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CHIAPAS:

Indigenous
Uprising
with Campesino
Demands?



LINKING
INDIAN PEOPLES
OF THE AMERICAS



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On the Cover: Comandante Ana Maria of the EZLN: SAIC. Background: Peter Robertson



On January first, 1994, much of the world was shocked with the news of the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas. Mexico internationally recognized as a stable, peaceful and democratic country, proud of its government and admired by others, finally stood revealed. The uprising showed the world what many of us already knew: the extreme exploitation, oppression, discrimination and misery of the close to fifteen million Indigenous people that live there. We also know that the same conditions exist in the majority of the countries on this continent.

We hope that the events in Chiapas cause to reflect not only governments but also the so-called national societies which have generally remained indifferent to Indigenous demands--so that this indifference is recognized as complicity with injustice. Governments and societies in general cannot continue to ignore the clamor for justice being made by our people. In the meantime, Indigenous people are creating the necessary strategy and ideology to see more clearly our road to liberation, and to avoid confusion in the sense that Indigenous aspirations are reduced only to class or economic demands. We want to clarify that Indigenous demands are not just for a better salary, or a piece of land, rather they oriented towards reconstructing our communities and cultures.

In the last edition of Abya Yala News, we noted that even though some attention had been given to Indigenous problems by governments, institutions, and non-governmental organizations, little justice was actually achieved. Nonetheless, and despite everything, there are positive signs which hold out hope for a better future. We can affirm that Indigenous peoples continue to develop and communicate their objectives and policies with increasing clarity and unity.

The International Year of Indigenous Peoples declared by the United Nations in 1993 created many expectations. But with few exceptions, and despite the good intentions of some international agencies and governments such as those of Norway, Canada and Australia, little has changed. Not only do Indigenous demands continue to be denied, but the systematic violation of our peoples' human rights continues. Repression, murders, forced displacements and indiscriminate natural resource exploitation are the continuation of work begun five hundred years ago.

The United Nations has now declared this the decade of Indigenous Peoples. It is likely that governments will use this declaration to divert attention from existing problems, with the usual paternalistic propaganda. The difference is that now, Indigenous peoples scrutinize government policies. We are better organized and have more experience. The current challenge for Indigenous organizations is create the necessary strategies for change and a solid continental unity.

SAIIC Board of Directors

Indigenous Leaders Awarded Goldman Environmental Prize

On April 18, 1994, Luis Macas president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and Mathew Coon Come, grand chief of the Cree were awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize in San Francisco, California.

The prize includes a no-strings attached \$60,000 grant. Macas was recognized for his role in the 1990 Levantamiento Indigena (Indigenous uprising) in Ecuador which forced the government to seriously negotiate the conditions for oil drilling in the Ecuadorian Amazon. He was also praised for his role in the negotiations between CONAIE and the Ecuadorian government which resulted in a sweeping settlement giving Indigenous nations title to three million hectares of rainforest in the Amazon.

Coon Come has worked for decades to oppose the Quebec government's monumental plans for hydroelectric dam building in James Bay. Both these struggles put Indigenous and environmental organizations against some of the world's most powerful forces. With these awards, the Goldman foundation has helped give world attention and stature to these leader's struggles. Following is Luis Macas' statement at the ceremonies.

...With the arrival of western civilization the plundering of natural resources was initiated as was the takeover and destruction of our mother earth and the exploitation of our people. This intensive and irrational exploitation of natural resources caused not only impoverishment of the earth but has generated poverty and the violation of human rights among our people in the South. The culture of capitalism and avarice has forced itself on nature to achieve its goals no matter what the sacrifice. As a result, we are now experiencing an accelerated process of true global collapse.

As inhabitants of this planet, it is vital and urgent to stop these crimes against nature and life and work to re integrate ourselves with the natural world so as to redirect our path toward a more respectful and harmonious relationship with it. These beliefs motivate us to defend our mother earth and resist her destruction with her. Therefore it is important that we gain title to territories which will guarantee their protection, not only for us, but for the benefit of all life... We have to oppose destruction and death with justice, sustainable development and life.

Indigenous Groups in Argentina Push for Rights Under New Constitution

The fifteen Indigenous nations in Argentina are carrying out a country-wide mobilization in response to the opening of a process for constitutional revision. Indigenous groups are pressuring the national congress to finally include an article stating their rights under the constitution. Indigenous organizations held two assemblies regarding the issue of constitutional reform and have drafted a proposal for rights to be included in the new constitution.

The proposal's most important points were recognition that Indigenous peoples existed before the creation of the National state and birth of the provinces; the recognition of the Argentinian Republic as a pluri-ethnic and pluri-cultural state; the inclusion of rights to communal land ownership as well as control of all natural resources found in these lands; the right to educate their children in their own language and culture; and finally, the deletion of part 15 of article 67 of the current constitution which states that the government should "maintain a peaceful relationship with the Indians and promote their conversion to Catholicism".

After drafting these proposals, representatives of all the Indigenous communities presented a declaration to the national congress to urge inclusion of these changes in the new constitution.

Innu Activists Blockade Hydro-Quebec Roads

Innu from the Coalition for Nitassinan (their traditional lands) supported by observers set up camp on May 29, blocking the access road which Hydro-Quebec intends to use for construction of the massive Sainte-Marguerite III (SM III) hydroelectric project. Hydro-Quebec officials have reportedly sought an official injunction against the blockade in order to remove the protesters.

The SM III project would be built in Innu territory along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River in Quebec. It would flood over 450 square km. and, possibly contaminate this area with the toxin methyl mercury. Innu fear this contamination will render the region's fish, one of their main food sources,

unsafe to eat. In addition, the construction would divert tributaries from the Moisle river, reducing flows by up to 42% of one of the world's most important salmon rivers. This could further endanger the Atlantic salmon. Reportedly, one million cubic meters of forest would also be clearcut for the reservoir and access roads. Quebec hopes to sell power generated by the projects to utilities in the northeastern US.

Coalition Pour Nitassinan, 182 de l'Eglise, Mani-Utenam, QC, Canada G4R4K2, Tel: 418-927-2102

Mapuche Exert Rights over Cultural Heritage

On February 20, remains of human skeletons, pieces of Valdivian style ceramics, and a stone pipe were discovered at a construction site in the city of San Martin de Los Andes, Argentina. Representatives of the three Mapuche communities in the region, the Curruhuinca, Vera, and Cayun, demanded immediate return of the artifacts, stating, "We cannot accept any manipulation of these remains be it for scientific or other reasons. There is no doubt that these remains were found on ancestral Mapuche territory where our ancestors rest and this is sacred to us."

The three communities, members of the Mapuche Organization of Tain Kine Getuam held a series of public demonstrations and meetings with municipal authorities, from which they obtained a promise that the artifacts would be returned to their "rightful heirs". The Mapuche remain concerned that this commitment will be kept. The discovery, also brought to light the lack of legislation for protection of such artifacts. The Mapuche representatives noted that protection of their cultural heritage was the "most fundamental human right" of their people.

First Restitution of Indigenous Remains in Argentina

One hundred and six years after his death, the remains of the 19th century hero of Indian resistance, Cacique Inacayal, will be moved from the Museum of La Plata in the province of Buenos Aires, to the community of Tecka in Chubut. This is the first such restitution in Argentina, which recognizes that

the rights of the Indigenous communities precede scientific interest in these remains. Inacayal lived his last days in the capital city, where he was brought with his family by the researcher Francisco Moreno to live on his estate of "Paseo del Bosque". On September 24, 1888 the chief died of sadness.

Continental Indigenous Foundation Formed

Indigenous leaders from throughout the continent came to Oakland, California on April 16 for the founding meeting of the first foundation formed and led by Indigenous people from South and Central America. SAIC hosted this meeting for the Abya Yala Fund during which the various leaders decided the foundation's strategies and goals.

The foundation aims to fund projects developed by Indigenous communities in South and Central America and Mexico. Areas of interest will be territory, environment, training, self-development, women's issues, health, education, organizing, scholarships, and exchanges between Indigenous peoples. Another of the foundation's goals will be to support training in international communication, for example the improvement of communities' access to other foundations. The Abya Yala Fund also plans administrative training and assistance in elaboration of grant proposals.

The meeting participants noted that it is time that the Indigenous communities have direct access to foundations and other forms of financial and technical support for their development efforts aimed at improving living conditions. In addition they observed that hundreds of non-indigenous intermediary groups have been receiving funds to work with indigenous people or in the name of indigenous people, and that many of these funds have been wasted in administration. Intermediaries have at times also imposed their political conditions on Indigenous communities, or have not been responsive to the communities' own interests.

The Abya Yala Fund currently has an office in Oakland, California, and aims to form regional offices in Central and South America. The fund is sponsored by the Tides Foundation until it obtains legal status. Donations are tax deductible, and computers, fax machines, printers and other office equipment are greatly needed.

*Abya Yala Fund c/o Tides Foundation
1388 Sutter St, 19th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109.*

CHIAPAS:

MAYA IDENTITY AND THE ZAPATISTA UPRISING

"In Chiapas, the owners of the fincas treat the Indians worse than they treat their animals. Chiapas is one great finca in which we Indians are less important than the cows. Testimony of a Maya representative to the National congress in 1992.

by Araceli Burguete Cal y Mayor

The vast majority of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) fighters are Indigenous Maya Tojolabal, Tzeltal, Tzotzil and Chole peoples in addition to a smaller number of mestizos and other ethnic groups. Their demands are diverse, oscillating between those raised by the revolutionary class-oriented movements of Central America, classic Mexican campesino (peasant) demands, and the claims being made by the Indigenous movement. The EZLN has also incorporated into its positions a wide range of demands relating to the urban movement's struggles, the political parties, and to the demands for democracy voiced by Mexican society in general.

Is this an Indigenous rebellion or an Indigenous uprising with campesino demands? Is this the beginning of a Mexican civil war for national democracy or is it a local struggle to change the medieval structures of Chiapas? Is this the last chapter of the Central American class-based revolutions or is it the first chapter

Araceli Burguete is a native of Chiapas, sociologist and technical and research coordinator for the Independent Indian People's Front (FIPI).

of the modern Indigenous "Indianist" revolutions? The recent history of Chiapas can help explain the apparently exclusive nature of these questions.

The Zapatista rebellion is embedded in the historic and geographic specificities of Chiapas. The state can be divided into four distinct regions: the first, incorporates the densely populated highlands and the newly colonized border zone; the central region which has only been populated by mestizos since the 19th Century; the coastal region colonized in this Century by mestizo immigrants; and the Soconusco region with its old colonial settlements. These areas have few relations with each other. They are sustained by different economic activities, partially due to the absence, until the 1970's, of roads and communication. The conflict developed in the highland and border area. The highlands are the ancestral territory of the rebellion's principal actors, the: Maya Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Tojolabal and Chole peoples. The border region, which includes the Lacandon rainforest, has received waves of migrant Indians from the highlands over the last 30 years. It now constitutes the regional and social base of the Zapatista army.



Chiapas and Guatemala: shared identities

The original Maya territory was fragmented during the formation of the colonial nations, into five Mexican states--Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatan, Quintana Roo, and Campeche--in addition to Guatemala and Belize. During the colonial period, Chiapas belonged to Spain's Guatemalan Captaincy General. Its social, economic, cultural, and political structures were defined in this period, and have persisted in contemporary Chiapas without revolutionary changes. Chiapas was annexed by the Mexican Republic in 1824 as the result of a plebiscite in which only ladinos (those of mixed European and Indigenous ancestry) --being the only citizens who could



Grassroots and human rights organizations condemned the region's heavy militarization following the uprising. Indigenous couple here talk with soldiers at a hastily assembled barricade.

read and write--voted. Despite annexation to Mexico, Chiapas continued to be integrated with Guatemala. Even today, its geography, its language, even its commerce fall within the limits of Guatemala. In-migration of Guatemalans looking for work has also been common. Until the 1970's, there was no direct road connecting Chiapas to the northern part of Mexico. Thus, the state capital of Tuxtla Gutiérrez was located 1,000 km by road from Mexico City.

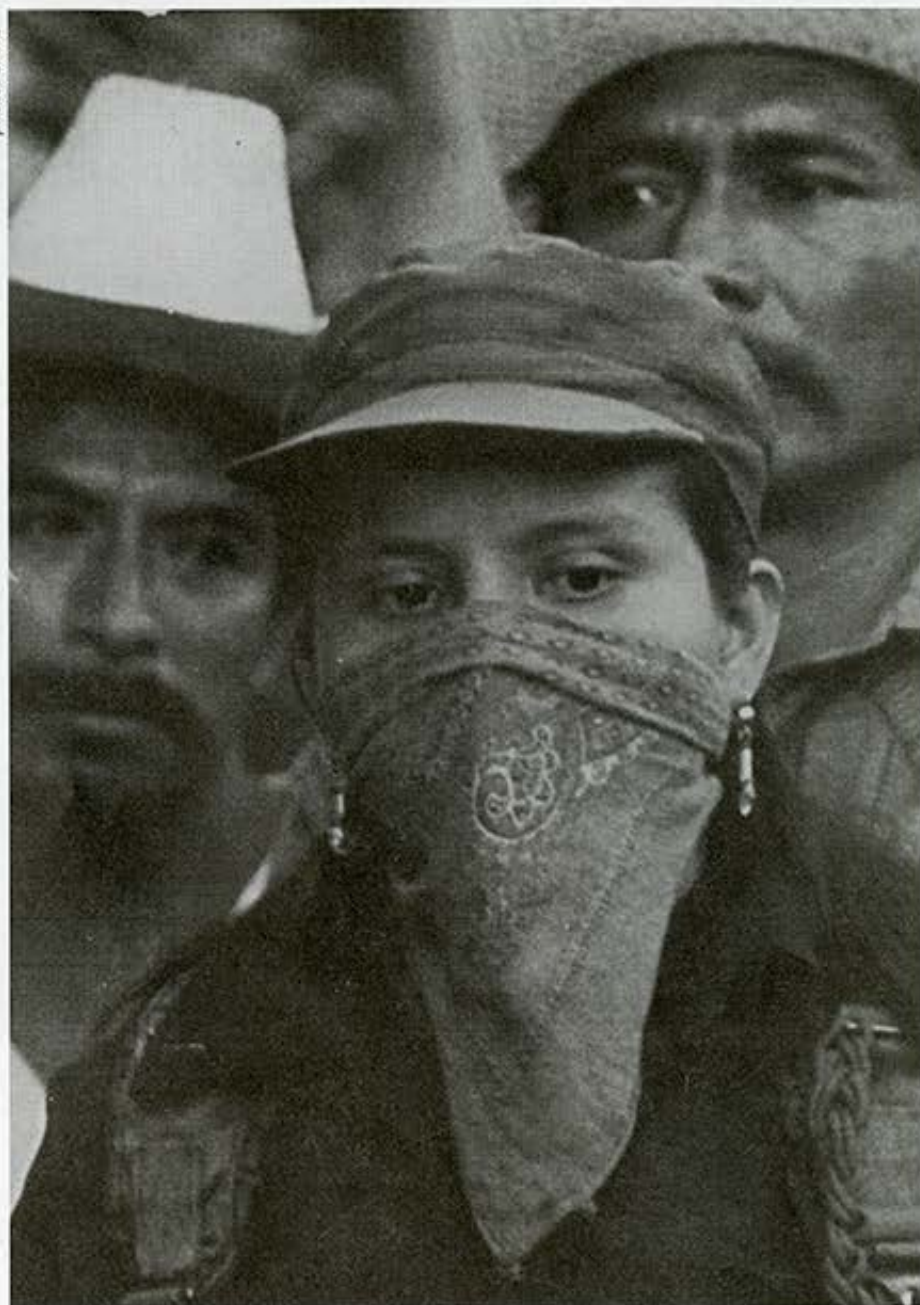
An important aspect of highland Chiapan society which clearly identifies it with Guatemalan society is that of identity. Indians were given a key role in the construction of the Mexican state, but only as dead Indians. Living Indians in contrast were denied. In

this way, a national model was constructed based on the notion of a glorious Indian past and a homogeneous, that is, mestizo, (mixed ancestry) present. Guatemalan ideology differs substantially. There, people who are biologically mestizo assume themselves descendants of the criollos referring to themselves as ladinos and as the people of reason. In opposition obviously are those lacking reason, the Indians. Chiapas in contrast to the rest of Mexico echoes the Guatemalan notion of identity. The ladinos negate racial mixing entirely and have organized society according to racial divisions; thereby guaranteeing racial discrimination and turning the devaluing of Indigenous people into a daily act.

Not the first indigenous uprising

Indian people have paid an extremely high price to maintain their identity. Indian rebellions, though nearly always frustrated, have been as much a constant of Chiapas' history as has the exploitation and oppression which followed the conquest. In 1532, the Maya rose against the Spanish. Following their defeat many heroically threw themselves from a cliff known as Cañon del Sumidero. In 1712, following several local uprisings, the Indigenous people throughout the highlands rebelled again; this time grouped around an apparition of the Virgin Mary. They declared the Indigenous headquarters of Cancuc as their capital and rejected Ciudad Real (now San Cristobal de las Casas), along with its civil and

photo: SAIIC



Many Zapatista Commanders and fighters, including Comandante Ana Maria, are women.

ecclesiastic authorities. Finally in 1714, a powerful army from Guatemala annihilated the rebels who had taken refuge in Ocosingo. The tremendous misery which resulted from this defeat, followed by loss of lands and frequent famines led to further rebellions in 1864 and 1867 by Tzotziles attempting to reclaim their sovereignty--an intent which was again repressed. Since then, the state's criollos and ladinos have perfected their control over the Indigenous population in order

to ensure practically free labor for their plantations.

A state the revolution passed by

Labor relations are determined by ethnic oppression maintained by politicians and ladino plantation owners.

During Mexico's first period of Liberal reforms in the 19th century, landholding families headed the counter-reform. New privatization laws and colonization of Maya territories had caused

several Indigenous revolts. The federal government responded in 1849 with a law outlawing forced and uncompensated labor. This law ended the semi-feudal custom of debt peonage, under which an indigenous or campesina family occupies a portion of land in a finca in exchange for unpaid work; a situation which converted them into the landlord's property and made securing their own land impossible. This legislation provoked an armed uprising led by the landlords, who succeeded in overturning the law two years later. Debt peonage was progressively eliminated in the rest of Mexico following the revolution of 1910. In Chiapas, however, several hundred Indigenous people continue, even today, to work as indebted peons on the large plantations.

Just as the counter-reform gripped Chiapas in the 19th century, the state's landlords also won the 20th century's counter-revolution. In 1910, Mexico was convulsed with the first social revolution of the 20th century, its changes weren't felt in Chiapas. One of the first actions of the revolutionary government was to begin agrarian reforms that responded to the expectations of the millions of campesinos who had participated in the revolution. President Venustiano Carranza sent his officials to the republic's different states in order to implement this reform. In 1914, General Jesus Agustin Castro arrived in Chiapas as governor and initiated land distribution and efforts at protecting worker's rights. The land owners immediately rose in arms declaring themselves against Venustiano Carranza. Their rebellion coincided with the revolts in the country's Northern and Central regions led by Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata. History's paradox is that the Chiapan landowners declared themselves Villistas and Zapatistas, in order to ally with these armies. Thus, the first Zapatistas in Chiapas were counter-revolutionaries.

The counter-revolutionaries' threatened secession from the Union, and the federal government was forced to negotiate. At this time, they conceded that

Chiapas would always be governed by members of the Familia Chiapaneca--as the local criollos were known--and also that privately held land would not be expropriated. Since then, the Chiapan elite have invoked the specter of secession and the defense of state sovereignty to avoid intervention by the national government. The cost has been too high. The revolution's institutions which are ubiquitous in the rest of Mexico, never arrived in Chiapas. Thus the continuity of Chiapas' similarity to Guatemala remained unbroken. Likewise, the Institutional Revolutionary Party's (PRI) which has ruled Mexico since the revolution only recently installed itself in Chiapas. Its peasant and worker organizations which have coopted social movements in the rest of Mexico only arrived in Chiapas in the 1970's, and still have little presence.

The Lacandon rainforest: cradle of rebellion

Due to its regressive agrarian policy most of the state's arable land was concentrated in a few hands by 1940. According to population censuses, more than half was owned by 2.6% of the population. Just nine landlords accounted for 630,532 hectares. In contrast the average size of Indigenous and campesino farms was under two hectares. At the same time, a significant proportion of the state corresponded to "National Lands", that is forest areas susceptible to colonization. Population growth and the exhaustion of the ancestral Indigenous territories, government support for forest colonization, the displacement resulting from construction of hydroelectric dams, the advent of oil exploitation, soil deterioration, political and religious persecution and violence between 1960 and 1980 led to accelerated colonization of the Lacandon. The population grew from 5,000 to 300,000 inhabitants in those years. Thousands of Indigenous families from the highlands needing a piece of land to work took refuge in the forest, principally in the region of Las Cañadas. This region how-

ever is characterized by steep slopes and extremely poor soils underlain by calcareous rock. These soils retain water poorly; making agriculture very difficult. The region's physical harshness further sharpened social discontent.

The Indigenous colonists adapted to life in the forest only after profound cultural, political and ideological changes. They left parents and grandparents behind and remodeled their identity around the central desire to obtain land. In order to survive new and difficult conditions and the landowners unleashing violence, the colonists formed political or productive organizations.

These strengthened their nascent campesino identity, substituting for their communal (Indian) identity. The rainforest's new colonists and their young descendants are the protagonists of the conflict in Chiapas. The four municipal centers taken by the Zapatistas: San Cristobal, Las Margaritas, Ocosingo and Altamirano were all points of departure from the jungle, specifically from Las Cañadas.

The uprising's detonators

Chiapas' economic structures are archaic: plantations for export of coffee, cardamom, extensive livestock grazing and logging--without value added processing. According to official statistics, Chiapas holds the unenviable position of being Mexico's poorest state. Ninety-four of its 111 municipalities are considered highly marginal. The paradox is that Chiapas is also a rich state. In the last 10 years, it has held the third and fourth place respectively in the production of gas and

oil. Nonetheless, the majority of communities lack electricity as well as any of the other benefits yielded by their resources

Chiapas has the second highest proportion of indigenous inhabitants (28%) of all the Mexican states, three quarters of whom live in dispersed rural settlements. It also has the highest infant mortality and illiteracy rates, percentage of citizens with incomes less than two minimum salaries (about \$250), and outstanding petitions for land. Just under half of the state's families live in houses with dirt floors, a statistic closely related to children's disease rates. A study prepared by the institute for European-Latin American Studies reported the following: "Chiapas has the lowest levels of electricity in the country (66.7%). Only 58% of the houses have running water when the national average is 79%...The state's population is only 4% of the nation, but constitutes 25% of all the disputes between campesinos and landlords in the country, disputes which often are violent."

"Is this the last chapter of the Central American class-based revolutions or is it the first chapter of the modern Indigenous "Indianist" revolutions?"

Maya Groups in Mexico



In a good will gesture, the EZLN inaugurated peace talks by releasing ex-governor Absalon Castellanos, held since the uprising's second day. Castellanos and his family own a significant portion of Chiapas' land and wealth. The EZLN and Indigenous organizations demand his trial for crimes committed during his administration, a period widely seen as the state's most repressive in modern history.



photo: SAIC

Out of the total population of close to 2,000,000, about 1,130,000 are "economically active" that is, 55.4% of the population receives no income.

While Chiapas occupies first place in the country for social marginality, this is further accentuated in the conflict regions. Illiteracy for those over 15 years old in Chiapas is close to 30%, in the Indigenous municipalities it is nearly twice that. In Altamirano 51% of the population over 15 years old is illiterate, in Las Margaritas 48%, in Ocosingo 47% while in San Cristobal 24% and Comitán 23%. The Indigenous people living in this region are the most marginal of the marginal.

Land ownership and Article 27

The virtual lack of an agrarian reform in Chiapas, as explained before, is directly related to the socio-economic and political problems are at the root of the January first explosion. The land distribution which occurred was realized principally on National Lands, and resulted from the struggles of the Indigenous people and campesinos without land. Rather than resolve petitions for granting ejidos or restitution of communal lands, the government has responded to demands for land by promoting colonization of near wastelands.

There is no consensus on the current quantities within each type of land ownership in the state. Some investigations

conclude that lands are totally distributed and that there are no large landholdings, others provide contrary opinions. According to leaders of the opposition, Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), the last census showed that 2.8% of the estates in the state have more than 1,000 hectares each; while 40.75% have less than 10 hectares each. According to this source, five large properties concentrate 36,000 hectares. Thirty percent of the nation's petitions for land are concentrated in Chiapas, totaling approximately 134,000 petitioners. These petitioners saw their hopes for receiving land dashed with reform of article 27 of the constitution in January of 1992.

In addition to land, productive resources are also concentrated. The problem of inequality corresponds not only to the concentration of property but also to a discriminatory system which sharpens the exclusion and oppression of Indigenous people and reproduces exploitation.

The 1970's: explosion of campesino organizations

Struggle for land in Chiapas has always been a radical process subject to violence from landlords. The federal government's general agrarian reform policy emphasized the ejido form of tenure (individual and sub-divided) in detriment to traditional communal tenure.

Indigenous petitioners for land were given no choice but to opt for the ejido form of ownership. In this way, Indigenous people participating in the struggle for land assumed a campesinista consciousness through which they demanded land to work rather than the autonomous territories which were stolen during the European invasion. This campesino-class consciousness has homogenized the struggle of the Indigenous people of Chiapas.

The figure of Emiliano Zapata has been continuously invoked to support land struggles, whereas the indigenous struggles for recovery of Indian government were forgotten with the oral history of the traditional Indian communities.

An organizational landmark

In October of 1974, the state's first Indigenous Encounter was hosted by Bishop Samuel Ruiz. This event marked the beginning of the campesino and Indigenous mobilizations in the region. At this event Indigenous people reflected on their common problems and began to organize. This process was accelerated with the arrival in these years of several political organizations with different ideological tendencies.

One of the first to arrive was the Central of Independent Agricultural Workers and Campesinos (CIOAC), a national campesino organization affili-

ated with the communist party and inspired by the program of Emiliano Zapata. Its members established themselves in Indigenous communities and worked for land reform and to organize agricultural day-laborers attached through systems of peonage to the fincas.

A second important movements in the country's agrarian struggle since 1979 was the National Coordination Plan de Ayala (CNPA). Its profoundly agrarianist and anti-partisan program was also derived from the program of Emiliano Zapata. Its most important expression in Chiapas has been the Emiliano Zapata Campesino Organization (OCEZ). Both of the above organizations suffered from brutal repression carried out by local death squads and security forces in the 1970's and 1980's.

Also during these years, young activists, mostly economics students and adherents to Maoist philosophy arrived from the country's northern region becoming known as Los Norteños. They had both resources and enthusiasm. They learned Indigenous languages and organized. In contrast to CIOAC and OCEZ, this group did not emphasize land struggles, but rather the formation of ejido unions (cooperatives) to enhance productive activities. Currently, many of these ex-activists hold high offices in Salinas de Gortari's government.

A significant number of the members of these various organizations have presumably joined the ranks of the EZLN.

Campesinista and Indianist organizations

The formation of Indigenous organizations that assume a humanitarian banner is a recent activity that has not been able to establish itself significantly in the consciousness of the Indigenous peoples. The Campesina and Zapatista tradition has until now subjugated Indianist efforts. Among the Indigenous organizations formed in the recent years, are the Organization of Indigenous Doctors and the Coordinator of Maya Organizations Struggling for Liberation (COLPUMALI)-

-member of the Independent Indian Peoples Front (FIPI). The majority of these organizations were formed by Indigenous activists that had experiences in the campesina struggle, but whom in a recent process of re-indianization (no more than 7 years old) have begun to base their claims and organization in their Indian identity. These claims still have little weight in Chiapas. First because it is a young movement, but also because it has not had the international economic support that other movements have received. Some members of these organizations also joined the ranks of the Zapatista army.

It is important to note as well, that even as the EZLN was nourished by the movements mentioned above, the great majority of the activists and organizations in the state decided not to actively participate in the armed uprising. Even so, they have noted on several occasions that they share the same struggle. After the uprising, these organizations formed themselves into the State Indigenous and Campesino Council of Chiapas (CEOIC), in an attempt to form a common front to defend the interests of the Indigenous organizations and campesinos in the context of the negotiations that were opened between the government and the EZLN.

There are several important differences between the programs of the Campesinista and Indianist organizations. The campesinista organizations demand: 1) land distribution and modification of article 27 to continue with the agrarian reform; 2) cheap and appropriate credit for agricultural production; 3) roads, health care, education, housing and other services; 4) support in the productive process, installation of agro-industry and 5) guarantees of individual human rights.

The Indianist organization's program, whose proposal is headed by FIPI in-

cludes in part: 1) modification of the relation between the State and the Indigenous peoples which implies constitutional recognition of their right to self-determination; 2) recognition of territorial rights of the Indigenous people of the country and of Chiapas and establishment of pluri-ethnic Indigenous regions where the different

Indigenous identities and mestizos would live under equal conditions; 3) modification of national laws to guarantee the participation of Indigenous representation in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government at the federal and state level.

The differences between the Campesinista Indigenous movement and the Indianist Indigenous movement are clear. The Zapatista demands arise from both these traditions which follow the campesinista line, but at the same time, identify in the Indianist demands possibilities for ending colonial oppression.

This most recent Indigenous uprising in Chiapas has given new air to the Indigenous movement in Mexico. A new feeling has flooded the millions of Indians of Mexico who have strengthened their struggle through processes of unification. Nevertheless, the most important thing is the hope that it has brought to the Indigenous movement worldwide. The sympathy which the EZLN provoked in the world shows that the Indigenous struggles have reason and justice on their side.

A report presented to the European Parliament on the topic of Chiapas by the Institute for European-Latin American Relations emphasized that "The conflict shows that the increasing aggressiveness of the Indigenous communities in Latin America will lead to armed conflicts, if the growing consciousness of Indians as subjects with rights, is not followed by increased governmental capacity to satisfy their necessities." ❧

"Thirty percent of the nation's petitions for land are concentrated in Chiapas...These petitioners saw their hopes for receiving land dashed with reform of article 27..."

Indigenous and Campesino Organizations Unite to Present Peace Proposals

Peace will come when everything that has been confiscated and stolen from the people has been returned, especially in regard to land, because the legitimate and authentic owners of the land are the campesinos and Indigenous people. ---Working commission, State Indigenous and Campesino Council of Chiapas

Six thousand Indigenous people and *campesinos* are occupying the public plaza in Chiapas' capital city of Tuxtla Gutierrez as this magazine goes to press. The occupation began when 10,000 members of the State Indigenous and Campesino Council of Chiapas (CEOIC) marched on the capital as part of a nation-wide mobilization called "Zapata Vive". They are seeking resolution of their demands for territory, autonomy land reform, and acceptance of the CEOIC peace plan. The Independent Indian People's Front reports some advances in negotiations with the government. However, but negotiations on human rights guarantees remain unresolved. Indigenous organizations will sign no agreements without securing the release of all those people who have been unjustly and arbitrarily arrested in the state.

Only ten days after the first shots were fired, every major Indian organization met in San Cristobal de Las Casas to form--along with non-Indigenous campesino organizations--the Indigenous and Campesino State Council of Chiapas (CEOIC). The Indigenous organizations are a minority in the tumultuous and fragile coalition. However, they are currently the most active and powerfully vocal faction.

Although the Zapatistas' positions have been minimal in relation to specifically Indian concerns, Indigenous organizations throughout the state of Chiapas have taken advantage of the political space opened by the January rebellion to unite forces and are developing their own alternative peace proposals. These proposals have special relevance since the Mexican government agreed that a prerequisite to negotiations was that there would be no return to the pre-rebellion situation in the state. Whether CEOIC will take a seat at the negotiating table with the government and Zapatistas remains unclear.

CEOIC has endorsed most of the EZLN's demands, in addition at their January 11-14 meeting, the council called for constitutional reform to enable a new relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Mexican state. This would be based in the reorganization of territory as well as political restructuring. CEOIC proposes the creation of autonomous pluri-ethnic regions which would shift power from the state and the federation to Indigenous peoples' in the state. Actual geographic regions have not been drawn. Actual territorial demarcation is the next challenge

Interview with Antonio Hernandez Cruz

Maya Tojolabal and Secretary General of the CIOAC

Hernandez is a founding member of the State Indigenous and Campesino Council of Chiapas. He spoke with SAIC in San Cristobal de las Casas regarding the Indigenous movement in Chiapas, government repression and the CEOIC's work. Following the uprising, Hernandez was among the hundreds of Indians detained and tortured by the military.

Can you tell me what happened to you when you were detained by the military, what did they accuse you of?

-We were detained on January 5 until 2:00 pm the following day... They accused us of being the Zapatistas' political leaders... They took us from the car we were riding in, put hoods over our heads and tied them very tightly around our necks. We were like this for 24 hours. Then they interrogated us heavily, trying to force us to say that we sympathized or were active in the Zapatista army. When we said no, they hit us. I received blows in the stomach, chest, back, and head, about 20 hard blows.

Did you denounce this occurrence?

-To the national and international press, to the television, but television doesn't report anything. The press

didn't report everything that occurred. I have publicly denounced the detention in meetings but the only thing which remains is the message, no actions have been taken. After being freed, I vomited blood for two days, because the beatings were severe. The hoods they put on us had ground chili pepper and our eyes were stinging. The powder would fall in our eyes with the slightest movements, and also we were tied up.

Do you think torture has become common?

-What was done to us was humanitarian compared to what they did to other compañeros. People are tortured simply because they do not speak Spanish very well, and do not understand orders they are given. From the maximum security cell where they held us, you could hear the beatings and continuous screams.

In addition to being repressive, is the military fearful of what could happen with the Zapatista revolt?

-Absolutely. When they had us in the jail-cell... We noticed that even though we were tied up, they came to look for us in groups of seven or ten people and would point their guns at us. They were afraid of the people they were holding. I imagine that if we were fighting in the jungle and armed that it would be more difficult for them.

Regarding the past events, we do not know if this [conflict] can be resolved or not. We as organizations have taken the initiative; in order to come to an understanding with national society, there will have to be profound reforms to establish a new relationship between the indigenous communities, society as a whole and the government.

What type of reforms does the State Council have in mind?

-We have been advancing these past

days in the attempt to establish a comprehensive plan for Indigenous people's rights. We need constitutional reform where a whole new chapter establishes various articles that speak of Indian people's concrete rights.

Identity and Alliances

Do the peoples in Chiapas speak their own languages or have they stopped speaking them?

-Many people have stopped speaking them, because they think that their language is inferior to the other society's. They have been raised to believe this way. There are moments when we are dominated, and then we stop speaking our language.

Is this still occurring or are there now processes to recover these languages?

-Now, there is more awareness of our identity. Many people now--even those that are not Indians--call themselves Indian peoples. The consciousness of the indigenous people is much greater than two or three years ago, now with this situation, it's accelerated even more.

Why do you think the struggle in Chiapas appears more like a campesino rather than an Indian struggle?

-Definitively because of the negation of Indigenous culture. We are discounted and in discounting us they say that we are backward, inferior to the other society. For this reason, many brothers refuse to tell the truth that they are Indian. That is why the struggle is known more as a campesino movement and we are seen as campesinos; nothing more than campesinos.

What is occurring with the supposed progressive allies? How do they see you?

-Well there are many allies that have

begun to understand little by little as we talk. As they become more aware, they are surprised that we are not inferior, but that we have our own capabilities, our own culture and our own identity. Now we are organizing at the level of both campesino and indigenous, under the principle of mutual respect. The intellectuals, the students, the allies, are all surprised that we are more than they imagined.

When you raised demands for self-governance and autonomy, did you encounter any type of resistance to these ideas?

-There are still many problems with the process we are undertaking. With the appearance of the EZLN, we need to accelerate this process even more. At the same time, there are problems with Protestant sects in the communities; with caciques who impose their way of life on our communities. These are the problems and difficulties that are present in the Indigenous communities.

Do most of these sects negate indigenous peoples' rights to self-governance?

-Yes, the Catholic Church has taken on a new understanding with the indigenous communities and has proposed that we be recognized by the Constitution. On the other hand, although they have not openly stated it, the other religions are, in practice, trying to totally exterminate us as peoples.

Have the Maya preserved their spirituality, or has it become mixed with Catholicism?

-There is a mix, but the Maya religion is present. Our elders tell us that our great ruler the Sun is one of the great gods on this earth, and that our mother is the earth, that is how we understand everything. The Mayan calendar is also known a little but is no longer used in the Mayan religion...

Land and Rebellion

What percentage of indigenous people have land in Chiapas. Do they have enough?

-It's difficult in concrete terms to give you a number of people that have land and those that don't. Approximately 60% have land, and the other 40% are still peons working for landowners.

Do they have enough land to live on?

-Those who have been awarded land [in agrarian reforms] have an average of five hectares per person. These lands however are in the mountains and of poor quality, while the bottom lands are held by landlords...

How have the landlords displaced the Indigenous people from their lands? Was it before or after the revolution in Chiapas?

-Here in Chiapas we have been organizing the revolution since independent organizations like ours started in 1979, that dates back 20-30 years. At that time, indigenous people began to recover the lands that were ours. We began what the government calls "land invasions", but we were only recovering lands which were ours. The years 1979 and 1980, until 1985 were some of the most difficult for us, because the government displaced us from our lands. They disappeared people; killed our leaders, in short, the government carried out much repression against the communities, because we had begun to recover lands which were taken from us by the landlords. This primarily occurred in the North, cases such as those of Simojovel, Huichipán, Bochil and Nuevo Pueblo.

When did the aggression against the Mayan people begin, isn't new is it?

-Definitely not, we have been suppressed in a thousand ways. We have been brutally repressed, like any animal, for many years. Some periods were

especially acute due to the policies applied by the governors of Chiapas.

In regard to the January first uprising, did it surprise you?

-There were some signs, but I believe that the Zapatistas knew how to prepare this movement very discretely, because they didn't give much information, they didn't give concrete numbers. In our organization we have said that we don't accept, at this time, the armed struggle. Nonetheless many of our brothers felt that there was no other way, that the anger had become too great, that is why the Zapatista army appeared.

The Zapatista communications do not talk much about indigenous rights. As indigenous people, what points do you have in common with the Zapatistas?

-We believe that the advances made by the Zapatistas are part of the proposal. We are completing the proposal's political and ideological parts for new restructuring of territories and the national political structure.

Do you think that the Zapatistas will accept this?

-I think they will. They are making demands for these proposals seriously and will make them part of their program.

Is the change to Article 27, eliminating community property, negative for indigenous people?

-It is completely negative. In the end it is the weapon that will destroy our people; because it is a way of dividing us into pieces, families or individuals, because the lands will be privatized. In the ejidos everyone will have their parcel, with title to their property, and the collective life of the community will be destroyed.

Have you considered the problems that have been created in the communities as a result of the clashes between the

Zapatistas and the military?

-Many times these problems are natural because many communities are governed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous caciques who accuse people of being Zapatistas even if they aren't. The municipal presidents, and the caciques have taken advantage of the moment to try and exterminate our companions in the communities that are forging a new path for national democracy.

Larger Contacts

Do you have contact as an indigenous organization at the national and international levels?

-We have CIOAC at the national level, and at the international level we are participating in events held by the international Indian movement, particularly CONIC.

Do you feel that indigenous continental unity is important?

-Definitely, the indigenous international network is part of the struggle. It is our support and protection. That is the case with this war in Chiapas. These movements are necessary. ♡



Chronology of Events Since the January 1 Uprising

January 1, 1994. The Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) forced its way into Mexico's political and military arena, and focused not just Mexico's, but much of the world's attention on the southern state of Chiapas.

In the early hours of the morning of December 31, the EZLN divided its army into five columns and in a coordinated action took control of all major towns in Chiapas with the exception of the state capital Tuxtla Gutierrez. The EZLN stormed a jail in Altamirano and liberated 160 prisoners, most of whom were Indians accused of illegal land takeovers, cutting trees without permits and other such crimes by local authorities--known regionally as caciques. From a captured radio station in Ocosingo, the EZLN denounced the conflict was caused by governmental repression, corruption and Indigenous peoples' miserable living conditions. From the balcony of the municipal building in San Cristobal de las Casas the Zapatistas read their now famous declaration of war.

January 2. The EZLN retreated from San Cristobal--the second largest city in Chiapas. They also overran a major military base in the state and carried off tons of explosives and ammunition. The administration of Carlos Salinas de Gortari denounced the Zapatistas as foreigners and outlaws.

January 3. The Mexican army counterattacked by land and air. Eight thousand soldiers were deployed in the first few days while the air force bombed presumed Zapatista positions, several Indigenous villages, and even a group of Tzeltal girls and a press vehicle.

January 4. The EZLN abandoned the highland towns, retreating to bases in the Lacandon forest. SAIIC received a call from Indigenous activists in San Cristobal with the news that the air force was bombing Indian communities, as well as kidnapping and killing civilians accused of supporting the Zapatistas. The SAIIC office launched a campaign to denounce these human rights violations and apply pressure on the Mexican regime. Human rights organizations all over the world began efforts to halt the repression.

The Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Nations and Organizations of the Continent (CONIC) through the coordinating office in Panama broadcast these events throughout the continent and decided to send delegates to Chiapas in solidarity with the Indian population.

January 6. The military sealed off the town of San Cristobal de las Casas and all the other zones of conflict, preventing movement of journalists, human rights monitors and local civilians alike.

January 8. Reacting to international outcry against the army repression in Chiapas, President Salinas proposed a cease fire, peace negotiations and a (conditional) general amnesty for those involved in the conflict. The EZLN remained in control of a swath of territory

encompassing the fringe of the highlands and much of the Lacandon forest.

January 13. The government and EZLN agreed to a cease-fire. Following the cease fire, the government's death toll counted 35 soldiers and 75 Zapatistas. Independent sources put the number at well over 200. Over 20,000 people mostly Tojolabal and Tzeltal Indians have also fled their villages and are living in makeshift refugee camps in San Cristobal and other towns.

January 11-14. Indian and campesino organizations in Chiapas carried out an unprecedented mobilization in San Cristobal. Five hundred and twenty delegates from 280 Indigenous and campesino organizations in the state of Chiapas met to propose resolutions to the conflict. The delegates called for an end to human rights abuses, a total cease fire, recognition of the EZLN as a belligerent party and negotiations to resolve the conflict. They then voted to form a State Council of Indigenous and Campesino Organizations of Chiapas (CEOIC).

January 16-22. The State Council met for the first time to try and further develop their proposals for Chiapas. CONIC delegates from North, South and Central America participated as invited observers in this meeting.

January 21. Mexican government negotiator Manuel Camacho Solis acknowledged that "we must ask forgiveness from indigenous groups and communities for all the suffering they have undergone"--a statement indicating reversal of the Mexican government's earlier denunciation of the Zapatistas as outlaws.

January 25. President Salinas met with 42 representatives of CEOIC in the capital city of Tuxtla Gutierrez. He was met with fiery speeches demanding a definitive end to the repression, and a just solution to the conflict.

February 6-8. Indian and campesino organizations seized four town halls and held protests in at least a dozen other communities to demand the removal of corrupt local (PRI) authorities.

February 21. With Bishop Samuel Ruiz acting as mediator the, EZLN and Mexican government, represented by ex-mayor of Mexico City Manuel Camacho Solis, began negotiations in the Cathedral of San Cristobal.

March 3. The government and EZLN announced an end to the first round of talks. The government announced its peace proposal which the EZLN promised to present to their base communities for a final decision.

(Continued on page 42)

Democracy, an End to Discrimination and Regional Development:

THE ZAPATISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY PROPOSALS

The extent to which the Zapatista army has been able to communicate its positions and observations to the national and international press is unprecedented in the recent history of Latin American armed uprisings. On June 10, in a rejection of the government's peace proposal the EZLN issued a "Second Lacandon Declaration" (the first being the January 1 declaration of war). In addition to reiterating old demands for national democracy, the EZLN proposed a new constitutional convention.

"...We address our brothers and sisters in different non-governmental organizations, in peasant and indigenous organizations, workers in the cities and in the countryside, teachers and students, housewives and squatters, artists and intellectuals, members of independent political parties, Mexicans. We call you all to a national dialogue with the theme of democracy, freedom and justice. For this reason, we put forward the following invitation to a National Democratic Convention...we call for a sovereign and revolutionary National Democratic Convention to create a transition government and a new national law, a new constitution that will guarantee the legal fulfillment of the people's will.

This sovereign revolutionary convention will be national in that all states of the federation will be represented. It will be plural in the sense that all patriotic sectors will be represented. It will be democratic in the way in which it will make decisions by na-

tional consultations. The convention will be presided over, freely and voluntarily by civilians, prestigious public figures, regardless of their political affiliation, race, religion, sex or age. The convention will be launched by local, state and regional committees in every ejido, settlement, school and factory. These committees will be charged with collecting the people's proposals for the new constitution and demands to be carried out by a new government following the convention.

The convention should demand free and democratic elections and should fight for the people's will to be respected. The EZLN will recognize the National Democratic Convention as the authentic representative of the interests of the Mexican people in their transition to democracy. The EZLN is now to be found throughout the national territory and is in a position to offer itself to the Mexican people as an army to guarantee that the people's will is carried out. For the first meeting of the National Democratic Convention, the EZLN offers as a meeting-place a Zapatista settlement with all of the resources to be found there..."

Apart from the fairly general comunero EZLN stated its positions most specifically in their now famous 34 point peace proposal last March. This proposal included demands for national democracy, regional economic development and in general, the abolition of discriminatory attitudes, policies and government repression. The following is a list of central demands in each of these categories.

Political Change

1. We demand free and democratic elections with equal rights and obligations for all political organizations contending for power, true liberty to choose one or another proposal and respect for the majority's will. Democracy is a fundamental right of all Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Without democracy there can be no liberty, justice or dignity and without dignity there is nothing.
2. To ensure free and truly democratic elections it is necessary for the Federal Executive and occupants of state offices who reached their positions of power through electoral fraud to resign. Their titles do not come from majority consensus but rather are the result of usurpation. Consequently, it will be necessary for a transitional government to be formed.
3. The recognition of the EZLN as a belligerent force.
4. A new pact between federation members to do away with centralization and allow regions, indigenous communities and municipalities to govern themselves with political, economic and cultural autonomy.
5. General elections in the state of Chiapas and the legal recognition of all the state's political forces.

Regional Development

6. It is of the utmost importance that all Chiapan communities receive

Photo: SAHIC



Members of the EZLN general command at press conference in San Cristobal de las Casas

electricity and that a certain percentage of the taxes earned from the commercialization of Chiapan petroleum be applied to industrial, agricultural, commercial and social infrastructure projects for the benefit of all *Chiapanecos*.

7. The revision of the North American Free Trade Agreement signed with the United States and Canada. In its present form it does not take into account the indigenous population. Furthermore, it represents a death sentence because it does not include any labor qualifications whatsoever.
8. Article 27 of the Magna Carta should respect the original spirit of Emiliano Zapata: land is for the indigenous people and peasants who work it, not for *latifundistas* (large landowners).
9. We demand that the government build hospitals in the capitals of all municipalities which are equipped with specialized doctors and sufficient medicine to attend to all patients and rural clinics in smaller communities with training and fair salaries for health representatives.
10. That indigenous people be guaranteed the right to information on local, regional, state, national and international levels through an in-

dependent radio station that is directed and operated by indigenous people.

11. We demand that housing be built in all rural communities in Mexico, and provided with necessary services such as: light, running water, roads, sewage systems, telephones, public transportation, etc. And also that we be granted the benefits of the city such as televisions, stoves, refrigerators, washing machines, etc.
 12. We demand an end to illiteracy in indigenous communities. For this we need better elementary and secondary schools in our communities which provide free materials and have teachers with university degrees who are at the service of the people and not just defending the wealthy.
- In addition, the proposal calls for jobs with fair salaries for all, cancellation of high-interest debts held by the poor, an end to hunger and government supported cooperatives stores in each community, and access to free markets without intermediaries. This "Indigenous Women's Petition" was also included:

We, Indigenous peasant women, demand the immediate solution to our urgent needs which have long been ignored by the government:

- a) Childbirth clinics with gynecologists;
- b) Child-care facilities in all communities;
- c) Sufficient food for all children in rural communities including: milk, corn flour, rice, corn, soy, oil, beans, cheese, eggs, sugar, soup, oats etc;
- d) Fully-equipped popular kitchens for children in the communities;
- e) Community grinding mills and tortilla presses depending on the number of families in each community;
- f) Poultry, rabbit, sheep and pig farms;
- g) We demand projects for baked goods;
- h) Artisan workshops well equipped with machinery and primary materials;
- i) Markets in which to sell our crafts at fair prices;
- j) Technical training schools for women;
- k) Preschools and maternal schools;
- l) Adequate means of transportation.

Discrimination and Repression

The proposal also called for an end to discrimination of all kinds, respect for dignity of Indigenous cultures and languages, and bilingual education in the schools. Finally, the EZLN demanded that federal security forces be barred from entering their communities, reform of the state penal code to permit free political expression, release of political and poor prisoners "who are being held unjustly in Mexican jails", and an end to expulsions of dissidents from Indigenous communities. Importantly, they also called for "political trials" for former state officials Patrocino Gonzalez Blanco Garrido, Absalon Castellanos Dominguez and Elmar Setzer M.--all accused of abuse of power, corruption and more serious crimes such as murder while in office. The EZLN proposal states that all accords should be enforced by a National Commission for Peace with Justice and Dignity. 🐦

Chiapas *as seen from* Temuco:

Interview with Aucán Huilcaman Consejo de Todas Las Tierras in Chile.



In the City of Temuco in the heart of Mapuche ancestral territory, the Consejo de Todas las Tierras (All Lands Council) meets once a year. Their international Werken (messenger), Aucán Huilcaman is charged with making known the denunciations, agreements and projects from the Mapuche Tribunal. He is also responsible for relations with other Indigenous peoples of the continent.

He is 27 years old and in his fourth year of law school at the Autonomous University of Temuco, he was also a congressional candidate in last December's elections, but didn't achieve a seat in the House. In the following interview he spoke regarding the situation in Chiapas, of the Mapuche in Chile, and the continental Indian movement.

by Ximena Ortuzar*

How do the Mapuche evaluate what happened in Chiapas this past January?

-There are various points related to this action. Personally, and in general, I celebrate the Zapatista's courage, decisiveness and organizational capacity which permitted them to prepare their uprising without being detected by the Mexican intelligence apparatus. That is remarkable. In addition, the Mapuche support all Indigenous peoples' struggles in defense of their legitimate rights. I observe though, a huge split between the discourse and ideology of the continental Indigenous movement and what the Zapatistas are proposing. In one of their points, they demand, "More land for the Indigenous people." This is good, but insufficient. Even if they give more lands, these will continue to be just fragments of the larger landscape. The fundamental Indigenous problem in all of America is that of territory. When the state distributes parcels of land, they remain under its sovereignty. The central demand

should be territory, where Indigenous rights have clear legitimacy. You cannot attack the real problems of the Indigenous people of the continent if you do not approach this issue.

Land and Territory

What is the conceptual difference between land and territory?

-Land is an individual concept relating a person to a specific place-person-property, whereas the concept of territory is collective and refers to a group of people with a portion of collective land. For the Indigenous people, the concept of territory holds elements of identity, of culture of a form of organization. I can give you an example: with us, the Mapuche, many of the trees that surround us have names like the names of our children. And when the huinca --white person cuts the trees, clearing the native forest, we feel that our identity has been cut off. Territory is connected in a substantial

manner with being human, and with our own nature. Our conception is that the territory is a physical space where the Mapuche people should have control, planning power and autonomy to exercise free self-determination.

I understand that one of the Mapuche's principal struggles in these moments is precisely for territory.

-That's right. That has meant charges against us for "illicit association", and "failure before the law, morality and good customs" which affects 144 of us. We could go to jail, but this will not stop our decision to recover what belongs to us.

And you miss this conceptual element in the Zapatista proposal.

-From what I know, yes. I see also that they ask for Salinas de Gortari to resign. I believe that he could resign and that wouldn't solve the problem for Indigenous people in Mexico. In my opinion, this is a weakness in the proposal, because the basic question is



not of changing the president but of changing the nature of the State, in order to achieve transformation that restrains the State's absolute dominion over the Indigenous people which is exercised against their will. In the Zapatista proclamations I don't see a questioning of the structure of the State. Another point that seems curious to me is that the highest visible leader is a "sub-commander" ...When we meet in our Tribunal there is no president, or secretary or treasurer of the Mapuche community, rather we have a Lonko, Machi--original authorities. These positions bring together the institutional structure and the juridic concept of the community.

And you find this important...

-Definitely, yes. It is not a question of form. While you don't reinstate your own forms of organization as a weapon to oppose the forms of ideological domination that the State imposes, you are fighting with your oppressor's weapons and they are not ours by nature.

How would you explain this situation in the case of Chiapas?

-As a certain amount of mental colonization. No one can fail to recognize the effort, the courage and the decisiveness of the Zapatistas that rose up in Chiapas. But I reiterate that in my judgement the proposal that we know

has holes in the area of Indigenous rights. They propose the need for justice which is impossible while the rights of Indigenous people in Chiapas to decide their own future is not reinstated. And this happens by reinstating territory and changing the structure of the State. I also see that they



Aucan Huilcaman addressing the UN World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna during June, 1993

propose the need for an agrarian reform law which is a concept distorted from the essence of an indigenous community. In Chile there was an agrarian reform and we don't question the amount of lands that were returned to

the Indigenous people, but rather the form in which this was implemented. If we travel through the province of Arauco we encounter barely five Mapuche communities. The rest are villages close to cities. They applied colonial thinking. Historically, the Council of the Indies--which was an organization designed to organize the Indians according to the dominant concepts--it recognized the Indigenous people's right to organize in municipalities and gave them a structure for this. With the agrarian reform, the Mapuche were obligated to live in villas on lands awarded in a determined place, making this a population center that breaks with the concept of individual-land that represents a human collectivity. In this aspect, I see in the Zapatistas a conceptual weakness.

What do you attribute this to?

-I don't exactly know. I believe that the Indigenous peoples in Mexico have sufficient institutional structure and they should have employed this in Chiapas. I am certain that the Mapuche would never have a sub-commander in a similar situation. We could have a Toqui, an original authority, but never a copy, an assimilation. I want to clarify that I don't intend to take away from what the Zapatistas have done, but it's my duty to say that I detect a certain strange influence on the Indigenous people in these circumstances.

What is the basis for your statement?

-For the last six years, we have met periodically with Indigenous leaders of Mexico, I know all of them. The last time, I was in Oaxaca last October. They assume that they are ethnic groups and don't vindicate their existence as peoples or nations. Ideological domination has entered into their minds and language. In Mexico, the Indian walks in the streets like a dominated being, despite being part of the majority, biologically speaking. They are not conscious of who they are. This is

explained by the fact that Mexico's government has implemented the most policies of assimilation against Indigenous people. Already in 1942 in the government of Lazaro Cardenas it was said, "We have to Mexicanize the Indians, and not to Indianize Mexico." And they worked on the Indians with that purpose.

Maybe the roots of the problem lie in the Conquest...

-Without doubt, the Spanish crown had a strong influence on the Indigenous people that inhabited the territory that is now the State of Mexico. Today they are disarticulated, they cannot decipher their own writing, and this blocks their ability to reach, once again, their own scientific explanation of life.. The Indigenous trunk was cut and they are still in the process of reassembling themselves. While this process is incomplete, the consciousness, the commitment of being Indigenous will continue to fail, despite being the majority.

Self-understanding as a person

What does it mean to be committed to being an Indigenous person?

-It is not a specific commitment or political belief but rather a way of understanding yourself as a person. A good example of this is that in Mexico, there have been two Indian presidents: Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz who governed for many years. Nevertheless, this did not mean any advantage for the Indians of Mexico.

To be Indian in biological or racial terms doesn't mean anything if the kind of commitment I was speaking about doesn't exist.

In the meeting with Indigenous leaders of Mexico which you alluded to, did you raise these observations?

-All of them.

With what response?

-Our concepts are very well received, but there has been unevenness in the level of who deals with the subject that stops at the level of leaders. Furthermore, the communities of Mexico have been very controlled. If one visits an Indigenous community, you find that it has a plaza, it has its musical bands that is, everything is organized as the Council of the Indies would have it. The Romano-Spanish concept of organization is palpable in the community's structures, which seem more like those of a city. I'm speaking of an ideological concept, applied through external structures, and contradictions arise such that Indians end up being Mexicans.

And this doesn't occur with the Mapuches?

-I would say it occurs less. I will give you an example: we hear and we read about Emiliano Zapata. If we don't have prior knowledge we don't know that he was Indigenous, because as happens with Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz, despite being Indians, they have Spanish names. We have struggled to conserve our Mapuche names and we have accomplished that with very few exceptions. The great majority of the Mapuche conserve their original last names, and for us, that constitutes an important element of our identity. Meanwhile in Mexico many times, Indians only recognize themselves inside themselves--and many times, not even there. Here, our last name identifies us as Mapuches, and in consequence, not as Chileans.

Chiapas a Landmark

To finish the fourth annual session of the Mapuche Tribunal, Huilcamán gave a speech in Temuco. In finishing he said, "To the brothers in Chiapas, forward with the struggle for land and liberty."

Will Chiapas set an important precedent in the Indigenous struggle?

-Without doubt. But it's important not to let out of our sight that this precedent and its lessons are important for both parties: Indigenous peoples and States. An example of this is that the first constitutional and juridic recognitions of Indigenous people arose in Nicaragua during the Sandinista Revolution when the Indigenous people rebelled against the Sandinista government and began the armed struggle which was erroneously called counter-revolutionary. The government decided to recognize them, and it happened that other States took similar measures. These were re-accommodations, small legal rectifications... Legally functional for the States, but not for the Indigenous people...

Things change so that everything remains the same?

-Exactly. The State makes legal modifications in order to insure the maintenance of its institutional domination.

Is there a message you would like to convey?

-Indigenous movements are the ones which will give a new face to America in terms of justice, democracy, and liberty--which today are only a dream for us. Thus, its fundamental that every political and social movement in America takes into account this element which will define relations State-people and Indigenous nation. Because today, it is not Marxism that puts the State at risk, but the Indigenous-original organizations. The State knows this, and takes its precautions. Every social and or political organization that fights for human rights must know that the indigenous people should prevail and contribute to the construction of a true institutionality with our own character and based on our own particularities. 🐦

*Reprinted in part from *Proceso*, Mexico, April 11, 1994.

What is the Significance of the Chiapas Uprising for the Continental Indigenous Movement?



AMALIA DIXON, Miskito ,Yapti Tasba, Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua

First, to be sincere, on the Atlantic Coast we are very isolated from all international news, and even local news hardly makes it to the interior. In Puerto Cabeza we only have one radio station. We have heard very little information on the situation in Chiapas. But as Indigenous people we understand that this situation is part of the Indigenous reality. The people of Chiapas had been suppressed by the ideas of others, and it was too much. We as a people say enough. We are a people with many valuable experiences, and we want to participate in the decisions. It is also time that we make our situations known to the world, and stop living as devalued citizens within the national societies. Chiapas was one of these situations. From this perspective, we are clear in our solidarity with the people's struggle in Chiapas.



ATENCIO LOPEZ, secretary, Kunas Unidos por Napguana

The struggle of Indigenous peoples... has always been obscured by non Indigenous political groups, especially by guerrilla movements that have swept it under their ideological class struggle. No colonizing ideology has served the liberation of Indigenous people. Christianity had to take root in Abya Yala by blood and fire, then the supposed "caudillos" kept Indigenous people as slaves in their haciendas while they proclaimed themselves "liberators of America". Then liberalism, and now neo-liberalism continues by profiting from our misery, selling lands to transnational corporations and landlords.

That is why for us the armed uprising of our brothers in Chiapas was not a surprise nor by chance. It was the explosion of repressed feelings, an explosion of a culture denied for more than five hundred years. Some nation, among the forty million voices, had to shatter the silence and move against capitalism and modernization which day by day confronts us with greater indifference.



JEANNETTE ARMSTRONG, Okanagan Nation, Director of the En'owkin International School of Writing in British Columbia Canada.

In my view the most significant issue arising is that the governments of Canada and the USA which so publicly espouse the principles of democracy worldwide, are in a partnership with a government which has a long history of perpetrating terrorism, armed oppression, and exploitation of peoples and natural resources. It is a government which has used and continues to use political and military violence as weapons of repression to maintain a system of elitism. A system which has and continues today to perpetuate racial-genocidal policies and practices against Indigenous peoples.

The North American Free Trade Agreement between the USA, Canada and Mexico can only heighten the necessity for stronger measures of control to protect the vested interest of the elite classes of all three countries. Perhaps most apparent is that, as long as the "conflict" is portrayed as a "domestic" crisis, then those two governments who are complicit in such serious human rights violations, can continue to maintain a pretence of innocence. The responsibility falls then on those who espouse true democratic principles, to expose the blood on the hands of these governments and the multinational corporations that they play hand maiden to.

After the Constitution: Indigenous Proposals for Territorial Demarcation in Colombia

The Colombian constitution granted all Indigenous territories legal status as "Territorial Entities" within the republic. The Indigenous movement's triumph during the constitutional convention is particularly important since it makes Colombia the first country to have recognized all Indigenous communities territorial rights, rather than selectively granting rights to certain peoples.

by Ana Cecilia Betancourt and Hernán Rodríguez

With 82 different ethnic groups living within its national boundaries, Colombia is second only to Brazil in terms of ethnic diversity in South America. As a result, we in Colombia have learned to respect differences, while working together to defend our ancient cultures, ancestral territories, and autonomy. This history explains, to a certain extent, why the Organization of Colombian Indigenous Nations (ONIC), and the Colombian Indigenous Authorities (AICO), representing 40 different local and regional organizations, were the only nonpartisan groups represented in the Constitutional Assembly of 1991.

Acting as spokespeople, Lorenzo Muelas of AICO, Francisco Rojas Birry of ONIC, and Alfonso Pena Chepe of the now demobilized armed indigenous movement, Manuel Quintín Lame, ensured that the Magna Carta protect the rights and aspirations of the various ethnic groups in Colombia, including the natives of San Andrés Archipelago, and African-American communities.

Ana Cecilia Betancourt and Hernán Rodríguez are members of ONIC's press department.

Although the Constitution has established legal norms for establishing territories, pressure to speed up the secondary legislative procedures has led to continued exclusion of indigenous communities from the political process. Agreements reached at the Constitutional Assembly are thus being disregarded.

Constitutional History

The political constitution of 1991 defines Indigenous Lands under Article 286 as Territorial Entities with the same political and administrative jurisdiction as departments and municipalities. This permits indigenous communities autonomy to define their own development strategies and be governed by their own authorities who will have authority to administer public resources including local and national taxes. The Constitution left the actual distribution of territorial entities as well as definition of their responsibilities to a piece of follow-up legislation called the Organic Law for Territorial Demarcation. This law would also regulate the settlement of disputes between the National Government and the Territorial Entities.

Indigenous organizations published

their proposals for the Organic Law two years after the Constitution was ratified. This proposal was developed through consensus and focused on three general considerations:

- a) As products of the national constitution the indigenous territories shall not be subject to decisions made at the congressional level.
- b) Indigenous Territories will be those areas currently held by indigenous communities with boundaries defined by traditional social, economic, and cultural activities, regardless of whether the communities have received prior legal title.
- c) The Organic Law should be designed with a certain margin for change as the territories' actual boundaries are drawn by future legislation.

Delimiting Territories

As a result of 500 years of colonial domination and genocide, many communities have been fragmented, or severely reduced in size. To allow for the variation among communities, there should be no minimum size limitations either for populations or areas in establishing territories. Problems may, however, arise if many small territories

which do not unify communities within broad administrative regions are created. In particular, divisions between communities could increase.

Indigenous organizations have made a series of proposals addressing these issues. First, the establishment of territories should be based on at least one of two criterion:

- a) a geographic unit consisting of a continuous region in which communities conduct their social, economic, and cultural activities;
- b) an ethnic unit belonging to a cultural complex in which the majority of the population is indigenous, in a region that is not geographically continuous.

Secondly, the indigenous organizations suggest that territories link their administrative structures to those of the departments. Administrative decentralization should be enhanced when combined with links to governmental bodies, such as departments, capable of providing institutional support, without threatening their autonomy.

We propose the following steps when establishing a territory:

- a) Interdepartmental Territorial Entities should be formed;
- b) Negotiations to establish a direct relationship with one of the departments or the central government should begin after a period, not to exceed five years, in which new administrative structures are consolidated.
- c) Indigenous communities should begin the process of establishing territorial boundaries and administrative functions by submitting an application and a preliminary proposal.
- d) The proposal should be evaluated through an in-depth study carried out by an interdisciplinary task force including indigenous organizations.
- e) The information collected will be used to submit a formal proposal to the Territorial Regulatory Agency, according to Article 329 of the New Constitution.
- f) The final decision will be made by the national government and repre-

sentatives of the indigenous organizations, as outlined under the Constitution.

Government Response

The Colombian administration presented congress with a proposal for the new Organic Law for territorial demarcation in 1992. The proposition however, violated guidelines established under the New Constitution by failing to consider Indigenous organization's proposals. Additionally, it neglected many territorial entities. As a result, the administration was forced to retract its proposal. In September of 1993, the administration presented congress with a new proposal, but this one also failed to address the Indigenous proposal.

The Future of the Territories

In addition to the difficulties of reaching an agreement with the government on the proposed Organic Law, this law which should be organic (providing original and basic structure to legislation), is not. Instead, the government proposed instead a step by step process. A series of legislation which would shape the territories functions has already been approved or is being considered. A law defining distribution of responsibilities and resources in relation to the municipalities was approved in 1993. At the same time, the National Fees Fund, National Environmental System and projects

regulating the national planning system and Departmental regulation are all awaiting approval. All of these will define the role of the state's administrative structures differently. In this way, the government proposes that the territories Organic Law should conform to preexisting laws, when the opposite should occur.

We hope that the proposals made by the indigenous people will stimulate a more open debate and promote more democratic and representative forms of government. This new government should reflect the interests of its diverse population and permit the introduction of alternative models of development. Nonetheless, we have a long way to go before this becomes a reality. Indigenous organizations efforts to construct solid political structures will determine the future of our earlier achievements. ♡



No Life without Land

Interview with **Teofilo Lacayo**

Garifuna leader of the Honduran Northcoast organization Iseri Lidawamari (New Dawn).



Photo: Sarah England

Garifuna in the North coast region have carried out a constant struggle to recover confiscated lands

The Garifuna live in 46 coastal communities in Northern Honduras, an area shared by Pech and Misquito peoples as well as ladino colonists. They draw their history back to a mixing of Caribbean islanders and escaped West African slaves, both of whom were displaced through British colonization efforts. Iseri Lidawamari is affiliated with CAHDEA (the NGO working with all the different Indigenous groups in Honduras).

The Garifuna traditionally lived from fishing and cultivating yucca from

which they make ereba (cassava bread). Many Garifuna communities lost the majority of their productive lands after the construction of roads through their regions--most households in these communities depend on remittances from relatives in the US for survival. Communities near the Mosquito coast are now also facing the loss of their lands. The Honduran government is currently pushing for massive tourist development on the entire North Coast which would displace Garifuna cultivators and force them to take jobs as low-paid workers in the tourist industry. Iseri Lidawamari was founded in the community of Limon both to recover communal land claimed by ladino landlords and to increase Garifuna agricul-

tural production and encourage economic autonomy. They are also struggling to prevent the takeover of their beaches by a powerful Honduran investor who plans to build a tourist resort there.

What problems have the Garifuna experienced following the land invasions?

-Traditionally, the Garifuna lived in their communities and respected the limits of each others' lands. If a neighbor said, "from here to that coconut palm is mine", then no one else would enter where that man was working. They would say to the neighbor: "from there to there you can take". On the other hand, you can observe now that concrete and wire fences are being

Sarah England conducted this interview in April, 1994 as part of graduate research in anthropology at the University of California, Davis.

"The mother earth, within the philosophy of Iseri Lidawamari, should not be sold, it should remain so that the generations that follow us have the space to be able to develop themselves."

raised in this community. Those did not exist here before. Those belong to cultures copied from the city, copied from idiosyncrasies external to the Garifuna. Of course, now we are also affected by this problem because everybody is putting up concrete or wire fences. The same is happening in the countryside. Before, we didn't put up even one thread of wire. Now everyone has to put up wire because otherwise they will be encroached on.

We were confident in those years in de -facto land ownership, and not in legal rights, so we never demanded titles. Now it is the same situation. Now everyone who goes acquiring their piece of land also has the idea of putting up fencing because they know that without fencing it will be encroached on. Now also the people are procuring titles in order to prevent problems with the ladinos who are invading our community.

This invasion began in the 1970s. It was gradual, nevertheless, it has intensified because those who were already here announced in other regions that there were great expanses of land, and that they were empty. People have come exclusively to make money off the land. I know families who have come, marked great extensions of land and are now enriching themselves selling it.

The Garifuna today, seeing this situation are also concerned with acquiring large areas of land to keep for their children. In general we don't have the inclination to sell land. What one has,

one thinks of for one's children. Which is very different from the people who come from far way to take great extensions of land, and then at some time return to live in the cities. We don't think like that. Land is owned so that it can be worked and so that your children can work.

What is the major land problem that Limon is confronting?

-The problem that the community of Limon is confronting right now is that the former mayor shortsightedly sold 100 hectares of land, only a few kilometers from here in Farallones, for 4,000 lempiras to the largest capitalist in Honduras. This man (Miguel Facussi) is now building a tourist resort in Farallones. Not only is he building there, he's also enclosing the beach which has been free for passage. Near there we have the lagoon of Salado, and Farallones serves as an area of absorption for Salado. Once the forest of Farallones has been cut down, we run the risk that Salado will dry up, and this would be a serious problem because Salado gives us food; in the sense that we fish there, we get sea food, we trap some animals, and we also farm at Salado.

Are there laws in Honduras that protect the lands of ethnic groups?

-The past administration emitted an order in the national congress. This document covered the situation that was occurring in the municipalities of Limon, Tela, Trujillo, and in the com-

munity of Iriona, in which the congress asked that the region's mayors not sell the ethnic groups lands, and in the cases where there were already colonists in these areas, that the state itself ought to clean up the situation--that is recover the lands for the ethnic groups. But they have not done this yet. Possibly there has been a lack of pressure on them from the communities.

What is Iseri Lidawamari's philosophy is relation to the land?

-I don't doubt that there are people who have taken up this idea of marketing the earth. But in the case of Iseri Lidawamari it would be out of the question for our members to sell the lands. The mother earth, within the philosophy of Iseri Lidawamari, should not be sold, it should remain so that the generations that follow us have the space to be able to develop themselves.

The cooperative will be marketing products, but at the communal level. For us, the land's products should be marketed, not the land itself. These ideas that I'm telling you are the orientation of Iseri Lidawamari because while I live, there will never be one inch of land sold within this territory that we are recovering. I would be the first to condemn such an action because I am convinced that it would not benefit the people who are working for development. How will people live from the air? We know well that in any part of the world, if there is no land, there is no life. We need the earth for its ecology, for the wild animals, for everything. So, we should not sell the land. ♡

Suicide Before Eviction



photo: J.R. Ripper/ Imagens da terra

Guarani-Kaiowa family in Mato Grosso do Sul wait along a road crossing the land that was theirs

An entire community of Guarani-Kaiowa people in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, threaten to commit collective suicide if a Federal court's order to expel them from their ancestral lands is carried out. This May, Marta Vitor Guarani, president of the Kaguatoca Association for Displaced Indians travelled to the US to make the situation of her people known to the international community.

"How long will we have to wait for the Brazilian justice system to give us rights to our land?" questioned Marta Vitor Guarani at a press conference in San Francisco. Over 11,000 Indigenous people including Guarani-Kaiowa, Nandeva and M'bya have lost their lands in the state to invasions by ranchers supported by sympathetic courts and police forces. Indigenous lands in the state have halved over the last decade, now total-

ling less than 25,000 hectares. "It is always the ranchers who win in the courts, while Indians end up without any respect for our land rights. But Indians are like plants, how can we live without our soil, without our land," asked Vitor Guarani. She notes that landless Indians are left nothing but misery. "Over seven thousand Indians are working in the charcoal factories and in the sugar cane processing plants. They live in a state of slavery. This is

the integration that white society offers us. But we Indians, the first owners of this land, cannot accept this humiliating and inhuman integration."

Land Expulsions and Mass Suicide

The Guarani, Vitor says, "are the poorest people, the most abandoned people in Brazil." In their desperation, many, especially youths, have turned to suicide. Indian organizations claim

that approximately 300 people have committed suicide over the last ten years. The Brazilian government's own estimate puts the number at 111 between the years of 1986-1993. Marta's community, Poste Indígena Dorados, has seen the greatest concentration of Indigenous suicides in the country.

One-hundred and six Guarani-Kaiowa families from the community of Jaguapire in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul are threatening collective suicide if a Federal court's order to expel them from their lands is carried out. Marta states, "The area has already been demarcated and legalized, but with no guarantees, and this could be the fourth time, that the Indigenous people of Jaguapire are expelled, which would be very serious, because the mothers have decided that they will give poison to the children and later kill themselves [rather than be moved]." At the end of last year the community of Jaguapire sent a letter to FUNAI (the Brazilian agency for Indian affairs) affirming that they had chosen to die rather than be evicted. A federal court postponed the community's eviction out of consideration for these circumstances, but the court's final decision is still pending.

In 1992, the community's 2,089 hectare area was declared a permanent Guarani-Kaiowa possession by the Brazilian minister of justice. It's demarcation was confirmed by the President of the Republic. Nonetheless, under Brazil's peculiar system for titling land to Indian communities, anyone else wishing to present counter claims is given a lengthy period and multiple opportunities to do so. Legal challenges filed at any time in the process can be pursued for many years, even after lands are demarcated and ratified as Indigenous possessions.

In Jaguapire and elsewhere, this has meant Indian loss of previously demarcated lands. Indigenous communities must prove with physical evidence that they have the longest record of inhabitation for contested lands. In the case of Jaguapire, evidence shows that the Guarani-Kaiowa have been burying

their dead on these lands for at least 90 years, while the rancher claiming the lands arrived only ten years ago. In many cases however, evidence is more difficult to find. Journalist Ripper notes, "ranchers are accustomed to run their tractors over the cemeteries to obliterate any sign that there were Indian people there."

Despite being the most populous Indigenous people in Brazil, the Guarani now subsist on the smallest pieces of Indian land in the country, and are submitted to the most brutal social and economic conditions. The giant region of forest and savannah once used by the Guarani for hunting, fishing and agriculture has been subdivided and reduced to degraded pasture by wealthy landowners, often with the help of State subsidies. Land ownership in Mato Grosso do Sul is arguably the most concentrated on earth, with 1% of the population owning 70% of all lands.

The Guarani are divided into three groups: the Nandeva, Kaiowá and

M'bya, and live throughout Southern Brazil from the state of Espírito Santo to Rio Grande do Sul. However, the vast majority live in Mato Grosso do Sul. Pressures on the Guarani lands have intensified as their territories lie within the area of the government's Paraná-Paraguay project which has caused real estate speculation in the region.

Although the case of Jaguapire is one of the most serious, eleven other Guarani communities have also been evicted or are threatened with eviction, and await court decisions as to their fate. In the community of Limon Verde, Marta points out, "people are living under tents without the conditions necessary to live while they await the judge's decision. More than 200 families are there, and they are going through a lot of misery. We can see in their faces since we are Guarani people that they are very sad, extremely sad."

According to the Brazilian Indianist Missionary Council (CIMI) another Guarani-Kaiowa community living in



Marta Vitor Guarani and a companion mourn at her community's cemetery for youths who have killed themselves

photo: J.R. Ripper/ Imagens da terra

central western Mato Grosso do Sul has reoccupied their lands in the previously demarcated 2,745 acre Takuaryty/Ivykuarusu Indian Area. They have been evicted six times from this territory. About 300 Guarani-Kaiowa burned a bridge providing road access to the contested area. Ranchers accuse them of burning a house and school as well, however CIMI notes these were burned by a non-Indian settler in an attempt to provoke military action against the Indians. Military police have occupied the area, although claiming neutrality in the conflict, they have nearly always acted against Indigenous people.

Resistance and Repression

The Kaguatoca Association for Displaced Indians unites all Indigenous groups in the state to reclaim lands of the dispossessed and prevent further evictions. Eleven thousand Indigenous people are displaced in Mato Grosso do Sul, 9,000 of these are Guarani, while the rest belong to other smaller peoples. A great problem facing those who would return to their lands, is the gap between planting and harvest times, since they are starting with no reserves. Kaguatoca is soliciting food support for these communities to help them live until the first harvest. Currently three different communities with a total of 220 people are preparing to reoccupy lands they were previously forced to abandon.

Marta founded the Kaguatoca association for displaced Indians following the assassination of her uncle Marcal Tupa y de Souza in 1983, a highly respected Indigenous leader known as the "poet with lips of honey" for his power with language. This was one of the many hundreds of Indigenous leaders assassinated for resisting land invasions. According to Vitor, "In Brazil, the murder of Indians doesn't shock anymore, not the politicians, nor the government, nor the civilian population." Although several assassinations have been investigated, not one resulted in the killer's conviction until last year when the assassin of Marcal

was finally sentenced. Shortly thereafter, local authorities allowed him to flee the region.

The Guarani fiercely resisted invasion of their lands until being overwhelmed in the early part of this century. Now, new pressures make resistance even more difficult. "For the Guarani, the core of resistance is religion. But today, there are many protestant churches which come to our communities with the same discourse as the Jesuits who came during the "discovery" of Brazil. They are killing our religion, killing our culture. Without a cultural identity, our people wander the highways and the streets of the cities, drinking, begging, and being ridiculed by the white society," stated Vitor. Twenty-one Guarani-Kaiowa communities have formed the assembly called ANTIGUASU to discuss these problems, especially that of land. Vitor explains, "If one community is already legalized, they help the other who are still in land conflicts." This organization will participate later this month in formation of a Statewide assembly to represent all Indigenous peoples of Mato Grosso do Sul, with the hope that the larger coalition will be able to more effectively pressure for land rights.

Positive Signs

In a landmark decision, the Supreme Federal Court in San Paulo recently dismissed a local court decision in favor of the ranching company Sattin S/A to relocate the Guarani community of Sete Cerros. Additionally, the Court granted a petition by the Nucleus for Indigenous Rights to prohibit one judge in Mato Grosso do Sul from hearing cases involving the Guarani, since every one of his decisions have favored ranching interests and resulted in evictions of thousands of Indians.

Vitor Guarani also notes "It seems that there will be hope for the Guarani if "Lula" is elected to the presidency, that there will be justice and recognition of Indian lands." Current opinion polls show Workers' Party candidate Luis Ignacio "Lula" da Silva with a strong national lead over his nearest

contender. At the end of last April, Lula met with Indigenous leaders representing 24 organizations and 36 Indian peoples from all over Brazil. At this meeting, he confirmed his opposition to anti-Indian constitutional "reforms", and promised that claims of Indigenous organizations would be met.

International Support Needed Now

Vitor Guarani stresses that international support for Jagaupire is needed now. "I am here to make this denunciation in the name of our people. I already made this denunciation in the US Congress, in the UN, and in the other spaces that are open to us. I hope that all of American society gives us support in this by sending letters to Judge Pedro Rotta in San Paulo, who is the judge who will decide, and by pressuring the Brazilian government so that they don't violate our constitutional rights. Between the 5 of October and last month they were to have demarcated all Indian lands, but this has not happened. ♡

In addition to Marta Vitor Guarani and Joao Ripper, information was provided by the Nucleus for Indigenous Rights, CIMI, and Rainforest Action Network.

Your letters are extremely important for the Guarani-Kaiowa. Please write judge Pedro Rotta asking that Guarani land rights be respected.

Exmo. Sr. DR. PEDRO ROTTA
Tribunal Regional Federal da 3ª Região
Rua Libero Badaro, n 30- Centro
01009-000 Sao Paulo, SP Brazil
fax: (5511) 35-3994 or 0496

Please send copies to:

Exmo. Sr.
DR. Jean Marcos Ferreira
Juiz Federal da 1ª Vara do Mato Grosso do Sul
Rua Quatorze de Julho, n 356
79004-392 Campo Grande, MS.
Brazil

Closing the Darien Gap?

The Pan-American Highway's last Link

by Alicia Korten



Delegates from throughout the Embera-Wounan territory travelled by river to a meeting regarding construction of the Pan-American highway

"We do not want the Pan-American Highway built through our homelands", states Leopoldo Baporiso, chief of the 13,400 Embera-Wounaan peoples of Panama's easternmost province, the Darien. He states that the highways will cause, "massive deforestation, immigration by outsiders, an increase in drug traffickers, violence and the loss of our culture". In October of 1993, the Panamanian and Colombian governments signed agreements to begin studies that they hope will lead to the connection of North and South America through the Darien Gap. If this 107 kilometer stretch is built, the highway will run without a break between Alaska and Argentina's southern tip.

The Darien Gap is one of the world's most biologically rich rainforests and a critical corridor between North and South American ecosystems for plant and wildlife. The area is home to roughly 40,000 inhabitants, including

Alicia Korten is the associate director of the Center for Popular Legal Assistance's Indigenous Program (CEALP) in Panama. She works with the Indigenous Pan-American Highway Commission.

five distinct Indigenous nations, African-Americans, and mestizo colonists. UNESCO declared the Darien National Park, the largest in Central America, a World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve in 1981 and 1983 respectively because of its cultural and biological diversity.

The Colombian and Panamanian governments are exploring three different routes—one along the Pacific Coast, one along the Atlantic Coast, and one through the isthmus's middle which would pass through the border community Palo de Letras. The Palo de Letras route is the shortest, least costly and most favored. All routes pass through Embera, Wounaan and Kuna territories. The Palo de Letras route cuts through the Indigenous communities Pucuro, Paya, Cupé, Aruza and others as well as through the Darien National Park and the Katios Park in Colombia—both of which have regulations permitting the highway's construction.

Pressure to build the road comes primarily from South American governments and industries who want greater access to North American markets. Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela

are promoting the highway's construction most aggressively due to a recently signed free trade agreement. "The highway ... will facilitate trade of petroleum, cotton, cloth, iron, steel, and other goods between Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela," states Juan Castanega, Colombia's Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Latin American Desk.

Extending the Pan-American highway is part of the Colombian government's aggressive development package for the region. The Pacific Plan is a complementary mega-project aimed at opening the region to multiple forms of resource exploitation (see *Abya Yala*, V. 7:3&4). The plan has gone through many revisions since its initial draft in 1983, which stated that "this extensive region contains immense forest, fishing, river-and sea-based mineral resources which the country requires immediately." The 1992 proposal however, begins with discussion of sustainable development and poverty alleviation and then continues with the previous goals of oil exploration, mining, large scale agriculture, commercial fishing and tourism. Together, these projects threaten the region with mas

sive change--change which local peoples feel will displace their communities and devastate the region's environment.

Indigenous peoples fear the highway would erode the forests on which their way of life depends by facilitating the area's colonization and development. In December of 1993, over 500 delegates from different Embera-Wounaan communities passed a resolution stating their "rejection of the Pan-American Highway's construction through Indigenous territories in Panama" because, "the construction of the Pan-American highway through our territories would cause irreparable damage to our forests, rivers, flora and farms upon which depend our brothers and sisters the animals and our river culture. The wounds caused by the recent construction of the Pan-American highway to Yavisa are still fresh. This construction caused the conversion of our territories into cow pastures and little by little the extinction of the biodiversity of our lands." Six indigenous organizations in the Darien Gap have formed a coalition called the Indigenous Pan-American Highway Commission (IPAHC) to gain a voice in upcoming negotiations. "We are demanding our legal rights to consultation regarding any plans the government has for our ancestral lands", states Clasmere Carpio, IPAHC's Coordinator.

Funding for the 107 kilometer link is not yet secured. However, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will loan Panama money to elaborate initial technical studies and environmental impact statements. The IDB will also provide Colombia \$1.5 million to renovate the Pan-American Highway segment Medellin-Turbo, an existing road that requires paving to support inter-continental traffic. The United States government will likely not provide funding but may support the project by providing technical assistance, according to State Department officials. Indigenous peoples are discouraging any outside funders from supporting the project. ♡



Resolution of the Indigenous Embera Wounaan and Kuna peoples of Panama at a national encounter to discuss extension of the Pan-American highway on May 8, 1994, in the community of Comun, Comarca Embera-Wounaan, Area of Cemaco.

Before the imminent threat against Indigenous culture, our congresses can not remain silent. We therefore resolve the following:

- First: Reject the Projects that the Panamanian and Colombian Governments are discussing within the Good Neighbor Commission to Open the Darien Gap by building the Pan-American Highway.
- Second: Demand the immediate suspension of studies being undertaken and that will be undertaken by the Panamanian and Colombian governments, to open the Darien Gap, which constitutes our Territories.
- Third: In the case that they continue to meet to discuss the opening of the Darien Gap, we demand the participation of Indigenous Nations under equal conditions, to realize studies and Development Plans at a National and International level, that may affect our territories.
- Fourth: Expand urgently the Indigenous Pan-American Highway Commission (Darien Gap), to include the following: a. A member and assistant of the General Congresses of the Embera-Wounaan and Kuna b. A member and assistant of Pucuro-Paya and the Oitcewd.
- Fifth: Demand that the Multilateral Financing Agencies such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank and others, suspend all credit for Studies and Projects in relation to the Opening of the Darien Gap and the participation of the Indigenous Nations in all Plans and Development Projects that will affect our territories.
- Sixth: Request the International Community and Solidarity Groups to demand that Financing Agencies and the Panamanian and Colombian Governments give real participation to the Indigenous Nations regarding plans for the region.

Cacique Leonidas Valdez. Kuna General Congress.
 Cacique Leopoldo Baporiso. Embera-Wounaan General Congress.
 Cacique Benjamin Garcia. Madugandi General Congress.
 Cacique Gilberto Ayala. Cacique of Paya.

For more information contact:
 Clasmere Carpio IPAHC Coordinator, Hector Huertas, Legal advisor
 Comision Indigena Carretera Pan-Americana/ Centro de Asistencia Legal Popular (CEALP)
 Apartado Postal 6-5866. El Dorado, Panama. Tel: (507) 23 53 51 Fax: (507) 64 65 29. or,
 Alicia Korten, Advisor, IPAHC /East 17th St., Apt. #5, New York, NY 10003 /Tel/ Fax:
 (212) 242-1901

Increased Oil Development Rejected in the Amazon

Indigenous people throughout the Amazon are increasingly discovering oil extraction to be one of the greatest threats to their land, health and culture. In Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, central governments are pushing increased oil and gas development as a solution to their economic problems.



photo courtesy of RAN

Maxus oil company constructs new pipeline into the forests of the Ecuadorian Oriente

ECUADOR:

Indigenous Federations Take Strong Stand Against Seventh Round of Oil Leasing

On January 24, Ecuador's president formally opened a new round of oil leases, which will open five million acres of the rainforest (an area the size of New Jersey) to international oil companies. Included in the lands affected are the territories of the Huaorani, Quichua, Cofán, Shuar and Ashuar peoples, the planned Sumaco and Galeras National Parks,

and vast areas of flooded forests and rainforest.

That same day, Ecuadorian Indigenous peoples and environmentalists responded with a peaceful takeover of the Ministry of Energy and Mines. As a result, Minister Francisco Acosta agreed to a meeting with the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador, CONAIE, opening the way

for discussions on the formation of a commission to design and implement oil monitoring policies.

In March, CONAIE and the Amazon regional Indigenous organization, CONFENAIE both issued strong statements notifying the Ecuadorian government and transnational oil companies that the Indigenous peoples in Ecuador would not allow the new round

"...the 150,000 Indigenous people who make up the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon cannot guarantee...that oil exploration or exploitation projects in our territories will be able to proceed."

of licensing to proceed.

In an open letter to the Ecuadorian president, Edmundo Vargas President of CONFENAIE declared, "The Ecuadorian government's lack of sensitivity regarding the position of the Indigenous peoples and environmentalists of the region; the lack of a serious natural resource management policy which addresses the present and future needs of our country and particularly those of the Indigenous nationalities of the region; the absence of adequate laws to control national and foreign companies; the carrying out of economic projects within Indigenous territories by the government and private companies without prior consultation; and the lack of indigenous participation in the decisions and benefits of these projects, clearly demonstrate that the conditions and guarantees necessary to extend the scope of petroleum activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon do not exist."

CONAIE supported this position adding, that they hold, "the Ecuadorian State and petroleum companies participating in the Seventh Oil Licensing Round responsible for the problems we have and for damages both to those people who have lived in the Amazon for thousands of years and to their environment."

Indigenous groups point out that the drilling areas up for relicensing are located in the headwaters of the Amazonian river system on the Eastern slope of the Andes. Therefore any spills and toxic dumping--which have been ubiquitous companions of previous oil activities in Ecuador--could potentially affect the entire Amazon region through its waterways.

Both organizations called for a fifteen year moratorium for the seventh

round of licensing, "during which time the country can evaluate the environmental and social impacts of oil development, and Ecuador can implant policies for oil development which include defense of the environment, respect for the ways of life of Indigenous peoples, and an integrated orientation of the country which will benefit all Ecuadorians."

Vargas stated, "The Directive Council of CONFENAIE, together with its member federations, has resolved that

the 150,000 Indigenous people who make up the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon cannot guarantee, neither to the Ecuadorian State, nor to national or foreign investors participating in the Seventh Oil Licensing Round, that oil exploration or exploitation projects in our territories will be able to proceed. ♡

Information supplied by CONAIE, CONFENAIE and the Rainforest Action Network."

Case against Texaco may be heard in New York Courts

In April, Federal Judge Vincent L. Broderick ruled that if Indigenous people and others suing Texaco for irresponsibly discarding hazardous waste in the Ecuadorian rainforest can prove that decisions regarding these operations were made at Texaco headquarters in New York, then it would be appropriate for the case to be heard by the US federal court in New York. The case was brought by Siona, Secoya, Cofán, and Quichua peoples and mestizo colonists who live in the zone affected by Texaco's operations.

Texaco's lawyers have asked the judge to reconsider. If the case proceeds in New York court, it will set an important precedent regarding rights of foreigners to bring US based multinationals to trial within the US.

Pastaza Organizations negotiate with ARCO

Under pressure from the Organi-

zation of Indigenous People of Pastaza (OPIP) and support organizations, the transnational oil company ARCO agreed to negotiate their plans for oil exploration in the province of Pastaza in Ecuador's Oriente. OPIP met with ARCO on June 9. A second meeting should be occurring in Ecuador as this magazine goes to press. ARCO officially states that it has not yet made the decision to pursue exploration in the Oriente's "Block 10", it has nevertheless, reached several preliminary agreements with OPIP. OPIP and ARCO agreed to establish a technical commission which will include three representatives from ARCO and from Petroecuador and six from Indigenous organizations in the region. This commission will establish the guidelines for an Evaluation of Environmental Impact for the Exploratory Period, as well as select which company will complete the study.

PERU:

Oil Development brings Death and Devastation to the Marañón

On April 14, UPI in Lima, Peru reported that the country's trans-Amazon pipeline had ruptured two weeks earlier, spilling crude from Occidental and Petroperu oil wells directly into the Marañón River in the Peruvian Amazon. Petroperu technicians stated that "10,000 barrels a day are spilling because of the rupture and that the figure could increase to 30,000".

Indigenous communities depend on the Marañón and its tributaries for fishing, drinking water, and transportation. Miqueas Mishari president of the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon (AIDEPSEP) stated, "The government isn't worried about the effects of the spill on the Indian communities," and called upon President Fujimori to "listen to us, to take into account that we exist, to talk to the communities."

One week prior to the UPI article AIDEPSEP stated, in a report sent to international Indigenous and environmental organizations, "At this very moment, the Rio Marañón and Rio Napo are totally covered with oil from shore to shore and in the next several days it will reach the Amazonas River". They noted that eight people had died as a result of the spill and that "It is of the utmost urgency to investigate the

causes of the spill." AIDEPSEP also denounced that the local and national press had not covered the spill out of pressure from interests working to secure foreign investment.

Government Proposes Increases in Exploration and Extraction

On March 30, as oil gushed from decrepit pipes into the Marañón, Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori was present at the signing of a natural gas exploration contract between Petroperu and Maple Gas Corporation of Peru a



Spilled oil spreads quickly and devastates rivers and flooded forests in the Amazon

subsidiary of the Dallas based Maple Resources Corporation. This contract allows for drilling to evaluate the feasibility of gas exploitation along the Auaytia river near Ucayali in the central forest region. The previous week, the Peruvian government signed an agreement with Royal Dutch Shell for oil exploration in the areas of Kashiyari, San Martin and Mipaya. If discoveries are made, the company could land a 30 year

leasing contract for exploitation in the region. In all, these new contracts could cover areas in the regions of: Purus, Camisea, Aguaytia and Pucallpa. The Yine, Chipibo, Conibo, Amahuaca, Yaminahua, Sharanahua, Matsiguenga, Catacaibos, and Ashaninka peoples all inhabit these regions, with a combined population of approximately 27,000.

"At this very moment, the Rio Marañón and Rio Napo are totally covered with oil from shore to shore and in the next several days it will reach the Amazonas River."

Less than three weeks after the pipeline rupture, Petroperu chief Miguel Celi Rivera announced, at the newly opened Payacacu Amazon drilling site, that Peru's crude production would be increased from 132,000 barrels/day to approximately 300,000 barrels/day over the next two years as a result of increased foreign investment. Such an increase would place Peru's production on par with Ecuador (a former OPEC member), which also produces close to 300,000 barrels/day. Approximately 80% of new extraction is proposed for the Amazon region. The already deteriorating 24 year old Trans-Amazon pipeline would carry this additional burden as well.

AIDEPSEP Begins Mobilization

If the government's oil development program is allowed to proceed, AIDEPSEP foresees massive destruction of the environment and Indigenous people of the Peruvian Amazon. To this point, the Peruvian government has refused to allow Indigenous organizations a role in the decision-making process. AIDEPSEP is planning efforts to document the current situation and mobilize an Indigenous front in opposition to new drilling. Support is desperately needed for these efforts. This mobilization holds hope that the Indigenous people of Peru will be able to avoid the environmental catastrophes that have followed oil development in countries such as Ecuador. ♣

For more information, contact: Eusebio Armando Castro, Coordinator, AIDEPSEP, Programa de Emergencia Ashaninka-Aideseper, Ave. San Eugenio 981 URBSTA Catalina, La Victoria, Lima (13) Peru. Information supplied by AIDEPSEP and Edward Hammond, graduate student, University of Texas.

Report from **The International Symposium
on Public Policy and Traditional
Health Systems** *Ottawa, Canada*

Indigenous people, doctors, traditional and Western researchers from the diverse traditions of Asia, Africa and the Americas met in Ottawa, Canada to discuss policy models and experiences, the revival of traditional knowledge and practice, biodiversity and intellectual property rights.

The symposium, held on March 2-4 at the International Development and Research Center in Ottawa, Canada (IDRC) followed a series of related meetings such as the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) conference on "Health and Indigenous People of the Americas" held with support from the IDRC in Winnipeg, Canada in April 1993. PAHO's Board of Directors, made up of the Public Health ministers from every Latin American country, adopted a significant resolution based on the recommendations of this conference.

This resolution serves as an important tool for indigenous people in each country when demanding the right to practice traditional medicine as well as official support for improved healthcare in our communities. The resolution approved on September 28, 1993 credited indigenous communities' aspirations for control over their institutions and way of life, and their need to strengthen their own identity. It also recognized that indigenous communities have contributed significantly to health & nutrition of society, and the maintenance of ethnic, cultural and biological diversity. The resolution also based itself in respect for the values and social, cultural, religious, and spiritual practices of indigenous people including those which are related to the maintenance and improvement of health and the treatment of illnesses. PAHO urged member governments to

Photo: Wara Alderete



Offerings being made to Pachamama (Mother Earth) in Jujuy, Argentina



promote Indigenous people's participation in all health policy affecting them; promote of prevention programs especially in regard to the health of the indigenous people; assist in the evaluation of the initiative of the Health of the Indigenous People of the Americas; and to establish an expert commission which would include Indigenous representatives and be charged with developing strategies and projects to improve Indigenous people's health care.

Divergent perspectives on research policy

Indigenous representatives and western researchers voiced very different perspectives on research. Researchers from the National Cancer Institute in the United States described the "Biodiversity Project" in which they are isolating chemical compounds from medicinal plants in the search for a cure to cancer or AIDS. Their statements were criticized by the indigenous representatives for not taking into account the true value of traditional medicine which is based on an understanding that a cure is found in all aspects of the plant—not just in an isolated component. This western model was also criticized for its lack of spirituality, in the sense that a cure is not just a biological action but is also a strengthening of the spirit, something which is not found in a chemical substance.

Indigenous people also voiced con-

cern over the exploitation of our medicinal plants in order to serve the interests of developed countries and their pharmaceutical companies. This exploitation can result in environmental devastation as well as destroy our communities' cultural and social structure through the introduction of a mercantile system. A call was made for the development of research methodologies that are a) participatory, b) sensitive to the indigenous cosmology and respectful of their traditional health systems c) serve the needs of the local communities rather than foreign research institutions or companies d) evaluate the cost efficiency of traditional medicinal systems based in social values and spiritual traditions not just on western values, and f) to work within ethical bounds where research goals and uses are clearly stated.

Official Health Policies

In some Asian countries such as China and India, traditional medicinal practices have been preserved as a significant component of national health policy. Researchers expressed concern with respect to the integration of traditional and Western medicine, citing the negative impact official regulations may have on traditional practices; as well as the possibility that the Western system could dominate the other. The Chinese and Indian governments, for example, removed cosmology and spirituality from traditional medicinal

practice, so as to regulate or use these practices at their convenience.

Various indigenous representatives expressed their preference for an official position of tolerance, which would allow continuation of traditional practices without direct governmental interference or regulations. There was a general consensus that social control over traditional practices arise in each community, as it has been for thousands of years.

Despite cultural differences, spirituality seemed to be the common thread uniting the majority of traditions. Spiritual, mental and physical well-being are integral components fused together in traditional curing practices. Traditional health systems are sciences in their own right and, if they are to be understood, this basic principle must be respected.

It is imperative that indigenous communities and organizations continue to actively participate in this process by analyzing and influencing the policies that affect all aspects of life in our communities. ♡

This article was based on the PAHO's "Health of Indigenous Peoples" and a report by Jerry Bodecker, to whom we wish to express our gratitude.

To receive the PAHO document "Health of Indigenous Peoples" HSS/SI-LOS-34, write to: 525 23 Street N.W., Washington D.C. 20037, U.S.A., or the PAHO office in your country.

Wave of Violence in Colombia takes Heavy Toll on Indian Leaders

The Indigenous communities of Colombia have not escaped the alarming levels of violence registered in this country in the last few years. Many Indigenous communities have suffered the aftermath of a lingering and irrelevant war between the army and guerrilla groups; others, have been victims of the unrelenting struggle for land rights. The security forces generally see Indigenous people as potential guerrilla collaborators, and have directed arbitrary detentions, tortures, disappearances and murders against them. In addition to preexisting land struggles, Indigenous efforts to exercise rights under the new constitution, especially administration of government funds, have drawn violent opposition from traditional power groups. This year several cases have been added to the already long list of crimes against the Indigenous population of Colombia.

Senu Activists Killed in Land Struggle

Three Senu Indigenous activists, Clemente Mendoza, Hernando Solano and Fernando Alvarez Conde, were murdered during the months of February and March in Northern Colombia in the community of Aserradero, Municipality of Purisima, Department of Cordoba. According to local reports, they were engaged in attempts to recover lands of the Gran Resguardo de San Andres de Sotavento through a land title given by the Spanish crown three centuries ago.

ONIC Leaders Assassinated for Demanding Compliance with the Constitution

On March 26, four Senu Indigenous leaders were murdered on the outskirts of the municipality of San Andres de Sotavento. The four were intercepted at 12 o'clock in the night, by unknown assailants while riding in a van belonging to the community. The empty burned van was discovered with blood stains inside. The next day, the lifeless bodies of Porfirio Ayala Mendoza, Alternate Secretary of the ONIC, nominated for 1993-1997 during last September's National Indigenous Congress; Hector Aquiles Malo, Chief of the Gran Resguardo de San Andres de Sotavento; Luis Arthur Lucas, Senu leader, and ex-General Secretary of the ONIC from 1968 to 1990; and Cesar Mendoza Cruz the vehicle's driver. Indian groups see these murders as manifestations of traditional power groups opposition to Indigenous communities' attempts to exercise new constitutional rights to manage tax revenue and investment for their regions.

Assassination in Southern Colombia

Amnesty International reports that, the body of well-known Indigenous leader Laureano Ñampue was found in the San Juan River on May 6, near his home in the Guachucal Indigenous reserve in the department of Nariño. According to witnesses, he was violently removed from his home by heavily armed men in military uniform. His captors claimed they were detaining him for interrogation by the local battalion's commander. Family members were unable to obtain any information regarding his whereabouts from local authorities. He was found dead a day later. Ñampue had been threatened previously because of his work to recover Indigenous lands.



"Tireless" Activist Killed in Tolima

On May 15, ONIC denounced that Yesid Bocanegra Martinez was shot to death by gunmen in the town of Colaima, department of Tolima. Omar Mendoza vice-president of Tolima's Indigenous council also received three gunshot wounds in the attack, and remains hospitalized. Bocanegra was described by ONIC as a "tireless fighter for our cause".

Indigenous communities throughout the country are now on alert fearing that a second major wave of violence will follow attempts by Indigenous communities to exercise their new constitutional rights. (See "After the Constitution" in this issue) 🐦

Information supplied by National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC).

Please send letters urging the Colombian government to provide adequate protection to Indigenous leaders exercising their constitutional rights, that these killings be immediately investigated and that those responsible be held accountable to:

*Señor Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo, Presidente de la Republica, Palacio de Nariño, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia.
Fax: 011 57 1 286 7434/287 7939.*

With copies to:
Ambassador Gabriel Silva, Embassy of Colombia, 2118 Leroy Pl. NW, Washington, DC, 20008. and: ONIC, AA 32395, Bogotá, Colombia.

Emergency Support Needed!

Paez People left Homeless, Injured, Orphaned by Earthquake in Southwestern Colombia

Eighteen Indigenous communities disappeared beneath tons of mud and rock after a massive earthquake registering 6.3 on the Richter scale struck northern Colombia's remote Cauca region which is inhabited primarily by Indigenous people. The quake struck on June 6, with its epicenter close to the town of Torbio, releasing a series of debris slides and flooding of the Paez and Moras rivers. The list of dead, disappeared and injured grows daily. Indigenous organizations report that government aid to the survivors has been slow and totally insufficient, and that many injured have not received treatment and that people are dying from infection. Official calculations, acknowledge 857 deaths and close to 15,000 injured, but there is no precise information on the number of victims or the conditions of the survivors. A leader of the Vitaco Indigenous reserve site of a major avalanche, claimed that at least half of the 4,000 Indigenous inhabitants of this locality had been buried.

The National System for Prevention and Attention to Disasters announced that "given the magnitude of the quake' aftershocks, new rock slides could fall from the Nevado del Huila [mountains] which could cause increases in the Paez river's levels." In turn this could result in the flooding of more communities. On the 9 of June, the affected communities were again pan-

icked by tremors with intensities varying from 4.0 to 4.8 on the Richter scale.

Emergency aid provided by Colombians and international organizations has been essential in saving hundreds of unprotected Indigenous people's lives. However, the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) calls for individuals and agencies to take into account, not only the immediate situation, but also the communities future. Of particular concern has been a campaign, promoted by portions of the national press, for the adoption of Indigenous children by people outside the region. This is an attack on the autonomy for which Indigenous communities have struggled for years. Additionally, ONIC is concerned with the process of resettling those who have been displaced from their land, stating, "land isn't just a material element, but the essence of their cultures".

Its recovery has cost many lives, as well as much pain and suffering. Now, the displaced people find themselves set back to step one. Delimitation of new Indigenous reserves is urgently needed. Its also critical to urge governments who are supplying aid that these funds be channeled through Indigenous organizations in a way that establishes a true network of solidarity with the affected communities. The Colombian government has been slow to recognize Indigenous organizations juris-

diction within the disaster area.

ONIC's Executive Committee and the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC) is urgently international aid and solidarity. In order to send information regarding the possibilities for support in this state of emergency communicate with CRIC at Fax: 928-233893.

Donations can be sent directly to the ONIC bank account in Colombia:

BANCO DE BOGOTA, Cuenta No. 051-06327-9, DAMNIFICADOS INDIGENAS DEL CAUCA-ONIC.

Or in the US, to:

ABYA YALA FUND,
c/o Tides Foundation,
DAMNIFICADOS INDIGENAS
DEL CAUCA-Colombia, 1388
Sutter St. 10 floor, San Francisco
CA 94109



State of Emergency Declared in Ecuador: Reports of 15 Indigenous Activists Killed

Ecuatorian President Sixto Duran-Ballen declared a State of Emergency on June 21 and the following day gave the military sweeping powers to "restore order" throughout the country. Indigenous organizations led by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) are blockading roads and demonstrating to demand the government revoke the new agricultural development law. The military has surrounded CONAIE offices and are seeking arrest of the organization's leaders who are now in hiding. Increased repression is feared.

The Ecuadorian government ignored repeated calls by CONAIE and popular organizations for national consultations on proposed agricultural bills. Instead it swiftly approved new legislation on June 13. President Duran-Ballen claims the new law will modernize the country's agricultural sector. Indigenous organizations called the law unconstitutional, stating that it will destroy their agricultural economy, threaten Indigenous systems of land tenure, and drive thousands to immigrate to city slums in search of work. Today, the country's constitutional court ruled the new law to be unconstitutional, but observers think the government may ignore this ruling.

CONAIE organized a massive "Mobilization for Life" to demand the law be revoked. The mobilization has nearly paralyzed nine of 21 Ecuadorian provinces. This is the fourth nationwide mobilization led by CONAIE since the well-known Indian uprising in 1990. In a gesture that was both symbolic and concrete, CONAIE has stalled the flow of agricultural goods to several cities. The government stated that three year sentences would be given to those protesters who disobeyed the state of emergency. CONAIE responded, "The decision of our grassroots is to remain where they are until the law is repealed. If all the dimensions of the conflict are taken into account, the imposition of a state of emergency is a virtual declaration of war against the Indigenous people and the majority of the country."

Five Indigenous protesters have been killed in the highlands, and there are unconfirmed reports that 10 people were killed by police while peacefully blocking a road to an oil well in Lago Agrio in the Amazon. The number of those injured and detained is unknown. A radio station in Latacunga belonging to the Catholic Church was occupied and ransacked by security forces, and one of the staff detained. Protesters have been harassed and threatened for the last two weeks, and tensions are extremely high.

On June 20, after two weeks of protest, the government invited Indigenous organizations to negotiations, but broke off talks the next day. Indigenous organizations demand that the agricultural law be revoked before negotiating the shape of new legislation. The government would agree only to modifying the new law. CONAIE and the environmental group Accion Ecologica point out that the new law promotes privatization of communal properties, fails to recognize Indigenous systems and concepts of land tenure as legitimate, and will promote agroindustry and livestock grazing at the expense of small farmers who now account for 75% of the country's agricultural production. 🐾

Please send letters to President Duran Ballen urging the Ecuadorian government to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the conflict, to immediately halt repression directed against CONAIE and other Indigenous groups and to respect Indigenous organizations' just demands.

Sixto Duran Ballen, Presidente del Ecuador, Palacio Presidencial. Carcia Moreno, 1043, Quito-Ecuador
Fax: (593-2) 580 735

with copies to:

Luis Macas, Presidente CONAIE, Av. Granados 2553,
Casilla 17-17-1235, Quito-Ecuador Fax: (593-2) 442271

Whose History?

Much Work Ahead for Indigenous Historians



There are few texts in which indigenous voices speak for themselves. This historiography still needs to be written by both men and women of Abya Yala. Until today our history has been oral. Generally, our voices have been recorded in colonial languages, which in effect, are translations. Our own literature, should be caustic, in regard to those texts which have relegated us to being objects of study. Maybe those who objectify us forget that we can read their accounts. Here is a sample of three relevant texts: *The Elder Brothers: A Lost South American People and their Wisdom* (1990) by Alan Ereira; *War of Shadows* (1991) by Michael Brown and Eduardo Fernández; *Indigenous Voices* (1992) by Roger Moody. In contraposition, we can find texts (e.g., *Taraq* written by the Aymara historian Carlos Mamani Condori in 1991) that have been written by indigenous people themselves, presenting a

different voice.

Ereira's book is a good example of "colonial anguish". We do not believe that indigenous peoples' struggles can be understood until colonial attitudes are abandoned when facing indigenous cultures. In his account, Ereira "becomes" the spokesperson for the Kogi people of the Sierra of Santa Marta in Colombia. In very few pages can we hear the Kogi's own voices. Instead, the author-historian basically presents his own saga which coincides with those of the Kogi, who are a living example of what Europe and the United States call "ecological sustainability". This book does, however, illustrate the constant threats experienced by the Kogi, and their efforts to live harmoniously with nature.

Michael Brown and Eduardo Fernández's book documents the guerrilla phenomenon in Perú, describing the Ashaninka Indigenous tribe's experiences as they struggle to win a fight that is not theirs. The heroes in this account are the guerrillas and the authors themselves. The Ashaninkas' voices are barely heard throughout the book. The text should be considered as a history of the sixties and seventies of Perú, but not of the Ashaninkas, except as victims of the political left and right, the missionaries, the government and the armed forces.

Moody's *Indigenous Voices* is a collection of indigenous texts. Moody takes advantage of the demands published by Indigenous leaders in the Working Group of the United Nations, and decided to compile them into a book. Moody's project is highly questionable given that the texts printed were all produced by indigenous nations, yet there is not a single instance in the book in which the Indigenous contributors were invited to participate in the editing process. In a world where publications are the equivalent of business cards, indigenous peoples are once again objects of the text, rather than subjects capable of articulating our own ideas.

In contrast to the above texts is Mamani Condori's *Taraq*, which is one of the first texts produced by an Aymara historian. He started by studying documents related to the Aymara territories. In an eloquent job, *Taraq* presents the Aymaras' voices, who are thus the text's ultimate owners. This text shows more than ever, that it is imperative for the nation-states to recognize the Aymara as the legitimate caretakers of their territory and halt the abuses directed against them. Mamani Condori is a member of the Andean Oral History Workshop in Chuquiawu, Kollasuyo, in Bolivia. ♡



Special Offer!

News from

NATIVE CALIFORNIA

"An inside view of the California Indian world"

A unique quarterly magazine devoted to Indian people of California, *News from Native California* contains articles on social, environmental, and political issues written by Native Californians and those close to the California Indian community. As a special service, *News from Native California* would like to offer a special rate on new subscriptions: one year (four issues) for \$12.50 (or \$22.00 outside the U.S.).

To take advantage of this offer, send your name, mailing address, phone number, and a check for \$12.50 (or \$22.00 in U.S. currency, check, or money order issued by a U.S. bank) to: *News from Native California*, P.O. Box 9145, Berkeley, CA 94709. For more information, call (510) 849-0177.

ORGANIZATION & COMMUNICATION

CONIC Preparatory Meeting in Bolivia

The provisional council of the Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Nations and Organizations of the continent held its planning meeting for the upcoming continental encounter in Chuquiagu (La Paz), Bolivia from May 11-4. The Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Women of Bolivia hosted this meeting.

At CONIC's last continental encounter held at Temoaya, Mexico in 1993, participants decided to hold a constitutive congress in October 1994 in Guatemala, and to form a Provisional Council to plan this congress. Delegates from the Southern Cone, Andean region, Central and North America elaborated proposed bylaws at this meeting, and have sent these along with a declaration of principles and objectives to all CONIC members. The coming congress in Guatemala was set for the 10-14 of October and will be hosted by the Council of Maya organizations of Guatemala (see calendar below). All member organizations will be attending, and may also invite up to three additional organizations from their region.

Fourth Session of Mapuche Tribunal--Wallmapu Norngulamtuwum--Held in Temuco, Chile.

From the 28-29 of March 1994, the Mapuche organization Aukiñ Wallmapu Ngulam (Consejo de Todas las Tierras--All Lands Council) held their annual meeting, focusing on reforming the Chilean State and self-determination for the Mapuche. The Council issued several resolutions rejecting Chile's "Indigenous Law" (Law #19.2553) as serving the Chilean state, but not the Indigenous population. Many specific changes were recommended.

For information: Aukiñ Wallmapu

Ngulam--Consejo de Todas Las Tierras. Maraflores 1326, Casilla 448, Temuco, Chile.

Indigenous News Agency begins Publishing

The International Indian Press Agency (AIPIN) began wiring news relating to Indigenous nations and organizations of the continent through the IPS network last January. Genaro Buatista, Mixtec journalist and Natividad Gutierrez are the acting coordinators in Mexico City. All Indigenous journalists are invited to submit reports to AIPIN, by fax (525) 761-8573. The reports are published over the wire every week and are accepted every Wednesday until 6:00pm. submissions should be a maximum of 300 words, approximately 60 lines of text.

CONAIE National Congress Approves National Policy Statement

From the 15-18 of December last year, CONAIE celebrated its fourth national congress in the town of Unión Base, Puyo in the Amazon Region. The Congress approved CONAIE's "Political Project", a document which outlines the organization's national political strategy. According to CONAIE president Luis Macas this project "will be a guide for the construction of a more just, plurinational and pluricultural state and for the recognition of the Indigenous people and the poorest sectors of the country.", and proposes solutions to the problems of land distribution, housing, industrialization, health, unemployment, segregation and discrimination.

According to CONAIE, the project's proposals are based on the fundamental principals of the Indigenous peoples, especially, an integral humanism which recognizes that the close relationship between people and nature is what guarantees us life; communitarianism

based in reciprocity; solidarity and equality; and plurinational democracy. For information: CONAIE, Los Granados 2553 y 6 de Diciembre, Casilla 17-17-1235, Quito, Ecuador, Tel: (593-2) 248930 Fax: (593-2) 44271 email ccc@conaie.ec

Ashaninka Women Begin Organizing for Self-Sufficiency

Many Ashaninka have been forced to flee their homes by conflicts between the military and the Sendero Luminoso Guerilla movement. Ashaninka women are searching for solutions to the critical lack of food, clothing, and health care facing their families. Following the First Ashaninka Summit in November-December of 1993, an "Ashaninka Mothers' Club" was formed with the goal of carrying out projects to meet basic needs in the Central Forest region of Peru. According to club leader, Lucila Arce Salcedo, the traditional Ashaninka economy which was based on self-sufficient agriculture, hunting and fishing has been seriously impacted in recent years by the arrival of colonist, Sendero Luminoso activity, logging and most recently the activities of oil companies such as Shell and Mobil.

The Mothers' organization is therefore working to develop sewing and cooking industries to help support their families with cash incomes. If successful, this project will benefit 500 Ashaninka families. Next, they hope to begin a home for children who have been orphaned during the wave of violence. Arce Salcedo reports that approximately 2,000 children in the communities of Provincia de Satipo, Purtor Ocopa, Rio Ene, and Rio Tambo are orphans in their communities living in various stages of malnutrition, sickness and poverty.

For information or to send aid: Katia Torrelli, 4015 Rhoda Ave., Oakland, CA 94602, Tel: (510) 482-4682 Fax: (510) 421-4758

CALENDAR

June 26-29

Traditional Lakota Nation Summit

Eagle Butte, Cheyenne River Indian Reservation, South Dakota (175 NE of Rapid City), USA. All nations in the Western Hemisphere are invited to attend.

Richard Grass (605) 343-3046 or Raymond Uses Knife (605) 964-6685

July 4-6

Planning meeting for the Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Women of Meso and South America

Indigenous women from the region are invited to attend this meeting in La Paz, Bolivia to plan for the upcoming women's continental encounter. Unfortunately, there is currently no funding to help delegates attend.

*Comision Coordinadora de Mujeres Indigenas de Bolivia, Casilla 2315, La Paz, Bolivia
Tel/fax: 591-2-369-963*

July 21-24

United Nations Meetings on the Decade for Indigenous people.

There will be a series of meetings on the decade, Indigenous intellectual property rights, and of the UN Working Group in Geneva, Switzerland.

Contact: Julian Burger, Center for Human Rights, UN, CH1011 Geneva 10, Switzerland

August, 8-13

Indigenous Forum 94

International conference coordinated by the Fourth World Association, America 501, and the Sita Saamiland Foundation to be held in Arvidsjaur, Sápmi, Sweden. Conference will last five days, and be followed by a Saami cultural fair.

Fourth World Association, Foreningen Fjarde Varlden, Horngatan 113, 11728 Stockholm/SWEDEN tel: 46-8-844915 Fax: 46-8-845181



October 10-14

CONIC General Assembly

The Council of Maya Organizations of Guatemala (COMG) will host this meeting of the Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Organizations and Nations of the Continent (CONIC) in Solola, Guatemala. CONIC will discuss and formally adopt the organization's principles and guidelines in this meeting.

October 13-17

Seeds of Hope: Reclaiming the Forests Congress

Arctic to Amazonia is coordinated a Congress to be held on community forestry in Vermont, USA. Organizations several dozen countries have expressed their intent to participate. This could be an opportunity to establish an international community forestry network, within which Indigenous organizations should be at the forefront.

Arctic to Amazon Alliance, PO Box 73, Stafford, VT, 05072, Tel: (802) 765-4337

December 7-20

First American Nations Film and Video Festival

The First Continental Indigenous Film and Video Festival to be organized by Indigenous People will be held in Quito, Ecuador under the sponsorship of CONAIE. The festival will present a chance for Indigenous film and video producers to present their work, exchange experiences, and evaluate problems such as Indigenous participation in this communication form, the role of the media in the development of Indian peoples, and the establishment of national and international means of communication and coordination for film and video.

Alberto Munuela, Festival Coordinator, CONAIE, Los Granados 2553 y 6 de Diciembre

Casilla 17-17-1235, Quito, Ecuador, Tel: (593-2) 248930 Fax: (593-2) 44271 e-mail: ccc@conaie.ec

December 9-10

Summit of the Americas.

Presidents from every country in the Americas will be meeting in Miami for two days. Although the agenda is still not set, sources at the White House in Washington state that Indigenous peoples' issues will definitely be discussed, especially in regard to land demarcation. This presents an opportunity for Indigenous organizations to lobby each of their governments, so all of them arrive at the negotiating table with Indigenous demands on their agendas.

(Continued from page 15)

March 7. Over 70 Indigenous organizations met at an electoral convention in Mexico City, and passed a resolution criticizing the government's Chiapas peace proposal for failing to adequately address Indigenous rights under the constitution.

March 23. PRI presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, was assassinated at a campaign rally in Tijuana. The army reportedly intensified a troop build-up in an attempt to surround EZLN positions particularly in the areas of Las Margaritas, Ocosingo and Altamirano. The EZLN then suspended its consultation process, stating that it was forced to devote all resources to preparing for an attack.

Throughout March, Indigenous and campesino organizations across the state take over lands held by giant landowners. In contrast, the EZLN forbids takeovers in the region under their control.

May 4. Camacho Solis met with the EZLN and Bishop Samuel Ruiz to discuss renewing the dialogue.

May 29-31. The EZLN announced it had concluded consultations with base communities, and was beginning to count votes, analyze opinions received and prepare a response.

June 13. Zapatistas' base communities rejected the government's peace proposal.

June 16. Manuel Camacho Solis resigned as government negotiator while criticizing PRI presidential candidate Ernesto Zedillo. Bishop Samuel Ruiz also announced his resignation as mediator in the conflict.

Human Rights Violations

Following the uprising, the Mexican army, in collaboration with local caciques and plantation owners unleashed a brutal campaign of repression and terror against Indigenous and campesino organizations and villages suspected of sympathizing with the EZLN. Although the details of many of these atrocities may never be known, descriptions of several cases, such as those listed below, were gathered by Indigenous and human rights organizations and broadcast around the world.

January 5. A photo of five corpses with

single bullet wounds to the head was published around the world. The bodies were found in the Ocosingo market and, according to reports, were members of the last group of Zapatistas to retreat from the area. A delegation of forensic specialists reported that this scene bore all the signs of an extra-judicial execution.

January 6. The Mexican army detained 14 men from the Indigenous community of El Chanal when the mayor accused them of being Zapatistas. They were beaten, tied by the hands and feet and taken first by military vehicle and later by helicopter to the military base of Teran in Tuxla Gutierrez. They were reported being tortured by electric shock and beatings over the course of a week before being released.

January 7. three Tzeltal elders from the community of Morelia were tortured by the army in the local church, while other men of the village were detained outside. Thirty-one other community members detained by the army were reportedly tortured while in government custody.

January 16. Jorge Mariano Solis Lopez and Eduardo Gomez Hernandez, 21 and 22 years old respectively, were apprehended by municipal police while driving through the town of Las Margaritas. Police identified the truck they were driving as one requisitioned by the EZLN in their takeover of the town. According to local reports, they were taken to the municipal police station and hours later, put on an army truck heading for El Progreso. On January 24, their cadavers appeared at the regional hospital in Comitán after being discovered by a hunter near the community of

Agua Campesino Organization was assassinated in an ambush by a group of heavily armed men as he left his village of El Carmalito near Simojovel. His son was also critically wounded in the attack. Mariano Perez was a representative of the State Council of Indigenous and Campesino Organizations of Chiapas. Many other representatives have received death threats, including Margarito Ruiz of the Independent Indian People's Front.

In testimony before the US congress, Amnesty International documented "reports of at least 9 extrajudicial executions; 15 arbitrary killings, including the killing of a 10 year old child; 3 cases of "disappearance" and serious concern about the possible "disappearance" of at least 6 others' and at least 100 cases of torture and ill-treatment, including at least 2 cases of possible rape of women in detention." All these violations were allegedly carried out by the Mexican army or police forces. In addition, they confirmed the occurrence of hundreds of arbitrary arrests.

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 — Eric Mar, Assistant Dean, New College School of Law.*

African Americans at the Crossroads is published by South End Press, Boston, MA. March, 1994. 300 pages. \$16.00 paper, \$40.00 cloth.



News from SAIIC...

The Indigenous movement has grown immensely over the last decade, and the problems facing Indigenous people are as diverse and pressing as ever. In acknowledgment of Indigenous peoples' shifting political, economic and ecological realities, our information dissemination and networking activities have focused on supporting Indigenous organizing for territorial, environmental and human rights. We have also been busy improving our internal organizational structures to enable us to use limited resources most efficiently.

Being located in the US puts us in the privileged position to effectively distribute information, offer technical support and act as a communication link for Indigenous organizations. We do not try in any way to define or shape the decisions of Indigenous communities because that power legitimately corresponds to the people's grassroots organizations. Our role is to give those organizations and communities a voice here in the US and internationally.

Since January 1 this year, we have turned much attention to the situation in Chiapas, Mexico. The peoples of this region, which was bypassed by the first Zapatista revolution of 1917, may finally have the possibility to shape their own destiny. Outsiders have always sought to impose their priorities on the Maya of Chiapas. Now Indigenous peoples are fighting to take their destiny into their own hands. SAIIC offers support to the many Indigenous organizations in the state engaged in this struggle, as well as to the statewide council they have formed with campesino organizations.

Through networking, publishing information, and making our voices heard at events, conferences and meetings across the world, we are working to advocate for Indigenous peoples on other important issues as well. Board

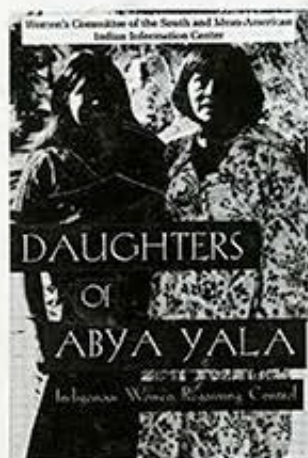
member Alejandro Argumedo has actively pursued reforms in the International Biodiversity Convention. Wara Alderete also on the SAIIC board, is active in work relating to Indigenous peoples' health care and respect for traditional systems of healing. Board member Guillermo Delgado continues to participate in the development and organizing efforts of AIPIN, the first International Association of Indigenous Press. With the assistance of the Indiansk Mediasenter in Oslo, SAIIC has been providing fresh news on Indian issues to support organizations in Europe. SAIIC is pleased to have been able to help build the Abya Yala Fund, and to have hosted its founding meeting (see "Abya Yala Fund formed" in this issue).

SAIIC's Visitors & Exchange program continues to coordinate or otherwise assist in visits and speaking tours by Indigenous representatives. Most recently, Araceli Burguete, research coordinator for the Independent Indian People's Front of Mexico, made a tremendous impact during her California tour educating the public about the conflict in Chiapas from the perspective of Indigenous organizations working there. We were also fortunate to share in coordinating a joint solidarity tour of Indigenous leaders Leonardo Viteri and Hector Villamil from Pastaza Ecuador, as well as three representatives of COLPUMALI--the regional Maya organization in Chiapas. Jorge Matamoros, Miskito sociologist from Nicaragua presented information on the situation on the Atlantic Coast here. Last year, Rosa Jalja from the Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Women in Bolivia and Atencio Lopez, Secretary of the Kuna Nation, provided inspiration and advice at SAIIC's Board Retreat in Mountain Wolf, California and gave presentations throughout the country. Finally, we were

honored to have Mapuche elder Jose Luis Huilcaman here for a short time in November.

The Ford Foundation recently reported that less than 1/10 of 1 percent of foundation assets go to Native American/Indigenous programs. This report has helped shape efforts to increase our base of support among individuals and institutions as both donors and as subscribers to this quarterly journal. Support from the General Service Foundation has allowed us to spend concerted time and attention on our organizational needs and plan for future work. In the process, we have spent a considerable amount of time expanding and streamlining our computerized database. Two public awareness campaigns are planned for this year, one targeting individuals and one targeting foundations. One of SAIIC's goals is "To communicate the Indigenous perspective to policy and funding institutions whose work affects Indigenous people." We have therefore designed a mailing to foundations designed to raise their awareness of Indigenous issues, thereby, hopefully increasing the amount of support that goes to Indigenous organizations. We want to thank all of you who have hung in there with us throughout the years, despite the, at times, sporadic nature of our communications. It has been hard for us to focus in the midst of so many pressing issues facing our brothers and sisters in the South. We, however have never forgotten our supporters in the North. We are very grateful to the individuals and foundations that have supported us, including: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Foundation for Deep Ecology, Public Welfare Foundation, The Tides Foundation, Public Media Center, Victoria Ward, Jeffrey Bronfman, Maya Miller, Rosa Alegria and Billy Trice, Jr. Muchisimas Gracias

Items Available from SAIIC



Daughters of Abya Yala

Testimonies of Indian women organizing throughout the Continent. Statements from grassroots Indian women leaders from South and Meso America. Includes resolutions from Indigenous women's meetings, a directory of Indian women's organizations and key contacts, information on Indian women's projects, and poems by

Indian women. Forty-eight pages with beautiful black and white photographs. Printed on recycled paper. \$6 + \$1.50 shipping. An updated, bound edition is also available for \$8 + \$1.50 shipping.

Video: A Skirt Full of Butterflies

15 minutes. A love poem to the Isthmus Zapotec women of southern Oaxaca, Mexico, by filmmakers Ellen Osborne and Maureen Gosling. For every purchase made, a second copy will be sent to an Indigenous women's organization as a gift. \$19.95 + \$3 shipping.

Video: Columbus Didn't Discover Us

Native people's perspectives on the Columbus Quincentennial based on the footage of the 1990 Quito Conference. 24 minutes. A co-production of SAIIC, CONAIE, ONIC and Turning Tide Productions. Available in Spanish or English for \$19.95 + \$1.75 for shipping & handling.

Video: Rebuilding Our Communities

Indigenous leaders from Central and South America discuss the 500-years campaign, which began as an Indian response to the Quincentenary celebration and has developed as an ongoing dialogue among indigenous activists. Produced by SAIIC. \$18 + \$1.75 shipping.

Amazonia: Voices from the Rainforest

A resource and action guide with a comprehensive listing of international rainforest and Amazonian Indian organizations sponsored by SAIIC and the International Rivers Network, and published by Rainforest Action Network and Amazonia Film Project, 1990. Available in Spanish or English for \$4.50 + \$1.75 shipping.

1992 International Directory & Resource Guide

An annotated directory of over 600 international organizations that participated in 500 Years of Resistance projects. Includes declarations from Indigenous conferences and organizations and information on curriculum resources, speakers bureaus, computer networks, audio-visual resources and print resources. \$5 + \$1.75 shipping.

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