

asking the government, "Is it okay to buy the land or is it okay to put our homes on the land?" When we see the need to go back to our land, our people are just moving back and sitting on it, living in tents or busses or makeshift homes, starting to build up the land, and starting to survive on the little land that we have.

Whenever there is a land occupation, the people are always supportive of it. And that is encouraging, because the people support it from the right wing to the left wing, from the old to the young.

We are starting to take control of our lives. We now speak Maori to one another and to other people, and if they can't understand it, too bad. We have a pre-school, and only Maori is spoken there. At the school there are older brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, a whole *fanu* base. That is the extended family. It is only through that, through the nurturing of the child to go out into the so-called rat race, so that they can cope with it, that we can survive.

We have our own spirituality. We can say a story and it has three or four meanings to it. We believe all the meanings are the right ones.

We know that the people of the Pacific need to unite together. We all achieve our independence together. Nobody is free until everybody is free. To the people of South America, we say, "Be strong in your stance."



The Seventh Generation Fund

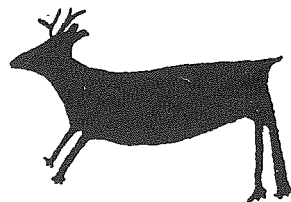
SAIIC has been working with Victoria Bomberry and the Seventh Generation Fund to find ways to bring together Indian people of North, Central, and South America. Victoria, who is also editor of Native Self-Sufficiency, spoke with SAIIC recently about Indian sovereignty.

SAIIC: Could you tell us about the Seventh Generation Fund? What is the basis for the work you do?

Victoria: The Seventh Generation Fund was founded in 1977 by a group of activists who were interested in moving from merely rhetorical speech about sovereignty toward making sovereignty a reality. In order to do that, there were several things that needed to be articulated. People here had a notion of sovereignty and we started working on all the areas that make a people sovereign. To be sovereign, a nation needs to have an economic system. It needs to have a shared culture and language. It needs to have a land base, and it needs to have a people who are tied together by those common bonds. We began thinking about ways we could move these things to reality on reservations throughout North America.

SAIIC: What kinds of projects have you been doing to make these kinds of changes?

Victoria: We've worked in several different areas. We work with land and natural resources protection. We work in the area of economic development to find ways that are culturally benign and environmentally protective and to develop economies that are self-sustaining. For example, we have worked with several Navajo communities to develop an agricultural system based on traditional foods, and branching out to develop crops that can be sold in the market place for a little bit of cash income.



We've worked with the Western Shoshone people in their fight to maintain their ancestral homeland. They were also able to successfully defeat the MX missile that was proposed to go into Nevada. They used the argument that they held title to the land and it worked.

We've worked with women's health projects. We've worked with women who were interested in reviewing traditional methods of healing and midwifery. They have been very successful in their communities in bringing women together to talk about their common concerns and to gain control over their reproductive rights.

We've worked with over 85 projects in the past eight years and they are all grassroots, Indian-controlled, Indian-initiated projects in Canada and the United States.

SAIIC: How have you now become involved with some hemispheric-wide concerns of Indian people?

Victoria: We became involved as an organization in 1981 when the people in Guatemala asked us to speak out on their behalf. We ran a full-page ad in The New York Times denouncing the Guatemalan government for their brutalization of the Guatemalan people, in particular the Indian people who are the majority in that country.

We keep finding, no matter where we go or who we talk to, that our concerns as Indian people are the same concerns. We're all concerned about our land, our spirituality, our families, our communities, and our rights to exist as separate, distinct people. Those are themes that come up over and over again. And they are the same issues that people involved in both hemispheres are working on right now. I think that we have a lot to learn from one another as Indian people, and I think that we can help one another.

You know, it's all community. We are talking about community, and there are many people now working in both the United States and Canada to rebuild their communities and rebuild their nations. I think it is time to start reaching out to other Indian people in Central America and South America and to start rebuilding the ties that we've had over the centuries.

For more information about the Seventh Generation Fund, write P.O. Box 10, Forestville, CA 94536.



Art Dealers Raid Indian Heritage

John Ross, a correspondent writing from Peru, reports that the heritage of Indian civilizations is vanishing from under the noses of the Peruvian and Mexican governments.

The Peruvian government is concerned that some 50,000 objects created by Indian cultures before the European invasion are being stolen by graverobbers and art dealers each year. But descendants of the Incas argue that the government's policy of nationalizing such objects constitutes theft of Indian heritage by non-Indian governments.

"The whites manipulate our culture. They make laws for their own class and state which, of course, is not truly national, since we, the majority of the population, are excluded from power," says Salvador Palomino, a Quechua-speaking descendant of the Incas and one