

*Nature and the Amazon:* We want support. We are sad because the natural world in Brazil, especially in Amazonia, is going to be destroyed. In Amazonia, there are many indigenous medicines which could save many lives in the whole world. The Indians must be preserved, in order to provide this future, to improve human life for all of us—Brazilians, Indians. This could save the lives of millions in many countries.

*The Future:* We would like to form alliances with all the Indians of the Americas, including

here in the United States. We want that alliance because it is a way to protect our people—through such an international alliance, between Brazil, America, Canada, and other countries. Here, I met with the Lummi and Canadian Indians. The Canadian Indians gave me a lot of support in my struggle. We want to live as Indians. Always the Indian will be a good example for whites, because he is a person who is not after private gain; he is a person who speaks the truth in this world.

## AMAZONIA

# Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Hold International Meeting

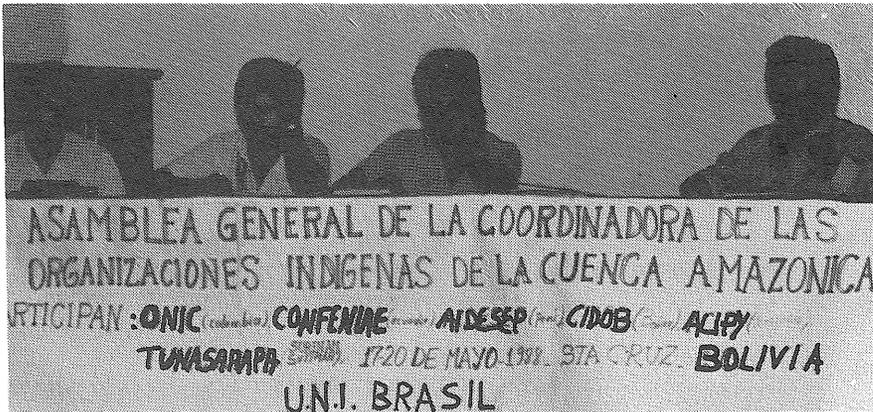


photo: Aguirre/Switkes/Amazonia



*Amazonian Indian leaders address the Coordinadora meeting, May 1988.*

Sixty delegates from Indian organizations of seven Amazonian countries—ONIC, Colombia; CONFENIAE, Ecuador; AIDSESP, Peru; UNI, Brazil; CIDOB, Bolivia; ACIPY, Venezuela; and TUNASARAPA, Surinam met in May in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia to hold the third meeting of *La Coordinadora*—the Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin.

The *Coordinadora* was originally formed in 1981, after Indian organizations of the Amazon

region rejected a proposal by the Interamerican Indigenist Institute and the eight countries that had signed the Treaty of Amazon Cooperation. According to Evaristo Nugkuag, Aguaruna from Peru and President of the *Coordinadora*, "We realized that the most serious threat might be from the eight countries that signed the Amazon Pact—who resolve to exploit the resources of the rainforest without taking into account the existence of Indigenous people who live there.

It's important on the international level to have a permanent, strong coordination, because when the governments begin to work together on the level of the Amazon region, it's going to affect us all".

The main purpose of the Coordinadora is to defend the economic, social, cultural, and land rights of the Indian peoples of Amazonia. In 1986, a delegation met with President Barber Conable of the World Bank in Washington, and discussed the impacts of World Bank lending policies on Indian people of the Amazon.

At this year's meeting, representatives of each organization recounted the massacres and political persecution taking place in their countries, and problems in the areas of land, health, and education. There were also reports on small-scale, sustainable economic projects being developed by Indian communities. Five working commissions were formed. Among their resolutions were:

to strengthen the mutual cooperation of the member organizations, including programs of bilingual education and the promotion of traditional medicine;

to explore ways in which Indian organizations may communicate more effectively with remote communities in the Amazon as well as with Indian groups in other nations;

to elaborate a proposal at an international level on the rights of Indian people to serve as a model for each country's laws;

to search for indigenous models of eco-development as an alternative to industrial development;

to reject the militarization of Indian areas, whether in border areas or in the interior;

to assist Indian groups in demarcating their own traditional lands;

to demand royalties and indemnization from transnational and national companies that are already exploiting natural resources on Indian lands; and to earmark this money to create a fund to reforest damaged lands; to reject the entry of new companies;

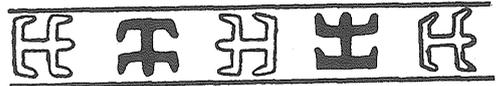
to form a team of Indian and non-Indian experts on Amazon ecology in order to compile information for use in defending their territories.

The Coordinadora rejected unanimously the celebration of 500 Years of the Discovery of America to be held in 1992, and will be developing its own alternative campaign. The 12th of October has been declared the "Day of Solidarity with Indian People."

The Amazon Indians also stressed the importance of support from environmental organizations for the defense of Amazonia.

The representatives elected a Council of Directors for the period 1988-1990, comprised of:

- Evaristo Nugkuag (AIDSESP, Peru), President (re-elected);
- Cristobal Naikiai (CONFENIAE, Ecuador), Vice-President;
- José Uranavi (CIDOB, Bolivia), Secretary;
- George Pierre (TUNASARAPA, Surinam), Treasurer;
- Javier Armato (ACIPY, Venezuela), Spokesperson.



## PRODUCTION COMPLETE ON AMAZONIAN FILM

Co-producer/directors Monti Aguirre and Glenn Switkes announce that filming has been completed on the feature-length documentary, "AMAZONIA: VOICES FROM THE RAINFOREST". The film, currently being edited in San Francisco, shows sustainable alternatives to the destruction of the Amazon rainforest proposed by Native people, rubber tappers, riverine populations, and small farmers in the Amazon. For more information, contact the producers through SAIIC, or write to: P.O. Box 10044, Oakland, CA 94610.