

Three Arhuaco Indian Leaders Murdered

(Colombia) SAIIC learned from Amnesty International of the torture and killing of three leaders of the Arhuaco Indians from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Department of Magdalena. Luis Napoleon Torres, former governor and spiritual leader of the Arhuaco and mediator between the community and the Colombian authorities, was killed together with community leaders Angel María Torres and Hugues Chaparro in circumstances suggesting they may have been victims of extrajudicial execution.

On November 28, the three set out from Valledupar, the capital of the Department of César, on a bus going to Bogotá. According to eye-witness reports, the bus was stopped near a town called Curumani in the south of César by a group of heavily armed men wearing army uniforms, who forced the three men off the bus. On December 13, the bodies of Hugues Chaparro and Luis Napoleon Torres were found in an unmarked grave in Tomalinda, César, showing signs of severe torture. The body of Angel María Torres was found on December 14, in El Paso, César, also showing signs of torture.

Members of the Arhuaco community and the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) have denounced the killings to the Procurator General, who has a human rights monitoring role in Colombia, and to other national authorities.

In recent years human rights violations have occurred on an increasing scale in Colombia. Armed forces counter-insurgency operations have been progres-

sively intensified to combat the country's guerrilla groups. In areas where guerrilla forces are active, the local civilian population is often perceived by the armed forces as potential collaborators and has, as a result, been subjected to arbitrary arrest, torture, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution by army personnel and civilians working for them. Civic and community leaders, including leaders of Indigenous communities in areas where guerrilla forces are active, have been particular targets. The majority of abuses have been attributed by Colombian authorities to civilian "death squads" which it claims it is unable to control. However, independent investigations, including judicial enquiries, have concluded that many such groups operate under the command or with the support of the Colombian armed forces.

We urge you to send letters urging that there be an immediate enquiry into their deaths, the results of which should be made public and urging that all possible measures be taken to protect the lives of Indigenous community leaders to ensure that they are able to carry out their lawful activities. Send your appeals immediately to:

Presidente César Gaviria Trujillo

Presidente de la República

Palacio de Nariño

Bogotá, COLOMBIA

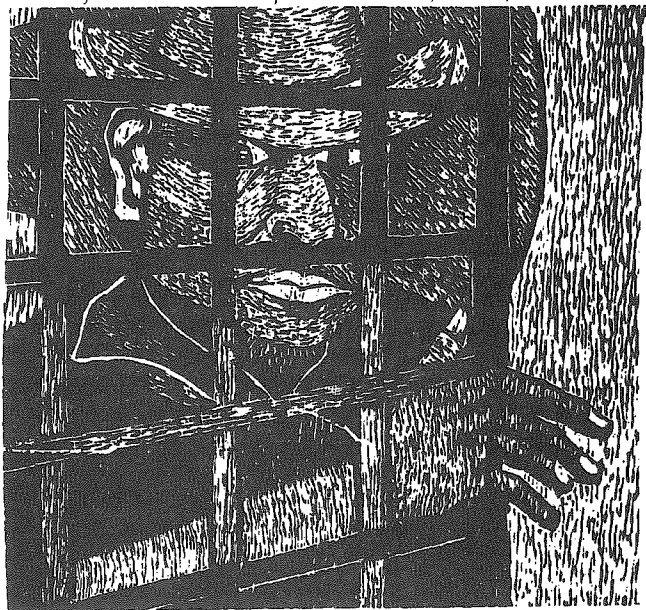
Telegrams: Presidente Gaviria, Bogotá, Colombia

Telexes: 396 41224 PRGEN CO

Felipe Quispe Huanca Arrested!

Released Due to Urgent Action Response!!

Woodcut from the Asamblea Zapoteca Chinanteca, Oaxaca, Mexico



(Bolivia) On the 14th of November 1989, policemen arrested Felipe Quispe Huanca, union leader of the *Federation of Campesinos Tupak Katari* of La Paz. He was held for several months in the Public Prison of San Pedro in La Paz. The government accused Felipe of being the perpetrator of assaults with explosives against the central offices of two political parties. Felipe vehemently denies these charges, indicating that they are reprisals for his trade union activities among Indian communities. Felipe has worked extensively with Aymara Indian communities. He was arrested on his return from a gathering of 5,000 Indian people, honoring the famed Indian leader, Tupak Katari, killed for his resistance to the Conquistadors. Felipe was held prisoner for months without formal charges or a trial.

SAIIC sent out an Urgent Action request in June of 1990 and Felipe Quispe Huanca was released in August. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to all those who responded to the Urgent Action. Please take the time to respond to as many of the Urgent Actions as you possibly can as they are often proven to be effective.