



Bolivia



Photo Wayne Bernhardson

Aymaras herder with their Llama

IN SEARCH OF UNITY

INDIAN AND CAMPESINO LEADERS MEET IN LA PAZ

“Nearly 150 Indian leaders from the La Paz provinces came together in a planning and consciousness-raising meeting to consolidate the Assembly of Nationalities,” reported Zenobio Quispe, permanent secretary of the Federation of Campesino Workers of La Paz (Tupaj Katari).

During the event, campesinos of La Paz, struggling for unity, reiterated the need to establish their own political party and assembly of nationalities, and determined that the Indian confederation should be formed, under its own laws, and its own political constitution “until Aymara, Quechua, Guaranés and other nationalities assume power.”

The participants reject the celebration of the quincentennial because Oct. 12 is a date of pain and mourning for campesinos and Indians of the continent. For this reason, they will demonstrate with a reaffirmation of their cultural identities and

against ethnocide, genocide, and the destruction of cultural values.

Ideological and Political Unity

The participants will ask professionals committed to the cause of Native peoples for their support in creating documents and school texts, both historical and otherwise, which will encourage Native cultural values.

“This first meeting has been positive, because with the initiative of the campesino and Indian authorities, we have accepted the responsibility of strengthening our organizations,” said the Director of Tupaj Katari at the conclusion of the meeting. He indicates that the most important step is to organize because the Indian, campesino, worker, and popular movements have been weakened in the current political climate. “In spite of the adverse situation, campesinos and Indians have accepted the great challenge of establishing the assem-

bly of nationalities and a political party, to provide an alternative for the marginalized and oppressed sectors of Bolivia.”

Seventh Congress

The seventh congress of the Federation of Campesino Workers of La Paz (Tupaj Katari) will be held Dec. 20—22. At this event the Federation will discuss the situation of the campesinos, who categorically reject property taxes and demand that the government fulfill the numerous obligations it has made to agricultural workers.

The Federation of Campesinos of La Paz, which seems to be consolidating itself after several actions which were interrupted by official militants, “has decided to form a new pluralist executive committee, but only with leaders who fight for the people and not with those who have sold out to the oligarchy’s parties.”

Source: *Semanario Aquí*
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