

INTERNATIONAL WORK GROUP OF INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS (IWGIA).

Newsletter no. 2. October 1968.

The International Work Group Of Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) was established at the 38th International Congress of Americanists, Stuttgart and Munich, August 1968. The Congress unanimously passed a resolution on integration policy, protesting and repudiating the use of force as an instrument of cultural change, in programs of social and economic development. This resolution was included in Newsletter No.1.

The Work Group intends to use knowledge collected by social scientists to seek solution to the problems arising from forced acculturation and integration in various countries throughout the world.

The Work Group is a non-political and non-religious organization whose members do not represent any nation or national institutions. It will try to include representatives of other disciplines having useful knowledge and expertise and wanting to take an active part. It will also cooperate with other institutions working on related problems.

The Work Group intends to establish itself under the U.N. in co-operation with the Office of Legal Affairs and the Commission of Human Rights.

It will contact national governments informing them about the status of indigenous groups, offering co-operation in working toward the solution of the problems and in critical cases offering to send specialized work groups into the field.

At the VIIIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, September 3rd - 10th, 1968, Tokyo and Kyoto, a resolution was presented to the permanent council by Cyril S. Belshaw, Lars Persson and William C. Sturtevant. The resolution was examined, modified and then unanimously approved by a special committee. This resolution was presented to the permanent council where it was unanimously approved in the following form:

"In view of substantial information received that force and other forms of questionable pressure have recently been, and continue to be used against indigenous peoples in many parts of the world, and furthermore strongly believing that current programs for the acculturation and assimilation of indigenous societies are after harmful, immediately or ultimately, to their physical and mental health, and to their social and economic well-being,

1. we protest and repudiate genocide, and the use of force as an instrument of cultural change, in programs of social, economic and political development, and in the separation of indigenous peoples from their land;

2. we request the governments concerned to institute effective protection under the law for indigenous peoples, and to discipline government officials and others guilty of actions that contravene the International Declaration of Human Rights;

3. we urge governments, anthropologists, and others to re-examine current policies in order to provide ethically just and scientifically enlightened programs of acculturation which allow the peoples concerned a free and informed basis for choice.

We support in principle the International Work Group of Indigenous Affairs now based in Sweden, and other groups working in the same direction."

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It was also recommended that an international standing committee should be appointed to collect documentation, organize symposia and take other appropriate actions on these matters. Communication regarding this committee should be sent to:

Dr. William C. Sturtevant,
North American Division,
Office of Anthropology,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C. 20560,
USA

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The ad hoc secretariat of IWGIA formed at the ICA-meeting in Stuttgart continues to work temporarily until a permanent administration can be set up. We hope that this will be done in a few months, and till then Lars Persson continues to act as chairman, and Helge Kleivan as secretary. All communication on membership and information regarding IWGIA should be sent to:

Mr. Lars Persson,
Råmpedal,
Skytts Wemmerlöv,
Sweden.

The next step to be taken by IWGIA is to approach the U.N. The idea is to establish IWGIA (under this or any other appropriate name) as an independent organization dealing with problems that should be the concern of social scientists.

Documentation: An appeal will shortly be made to the Commission of Human Rights and to National Governments. In this connection it is imperative to produce detailed documentation on genocide and on forced integration in various countries. We urge those who presented documentation at the Congress of Americanists in Stuttgart on the extreme situation in a number of Latin-American countries, to send us their manuscripts as soon as possible, preferably before X-mas. Other members in a position to contribute documentary material on genocide, forced integration or other use of force against indigenous peoples, are also urged to forward their manuscripts.

MSS should be carefully documented, and authors are asked to specify in detail dates and place names referring to incidents dealt with in their papers.

Reasonable length of MSS would be 10 - 15 pages.

We will ask members to keep IWGIA informed about the actual situation in different areas and countries, or about incidents that call for immediate action. If you want to act as permanent regional secretary for IWGIA, please inform us, and state area and country.

We also urge the members to take contact with press, radio and television to inform about the development of IWGIA. We will also be glad to receive press cuttings from your country for our files. This and all other communication, ideas and problems concerning IWGIA should be sent to the temporary secretariat.

During the last months we have been happy to receive letters from individuals and organizations working with similar problems. This shows that there is a widespread interest for what could be termed "activated anthropology". One of our aims is to unite, strengthen and canalize such efforts.

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The Work Group still has no funds to cover expenses in connection with its activities. Nevertheless, the secretariat hesitate to propose an annual subscription, however small. The economic situation, however, implies a delay to some of the planned activities. Much effort lately has been devoted to these problems, and we are in contact with a number of institutions, which we hope will react favourably to our requests. But in view of these economic problems any constructive proposal from our members will be welcome.

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We ask all members who have not filled in and returned the information card to do so as soon as possible.

Members are also asked to bring to the attention of colleagues and others the aims and objectives of IWGIA.

Editors of this newsletter: Lars Persson and Helge Kleivan.

Copenhagen, October 31st, 1968.