

Julia Macuxi: "I'm Going to Continue in this Struggle"

Julia Macuxi is a Macuxi Indian from the Maloquinha Village in the Serra do Sol Raposa. She is 26 years old, has 6 children and is the wife of Gilberto Macuxi. Her statement:

"Gilberto [Macuxi] and I left the village in 1980, expelled by the large landholders. They wanted to take our land and we didn't know our rights.

"Our work here in the city is with our relatives. They come from all parts of Roraima and look us up to help them with their problems with FUNAI (the government's Indian agency). I'm part of this struggle and I'm also a representative of the Chiefs (Tuchauas). Since I haven't gone to school and don't have a profession, I don't have any means of surviving in the city. My profession is in the village—hunting, fishing, cultivating our crops, and making *cachiri* (manioc beer).

"Up until now, there hasn't been a good FUNAI representative to help the Indians. We don't trust them because they sell and give away our land to the large landholders, mining companies and to *Calha Norte* (a Brazilian military project). Once, when I went to my village, I was attacked by gold prospectors who were trying to kill Gilberto.

"We want our brothers in the United States to help us in our struggle by informing people of our situation—because I'm going to continue in this struggle with my relatives."

Tikuna Massacre—Update

A dangerous atmosphere of prejudice continues against Tikuna Indians in Brazil's upper Solimoes region, where 27 Indians were massacred in March. On May 19, the body of Francisco Otaviano was found, and Indians claimed there were visible marks of violence on his body. Authorities have said his death was due to "natural" causes. At about the same time, Oscar Castelo Branco and others allegedly responsible for the

Tikuna massacre were released from jail, prompting a celebration with fireworks in the town of Benjamin Constant.

Edson Oliveira, regional vice-president of the Brazilian Bar Association in Manaus, and responsible for assisting the Tikuna case through the organization's Commission on Human Rights is worried about pursuing the case through the local courts. While waiting to learn the basis for the Federal tribunal's decision not to hear the case in a Federal court, Oliveira is worried that more deaths might occur due to increasing tensions between Indians and non-Indians.

After a visit to the community last April, and interviews with local representatives, the police chief, FUNAI representatives, the local judge and the Indians, the lawyer verifies local authorities' strong unwillingness to resolve the case. He says wood and rubber extracting companies are spreading rumors that the Tikuna would poison the town's water and mix glass particles with the flour they produce and sell to the town. This, according to Oliveira is extremely unlikely as the flour is the Indian's main income source.

The Brazilian Press Association, during the celebration of its 80th anniversary in defense of human rights, expressed its repudiation of the Tikuna massacre.

In response to the Tikuna massacre, SAIC sent an Urgent Action Bulletin requesting letters and telegrams to be sent to the Brazilian authorities in protest of this atrocity. We wish to express our appreciation of solidarity to the hundreds of supporters who responded to our request.

