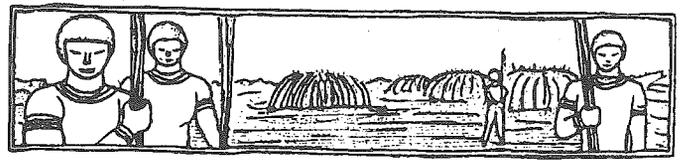


corner of Xingu National Park, south of Batovi and Ulupuene rivers. Atamai accuses FUNAI of the following: (1) the publication of maps which altered the boundary of unceded traditional Wauja lands without the prior consent of the Wauja Nation; (2) failure to rectify initial complaints voiced by Atamai before FUNAI concerning these errors; (3) through omission (e.g., failure to protect rights of the Wauja) and/or commission via these documents, aiding and abetting subsequent foreign and domestic poachers on Wauja lands; (4) subsequent use of indirect threats on Wauja life and property in its attempt to silence Wauja protests concerning land poachers and FUNAI's failure to adjudicate Wauja complaints about land rights; and (5) unlawfully defending the usurpation of Wauja lands which the agency now claims belong to non-Indians under Brazilian law. Atamai states that it is urgent that we now pressure the Brazilian government to ethically adjudicate the Wauja situation before lives are lost on both sides. This situation is critical since racist poachers recently destroyed three Wauja houses containing not easily replaceable tools and medical supplies (late summer, 1990).



# President Postures Under International Pressure

## Bombing of Airstrips is Meaningless

*My people, the Yanomami, are dying. When they take the minerals from under the earth, whites do not realize that they are spreading poison throughout the world, and that the world will come to an end, will die. - Davi Yanomami*

(Brazil) With these words, Yanomami leader Davi Kopenawa describes the tragedy of his people. In the past three years a goldrush has brought 45,000 miners to the state of Roraima, home of the Yanomami Tribe (See SAIIC Newsletter, Vol. 5, Nos. 2 & 3). The mining operations have severely damaged the environment. Mercury residues from the mining operations poison the rivers, killing fish and destroying Yanomami water supplies. Wildlife, essential to the Yanomami diet, is scared away by noise and is decimated by the miners. But most disruptive of all, the new immigrants have brought with them many diseases for which the Yanomami have no immunity. As a result, of the 9,000 Yanomami in the region, as many as 15% have died so far. At this rate, all Yanomami will have disappeared in the next ten years.

Last January the Brazilian Government ordered the eviction of the miners, but no real enforcement followed. An estimated 8000 miners remain on Yanomami lands, and more have been returning. Pressured by an international outcry, President Fernando Collor de Mello ordered the bombing of all illegal landing strips, estimated to be about 100, built by the miners, so as to prevent their returning.

Since the Presidential decree, only 14 airstrips have been destroyed. Heavy rains have brought any further government operations to a halt while the garimpeiros (gold prospectors) are already recovering the few damaged airstrips. The bad faith of the government and its posturing to hold off criticism are evident by President Collor de Mello's refusal to repeal former President Sarney's decree that permits miners to enter the 35,000 square miles of Yanomami territory, establishing "three garimpeiro reserves." The decrees are uncon-

### **How You Can Help**

**Send letters, Faxes, telegrams, telexes 1) urging that a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation be opened into the killings of Damiao Mendes and Mario Davis, that the results be made public, and that those found responsible be brought to justice; 2) urging that a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation be made of FUNAI concerning the above five accusations, and that justice is carried out in regards to Wauja land claims; 3) respectfully reminding the authorities of their duties to offer effective protection through judicial or other means to individuals and/or groups who are in danger of extrajudicial executions, including those who receive death threats.**

**Send your appeals to:**

**President Collor de Mello  
Presidencia de la República, Gabinete Civil  
Palacio do Planalto, CEP 70150  
Brasília DF BRASIL**

**Sr Bernardo Cabral  
Ministro da Justiça  
Esplanada dos Ministerios  
Bloco 23**

**70.064 Brasilia DF BRAZIL**

**Fax: 011-55-61-224-4357**

**Telegrams: Ministro Justica Brasilia, BRAZIL**

**Telex: 391 611003 MNJU BR**

stitutional, and the Federal Court ordered that they be repealed. Yet the Government continues to allow miners access to these reserves. In fact Roraima's settler population -which is dependent on mining for its subsistence- gave the President his largest margin of victory out of all Brazilian states and territories. President Collor has thus pledged he will take into account the miners' interests - as well as the Indians'.

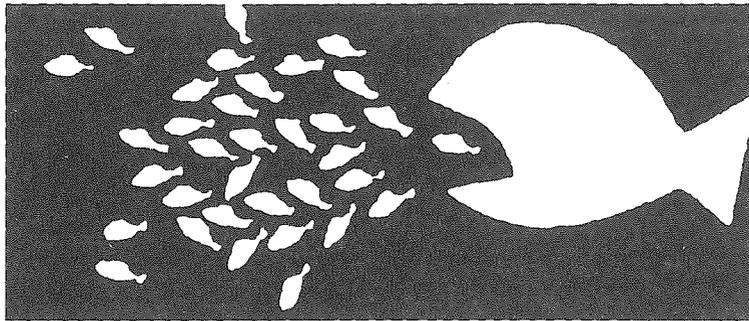
On March 27th, the new President went to Roraima making his first official visit to Yanomami territory. The President's priorities were not so much to visit Indian villages, but rather to inspect the local military base which is part of the Calha Norte (Northern Headwaters) project. The military program was estab-

lished in 1985 and has installed 26 military outposts along the 3,900 miles of Brazil bordering Colombia, Venezuela, Surinam and the Guyanas. The program has cost \$640 million and is designed to attract settlers to these remote areas.

On a recent trip to Sao Paulo, Davi Yanomami stated that just dynamiting the airstrips will do nothing to eliminate the problems. "The Collor government isn't worried about the Indians. They want the riches of the forest; they want money. I fear that the government will get the garimpeiros out and the large mining companies will move in," he said.



## Toba Reclaim Traditional Lands



Although they have not received any word on the matter from the provincial government, representatives of the Meguesoxochi Association inaugurated the land reclamation by installing a sign on the Santa Ana Bridge

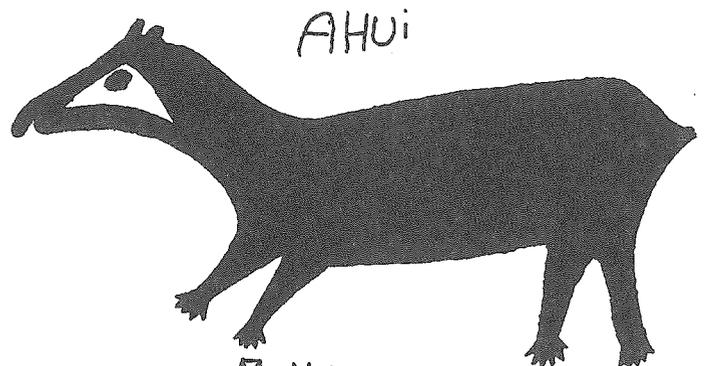
(Argentina) The *Voz de las Primeras Naciones* informed us that the Toba community of Olla Quebrada in the Chaco Province (located in the Northeast of Argentina), hosted an assembly organized by the Community Association of Meguesoxochi of Teuco Bermejito on April 7-8. Representatives from eleven Toba Indian communities united to reclaim 150,000 hectares of land between the Teuco and the Bermejito rivers. These lands were recognized as belonging to the Toba by National Decree in 1924, but have been increasingly stolen by logging companies and large cattle ranches. This is partially due to the fact that land titles were never given to the Toba for these lands.

About 500 people from 15 local communities participated in the reclamation and the symbolic re- ratification of the 1924 Decree. Many creole families who have lived among the Toba for more than 50 years, stood in support of their Indigenous neighbors. This proves false the circulating accusations that the Indian people "are on the warpath" against the creole inhabitants. The Creole supporters declared "...today, we stand in solidarity with our brothers in the neighboring community of Olla Quebrada, whom have not yet received official titles to their lands." The Toba leaders stated that the Creole population they are having difficulties with, are those who buy thousands of hectares for logging and cattle- ranching and never live there. "They don't care that they are cutting off paths with their wire fences and threaten those who try to cross them, and irrationally exploit the valuable Chaqueños trees."

which reads: "*Lalamax Nam Qom 'Alhua'*" or "*Toba Dominion*" - 150,000 hectares, by National Decree (February 19, 1924).

**Please send letters of support and concern for the lands of the Toba people to:**  
**Ministerio de Gobierno, Justicia y Educación**  
**Dr. Julio Sotelo**  
**Resistencia - Chaco, ARGENTINA**

**For more information on the Indian people of Argentina, subscribe to:**  
**La Voz de las Primeras Naciones**  
**Casilla de Correo #49, Suc. 3-B**  
**1403 Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA**



MANOC Pro fessor de Ajiitini dia 12