

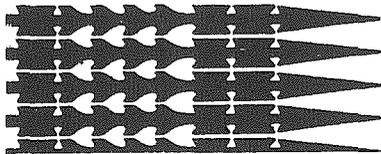
STATEMENTS from the COMMISSION ON LIBERATION AND THE LAND at the WCIP Conference

"One of the many forms of repression is the practice of extinguishing the existence of the indigenous people by separating them from their traditional lands. Land to the indigenous people represents more than a commodity to be bartered back and forth to maximize profit. For many indigenous people, land is the seat of spirituality. It is the guardian and protector of the bones of our forefathers; it is the historical record of a people, the provider of food, clothing, and shelter; it represents the hope of the generations to follow.

"To separate the indigenous people from the land traditionally held by us is to pronounce certain death for we will either die physically, or our minds and bodies will be altered in such a way that we will mimic the foreigners' ways, adopt their language, accept their thoughts, and build a foreign prison around our indigenous spirit which suffocates rather than allows for the flourishing of our spirit.

"Whether or not we die physically or alter our minds and become the foreigner, we still perish when we are separated from our traditional lands.

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



WORKING COMMISSION REPORTS

"The national governments do not respect our ancestral territorial rights, which embrace not only the land itself, but the spiritual world of the Indian as well. Mother Earth is not for sale or rent." Quote from: Commission #1, Territorial Rights, in Working Commission Reports: Second Conference of Indian Nations and Organizations of South America. Tiwanaku, Bolivia. Published by SAIIC, 1984. To order a copy, send a check for \$3.00 made out to the American Friends Service Committee to: SAIIC, P.O. Box 7550, Berkeley, CA 94707.