

Dedication

This issue of the SAIIC Newsletter is dedicated to Brother Bill Wahpepah, who died January 2 in Oakland, California, at 49 years of age.

As a friend said at the time of Bill's death, "His life was a celebration of the primacy of the creator and of the traditional ceremonial Indian ways. Around the world people will carry on Bill's work with the strength and wisdom he gave everyone."

A leader of the American Indian Movement and a supporter of SAIIC, Bill was one of the people most interested in fostering brotherhood and solidarity among all Indian people of the hemisphere. The following message from Bill was tape recorded in July, 1982, and carried to Peru by a friend, where it was played to a number of Indian groups and at meetings where replies were taped and sent back to Bill.

"Greetings, my relatives. My name is Bill Wahpepah and I am Kickapoo/Sauk-Fox Indian from North America. I want to tell you that we are very concerned about all of our people in this hemisphere and we want to know from you if you would communicate with us. There are stories among our people that before the colonizers came and long before the Europeans came to us, our people had all these good things to communicate with each other. And these many different ways to pray and protect this earth and respect this earth were commonplace to us.

"We want to reach out to that commonality so that we can grow and we can make our people live. We are urging you to communicate with us, to participate in a movement to join all Red People of this hemisphere so that we can contribute to the rest of the world our philosophy of our Mother the Earth, and to bring about peace on the Earth, and to make a good future for all of our children. Now we can begin communication, and we can rediscover the family ties that we once knew so many centuries ago. I thank you for your time, and we send you greetings of solidarity and love from peoples from North America. And we look forward to visiting with you in person, and singing songs, and dancing together with you, and praying with you."



Photo courtesy International Indian Treaty Council

SAIIC promotes exchange and unity among all Indians of the Americas by making information available and by making increased direct communication possible. SAIIC also makes South and Central American Indian issues and culture known to the general English-speaking public. The *Newsletter*, one of SAIIC's projects, reflects indigenous perspectives of the Americas.

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