

The outraged community claimed that they do not now, nor have they ever, burned their dead. On the other hand, bodies of those who have been tortured and killed are sometimes burned by landowners.

ONIC has said that these acts "reaffirm our decision to continue reclaiming our rights and our firm desire for unity with popular sectors, and with those who, just as we do, repudiate the terror and violence and wish profound change for Colombia."

In addition to political assassinations, many human rights violations suffered by Indians occur over land disputes, or during the military's counter-insurgency operations. Indians have been killed when would-be landowners decided to evict them from land they have farmed for centuries. Some have even been imprisoned on charges of "land invasion." More recently, the army has been abducting Indian men to use as porters or guides during their counter-insurgency operations. Some are later released; many more are executed or "disappeared." Authorities tell families that these men are helping voluntarily, or deny having seized them.

## OREWA Demands Participation in Development Plans

In the Rio Pato region of the Choco, new development projects have been undertaken without consulting the communities affected. These include new roads and a hydroelectric plant. The government has turned a deaf ear to requests by OREWA, the regional Indian organization, to discuss problems these projects will present for Indian communities. Among these, according to OREWA, are an increase in colonization of Indian territories and reservations, the defiling of sacred sites such as cemeteries, damage to the ecology of the region, and the loss to Indians of land and resources. OREWA is asking for a guarantee of protection from colonization on reservations adjacent to new roads, reimbursement for damage to land and crops caused by construction, and that the government consult with Indian communities about these projects, and that it respect Indian cultural values and autonomy.

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## EL SALVADOR

### ANIS: There is No Justice for Indian People in El Salvador

On July 1st, approximately 100 armed soldiers from the Cuartel Atonal Army Garrison entered the Indian community of Canton Las Cruces (near Santa Elena in Usulután Province), disrupting the crucial corn harvest. The soldiers arrested five members of that community who are also members of A.N.I.S. (the National Association of Salvadorean Indians), which unites 45,000 Lenca, Maya and Nahuat people. (See SAIIC "Urgent Action Bulletin" of July 7, 1988). The five are accused of being supporters of the FMLN (Faro-bundo Martí Liberation Front) which has been waging an armed struggle during nine years of civil war in El Salvador.

On July 7th they were released from custody and, according to ANIS members in Sonsonate Province, the five had been tortured. Two of them, including Jesus Mondragon, a very active member of ANIS, returned in serious condition and are currently undergoing medical treatment.

On the week of July 23rd, another two members of ANIS were taken by the army from their homes at night and murdered. This signals a worsening of conditions for Indian people in El Salvador who have continually suffered harassment, repression, and disappearance.

In addition, the Supreme Court in El Salvador again dismissed charges under the Amnesty Law against the military officers and informers

responsible for the 74 Indian people assassinated in Las Hojas agricultural cooperative on February 22, 1983.

ANIS maintains that "there is no justice for Indian people in El Salvador while these unpardonable crimes go unpunished." ANIS continues protesting such brutality, nationally and internationally, even after a State of Emergency law (prohibiting protest) went into effect recently.

Regarding the frequent accusations levelled at ANIS members as a pretext for their arrest, detainment and murder, an ANIS board member responded, "Accusing us of belonging to the guerilla or being subversive is part of a psychology that is used to arrest people. The struggle of ANIS is to know our rights and defend them. With the help of Human Rights organizations, international journalists, supporters, ambassadors and friends within the military we are able to get people freed."

"Both the Reagan and the Salvadorean government want to 'finish off' ANIS and sister organizations like us because, organized, the Indian is able to defend himself and others against a lot of injustice and suffering."

People who wish to support ANIS may contact SAIIC about future actions which will be taken.

#### DOCUMENTARY

Currently, a 1/2-hour bi-lingual video documentary about the life of the Lenca, Maya and Nahuat people of El Salvador is in progress. It aims to disseminate more adequate information about the existence of the Indian people of El Salvador and help people reach a more complete understanding of regional conditions in order to eliminate the constant menace to these seriously threatened people. The program will portray aspects of the history, development and achievements of ANIS, maintaining their identity and culture in the midst of war. It will include brief story-telling through animation and testimonies of living elders (112 years-old!) who lived through the uprising and massacre of 1932.

Members of SAIIC and Mas Media, a San Francisco-based women's media collective, are working together with the ANIS media project to bring this program to completion. Volunteer work and contributions are needed. Contact can be made by writing to A. Luisa c/o Mas Media, 2940 16th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 or by calling 415-626-1875.



Community members and leaders of the Maya, Nahuat and Lenca people are protesting continued violations of human rights and are demanding justice and

prosecution of the military personnel responsible for the massacre of Las Hojas Cooperative.

photo: A. Luisa/Mas Media