



# Cultural Survival Inc.

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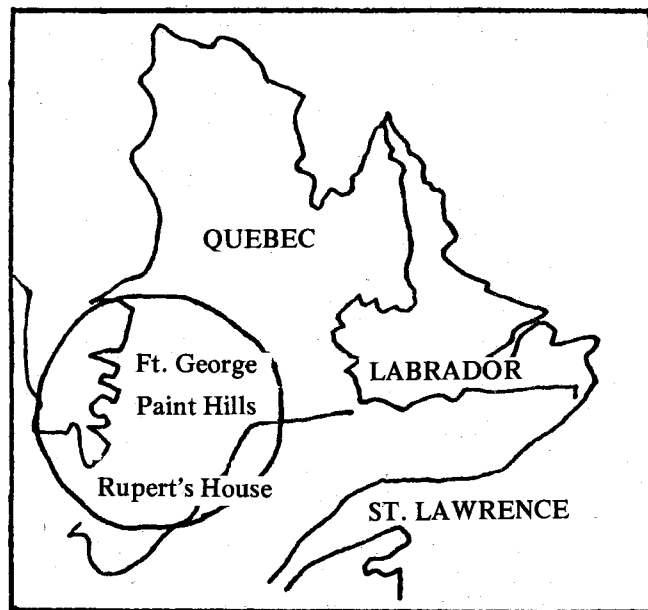
Number 1

## JAMES BAY

In 1971, when Quebec's then-Premier Bourassa announced his plan to "...harness the hydroelectric energy of rivers running into James Bay," he made no mention at all of the effects of this proposed sprawling James Bay Hydroelectric Project on the nearly 6,000 Cree Indians and the nearly 4,000 Eskimos living in the James Bay region. The Crees and Inuits in a Montreal court attempted to defend their ancestral homeland from being flooded:

On November 15, 1973, the Superior Court of Quebec, in a decision by Mr. Justice Albert Malouf, granted petitioners representing Cree and Inuit peoples an order of injunction against The James Bay Development Corporation. A week later, the Court of Appeals for Quebec suspended the lower court's injunction "until the appeal's validity could be determined." On December 21, 1973, the Supreme Court of Canada (by a 3:2 decision) refused an appeal to native petitioners. Subsequently, an "agreement-in-principle" as to land-claims was signed between native peoples, the federal and provincial governments on Nov. 15, 1974. However, the Court of Appeals shortly thereafter gave a judgment *reversing* Maleuf's original decision; because of the agreed settlement, the case was not appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. Peter Cummings of International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs writes, "If the Quebec Indians and Inuits had been ultimately successful in court, undoubtedly the government of Quebec would have expropriated, very probably, through a specific piece of legislation. This would have resulted possibly in further court action based on the argument that the Province of Quebec does not have constitutional power to expropriate native lands."

The James Bay Hydroelectric Project, whose proposed completion date is 1985, will constitute a network of 170 dams and dikes, and 145 million cubic meters of landfill to retain the large reservoirs in the overall scheme. Wildlife ecologist Robert Cardell, who has done field research in the region for over ten years, states, "The situation, ecologically, is devastating: the effects of moving such vast amounts of land, and the subsequent flooding and re-routing of hundreds of lakes, ponds, and streams — all in a region rich with the wildlife on which the Cree and Inuits have depended for 5,000 years — is clearly a brutal shove toward the extinction of the Indian and Eskimo way of life, another invention out of the boredom and megalomania of a



Cree Communities In James Bay Region

bureaucracy who can only grab at the present, while gobbling up the natives' past and future in the process. The James Bay Project will literally drown burial sites, and flood the future. It is abominable — and all in the name of megawatt power, progress and job opportunity — what a hideous, ethnocentric trinity."

Citizens of Quebec were told by Hydro-Quebec that their province would have a shortfall in electricity by 1980 if it were not for the James Bay Project. Moreover, in 1980 Quebec is selling power to New York at an already contracted price of 6.3 mills a kilowatt and Quebec will be paying four or five times that price for James Bay power for its own use. In addition, now-Premier Rene Levesque has visited throughout all New England, peddling Quebec's hydroelectric power which Vermont and New York have already purchased. Quebec managed to export \$134 million worth of power in 1978.

The James Bay land claims settlement of November 1975 is truly "historic" because it finally allows Quebec to

(cont. on p. 2)

## JAMES BAY (cont. from page 1)

exercise the full jurisdiction it has long intended over a territory acquired in 1912. In 1912, the Canadian federal government transferred the 410,000 square mile territory that had belonged to the Hudson Bay Co. to Quebec. The 1912 Boundaries Extension Act stated that, in accepting this territory, Quebec: "Will recognize the rights of Indian inhabitants in the territory. . . to the same extent, and will obtain surrenders of such rights in the same manner, as the government of Canada has theretofore recognized such rights and has obtained surrender thereof, and the province shall bear and satisfy all charges and expenditure in connection with or arising out of such surrenders."

In practice, this meant that Quebec had to sign treaties with the territory's Indians, following the practice established by Canada in its western provinces.

However, successive provincial administrations did nothing. The territory's Indians were allowed to remain relatively undisturbed until 1971 when Premier Bourassa announced his hydroelectric power plan.

Under the terms of this massive 1700-page agreement, the Cree are left with about 1.3% of their traditionally used hunting and fishing lands. The other major element of the settlement is that the nearly 10,000 native people of the James Bay region receive \$225 million over several years. Discounting for inflation, the *per capita* present value of a share could be as little as \$7,000. Yet, as Cree hunter Job Bearskin said, "There will never be enough money to pay for the damage that has been done. I'd rather think about the land and think about the children. What will they have when the land is destroyed? The money means nothing."

In the agreement, lands in the territory are divided into three categories:

CATEGORY ONE sets up "modified reservations" for the exclusive "benefit" of the Cree and Inuit. The Cree get a total of 2,158 square miles, and the Inuit 3,250 square miles of "category one" lands. There is a different ownership structure for Cree and Inuit because the Cree fall under the federal Indian Act, while the Inuit do not. In addition, this "category one" land is again divided into 1-A and 1-B lands. 1-A lands are under the control of the federal government, but in practice the federal government has transferred its jurisdiction to Quebec. As a result educational, health and police services will be provided by the province. Category 1-B lands are "for exclusive use of the Cree, but under full provincial jurisdiction, not subject to the federal Indian Act." For the Inuit, all "category one" lands are under provincial jurisdiction. Robert Cardel says of this part of the agreement, "Supposedly, the government has limited expropriation rights on "category one" lands, and must compensate the Cree and Eskimo for any loss of their lands. That's in the pact. But it just sets a precedent for continually pressuring the native people into selling huge chunks of land."

On so-termed CATEGORY TWO lands the Cree and Inuit will have "exclusive hunting, fishing and trapping rights, but the province retains full powers to develop these lands." If Quebec takes Category Two lands for development purposes it must, again, "compensate the Cree and Inuit in cash or other lands." The Cree are allotted just 24,899 square miles of Category Two lands, the Inuit 31,300 square miles.

CATEGORY THREE lands, most of the territory, will be "accessible to all Quebecers," but the Cree and Inuit will be allowed to hunt there year-round and will "have certain species of fur-bearing animals reserved for their

exclusive use." Robert Cardell again responded, "If there is one thing the Indian people and ecologists agree on, it's that under these new categories, those fish and mammal populations not literally drowned in the James Bay floodings will be depleted severely within 10 years. These Indian people know how to let the land rest, how to allow animal populations to replenish themselves by not hunting and trapping certain regions for several years at a time. With so little land left to native people, even this basic precept for maintaining ecological balance around James Bay is lost."

The official opening of the James Bay Hydro-Plants occurred in autumn 1979. There, today, remains fierce controversy between Cree and Inuits over the particulars of this land-claims settlement, and certainly over the James Bay Hydro-Project to begin with. Why was the long-fought settlement eventually signed by Cree and Inuits at all? Cummings writes, "The James Bay settlement is simply a forced purchase, an offer that could not be refused in the sense that no other government offer would be made. Construction on the hydro-electric project was continuing throughout negotiations. All provincial political parties supported the hydro-electric project. . ."

" . . . the James Bay settlement has no positive features at all, and indeed, is worse than having no settlement at all. The James Bay settlement fails in dealing with the two essential requirements in a land claims settlement. On the one hand, it fails to do anything significant to effectively preserve the traditional identity. Through the surrender of land rights the people are removed from their traditional identity. They retain only a surface title to about 1.3% of traditional lands. On the other hand, the settlement does not provide a mechanism to bridge the people into the new identity of the emerging industrial society in Arctic Quebec. They will not be the owners of sufficient lands to effectively involve them in non-renewable resource development. Moreover, the unwitting public believes fairness has been done and will not readily respond to the inevitable complaints of the native peoples in the future. Finally, the native peoples themselves will eventually show self-hostility to the fact that they 'sold out', and got nothing substantial in return."

The northern native peoples' culture and identity is based upon an intimate relationship with their lands and waters. In an autochthonous culture, the people are truly part of the very lands they occupy. Their land is not regarded by them as a marketable commodity simply because it provided their traditional livelihood, with a cash payment through a sale seen as providing a substitute for physical needs. Their lands and waters are an integral part of their total being. To the extent that relationship is compromised, they lose their identity. This is inevitable to some considerable extent, given the apparent attitudes, values, and perceived needs of the dominant society. But the native people do not want to sell their lands, and thus themselves and their heritage, for money. They do not want to give up their lands as part of a settlement. On the other hand, it seems inevitable that a very large part of the traditional land bases will be utilized for non-renewable resource development.

— Howard Norman  
for Cultural Survival

## A CREE TESTIMONY

Job Walks is a Cree man, fifty-nine years old, who had lived and hunted for over forty years in the areas altered by the James Bay Hydro-electric Project. This is part of a long narrative testimony concerning changes in his and other Indian people's lives consequent to the James Bay Project, translated for the CS Newsletter.

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"You ask about what happened. . . I'll tell you, first, that things happened to me *before* I had to leave my land. Before I had to pack things up and leave. Before the dam-builders arrived. This is what happened: the dreams became bad. It was (as if) someone told you a huge flood would hit your village, your house, but they did not say exactly when. They told you it would be here. Well, you must believe them because, in the past, they have proven they could say such things and show them to be true. They have said, in the past, that smoke coming from chimneys to the south in the cities will soon kill the fish way up here, north! Then one day you see fish choking and laying there on the shore. You have fished there all your life, and you see this. You are walking with a white person who has lived in the cities. This person has worked in the factories there. All day long, for many years he worked in them. You listen to what he says about this. How anger inside people working there caused this poison smoke. Sent up here. Then . . . you begin to understand him when he says . . . you believe this then. . . when he says a huge flood will come. So, then, you begin to think about this before it happens, and it gets into your dreams. And into your wife's dreams. And when she has a baby it is already in that baby's dreams. That is how it works, one of many ways it does.

And now, as you can see, we have little land to hunt on. So I have moved away, to here. I have the sad-anger in me now over this. It has teeth. It gnaws me. I have to fight hard to keep it from eating me. When I was a boy, the



"Cree Hunting Camp Under Water"  
from woodcut by William Mukeses

missionaries told us about a great flood. A bible flood. They said this was the only one, that flood. But they . . . this missionary, and others . . . did not tell their (kind of story) well. We tell this: that, in the old time, Wichikapachet cause a flood. He was walking around the earth, and he caused water to pour over some land — and afterwards, things got better. There were more fish, more places for moose to drink. More moose drinking. More moose to hunt. That kind of flooding that Wichikapache did, did much for the Cree. But these (meaning the James Bay Hydro-flooding) will drown that out . . . that story. Because that story was born on the land there, being flooded. After these floods, things do not get better for us. Things do not get better. Now you take the geese. . . the geese see what is going on, they have seen this. They will hate this greatly. This new water will not be like the old water to them. They will change their routes. That is just one thing! The geese. That is just one thing. Of many. . ."

† Cree Trickster Figure

## CHIEF OF THE PANKARARE INDIANS SHOT AND KILLED IN BAHIA

The Brazilian Press has recently provided us the following story of the circumstances surrounding the murder of the chief of the Pankarare Indians in the interior of the state of Bahia, Brazil (See *Jornal do Brasil*, 27 and 28/12/1979 and *Veja*, 2/1/1980). On 26 December 1979, Afranio de Lima, a local tenant labourer, killed chief Angelo Xavier with gunfire as Xavier and his young son walked near their home in Brejo de Burgo — a small town of 3,000 in the Catarina lowlands of Bahia.

Since the eighteenth century, Brejo de Burgo has been the scene of land disputes between the Pankarare Indians and Brazilian settlers and ranchers. These disputes were temporarily halted in 1975 when a group of anthropologists from the Federal University in Salvador, Bahia came to Brejo de Burgo to learn about the tribe of 12,000 Pankarare. The anthropologists were informed of the long history of the unresolved land question. They promised the Indians that they would try to help. The anthropologists brought FUNAI (National Indian Foundation — the

(cont. on p. 6)

The first of our series of Special Reports, the **Brazil Report**, is available. To obtain a copy send 75 cents plus 50 cents postage to Cultural Survival, 11 Divinity Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138.

Just before Christmas we received this brass pendant made by Martin Nettleship. We feel that this pendant is so beautiful in itself that it could be enjoyed even without knowing it is Cultural Survival's logo. Martin has offered to make a limited supply of these pendants which we will now give to people who contribute \$60 or more. (Martin Nettleship is a social anthropologist-turned-jeweler. He lives in the Appalachian Ohioan countryside.)



# ON BEING CULTURALLY PROTECTED TO DEATH:

## THE LAPPISH CASE

— Hugh Beach Uppsala University Sweden

A culture which does not change cannot survive indefinitely, yet too rapid a change destroys traditions and erodes the foundations of what we call culture. Encounters between two or more cultures force the minority or the weaker and less developed into a stressful environment which might demand a greater rate of change than its identity can survive.

The Lappish-Swedish encounter is such a dilemma, one I would like to bring to the attention of Cultural Survival, for without recourse to any bloodshed or oppression, the Swedes are today achieving their aims of northern exploitation. Yet, while protecting human life, the Swedish State is nonetheless dissolving the Lappish culture. In simplified terms, the scenario is something like this:

In the early days, the Swedish Crown could not afford to dispense with the Lapps and their reindeer herding, if their program of colonization was to succeed. For hundreds of years, Swedish pioneers were dependent upon Lappish contact for their survival. Moreover, the Swedish State did acknowledge the desirability of preserving the Lappish culture. In order to provide Swedish settlers access to northern resources, a stance of "compatibility" was adopted. Swedish agricultural expansion was not thought to conflict with reindeer herding (and indeed, *at first* there was room for all). This policy required, however, the legal recognition of Lappish herding rights, not necessarily Lappish minority rights. Thus, the Lapps as a group were not recognized as having land ownership rights but only rights of land use in order to herd. As crowding and conflicts increased in the North, these rights were confined to a smaller and smaller part of the Lappish population. Herders without many reindeer who tried to supplement their economy by farming found themselves with no more rights than farming Swedes.

Now had farming Lapps also been granted herding rights, this would have given them unfair advantage over Swedish farmers and jeopardized the Swedish program of colonial expansion. Therefore Paragraph #1 of the reindeer grazing law of 1928 states that only one of Lappish ancestry — specifically, one whose parent or grandparent has had herding as a steady livelihood — is eligible to become a herder and to be given "Lapp privileges." Not surprisingly, the number of Lapps eligible for herding Crops drops significantly with each generation. Today there are only about 900 active herders in all of Sweden, and the program for modernizing herding calls for a herder reduction of about 30%. *Herding rights are all that remain of traditional Lappish rights, and the number of herders is steadily being reduced.*

To this already deteriorating situation, a new twist was added by paragraph #9 of the Herding Law of 1971: Commercial herding organizations (there are about 45 of them) should not be allowed to engage in any activity other than reindeer herding (according to Paragraph #9 of the herding law of 1971). Meanwhile, as the number of reindeer needed to provide a family with a decent living rises steadily, and as the encroaching timber and hydro-electric power industries decrease the supportive capacity of the grazing lands, herding is less and less able to support the same number of herders at the same standard of living. Herding organizations need more than ever to engage in

economic activities other than herding. If, for example, the herding organizations were permitted to control and reap the profits from the growing tourism in the grazing lands, then the advance of tourism would not constitute such a threat to herding and would instead contribute to its permanence. As Tomas Cramer, leader of SSR, the Lappish Parliamentary Organization, points out, unless Lappish youth is provided with a Lappish alternative and with a chance to remain in the North, in the Lappish cultural milieu so that their Lappish identity can develop, Lappish rights will be retained by only a handful and the rest of the Lapps will be absorbed by the Swedish population in the industrial centers to the south. Already Stockholm has the second highest concentration of Lapps of any district in Sweden. Herding alone does not provide an economic base broad enough to sustain indefinitely a living Lappish culture. But, when asked why Paragraph #9, which constrains the economic activity of the herding organizations, is essential, the Swedish government replies in effect: We are interested in the cultural survival of the Lapps, and we cannot afford to let this sensitive herding culture be jeopardized through involvement with risky financial speculation.

The Lappish case provides a valuable lesson to those who might otherwise view the very real moral and practical dilemmas of cultural survival as overcome, once a "bad" majority becomes benevolent and ceases its inhumane actions. Those Lapps who lose their herding rights and who must relocate to southern Sweden lead usually very comfortable lives as full citizens of the Swedish welfare state. Still, there are many important ethical issues to be considered here. To combat ignorance and ethnocentrism is not enough. The very argument for the desirability of cultural survival can be turned around and used to freeze a culture beyond all chance of development in the face of demanded adaptation. Ironically, it is quite possible to "protect" a culture to death.

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## I SAY: I DON'T ACCEPT

I speak, I speak to Caracas  
to its people, to its men  
Wanadi has been my source  
Osedum, Osedum Wanadi  
The creation of people exists  
because I know it was that way  
The memory of my beginning is always here  
Because all that we have was created here  
The source of our food like Marawaka  
and the branch of the guayteyama that  
still exists and will always exist here. . .  
in our lands, those lands that speak in my tongue  
my land is this one, where my people live

It's mine because my community's here  
because my source, Wanadi, lived here  
in this land which I love  
just as you love the land of Caracas

Wanadi made good people with white dirt  
but he also made bad people  
Those were the Spanish, the French  
All those people came to the land of Caracas to do evil  
The whole population was swept up by them  
They were the same race as us  
They didn't have the strength to stop the white people  
After the people of Caracas were done with  
the bad people came to where we lived  
to where we still live today  
They're the bad white people  
They're the foreign missionaries we call Juruncu  
Wanadi gave them the iron to make machines with  
That's what my father told me

We, the Ye'kuana, we don't have any of that, so those  
people exploit us because they think they own everything

I say: I don't accept  
I don't accept the Catholic belief . . . the Evangelicals,  
because those beliefs go against our life. . . our way of being

They want us to forget them  
They tell us: "Don't make *ademi*, don't sing."  
They say to us: "Don't drink *yarake*."  
They say: "That's not the truth."  
That's the reason. . . that's why I don't accept.

I never wanted to become an Evangelical or a Catholic  
because  
I always wanted to maintain my own tradition, my own  
customs

Wanadi, no one knows how he began or who made him  
All I know is that he existed  
that he still exists

I ask for security and protection  
I'm not claiming anybody else's lands  
just those that belong to us:  
the headwaters of the Cunucunuma, the Ventuari, the  
Padamo and the Cuntinami. . . all those that speak in  
my tongue

I say that we are friends  
We live in the same land  
but we must respect each other to be able to live  
in harmony with our tribes  
I know that all this is very difficult to understand  
since we're all contradicting each other right now  
We're guilty for the presence of bad whites  
in our community

Yes, that's what I think

Barne Yavari, Ye'kuana Shaman, Venezuela  
translated by David Guss

## REPORT ON SALVINIA MOSESTA IN THE SEPIK

During the summer of 1979 I returned to Papua, New Guinea to continue field research among the Chambri (Tchambuli) people of the East Sepik Province. I arrived to find them devastated by a major environmental crisis. During the high water season of 1979 ninety percent of Chambri Lake was covered by a floating water fern originally from South America called *Salvinia molesta*. The spongy fern grows so thickly that neither canoes nor fish traps can be made to penetrate the barrier that it has formed. Since the Chambri are sedentary hunters and gatherers, who grow no crops but subsist entirely by fishing and by bartering fish for sago at markets reached by canoes, the effects of the fern have been catastrophic.

No one is sure of how the *Salvinia* was first introduced into the area. It is known that since 1971 the fern has spread throughout the Middle and Lower Sepik, now covering over 79 km<sup>2</sup> of the Sepik River and its articulating tributaries, lagoons and lakes, and affecting the subsistence of nearly 35,000 people. Because the Sepik provides it with near perfect growing conditions, the fern has spread rapidly, doubling in size every 2.2 to 11 days.

The government of Papua, New Guinea has allocated \$75,000 Kina to eliminate, or at least control the spread of *Salvinia* throughout the country. D.S. Mitchell, a consultant hired by the Office of Environment and Conservation, has suggested three possible methods. The first involves spraying the affected areas with herbicides, probably with paraquat or with AF 101 (a new herbicide developed by the Alan Fletcher Research Station, Ministry of Lands, Queensland, Australia). Unfortunately these herbicides are toxic, and the degree to which they will injure other aquatic organisms is unknown. The second method, biological control, involves introducing an insect, either the grasshopper, *Paulina acuminata*, the weevil, *Cyrtobagous singularis*, or the moth, *Samea/multiplicalis*. These insects have not been particularly successful in reducing the *Salvinia* infestation in Botswana and Sri Lanka. Moreover, they may not limit themselves to a diet of the fern, but may learn to consume the wild greens upon which Sepiks depend. Finally, the third method, mechanical and manual

(cont. on p. 6)

Brazilian government agency concerned with Indian affairs) officials to speak with the Pankarare people. The FUNAI personnel agreed to demarcate Pankarare lands, providing the Indians with legal rights to their own land. However, the FUNAI officials never returned to Brejo de Burgo following their initial visit — despite warnings from the anthropologists, the National Association for the Support of the Indian (ANAI), and from the Missionary Indigenist Council (CIMI) that tensions were rising between the Brazilian and Indian communities.

Finally, chief Xavier was shot dead the day after Christmas, 1979. The police from nearby Paulo Afonso conducted a criminal investigation. Apparently, there were people who witnessed the crime. Although the police knew who committed the murder, they said they could not catch him because he had fled into Bahia's inhospitable backlands. The police concluded the murder was the climax of a "personal dispute" between chief Angelo Xavier and Afranio de Lima.

The anthropologists thought this interpretation of the events was totally false. They informed the authorities of the land question; they told of the local ranching Figueiredo family which repeatedly broke down Indian fences and expanded the area of their rangeland onto Indian territory. CIMI and ANAI agreed with the Indians and the anthropologists that Xavier's death was a political murder undoubtedly ordered by a local rancher wanting their land. Despite these protests, FUNAI and the state deputies representing the locality (both members of the official military ARENA party) were satisfied with the "official" explanation. ANAI concluded that this ugly affair "was not a simple homicide. It was rather another chapter in the history of the genocide of Brazilian Indians." Cultural Survival awaits more information on the Pankarare situation from contacts who are now visiting the Brejo de Burgo area.

Salvinia Molesta (cont. from p. 5)

removal, is prohibitively expensive and seldom successful against large areas of *Salvinia*.

Thus, the prognosis is grim, and the Chambri feel helpless in the face of it. By the time I arrived there almost 40% of the population had fled to the town of Wewak, some twelve hours away. The remaining people, many of them old, and all weakened by a diet of coconuts and wild greens, recognize that their culture and society may never recover.

Dr. Deborah Gewertz  
Amherst College

We have received  
PREVIEW OF  
COMING ATTRACTIONS

THE RONDONIA FILM PROJECT

Those who are familiar with Jean Chiappino's IWGIA monograph No. 19, *The Brazilian Indigenous Problem and Policy: The Aripuana Park*, may find it odd that a project is underway to film a "pacification" expedition which promises to be a repetition of the tragic "pacification" described by Chiappino. According to the IWGIA report, no real territorial or medical protection was given to the recently contacted Surui Indians, though a fake vaccination campaign was conducted and photographed. As a result, the population of roughly 700 dropped to 250 within five years, mostly due to measles and tuberculosis, which are easily preventable by vaccination. The photojournalist who was present wrote an article for *National Geographic*, Sept. 1971, which systematically falsified these events and blamed the Indians themselves for the failure of medical care.

Now, according to a synopsis of the Rondonia Film Project, Adrian Cowell plans a new film which would feature the same "Indian expert" who presided over the decimation of the Surui. This Indian expert would contact a group of Cintas Largas Indians inside the Aripuana Park and be filmed doing so. The danger to the Indians would be very great, given the Indian expert's continuing poor record. For example, he contacted the Zoro Indians in 1977 accompanied by some Surui, who are the mortal enemies of the Zoro and who often carry tuberculosis. The result was a war in which three Zoro were shot to death. In addition, some have contracted tuberculosis.

The scenario presented by the film project synopsis systematically falsifies the real situation in the area, concealing anything embarrassing to the local authorities. For example, a certain illegal road connecting a ranch with the local town has been in operation since 1975, but is presented as not yet constructed. Likewise, the impression is fostered that the invasion of Surui land is recent, though in fact it began over eight years ago.

Part of the proceeds from the film would go to a "fund for the Indians in the Aripuana reserve". This would be of dubious value to the Indians, especially since it would presumably be administered by the "Indian expert". The damage to the Indians in the area has been due primarily to poor policy and judgment; the money would simply reward this poor judgment and promote its further implementation.

This film exemplifies the dangers of the symbiotic relationship between the media and the prominent Indian official. The media gains access to colorful, exotic adventures involving Indians by providing uncritical, favorable publicity. The official knows this will guarantee his career no matter how poor his record for protecting Indians. Dramatic events of doubtful value, such as contact expeditions, are promoted to garner publicity. Everyone's interests are served except the Indians'.

## DECREE 2, 568: NEW CRISIS FOR THE MAPUCHE

Chile has long attempted to assimilate its Indians into the national society. This has been particularly true for the Mapuche (Araucanians) who today number approximately 600,000, or 5% of Chile's total population. There are 450,000 Indians living in rural areas throughout the seven provinces which make up the south central part of Chile; there they constitute 25% of the total population. An additional 150,000 Mapuche live in Chile's three largest cities: Concepcion, Valparaiso, and Santiago.

The Mapuche are generally considered by members of the dominant society as "... racially inferior, with little intelligence, lazy, drunk, thieves, intractable, and adverse to civilized and Christian values and practices, etc." Based on this attitude, the attempt by the dominant society to assimilate the Mapuche has been continuous; but perhaps more than any other Chilean Indian group, the Mapuche have been so far able to resist such assimilation.

During the Allende period, legislation was passed with full cooperation and participation of the Mapuche community: Law 17,729 had as a fundamental premise the recovery, augmentation and protection of Mapuche lands — basically, the survival of the Mapuche people.

However, the latest attack on the Mapuche carried out by the Chilean military government is Decree 2,568. This modification of the "Ley sobre Protección de Indígenas" (The Indian Protection Law) drastically changes that legislation passed by the Allende government. This new decree focuses on land tenure only. While it was being drawn up, the Mapuche asked the government for the opportunity to participate in the new law's formulation — the government ignored their request.

As a brief history: between 1884 and 1929, the Mapuches were moved onto *reservas* (reservations) consisting of 475,423 hectares of land in southern Chile. Divided among 77,751 Indians, this resulted in approximately 6.1 hectares per person. However, 9,000,000 hectares of neighboring lands taken from the Mapuche were divided among white *colonos* ("colonists"), with each colono receiving a parcel of 500 hectares.

Today, due to further expropriation of *reserva* lands, plus growth in the Indian population, in many areas land-holding is less than 0.4 hectares per Indian. Crop rotation can no longer be practiced. As a result the land has become poorer and poorer, erosion has set in, and Mapuche land has become unfit for cultivation.

Thus, many of the Mapuche, in order to survive, must buy food, which means relying on a cash economy. Many Mapuche now work as agricultural laborers, tenant farmers, or share-croppers with neighboring whites. Others are migrating to urban areas where men work in bakeries, and women work as servants in private homes. However, even with migration to the cities, often requiring long periods of time spent away from *reservas*, the Mapuche maintain an ethnic identity sustained by their relationship to their traditional land. Land forms the center of their ethnic identity, it is the place regarded as home, no matter how long a time they must spend away from it. Rituals are maintained on the *reservas*, with the participation of large numbers of Indians who return from the cities for such special events. To remove their lands from the Mapuche is to destroy totally their ethnic identity.

This is precisely what the Chilean government wishes to do. Without taking Mapuche desires or needs into account, Decree 2,568 is designed to separate the Mapuche from their lands. The decree attempts to justify itself by implying that it was drawn up in direct response to:

... the obvious aspiration of the Indians (which) is to become individual property owners ... (Article 3°).

It then proceeds to describe how the *reservas* will be divided. In Article 10° it states that any occupant of a *reserva* may request that the "Legal Defender of the Indians" make an appeal before a judge that a *reserva* be divided among its inhabitants. One must then return to Article 1° which states that after the *reserva* is divided, then neither the individual lands nor their owners themselves shall be considered Indian. In keeping with the "de-ethnicization" of the Indian, Article 3° states that the Instituto de Desarrollo Indígena (Institute for Indian Development) shall be dissolved, with its functions taken over by the Instituto de Desarrollo Agropecuario (Institute of Agricultural Development).

There is an attempt made to explain the advantage of individual ownership by stating that the Indians, by having individual titles to their lands, will be able to receive agricultural credits and technical assistance from the government. This appears to be a false promise in the extreme. The Chilean government is not working with, nor does it seem that in the future it plans to work with, small agriculturalists. In fact, if anything, the government appears to be consciously bringing about the demise of small farmers in Chile as the result of its new economic policies encouraging agricultural imports.

And what are the desires of the Mapuche vis-a-vis their lands? In a meeting sponsored by the Bishops of Temuco and Auranca just before the promulgation of Decree 2,568, a group of 155 Indian leaders stated:

... their opposition to the obligatory division, direct or indirect, of their lands; they expressed the desire that their lands remain in the hands of the Mapuches; they asked that lands that had been taken away from them be returned ... and that the lands which are now occupied by the communities be amplified; that the sale of Mapuche lands be impeded; whether for touristical ends or other forms of expropriation; and that there be respect for the proper character of the ethnic minority with its cultural values ... (Vives 1978:715).

Beyond this, the Mapuche leaders solicited agricultural credits and technical assistance, but on a communal and not individual basis.

Thus the new decree is totally against the wishes of the Mapuche. But it has been signed under law and there are already ominous portents for the future. For example, there is at least one group of investors which is attempting to persuade Indians on one of the *reservas* to subdivide and sell their lands so that they can begin the construction of a tourist complex. This appears to be just the beginning.

What can be done? The decree has already been promulgated. However, its implementation is another issue. It is still possible that international pressure can have some effect on the interpretation and enforcement of the law. Heeding this possibility, the International Congress of Americanists passed the following resolution on August 17, 1979:

We can only hope that with more publicity about the current situation of the Mapuche, plus direct and indirect pressure from international sources on the Chilean government, that there will be some hope for the maintenance of Indian lands, and a stop to the threat of ethnicide for the Mapuche.

November 1979

## MORE ON EAST TIMOR by Elizabeth Traube

**East Timor: Nationalism and Colonialism.** By JILL JOLLIFFE. St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1978. xi, 362 pp. Plates, Notes, Glossary, Appendixes, Index. \$11.75 (cloth). (Distributed by Technical Impex Corp.)

**An Act of Genocide: Indonesia's Invasion of East Timor.** By Arnold Kohen and John Taylor. London: Tapol (UK) Publication, 1979. 133 pp. Plates, Notes. (available from Tapol USA, P.O. Box 609, Montclair, N.J. 07042. \$4.25 incl. postage.)

Together *East Timor: Nationalism and Colonialism* by Jill Jolliffe and *An Act of Genocide: Indonesia's Invasion of East Timor* by Arnold Kohen and John Taylor provide a comprehensive overview of the tragic events which have recently unfolded on the little-known former Portuguese colony of East Timor. Yet the books are not mere chronicles. They are politically significant counterpoints to the main-stream pro-Indonesian reporting which, the authors contend, has mystified the East Timor situation. Thus these books are intended to expose Indonesia's flagrant violations of self-determination and human rights on East Timor, to condemn the United States and other Western democracies for their roles in the tragedy, and to inspire committed action on the behalf of the East Timorese people.

The books focus on different periods. Jolliffe, an Australian journalist who visited East Timor in 1975, concentrates on the internal political situation prior to the Indonesian invasion initiated on December 7, 1975. She provides a detailed account of the independence movement which emerged in the Portuguese colony in the wake of the overthrow of the Caetano regime, led to a brief period of semi-independence under FRETILIN (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor), and was forced underground following the Indonesian invasion and subsequent occupation of the territory. Kohen and Taylor focus on the post-invasion period. They draw on a substantial and varied body of material (press reports, interviews with refugees, letters from East Timorese church officials and other persons, diplomatic communications, U.S. State Department reports, United Nations and Congressional

hearings) to construct a grimly convincing account of the invasion's tragic aftermath. Their major concerns are to establish and document the genocidal character of the Indonesian occupation (through which from 50,000 to 200,000 persons have reportedly died), and to call attention to the complicity of the governments of the industrialized nations who have provided Indonesia with arms and diplomatic support.

Of the two works, that by Kohen and Taylor is the more measured and persuasive. The style is effectively un-polemical and free of leftist rhetoric, the evidence is clearly set forth and dispassionately analysed, and the work as a whole is well-researched and carefully documented. The authors' concern for the plight of the East Timorese pervades the book, yet it is never flaunted at the reader, but is powerfully conveyed through the materials themselves. *An Act of Genocide* is depressing and informative reading which, as Noam Chomsky says in his introduction to the book, "provides the essential background for understanding what has happened in East Timor."

Jolliffe's objectives are somewhat broader, and I do not think she is entirely successful. Her efforts to root East Timorese nationalism in a long history of indigenous resistance to colonial oppression result in a confused, polemical, poorly documented diatribe against the Portuguese which I find to be neither convincing nor politically strategic. In contrast, Kohen and Taylor's terse criticism of Portugal's half-hearted, ineffective, and superficially "principled" position on East Timorese decolonization is well-founded and timely. Kohen and Taylor also steer clear of another difficulty encountered by Jolliffe. For the latter, establishing FRETILIN's broad popular support is a prime concern. Unfortunately, since she herself had little evidence for such support outside of mass rallies and the statements of FRETILIN leaders, the book often takes on a propagandist tone. Kohen and Taylor are more concerned to document the sufferings of the East Timorese people than to legitimate FRETILIN. The evidence presented in their book for a strong, ongoing FRETILIN resistance to the Indonesian occupation testifies implicitly to the movement's popular support.

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