



NEWSLETTER

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## South and Central American Indian Information Center (SAIIC)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 7550, Berkeley, CA 94707 USA

Office: 523 E. 14th St., Oakland, CA (415) 452-1235

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### Brazilian Indian Leader Addresses Washington Conference

See Pages 2-4.



Photo: © 1986 R. Aguirre, G. Switkes/Amazonia

# Ecologists, Indigenous Groups Oppose World Bank Policies

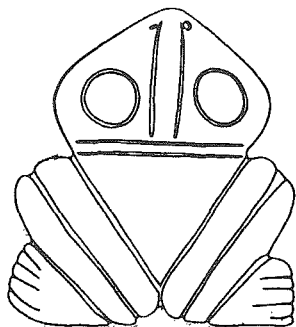
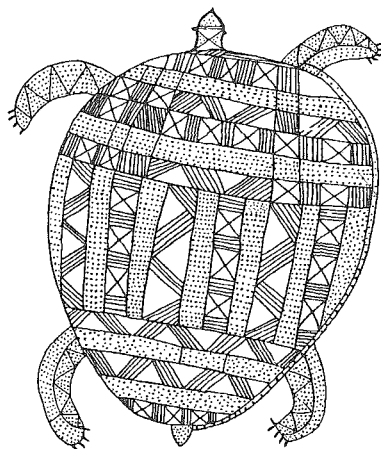
An international coalition of indigenous peoples support groups and environmental organizations met in Washington, D.C., from September 28 to 30 to oppose World Bank lending policies. The meeting, called "The Citizens' Conference on Tropical Forests, Indigenous People, and the World Bank," was timed to coincide with the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The World Bank is the largest financier of development projects in the world.

The alternative conference set the stage for an international campaign to pressure the World Bank to institute stronger measures to protect both the natural environment and the right of indigenous people to retain their land and way of life. "The Fatal Five" development projects were identified as targets of the campaign. They include Polonoroeste, a road-building and colonization project in the Brazilian Amazon; the Narmada Valley Dam project in India, which will require the relocation of two million people; transmigration in Indonesia, the largest resettlement plan in the world; a beef export project in Botswana, southern Africa; and the Three Gorges Dam project in China.

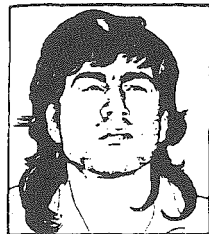
The need for environmental organizations in the industrialized nations to work more closely with Indians, peasants, and others in the Third World who live in areas affected by World Bank projects was a recurring theme at the conference. Ailton Krenak of the Union of Indian Nations (UNI) in Brazil and ecologist José Lutzenberger demonstrated the type of actions which will be taken to oppose World Bank projects with the announcement of the formation of the Amazonian Alliance of the People of the Rainforest. The group will unite Indians, rubber trappers, river dwellers, and landless people to confront challenges to their survival in the Amazon.

SAIIC coordinator Nilo Cayuqueo was featured with Ailton and two representatives from Survival International on a panel which denounced the effects of World Bank projects on indigenous people. Other participants in the conference included activists from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Indonesia, India, Kenya, England, and the United States, including Hawaii. The conference was co-sponsored by the Anthropology Resource Center, Cultural Survival, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Environmental Policy Institute, the National Audubon Society, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Rainforest Action Network, and Survival International. (For a report on an earlier meeting of the organizations, see *SAIIC Newsletter*, Winter, 1986. p. 17.)

The World Bank will provide about \$15 billion in new loans for development projects in the coming year. The Bank receives its funds from industrialized nations in North America, Europe, and Asia. The United States contributes about 20 percent of the capital of the Bank.



# Ailton Krenak Describes Indian Strategy To Resist Harmful Projects In Amazon



Ailton Krenak, Coordinator of Brazil's Union of Indian Nations (UNI), attended the Citizens' Conference of Tropical Rainforests, Indigenous People, and the World Bank. Ailton said he came to serve as "a witness to the disasters that development projects have caused for our people. I thought that it was very important to have a meeting with the taxpayers [of the United States] who give money to those projects." He also spoke about UNI's "project of life"—a plan to assure the survival of Indian people. The following are excerpts from Ailton's statements to the conference and from an interview with SAIIC.

*On UNI's Plan of Action:* "The Amazon Alliance, the Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Populations of the Amazon Basin, the Indian participation in the Constitutional Assembly, and my participation at this conference today have to be understood as a plan of action by Indian people, directed towards setting up broad policies which address the demarcation and the effective guarantee of Indian land. We have a project of life, but we are not going to be able to realize it if it is not articulated among the Brazilian people."

*On the Amazon Alliance:* "A significant proportion of the people of Amazonia oppose the unbridled and disorderly occupation of Amazonia being promoted by the government with financing from external sources. The people of the forest, Indians, river populations, and those such as rubber gatherers who live on extractive resources are ready to carry out an effective defense of the place where they live. The Amazon Alliance of the Peoples of the Forest is put forth as a social proposal. Each time it was posed as an environmental issue it

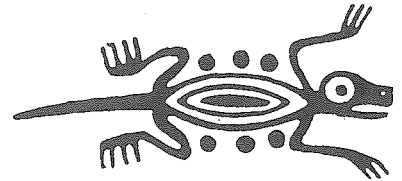
*Rainforest preservation is essential to Indian survival.*



did not succeed in changing the awareness of the Brazilian government. The people who are defending Amazonia are people who historically have used the land sustainably. This alliance is questioning the development programs being implemented by the government. We are seeking the solidarity of those outside the region who are concerned about what's happening in Amazonia and of those who are following what's going on there."

*On the Coordinating Committee of the Indigenous Populations of the Amazon Basin:* "This Coordinating Committee includes all the Indian populations of the Amazon region, including eight neighboring countries. We had a meeting in Itacoatiara [Brazil] in June and

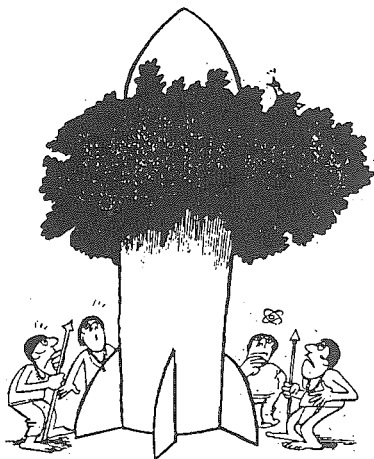
another in Brasilia to which we invited Evaristo [Nahuag, from Peru], who is now the Secretary General of the Coordinating Committee. On October 20 we'll have another meeting to set up the committee. Once this is done, we can carry out a program at an international level. We want to raise issues concerning government projects on Indians lands to an international forum, where people can have an opportunity to debate, examine, and analyze some of these projects. At a national level, we want to identify development projects, discover the origin of the capital invested in those projects, look into the possibility of interceding with those agencies, demand the re-evaluation of the viability of those projects, halt the operations of the timber companies, and demarcate Indian lands in the area, which include 70 percent of all Indian lands in Brazil."



*On Indian Participation in the Constitutional Assembly:* "Perhaps the greatest tragedy of our Indian people has been that we have lived under the boot of the government. Before, it was under the Service for the Protection of Indians; now it is under the National Indian Foundation [FUNAI]. Today, we want to keep our identity as Indians, but we don't want to remain apart from the formation of national policies where all Brazilians are participating. We are not going to win our struggle if we don't get the respect and solidarity of the Brazilian people. We are 0.17 percent of the Brazilian population—we are very few, and we can only keep our identity as Indians as part of a common national program.

That is why we are choosing representatives to the Constitutional Assembly, representatives who can legislate in Congress. Together with the support of other popular movements, we can draw up a constitution that at least assures the interests and principles of land and that acknowledges our cultural institutions. This is not a country of only one language. It's a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country. The elections will be held on November 15, and 530 representatives will be elected. We have four candidates from the Amazon and four from the Central Western region. If we can implant in the Brazilian constitution the principles of a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, we will no longer have a samba of only one note."

## Radioactive Wastes To Join Pollutants In Amazon?



The newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* has reported that the Brazilian military may be constructing underground installations in the Cachimbo Mountains for use as a nuclear test site and for storage of nuclear wastes from atomic powerplants.

The construction site in the Amazonian state of Pará was discovered by air. Many Indian peoples live within 300 kilometers of the site, including those in the Xingu Park and the Menkranoti, Kayapó, Apiaká, Rikbatsa, Kayabi, and Munduruku. There are also uncontacted groups in the area, including the Bararari and Parauari.

Nuclear physicists and geologists say the sedimentary soils of the region cannot guarantee a reliable resting place for dangerous radioactive materials. They express concern for the potential negative consequences if contaminants reach a major river system, such as the Xingu.

## COLOMBIA

# CRIC Issues Statement On M-19 Guerrillas

*The Cauca Regional Indian Council (CRIC) has published the following statement on the military strife in southwestern Colombia in the latest issue of Unidad Indígena (Apartado Aereo 32395, Bogota, Colombia).*

We reject the declaration of the M-19 guerrilla movement which was announced by radio September 6, 1986. The declaration, which was made after the group had militarily taken the community of Inza, stated that Indian people are in total agreement with the war that M-19 has declared against the government.

Indian organizations know that the interests of Indian people and our struggle are not compatible with the war now carried on by armed groups. We reject the war in Indian communities and territories that these guerrilla groups want to impose on us by force in clear violation of the rights of autonomy of Indian communities.

The M-19 movement falsely maintains that it represents Indian interests based on the fact that some Indians are active in this group. However, those Indians act as individuals and not as members of Indian communities.

Finally, we object to M-19's use of the names of Indian leaders to suit interests not compatible with those of Indian communities.

Popayan, September 8, 1986

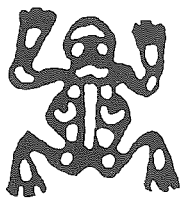
## Paez Leader Tells Pope Indian View Of History

*The following comments were made by Paez Indian Guillermo Tenorio to Pope John Paul II before a gathering of about 150,000 people in Popayan during the Pope's visit to Colombia the first week of July.*

Soon we will mark the 500th anniversary of the arrival of European conquerors in our land. Much has happened since then to shape the destiny of our people. We have experienced a complete upheaval of our culture. We complete 500 years of history made in the silence of pain, contempt, marginalization, of tortures which remain unknown because they are tortures of Indian people. Our history has been a struggle of life or death for our cultures. Many brothers and sisters have succumbed to the unceasing aggression of the conquerors, but many others have persevered in our struggle. The wild mountains of the magnificent Andes, the plains, and the thick Amazon jungles are deaf witnesses to all our sufferings and hopes. Our music, the sound and the image of Indian people, bears witness to the sadness caused by the pillage of our land, the undermining of our community organizations, and the undervaluing of our



*Guillermo Tenorio's speech to the Pope was interrupted by a Colombian Church official, inspiring the above cartoon in CRIC's newspaper.*



languages, our medicine, and our systems of community education.

But in recent years, along with a general awakening of human consciousness, we as people and as Indians have awakened. In this awakening we look with honor and love to the heritage of our past, and in this spirit we have begun to organize ourselves to be stronger. With steady efforts and much work we are recovering our land, to live there with our own forms of government, to proudly speak our own languages, to seek an educational system which facilitates our cultural and social development.

The road we have taken is difficult because the landowners have not hesitated to kill Indians, including women and children, to imprison us, and to militarize our territories. And it is important to acknowledge that a sector of the Church has also worked against us. Because we have struggled for our liberation they have slandered us by calling us subversives and suspended health and educational services. Despite this we maintain our faith in Christ and take refuge in the words you spoke in Mexico, when you said that the Church must be rooted in the people and committed to an identity in the culture of our communities.

There also has been a sector of the Church which has seen in the struggles of Indian people the sufferings of Christ for true liberation and for the right to life that motivates our struggle. Such representatives of Christ on earth who have been with us in our struggle are also persecuted and killed, as in the case of the deaths of Father Pedro León Rodríguez and Alvaro Ulcué Chocué, the only Paez Indian priest.

With this greeting to Your Holiness, we remember in our history the shedding of Indian blood, blood of native Americans, blood which nourishes the new world which we seek. . . . We are convinced that such martyrdom will bear abundant fruit.

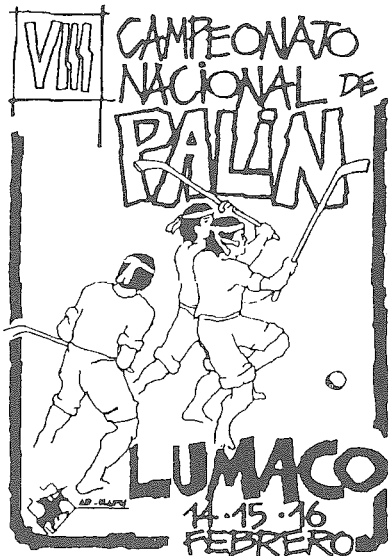
*(See Page 8 for the comments of a Bolivian Indian leader on liberation theology.)*

## Amazon Communities To Stage Indian Olympics

*The following story appeared in a recent edition of Unidad Indígena, the publication of the National Organization of Indians of Colombia (ONIC).*

Centuries ago the Witoto and Muinane people held sports tournaments where they played games called "tops," "ball," "spear," and "athletics." The games were mostly forgotten until about ten years ago when sports lovers began holding tournaments of European games. That reminded people of the traditional Indian games, and some priests organized a tournament called the Regional Indian Olympics of the Amazon. The first competition was held in 1974 at Chorrera, Amazonas, and since then the games have been expanded to include many Indian groups.

*Poster at left announces a palin tournament sponsored by the Mapuche organization AD-Mapu in Chile last summer. Palin is an Indian game similar to hockey which is played with bent sticks and a wool ball covered with leather.*



This year the games will be held from November 20 to 30 at Araracuara. The tournament will include two types of competition. Western-style games will include soccer, basketball, volleyball, and track and field. Traditional Indian games will include some that are modified to make them more competitive and others which are primarily recreational. "Tops" is played with two teams which have five to ten people each. Two kinds of tops are used, one classified as male and the other as female. Each team has a fixed number of tops. A large circle is drawn on the ground where one side must launch a female top. The other side uses male tops to try to remove the female top from the circle. "Ball" is played with a rubber ball about the size of a small soccer ball while dancing in the *maloca* (the traditional communal house).

## CHILE

### AD-Mapu Reports Assaults By Government

SAIIC has received several reports from the Mapuche organization AD-Mapu concerning continued repression of Indian people by the military government of General Augusto Pinochet.

José Santos Millao, the president of AD-Mapu, spent several weeks in prison after being accused along with four other Indian leaders and community workers from the Universidad de la Frontera in Temuco of participating in subversive activities. José was released in August.

On August 26 local police raided the building where the AD-Mapu Cultural Theater Group (see *SAIIC Newsletter*, Spring, 1986, pp. 11-12) was rehearsing and forced everyone to lie on the floor while the director of the company and his wife were severely beaten. The group was attacked as "communist."

The unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Pinochet several days before the thirteenth anniversary of the coup which brought him to power was followed by numerous instances of government-sponsored repression throughout Chile. On September 11, the day of the anniversary, the Mapuche communities of Loncoyan Grande and Hueico Chico were invaded by ten vehicles filled with military police, local police, and civilians whose faces were painted black. Three houses were destroyed and three people were wounded, including Fresia Curin Chichual, 12 years old, who was wounded in the arm; Francisca Maria Reuca, who was wounded in the leg; and Carlos Huenticono Curin, who was gravely wounded by various shots in the stomach. Other people were detained, including Juan Curin Melin, Alfonso Loncomilla, Francisco Loncomilla, Vicente Loncomilla, José Evaristo Huenticono, and Gabriel Chicohuel, a member of AD-Mapu. Police deny any knowledge of their whereabouts and they have not yet returned to their communities.



*Members of the AD-Mapu Cultural Theater Group, whose rehearsal was raided by police in August.*



BOLIVIA

## Huarayo Leader Discusses Theology of Liberation

*The following interview with José Urnari, Huarayo Indian and president of the Center for Indian Communities and People of Eastern Bolivia, was originally published in Boletín del Campesino Indígena del Oriente Boliviano (Casilla 4213, Santa Cruz, Bolivia).*

**Boletín:** I understand that you participated in a seminar in Ecuador. What was the topic?

**José:** Yes. It was a seminar for clergy and Indian leaders. It was about Indian programs, and the main topics were land, Indian organizations, the old and new Church, and theology of liberation. For me it was interesting because we have had problems with Bishop Ñuflo de Chavez here in the local vicarate. He is trying to force the community members to work on his ranch instead of working for the community. I have denounced this internationally.

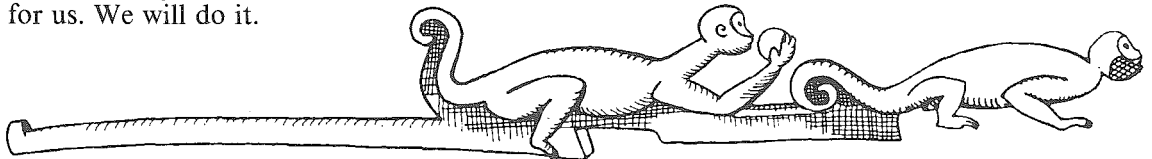
**Boletín:** What do you see as a positive result of the seminar?

**José:** I was glad to see that the church is trying to face reality, to go back and analyze the situation. The church is also aware that European religions, along with the "discovery of America," have destroyed Indian religions and languages.

Now they are trying to use the theology of liberation. So we Indians asked, "What is the theology of liberation." We did not know the term, but we have always lived it and practiced it. So then we asked, "What theology are you going to practice? Are you going to make theology for us, or are we going to make our own theology?" We and our ancestors have had our own religion. We Indians used our own approach at the seminar so they would not impose their ideology and western religion on us. Although there were Christians and Indian Deacons present, we did not accept their opinions since they are already influenced by Christianity. I told them about what the Church did in my homeland during my father's time. As punishment, they removed an Indian's pants, gave him fifty lashes, and then rubbed salt in the wounds. We have also been told that many Indians were burned alive for practicing our religion, having been accused of worshipping the devil.

**Boletín:** How do you see Christianity responding in the face of Indian religion?

**José:** The Church is beginning to respect Indian reality. I just hope that they do not use this knowledge in order to manipulate us. We must be very careful. We are going to practice our own religion. We may ask for assistance from theologians, but they are not going to do it for us. We will do it.





# Indian Groups In Eastern Bolivia Meet

From May 19 to 22, 1986, a meeting organized by the Center for Indian Communities and People of Eastern Bolivia (CIDOB) was held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, to discuss Indian land. Guaraní, Chiquitano, Mojeño, Ayorode, Mataco, and other Indian people live in this area of Bolivia near the border with Brazil. Among the participants in the meeting were the Farmworkers Union and the Federation of Women Farmworkers. The topics discussed included contradictions of the colonial process, such as market dependency; capitalist appropriation of Indian land as a basis for regional development; genocide; ethnocide; slavery; and destruction of the ecosystem.

The conference concluded with a statement stressing the need to promote a multi-national state where all social groups can participate in government decisions. It also called for a strategy of alternative economic development in which Indians will retain control of natural resources such as vegetation, minerals, and petroleum.

## PARAGUAY

### Mbya Apytere Resist Attack On Land By Mennonite Colony

Reports from Paraguay indicate that the Sommerfeld Mennonite colony has acquired title to land long occupied by Mbya Apytere Indians in the San Juan and Jaguary communities of the Caaguazú department.

Máximo González, Amselmo Miranda, and Juan Guato, leaders of the two communities, traveled to the capital, Asunción, Saturday, July 19, 1986, to denounce the most recent acts of violence against their people. They reported that on repeated occasions and by a variety of violent means the Mennonites had tried to evict the Indian communities from their land, in total disregard for their legal rights, which are guaranteed in the Indian Communities Statute and confirmed by a ruling of the Villarrica district court issued January 10, 1984. As a consequence of his declarations to the press, Máximo González was arrested.

The violations of Indian rights include the complete deforestation of an area of woodlands totaling 40 hectares, situated within the traditional territory of the Mbya Apytere communities. The land is expressly protected by the January 10 ruling, which states, "Ordering the cessation of all threatening acts until an agreement has been reached between the Indian community, the administration authorities and the inhabitants of the Sommerfeld colony." However, neither the district police nor the Institute of Indian Affairs has made any effort to ensure that the ruling is respected.

Declarations of support for the Mbya Apytere can be sent to the following officials:

General Germán Martínez, Presidente, Instituto Paraguayo del Indígena, Avenida Don Bosco 745, casi Humaitá, Asunción, Paraguay.

Willys Enns, Cooperativa Sommerfeld, Casilla de Correo 166, Asunción, Paraguay.



Name: Cesar Augusto Salazar Jerez  
 Born: October 22, 1946, Chimaltenango  
 Occupation: Driver

Circumstances of Disappearance: He was with some friends at the Blue Danube Bar. Some people came in wearing masks over their faces and told him to go with them, which he did. This was March 6, 1981, in the capital of Chimaltenango department. He has not been known of his whereabouts since. He is still behind, one of whom died after the incident.

Name: Francisco Chay Poz  
 Born: December 3, 1950, San Antonio  
 Occupation: Laborer

Circumstances of Disappearance: He was in Santo Tomás on November 30, 1981, when he left his house to have a pair of trousers. Since that day, he has not been heard of his whereabouts. As his mother said, the motives were for his capture and he is not involved in politics. He is now a son and only dedicated himself to his work.

Name: Nicolas Elias Tahon  
 Born: September 11, 1921, Guatemala  
 Occupation: Shopkeeper

Circumstances of Disappearance: He was selling goods to sell and that the incident happened the way from Xesuj to the town of the incident was March 4, 1981.

Name: Juan Sirín Celi  
 Born: 1950, Caserio  
 Occupation: Farmer  
 Circumstances of Disappearance: He was walking in front of the house approximately 8:00 AM.

Name: Timoteo Chay  
 Born: December 3, 1950  
 Occupation: Farmer  
 Circumstances of Disappearance: He went into town and did some work. He left behind his wife and not done anything. His wife and my husband reappeared.

Name: Cecilio Taxaj  
 Born: November 1950  
 Occupation: Farmer

Circumstances of Disappearance: He was the secretary general of the farm workers trade union. On the day of the abduction he was on his way to Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa, in the department of Escuintla, to do some food shopping. But before arriving at this town they noticed that a car was following the bus they were on. But to

everyone's surprise, when the bus reached the station and everyone got off, three armed men got out of a car which the bus had just overtaken, and they seized Cecilio Taxaj Coj by his arms and pushed him into the car, which had its door open waiting for him. Inside there were three other men armed with machine guns. His wife and children and other bystanders looked on, but nobody could do anything. To this date his whereabouts are unknown. He is still behind, one of whom died after the incident.

## Missing

Mommas' cry for the little ones long gone,  
 raised over mountains of oppression  
 during these revolutionary times  
 as old people wait by empty windows  
 for tears won't return the lost ones  
 and sorrow never leaves the living room.

Three Years, Four Years, Five Years!  
 Still, no word. Doubt is worse than knowing . . .

As the Dirty War grows without any headlines  
 thousands and thousands of people missing  
 throughout the land, assumed to be dead by  
 so many families who are wondering only what  
 has happened to all their little ones

missing for so long!

—Tom LeBlanc  
 (Sisseton, Dakota)



Occupation: Farmer

On Tuesday, May 4, 1981, he was in the square in Poaquil. He left the square and was charged against him at the time.

On Tuesday, May 4, 1981, he was in the square in Poaquil. He left the square and was charged against him at the time.

He went to town to sell his goods in the purchaser's car, when he was stopped by the police.



He was selling clothes in the market in January, 1981, when he was kidnapped by the men who demanded his personal belongings. To this day we have not seen his three young children.

Maria village

Circumstances of Disappearance: He was kidnapped from his home on Wednesday, December 29, 1981. He left three children. He had not done anything against the law. As his wife, I long for him to return soon to our home, because his children and I need him so much.

Name: Paulino Chacach Oxi  
 Born: January 26, 1953, San José Poaquil, Chimaltenango  
 Occupation: Bilingual education promoter  
 Circumstances of Disappearance: He was abducted from the house where he was living on December 30, 1981. He had no children. He worked in Ponimono village in the District of San José Poaquil.

Name: Catarino Mejia Ch  
 Born: November 29, 1948  
 Occupation: Radio repairman  
 Circumstances of Disappearance: He was kidnapped from in Maria village. He left four children. There were no charges against his abduction.

Name: Bueno Ventura Saj  
 Born: July 7, 1964  
 Occupation: Farmer  
 Circumstances of Disappearance: He was abducted in front of his house. He was 16 years old and single.

Name: Carlos Alfredo Xil Lozano

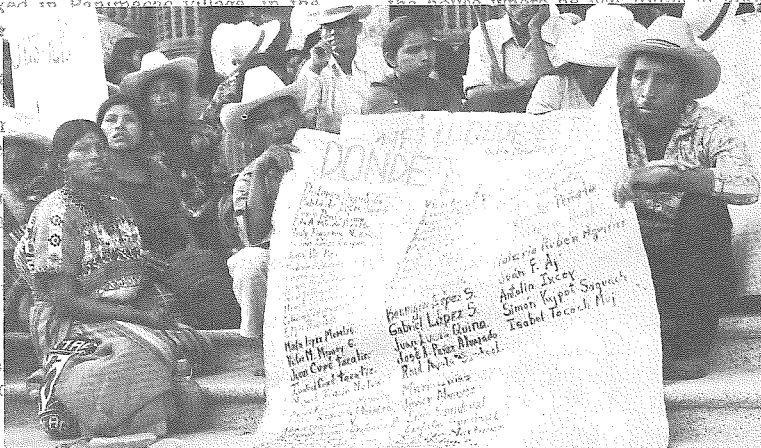


Name: Ceferino Sajvochol Gabriel  
 Born: August 25, 1963, Caserí Sarajmac, San José Chimaltenango  
 Occupation: Farmer

Circumstances of Disappearance: It was March 6, 1982, when he was in the patio of his house grinding corn. He had had a problem with a neighbor years back, a family problem. On this fateful March 6 the neighbor got drunk and out of spite went to a military barracks and accused him of being a rebel. The innocent man was taken by force from his own house and savagely beaten by the security forces. He had recently been married. He was setting up a new home and trying to make a better life. His wife was pregnant at the time.

Name: Nasario Set Culajay  
 Born: July 28, 1962, Paraje La Perdera, San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango  
 Occupation: Farmer

Circumstances of Disappearance: January 1, 1982, he left the house where he was living at about 8:00 a.m. He was named bailiff by the day from Xejuyú village. Nothing more has been heard from him.



The abduction took place in the morning. He was a husband, and she was a mother. Her father would look for him. Perhaps some of the neighbors had placed traps. Perhaps they said that it was a live in the village. He was married and five single.

These photos were taken at the Presidential Palace in Guatemala City in April, 1986, during a vigil organized by GAM (Grupo de Ayudo Mutual, or Mutual Support Group). GAM, which was founded in 1984, is the only openly active human rights organization in Guatemala, where the 40,000 people who have been kidnapped by army and police forces in the last 20 years constitute one-third of all documented disappearances in Latin America. Eighty per cent of the 1,200 families united in GAM to search for missing relatives are Indian. Families often travel long distances and make many sacrifices to participate in weekly GAM meetings and vigils in Guatemala City.

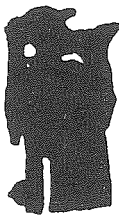
Photos: © 1986 Rick Droz

Name: Ernesto Serván  
 Born: April 20, 1964, Comán, Patzicico, Chimaltenango  
 Occupation: Town worker  
 Circumstances of Disappearance: He was on his way to Comalapa park to receive his salary and do some errands for his boss at the time of his abduction, which was carried out violently. He left his wife behind, and a child who had not yet been born, as well as his parents. We took him in when he was 16 months old because he was an orphan.

Comalapa, Chimaltenango

He was on his way to the park in order to grow corn. He was taken off to do their errands. His mother and his 74-year-old father left completely behind. His wife expecting a child. Shock of having her

He was captured in the park at exactly 8:20 p.m. Measurements taken for identification have been heard. He wants to know what happened. He is very well known in the area. He is a very poor person. No work.



## ECUADOR

# New Road Brings Multinationals To Runa Land

Threats to Indian land in the Ecuadorian Amazon have reached crisis proportions in the area around Loreto in Napo Province, home to approximately 3,000 Quichua-speaking Runa living over an area of 200,000 hectares.

The menace to Indian land and culture has been clear to the Loreto Runa since the discovery of oil in the Ecuadorian Amazon in the 1970's. Neighboring Archidona Runa living in the center of development were the first to lose their lands and can no longer obtain sufficient food from their reduced resource base. Pressure on Loreto Runa land is more recent, dating from the construction of the Loreto-Coca road in 1981-83. In response, the Loreto Runa have organized with other native communities to try to obtain title to their land. Between 1982 and 1984 the San José Runa cleared surveyor's lines in accordance with national law that allows them to determine their traditional boundaries. However, since 1984 no land titles have been granted to Indian communities.

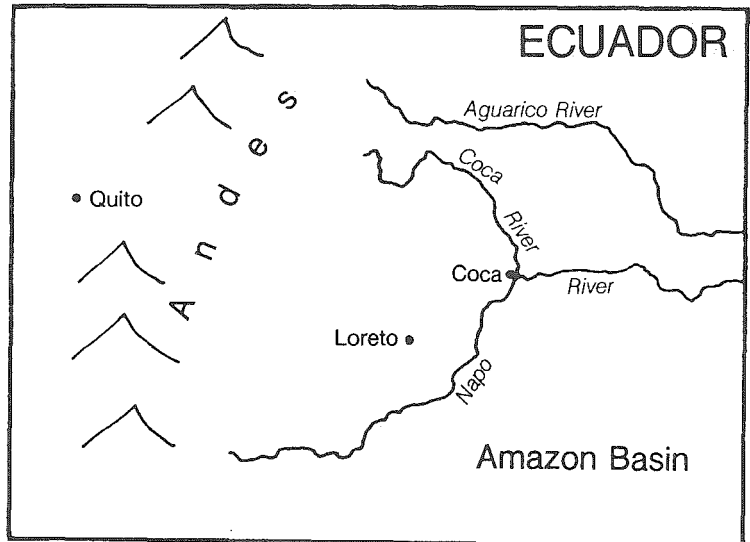
Instead, in mid-1984 a forest reserve of 11,000 hectares was established by the government in the Loreto area and declared to be "empty of all human settlement." Right to use the forest reserve was to be awarded to African palm oil enterprises. Although the "conservation zones" were rescinded in May, 1985, pressure on the Loreto area continues.

The Confederation of Indian Nations in the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) states that the government, multinationals, and large firms are working together to usurp Indian land (see *SAIIC Newsletter*, Summer, 1986, p. 8). In September, 1985, IERAC, the national land-granting agency, designated 60,000 hectares between the Napo and Aguarico Rivers to multinationals for the cultivation of African palm oil. British Petroleum was awarded a concession of 200,000 hectares in the Loreto area, and in February, 1986, IERAC announced a major new colonization project of 120,000 hectares along the Loreto-Coca road, an area where the company Plywood has been harvesting lumber for several years.

*Amanecer Indio*, the publication of CONFENIAE, reports that the Indian federation FOIN conducted courses to prepare the Loreto Runa to defend themselves. Delegates from 20 Runa communities have met to develop plans to legalize community land.

—Nickie Irvine

*Nickie Irvine and Ellen Speiser are making a film that features a community in the Loreto area of Ecuador. It focuses on Indian knowledge of natural resources which permits sustainable use of the rain-forest. For more information, call (415) 826-8432.*



*Sources in Ecuador also report the following developments there:*

CONFENIAE reports that many Indians are working on the African palm plantations because their traditional sources of livelihood have been destroyed. Wages on the plantations are low and efforts to organize a union have been blocked by police.

The community Corazon del Oriente near the Huashito River (northwest of Coca) has encountered thousands of dead fish killed by pesticides dumped into the river by an African palm plantation. According to CONFENIAE, for every hectare of rainforest land cleared for palm plantations, approximately 94,000 plants are destroyed. It is estimated that one million trees are being cut daily in the Amazon.

Attacks on Indian communities in Ecuador are not limited to the Napo region. The Confederation of Indian Nations of Ecuador (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, CONACNIE) has charged that on September 1 the Shuar community of Kukush was invaded by homesteaders. One person was killed and three were injured. In March, local authorities and military and civil police forcibly removed Indian families, including children and elders, from their homes at Centro Shuar Washikiat. Seven homes were destroyed there.

The critical situation for Indian people in Ecuador becomes even more complex as the government attempts to create confusion and diffuse the focus of Indian action by creating "official" Indian organizations which have no grassroots support in Indian communities. President León Febres Cordero and the ministry of education have also authorized the return of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, an evangelical group that was expelled by a previous government. According to CONFENIAE, SIL works to undermine Indian cultures, impose capitalist values, destroy Indian organizations, and co-opt Indians, such as those who are trained as technicians and then contribute to the destruction of the Amazon environment.

The external debt and the reduced price of oil have intensified the crisis which confronts Indian people as well as the rest of Ecuadorian society. The Ecuadorian Front for Human Rights indicates that of a total population of 8 million people, there are more than 350,000 unemployed. At least 1,200,000 other people barely subsist with minimal employment and live in extreme poverty. Inequality in the distribution of income is dramatic. The poorest 40 percent of the population receive only 13.3% of the gross national product, while the wealthiest 1.6 per cent receive 12 percent.

*For further information on the African palm threat to Indian people in Ecuador, see Andean Focus, Vol. III, no. 4, 1986 (198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038).*



Photo: © 1986 Nickle Irvine

*Runa from Loreto area of Ecuador.*

## PERU

# Yanesha: Another Indian Struggle For Land In Amazon Basin

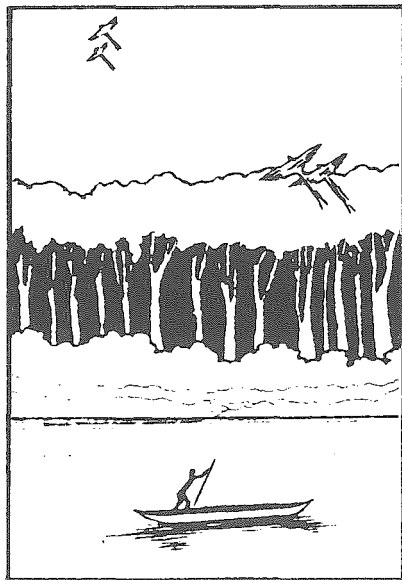
Through the insistence of Indian people and others sympathetic to their concerns, Peru maintains a process of granting communal titles to ancestral lands occupied and used by Indian people. Communities with titles are then officially recognized as *comunidades campesinas* in the Andean highlands and along the Pacific coast or as *comunidades nativas* in the jungle areas east of the Andes. There are currently more than 4,000 such communities in Peru.

There are also many Indian communities which have continual and habitual long-term use of their ancestral lands but which for a variety of reasons do not hold legal titles. Some communities are not recognized by the Peruvian government, others choose not to give the national government the authority to determine what always has been and always will be theirs, and others are too isolated geographically to actively participate within the national government's political or judicial spheres.

Ideally, communal land titles provide guarantees that protect the community from external threats to their land and that officially recognize on-going rights to function as an Indian community. However, in reality many communities face severe pressure from interests who wish to displace them, such as large landowners, mining companies, and lumber companies. Authorities from the national government often collaborate with those seeking to usurp Indian land. Energies of many communities are tied up for years with bureaucratic processes for establishing and maintaining title to their land.

The region of Oxapampa, east of Lima, has been a major corridor of access for development in the Peruvian jungle. Indian communities in the area experience extreme stress in maintaining their land. A major road which cuts into the area is bringing increasing numbers of *colonos* or homesteaders who are lured by the prospects of what mistakenly seems or may even officially be termed "unoccupied land." Ironically, many of the homesteaders are also Indian people, Quechua speakers who have been forced off their land in the mountains. For the highlanders, the major options are to migrate to the urban centers along the coast or try to continue farming by moving to the frontier towns of the jungle.

A study completed in July, 1986, by the Center for Amazon Research and Development (CIPA, Centro de Investigación y Promoción Amazonica, Av. Ricardo Palma 666-D, Miraflores, Lima 18, Peru) documents the long and vigorous struggle of the Yanesha Indians of the Comunidad Nativa Tsachopen near the town of Oxapampa to maintain rights to their land. In 1884 the Peruvian government granted the Catholic





church rights to establish a mission in the area and to function in a hazily defined role as "protector" of the Indians. The Yanesha have also been threatened by homesteaders and the Summer Institute of Linguistics, an evangelical organization. After intense effort by the Yanesha, they received title to their land in 1976. But the title was annulled in 1981 as a result of strong pressure from the Catholic church, according to the CIPA documentation. Since then tensions have increased in the area as homesteaders have attempted to invade Yanesha land. In 1982, the Comunidad Nativa Tsachopen filed a court document called an *acción de amparo* which should provide immediate judicial protection against violation of constitutional rights. But for four years technically illegal judicial tactics have blocked consideration of the petition and violations of Yanesha land rights continue.

CIPA states that it "has protested this grave situation to the Peruvian government, demanding effective intervention of judicial, administrative, and church authorities to reinstate territorial rights to these Indian people of the Amazon who have now been displaced."

Comunidad Native Tsachopen also makes an urgent call to national and international public opinion to lend support. They request that letters be sent to the following officials and that copies of the letters and any responses to the letters be sent to CIPA:

Dr. Alan García Perez, Presidente de la República, Palacio de Gobierno, Lima, Peru.

Señor Ministro de Justicia, Ministerio de Justicia, Lima, Peru.

Monseñor Luis Barbarén, Conferencia Episcopal de Acción Social, Rio de Janeiro 488, Jesús María, Lima 11, Peru.

## MEXICO

### Zapotec Weavers Discuss Origins of Designs

*Zacaría Ruiz Hernandez and Emilia Gonzales de Ruiz, Zapotec weavers from the town of Teotitlan de Valle, near Oaxaca, were in the San Francisco Bay Area for the month of July. They sold their weavings and gave demonstrations of weaving techniques. During a conversation with SAIIC, Zacaría made the following comments.*

I started to weave in 1958. My parents taught me. It is one of the jobs of parents to teach the children to weave. Already one of our sons and our daughter weave. The tradition comes to us through our ancestors.

Some designs, such as "flor de Oaxaca" have been used for many, many years. Designs like this are from the area. Also people are now interested in using the designs from the ruins at Mitla and Monti Alban. People who buy weavings are interested in these designs. Other designs I use are my own.

Now there is a rebirth of weaving using natural colors and dyes. People are asking their grandparents about the natural dyes that hadn't been used for a generation. Each family has its secrets on weaving and also

*Emilia carding wool.*



Photo: © 1986 R. Aguirre





*Zacarías working at his loom.*

preparing the colors and dyes. It is the mixture of the vegetable dyes that makes the colors, and each family has their special mixture.

About 1968 we started to use some modern designs taken from Escher and Miró in our weaving. People who wanted rugs showed us books and asked for special designs for a rug. There are others in my family and three more families who make these designs and other unique and personal designs. Almost everyone in Teotitlan weaves. It supports us fairly well. We don't have to take other jobs.

We have been using Navajo designs since 1978. We first saw these designs in a book. It was easy for us to make them because Navajo work is very straightforward, very geometric, like ours. So it was easy. At first we were not really interested in who the Navajo are. We didn't pay much attention to where the designs came from. But whatever design we use, we are conscious to do good quality weaving. We now do three Navajo designs. They sell very well. Now I see this as a kind of interchange with the Navajo. Someday I would like to go to New Mexico and live with them for a while. We should teach one another what we know best.

*Zacarías also spoke of topil.*

*Topil* is helping the community. There are five levels or *cargos* of the *topil*. One takes on more responsible *topiles* each time, depending on the conduct of each person. Maybe some day I will become president of the community. This is not for any salary. Everyone knows that we do the *cargo* in order to give our service to the people, the community. We were married for two years when they named me for a *topil*. The service is for one year. Then I rested and then they named me president of pre-school education, which I served for one year. Now I am serving again in the central committee of the church. There are two altars that I take care of. We work all day on the weekends. We leave flowers at the altar where we have our Gods, to worship our saints. We have responsibility for the whole community.

## Announcements

The National Indian Social Workers Association held its annual convention October 14-17, 1986, in Buffalo, New York. Among the topics discussed was a commission of inquiry on the status of Guatemalan children (see *SAIIC Newsletter*, Spring, 1986, p. 7). NISWA, in cooperation with Defense for Children International, USA, proposes the establishment of a three-member panel to review the status of Indian children in Guatemala. For further information, contact Angela Russell, Box 333, Lodge Grass, MT 59050.

An English-language edition of the *CISA News Bulletin*, published in Lima, Peru, by the South American Indian Council, is now available. The introductory issue includes articles on "Brazil: A Development Program of Death and Destruction," "Bolivia: Andean Community Memory, an Alternative Oral Archive," and "Chile: Mapuches in the City." A subscription for three issues costs \$7.00, which should be sent to CISA, Apartado 2054, Lima 100 Peru.

# Indians Are Dying And More Deaths Are Planned

Brothers and Sisters,  
I have to write this poem  
because  
of the pain  
in my heart  
for the deaths of thousands  
upon thousands  
of Indian people  
in Guatemala  
in El Salvador  
in Honduras  
at the hands  
of murderers  
(don't we know them well)  
trained  
armed  
supported  
and directly aided  
by the United States government!

And now, the Reagan/CIA/Pentagon  
is planning  
the invasion  
and destruction  
of Nicaragua  
using Somoza thugs  
rapists and torturers  
thrown out of the country  
to plunder once again!

I guess it's a test for us too,  
a moment of truth.  
Do we care?  
Do we care about  
Indians "south of the border"?

Each day hundreds of our  
brothers and sisters  
are murdered.  
Do we care?

Each day the Pentagon moves closer  
to the invasion  
to the assault  
upon Nicaragua.  
Do we care?

This poem requires an answer.  
What will you do?

Can you write letters to senators  
and representatives?  
Can you get a resolution  
from your tribal council?  
Can you get your tribe to  
protect its young men  
from the draft?  
Can you demonstrate?

These are Indians who are dying,  
Can't you hear their cries?  
Tens of thousands are  
refugees in Mexico.  
Can't you feel their sorrow?

This poem requires an answer.  
What will you do?

The Indian wars are not over.  
Reagan's "west"  
has just gone  
"south."

—Jack D. Forbes  
(Powhatan-Renape and Delaware-Lenape)



# Treaty Council Acts On Central America

A number of issues related to Indians of Central America were discussed during the 11th Annual International Indian Treaty Council Conference, held at Big Mountain from June 2-8.

On Guatemala, it was resolved that the IITC condemn emphatically the repressive actions of the army and the government of Guatemala against our Indian Brothers and Sisters, especially in the case of the "Model Villages" and other manifestations of militarization of the population.

On Nicaragua, it was resolved that the IITC support the Nicaraguan revolution and the self-determination of the Nicaraguan people, that the IITC support the peace dialogue and ongoing negotiations working toward autonomy for the indigenous peoples of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, and that the IITC condemn the U.S. war against Nicaragua, including aid to the contra forces, as this is detrimental to the efforts of the people of Nicaragua to achieve peaceful autonomy, unity, and peace, and causes great suffering among the Indian peoples of the Atlantic Coast, and all the peoples of Nicaragua.

In addition, the commission on refugees and migrant workers resolved that the United States government should discontinue the abuse of refugees and migrant workers as well as the manipulation of the situation of said peoples for its own political and economic motives. For more information regarding the conference, contact the International Indian Treaty Council, 1259 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94103.



## SAIIC Newsletter Begins Third Year

With this issue, the *SAIIC Newsletter* begins its third year of publication. Two years ago the first issue was a legal-sized sheet of paper photocopied on both sides. As contributions of time, money, and information have come from all corners of North, Central, and South America, both the content and our form of presentation have grown considerably. We want to thank the many people who have worked together to give this newsletter its unique character. We plan to continue publishing an always-improving newsletter which brings information on South and Central America from an Indian perspective and which promotes unity among all Indians of the Americas.

With the next issue (Winter, 1987) we will be increasing the subscription rate to \$8.00 per year. So subscribe now at the \$6.00 rate. This increase is necessary to keep up with printing and mailing costs. But we also want to be sure that the Newsletter is available to all who want to read it. If you are imprisoned or otherwise do not have the money for a subscription, please let us know and we'll be sure you receive your copy. Otherwise, we need paid subscriptions from you and your friends! Please subscribe. It helps us to continue along this road.

There are other ways you can help us, too. Please send material for publication or suggestions that will help improve the Newsletter. We are also looking for a more creative name than "Newsletter" but so far haven't come up with the right one. All suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

The Newsletter operates on a shoestring budget. With a press run which has reached 2,000, the shoestring is getting



thinner and thinner. All donations to SAIIC are tax-deductible and may be earmarked for the Newsletter. Volunteers to help us with production and distribution are heartily welcomed. If you would like to contribute to our efforts, please write us at P.O. Box 7550, Berkeley, CA 94707 or give us a call at (415) 452-1235. Thanks. —*Susan Lobo*

Special thanks for work on this issue to Juan Bottasso, Aldous Cardarelli, Sandy Davis, Rick Droz, Jean Ann Jensen, Judith Stronach, and Karen Turtle.

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## NEWSLETTER

To receive the SAIIC Newsletter for one year please send a donation of \$6 for addresses in the United States, Mexico, and Canada or \$8 for addresses elsewhere.

## PUBLICATIONS

*Working Commission Reports: Second Conference of Indian Nations and Organizations of South America. Tiwanaku, Bolivia*, published by SAIIC, 1984, \$3.

*Journey to the South*, K'uu yaa Tsa-wa, published by SAIIC, 1986, \$1.

## RADIO SHOW

The SAIIC radio program "South and Central American Indian Update" is heard the first Friday of each month at 8:00 p.m. on KPFA FM 94.1 in northern California. One hour tapes can be purchased for \$8 each.

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Photo: © 1986 Rick Droz

*Indian vigil in Guatemala City seeks information on missing relatives. See Pages 10 and 11.*

SAIIC/Intertribal Friendship House  
523 E. 14th St.  
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