

**COMPETING  
SOVEREIGNTIES  
IN NORTH AMERICA  
AND THE RIGHT-WING AND ANTI-  
INDIAN MOVEMENT**

Preliminary Findings

of the

**Right-Wing Extremism  
&  
Anti-Indian Network  
Project**

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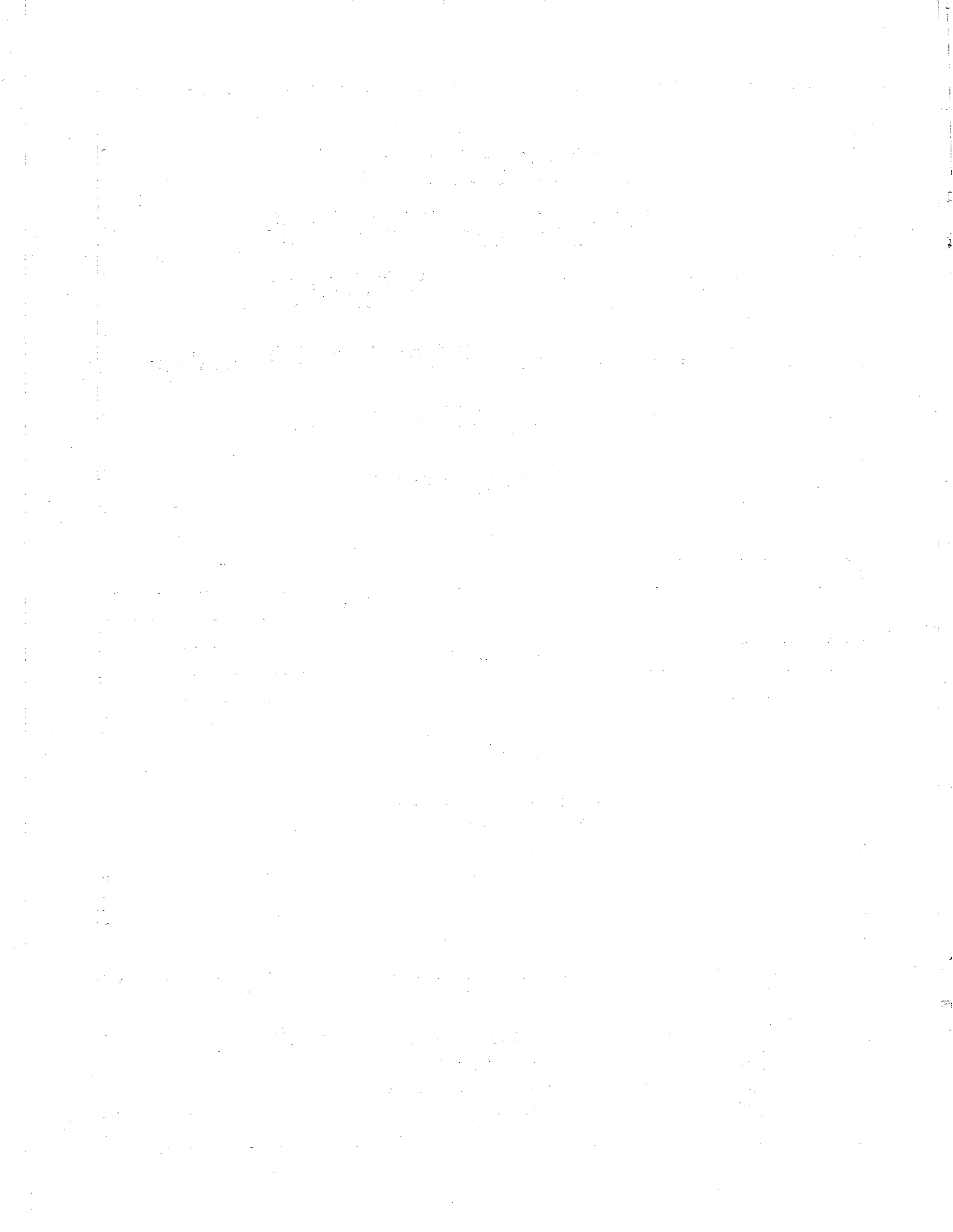
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January 13, 1988



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# COMPETING SOVEREIGNTIES IN NORTH AMERICA AND THE RIGHT-WING AND ANTI- INDIAN MOVEMENT

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## Preliminary Findings

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Indian and Native Nations, tribes and communities are in a tug-of-war in Canada and the United States of America. The first nations of North America are locked in a political conflict with the United States and Canadian federal governments and individual State and Provincial governments. They face off over the question: "Who will exercise sovereignty over Indian lands and resources and the people who live inside Indian and Native lands." The struggle between Indian Nations, States and the federal governments has its origins in European colonization, and the later formation of the United States of America and Canada. Unsettling as this long-term dispute between nations and states has been to Indian peoples, it now seems to have spawned a reactionary movement among non-Indians against Indians. Incipient racism, economic hard-times and honest fears combine to form the basis for an organized Anti-Indian Movement that threatens the destabilization of Indian governments and the break-up of Indian Nations.

Organized activism aimed at the dismemberment of Indian Nations has been growing since the late 1960s. The Anti-Indian Movement is now organized in 13 states in the United States and at least four of the provinces of Canada.

While the Anti-Indian Movement grew in size and

organizational sophistication from 1968 onward, it has only been in the last ten years that a more virulent form of reactionary-racism began to appear Indian Country. Extreme Right-Wing groups which include the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, the "White Aryan Nation," Survivalists, Constitutionalists, and the Identity Church appear with increasing regularity on and near Indian reservations - particularly in the Pacific Northwest and Great Lakes Region of the United States and Southern British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario in Canada. People associated with the Anti-Indian Movement now appear to have occasional, if not frequent, association with Right-Wing Extremist groups. This tide of non-Indian reaction rides on the back of discontent, racism, economic troubles, and uncertainties about land and natural resource rights. These concerns are partly connected to the long-term struggle between Indian Nations, neighboring states and the United States government.

## ROOTS OF CONFLICT AND REACTION

Indian and Native nations claim the inherent right to exercise power over their lands and resources and people within their boundaries. State and Provincial governments claim the right to exercise power over citizens within their boundaries - including those living inside reservations. The Canadian and U.S. governments claims the right to exercise power over all matters granted to them by the federal constitutions. Caught up in the struggle between Indian governments, State or Provincial governments and the federal governments are thousands of individual Indians and non-Indians who experience persistent challenges to what they perceive as their rights. In both countries, the patterns of political competition

over sovereignty are very similar.

## **In the United States of America**

While the Tribal, State and U.S. governments dual in the courts, executive agencies and legislative branches, individual Indians and non-Indians feel the uncertainties produced by the struggles. Though Indian and native governments experienced defeat after defeat and the State and federal governments expanded their powers over Indian reservations through the first half of the 20th century, things began to change after 1964. The tide of encroachments reducing Indian governmental powers began to reverse. From 1965 to 1975, many Indian nations and tribes began to recover many powers and authorities once eroded by various States and the U.S. government. As a result of hard won successes, Indian governments began to compete directly with States and the federal government for control. Tensions focused on control of lands, hunting, fishing, taxation, social welfare, commerce, and a growing list of other powers.

Compared to the powers lost over the previous generations, Indian nations and tribes could only consider their successes as minor compared with their losses. To a growing number of non-Indians who took up residence inside Indian reservations between 1900 and 1965, Indian successes caused doubts and anxieties. Non-Indians began to express doubts about whether their rights to land and a way of life would be protected by increasingly active Indian governments. Individual Indians holding allotments on reservations, but not living as members of the tribe, also began to have doubts about the protection of their rights. Increased Indian government activity aroused increased concerns among both Indian and non-Indian land-owners.

Non-Indians with significant economic interests on Indian reservations sought protection from growing Indian government power by turning to the U.S. federal courts. Their success can best be described as modest. The U.S. courts did not produce the broad reduction of Indian government powers originally hoped for. Non-Indians turned to the State governments for protection and found even less success. Many non-Indians began to express frustration which became anger and finally produced reactionary political action.

Though reservations and native communities are recognized by the United States government to include reserved lands and resources for Indian and native peoples, the U.S. Department of the Interior has worked unceasingly to move non-Indians into these lands. Since the U.S. government enacted the General Allotment Act in 1887 it has successfully annexed major portions of reserved Indian lands for use by non-Indians. A little more than three-tenths percent (.3% or about 567,000) of the total non-Indian population in the United States now either owns lands or lives on Indian reservations. Fully forty-five percent (45%) of the estimated 1,263,403 people on Indian reservations are now non-Indian. On some reservations, the Indian population now represents less than 20% of the total number of residents.

The Department of Interior's promotion of non-Indian immigration into Indian reservations violated both the spirit and the language of treaties and agreements with Indian nations. Because of their greater numbers, non-Indians began to or-

ganize inside reservations to undermine Indian communities and their governments. Immigrant non-Indians began to argue that their presence actually reduces the size of Indian reservations and opens the "annexed lands" to control by the State government. They appealed to State governments and found increasing interest in their concerns. One-by-one, State governments have begun to assert that where "non-Indians reside inside Indian reservations," the authority of a state can and will be extended.

Competition for the land and resources and regulation of people's lives is not new. This struggle has

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been a continuing fact of life for Indian nations since Europeans began to colonize the western hemisphere 495 years ago. For 428 years, until the 1920s, Indian nations and the growing immigrant populations competed through violent means: Wars, massacres, battles, and skirmishes. In that time, the collective population of Indian nations fell from an estimated 15,000,000 to less than 1,000,000 - a 94% drop. Meanwhile, the non-Indian immigrant population swelled from a few thousand individuals to more than 100,000,000 - a 5000% increase.

Over the same period, Indian and native peoples saw their land and resource domain shrink from 3.6 million square miles to just 680,000 square miles - a drop of 81.2%.

Since 1972, the size of the Indian and native land-base shrunk to about

152,000 square miles - with the enactment of the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act. An area larger than the combined size of Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana, an estimated 480,000 square miles of land near Indian and native lands, remain contested.

### **In the State of Canada**

In Canada, Indian and Native Nations have had a similar experience though of more recent vintage. Eleven treaties concluded by Indian Nations and the United Kingdom deal with "Peace and Friendship," immigration, trade, travel, resource extraction, "to open lands for settlement," and land cessions in regions located primarily in southern Canada. Nearly two-thirds of what is now called Canada was never ceded to any European or American State. As a result, many Indian Nations in Canada hold the view that they have a relationship based on treaties with the United Kingdom and not with the State of Canada.

It was this perception that aroused Indian and Native Nations to react to the Canadian government's developing plans in the late 1960s and early 1970s to establish a new relationship with the United Kingdom. In 1969, the Canadian government published the *White Paper* which detailed proposals for the termination of Indian and Native Nations. After years of public opposition by Indian governments, and the development of alternative political proposals by Indian governments, Canada shifted its emphasis. The Canadian government began to move toward a unilateral redefinition of relations between Canada and the United Kingdom without consulting with Indian and Native Nations. Canada proposed to secure its independence from the United Kingdom by "repatriating the Constitution." Put another way, Canada sought a political process

between the Canadian government and the British government which would formally constitute the State of Canada under its own constitution. Along with this process was the assumption by Canadian leaders that Canada would assume full control over all Indians and their lands - thus breaking the relationship between Indian Nations and the United Kingdom by agreement between Canada and Britain, and without Indian consent.

By 1979, the *Canadian Constitutional Repatriation* process had begun to take form. Indian Nations believing that the United Kingdom would not break the promises it made in the eleven Treaties, pursued a separate political process to enter discussions with the British government. During the next four years, Indian and Native Nations became a visible participant in a political tug-of-war that involved the British government, Canadian government and the governments of Canada's Provinces. On April 17, 1982, Canada succeeded in gaining agreement with the British Parliament which allowed Canada to have its own Constitution separate from Britain. On that date, Canada became a legitimate, independent State in its own right.

Despite proposals and petitions from Indian and Native Nations, Canada would not agree to include Indian Nations in its new Constitution as a "Third Level of Government." Indian and Native Nations were specifically left out of the Canadian Constitution as distinct political entities. They were not permitted to join in confederation with the provincial and federal governments. Simultaneously, Treaties and agreements between Indian and Native Nations and the United Kingdom were unceremoniously abandoned by the British government. Canada said it would assume the responsibilities under such treaties - an idea soundly rejected by many Indian and Native

governments.

Since, under the new Canadian Constitution, Provincial governments have primary authority over land and natural resource questions, these governments began to move quickly to ensure control over Canadian, Provincial and Indian lands. It was this very move that Indian and Native governments feared would be the outcome.

In the five years since Canada became an independent State, the political conflict between Indian and Native Nations and the Provincial and Federal governments has continued unabated. An incipient, Anti-Indian Movement, partly influenced by events over the previous fifteen years and by events in the United States began to grow. But, unlike the United States' Movement, Right-Wing political extremism has played a much more public and active role. The growth of fundamentalist religious activities in and around Indian and Native communities has been very rapid. Elements of the Identity Church, in British Columbia and Alberta particularly, have assumed considerable influence. Elements of the Church of Jesus Christ Christian and groups of "concerned citizens" have increased in number.

While most of what is discussed below focuses on the United States, virtually all applies with equal relevance to Indians in Canada.

### **THE ANTI-INDIAN MOVEMENT**

Competition for control over Indian reservations now includes individual non-Indians seeking to force the break-up of reservation governments and lands. On reservation non-Indians were joined by off-reservation non-Indians to achieve the break-up of Indian nations. Off-reservation non-Indian activism began to grow as a result of three factors: Public activism by the American Indian Move-

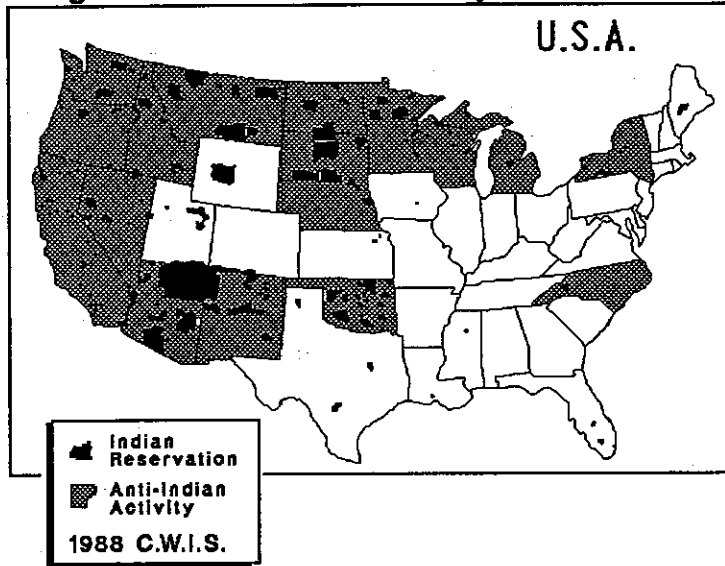
ment in the early 1970s, growing success by Indian governments to exercise some governmental powers over lands, resources and activities in "ceded territories," and movements by several Indian nations to reclaim original lands and resources wrongfully taken by the United States.

ganization, *Enough is Enough*, *White Earth Equal Rights*, *Concerned Citizens Council*, *Property Owners' Association*, and *Interstate Congress for Equal Rights and Responsibilities*. These groups have been linked through individuals and interest issues with organizations formed in cities and

organizations have worked to gain support for their interests through the *National Association of Counties* (NaCo), the *National Wildlife Federation* and the *National Rifle Association*.

While the Anti-Indian Movement has grown and become more sophisticated in the last 20 years, its actual affect has been small. In 1987, however, the Anti-Indian Movement began to have an affect on the actual functioning of Indian governments, and it had a greater affect on the political aggressiveness of several State governments. Instead of directing their attention to legal actions, the Anti-Indian Movement focuses on political action centered on State legislatures, State Attorneys' General, U.S. Congressional offices and public opinion.

### Organized Anti-Indian Activity 1977 - 1988



### ENTER RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS

What is now called the "Anti-Indian Movement" includes non-Indian activists inside reservations and non-Indian activists outside reservations. It also includes a small minority of Indians, both inside and outside reservations, who associate themselves with the values and aspirations of the non-Indian population. While the Anti-Indian Movement has an important influence in several areas of the country, the actual numbers of activists is not more than 1000 people. Far greater numbers of sympathetic followers, have given their names to small organizations in fifteen states. The total number of sympathetic followers is now estimated at 5,000 to 10,000 people.

Activists have formed small groups on and near Indian reservations with names like, *All Citizens Equal*, *Totally Equal Americans*, *Citizens Rights Or-*

towns. These include narrowly defined associations of individuals concerned with sport-fishing, hunting, small business, and recreation. Such groups like S/SPAWN located in Bellevue, Washington, Alaskan Constitutional Legal Defense Fund in Anchorage, Alaska, Bonduel Conservation Club in Wisconsin and East Slope Taxpayers in Cut Bank, Montana fall into this category. These local groups are linked independently and through two main group associations: The *Inter-State Congress for Equal Rights and Responsibilities* which has been a recipient of financial support from Joseph Coors of Coors Beer fame. The *Protect Americans' Rights & Resources* association (PARR) which was formed in Wisconsin in March 1987.

These small associations of individuals and larger associations of

The formation of groups in the Pacific Northwest having the intent of intimidating, violently attacking and even killing members of different societies (Non-Whites, Jewish people, etc.) began in earnest ten years ago. Organized activities began much earlier in the mid-western states and the Great Lakes Region. People connected with various churches, political groups, intellectual groups, and paramilitary groups broadly identified with the New-Right, Ultra-Right, and the neo-Nazi movement assert their intention to occupy and take the five state area including Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming as a homeland for what they call the Aryan Nation. Groups like *Citizens for Constitutional Government*, *Committee to Restore the Constitution*, *National Socialist Vanguard*, *Church of Jesus Christ Christian* (Aryan Nations), *Posse Comitatus*, *The Duck Club*, and *The Order* have been established in towns near Indian reserva-

tions and on some reservations in Idaho, Washington, Michigan, Minnesota, Alaska, Wisconsin, Montana and South Dakota.

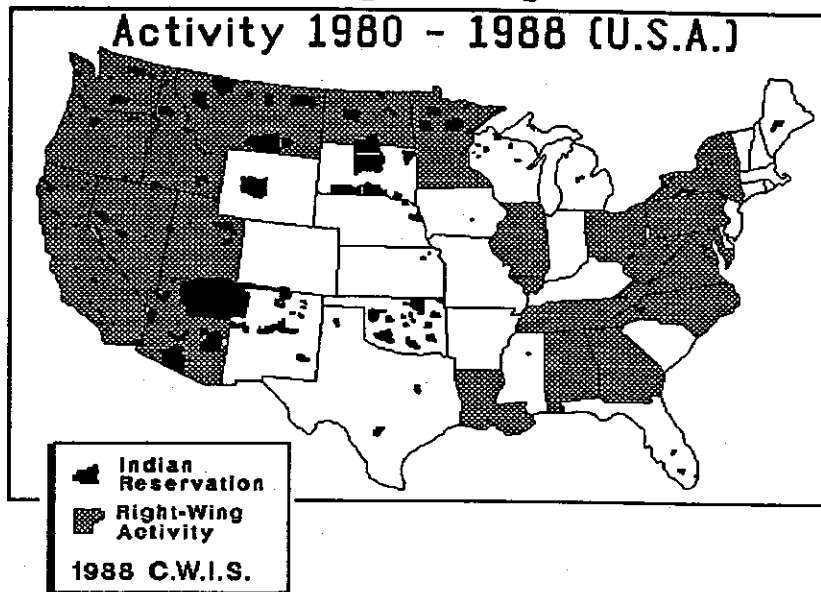
All these groups are ultraconservative and far-right in their ideology. All have close links with neo-nazi aspirations. The most visible of these on Indian reservations are the *Citizens for Constitutional Government* and *Committee to Restore the Constitution*. People active in the Anti-Indian Movement have been directly linked to the Committee to Restore the Constitution.

The Anti-Indian Movement, Extreme Right-Wing groups and the competition between governments are all concerned with **land and jurisdiction**. These are refined terms for the same conflict that has been going on for more than four hundred years. The conflict now, however, is political; peppered with occasional instances of violent behavior. It is also a conflict that rages both **inside and outside** Indian reservations.

Organized Anti-Indian activists have been joined by private individuals on and near Indian reservations who fear Indian tribes. Growing evidence suggests that Extreme Right-Wing activists connected to such groups as the "White Aryan Nation," "The Order" and the "Identity Church" have located on and near Indian reservations; and, they are winning converts from "those who fear Indian tribes." This is a new wrinkle in Anti-Indian activity, which may contain the seeds of greater conflicts in the future.

The Order operates near the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, while elements of the *Identity Church* operates near the Quinault and Lummi Indian Reservations. The *Duck Club* operates near two Klallam reservations in Northwest Washington State, and growing evidence suggests that the groups have actually infiltrated some reservations. Citizens for Con-

## Organized Right-Wing Extremist Activity 1980 - 1988 (U.S.A.)



stitutional Government and the Committee to restore the Constitution have strong political connections in Southern California. They are increasingly active near the Yakima, Lummi and Colville reservations in Washington State, Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho.

While the Anti-Indian Movement has its "racist leaders," it has remained primarily oriented to political action and public demonstrations. The Extreme Right-Wing groups, however, tend to combine political action, intimidation, paramilitary activity, actual land occupation and public demonstrations. While both are small, these apparently converging movements have important affects on community stability by using intimidation and "bully politics."

### ANTI-INDIAN AND RIGHT-WING HARMONIC CONVERGENCE: 1986 - 1987

The apparent convergence of the Anti-Indian Movement and Right-Wing Extremists is ominous not only

because of the instability and threat posed to Indian communities.

Both the Anti-Indian Movement and Right-Wing Extremist groups have an intense interest in both Indian land and reducing Indian governments powers. When combined with the efforts of State governments and the United States government to reduce Indian rights and Indian lands, the Anti-Indian Movement and emerging presence of Right-Wing Extremist groups operating from a fundamentally racist, *white-supremacist ideology* pose a serious threat to Indian people. Out of sight, and out of mind, the movement to organize opposition to Indian tribes (now twenty years old) has continued to grow. It has grown into a sophisticated movement involving scores of small organizations, a few large organizations, businesses, county governments, state legislatures, offices of State Attorneys General, candidates for Congressional office in three states, and a growing number of individual Indians and non-Indians. The Anti-Indian Movement has a few ideological activists. It now includes conservative and right-wing ideologues, farmers,

on-reservation land-owners, hunters, fishermen, small businesses, and a growing number of individuals who have become persuaded that Indian Tribes must be eliminated.

Here are a few "apparently unrelated events" that took place in 1987:

— The Protect Americans' Rights & Resources (PARR) organization was formed in Wisconsin, in March 1987. The PARR called for a boycott of all high stakes bingo on Indian reservations as a way to counter a threat by Chippewas to boycott merchants in Ashland, Wisconsin.

— In Montana, about 300 Indian and non-Indian farmers and ranchers joined a "tractorcade convoy" to protest the Bureau of Indian Affairs' control over the Flathead Irrigation Project. Water, they said, should be under the control of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and eventually under the control of the users themselves. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes joined the Bureau of Indian Affairs to counter the protest.

— In Washington, Indians arrested by U.S. authorities for fishing the Columbia River received an acquittal from the Yakima Tribal Court, but sit in a Federal jail. Political intimidation inside the Yakima reservation increased. Non-Indian activists increasingly exploit public ignorance about a U.S. Internal Revenue Service challenge to the Lummi Indian Tribe's claim that individual Indian earnings from the sale of trust protected resources are exempt from U.S. income tax. The subject is of particular interest to leaders of the Committee to Restore the Constitution.

— The Michigan based organization, Enough is Enough protested Indian treaty-protected fishing and hunting in Northern Michigan.

— In Minnesota, the Totally Equal Americans organization expresses satisfaction and distrust with Mon-

tana Senator John Melcher's proposed legislation for Congress to "review Indian tribal authority to impose taxes on non-tribal persons on Indian reservations."

— The National Association of Counties (NaCo) considered supporting a study to reclassify Indian reservations like counties and cities.

— The Washington State Attorney General authored a letter to U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese expressing gratitude for a December 9, 1987 meeting to discuss federal Indian policy, and "the unheard voices [of] individual Indian and non-Indian citizens who are being directly impacted by such federal Indian policies."

The Anti-Indian Movement has evolved a jargon of its own with buzz words and slogans: **Equal Rights, Non-Indian and Non-Tribal Indian Rights, Indian laws supplant the laws of the United States, "The U.S. Constitution is Being Ignored," Initiative 456, Presidential Commission on the Impact of Federal Indian Policy on Non-Tribal Indians and Non-Indians, Equal Rights and Responsibilities, Special Rights for a Race of People, and Abrogation of Treaties.** Out of an historical context, these terms and phrases have the ring of respectability, and even "mainstream politics." The contemporary environment in which these phrases have taken on meaning is decidedly not mainstream. Ultraconservative groups have adopted buzz words and slogans that are very similar, and Right-Wing Extremists often rely on such words to express their views.

## ANTICIPATING THE YEAR AHEAD

In 1988, the Anti-Indian Movement and elements of the extreme Right-Wing will continue to agitate

on and near Indian reservations over "special interests" like hunting rights, water rights, fishing rights, land rights, jurisdiction, bingo, taxation and "government representation on reservations." Organizations will increase efforts to lobby support for anti-Indian legislation and legal contests through state governments. Specific emphasis will be placed on Attorneys General in the Western States who will seek to force U.S. government consideration of new policies to "protect non-Indians and non-Tribal Indians from tribal governments." Continuing efforts will be mounted to force the establishment of a Presidential or Congressional Commission to Investigate the affects of federal Indian Policies on non-tribal Indian and non-Indian citizens of the United States.

Finally, the Anti-Indian Movement will mobilize resources to support anti-Indian political candidates for state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress. Particular emphasis is being placed on Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Alaska and Nevada.

It can be furthermore expected, despite recent indictments of leading Right-Wing Extremists, there will be a greater convergence between Anti-Indian Movement activists and ultra-conservative and right-wing groups like the Citizens for Constitutional Government, Committee to Restore the Constitution, Church of Jesus Christ Christian and The Duck Club. Though closely associated with more militant extremist groups, these groups have achieved a level of public respectability and appear (*publicly*) insulated from extremist groups. Because some of the ultraconservative groups are lead by individuals who have achieved some prominence as State and County elected officials, they are even more able to wear the label of respectability.

Indian government, fishing, hunt-



ing, land, taxation, equal rights, will broaden as the principal themes of the Anti-Indian Movement. Changes in the U.S. Supreme Court opposing Indian tribes will be increasingly exploited. State legislatures, county governments and popular referenda will continue to be used to promote "popular opposition to Indian tribes." Because the United States and Canada are entering a "political year," the more respectable elements of ultraconservative and right-wing groups will assume a greater level of public visibility - exploiting popular discontent and local economic upheavals. Indian tribes can expect a substantial escalation in frequency of incidents and political action.

Despite a long felt wish that "people would just leave Indians alone to live as they wish," organized efforts to subvert Indian governments, create political division inside Indian tribes and force State, Provincial, County and Federal challenges to tribal government authority continue to mount. Despite the growing Anti-Indian Movement, there is no effective plan among Indian tribes to counter it across the country or inside Indian reservations. There is no consensus among Indian leaders about what the Anti-Indian Movement consists of, nor is there a consensus about what the movement actually means and why it is occurring. This condition of disarray will continue to be exploited.

Indian Tribes are on the defensive in nine states in the United States and three provinces in Canada. Though not winning many actual concessions from the U.S. government, the Anti-Indian Movement is rapidly moving with success among State and Provincial governments (many legislators and Attorneys General), Counties (County Executives, Commissioners, Sheriffs) and increasing numbers of "distressed non-Indians" on and near reservations. Anti-Indian organizational efforts are strongest in Wash-

ington, Idaho, Montana, South Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Alaska and Nevada in the United States. Canadian Anti-Indian Activists and Right-Wing Extremists have increasingly close ties with their U.S. counter-parts. Their strength is greatest in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario. In some instances, these groups will expand by organizing joint actions across the U.S./Canada border.

