. They are accused of subversive actions among indigenous peoples, who are denied the right of self-liberation, self-determination and self-management. This is how the State justifies the failure to fulfill their obligations to indigenous peoples. Therefore:
1. We demand respect for the indigenous peoples and that the State provide for their social welfare.
2. That all organizations dealing with indigenous policy be passed into the control of indigenous peoples.
4. Restitution of the territorial rights of the indigenous people with intransferable title of collective ownership.
5. Respect for the cultural heritage, languages and traditions of each ethnic group, complying with Decree No.283.
6. To make possible the minimum conditions for an organization of national character representing all ethnic organizations and groups.
7. We inform the WCIP that a considerable part of the Venezuelan population has in solidarity, echoed the protests and claims of the indigenous peoples.

For the Indigenous Movement for National Identity and the Civil Association of Yukpa Indigenous People - Venezuela.

Pacific

Australia

Resolution concerning the Aboriginal Cosmovisions which encompasses the harmony between nature, beliefs and man’s way of life.

We request this WCIP Conference to accept responsibility for the facilitation of the following resolutions that:
1. All traditional aboriginal art be recalled, and returned to the traditional owners or their direct descendants.
2. Where aboriginal communities produce particular art forms for use as an economic base their interests be protected by legislation enshrined at national and international government levels after consultation with the communities.
3. All legislation relative to aboriginal art forms recognize the traditional socio-religious notion of ownership of such art forms.
4. All governments respect their indigenous peoples determination regarding the possession and distribution of traditional art forms retained within museums, institutions and other professional or governmental collections.
5. The principles enunciated for the protection of traditional art forms be extended to encompass contemporary aboriginal art forms and that governments encourage and support such contemporary art.

East Timor

Be it resolved that the WCIP condemns the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia and its perpetration of genocide on the indigenous peoples of the area.

Be it further resolved that the WCIP demands that the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on East Timor be put into effect immediately.

Be it further resolved that the WCIP condemn the policy of transmigration practised by Indonesia to gain political ascendency over the indigenous people of East Timor and urge the governments of Australia and New Zealand, as members of the United Nations Committee on Decolonization, to give assistance to refugees from the Indonesian invasion.

New Caledonia

Resolution in support of the establishment of the Kanak Provisional Government of New Caledonia

Whereas the indigenous people of New Caledonia have been under the rule of the French government since September 24, 1853 and the French government has never consulted with the indigenous people to permit such rule;

Whereas the indigenous people of New Caledonia have insisted on the right to self-determination of their people and the French government has refused to respect that request; and

Whereas the National Liberation Front representing the indigenous people of New Caledonia has proclaimed an independent government to bring about its right to self-determination;

Therefore be it resolved that the WCIP hereby support the Kanak Provisional Government of New Caledonia established by the National Liberation Front; and

Be it further resolved that the WCIP extend to the Kanak Provisional Government of New Caledonia its admiration and appreciation for standing as the newest torch of freedom for indigenous peoples of the world who continue to be governed by foreign, non-indigenous forces which have occupied territories without consulting with and receiving the consent of the indigenous people.

French Occupied Polynesia

Whereas it is clear that the proliferation of nuclear testing is destroying the environment and economy of French Occupied Polynesia; and

Whereas the Ma’ohi people have never been consulted by France about nuclear testing in their country; and

Whereas the continued nuclear industry in French Occupied Polynesia remains the greatest hindrance to economic development;

Be it resolved that the WCIP condemn the continued nuclear testing and demand the immediate consultation with the Ma’ohi people only, about the French nuclear testing centre.

Micronesia

BE IT RESOLVED that the WCIP condemn the US government for refusing to accept the will of the Belau people as reflected in four referenda rejecting the constitution of association with the United States by the majority of 80-90 per cent of the Belau people.
Resolution of an Independent Investigation in Hawaii

Whereas the Pacific Region Council of the WCIP, having met in convention from June 25 - June 27, 1984 at Canberra, Australia; and

Whereas the Council has been presented with sufficient prima facie evidence to raise serious concern over the 'overthrow' of Liliuokalani, Queen of the Sovereign Nation of Hawaii, which allowed for the subsequent United States occupation of Hawaii, the resocialization of the citizens of Hawaii, the disengagement of the native Hawaiian people from their lands, the widespread militarization of the islands, and the poor social, economic, educational, health, mortality, language and cultural state of the native Hawaiian people; and

Whereas, the United States of America and its State of Hawaii have been requested to provide an independent and impartial investigation or inquiry into the right of the people of Hawaii to determine their own destiny, the responsibility of the US in the overthrow of 1893, the liability of the US for the state of affairs of the native Hawaiian people, and the many other controversies which resulted from the landing of American troops and occupation by American forces upon the lands and people of Hawaii.

Be it therefore resolved that the WCIP call for the presentation by the US of its case before an independent and impartial investigative committee relative to its involvement in the overthrow of the Sovereign Nation of Hawaii, which has affected the social, economic, educational, health, mortality, language and cultural state; the resocialization of the citizens of Hawaii; the disengagement of the native Hawaiian people from their lands; and the general effect of US occupation of Hawaii; and

Be it further resolved that the Pacific Region Council of the WCIP act as an intermediary agency in selecting members of such an independent and impartial investigative committee.

Pacific Issues

Resolution on a Nuclear Free Pacific

Having regard to the migratory nature of sea life and the ever changing currents throughout the Pacific, contamination of one area leads to the contamination of the whole of the Pacific by radiation entering the primary food chain, the WCIP opposes the French nuclear testing program in the Pacific and the dumping of waste by Japan and the United States.

Transmigration

Whereas the policy of transmigration (ie the moving of citizens or sympathizers of a particular nation or a particular national policy into the territory of a people which suffer the
imposition of a non-indigenous power) has been used time and again by foreign powers in the Pacific to support the said powers' continual control or attempt to control the said territories; and

Whereas too often those people transmigrated become that very force which continues to hold the native people under the control of these foreign forces by means of arms or by flooding the ballotting process, which finds the indigenous people in a minority position.

There it be resolved that the WCIP condemns the continuing policy of transmigration; and

Be it further resolved that such practice be immediately halted in New Caledonia, East Timor, West Papua, Hawaii, New Zealand and all other territories in the Pacific; and

Be it further resolved that the WCIP does not recognise the legitimacy of the outcome of any armed conflict or electoral process in which transmigrated people are permitted to participate in such contest; and

Be it further resolved that the original and/or certified copy of this resolution be distributed to the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation and other distribution as considered appropriate by the President of the WCIP.

North America

Canada

Whereas the members of the WCIP at their IVth General Assembly held in Panama, 23-30 September, 1984 addressed problems concerning harvesting; and

Whereas the majority of indigenous peoples the world over have traditionally depended upon harvesting for their own sustenance as well as for economic purposes; and

Whereas the economies of these indigenous peoples would be severely damaged, in some cases beyond repair, if they were to be prevented or restricted from harvesting activities; and

Whereas these indigenous peoples have an historical, traditional and inalienable right to harvest the wildlife resources of their ancestral homelands; and

Whereas, based on false ecological and so-called conservationist premises, there is a growing urban movement, namely in Europe and North America to prevent or restrict indigenous peoples from exercising this right; and

Whereas there is a need for solidarity among indigenous peoples in common defence of the right to harvest; and

Whereas, at an international conference held in Yellowknife 7-9 August, 1984, indigenous peoples from Alaska, Canada and Greenland established the Indigenous Survival International (ISI), among other things, to:

a) take all reasonable affirmative action towards achieving the objectives of protecting their indigenous harvesting rights and maintaining their international markets in native products; and;

b) co-ordinate research and prepare information and relevant materials.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the IVth General Assembly of the WCIP support the rights of those indigenous peoples affected to continue harvesting in enhancement of their economies; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Assembly endorse, support and promote the aims and principles of ISI, and, to that end, the members of the WCIP undertake to do all that they can to ensure the success of ISI, in particular, to provide ISI relevant information about their own harvesting activities and problems on an on-going basis.

Also:

Whereas the delegates to the 4th General Assembly of the WCIP in Panama, September 23-30, 1984 support the people of the Metis Nation in their fight for the right to a land base and self-government; and

Whereas the Metis People are commemorating in 1985, the Centenary of their last armed struggle against Canadian and British troops; and

Whereas 1985 is also International Youth Year as designated by the United Nations; and

Whereas the WCIP Executive Council in Finland, August, 1983, has given their support to the Metis to organize an International Indigenous Youth Conference in Batoche, Saskatchewan.

Therefore be it resolved that the delegates here assembled endorse the International Indigenous Youth Conference and that the 4th General Assembly encourages its Regional Organizations to sponsor their respective youth delegates to attend this conference, bearing in mind that the organizers of the Conference will continue their efforts to raise funds for the youth delegates from Central and South America;

Be it further resolved that this Assembly encourages the Executive Council of the WCIP to convene an Executive Council meeting at Batoche during July 18-28, 1985 to convey the WCIP's solidarity to the Metis Nation.

Also:

Whereas the corporation owned by the Canadian government, the National Canadian Railroad is implementing an expansion program of a railroad line in British Columbia; and whereas this expansion will have a damaging impact on the largest sites where fish pay their eggs, which are traditional and historical (inherited) places and fishing sites; and
Whereas the first Indian Nations, Shuswap, Thompson and Stolo are opposed to this expansion program which threatens all the native fishermen of the area;
Therefore be it resolved that: The 4th General Assembly of the WCIP give support to the first Indian Nations, Shuswap, Thompson and Stolo in their efforts to stop this expansion program to insure that its traditional economic base will not be destroyed.

Indian Nations within the United States
Whereas the Indian Nations within the United States are sovereign and independent, and have entered into international treaties; and
Whereas the United States government has conceded and agreed to recognize the sovereign status of Indian Nations at Helsinki in 1978; and
Whereas the United States has maintained this position to the world community through propaganda and other means; and
Whereas the United States government has promised through President Ronald Reagan's Indian Policy Statement, that they (US government) would implement a government to government relationship with the Indian Nations; and
Whereas the government to government relationship between the Indian Nations and the US government have not been implemented by the US government; and
Whereas the Indian Nations of North America (USA) possess inherent inalienable rights, and are sovereign; and
Whereas the Indian Nations of North America have entered into treaties with various nations, including France, England, Canada, Spain and the United States of America; and
Whereas the Judiciary of the United States government have asserted plenary power over the Indian Nations as an interpretation of the US Constitution; and
Whereas the Indian Nations of North America have exercised their sovereign status by entering into various treaties with other nations before and after the drafting and adoption of the Constitution; and
Whereas the Indian Nations have never waived their sovereign powers nor relinquished nor have they ever been conquered by the US government, as would be required under Canon Law, or International Law; and
Whereas the US government has unilaterally usurped the sovereign status of Indian Nations by proclaiming Plenary Power over Indian Nations within the exterior land base known as the United States of America; and
Whereas the US government, through its Judiciary have usurped certain attributes of the sovereignty of Indian Nations; and
Whereas the Indian Nations of North America have never been conquered nor otherwise waived their sovereign status:

NOW, therefore, be it resolved that the WCIP convey these violations of International Law, and basic human rights of the Indian Nations of North America, to the appropriate forum within the United Nations;

And be it further resolved, that the WCIP demand of the World Community and United Nations to investigate the violations of Indian Nations in the United States; and

Be it finally resolved that the WCIP assert the status of all indigenous nations and demand that the United Nations hold hearings and bear testimony of Indian Nations to redress these violations of our basic human rights.

National Congress of American Indians.

General Resolutions

Genocide and Ethnocide in Central and South America

Considering that among the Indian population of Central and South America, all types of genocide and ethnocide actions are taking place;

That there is no respect for territorial integrity, for the language and other values essential to Indian culture;

That a great number of religious institutions and sects as well as institutions of other characteristics such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, are invading Indian communities, violating the spiritual life of the Indian people:

It Resolves:

1. Condemn the successive governments of the United States for the economic, military and political support it provides for the reactionary regimes of Central and South America in its genocidal and ethnocidal actions.

2. Make demands upon the different States/Nations where respect for territorial integrity, language and other essential values of Indian cultures are not being granted.

3. Condemn and demand from the States/Nations to remove the religious and cultural sects and institutions such as SIL from Indian territories, because they are a threat to the spiritual life of the indigenous people.

4. We demand from the States/Nations the respect for autonomy for self-government and self-determination concerning education for Indian people which should be bilingual, and the officialization of education of Indian culture among our people.

World Peace

Nordic Sami Council proposal for Peace resolution concerning the United Nations designated "International Year of Peace" 1986

In spite of today's mass communication, the world has little knowledge of the situation of indigenous peoples. The lack of knowledge about indigenous peoples and what they represent often undermines necessary dialogue. When indigenous people seek solidarity and understanding, it is always in vain.

The Nordic Sami Council wishes to indicate that the United Nations has a special responsibility to create the necessary conditions for indigenous peoples to participate in dialogue between peoples.

The Nordic Sami Council wishes to contribute, through the WCIP, some thoughts with respect to the "International Year of Peace" which has been designated by the UN.

Indigenous peoples of the world are recognised as people who love peace. They have lived in harmony with nature, with all their creations, they have lived in harmony with each other and with different cultures, cultures which have survived colonial repression and genocide.

The right to life, the fundamental principle of human rights, recognised by several international agencies, is today being repeatedly and sometimes systematically violated. Torture, murder, disappearance, massacres of indigenous communities, burning of their homes and crops and persecution is the reality of many indigenous peoples. This massive violation of the fundamental human rights constitutes a genocide and ethnocide.

Indigenous people believe firmly in the right to life and self-determination free from economic, political and social bonds.

Recommendations:

The Nordic Sami Council therefore suggests that during the International Year of Peace in 1986 the UN should arrange a seminar on the role of indigenous peoples in the quest for peace and the co-existence of the peoples of the world.

The objective of the seminar should be to emphasise and discuss human rights, solidarity, democracy, tolerance, knowledge understanding and acceptance of indigenous peoples.

There should also be discussed more concrete subjects such as war, disarmament, nuclear free zones and other activities which work against world peace and peaceful co-existence.

Also:

World Peace and the Arms Race

1. We the 4th General Assembly of the WCIP proclaim that the liberation struggle of indigenous people in South and Central America is against oppression by national governments and
North American intervention, and we affirm that our struggle is profoundly indigenous and one of liberation.

2. The 4th General Assembly of the WCIP condemns the massacres and ethnocide and genocide perpetuated against the indigenous population of Peru by the Central government and its forces of repression and by the political-military. The 4th Assembly calls for the withdrawal of the military forces from the region of Ayacucho and for a socio-political solution in order to return to peace and respect for the integrity of the indigenous people. This 4th Assembly demands the participation of the true representatives of the indigenous people of Peru in the decisions of Government.

3. That the 4th General Assembly of the WCIP condemns the imposition and use of military bases and nuclear weapons in Panama and the passage of nuclear propelled vessels and vessels carrying nuclear wastes through the Panama Canal, as these transits constitute violation of the Torrijos-Carter Treaty.

4. That the 4th General Assembly of the WCIP CALLS on the major powers to stop all atmospheric and underground nuclear testing; the building of nuclear power stations and the production of nuclear arms.

Liberation

Whereas the WCIP having met in convention from September 22-30, 1984, and having received presentations from indigenous peoples of the world; and

Whereas the WCIP have concluded that we indigenous People are the owners of our lives and have the right to determine our own destiny; and

Whereas the WCIP have found that there are many forces of repression which continue to deprive the indigenous of the world from the full enjoyment of life, and the full control over the destiny of indigenous people; and

Whereas among the many forms of repression the WCIP has identified those most prevalent as:

1. The imposition of force either through government-sponsored military action or non-government-sponsored activity which encourage or even sponsor the use of arms against the indigenous people.

2. The suppression through economic abuse by those who fail to appreciate the dignity of a fellow human being and the continued attempt to equate such humans to an economic equation of maximizing profits through the reduction of fair and appropriate wages.

3. The attitude of governments which fail to give to the indigenous people the full dignity of human beings by refusing to recognize the indigenous as full participating members in a political system.

4. The attitude of social and economic institutions which discriminate against the indigenous people through the assignment of only menial jobs to indigenous people, through lack of a fair promotional system which treats all people equally, through the exclusion of indigenous people from schools and other public places and institutions.

5. The practice of transmigration in which a nation floods the traditional territory of the indigenous people with supporters or sympathizers of that nation, resulting in the domination of language, culture, political attitude and control and at times, resulting in a superior number of arms in the event of conflict.

6. The practice of extinguishing the existence of the indigenous people by separating them from their traditional lands. Land to the indigenous people represents more than a commodity to be bartered back and forth to maximize profit. For many indigenous people, land is the seat of spirituality, it is the guardian and protector of the bones of our forefathers, it is the historical record of a people, the provider of food, clothing and shelter; it represents the hope of the generations to follow. To separate the indigenous people from the land traditionally held by us is to pronounce certain death to the indigenous people for we will either die physically or our minds and bodies will be altered in such a way that we will mimic the foreigners’ ways, adopt their thoughts and build a foreign prison around our indigenous spirit which suffocates rather than allow for the flourishing of our spirit. Whether or not we die physically or alter our minds and become the foreigner, we still perish when we are separated from our traditional lands.

7. The imposition of foreign laws upon the indigenous people. Laws themselves are containers of human values; thus foreign laws are containers of foreign values. When foreign laws are imposed upon indigenous people, such laws affect the traditions and cultures of the people, many times resulting in direct conflict with such values. Furthermore, too often, the passage of such laws are accomplished without the prior consultation or consent of the indigenous people who are expected to abide by them. The mere assumption of jurisdiction over the indigenous people results in the forced submission of aspects of the indigenous peoples' sovereignty to the foreign state.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the WCIP adopt the following principles and practices:

1. The battle against repression must be taken to international tribunals and fora in order to educate the world of the injustices under which our indigenous peoples now live.

2. That greater and more effective alliances be undertaken to spread the cry for liberation by the indigenous people.

3. That greater and more effective alliances be formed with our indigenous brothers and sisters to the end that we develop
a world solidarity in protecting and advocating for the liberation of our fellow indigenous people from the continuing suppression we labor under.

4. That we unite with all human beings, indigenous or non-indigenous, who can appreciate the beauty of freedom of all peoples, and march arm in arm against those who have dared to deny us the right to life and the control over our destinies.

5. To this end, we call for a united effort to create a centre for information on the Liberation of Indigenous Peoples, which may include broadcasting facilities, both audio and visual and publishing facilities for the transfer of printed information.

6. We call for a united effort in gathering the ancient wisdom and knowledge of all our indigenous people along with the practitioners of this knowledge, to exchange that which can be exchanged, and respect that which should remain secret; to teach our youths the treasures of our culture and inspire pride and dignity in our future leaders; to unify the indigenous people across the world into an army of solidarity to bring about our liberation.

7. That we say to our brothers and sisters who choose or who are selected to enter into the halls of the non-indigenous peoples' institutions: "Go with pride and dignity, learn the ways of the non-indigenous people well, and be strong in mind and spirit as a warrior for indigenous justice. Learn to walk in both worlds but remember always to walk with one spirit, an indigenous spirit."

8. That where there is no justice, there will be violence. We decry the need to resort to violence. Those responsible for violence are not those who must resort to it as a last resort. The responsibility of violence rests upon the souls of those who deny justice. The resort to arms is justified, but only as a last resort, only after an appeal to reason is no longer available. But when a resort to arms becomes necessary, it should be done with pride and not with shame; it should be used with compassion and not with uncontrolled hate; it must be taken up always with a clear understanding that it is justified only for the sake of liberation of our people and not for the purpose of revenge or suppression of another person's right to life and liberty of self-determination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

To be effective in the use of international tribunals and fora, in the mass media, in unification attempts with non-indigenous and indigenous peoples, in the use of arms and in the many other methods of achieving liberation, we must first liberate our minds.

We must cast off the chains of doubt in ourselves. Contrary to what others want us to believe, we are all beautiful, intelligent and resourceful peoples.
Let us Decolonize our minds first, then march ahead to take our proper places in the communities of the world, to take our places as people who have survived the centuries of repression and have brought about our own Liberation.

Declaration of Principles of Indigenous Rights

Principle 1. All indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of this right they may freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, religious and cultural development.

Principle 2. All states within which an indigenous people lives shall recognize the population, territory and institutions of the indigenous people.

Principle 3. The cultures of the indigenous peoples are part of the cultural heritage of mankind.

Principle 4. The traditions and customs of indigenous people must be respected by the states, and recognized as a fundamental source of law.

Principle 5. All indigenous peoples have the right to determine the person or groups of persons who are included within its population.

Principle 6. Each indigenous people has the right to determine the form, structure and authority of its institutions.

Principle 7. The institutions of indigenous peoples and their decisions, like those of states, must be in conformity with internationally accepted human rights both collective and individual.

Principle 8. Indigenous peoples and their members are entitled to participate in the political life of the state.

Principle 9. Indigenous people shall have exclusive rights to their traditional lands and its resources, where the lands and resources of the indigenous peoples have been taken away without their free and informed consent such lands and resources shall be returned.

Principle 10. The land rights of an indigenous people include surface and subsurface rights, full rights to interior and coastal waters and rights to adequate and exclusive coastal economic zones within the limits of international law.

Principle 11. All indigenous peoples may, for their own needs, freely use their natural wealth and resources in accordance with Principles 9 and 10.

Principle 12. No action or course of conduct may be undertaken which, directly or indirectly, may result in the destruction of land, air, water, sea ice, wildlife, habitat or natural resources without the free and informed consent of the indigenous peoples affected.
Principle 13. The original rights to their material culture, including archaeological sites, artifacts, designs, technology and works of art lie with the indigenous people.

Principle 14. The indigenous peoples have the right to receive education in their own language or to establish their own educational institutions. The languages of the indigenous peoples are to be respected by the states in all dealings between the indigenous people and the state on the basis of equality and non-discrimination.

Principle 15. The indigenous peoples and their authorities have the right to be previously consulted and to authorize the realization of all technological and scientific investigations to be conducted within their territories and to be informed and have full access to the results of the investigation.

Principle 16. Indigenous peoples have the right, in accordance with their traditions, to move freely and conduct traditional activities and maintain kinship relationships across international boundaries.

Principle 17. Treaties between indigenous nations or peoples and representatives of states freely entered into, shall be given full effect under national and international law.

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