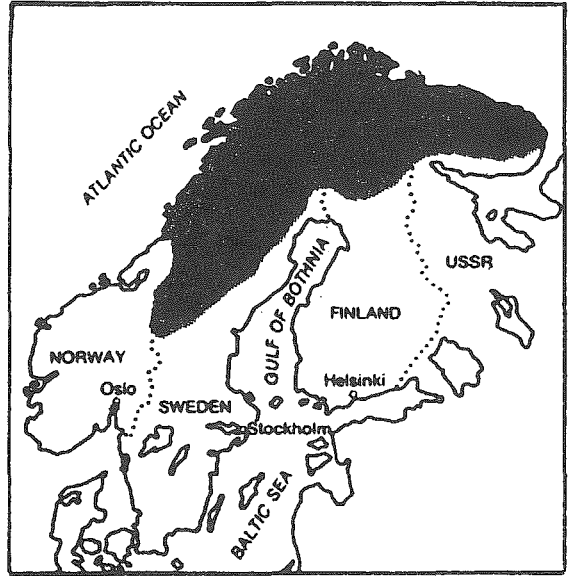


NORDIC COUNTRIES

Sami Issue Statement On Nuclear Pollution

Like many Indian organizations in North, South, and Central America, the Sami are members of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples. Their homeland covers the northern regions of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Soviet Union. During the many centuries they have lived in this arctic climate, the Sami have developed a culture which is centered around reindeer husbandry. Among the serious consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Union last spring was the contamination of much of the Sami homeland with radioactive fallout. Especially in Norway and Sweden, the national governments declared that Sami reindeer meat was too contaminated for human consumption, which dealt a serious blow to the Sami economy. The following statement on this situation was adopted by the 13th Nordic Sami conference held at Are, Sweden, September 13-15, 1986.



"It is obvious that our existence is based on a natural milieu and any marked worsening of the milieu will immediately have the most negative consequences. In a situation which is already serious, we and our way of life are now threatened by dangers connected to atomic power. The area threatened by radioactivity is limited to the South Sami region, but the consequences represent a threat to the whole of the Sami people.

"The Sami Conference requests that the Nordic countries assume full responsibility for negative economic and other consequences resulting from radioactive fallout in Samiland for the Sami and their existence, not only for the present but for the future as well. Even though the present situation requires immediate and special economic help and planning, this assistance must not, in the long run, threaten the basis of Sami life. We further require that the Nordic countries together with Sami organizations work out a common program for the present and future. The Sami Conference requests that the governments of Finland, Norway, and Sweden support this resolution."

