

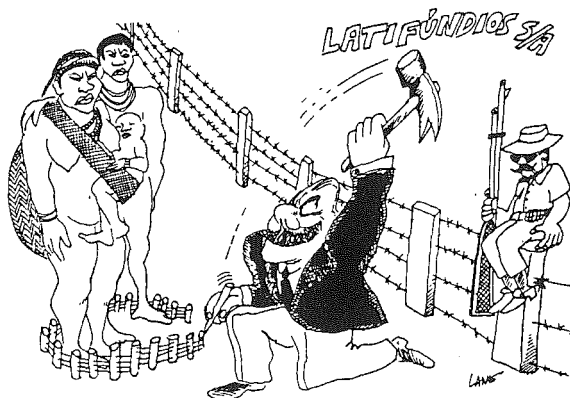


IN MEMORIAM: FRANCISCO MENDES FILHO (1944-1988)



Chico Mendes worked to forge an Alliance of the Peoples of the Amazon.

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On December 22, 1988, "Chico" Mendes, President of the Rubber Tappers' Union of Xapuri, Acre, was gunned down by an assassin hired by cattle ranchers. During his lifetime, Chico Mendes worked to forge an alliance between rubber tappers and Indigenous people of the Amazon, viewing both groups as common victims of the predatory destruction of the rainforest. Chico Mendes' work lives on through a new foundation in his name which will support the rubber tappers' struggle.

According to Chico Mendes, "I think this alliance that we are starting to bring into being as the alliance of the peoples of the rainforest is what I consider to be one of the most important steps forward in the struggle in defense of Amazônia.

For more than 100 years, the rubber tappers were used by their bosses here in Amazônia as slaves—used against the Indians, to massacre those Indians who were the legitimate owners of these forests. Today, an important awakening has taken place, where the Indian and the *seringueiro* have now discovered that they are not enemies—that it was those who caused this fighting who were the real enemies then—and that the real enemies today are those who are devouring and devastating our rainforests, and who want to finish off Amazônia."

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WHAT YOU CAN DO: Donations may be sent to the Chico Mendes Fund, c/o the Environmental Defense Fund, 257 Park Ave So., New York, NY 10010.