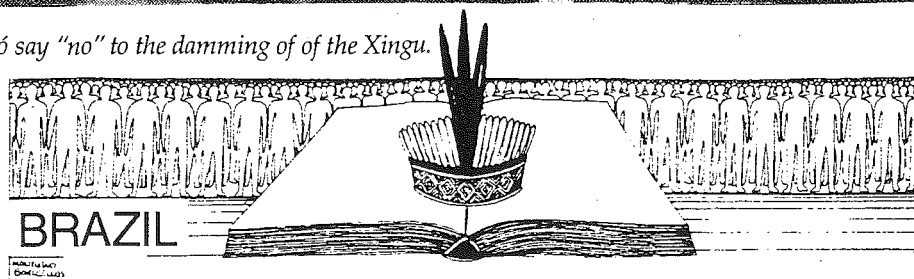


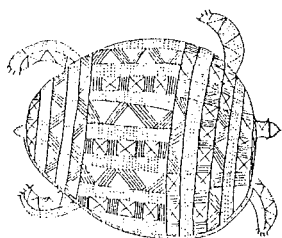


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*The Kayapó say "no" to the damming of of the Xingu.*



## KAYAPO ORGANIZE OPPOSITION AT HYDROELECTRIC DAM SITE



The Kayapó of the Xingú River region, incensed over the prosecution of two of their leaders by the Brazilian government, and wishing to take direct action to oppose a series of dams planned for the Xingú, convened a meeting February 21-26 to mobilize opposition to the hydroelectric projects. Kayapó organizers brought together nearly 1,000 Indian people from the Xingú region at the site of Kararaô dam, and they plan to establish a permanent settlement at the dam site in order to more closely monitor the surveying and construction activities.

One of the Kayapó indicted by the government, Bepkororoti (Paiakan), who was charged with for treason under the "foreigner's law" for criticizing the government's hydroelectric plans, recently visited seven countries, including the U.S., to enlist international support. The Kayapó have come out in opposition to a \$500 million loan to the Brazilian electric power industry under consideration by the World Bank, which would facilitate the construction of the Xingú Dams. In October, Bepkororoti's co-defendant, Kuben-i, was refused admission to the courtroom in Belém for appearing in traditional Kayapó dress and warpaint. The judge then ordered the two to undergo psychiatric testing to determine their "fitness" to stand trial. The charges were finally dropped in early February

Among the Native groups summoned to the meeting were the Arara, Parakanã, Xipaiá, Kuruaia, Arawete, and Asuriní, all of whom would be impacted if the dams were built. The date chosen for the meeting conformed with the Kayapó calendar, and the festival of new corn was concluded in Altamira, the site of the meeting.

Bepkororoti issued a call for international support for the Kayapó's initiative in defense of the rainforest:

"The forest is one big thing—it has people, animals, and plants. There is no point saving the animals if the forest is burned down; there is no point saving the forest if the people and animals who live in it are killed or driven away. The groups trying to save the races of animals cannot win if the people trying to save the forest lose; the people trying to save the Indians cannot win if either of the others lose. The Indians cannot win without the support of these groups, but the groups cannot win without the support of the Indians who know the forest and the animals and can tell what is happening to them. No one of us is strong enough to win alone—together, we can be strong enough to win."

**SOURCE:** Ecumenical Center for Documentation and Information (CEDI), Av. Higienópolis 983, CEP 01238 São Paulo SP, Brasil. For more information on the meeting, and how you may assist the Kayapó in their effort, please contact SAIIC.



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*Bepkororoti (Paiakan): "No one of us is strong enough to win alone."*