



**NATIONAL  
CONGRESS  
OF  
AMERICAN  
INDIANS**

202 E STREET, N.E., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002 (202) 546-1168

NCAI RESOLUTION NO. 3 - 82

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Ronald P. Andrade  
*Luiseno-Ojeguano*

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**PRESIDENT**  
Joe De La Cruz  
*Quinnault*

**FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT**  
Raion Eluska  
*Aleut*

**RECORDING SECRETARY**  
Ella Mae Horse  
*Cherokee*

**TREASURER**  
Mollis D. Stadler, Jr.  
*Ojama*

**AREA VICE PRESIDENTS**

**ABERDEEN AREA**  
Robert Chasing Hawk  
*Cheyenne River Sioux*

**ALBUQUERQUE AREA**  
Guy Pinnecoose, Jr.  
*Southern Ute*

**ANADARKO AREA**  
Newton Lamar  
*Ute*

**BRITISH COLUMBIA AREA**  
Bill Morigeau  
*British-Kootenai*

**CHICAGO AREA**  
Clifford A. Black  
*Iskimo*

**MINNEAPOLIS AREA**  
Jordan Thayer  
*Mac Courte Orestles/Ojibway*

**MUSKOGEE AREA**  
Terry Wheeler  
*Cherokee*

**NORTHEASTERN AREA**  
Dimer John  
*Seneca*

**PHOENIX AREA**  
Anthony Brennan  
*Colorado River Indian Tribes*

**PORTLAND AREA**  
Russell Jim  
*Sahim*

**SACRAMENTO AREA**  
Juanita Dixon  
*Luiseno*

**SOUTHEASTERN AREA**  
Dodie Tullis  
*March Band of Creeks*

**INDIAN CRISIS IN CENTRAL AMERICA: A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE URGENT SITUATION OF CENTRAL AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLES IN THE FACE OF VIOLENCE AND GENOCIDE, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCES TO THE SITUATIONS IN EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA AND NICARAGUA**

**1.0 STATEMENT OF FINDINGS**

The more than fifteen million Indigenous peoples (Indians) located within the asserted boundaries of Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Belize, Guatemala and Mexico constitute majority populations within their respective territorial enclaves. The majority of Central American Indigenous peoples retain their own cultural practices, their own native languages and internal political systems and have maintained their distinct group identity despite Spanish and British colonization of their territories and subsequent formation of eight nation-states by Spanish and British descendents. None of the Central American states recognize the distinct political character, nor do the individual states recognize the right of indigenous peoples to participate in the state governments as distinct political groups. (Note: Indigenous group representation in the Nicaraguan government was accepted in the new Council of State formed by the Sandinista regime, but was terminated in 1981.) The indigenous populations of Mexico and Central America are treated as peasants at the bottom of the general economic system, though in reality indigenous peoples are forced, by virtue of their Indian lineage, to live as the poorest of the poor. Over the generations, rival groups of Spanish and/or British descendents have met in violent confrontations to control the various state governments which have in turn, formulated laws or used violence to confiscate indigenous lands and natural resources for the direct benefit of a minority of wealthy, landed families. Thus forced off of their rich lands into less productive lands, indigenous populations in Central America and Mexico now occupy the last remaining parts of their original homelands. During the last twenty-five years, indigenous territories now occupied, have been found to contain vast amounts of petroleum, gold, nickel, timber and other raw materials of economic importance to the wealthy, landed families; and of significant strategic importance to the industrial states of North America and Europe. The current violence in Central America reflects

a resurgence of rivalries among non-indigenous groups seeking to hold or gain control over the instruments of state government to gain ultimate control over the newly found wealth in the remaining indigenous territories. In the course of resurgent violence, acts of genocide and ethnocide are being committed against indigenous groups. Indigenous populations are caught between the rival forces as a third political force which holds ideals and aspirations, values and political views in opposition to non-indigenous rivals.

- 1.1 Non-indigenous rival forces in Guatemala are directly and indirectly responsible for the violent deaths of an estimated 25,000 indigenous Mayan people during the last ten years, and the dislocation of thousands more who have become refugees in other countries. The Guatemalan government, private death squads, and their non-indigenous rivals are carrying out a deliberate policy of genocide to deny the Mayan peoples their fundamental human rights, their territorial rights and their livelihood as a peaceful people by confiscating Mayan lands and natural resources for the benefit of wealthy, landed families, national and multi-national corporations and for the benefit of nations which receive import products from the exploitation of Mayan lands and natural resources. The Mayan population constitutes the majority population in Guatemala living under the domination and control of a minority which holds control over the military and instruments of governance. The ruling minority uses torture, intimidation and coercion against the Mayan majority to secure virtual slave labor; and the ruling minority practices torture, mass murder, intimidation and coercion to induct Mayan men and boys into the military to carry out insurgency and counter insurgency actions among the minority population and against Mayan communities. Weapons and armaments widely used against indigenous communities are imported to Guatemala from the United States, Brazil, Israel, Venezuela, Chile and Eastern Block states through government-to-government sales or through the private black market.
- 1.2 Non-indigenous rival forces in El Salvador are directly and indirectly responsible for the violent deaths of an undetermined number of Indigenous Pipiles (Nahuat-Pipiles) whose collective population is estimated at 360,000. El Salvadoran government officials, private militias, death squads and their rival counterparts are carrying out a deliberate policy of genocide against the Pipiles to deny them their fundamental human rights, their territorial rights and their livelihood as a peaceful people. The Pipiles constitute a majority population within their own region, living under the domination and control of a majority which holds control over the military and instruments of governance. Rival forces within the majority use torture, intimidation and coercion against the Pipiles to secure virtual slave labor; and the ruling majority practices torture, mass murder, intimidation and coercion to induct Pipiles men and boys into the military to carry out insurgency and counter insurgency attacks within the majority population and against Pipile communities. Weapons and armaments widely used against indigenous communities are imported to El Salvador from the United States, Argentina, Venezuela and Israel through government-to-government sales and transfers, and through the private black market from Libya, Western Block states and Eastern Block states.
- 1.3 Non-indigenous rival forces in Nicaragua, in the border areas of Honduras and Costa Rica and in Guatemala are carrying out acts of genocide and ethnocide

against the indigenous Miskito, Sumu and Rama peoples who have a combined population exceeding 180,000. The Miskito, Sumu and Rama constitute the majority population living on the Atlantic Coast, in Zelaya Department, within the asserted boundaries of Nicaragua. Acts of violence against the Miskito, Sumu and Rama have been precipitated by the 1979 overthrow of the Anastasio Somoza Regime by the "Frente Sandinista De Liberacion Nacional" (F.S.L.N.) which subsequently established the Sandinista Regime. An undetermined number of Miskito, Sumu and Rama have been murdered by the military and insurgency forces of the former Somoza Regime operating from protected enclaves in Honduras and Costa Rica with the covert aid of the United States government, paramilitary forces in Florida and California, and covert forces organized by Argentina, Chile and other South and Central American states. These enclave and covert forces are using torture, mass murder, intimidation and coercion to induct Miskito, Sumu and Rama men and boys into their ranks to carry out violent actions against Miskito, Sumu and Rama communities, and against communities and installations under the control of the Sandinista Regime. The Sandinista Regime has enacted a policy entitled "Declaration of the Popular Sandinista Revolution in Regards to the Indigenous Communities of the Atlantic Coast" which contemplates forcible assimilation of Miskito, Sumu and Rama peoples and their territories into Nicaraguan society despite their relative independence prior to 1979. The Sandinista policy further contemplates annexation and confiscation of Miskito, Sumu and Rama territories and natural resources against the will of the coastal indigenous peoples. These policies are now being executed as demonstrated by the forced relocation of more than 8,500 Miskito from their native villages to permanent government controlled "model communities". The Miskito, Sumu and Rama peoples are being tortured, murdered, intimidated and coerced by representatives of the Sandinista Government and the United States supported forces seeking to overthrow the Sandinista Government. Weapons and armaments from France, Libya, the United States, Cuba, the Soviet Union, Argentina, Israel, Brazil and Chile provided through government-to-government sales and transfers, and through the black market are being used against the indigenous Miskito, Sumu and Rama peoples.

- 1.4 The acts of violence against indigenous peoples, as revealed by events in Guatamala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, demonstrate a systematic and calculated pattern of state supported and rival group supported practice of genocide and ethnocide against the indigenous peoples of Central America. The states of Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Honduras, Venezuela, Israel, United States, Libya, France, the Soviet Union and Cuba, are by virtue of their arms and weapons sales, knowingly or unknowingly, contributing to acts of genocide and ethnocide against indigenous peoples in Central America.
- 2.0 WHEREAS, in consideration of the Founding principles upon which the Constitution of the National Congress of American Indians is based, where member Tribal Governments are committed to the preservation of Indian cultural values, the equitable adjustment of Indian Affairs, the preservation of Indian rights, the promotion of the common welfare of the American Indian; and a better understanding of Indians, and

- 2.1 WHEREAS, recalling that the National Congress of American Indians is a Charter member of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, founded in Port Alberni, Canada on October 27-30, 1975, and is, thereby, committed under that Charter to: "Promote unity of Indigenous peoples through knowledge and organization; to combat racism, to abolish genocide and ethnocide; to ensure political, economic and social justice; and to establish equality among indigenous peoples and other peoples of the world"; and
- 2.2 WHEREAS, recalling that the National Congress of American Indians has from time-to-time extended its support and assistance to indigenous populations throughout the Western Hemisphere through the adoption of relevant resolutions in convention; and
- 2.3 WHEREAS, recalling that the National Congress of American Indians has mandated international initiatives to organize and promote supportive action within the United Nations and other international organizations to stop national government policies of genocide and ethnocide against tribal peoples \*\* in South America, Central America, North America, the South Pacific and Northern Europe, as provided in the "Tribal/Global Relations: Policy & Action Plan for the 80's" adopted by the 37th Annual National Congress of American Indians Convention, October 28, 1980; and
- 2.4 WHEREAS, recognizing that the rights of indigenous peoples to self-determination and self-government are accepted international law, and have been increasingly given effect in the domestic law of States; and
- 2.5 WHEREAS, considering that the Recognition of the Inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of individuals and of peoples are the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, and considering that these principles are recognized and proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights; and
- 2.6 WHEREAS, the indigenous peoples of Central America and Mexico are suffering from systematic and calculated genocide and ethnocide due to the actions of State governments and their rivals; and the indigenous Indian peoples of Central America and Mexico are suffering from the systematic and calculated efforts of States to force assimilation, annex indigenous territories, and expropriate and confiscate indigenous lands and natural resources.
- 3.0 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians does hereby, proclaim its endorsement and support of the indigenous peoples of Central America and Mexico and offers its assistance and participation in World Council of Indigenous Peoples sponsored commissions or other actions which may be instituted to protect Indian rights in Central America and Mexico.

- 3.1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians does call upon the World Council of Indigenous Peoples to receive this resolution and transmit it to the good offices of the United Nations, Organization of American States, Organization of Non-Aligned Countries, the European Human Rights Commission, the U.N. Human Rights Commission, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, the Foreign Ministries of all of the hostile States governments, representatives of hostile rival groups located in Central America and Mexico, and the relevant international press.
- 3.2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians does direct its President and Executive Committee and staff to take all necessary steps to express our collective outrage and the contents of this resolution to the Executive and Legislative offices of the United States Government relevant to our concerns.
- 3.3 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians does direct its President and Executive Committee and relevant staff to take all necessary steps to convey the contents of this resolution to the U.S. electronic media and press, and to the Central American Regional Indigenous Council (CORPI) with all deliberate speed.

CERTIFICATION

The NCAI General Assembly duly convened at the NCAI 1982 Mid-Year Conference in San Diego, California, on May 26 through 28th, 1982, voted to approve this resolution.

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

*Ella Mae Horse*

---

Ella Mae Horse  
Recording Secretary