

NEWSLETTER

## South American Indian Information Center (SAIIC)

P.O. Box 7550, Berkeley, California 94707 - USA

Phone 415-521-2779

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are grateful for your subscriptions! Your response made it clear to us how necessary our information center is. Thanks for your letters and good wishes.

This is our second bi-monthly newsletter. It is dedicated mainly to the General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples held last September in Panama. We hope to hear more from you, and urge those that haven't subscribed yet to do so.

Sincerely,

The SAIIC Committee

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The World Council of Indigenous Peoples was founded in 1975 in Canada. It encompasses five regions: the Eastern Region (the Samis from Scandinavia and the Inuit from Greenland), the Northern Region (Alaska, Canada, and the United States), the Central Region (Mexico and Central America), the Southern Region (South America), and the Pacific Region (Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific Islands).

WCIP's main objectives were to create a communications network for indigenous people worldwide. This would facilitate their struggle against the oppressive neocolonial nation-states in which they live. Also it would help educate international public opinion about the Indian situation throughout the world, and especially in the Americas.

For diverse reasons, the WCIP did not meet all these expectations agreed upon during its founding. It did, though, continue to function and hold General Assemblies every three years. The second assembly was held in 1977 in Samiland (Lapland), the third



in 1981 in Australia, and the last one this past September 23 through 30 in Panama. Two members of SAIIC, Nilo Cayuqueo (Mapuche from Argentina) and James Muneta (Navajo, U.S.), were invited to participate in this conference.

Indian organizations at a regional level have gained experience and political maturity during their struggle for survival. They attended this meeting offering clear and precise proposals as to the role international Indian organizations (especially the WCIP) should have towards the genocide and ethnocide facing Indian peoples. These problems are brought about by colonial states, or dominating societies, that carry out the interests of local elites and the large transnational corporations.

During the last day of the conference, the new executive members of the WCIP were elected for a period of three years. They are: Clams Chartier from Saskatchewan, Canada, President; Hyden Burgess from Hawaii Sovereignty Committee, 1st Vice President; and Donald Rojas Moroto from Costa Rica, 2nd Vice President. There was also an executive representative from each region elected. The next WCIP General Assembly will be held in South America. The current address is: WCIP-Secretariat, 555 King Edward Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6N5.

Representing the American Indian Movement at the WCIP Conference was Larry Anderson, who spoke about recent resistance to relocation at Big Mountain in Arizona. His presence was greatly appreciated.

SAIIC member James Muneta made the following comments concerning the Conference on KPFA radio in Berkeley on October 12:

"I was very enlightened by this experience, in being a North American Indian to travel to Central America to find people similar to me and people that had the same beliefs and values in the earth and in the children and to find people who want to preserve their culture and tradition. When the Europeans came, when the white people came, their governments created different boundaries which through time divided the indigenous people. I have been told by my elders and the old people, that in our history, the Indian people migrated from South to North America and they traded goods and shared cultures with each other. But in the contemporary world, the political boundaries have separated the people. We have almost lost total contact with our brothers and sisters in Central America and South America. To go down there was like finding a lost brother or sister. We can be physical and spiritual support to each other.

"It brought to mind the vision of Black Elk. He saw in his vision the sacred hoop that is the unity of all indigenous people of the Americas. And within that hoop was the growing tree that was blossoming, meaning that through unity we will gain strength. We will be able to have strength in supporting each other in creating a better future for our children and to start to create peace for our people who are struggling in Central and South America. I feel it is important for more of our indigenous nations in North America to go to South America to establish that unity in brotherhood and sisterhood to bring forth this peace."

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THE FOLLOWING COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY REPORTS INCORPORATE MUCH RECENT INFORMATION FROM THE WCIP CONFERENCE AND OTHER SOURCES.

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## GUATEMALA

The following interview was taped by Nilo Cayuqueo at the WCIP Conference. It represents one of the many indigenous women's voices heard to speak out regarding the continuing repression and genocide in Guatemala:

"We are here representing "Mayas," (Movimiento de ayuda y accion solidaria) to give testimony and to ask support of the Council as an organization that works in defense of indigenous rights. We are here to ask for concrete action against the Guatemalan government. This government is killing us every day in diverse forms. Also they are using the Indian people in many ways to maintain military control in Guatemala.

We estimate there are approximately 200,000 refugees outside the country. At the same time, it is established that there are more than a million people who have been displaced and remain in the country. These people are in very difficult situations, many living outside and suffering daily from hunger and cold.

The reaction of Indian women to all this is very strong because women are used by the government in various ways, due to our being women and Indian. This suffering that women go through is a kind of torture and, for a mother, it is even more difficult. A woman might take passive or aggressive action, but it is very difficult to act, because of the type of psychological warfare that exists. One suffers, because of the killing of our children, of our husbands, and our people. At the same time, it is a woman's responsibility to educate, raise, protect, and feed her children, particularly if her husband has been killed. So a woman's attitude must be strong in finding a way to defend and sustain herself and her family in this critical situation.

## NICARAGUA

Representatives of the Miskito organization, MISATAN, founded in July, 1984, were in attendance at the WCIP conference. The representatives invited the conference participants to visit Nicaragua, Honduras, and Costa Rica in order to gain a clear picture of Miskito reality and to support "the reunification of our families that have been dispersed for the past three years."

Representatives of the Miskito opposition organization, MISURASATA, were also present, but did not participate officially in the conference. The representatives affir-

med that their organization will struggle on the side of the people of Nicaragua if faced with a military intervention by the United States, and that they are eager to enter into a dialogue with the Sandista government, if Miskito rights are recognized. On the other hand, Brooklin Rivera, the principal leader of MISURASATA, travelled to Managua in response to an invitation extended by Daniel Ortega, now president elect, in order to reach an agreement between the Sandanista government and the Miskito Indians. They are hoping to make progress in these conversations, keeping in mind the threat of North American intervention which would create catastrophic results for the people of Central America.

\* The General Assembly also condemned any intent by the United States to intervene in Central America, as well as military support given by the U.S. to the governments of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

#### VENEZUELA

(Statement from the WCIP Conference)

The Venezuelan government continues to deny the right of self-liberation, self-determination, and self-management to the indigenous peoples of Venezuela. Furthermore, the state does nothing to discourage aggressive acts against the Piarao in the Federal Amazon territory and continues to persecute those who protest these acts.

The Indigenous Movement for National Identity and the Civil Association of Yukpa Indigenous People demand the following: (1) Respect for indigenous peoples and provision for their social welfare; (2) Control of all policies affecting indigenous peoples; (3) Passage of the Law of Indigenous Ethnic Groups; (4) Redistribution of territorial rights with nontransferable title of collective ownership; (5) Respect for cultural heritage, languages, and traditions complying with Decree No. 283; and (6) Formation of a national organization representing all ethnic groups.

Let it also be known that many Venezuelans support our claims and echo our protests.

#### COLOMBIA

Since the establishment of peace agreements with the guerilla groups, the government has placed rural areas, especially the Cauca, under military control. All meetings have been prohibited, and Indians are jailed if they are considered subversive. In February, 1984, in Tolima, two indigenous leaders were assassinated by mercenary groups working for the large land owners.

## ECUADOR

[From a September, 1984, letter to SAIIC from Murinkias Tsetsenk Enrique, Federacion Centros Shuar, Tarqui 809 y Av. 10 de Agosto, Segundo Piso, Oficina 209, Casilla Postal 4122, Quito, Ecuador]

"The Federation of Shuar organizations was recognized by the national government of Ecuador in 1964. There are currently 250 Centers that have communal lands. Currently we have 40,000 Shuar members living in Ecuador. (There are Shuar in Peru also.) Since our founding, we have established programs exclusively for the benefit of and run by Shuar including: education and culture, health, arbitration and tenancy of the land, communal work, and communication. All of these programs are recognized by the government, but we must constantly petition the government for support and financial assistance. Now we are working to create a new program that has never existed before in Ecuador. It is the Shuar legal commission with the goal of defending the true rights of the Shuar and other Indigenous people. For example we will work for land rights and for the defense of life and liberty of Indigenous people. We solicit support in our efforts. Kakachkurkia Penkesha Emkachminiatji. (Nothing is gained without struggle.)"

## PERU

Reports reaching us at SAIIC indicate increasing violence and escalating abuse of human rights in Peru. Indian people are suffering greatly as a result of ongoing armed conflict.

@ Statement issued by the WCIP during the conference held in Panama, September, 1984: "The 4th General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous People condemns the massacre and genocide perpetrated against the indigenous population of Peru by the Central Government and its forces of repression and by the political-military forces. The 4th Assembly calls for the withdrawal of the military forces from the region of Ayacucho and for a socio-political solution in order to return to peace and respect for the integrity of the indigenous people. This 4th Assembly demands the participation of the true representatives of the indigenous people of Peru in the decisions of government."

@ Statement in the newspaper Diario la Republica, Lima, September 9, 1984, by the Consejo Indio de Sud America (CISA): "451 years of Andean Holocaust. The Latin Americans, orphans without cultural identity and perpetuators of historic shame, plan to celebrate 500 years since the infamous date on which the Europeans invaded our continent. Time moves on for centuries. The Viceroys have changed their names. The urban centers have changed their locations. But in our devastated Andean land, colonial occupation con-

tinues. The landholders continue exploiting, the Pizarros continue murdering, and 451 years later, the Indian holocaust in the plaza of Cajamarca repeats itself and the killing of Alao Huallpa continues."

@ A letter from a community: "Here, everything has become difficult. Everything is changing with violence an everyday event. But we have to keep living, victims of the violence, living with fear or without it, we have to keep working."

@ From La Estrella de Arica newspaper, October 3, 1984: Last week forty Indians were killed from the Pirus and Panos tribes of the Amazon region near Yarinacocha. This is the most recent in a series of attacks by loggers who come into the area, set up camps and dedicate themselves to hunting Indians. The Indians are defending their limited sources of subsistence. The loggers not only invade their land and cut their trees, but also exterminate animals that are traditionally hunted; and they try to remove the Indians from their land. This critical situation is compounded by petroleum drilling in the area by the Shell corporation of the United States.

@ Two reports give further information. Just released,  
Abdicating Democratic Authority. Oct., 1984. 161 pages. Write  
Americas Watch, 712 G Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. \$8.  
Peru: Torture and Extrajudicial Executions: Fall 1983. 49 pages.  
Amnesty International USA, 304 West 58th Street, New York,  
New York 10019. \$3.

## BOLIVIA

In this country, where over 80% of the population is Indian, there has been no positive government response to various Indian requests. What is worse, there is the constant threat of a facist coup that would initiate another blood bath. One of the Indian leaders at the conference said, "Until the Indian majority takes power and forms a government that represents the people, there can be no justice in Kollasuya" (Bolivia).



## BRAZIL

A year after the assassination of one of the main Indian leaders of Brazil, Marcal Tupai, by a group of large land owners who had confiscated Indian land, the Indian people continue in the midst of struggle. Three representatives from Brazil at the

conference brought greetings of solidarity and reports that there have been recent threats to the little land that remains in their hands. The representatives stated that the Pataxos Indians have especially suffered at the hands of the government who last year permitted the activity of a French-North American multi-national corporation. This corporation set off numerous dynamite charges in the territory of the Kasinawas Indians. These explosions emitted poisonous chemicals that killed eight Indians and caused a great deal of illness. Ailton Lacerda, of the Grenak Indian nation, said in reference to this act, "After our brothers were killed, the cynical capitalists offered \$300,000 as compensation, as if the lives of people can be bought which is typical of the way they deal with our people."

## ARGENTINA

After the catastrophic situation of repression, assassinations, disappearances and hunger where many children and elders died in the provinces of Salta and the Chaco in northern Argentina, there is now the beginning of hope with democratic "apertura" begun in 1983. Although the economic crisis continues, a rebirth of Indian organizations and the struggle for the rights of the more than one million Indians who now live in Argentina has begun. Currently there is emphasis on establishing a law that guarantees the indigenous land base.

## CHILE--The Mapuche Situation

With Decree Law 2568 of 1979, the military regime of Pinochet provides for the extermination of Mapuche communal lands. Not only does this law state that all Indian lands must be divided, but it also implies that after the division, the lands will no longer be considered "Indian" (nor the people "Indians"). Indians will no longer be defined by their culture or language, and land division cannot be appealed.

The Mapuche were never conquered by either the Incas or the Spanish. Although Chileans state that they "pacified" Mapuches in 1883, Mapuches are proud and conscious of their history. Their struggle has not ended. They not only struggle for their land (which has been reduced from 31 million hectares in 1540 to 350,000 hectares at present), but they also resist being assimilated by the colonial society. At the same time, the Mapuche, along with a vast majority of the Chilean population, are actively fighting the authoritarian dictatorship of Pinochet.

URGENT NOTICE: Juan Neculqueo, a national leader of the Mapuche organization AD-Mapu, was imprisoned for three years after the coup of 1973, accused of collaborating with the freely elected Allende government. Since his release, he has been arrested three more times. His last imprisonment was on April 23, when he and four other AD-Mapu

members were on their way to talk to a lawyer in Temuco regarding the detention of two national officers (see SAIIC Newsletter no. 1, vol. 1). The other four members were held for 14 hours with no charge. Neculqueo was released six days later and his life threatened if he was seen again. He fled the country to Peru, where he was arrested again. After his release, he participated in the WCIP General Assembly in Panama. He is presently in Panama, expecting to obtain a visa to come to the United States and Canada.

If you or your organization can help with support efforts, please reach SAAIC by phone or mail. Also, any donations for Juan's family, still in Chile, can be sent through us.

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Since we are devoting most of this newsletter to the WCIP Conference, we want to include the following information on indigenous concerns at the international level.

#### CANADA

The government owned National Canadian Railroad is expanding their railroad line in British Columbia. This expansion will have an extremely damaging effect on traditional Shuswap, Thompson, and Stolo fishing sites. The major places where fish lay their eggs will also be greatly damaged. The expansion program threatens all the native fishermen of the area. The 4th General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous People resolved to give support to the first Indian nations, Shuswap, Thompson, and Stolo in their efforts to stop this expansion program to insure that the traditional economic base will not be destroyed.

#### SAMI NORDIC GROUP

The Sami Nordic Council suggests that during the International Year of Peace in 1986 the United Nations should organize a workshop on the role of indigenous peoples of the world. The objective of the workshop should be to emphasize and discuss human rights, solidarity, democracy, tolerance, knowledge, understanding, and acceptance of indigenous peoples. They should also discuss more concrete matters, such as war, disarmament, de-nuclearized zones, and other activities that threaten world peace and peaceful co-existence.

## PACIFIC REGION

At present, the struggle of Indigenous Peoples adopts different forms of organization to resist imperialism and colonialism.

The Pacific Region is an area which, although information is hard to come by, has suffered much repression and massacres by the colonial governments. This region consists of Australia, New Zealand, East Timor, West Pacific, New Caledonia, French occupied Polynesia, Hawaii and Micronesia.

Although there have been numerous meetings at local levels, probably the most important is the South Pacific Conference held from June 25-27 in Canberra, Australia. The following is part of the report of the Pacific Region at the General Assembly of the WCIP in Panama:

"The Pacific Region, contrary to the popular myth of idyllic coral islands populated by carefree villagers, suffers the full range of colonial oppression, and the struggles of indigenous peoples are characterized to a large extent by the kind of occupation they endure."

French Occupation--The Maori people in Polynesia have been subject to French control for over a century. During the past years, the situation has worsened due to the French program of nuclear testing in the Pacific which began in 1962 and the dumping of waste by the U.S. and Japan. This threatens the life of humans, animals, and ecology as a whole.

New Caledonia was annexed by the French 130 years ago, with the intention of turning it into a penal colony. For the native Kanak people the French presence caused an immediate and lasting social upheaval. Like the Australian aboriginals, they were forced to live on reserves in poor lands to which they had no title. But the social turmoil of New Caledonia today stems from the fact that from 1903 to 1945 forced labor was instituted. Today the Kanak struggle for independence led by the Kanak Independence Front is gaining momentum. While the French government offers "autonomy" by 1989, the Independence Front has lodged its own program. This would lead to an act of self-determination during this year, and independence on Sept. 24, 1985, the 132nd anniversary of French annexation.

English Occupation--Australia and New Zealand: The victims of Anglo and American occupation are also entering the political arena to an increasing extent. Despite many obstructions, the National Aboriginal Conference is carrying out the task of representing Aboriginal opinion to the government of Australia. The struggle for self-determination is led by the NAC working within and outside the system to bring about change. The Maua Motuhake in New Zealand is a Maori political party which aims to gain control over land, law, and education. The Organization of the Maori People, like that of the Aborigines, is proceeding on many levels.

Indonesian Occupation--East Timor and West Papua: The worst cases are the victims of Indonesian expansionism. The people of East Timor and West Papua have endured a

concerted campaign of genocide since the beginning of Indonesian occupation. In these countries the killing and terrorism of indigenous people is part of a sustained program of control, geared to replace the existing population with the invading culture in as short a time as possible. In simple terms this is a horror of unimaginable proportions, but it is the daily experience of many East Timorese and West Papuans. Since emerging from 464 years of Portuguese colonization, the people of East Timor have been subjected to an invasion in which 150,000 people have died. A continuous guerrilla war has had catastrophic effects on the population. Timorese are continually uprooted from their homes or resettlement camps, and forced into new camps in unfamiliar areas so they can offer no support to Fretilin (Timor Liberation Front), the rebel organization. Traditional ways of life have been disrupted, hunger and malnutrition are rife and many refugees have been waiting in vain for years to join their families who have fled. The United Nations General Assembly has consistently rejected the legitimacy of the Indonesian annexation of East Timor.

As in East Timor, the Indonesian annexation of West Papua continues to cause killings, torture and massacres of whole cities opposing invasion. Another problem is that thousands of Javanese immigrants are relocated on land belonging to indigenous Melanesians. The Free Papua Movement represents the people of West Papua in resistance to the Indonesian occupation.

United States Occupation--The United States continues to control Micronesia for strategic reasons. Micronesia is now divided into four states: the Republic of Belau, the Federated States (Yap, Truck, Ponape, and Kossae), the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Northern Marianas. A large part of this territory is used for U.S. nuclear bases, occupying lands of indigenous people and destroying the ecology with tests of chemical and biological arms.

The illegal U.S. occupation of Hawaii has brought many negative consequences for native Hawaiian people, dispossessing them of their lands, militarizing the islands, and lowering the social, economic, educational, health, mortality, and language standards of the people.

The report of the South Pacific Confernece ends saying, "These, then are the countries which now form the Pacific Region of the WCIP. Our histories are different but similar, and our member organizations range from rebel guerrilla groups, to political parties, to autonomous representative organizations. The spiritual relationship with the land, the commonality of experience, particularly the traumatic experience of alienation and loss heralded by colonization, and our continued presence as the most disadvantaged groups in our societies has given the indigenous peoples a natural unity of spirit which we may yet fuse into a unity of action."

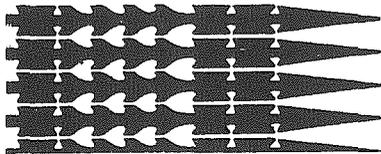
STATEMENTS from the COMMISSION ON LIBERATION AND THE LAND at the WCIP Conference

"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.

FOR SALE IN THE U.S. THROUGH SAIIC

Tengo Casa Propia (in Spanish), by Susan Lobo. 1984. Published by the Institute of Peruvian Studies (Peru) and the Inter-American Indian Institute (Mexico). This book presents an in-depth understanding of the building of community by Indian migrants in one of the squatter settlements of Peru. 20% of proceeds from sale of the book support SAIIC Newsletter; 80% of proceeds will be donated to a community project in the squatter settlement discussed in the book. Send a check for \$11.00 to: American Friends Service Committee/South American Indian Information Center. SAIIC, PO Box 7550, Berkeley, CA 94707.

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#### SAIIC RADIO PROGRAM

Starting in December, SAIIC will host a half hour radio program "South American Indian Update" the first Friday of each month at 8:00 P.M. Radio KPFA, (94.), listener sponsored radio, Berkeley, reaching northern and central California areas. Listen in!

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To receive a copy of the Working Commission Reports: Second Conference of Indian Nations and Organizations of South America, please send a contribution of \$3.00 to cover publication and mailing costs.

To receive the South American Indian Information Center Newsletter for one year, and to remain on our mailing list, please send a donation of \$5.00.

Please check if you cannot send a donation at this time, but would like to remain on our mailing list.

Make out all checks, which are tax deductible, to: American Friends Service Committee/the South American Indian Information Center, and send along with this portion of the Bulletin to P.O. Box 7550, Berkeley, California 94707, U.S.A.

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Nilo Cayuqueo, SAIIC Coordinator Susan Lobo, Publications Editor