

## MEXICO

### Community In Oaxaca Struggles For Land

The Zapotec community of San Juan Jaltepec in Oaxaca has appealed for international assistance to maintain their community land, which the Mexican government has given to other parties. The community, which currently numbers more than 2,000 people, has lived on the land for hundreds of years and holds a legal title through a Spanish land grant dated 1770. Several decades ago a portion of the land was set aside for the community of Santa Maria Yaveo, which now includes about 380 people. In 1975, Santa Maria Yaveo asked the Mexican government for more land, and the government surveyed San Juan Jaltepec's land with the intention of dividing it between the communities. Efforts to resist the survey led to a conflict in which three people were killed and nine wounded by government police on September 3, 1979. Since then some of the land in dispute has been obtained by ranchers from other states, and the general situation remains very tense. When members of the San Juan Jaltepec community attempt to cultivate the land, the new "owners" complain to the police, who evict them. San Juan claims the land was sold illegally through corrupt judicial proceedings and is prepared to defend the land with arms.



## CARIBBEAN

### Meeting Planned For August In Dominican Republic

The Inter-American Indian Institute, located in Mexico City, and the Museo del Hombre Dominicano (Museum of Dominican People), located in the Dominican Republic, are organizing the First Meeting of Caribbean Indians, to be held August 10-14, 1987, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The goal of the meeting will be to bring together Indian people, government representatives, academics, and non-governmental organizations to establish relationships among these groups and to discuss prospects for the future of Indian concerns. For more information, contact Alejandro Camino, Project Director, Inter-American Indian Institute, Insurgentes sur 1690, Mexico, D.F., Mexico.

### OAS Challenged on Neglect of Indian Rights

In the fall of 1985 the Inter-American Indian Institute, which functions under the auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS), held its Ninth Congress in Santa Fe, New Mexico (see *SAIIC Newsletter*, Winter, 1986, pp. 2-5). Under pressure from Indian leaders who had been invited to the Congress for the first time, the Institute agreed that all future OAS reports on human rights should include a section on Indian communities.

However, in the recently completed draft of the annual report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, there is no mention of Indian rights. SAIIC encourages Indian organizations in North, Central, and South America to write letters to the general secretary of the OAS urging the acknowledgement of Resolution 16 from the Santa Fe Conference in all statements on human rights. Letters should be sent to OAS Commission on Human Rights, 17th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.