

The Impact of U.S. Policy on Indigenous Peoples

The Quincentenary: Heroes and Villains

He was probably beaten to America by Leif Eriksson and certainly by millions of Indians. He thought he was in Asia, even after four visits. He claimed possession of all the lands he found, though they were already populated....He tortured, killed, and captured Indians, introducing slavery along the way. On one voyage, he was arrested for misgoverning the island he colonized, and he returned to Spain in chains. On another he insisted he had discovered the gateway to the garden of Eden....He and his crew may have spread smallpox to America and syphilis to Europe. ("Dubious Man of the Millenium," *Esquire*, 1/91, p. 107.)

And yet, he is characterized as a hero and a day is set aside to celebrate his accomplishments. Obscene, yes, inconsistent, no. Christopher Columbus fits a pattern of American heroes. For more than two centuries, our esteemed leaders have systematically assaulted Native Americans. In this, the last half of the 20th century, our country has lionized a series of felons who violated U.S. and international law and standards of human decency.

We have been led by a series of criminal chief executives, including a man who invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs and escalated the Vietnam War, another who could have been poster boy for the Society for the Advancement of the Brain Dead, and a former head of the CIA—an agency which has unleashed a plague of suffering around the world.

The real heroes are not these "great men of history," but rather the men and women who have refused to surrender or to be conquered. Although this issue of *CovertAction* cannot cover every struggle, it is meant to honor all peoples who have fought against the oppressive system which seems inevitably to give rise and glory to these adventurers. In this quincentenary of Columbus' invasion of the Western Hemisphere, though, we want especially to pay tribute to the courage and tenacity of the world's indigenous peoples in their movements for liberation and self-determination. ●

Letters:

Gas Warfare

I am writing in the hope that you will clear up what seem to be conflicting facts in issue Number 37 (Summer 1991).

In "Disinformation and Covert Operations," the authors cite a U.S. Army War College Report that states that the gassing of the Kurds, "...in March 1988..." was actually a result of Iranian actions and

not, as is commonly believed, an Iraqi crime (p. 10). It came as quite a surprise to me since I had, from mainstream media efforts, believed that the Iraqis had gassed the Kurds. But I was willing to accept the new information, since your articles seem to be usually well researched and based on fact.

In the same issue though, Jack Colhoun, in "Trading With the Enemy," states "...Iraq used poison gas against a Kurdish uprising in August and September 1988" (p. 21). Now, either I am unaware of the facts, and there were actually two separate incidents (March and August/ September 1988) or Jack Colhoun was unaware of the War College report.

Eric Johnson
British Columbia, Canada

Jack Colhoun Replies

There were many allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq War by both sides but most of the charges focused on Iraq. The United Nations sent seven missions to the battlefield to investigate incidents of alleged chemical warfare. The missions found evidence of the use of chemical agents but most of the reports were reluctant to draw conclusions about which side was responsible.

A May 8, 1987 U.N. report concluded that Iraq had attacked Iranian positions with mustard gas and possibly nerve agents. It noted that Iranian military personnel and civilians were injured in the attacks. It pointed out that Iraqi troops were af-

fected by mustard gas but reached no conclusion about the origins of the attack.

Histories of the Iran-Iraq War like Dilip Hiro's *The Longest War* and Anthony Cordesman and Abraham Wagner's *Lessons of Modern War, Vol. II: The Iran-Iraq War* describe repeated instances of Iraqi use of chemical agents.

Regarding the use of chemical agents at Halabjah against Kurdish civilians in March 1988, it appears both Iran and Iraq used chemicals. The U.S. Army War College Report *Iraqi Power and U.S. Security in the Middle East* by Stephen Pelletiere, Douglas Johnson and Leif Rosenberg states "Iraq was blamed for the Halabjah attack even though it was subsequently brought out that Iran too had used chemicals in this operation, and it seemed likely that it was the Iranian bombardment that had actually killed the Kurds."

In "Trading With the Enemy," I focus on a series of chemical attacks against the Kurds in northern Iraq in August and September 1988, because the evidence of Iraqi responsibility is more clear. I believe *Chemical Weapons Use in Kurdistan: Iraq's Final Offensive*, a 1988 staff report of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and *Winds of Death: Iraq's Use of Poison Gas Against Its Kurdish Population*, a February 1989 report by Physicians for Human Rights, assemble persuasive evidence that the regime of Saddam Hussein did gas the Kurds.

I also used the August/September 1988 gassing of the Kurds by Iraq to highlight
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Incident at Oglala

William M. Kunstler

On June 26, 1975, FBI Special Agents Jack Coler and Ronald Williams were shot to death when, unannounced, they drove their late model cars at high speed toward a hilltop camp. The land was occupied—with the consent of the landowners, Harry and Cecilia Jumping Bull—by members of the American Indian Movement (AIM). Four Native Americans, Rob Robideau, Dino Butler, Jimmy Eagle, and AIM activist Leonard Peltier, were eventually charged with the homicides.

In the summer of 1976, Robideau and Butler were tried in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where their cases, as well as that of Peltier, had been transferred because of anti-Indian prejudice in the Dakotas. Peltier, like Sitting Bull and so many other beleaguered Native Americans in the past, had fled to Canada for sanctuary. Since he was still embroiled in extradition proceedings in Canada, he was not tried in Iowa with his co-defendants.

After Robideau and Butler, claiming self-defense, were acquitted by their all-white jury, the case against Jimmy Eagle, who had not been present at Pine Ridge on the day of the shootout, was voluntarily dismissed by the government. Peltier was left to stand trial alone.

When he was finally extradited on the basis of affidavits from Myrtle Poor Bear, an emotionally disturbed and alcoholic Indian woman, his trial was mysteriously transferred to Fargo, North Dakota, where it was assigned to Judge Paul Benson, who shared local anti-Indian attitudes. The government later conceded that the documents on which the extradition had taken place had been fabricated.

William Kunstler, a Founder, Vice-President, and Volunteer Staff Attorney, Center for Constitutional Rights, was one of the attorneys who represented Leonard Peltier's acquitted co-defendants, Dino Butler and Robert Robideau, and has been one of Peltier's appellate attorneys since the 1977 conviction in Fargo, North Dakota.

Leonard Peltier



Thomas Janson

CovertAction: The U.S. government treats you like a very dangerous man. What is it that you represent to them that makes you such a threat?

Leonard Peltier: Well, two of their agents got killed in a fire fight in 1975 at the Pine Ridge Oglala reservation and because they claim I was the leader, I was responsible, they feel that I am a very serious threat to them, a danger to them.

Do you feel that you or the goals and aspirations of your movement threaten some of the things the U.S. government stands for?

I suppose in a sense we do because we have been trying to get the government to honor the treaties, and if they ever did honor them there's a lot of finances, a lot of money, billions of dollars involved in this whole thing. Plus there is the fact that we would be declaring ourselves a sovereign nation, which by the way, although there has been no reporting on it, ten tribes have recently done in the last six months. So, yes, they would lose an enormous amount of minerals, land, and that's worth billions, and it's money that is behind so much of what's happened here and accounts for so many reasons why the Indians have been targeted.

U.S. senators, Nobel Prize winners, and even the Archbishop of Canterbury have contended that the evidence points to the fact that you were targeted and framed. Recently, a man identified only as "X" came forward and gave firsthand evidence establishing your innocence. He talked to journalists, but will not go to officials. Do you think it will make any difference if "X" comes forward to testify?

From Prison

It won't because that's the way the system runs. They wanted more than one person convicted and [if he went public] then, they would now have two people convicted. But the chances of my being released because of his testimony are very, very small, so he does not have any intentions of coming forward, nor do I want him to.

The FBI has played the major role in conducting the case against you. Would you talk about its tactics and motivations in pursuing this case so doggedly?

Well, their investigation tactics were overly aggressive. They terrorized witnesses, they tricked witnesses, they basically threw the rule books and law books out the window to investigate this case. When they couldn't get anyone to talk for them, to support them and be witnesses, they began to use Gestapo tactics and they went through terrorizing people. Prior to the June 26th incident, they were arming the goon squads with armor-piercing ammunition and sophisticated weapons and intelligence of the area of the Jumping Bull ranch and other areas where the people were living and they had planned on assaulting the place.

One of the tactics the FBI used was infiltrating the Indian movement.

That should be clarified here. Yes, we've had some infiltration, but it hasn't been as great as the Black civil rights movement. We've had a few, but not the same as other movements have. First of all, because our population is very small, most Indian people all know each other — our reservations are so small. And it's very difficult for them to get an Indian person to turn against his own anyway.

There appear to be many instances in which the FBI constructed, fabricated evidence against you. Did, for example, FBI Special Agent Evan Hodge and others perjure themselves in your trial?

Yes, and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1985 ruled specifically, that there was perjury by government witnesses, and though they didn't name him [Hodge], that's what the issues were being argued around.

There are still bits and pieces of the whole conspiracy concerning the murder weapon that are still missing and that they haven't turned over to us. But we were able to prove in 1984 that Hodge committed perjury — not only in the extradition, not only in Bob [Robideau] and Dino's [Butler] trial, but in my trial — three times. Hodge and his assistant Joe Twardowski were the only persons who had access to his worksheets, in other words, to the evidence. In 1985, we were able to bring out that there was not only a third per-

Peltier was ultimately convicted on the strength of the apparent matching of a .223 shell casing supposedly found in the open trunk of Agent Coler's car with an AR-15 rifle falsely attributed to the defendant. The prosecution's case was based squarely on the contention that Peltier had executed the victims at point-blank range after they had been rendered helpless by gunfire.

This evidence, too, was of doubtful authenticity. Two government agents had claimed to have found the matching and crucial shell casing on two different days. And years later, through resort to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Peltier's attorneys obtained an FBI ballistics report which stated that, in any event, the .223 shell casing could not possibly have been fired from the weapon in question.

The weight of FOIA revelations and the history of questionable testimony did not sway the court. In 1984, Judge Benson, as expected, refused to grant a new trial following a three-day evidentiary hearing. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit affirmed — on the basis of its interpretation of a Supreme Court decision which required a finding — that the new evidence would "probably," rather than "possibly," have resulted in a different verdict. Another legal channel was closed when, despite urging by more than ten percent of the U.S. House of Representatives and many of the world's religious leaders, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Supreme Court declined to review the lower court's decision to deny a new trial.

During oral argument before the Eighth Circuit in the 1985 hearing, the prosecution, in order to prevent a reversal of Peltier's conviction, had downgraded the importance of the .223 casing. It then took the position that it didn't know who executed the agent but, if Peltier did not pull the trigger, he had at least been properly convicted as an aider and abettor of whoever did. In its opinion, however, the three-judge panel maintained throughout that the sole and exclusive theory relied on by the government during trial was that Peltier was the coldblooded executioner of Coler and Williams and not merely someone who assisted in killing them. They maintained this position

despite the fact that the prosecution had backed away from it and in disregard for the new evidence which invalidated their decisive link between Peltier and the weapon from which the fatal shots were fired. "The government's theory," wrote the court, "...accepted by the jury and the judge, was that Peltier killed the two FBI agents at point-blank range with the Wichita AR-15."

Based on the newly-asserted prosecution version, Peltier again in 1991 moved for a new trial. In order to escape Judge Benson, the motion was filed in a federal court in Kansas, where Peltier is imprisoned.

The local judge, however, refused to entertain the matter and it was eventually sent back to Benson. Faced with an attempt by Peltier's counsel to disqualify him for bias, he ingenuously turned the proceeding over to Federal Magistrate Karen K. Klein for hearing and recommendation. To no one's surprise, after hearing oral argument, Klein claimed that the Eighth Circuit had not really meant it when it discounted the government's theory at the trial that Peltier was the actual triggerman. She then urged an all too willing Benson to deny the motion, which he promptly did. An appeal was immediately taken to the Circuit which will now have one more opportunity to do the right thing.

Justice Denied

Incident at Oglala, Robert Redford's documentary about the ordeal of Leonard Peltier in particular and about the sorry plight of Native Americans in general will be released shortly. It traces the tumultuous events that brought South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation into the national consciousness during the mid-1970s by documenting the 71-day occupation by AIM of the hamlet of Wounded Knee, the hundreds of unsolved murders, the tyrannical reign of tribal President Dick Wilson, and the shooting deaths of two FBI agents.

Ultimately, the film narrows in on the governmental vendetta against Peltier because of his alleged involvement in the killing of the agents. Painstakingly and graphically, under Michael Apter's inspired direction, it proves



Cate Gilles

St. Louis, 1983. Demonstrators protest outside Peltier's hearing.

son, but a fourth person who had worked on the sheets, although Hodge had said that no one had the combination to his safe, or keys to his safe and therefore, he was positive, definite, that no one else worked on the worksheets. But [we proved that] there was other people's handwriting, so we were able to impeach him there. He had to return to the stand and say that he had made an error and that he didn't know who these other people were [who altered his files].

Yes, there was some manipulation going on there and there was withholding of exculpatory evidence which could have exonerated me, because, as I said, the most crucial evidence which was used at the trial was the alleged murder weapon which we had no way of disputing [because of the withheld documents and perjured testimony].

Is the FBI still targeting the Indian Movement the way it did during the 1970s?

In certain areas, yes. There are still a lot of areas of the tribal government where tribal leaders who are very progressive have been [wrongfully] convicted of fraud and sent to prison. Yes, there have certainly been areas.

What about the Bureau of Indian Affairs and its role?

Well, that's all part of it, they're part of it. The Bureau of Indian Affairs plays a great part with the FBI and the United States government...they are the United States government.

What are your current conditions in Leavenworth Penitentiary? Do you have access to information?

I'm in [with the general prison] population. The doors are open at 6:30 [a.m.] and then we have to go in the cell from 4:00 to 4:30. It reopens again and we are able to make ten-minute movements on the hour and then we're locked up for the night again at 10. And, yes, we have TV rooms and we have libraries and newspapers.



Associated Press

Wounded Knee, S.D., 1973. Army APCs surround Pine Ridge Reservation.

Have there been any repressive measures brought against you, restrictions on visitors, or efforts by prison officials to make you renounce your politics?

No, they have pretty much backed off from me in the last five years.

And what about the current status of your case? I understand that your most recent attempt to get a new trial was not approved.

Well, I go from the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals now to the Appellate. It's out of the district level, which we had wanted, and hopefully we will be able to get something out of the Eighth Circuit Court. But because I don't have any money—I'm just surviving on a day-to-day basis with my defense committee—my lawyers are volunteers, and they are not getting paid, and they have other trials they have to do to support themselves, naturally. Until the court appoints them [as public defenders] they have asked for a suspension of the March date which was set for us to present our appellate brief motions. The case has now been suspended indefinitely until they get appointed, or I get the money.

The case has been going on for almost two decades now. How has the situation of Native Americans changed since you've been in prison?

It hasn't. It hasn't changed. The only thing is the years have gone by. We still have the same conditions, the same issues, the same struggle is still going on.

Any progress in regaining the Black Hills or on the struggle at Big Mountain?

No, none whatsoever, not in those areas. But we have made gains in other areas where our friends who are politicians have helped get some legislative bills passed that are very beneficial to Indian people in our moves toward sovereignty.

conclusively that the case against Peltier was, from beginning to end, wholly fabricated.

Paradoxically, Judge Gerald W. Heaney, a member of the three-judge panel which wrote the original opinion denying Peltier a new trial, and who appears in *Incident at Oglala* as well as on *60 Minutes* and *West 57th Street*, two CBS network programs about the case—recently wrote a letter to President Bush, through Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), chair of the Senate's Select Committee on Indian Affairs. The judge recommended a commutation of the defendant's two consecutive life sentences on the grounds, among others, that "the United States government must share the responsibility with the Native American for the June 26 firefight."

Oral arguments before the Circuit Court are expected in late spring, as Peltier's attorneys—Eric Seitz, Bruce Ellison, and the author—are trying to get as early a hearing as possible. Every day added to the 16 years of our client's unjustified imprisonment cruelly and needlessly increases the bitter torment to

The case was, from beginning to end, wholly fabricated.

which he has been subjected. Every hour he spends behind bars accentuates the hypocrisy of the arrogant boast that fair and equal justice is the benchmark of our legal system.

In his letter to Senator Inouye, Judge Heaney eloquently emphasized what is perhaps the historical significance of the Peltier case. "At some point," he concluded, "a healing process must begin. We as a nation must treat Native Americans more fairly. To do so, we must recognize their unique culture and their great contributions to our nation. Favorable action by the President in the Leonard Peltier case would be an important step in this regard." If "a thousand points of light" has any more meaning than flowery campaign rhetoric, the President should rise to the occasion and bring this savage perversion of justice to an end while Leonard Peltier still has useful years of life ahead of him. ●



Graffiti attacking the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) "I would rather be free in my grave than to live as your puppet or slave."

Do you hold out any hope that the congressional hearing on your case proposed by Senator Inouye (D-Hawaii) will set you free?

Oh, certainly. There are definitely reasons, beneficial to my case, why they have been withholding those 6,000 documents. Every document that was harmful to me, they turned over. There has to be a reason why they kept back the other 6,000. And as we all know the

How have you started to prepare?

By waiting for approval from the Bureau of Prisons to allow me to marry...a very wonderful person. As soon as approval happens, we will set a date.

How did you meet her?

We've been corresponding for four years. She was in college, she's a little younger than me, but she's very sincere, very certain that she wants to marry me. We are just preparing a new life. That's what's happening!

And politically, are you hopeful?

Hopeful for what?

Hopeful that Native Americans can attain some measure of justice.

Well, you know, we see a lot of countries that have now regained their sovereignty and how the world is reporting it. Eastern Europe and other nations are now declaring themselves sovereign nations and we're hoping that, unlike the ten tribes that have now declared themselves sovereign nations on which there has been no news reporting, there seems to be no un-

[The FBI's] investigation tactics were overly aggressive. They terrorized witnesses, they tricked witnesses, they basically threw the rule books and law books out the window...they [used] gestapo tactics.

government is very famous for withholding evidence that could be helpful to anyone accused of a crime, political or criminal.

How are you holding up, have you been pretty healthy?

Yeah, I let myself deteriorate a little bit, get a little overweight, but I've gotten myself to slim back down. And even though I might not sound very optimistic, I really am. I am optimistic.

What makes you optimistic?

There's a big movement going on right now, from the literary world, the film business and everything, about how to really push my case. There are also some really very powerful politicians who are working very hard for me. And, you know, I feel that there's some optimism. I feel that '92 can very well be the year that something positive happens in my case and, in fact, I've even started to prepare.

favorable reaction or response to [Eastern Europe, etc.] by the United States government. So, we're hoping that when we do continue to make these moves that we won't have to face confrontations like what happened in 1973, 1975, and prior to that.

I know you got a lot of solidarity from the Soviet Union. Can you expect that kind of support, given the current political situation?

Well, I imagine that the people who supported me in the past—more than 18 million—still do. Whether they have access depends on what kind of media they have over there. Since all the turmoil nothing really concrete has been going on over there.

How effective has international and domestic solidarity been in keeping alive your case and supporting you?

Well, the international support has been the greatest support, not only for myself, but for Indian people. The American people—I don't care how political they are or

how active they are — still are more concerned about what's happening in South Africa or other countries. They don't want to admit that the Native people of this country have had great atrocities committed against them. You don't see them rallying behind Indian issues the way you do, say, even with civil rights in the U.S.

Why is that?

I suppose it is their guilt [for not recognizing their own role in the oppression of Indians]. I mean everybody else is a bad person but them, that's even in the movements here in the United States. You don't see them rallying behind the Indian people like they do the Black man or East Germans or the Russians or whatever, in places where there are some atrocities going on.

Are there other political prisoners here and around the world with whom you've been in contact?

I'm not allowed to write to anyone in another institution. I've had news through newspapers but not directly.

I'm sure you've been hearing a lot about the 500th anniversary of the invasion by Columbus and about the

and resisted it, fought it. And that's precisely what we will continue to do, each time they attempt to put one of these things on our reservations.

I know that the amount of time you can use the phone is limited. Is there any point you'd like people to understand about your struggle?

Well, I'd like to tell the people who read *CovertAction* that there's been a struggle going on here for over 200, over 500 years in this land right here. It hasn't been resolved yet. We're asking you to help us clean up our own backyard before we go around the world being world revolutionaries. We need help. We need your support. We can't, because of our population [size], because of our near extermination, we can't do it alone. We need help.

Do you think that help should come from Washington or from the people?

It's got to come from the masses; it's the masses that are going to change Washington's mind. [Only] when the voters get out there and support it and get behind us, that's when it's going to change Washington.

The government is very famous for withholding evidence that could be helpful to anyone accused of a crime, political or criminal.

movement to link indigenous issues throughout the continent, to make alliances so that various movements can work together. Is that a strategy that is useful to North American Indians or would it be better to concentrate on what's happening at home?

First of all, we support all of the movements that are going on. For us to go out and start concentrating on what's going on in other parts of the world while we are suffering here in this country would be rather hypocritical. We, as Indian people in this country, yes, we will be in solidarity with everyone around the world, but we will also be concentrating on what's happening to us here at home and try to bring this to the attention of the world.

One of the things happening here is that Indian lands are targeted for toxic waste dumps and uranium mining. What kinds of effects does that have and what ways of fighting that do you see?

As you see, in some of the areas that they were trying to put these toxic waste dumps, the people got together

What about in terms of your case?

Same thing. The same thing. Without the masses for support, chances of our getting, of my winning my freedom, are very, very small.

It sounds like you don't have much faith in the justice of the U.S. legal system.

No. No, I have very little. I certainly have a lot of proof to support this you know, indications from history that support this [lack of faith]. That's all I can say. ●

This interview was conducted by telephone to Leavenworth Penitentiary where Leonard Peltier — one of the longest serving political prisoners in the world — has spent 16 years of two consecutive life sentences. To support his struggle with funds and solidarity, contact:

**The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee,
P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, KS 66044 (913) 842-5774.**

Since Predator Came

Ward Churchill

On October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus, blinded by greed and arrogance, first washed up on a Caribbean beach. Neither then, nor in subsequent landings, did he see what lay before him—a continent rich in culture and civilization.

The exceedingly complex societies of this "New" World had existed on the North American continent continuously for 50,000 years and supported perhaps 15 million people. They had developed highly advanced architecture and engineering; spiritual traditions embodying equivalents to modern ecoscience; refined knowledge of pharmacology and holistic medicine; highly sophisticated systems of governance, trade and diplomacy;¹ and environmentally sound farming procedures out of which originated well over half the modern world's vegetal foodstuffs.

The primarily agricultural economies were able to support cities as populous as the 40,000-person center of Cahokia in present-day Illinois.²

By and large, the societies were organized along extremely egalitarian lines, with real property held collec-

tively. Women shared real political and economic power and matrifocality was a normative standard.³ War, at least in the Euro-derived sense the term is understood today, was virtually unknown.⁴

Within an astonishingly short period, the face of Native America was changed beyond all recognition. The "Columbian Encounter" unleashed a predatory, five-century-long cycle of European conquest, genocide and colonization. Indeed, over the first decade of Spanish presence in the Caribbean—while Columbus himself was governor—the pattern was set. Slavery and slaughter, combined with the introduction of Old World pathogens, reduced the native Taino population of just one island—Española (presently the Dominican Republic and

[W]e gave them two blankets and a handkerchief out of the smallpox hospital. I hope it will have the desired effect.

—Lord Jeffrey Amherst

Haiti)—from as many as eight million to fewer than 100,000 people. By 1542, only 200 could be found by Spanish census-takers. Within a generation, the 14 million Indians of the Caribbean Basin were declared extinct.⁵

In North America, a similar dynamic was set in motion by the 1513 expedition of Ponce de León into Florida. Before the smallpox pandemic it brought had run its course in 1524, the plague spanned the continent and killed about three-quarters of all indigenous people north of the Río

Ward Churchill has been co-director of Colorado American Indian Movement (AIM) since 1980 and coordinator of American studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder. His books include *Marxism and Native Americans*, *Agents of Repression*, *The COINTELPRO Papers*, *Critical Issues in Native North America*, and *Fantasies of the Master Race*.

1. For a good survey of the data indicating native occupancy in North America for fifty millennia or more, see Jeffrey Goodman, *American Genesis: The American Indian and the Origins of Modern Man* (New York: Summit Books, 1981). On population size, see Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Numbers Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983). On architecture and engineering, see Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton, *Native American Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). On medicine and pharmacology, see Virgil Vogel, *American Indian Medicine* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975). On governance and diplomacy, see William Brandon, *Old Worlds for New: Reports from the New World and their Effect on the Development of Social Thought in Europe, 1500-1800* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986).

2. R. Douglas Hurt, *Indian Agriculture in America: Prehistory to the*

Present (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987) and Jack Weatherford, *Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1988). On Cahokia, see Melvin T. Fowler, "A Pre-Columbian Urban Center on the Mississippi," *Scientific American*, No. 233, 1975, pp. 92-101.

3. Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).

4. Tom Holm, "Patriots and Pawns: State Use of American Indians in the Military and the Process of Nativization in the United States," in M. Annette Jaimes (ed.), *The State of Native America: Colonization, Genocide and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992).

5. Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).

Grande. This was only the beginning. Between 1520 and 1890, there were no fewer than 41 smallpox epidemics and pandemics among North American Indians. To this number must be added dozens of lethal outbreaks of measles, whooping cough, tuberculosis, bubonic plague, typhus, cholera, typhoid, diphtheria, scarlet fever, pleurisy, mumps, venereal disease and the common cold.

The attrition of native populations by disease has usually been treated as a tragic but wholly inadvertent byproduct of contact between Native Americans and Europeans. The perception by many Indians that the English deliberately employed smallpox as a form of biological warfare is amply documented. In 1763, Lord Jeffrey Amherst told his subordinates to infect the members of Pontiac's Algonquin confederacy "by means of [smallpox-contaminated] blankets as well as...every other means to extirpate this execrable race."

A few days later, it was reported to Amherst, "[W]e gave them two blankets and a handkerchief out of the smallpox hospital. I hope it will have the desired effect."

It did. As an early form of biological warfare, the epidemic that Amherst initiated killed at least 100,000 Native Americans.⁶ In 1836, as many as a quarter-million Indians died after the U.S. Army knowingly distributed smallpox-laden blankets among the Missouri River Mandans.⁷

Beginning in the early 17th century, with England's Plymouth and Virginia colonies and the Dutch toehold at New Amsterdam, the eradication of North America's indigenous population assumed much cruder forms. Outright massacres and casualties from wars provoked by European powers fighting for colonial hegemony dramatically accelerated the reduction of indigenous people.⁸

Enter the United States

Although it renounced rights of conquest and in the 1789 Northwest Ordinance pledged "utmost good faith" in its dealings with Indians, the fledgling U.S. embarked almost immediately on a course of territorial acquisition far more ambitious than that of its colonialist precursors. From 1810 to 1814, a sequence of extremely brutal military campaigns against the Shawnee in the Ohio River Valley, and the Creek Confederacy further south eliminated the Native military capacity east of the Mississippi. The government then forcibly relocated entire indigenous nations and "cleared" the eastern U.S. for repopulation by white "settlers." Attrition was severe; thousands died when the Cherokee were rounded up at bayonet-point and marched over the 1,500-mile "Trail of Tears."¹⁰ This federal "removal policy" would be echoed a century later in Adolf Hitler's *lebensraum* policy.¹¹

The government understood clearly that Indians were an impediment to the expansion of white settlers who would open the land to profit-making productivity. Since these inconvenient Natives could be classified as subhuman savages, the process of controlling and even killing them carried no more moral weight than an exercise in animal husbandry.

During the 1820s and 1830s, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Marshall penned a series of high court opinions based in large part upon the medieval Doctrine of Discovery. Over the next four decades, the U.S. used this veneer of legality to acquire Indian territory through at least 371 nation-to-nation agreements. In a bizarre departure from established principles of international law, however, Marshall also argued that U.S. sovereignty was inherently "higher" than that of the nations with which it



Kenji Kawano

Arizona, 1981. Navajo women face government eviction. "There is no word for relocation. To move away means to disappear."

6. E. Wagner Stearn, and Allen E. Stearn, *The Effects of Smallpox on the Destiny of the Amerindian* (Boston: Bruce Humphries Inc., 1945), pp. 44-45.

7. Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), pp. 94-96.

8. Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976).

9. The policy was implemented under provision of the Indian Removal Act (Ch. 148, 4 Stat. 411), passed on May 28, 1830. See Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal: The Immigration of the Five Civilized Tribes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953).

10. Russell Thornton, "Cherokee Population Losses During the Trail of Tears: A New Perspective and a New Estimate," *Ethnohistory*, No. 31, 1984, pp. 289-300.

11. The *lebensraum* concept is laid out in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (Munich: Verlag FRZ, Eher Nachf, G.M.B.H., 1925, 1927).

was making treaties. Since Indians had no right to refuse to sell their land to the U.S., any resistance to the appropriation of their territory became an "act of war" which justified a military "response."¹²

By 1903, the "Marshall Doctrine" established "intrinsic" federal "plenary" (full) power over all Indians within the U.S., and released the government from its treaty obligations while leaving the land title gained through those treaties intact. In conjunction with this novel notion of international jurisprudence, the high court ruled that the government enjoyed "natural" and permanent "trust" prerogatives over all residual Native property.¹³

Invoking Manifest Destiny

Having consolidated its grip east of the Mississippi during the 1840s and having militarily seized "rights" to the northern half of Mexico as well, the U.S. proclaimed its "Manifest Destiny" to expand west to the Pacific.¹⁴ Indian-controlled land had no part in this agenda. The ensuing rhetoric of outright extermination by both federal policymakers and a sizable segment of the public¹⁵ led unerringly to a lengthy and extensive chain of massacres of Indians in the Great Plains and Basin regions by U.S. troops. Among the worst were the slaughters perpetrated at the Blue River (Nebraska, 1854), Bear River (Idaho, 1863), Sand Creek (Colorado, 1864), Washita River (Oklahoma, 1868), Sappa Creek (Kansas, 1875), Camp Robinson (Nebraska, 1878) and Wounded Knee (South Dakota, 1890).¹⁶ According to the Census Bureau, by 1894, in barely a century, the U.S. had waged "more than 40" separate wars against Native people killing a "very much greater" number than the Bureau's figure of 30,000.¹⁷

12. The sequence of cases consists of *Johnson v. McIntosh* (21 U.S. 98 (Wheat.) 543 (1823)); *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (30 U.S. (5 Pet.) 1 (1831)); and *Worcester v. Georgia* (31 U.S. (6 Pet.) 551 (1832)).

13. *Lonewolf v. Hitchcock* (187 U.S. 553 (1903)).

14. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

15. David Svaldi, *Sand Creek and the Rhetoric of Extermination: A Case-Study in Indian-White Relations* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1989).

16. Ralph Andrist, *The Long Death: The Last Days of the Plains Indians* (New York: Collier Books, 1964).

17. *U.S. Bureau of the Census, Report on Indians Taxed and Indians Not Taxed in the U.S. (except Alaska) at the Eleventh U.S. Census: 1890* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (USGPO), 1894), pp. 637-38.

* *From What It's Like to Be Discovered* (N.Y.: Monthly Review Press, 1991).

The "quite substantial" indigenous death toll from "private actions"¹⁸ during U.S. continental expansion was in all probability far higher than the formal military toll. In California alone, the Native population was reduced from approximately 300,000 in 1800 to fewer than 20,000 in 1890, "chiefly [because of] the cruelties and wholesale massacres perpetrated by...miners and the early settlers."¹⁹ In Texas, where a bounty was placed on any Indian scalp brought to a government office, North America's most diverse Native population was "exterminated or brought to the brink of extinction by [Euroamerican civilians] who often had no more regard for the life of an Indian than they had for that of a dog, sometimes less."²⁰

After the indigenous population was virtually liquidated, its agricultural economy destroyed and its remaining food sources—most notably the buffalo—wiped out, white settlers took over most of their land.

By 1890, more than 95 percent, or fewer than 250,000 Indians, remained alive within the U.S.²¹ The survivors were lodged on a patchwork of "reservations" even then being dismantled through application of the 1887 "General Allotment Act."²²

Under this formal eugenics code,²³ those who could prove "one-half or more degree of Indian blood" and accepted U.S. citizenship typically received 160 acres or less.²⁴ Reservation land remaining after each person with sufficient "blood quantum" had received his or her allotment was declared "surplus." By 1930, government-certified Indians were concentrated in about 2.5 percent of their original holdings—fifty million arid or semi-arid acres—while the best 100 million acres were stripped away and

18. *Ibid.*

19. James Mooney, "Population," in Frederick W. Dodge (ed.), *Handbook of the Indians North of Mexico*, Vol. 2, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin No. 30, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1910), pp. 286-87.

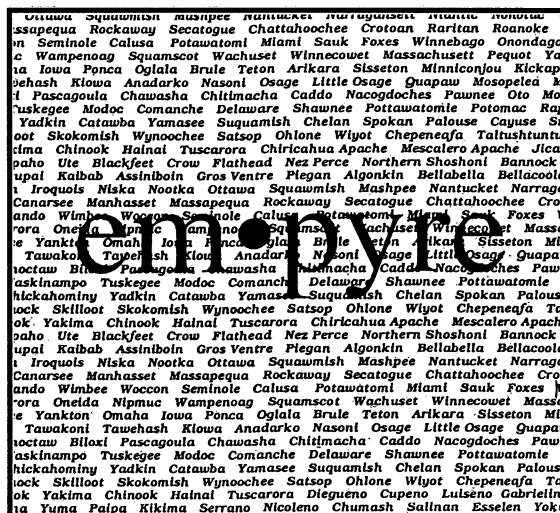
20. W.W. Newcome, Jr., *The Indians of Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961), p. 334.

21. *U.S. Bureau of the Census, Abstracts of the Eleventh Census: 1890* (USGPO, Washington, D.C.), 1896.

22. Ch. 119, 24 Stat. 388, now codified as amended at 25 U.S.C. § 331 et seq. The General Allotment Act is also known as the "Dawes Act" or "Dawes Severalty Act" after its sponsor, Massachusetts Senator Henry M. Dawes.

23. M. Annette Jaimes, "Federal Indian Identification Policy: A Usurpation of Indigenous Sovereignty in North America," in *The State of Native America*, op. cit.

24. As of 1924, all Native Americans who had not been made U.S. citizens through the allotment process were unilaterally declared so *en masse* through provision of the Indian Citizenship Act (Ch. 233, 43 Stat. 25).



Deborah Small*

opened up to non-Indian homesteading, corporate acquisition, or conversion into national parks and forests.²⁵ This model was later borrowed by the apartheid government of South Africa for its "racial homeland" system of territorial apportionment.²⁶

Stealing the Future

The appropriation of Indian land culminated in the mid-1950s, when the federal government enacted a series of "termination" statutes which unilaterally dissolved more than a hundred indigenous nations and their reservation areas.²⁷ Concomitantly, new legislation "encouraged" the relocation of large numbers of Indians from the remaining reservations to selected urban centers, and thereby discourage social cohesion within most land-based Native communities.²⁸ Although suspended in the late 1970s, the federal relocation program had by 1990 fostered a Native diaspora which scattered 880,000 people — more than half of all Indians in the U.S. — to urban ghettos.²⁹

Under the guise of "assimilation," the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) further undermined the integrity of Native existence by targeting children. Its generations-long program of "blind adoptions" placed Indian babies with non-Indian families, permanently sealed their birth records, and thereby denied them knowledge of their heritage.³⁰ Similarly, beginning in the 1870s and continuing to some extent into the present, the BIA administered a system of boarding

schools, where Indian children were kept, often for a decade or more, without being allowed to return home, speak their native languages, practice their religions, or otherwise manifest their identity as Indians.³¹ These policies blatantly violate the 1948 Convention on Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide, which makes it a crime against humanity for a government to engage in the systematic forced transfer of the children of a targeted racial or ethnic group to another group.³²

Nor is this the only Genocide Convention BIA violated. During the 1970s, its "Indian Health Service" imposed involuntary sterilization on approximately forty percent of women of childbearing age.³³



Vichy Indians

Ironically, the final and complete dissolution of Native North America may have been averted because the seemingly barren areas allotted turned out to be inordinately rich in mineral resources. By current estimates, two-thirds of all U.S. domestic uranium deposits, a quarter of the readily accessible low sulphur coal, a fifth of the oil and natural gas, and substantial deposits of copper, other ores and water resources lie within reservation boundaries.³⁴ Maintaining these resources in discrete internal colonies suited government planners who could thereby control the pace and nature of extraction, royalty rates and the like through federal "trust responsibilities" unavailable on private property under state or local control.³⁵

A facade of Indian control was established by the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA).³⁶ Although the IRA

25. Janet A. McDonnell, *The Dispossession of the American Indian, 1887-1934* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991).

26. George M. Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (London/New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

27. House Concurrent Resolution 108 (1953) dissolved 109 Native nations, or elements of Native nations. A handful were "restored" to federal recognition during the 1970s.

28. The "Relocation Act" (P.L. 959) (1956) funded the establishment of "job training centers" for American Indians in various urban centers, and the relocation of Indian individuals and families to them. It was coupled to a denial of funds for similar programs and economic development on the reservations themselves. Participants were usually required to sign agreements not to return to their respective reservations to live. See Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986).

29. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of the Population, Preliminary Report* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1991).

30. Tillie Blackbear Walker, "American Indian Children: Foster Care and Adoptions," in U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Development, National Institute of Education, *Conference on Educational and Occupational Needs of American Indian Women, October 1976* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1980), pp. 185-210.

31. Jorge Noriega, "American Indian Education in the U.S.: Indoctrination for Subordination to Colonialism," in *The State of Native America, op. cit.*

32. For the complete text of the 1948 Genocide Convention, see Ian Brownlie (ed.), *Basic Documents on Human Rights* (London/New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

33. Brint Dillingham, "Indian Women and IHS Sterilization Practices," *American Indian Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 1977, pp. 27-28.

34. Michael Garrity, "The U.S. Colonial Empire Is as Close as the Nearest Reservation," in Holly Sklar (ed.), *Trilateralism: The Trilateral Commission and Elite Planning for World Government* (Boston: South End Press, 1980), pp. 238-68.

35. The prototype for this policy emerged with the BIA's formation of the "Navajo Grand Council" to approve drilling leases at the behest of Standard Oil in 1923. See Laurence C. Kelly, *The Navajo Indians and Federal Indian Policy, 1900-1935* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968).

36. The IRA (Ch. 576, 48 Stat. 948, now codified at 25 U.S.C. §§ 461-279) is also known as the "Wheeler-Howard Act" after its Senate and House sponsors.

boards which govern reservations are composed exclusively of Native people, their authority stems from—and thus their primary allegiance adheres to—the U.S., not their indigenous constituency. Steadily reinforced by the passage of various additional federal statutes,³⁷ these puppet governments function to sow confusion, to provide an illusion of Indian consent to the systematic Euroamerican expropriation of Native resources, and to denounce and isolate any Indian audacious enough to object to the theft.³⁸

The usefulness of IRA's "Vichy Indians" can be clearly seen in the Arizona "Hopi-Navajo Land Dispute." Through carefully tailored pronouncements, the strife was presented as an inter-Indian conflict requiring federal intervention/resolution to "avoid bloodshed." In fact, behind this appearance of humanitarian concern for Indian well-being is a U.S. governmental/corporate campaign to relocate more than 10,000 traditional Navajo and clear the way to strip mine more than 20 billion tons of high-quality coal.³⁹ This operation lay the ground for the Navajo-Hopi land dispute which erupted over Big Mountain decades later.

The same pattern of manipulation and distortion facilitated the conversion of Western Shoshone homeland (Newe Segobia) in Nevada into a U.S. nuclear weapons testing area; the removal of more than 90 percent of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty Territory from Lakota control; and the upcoming implementation of the "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act."⁴⁰

37. The Indian Civil Rights Act, P.L. 90-284 (82 Stat. 77, codified in part at 25 U.S.C. § 1301 *et seq.*) locked indigenous governments—as a "third level" of the federal government—into U.S. constitutional requirements. The "self-determination" aspect of the 1975 Act (P.L. 93-638; 88 Stat. 2203, codified at 25 U.S.C. § 450a and elsewhere in titles 25, 42 and 50, U.S.C.A.) provides for greater Indian employment within federal programs used to subordinate Native people.

38. On propaganda in general, see Ward Churchill, "Renegades, Terrorists and Revolutionaries: The U.S. Government's Propaganda War Against the American Indian Movement," *Propaganda Review*, No. 4, Spring 1989.

39. Jerry Kammer, *The Second Long Walk: The Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980).

40. On Western Shoshone, see Glenn T. Morris, "The Battle for Newe Segobia: The Western Shoshone Land Rights Struggle," in Ward Churchill (ed.), *Critical Issues in Native North America*, Vol. II, International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGLA) Document 68, Copenhagen, 1991,

Costs of Oppression, Consequences of Opposition

Organized opposition by Native people has been put down with the same kind of counterinsurgency warfare techniques—such as death squads—employed by U.S. agencies in Asia, Africa and Latin America.⁴¹ From 1973 to 1976, for example, when the American Indian Movement (AIM) resisted collaboration with the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) plan to transfer title of Pine Ridge Reservation lands in South Dakota to the National Forest

Service, the U.S. response was a "reign of terror." The body count was some 70 fatalities and nearly 350 serious physical assaults of AIM members and supporters.⁴² The government deployed federal forces in a military-style occupation of the reservation, launched a comprehensive propaganda campaign against what it called in military language "insurgents," and mounted an extensive series of show trials such as those of the so-called "Wounded Knee Leadership" (1974-75), and of the "RESMURS Defendants" (1976-77) including AIM leader Leonard Peltier.⁴³

For grassroots Indian people, the broader human costs of ongoing U.S. domination are devastating.

The 1.6 million American Indians within the U.S. remain, nominally at least, the largest per capita land owners in North America.⁴⁴ Given the extent of the resources within their land base, Indians should logically be the continent's wealthiest "ethnic group." Instead, according



AIM guards building during assault on Wounded Knee.

pp. 86-98. On the Black Hills, see the special issue of *Wicazo Sa Review* (Vol. IV, No. 1, Spring 1988). On Alaska, see M.C. Berry, *The Alaska Pipeline: The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1975).

41. Peter Matthiessen, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (New York: Viking Press, 1991, 2nd Edition).

42. The term "reign of terror" accrues from an official finding by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (*Report of an Investigation: Oglala Sioux Tribe, General Election, 1974*, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1974). For statistical comparison to Third World contexts, see Bruce Johansen, and Roberto Maestas, *Was'chu: The Continuing Indian Wars* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978).

43. Ward Churchill, and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1988). For FBI labeling of AIM members "insurgents" see Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars Against Dissent in the United States* (Boston: South End Press, 1990). On the RESMURS (Reservation Murders) trials, see Jim Messerschmidt, *The Trial of Leonard Peltier* (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

44. The U.S. never acquired even a pretense of legal title to fully one-third of the area (about 750 million acres) encompassed by the 48 contiguous states. While federal census data recognizes only about 1.5 million Indians

to the federal government's own statistics, they are the poorest with far and away the lowest annual and lifetime incomes, the highest rate of unemployment, the lowest rate of pay when employed, and the lowest level of educational attainment of any North American population aggregate. Correspondingly, they suffer, by decisive margins, the greatest incidence of malnutrition and diabetes, death by exposure, tuberculosis, infant mortality, plague disease, and similar maladies.⁴⁵ These conditions, combined with the general disempowerment which spawns them, breed an unrelenting sense of rage, frustration and despair which is reflected by spiraling rates of domestic and other forms of intra-group violence, alcoholism and resulting death by accident or fetal alcohol syndrome.⁴⁶ Consequently, in an extraordinarily telling measure of the stark reality of conditions, the average life expectancy of a reservation-based Native American male in 1980 was a mere 44.6 years, that of his female counterpart less than three years longer.⁴⁷ Such a statistical portrait is more representative of the Third World poor than of landowners in a wealthy and industrialized state.

Moving Forward

Official polemics notwithstanding, the agony induced by 500 years of European/Euroamerican predation in North America continues. The choice for the continent's indigenous people is clear: either to renew their commitment to struggle for survival, or pass into the extinction which has been relentlessly projected for them since the predator's arrival on their shores. Old and New World non-indigenous too, must choose sides: be willing participants in the final gnawing on the bones of their Native victims, or join hands with Native North America to end the wanton consumption of indigenous lands and lives which has thus far marked the relationship.

in the U.S., the actual number may well be ten times that; see Jack D. Forbes, "Undercounting Native Americans: The 1980 Census and the Manipulation of Racial Identity in the United States," *Wicazo Sa Review*, Vol. VI, No. 1, Spring 1990.

45. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Chart Series Book (Washington, D.C.: Public Health Service, 1988).

46. Rosemary Wood, "Health Problems Facing American Indian Women," in *Conference on Educational and Occupational Needs of American Indian Women*, *op. cit.*

47. Chart Series Book, *op. cit.*

For non-Indians, anti-imperialism, opposition to racism, colonialism and genocide, while worthy in and of themselves, are no longer the fundamental issues at hand. Ultimately, the same system of predatory goals and values which has so greedily consumed the people of the land these past five centuries is increasingly consuming the land itself.

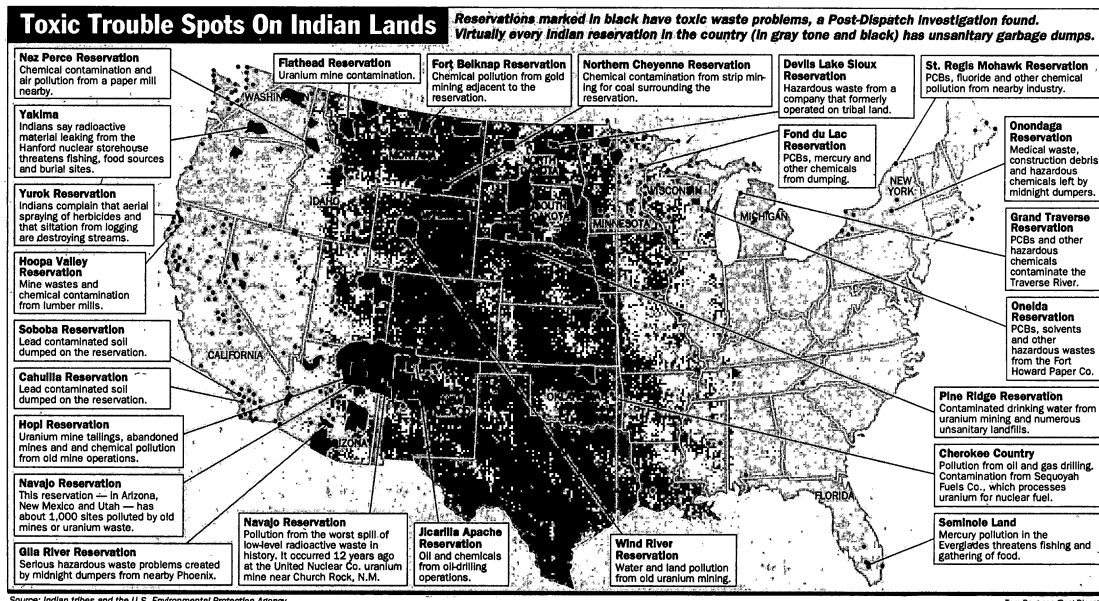
Not only the indigenous peoples, but the earth to which they are irrevocably linked, are now dying. If the land dies, no humans can survive. Thus, the struggle which confronts and unifies us is saving our collective habitat as a "survivable" environment, not only for ourselves, but for the generations to come. At long last, we have arrived at the point where there is a tangible, even overriding, confluence of interest between Natives and non-Natives.

Quite clearly, this alliance must not only stop the predator from conducting business as usual, but must conceive of and implement a viable sociocultural alternative. Here, the experience of pre-invasion indigenous peoples in organizing large-scale societies characterized by high standards of material life, individual fulfillment, and environmental harmony, could serve as inspiration and example. The requisite knowledge still exists within many indigenous cultures. Its implementation and the liberation of Native America would create indigenous societies not as they once were, but as they can be in the "real world" future. Therein lies the model—the laboratory, if you will—for a genuinely liberatory and sustainable alternative for all humanity. In a very real sense, the fate of Native America and the fate of the planet are one. ●

Not only the indigenous peoples, but the earth to which they are irrevocably linked, are now dying. At long last, there is a tangible, even overriding, confluence of interest between Natives and non-Natives.

When you draft a will, please make a bequest to *CovertAction*. Help the magazine survive into the post-Bush era and keep your principles going.

In the last two years alone, more than 50 tribes have been approached by toxic waste disposal companies waving deals worth millions.



The Toxic Waste of Indian Lives

Valerie Taliman

In times past, the warriors were prepared to defend and protect the people and the land. Today, that spirit lives on in many Native people fighting to protect what is left of their traditional homelands.

In recent years, new battles have been fought by many tribes to save the two percent of land that remains in Native hands. They are now struggling to defeat a vast array of interests which exploit their resources, culture, lives, and special status as Native Americans.

From the private sector, they face toxic waste firms, the nuclear industry, oil companies, mining interests, timber operations, hydroelectric power companies, land developers, multinational corporations, and sometimes even their own tribal officials. In the last two years alone, more than 50 tribes have been approached by toxic waste disposal companies waving deals worth millions. Tribes in Alaska, California, Washington, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Mississippi, New York, Rhode Island, North Carolina and Florida are among those recently asked to become dumping grounds for the nation's waste.¹

Valerie Taliman is a member of the Navajo Nation and a free lance writer based in Reno, Nevada. The map (above) by Tom Borgman was provided courtesy of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

1. Bill Lambrecht, "Endangered Culture," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 21, 1991, p. A10 also "Broken Trust," November 17-20, 22, 1991.

The government, through the Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Energy (DOE) and the Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator has created a legacy of nuclear exploitation that continues to escalate.

The bombs that rained death on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the massive U.S. nuclear arsenal have been created with uranium mined on Indian lands by Indian workers. Now, as nuclear waste piles up at commercial reactors and DOE facilities, Washington has targeted reservations or lands bordering them as permanent nuclear waste repositories. In the process, while profits have gone elsewhere, Indian land and people have been poisoned.²

Often, the government and the nuclear industry have worked together as accomplices in creating pollution and environmental devastation. The scars left by their greed for resources run deeply through the land and through generations of Indian people. In one of the most toxic examples of this profitable partnership — nuclear weapons development — they have recklessly exploited and poisoned thousands of Indians including the Navajo, Zuñi, Laguna, Acoma, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Ute, Cree, and the Western Shoshone.

2. Corey Dubin, unpublished manuscript, 1992.

Living and Dying with Radiation

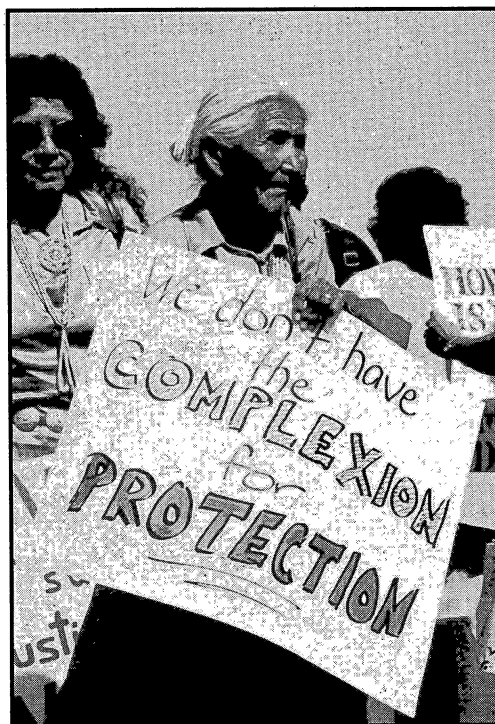
In October 1990, Congress issued a formal apology and appropriated funding through the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to provide "compassionate payments" for injuries to thousands of Indian and non-Indian people in five western states contaminated by the federal government's nuclear weapons programs.³

Even in light of this admission and the damning scientific evidence, the Federal Government continues to work closely with the transnationals to license new uranium mines on or adjacent to Indian lands. Recently, the Canyon Uranium Mine was built by the Denver-based multinational, Energy Fuels Nuclear, on land abutting that of the Havasupai people. Perched on the south rim of the Grand Canyon, the mine lies in the shadow of Red Butte, a site central to the practice of Havasupai religion. The Havasupai elders have expressed concern over the radioactive contamination that will enter the rivers flowing through the Grand Canyon, their ancestral homelands.

Nor do public apologies restore the health of those who continue to be affected. In Navajo communities where uranium mines were sited in the 1950s and 1960s, there were alarming trends in juvenile health. Dr. Donald Calloway, who authored a study for the division of Health Improvement Services of the Navajo Nation, found that "Children growing up in uranium mining areas like Shiprock, Farmington and the Grants Uranium Belt were developing ovarian and testicular cancers at 15 times the national average."⁴

"No one ever asked the Navajo people's permission to take the uranium that was used to make a bomb that killed millions during World War II," said Marshall Plummer, Vice President of the Navajo Nation, at a recent environmental awareness conference held at Navajo Community College in Tsaile, Arizona. "In fact, it was stolen. No one did anything to protect the Navajo miners who are still suffering from radiation contamination. And now our people are facing the hazards of more than 2,000 open pit uranium mines left abandoned and unreclaimed."⁵

Harry Desiderio, a former miner who now has silicosis, and his extended family live near the Bluewater, New Mexico, Grants Uranium Belt. Next to them are several 50-foot deep pits, open mine shafts, and huge mounds of uranium tailings left behind by Anaconda Minerals, United Nuclear, Homestake Mines, Santa Fe Uranium, and Hanosh Mines, which operated in the area in the 1950s



David Matson

Children growing up in uranium mining areas were developing ovarian and testicular cancers at 15 times the national average.

and 1960s as part of the government's weapons program. The family members say they had given up hope of help after three decades in which their pleas for protection from radiation exposure had fallen on the deaf ears of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and health officials. Only after a Public Health Advisory was issued in November 1991 by the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry did the government finally acknowledge that there was an "imminent public health threat" to the 500 Navajo people living in the area and begin a cleanup.

"All these technicians from the EPA came here wearing masks and protective gear to take water and soil samples," said Desiderio. "They put radiation measuring devices in our homes and told us we were in danger. They protected themselves for the few days they were here, but we've been living next to this trying to get help for decades."

"If we were white people, I think this would have been cleaned up a long time ago. I just want someone to give me one good reason why no one would help us."⁶

Environmental Racism

Conditions like those facing the Desiderio family are not uncommon on Indian reservations. A lack of protective actions by the federal government—which has "trustee" responsibility for Indians through its Department of Interior—has led to public accusations against the EPA of environmental racism.

6. Interview by the author, July 28, 1991.

3. Public Law 101-426, Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, October 15, 1990.

4. Interview by author, September 12, 1991. Dr. Donald Calloway, *Neoplasms In Navajo Children*, compiled for the Division Of Health Improvement Services of the Navajo Nation, Ft. Defiance, Arizona, February 1981. From information provided by Corey Dubin.

5. Interview with the author, September 12, 1991.



Cate Gilles

A Native woman whose herd of 86 sheep all died of coal nitrate contamination testifies at a public hearing, 1990.

At an EPA ceremony in Albuquerque last August, the Agency gave out environmental excellence awards to selected corporations. The Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice delivered an eight-page letter addressed to EPA head William Reilly. Charging environmental racism, the Southwest Network, an eight-state coalition of hundreds of multi-racial community-based organizations and individuals, accused the EPA of ignoring toxic hazards by allowing harmful industrial and government facilities to be located in poor and minority communities.

"How can you be giving awards to these polluters?" demanded Jeanne Guana, co-director of the Southwest Organizing Project, one of the Network's members. "The very companies you are giving awards to have long histories of poisoning our groundwater, land and air."⁷

Texaco, Sangre de Cristo Water Company and Sygnetics were among the EPA award-winning companies that activists say have polluted their communities throughout the Southwest and California. Texaco had been named as one of six companies responsible for contaminating two Albuquerque city wells that were the prime water source for thousands of low-income people of color. The closed wells have since become New Mexico's highest Superfund priority. When confronted with this record, EPA officials explained that Texaco's award was based on excellence in air quality and was not related to groundwater.⁸

"Is it any different to poison people by water instead of air?" asked Guana.

Guana charged that such actions are typical of EPA's lack of protection for communities of color. She cited

examples of severe health and economic impacts on people of color, including organ cancer rates 17 times higher than the national average among Navajo teenagers living near uranium spills, high levels of lead poisoning among poor African-American children in inner city housing projects, and birth defects and high cancer rates among children of farmworkers exposed to pesticides.⁹

"We are demanding that the EPA provide equal protection to Native American, Latino, African-American and Asian-American communities being poisoned by industrial, military and government polluters," Guana said. "As an agency run with our tax dollars, EPA is obligated to treat everyone equally by law. It has the resources to address the environmental hazards that are killing our people and we will no longer allow them to get

away with the kind of injustices that have been committed against our people."

At the same time the EPA is spending millions to clean up a few of the toxic waste sites created by government and industry, other tentacles of the government continue to manufacture and harmfully dispose of lethal wastes, often on or near Indian nations and other communities of color.

Nuking Native Nations

Since 1943, the DOE Hanford nuclear facility in southeastern Washington has spewed radioactive iodine into the atmosphere and leaked radioactive waste into groundwater and the Columbia River. Indian tribes downstream complain that the water and salmon they depend on have been contaminated, causing long-term health problems for thousands of citizens who must now bear the medical consequences of 40 years of government irresponsibility.

"By the Department of Energy (DOE)'s own estimates, it will cost \$150 billion to clean up the Hanford site," according to Wilbur Slockish of the Columbia River Defense Project.

Lance Hughes, director of Native Americans for a Cleaner Environment, based in Oklahoma, pointed out the broader context of how uranium production affects Native people. "Indians suffer at every level of the nuclear fuels cycle," he charged, "from mining and milling; to conversion, enrichment, fabrication; to the power plant; and then the waste."¹⁰

The legacy of nuclear testing has been particularly devastating. The DOE and DOD have detonated more than 900 nuclear devices aboveground and underground since

7. Interview by the author, October 18, 1991.

8. Robert Meacham, EPA Region VI press officer, interview August 13, 1991.

9. Charles Lee, *Toxic Rates and Waste in the U.S.*, Commission on Racial Justice, United Church of Christ, 1987.

10. Arthur James, "Native American's Energy Crisis," *Race, Poverty and the Environment*, Summer 1991.

the 1940s, many of which vented radioactive gases into the atmosphere. DOD also tests conventional weapons, such as the Stealth bomber, at ranges that stretch across vast, fragile landscape.

The Western Shoshone, Navajo, Hualapai, Kaibab Paiute as well as other residents of Nevada, Arizona and Utah were exposed to cancer-causing radiation as "downwinders" from more than 100 aboveground nuclear tests conducted by the DOD from 1951 to 1963. "No agreement, formal or informal, exists that gives the U.S. permission to explode nuclear bombs within Western Shoshone lands," said Joe Sanchez, director of the Native American program of Citizen Alert, a Nevada environmental organization.¹¹

The 128-year old Treaty of Ruby Valley is still in effect and has been consistently honored by Western Shoshone people, according to tribal officials who abhor the injustices they have had to endure at the hands of the U.S. government. Since the 1940s, the federal government has pressured the Western Shoshone to relinquish land title to 43,000 square miles for about \$1 per acre. In 1979, the U.S. deposited \$26,145,189 as compensation for the land in the U.S. Treasury to be held in trust. The Western Shoshone National Council, however, continues to refuse the offer while the fund, which has grown to more than \$60 million, sits idly in a Treasury account.¹² The government, however, has not been idle. In violation of the treaty, it has, through "gradual encroachment," created military installations that now occupy more than five million acres of land in Nevada, including the 3.1-million-acre Nellis Air Force Base containing the Nevada Test Site, where all U.S. and British nuclear weapons are tested.¹³

Waste Away to Yucca

"We are the most bombed nation in the world," said William Rosse, Sr., an elder who heads the Western Shoshone environmental action committee. "We've had our share of radiation, and now they want to put the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste repository on our land."¹⁴

Yucca Mountain, a six-mile-long, 1500-foot-high ridge located about 85 miles northwest of Las Vegas, is the government's proposed solution to its high-level nuclear



Cate Gilles

Peabody coal strip mine, Black Mesa, Arizona, devastates Indian lands.

waste disposal problem. If DOE has its way, it will create cavities and tunnels spreading over 1,500 acres inside Yucca Mountain to store up to 70,000 metric tons of high-level nuclear waste. The repository is intended to keep nuclear waste "safe" for 10,000 years by placing steel canisters filled with some of the most deadly substances on the planet in tunnels carved 115 miles into the earth.¹⁵ The estimated price to taxpayers so far: \$32.5 billion, according to the General Accounting Office.¹⁶

The safety of the proposed site has been challenged. Yucca Mountain lies in an active tectonic zone called the Walker Lane Structural Zone, a source of numerous large earthquakes in the past. Geological instability is exacerbated not only by the kiloton bombs which are exploded nearby at the Nevada Test Site and aerial bombing which continues overhead, but also by nearby volcanic activity.

Adding additional danger, the repository will be built over a major aquifer subject to flash flooding. DOE geologist Jerry Szymanski, who has worked on the Yucca Mountain project since 1983, has persistently warned that the repository could cause a disaster of vast proportions. Szymanski contends that groundwater under the mountain could well up, flood the facility and come into contact with hot canisters of nuclear waste. The water would then vaporize and could cause ruptures and explosions that would release radioactivity into the atmosphere.¹⁷

"You flood that thing and you could blow the top off the mountain," said University of Colorado geophysicist Charles Archambeau, who finds Szymanski's research convincing.¹⁸

11. Joe Sanchez, "The Western Shoshone: Following Mother Earth's Instructions," in the Panos Institute publication "We Speak for Ourselves, Social Justice, Race and the Environment," December 1990.

12. Western Shoshone National Council, *Newe Sogobia: The Western Shoshone People and Lands*, pamphlet produced in 1988.

13. Rebecca Solnit, "A Struggle for Land Rights: Western Shoshone and the Dann Case," *The Workbook*, Southwest Research and Information Center, Winter 1991.

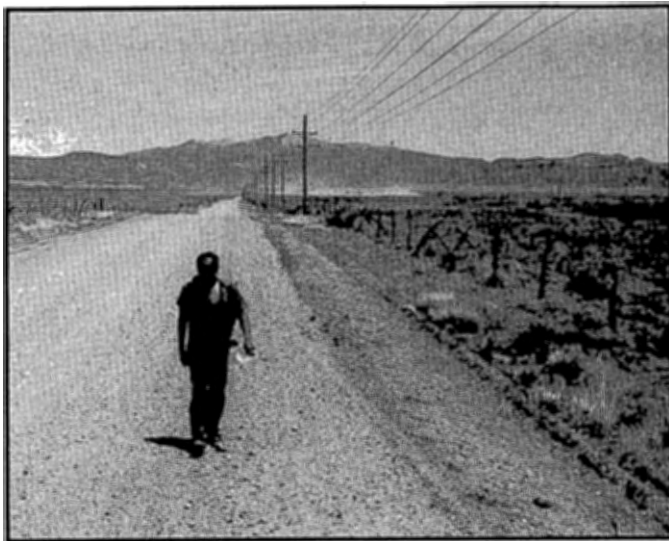
14. Valerie Taliman, "Waste Merchants Poison Natives," *Voces Unidas*, Southwest Organizing Project, Vol. 1, No. 4.

15. Nevada Nuclear Waste Project Office, interview with Dennis Baughman, December 2, 1991.

16. Interview by author with Dennis Baughman, Nevada Nuclear Waste Project Office, December 11, 1991.

17. William J. Broad, "A Mountain of Trouble," *New York Times Magazine*, November 18, 1990.

18. Broad, *op.cit.*



As the haze of uranium tailings rises in the background, an Indian walks the scarred land.

"At the very least, the radioactive material would go into the groundwater and spread to Death Valley, where there are hot springs all over the place, constantly bringing up water from great depths. It would be picked up by birds, animals and plant life. You couldn't stop it. That's the nightmare. It could slowly spread to the whole biosphere. If you want to envision the end of the world, that's it."¹⁹

Those dire predictions of world destruction are echoes of the prophecies set down by Hopi spiritual leaders centuries ago. Hopi elder and spiritual leader Thomas Banyanca was told by a council of Hopi elders in 1943 that his mission was to go among the people and spread the word of the Hopi Prophecies which predict the "third world shaking." The prophecies say the disaster will be caused by the greedy quest for material wealth by those who fail to respect the natural laws of the universe.

The Waste Merchants

That greed, coupled with the sovereign status of Indian nations, has attracted the interest of waste merchants who recognize that there are often fewer regulations governing toxic waste on Indian reservations. Companies can conveniently avoid layers of red tape that state, county, and municipal governments would require for waste facilities. Greedy waste merchants have seized upon this special status to offer deals disguised as "economic development" to poverty-stricken tribes desperately needing jobs.

Dilkon, a small isolated Navajo community, is set on an arid high plateau near the Arizona Painted Desert. In 1989, when officials from High Tech Recycling and Waste Tech, Inc. of Colorado arrived, the community had an unem-

ployment rate hovering near 75 percent. The outsiders proposed taking over 100 acres of tribal land for a "plant dedicated to destroying hazardous waste." In exchange the company would invest \$35 million, bringing millions in revenue for the local economy, a new hospital and 175 jobs.

Jane Yazzie, a traditional elder who speaks only Navajo, said the people were assured that the incinerator was not dangerous and would simply burn trash; the ash would be buried in a landfill. What she and many other traditional people did not understand was the highly toxic nature of the materials that would be trucked in from surrounding states, burned, and buried there.

"It was really hard to explain to our people," said George Joe, vice president of Dilkon's CARE (Citizens Against Ruining our Environment), who is a biochemistry major at the University of Arizona. He and a handful of other residents had some exposure to hazardous waste issues and were determined to educate the community about the dangers of the project.

"There are no words in the Navajo language to describe the kind of poisons that technology has enabled man to produce. We had to use the Navajo word for cancer to describe the potential toxic effects."²⁰

The grassroots opposition increased. "Is [the project] economic development or genocide?" asked Abe Plum-

There are no words in the Navajo language to describe the kind of poisons that technology has enabled man to produce.

mer, a Navajo social worker and CARE leader. The community's answer came when the people successfully fought back the proposed high-level toxic waste incinerator and landfill that had been approved by local tribal officials without their knowledge.

The Dilkon community not only effectively fought the big-money corporations, they organized the first "Protecting Mother Earth" conference held in Dilkon in 1990 to share their story with other tribes. They found that toxic waste predators were common as snakes in Indian country. The conference attracted more than 200 representatives, young and old, from grassroots Indian groups concerned about environmental devastation.

The grassroots movement is growing and forming important coalitions. In South Dakota, 400 participants convened the 1991 "Protecting Mother Earth" conference.

19. Broad, *op. cit.*

20. George Joe, interview by the author, August 17, 1991.

There, the Native Resource Coalition and the Good Road Coalition joined together to save sacred lands from a 5,000-acre landfill on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation.

Ron Valandra, one of the founders of the Good Road Coalition, told conference-goers about the struggles facing Northern tribes. He spoke with disgust about R.S.W., a Connecticut-based company that convinced the Rosebud Tribal Council to sign an agreement for the landfill without tribal members' knowledge.

"Trash guys—that's what we call them," Valandra said. "They wanted to remove all the bodies from the Good Road Cemetery, put the trash down, then put the bodies back. Maybe that's how they do it in Connecticut."²¹ The landfill was eventually defeated, but not without a protracted, painful struggle that split families and the community over issues of economics and environment.

Some tribes have vacillated and given in to the pressure and allure of million dollar deals. La Posta and Campo Indians are moving forward with waste operations on their reservations near San Diego, weighing land and culture against quick cash, according to an article reported by Bill Lambrecht of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.²²

W.R. Grace and Company of New York is negotiating with the La Posta tribe for construction of a hazardous waste incinerator. Meanwhile, the Campo have leased 600 acres to Mid-American Waste Systems of Ohio for a non-hazardous waste landfill.

But other tribes have reconsidered and are backing out of deals. The McDermitt Paiute of Nevada, the Kaw of Oklahoma, the Choctaw of Mississippi, and the California Los Coyotes Band of Mission Indians have invalidated agreements to accept hazardous waste and garbage, setting an important trend in Native peoples' struggle for survival.

Federal Predators

On the heels of the private waste industry came the federal government, this time in the form of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Negotiator, David Leroy. The former Idaho lieutenant governor is pedaling a deal to tribal leaders to set aside a 450-acre parcel of tribal lands for a Monitored Retrievable Storage (MRS) site. One California tribal leader called the proposal "economic blackmail," noting that tribes continually suffer from federal budget cuts, while Leroy was offering millions for storing nuclear waste. Last December, in return for waste, an unabashed Leroy promised tribes more federal money for health care, education, railroads, highways, waterways, airports, public schools, health care and recreation facilities, and environmental and

economic development programs. He could be "as flexible as the winds and tides" with benefits for any tribe that chooses to store the nation's nuclear waste, he recently told 1,500 tribal leaders at the National Congress of American Indians convention in San Francisco. His office recognizes tribal sovereignty and Indian rights, he said. It was time, he solemnly added for the "great sovereign nations of the world" to be willing to help solve the waste problem facing America.²³

"But look at where they are willing to recognize our sovereignty," said Tracey Bowers, a tribal council member from Big Pine, California. "They fight us on religious freedom, our hunting and fishing rights, yet they recognize our sovereign status when it comes to waste."

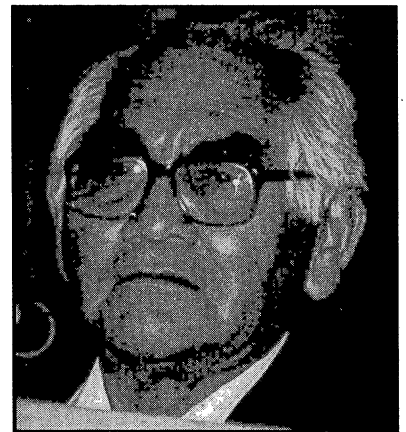
Mescaleros Study MRS

Leroy found his first taker in the Mescalero Apache tribe of southcentral New Mexico, which applied for and received a \$100,000 Phase I grant to conduct feasibility studies for an MRS. Phase II funding is now available and it appears likely the tribal council will vote to proceed with additional environmental and socio-economic studies.

The 450-acre MRS facility would store for 40 to 50 years up to 10,000 tons of "spent" nuclear fuel rods generated by the nation's nuclear power plants. The rods are now being temporarily stored at 111 commercial nuclear reactors operating in the United States.

Mescalero President Wendell Chino and the 10-member tribal council are expected to vote soon to seek an additional \$3 million in federal funding to conduct studies on possible MRS sites. Chino, who has been in office for 36 years, said he is approaching the project as a business venture which could yield a billion dollars for the tribe over 10 to 20 years.

Tribal members opposed to Chino's decision to back the feasibility study have been speaking out at anti-MRS meetings. Donalyn Torres, a tribal member critical of the plan, said that building an MRS would be "contrary to the Apache outlook and beliefs to protect the environment,



Cate Gilles

Controversial leader Wendell Chino.

21. Valerie Taliman, "Native Americans Battle With Toxic Waste," *Inyo Register*, June 19, 1991.

22. Lambrecht, *op. cit.*

23. David Leroy, transcript of speech to NCAI, December 6, 1991.

the wildlife, the clean, pure air and water." Others told stories of death threats, government corruption and "Chino's disregard" for Apache spiritual values.

Tribal officials countered those comments by insisting that they are concerned about the people and environment. Fred Peso, tribal council secretary, said that "The safety of the Mescalero people comes first,"²⁴ and promised that the tribe would not undertake a project that would destroy the many successful tribal enterprises the Mescaleros currently operate. These businesses bring thousands of tourists to Ruidoso and other Lincoln County towns heavily dependent on tourism.

Two newly formed anti-MRS groups, Sacramento and Southwest Nuclear Alert, comprised of residents of Mescalero, Ruidoso, Alamogordo, Tularosa and Hondo in New Mexico, have held numerous meetings to organize opposition to the proposed MRS. The groups have threatened to boycott and launch protest marches to the Apache's resort, Inn of the Mountain Gods, located on the heavily-forested 460,000-acre reservation in the Sacramento Mountains of southcentral New Mexico. They are demanding that Chino stop the tribe's plans to build an MRS which they say would ruin the environment and devastate the area's tourism economy. In response, Chino has said he would close Ski Apache and "padlock the Inn" if protestors set foot on reservation land, according to Ruidoso Mayor Victor Alonso.²⁵

Anti-MRS groups are lobbying Governor Bruce King and New Mexico legislators to prohibit construction of yet another nuclear waste facility in New Mexico. "We already have Los Alamos and Sandia nuclear labs, White Sands missile range and the Waste Isolation Pilot Project," said Dave Dale, a retired businessman who heads the Sacramento environmental group. "Look at the brain cancer cluster in Los Alamos. We don't need any more radiation."²⁶

After Governor King said he is "adamantly opposed to high-level nuclear waste coming into New Mexico, whether on or off Indian lands," Chino accused the governor of "political racism." The MRS project, he asserted, could be a source of economic development for the tribe, creating jobs that would pay \$45,000 per year.

Despite this rosy projection and Chino's contention that he has committed the tribe only to allow a study and not as a site for an MRS, fear of radiation contamination appears to be widespread in Mescalero and surrounding communi-

ties. "There are some things in the world realistically to be feared and high-level nuclear waste is one of them," said Robert Walters of Ruidoso. "Based on known scientific data to date, that fear is fully justified. Nuclear safety is an oxymoron. One only has to look at the emerging data on Three Mile Island, Los Alamos, Rocky Flats, and the Hanford facility to realize the Department of Energy either doesn't know the meaning of the word 'truth' or is incapable of telling it."

More than 100 merchants have signed petitions calling on Governor King to prohibit the project, and scared residents crowd community meetings to lament the loss of business they will experience if the MRS is built. Anti-MRS forces have organized meetings at which many Apache people spoke out. Some feared that their reservation would be contaminated by storing nuclear waste for the 40 years required by the terms of the deal with the federal government. Some spoke of the sacredness of the land and worried that desecration of their homeland would destroy their culture. Others remembered a history of betrayal. "What if the government breaks its promise again and doesn't remove the waste?" asked one elder. "Then we'll be stuck with it forever."

The government is tenacious and has been looking into various sites around the country. It recognizes that without a place to store waste, the troubled nuclear industry will be increasingly vulnerable to attacks by concerned citizens over its financial and environmental feasibility. After government seduction, six more communities recently filed applications for MRS feasibility grants. Four tribes—including the Sac and Fox Nation and the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Prairie Island Indian reservation in Minnesota, and the Yakima Indian Nation in Washington—were among the applicants.

Searching For Harmony

The poisoning of indigenous people has been going on for a very long time. Since Columbus brought death and disease to the Tainos of the Caribbean, a 500-year legacy of genocide against Native peoples has been perpetuated through both covert and overt means. The ominous pattern, from smallpox-infected blankets to toxic dumping, suggests that corporate and government officials deem Native peoples expendable.

In the Native world view all things are connected and interdependent; the poisonous pattern affects not only Native people, but also the web of life that sustains balance in the world. When the relationship between the land and the people is disrespected and destroyed, so too is that web of life.

24. Telephone interview with author, January 28, 1992.

25. *Albuquerque Tribune*, January 14, 1992.

26. *Ruidoso News*, December 12, 1991.

Washington's Skullduggery in Indian Country

Corey Dubin

Indians have provided the U.S. government with a convenient domestic laboratory in which it could refine its policies of colonial control and its techniques for covert action.

The pattern is now familiar: A nation asserts its right to self-determination, the U.S. intervenes, the nation is destabilized, its dissidents killed or disappeared, and its government replaced by one more pliant and sympathetic to United States interests. Guatemala in 1954, the Congo in 1959, Indonesia and the Dominican Republic in 1965, Chile in 1973, and Nicaragua in the 1980s represent just a few of the places where the U.S. employed covert action in defense of profit and strategic advantage.

Less well-known is that the tactics employed overseas have a long and sordid domestic history; they have been used with methodical efficiency against the indigenous peoples of North America. The very existence of these Indian nations directly interfered with the manifest destiny of the nascent U.S. and from its earliest days, the U.S. government targeted them.

Those Indians in the Eastern part of the continent received the early wrath of the new nation. By 1800, most of the roughly 13 to 15 million Native Americans lived west of the Mississippi. If the U.S. was to attain its economic potential, their large land masses would have to be conquered, and they would have to be pacified, destabilized, removed, or killed.

Those Natives who survived until the 1880s were confined to barren areas rejected by the settlers. By the 1920s, however, what had seemed valueless land became some of

the most precious real estate in North America, containing large deposits of oil and natural gas as well as a very large percentage of the uranium and other strategic minerals in North America. Deliveries of Indian coal and oil had to be guaranteed if the desert Southwest was to bloom with profit. Indian resources, coal, oil and water, would provide the energy needed to build and sustain Las Vegas, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Denver and Los Angeles, in addition to ensuring the domestic energy resources needed to fuel the U.S.'s rise as a global power.

Not surprisingly, this dynamic produced a new wave of intervention in Indian Country by Washington and the emerging energy corporate elite. Their first target was the Navajo, on whose land Standard Oil of California had found huge oil deposits. Rather than steal the land outright and sell it to private industry, the government chose to maintain federal control by using the unique status of Indian land tenure to its advantage. The same cynical exploitation of Indian "autonomy" later proved useful in formulating nuclear industrial policy.

To control the resources and peoples, the government implemented a tried-and-true technique of colonial management — co-opt a section of the indigenous leadership if possible, create a parallel leadership if necessary, and govern through these artificial entities. Thus, in the service of corporate profit and economic expansion, the U.S. imposed a "tribal council structure" on the Navajo. This system was designed to undermine the decentralized clan system by which Navajos had successfully lived for centuries before the Declaration of Independence was written.

The subversion process took some fine tuning. At the first Tribal Council meeting, 75 Navajo men voted unani-

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Associated Press

The 1935 caption describes John Collier (standing) with "Flathead Indians" signing "the first constitution providing for Indian self-rule rather than being under the direction of the BIA."

mously to deny all applications for resource exploitation. "We are opposed," they resolved, "to the leasing of any of our lands for oil and gas purposes."¹

Undaunted by this initial setback, Washington and its corporate cronies intensified their efforts. They disbanded the first unresponsive Council and using intimidation, pressure, and the promise of additional lands,² got the desired result. Two years of intense pressure and numerous new councils later, Washington and the energy giants prevailed. On July 7, 1923, the latest version of the council voted to allow oil and gas exploitation by unanimously passing a resolution drafted at the Department of the Interior in Washington.

The successful imposition of Washington's governing body on the Navajo paved the way for the next intervention. In 1934, President Roosevelt's New Deal arrived in Indian country with the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). This legislation, the centerpiece of the administration's Indian policy, was hailed as beginning a new era for Indian people.

On the surface it appeared that Washington was now promoting Indian self-determination through the establishment of "independent" tribal governments. Just beneath this democratic veneer, however, the federal government maintained firm control. Under IRA, Indian self-rule was subject to the supervision and approval of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Secretary of the

Interior. All tribal decisions needed the approval of the U.S. Government.

In reality then, the new policy promised more of the same with a liberal facelift and an added Orwellian twist: Through staged IRA-approved elections, Indians were generously given the opportunity to rubberstamp constitutions designed in Washington to sound the death knell on their indigenous governing institutions and gain control of their mineral wealth. In essence, the process culminated with the Indian people officially endorsing their own loss of sovereignty.³

Demonstration Elections, a Prototype

For public consumption, the ultimate objective of the Indian Reorganization Act—the destruction of traditional (Indian) governing structures—had to be cloaked in the rhetoric of "civilizing progress" and the "white man's burden." Today, the term of preference, especially when applied to the export model, is "promoting democracy," but the techniques and objectives remain consistent.

In 1984, fifty years after the passage of the IRA, Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead described how U.S. policy makers staged national elections abroad to achieve public relations hoaxes and create the image of legitimacy for Washington-controlled puppet governments.

Elections have been used by the United States as an instrument of management in Third World client states since the turn of the century. The functions which they have served, however, have changed in accordance with the shifting demands placed upon the managers. The aim in holding such elections has always been to ensure 'stability.' In the first half of this century the threat to stability came almost exclusively from within the client states, which were subject to internal turmoil...In recent decades, serious challenges [anti-war and solidarity movements] have arisen from within the United States itself. It is this shift in functional need that has led to the emergence of elections oriented to influencing the home (U.S.) population, which we designate 'demonstration' elections.⁴

1. Lawrence Kelly, *The Navajo Indians and Federal Indian Policy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press), 1976, p. 40.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

3. The U.S. later helped draft constitutions reflecting its interests for other "conquered" nations such as Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan.

4. Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead, *Demonstration Elections*:

It is with this definition in mind that we now turn to the elections held in Indian country following the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act. Clearly, these BIA-controlled elections fit the category of "demonstration elections." By giving the illusion of self-determination, they served two functions.

First, they promoted stability in the "client" states (the Indian nations). The electoral policies not only institutionalized law and order determined by and sympathetic to Washington, but at the same time they also undercut protests by indigenous people that they were victims of colonial authority.

With missionary zeal, Commissioner John Collier and the BIA bureaucracy went on the offensive to convince every Indian nation of the rewards of organizing under the IRA and voting in the IRA-approved constitution. They promulgated disinformation campaigns on every reservation and presented IRA-organized governments as the solution to virtually all Indian problems. BIA officials sweetened the pot with promises of massive bribes—called economic aid.

The program was not unlike that in Vietnam, where 33 years later in 1967, Washington staged an election to salvage its corrupt client state. The 1966 election in the Dominican Republic, which came a year after an invasion by the U.S. Marines, was also meant to legitimize an artificially installed government. By the time of the Nicaraguan election in 1989, the U.S. had institutionalized much of its electoral manipulation within the National Endowment for Democracy. This quasi-private organization, funded largely by Congress and working in cooperation with the CIA and USAID, uses its sophisticated "democracy machine" to follow the softening-up provided by economic and military warfare, and sweep electoral victory into the U.S. net.⁵

Disguising Racism as Democracy

Second, the electoral charade undermined possible repercussions from the non-Indian U.S. public by "demonstrating" Washington's commitment to Indian self-determination and disguising racism as democracy. Administration officials believed that if they held elections on each Indian reservation and a simple majority endorsed the IRA constitution, the process would appear legitimate and humanitarian.

While the U.S. public was subjected to a propaganda campaign, administration officials remained clear about the true intentions of the IRA. BIA Commissioner John Collier described the act's objectives:

U.S.-Staged Elections in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, and El Salvador (Boston: South End Press, 1984), p. 1.

5. *Ibid.*, Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

This affirmation of cultural diversity and cultural autonomy (under the IRA) did not imply a doctrine of laissez-faire either within the Indian group or in government of the surrounding Commonwealth. It implied rather, *the attractive and permissive way in place of the authoritarian way of swaying the human process.* [Emphasis added.]⁶

Even without the experience of these foreign campaigns to learn from, traditional Hopi religious leaders were strongly skeptical of any "new" policy for Indians. They saw a consistent historical pattern of exploitation by the U.S. government and were in no rush to embrace the IRA and its proffered economic carrot.

Collier, however, took a special interest in the Hopi and in early 1934 spearheaded the campaign to win Hopi endorsement of an IRA government. He received immediate feedback from traditional Hopi leaders who wanted their voices heard. (Each Hopi village is an autonomous political entity headed by a Kikmongwi or village leader). In March 1934, the Kikmongwi of Shungopovy rejected the proposed structure. "In reply to your letter of January 20, 1934, regarding the matter as in forming or organizing a Self-Government ...[W]e already have [one] that has been handed down from generation to generation up to this time."⁷

The Kikmongwi also restated the Hopi aboriginal land claim requesting "return [of] our Domain back to us Hopis." Despite the opposition of the traditional leadership, BIA's campaign for approval continued unabated. In April 1936, Commissioner Collier made a personal visit to the Hopi village of Oraibi in northeastern Arizona.⁸

At a town meeting, he promised economic aid to Indian governments which fell in line with the IRA structure. "The tribes who do organize and get their charter are the ones who get the money," he said, "not the ones who fail to organize."⁹ The implied threat was apparent.

Collier also presented for the first time his idea of organizing the historically autonomous Hopi villages into a federation under the authority of a centralized tribal council. Clearly, this consolidated body would be easier to control from Washington. It would have a head—like Duarte in El Salvador, or Chamorro in Nicaragua—who had some local clout, but who was ultimately responsible to Washington. Collier appointed well-respected author and anthropologist Oliver LaFarge to lead the operation for

6. William H. Kelly, ed., *Indian Affairs and the Indian Reorganization Act: The Twenty Year Record* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1954), p. 8; Indian Law Resource Center, *Report to the Hopi Kikmongwis*, Washington, D.C., 1979, p. 27.

7. *Report to the Hopi Kikmongwis*, op. cit., Exhibit 5, p. 30.

8. *Ibid.*, Exhibit 5, p. 30.

9. *Ibid.*, Exhibit 7, minutes of town meeting, p. 2.

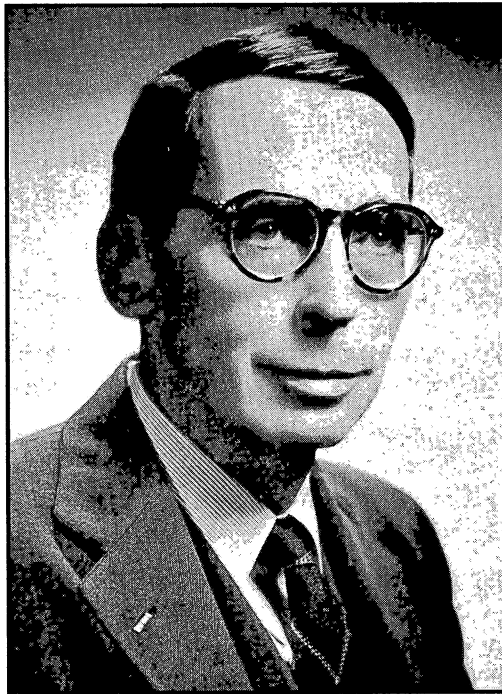
the IRA constitution and tribal council. LaFarge had acquired a great deal of prestige writing on the "Indian problem." His image as a friend of the Indians and as a familiar figure in the Southwest helped ease his entry into the Hopi community. LaFarge worked for the passage of the IRA constitution from June 1 to September 11, 1936.

The IRA provided an excellent opportunity to finally conquer the resistant Hopi—one of the only Indian nations never to have signed a treaty with the U.S. government. In his unpublished journal, BIA agent LaFarge consistently exhibited a strong bias against the Hopi, calling them "materialistic, self-seeking, and quarrelsome."¹⁰ He appeared unsettled by their cultural strength and commitment to a peaceful existence. "Among the Hopi," he wrote, "the cult of peace reaches an extreme, and all personal violence is looked upon with horror. With this comes an attitude of smug superiority towards all who fight, including the white man..."¹¹

In October 1936, the referendum on the IRA constitution was conducted on the three Hopi mesas. Two-thirds of the population boycotted the process by refusing to vote at all. Only about 2,500 participated with 21 percent in favor and 12 percent opposed.¹² The percentages are similar to those in the Salvadoran elections of 1989 when the U.S. rigged the process in such a way that their candidate won while the great majority of the population failed to participate.

In December 1936, "satisfied" with the results of the election, the BIA approved the Hopi IRA constitution. Following the election, LaFarge wrote the preface to his *Running Narrative* journal. The conclusion to that preface is a sobering indictment in which LaFarge includes himself among the list of notorious enemies of the Hopis:

"The Hopis have been operated on by everyone, official and unofficial, from Coronado through Kit Carson and General Scott to Oliver LaFarge. In almost every case they have suffered for it. They still stand almost where they did,



World Wide Photos
Oliver LaFarge, Bureau of Indian Affairs agent.

but they are slightly cracking. Why they should ever trust any white man is a mystery to me."¹³

Legacies

Five centuries have passed since Europeans invaded the continent; two centuries since the U.S. government embarked on a concerted and official policy of controlling indigenous people by stealing their resources and exterminating their race. Out of a continental population of 18 million at the time of Columbus' arrival, maybe two million Native people remain. The fate of the other 16 million is Columbus' legacy.

During those five centuries, Native Americans have contributed culture, language, and agricultural expertise to the society which greeted them with genocide. They have also provided a convenient domestic

laboratory in which the U.S. government could refine its policies of colonial control and its techniques for covert action.

From South Dakota to Southern Africa, from Navajo to Nicaragua, the U.S. government has destabilized centuries-old governing systems. It has assassinated leadership, manipulated elections, appropriated cheap labor, treated sacred homelands as toxic garbage dumps, and launched or backed wars of extermination.

The parallels are clear: Indian nations operate within the U.S. as an internal colony. Their existence is tolerated only insofar as they serve U.S. needs. When they resist and claim the right due any nation—self-determination—they can expect to be targeted. Then like any nation which opposes U.S. interests, they will be marginalized, manipulated, and if need be, murdered.

As we approach the anniversary of Columbus, understanding the genocide unleashed by marauding Europeans and their descendants on the continent's indigenous nations is a necessary first step to substantive change. From Tierra del Fuego to the Arctic Circle, Indian people are organizing an alternative to the dominant culture's shameless celebration of the "discovery" of America. 1992 represents an opportunity to celebrate, not Columbus, but the 500th birthday of the spirit of resistance as well as the rekindling of indigenous culture throughout this hemisphere.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 35. Originally from Oliver LaFarge, *Notes For Hopi Administrators*, on file at the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 34. Originally from Oliver LaFarge, *The Running Narratives of the Organization of the Hopi Tribe of Indians*, 1936.

12. Jerry Manders, "Kit Carson in a Three-Piece Suit," *CoEvolution Quarterly*, Winter 1981, p. 59.

13. *Report to the Hopi Kikmongwis*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

Imperialism as Media Entertainment

Hello Columbus

Michael Parenti

When Columbus invaded the Antilles in 1492, plundering villages, slaughtering tribes, and enslaving human beings, he was engaging in an imperialist undertaking that was not unique to him. Across the seas, other European "navigators," "explorers," and "settlers" were setting about to expropriate the land, labor, riches, and natural resources of Asia, Africa and the Western Hemisphere. This imperialism has continued for 500 years down to this day. It has been the most powerful force in history, shaping the map of the world and the destinies of billions of people.

To justify the violence and pillage that have always been a necessary part of the undertakings, defenders of colonialism have either denied that such crimes ever occurred or have portrayed the victimized populations as victimizers. For generations it was taught that the darker-skinned peoples were prone to savagery and violence, incapable of self-governance, and in need of White man's uplifting rule.¹

Colonial atrocities were going on for many centuries before the invention of cinematography and television. The racist images of Third World peoples found in the entertainment media, therefore, cannot be seen as the cause of the atrocities. But in their relatively short history, the media have done their part in making western imperialism seem like an okay thing.

Over the decades, first the motion picture industry and then television have produced a wide variety of action-adventure films that contain the same basic scenario. The enemies are the Indians on the American plains or Africans and Asians in the jungle or alien monsters from outer space or Communist terrorists from Russia or ethnic criminals in the inner city. The homeland, the safe place, is American White Anglo-Protestant, or at least White. It is inhabited by people who are sane and care about life. The enemies are maniacal and careless with lives, including their own.

In an insightful article entitled "Ambush at Kamikaze Pass," Tom Engelhardt notes the underlying common theme of the cowboy, war, and adventure movie. They all portray the non-Caucasian world through the lens of the colonizer, offering us an archetypal scene: a circle of covered wagons, or sometimes a fort or camp wherein humanity rests warm and secure. Suddenly on the periphery emerge the screeching savages to kill the humans for no other reason than to quench their bloodthirsty propensities. The White men, be they cowboys or cavalries, ready their rifles and gun down their attackers.

This scenario "forces us to flip history on its head. It makes the intruder exchange places in our eyes with the intruded upon."² In real life, of course, the Indians faced ruthless invaders ready to exterminate them. But in these films it is the Indians "who must invade, intrude, break in upon the circle—a circle which contains all those whom the film has already certified as 'human.'"³

This same script, in different costume, is reenacted in movies dealing with Third World peoples. A group of Whites (usually Americans) fights off the swarthy hordes of the Amazon jungle, the North African desert, the Sudan, the Transvaal, Indochina, or wherever. The Whites defend themselves against the (Red, Brown, Yellow, Black) "devils," who throw themselves against vastly superior firepower, not out of any desperate concern to defend their homelands and their people, but because they are propelled by a fanatical lust to kill and destroy.

Imperialism has never recognized the humanity of its victims who, lacking a normal range of human sensibilities, have no regard for their own lives. The colonizers are then more easily justified in exterminating these subhumans. John Wayne summed it up in one of his horse operas, *The Searchers* (1956): "There's humans and then there's Comanches."

In World War II films, Japanese were portrayed as sadistic pitiless demons. Hence killing them posed no great

Michael Parenti's most recent book is *Make-believe Media, The Politics of Entertainment* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991) from which this article is adapted.

1. For a discussion of the relationship of imperialism to racism, see Michael Parenti, *The Sword and the Dollar: Imperialism, Revolution, and the*

Arms Race (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), Chapter Eight.

2. Tom Engelhardt, "Ambush at Kamikaze Pass," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Winter-Spring 1971, p. 28.

3. *Ibid.*



Indian culture becomes a consumer commodity as tourist kitch.

moral problems. As the sergeant in *Guadalcanal Diary* (1943) explains: "Besides, they're not people." In that same film, one Marine asks about the enemy soldiers: "Where are the rest of the seven dwarfs?" Another answers: "They live in the trees like apes."⁴

In *The Real Glory* (1937), Gary Cooper plays an army doctor who solves all the medical and military problems in the Philippines in the wake of the Spanish-American War. The movie offers not a hint of why the U.S. Army was in the Philippines, and nothing about how the U.S. forces invaded the islands—killing thousands and crushing the Filipino liberation army that was fighting for independence—thereby paving the way for the takeover of the land, labor, and natural resources by U.S. firms. Instead, we get a benign image of U.S. imperialism in which the victimizer is transformed into the culturally superior benefactor. Perhaps only coincidentally, this film enjoyed a heavy television rerun in October 1990 when Bush was building up his interventionist forces in the Middle East, and again in January 1991 when the U.S. war against Iraq began.

Collaboration with the Enemy as Noble Friendship

Because of the bleak options facing them—poverty, displacement, or tribal rivalries—the colonized can sometimes be coerced or bribed into joining the colonizer's ranks. In other words, instead of killing all of the natives, the White conquerors use some in struggles against other segments of the native population.

The Lone Ranger and Tonto offer us a familiar media prototype of that kind of domesticated relationship. Frequently the swarthy sidekick sacrifices for his White companion at the appropriate moment. The pathetic little hero of *Gunga Din* (1939) is shot to death while blowing his

bugle to save the British imperialist troops from an ambush by his own compatriots. The Mau Mau member falls on Punji sticks to save the child of his White friend in *Something of Value* (1957). A Black officer in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (1982) kills himself rather than harm his leader, Captain Kirk.

Usually, the darker peoples are little more than a background against which the White principals engage in their adventures. "The indigenous population served as nameless bearers to lug the imported paraphernalia of civilization along jungle trails," observes Robert Hart. "When the story needed to be invigorated by vignettes of incidental action, one or another of the expendable porters would topple off a cliff or be eaten by crocodiles, whereupon the foreign explorers would glance down and commiserate: 'Poor devil—what was he carrying?'"⁵

Return of the Native American

In response to the protests of minority and progressive groups and the changing climate of opinion that came with the Vietnam era, the media began to offer a few improved scripts about Third World peoples. Films like *Little Big Man* (1970) and *Soldier Blue* (1970) and an occasional television drama actually showed sympathy for the Native American and stood history back on its feet—for a few wobbly moments—by portraying the U.S. Army as the exterminating aggressor and the Indians as the victims. In *Soldier Blue* and *Little Big Man*, however, the main protagonists are still White.

"Indian" films disappeared for the next 20 years, Hollywood having decided that the subject had no further commercial viability. In defiance of that market wisdom, Jim Wilson and Kevin Costner produced the three-hour epic, *Dances With Wolves* (1990). The film has some unusual and redeeming features: All the Sioux and Pawnee roles are played by Native American actors; the teepees and clothing are of authentic design; about one-fourth of the dialogue is in Lakota with English subtitles; and the Sioux are portrayed as sympathetic human beings rather than screeching savages. (The Pawnee are the wicked ones in this film.)

Present-day struggles of Indians to retain control of their tribal life, reservation lands, and fishing rights, however, have been accorded little attention by the entertainment media. The few exceptions would include *Loyalties* (1987), a Canadian film, which showed Native Americans as imperfect but recognizable humans rather than either bloodthirsty or noble savages. Like *Powwow Highway* (1989), which won a standing ovation at the New York Film Festival, *Loyalties* had no real distribution in the U.S.

4. Ralph Willett, "The Nation in Crisis: Hollywood's Response to the 1940s" in Philip Davies and Brian Neve, eds., *Cinema, Politics and Society in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 62.

5. Robert Hart, "Hollywood's African Safari," *Daily World*, May 8, 1985.

Africa Without Africans

Whatever new developments in history, there is no shortage of the old colonial stuff in the media. Witness the way that the motion picture industry continues to treat Africa. A thousand powerful stories could be told. There are African mythologies and legends; Africans who built cities and empires long before the Europeans set foot on their continent; Africans who suffered the loss of loved ones to slavers, experienced the destruction of their tribes and tribal lands, and today face the famine and misery that is part of colonialism's legacy; Africans who have struggled with great courage for independence and revolution; Africans who try to hold their families and cultures together, confront generational and gender conflicts arising from changing social conditions, live in modern African cities and deal with the problems of urbanization, and fall in love and have dreams for themselves and their children; Africans who organize labor unions, churches, communities, and businesses, fight to get an education, and build mass political organizations under oppressive conditions.

When Hollywood did recently turn its attention to Africa, all it could produce was *Out of Africa* (1985)—a major production about a minor White literary figure, Isak Dinesen. Saying nothing about Africans, the film focuses on Dinesen's tribulations as a plantation owner. She is surrounded by natives, who like so many Gunga Dins, address her reverently as "Sahib" and seem only concerned with serving her.

Several years later came *White Mischief* (1988), another film with an African setting which concentrates on a decadent colony of rich English. This movie offers adultery, murder and a courtroom trial. What it doesn't have is any Africans—except servants and other such human background fixtures. To judge from such media productions, Africans lead lives of little interest to anyone.

As with Africa, so with India. In the early 1980s a spate of dramas about colonial India was released, including the British-made motion picture *Passage to India* (1984) and the television series "The Jewel and the Crown," both of which focus almost exclusively on colonial Whites as principals. The Indians we see are usually members of unthink-



Associated Press

Black Hills, South Dakota tourist trap.

ing crowds, or are mute servants and lackeys who compose the social scenery of imperialism.

Passage to India does recognize that colonizers might treat indigenous peoples unjustly. But the injustice is confined to an atypical incident: An emotionally unstable English woman falsely accuses an Indian man of having raped her, a charge that is exposed as bogus in court. Given that British imperialism destroyed India's textile and manufacturing industries, impoverished most of its population, jailed and executed its resistance fighters, and appropriated its lands, labor, markets and capital, one easily could have found a more substantial example of colonial injustice than the old sexist standby of a woman falsely accusing a man of rape.

In *Gandhi* (1982), we have a film about India that actually focuses on Indians—in particular a great Indian leader, the struggle he waged against British rule, and his attempts to maintain peace between Muslims and Hindus. Here is a motion picture of quality that is absorbing and at times even inspiring. It does not flinch from showing the brutality of British colonialism, including the unprovoked massacre of hundreds of peaceful demonstrators, and in another sequence, the bloody beatings of scores of non-violent protesters.

But *Gandhi* fails to explain what the British are doing in India. The film never mentions that the imperialists are pillaging the country for the enrichment of western investors. It never suggests that the awful poverty of India is linked to the immense wealth being extracted from that country. One is left with the impression that (1) the British occupy far-off countries just so they might strut around with swagger sticks and lord it over other folks, and (2) they simply lack the decency to go home when asked.

What is never portrayed about imperialism is its actual nature, the plundering, self-enriching investors who leave poverty and misery in their wake. In this respect, U.S. movies and television are no different from U.S. leaders, mainstream media, and most of academia. When it comes to the awful realities of imperialism, they all turn a blind eye, exercising a uniformity of ideology so impressive that it would be called totalitarian were it to occur in some other countries. ●

East Timor in the Wake of Massacre

Liz Gardiner



In early November 1991, Indonesian soldiers shot and killed Sebastiao Gomes. The sad but not particularly unusual death took place at the Motael Catholic Church in East Timor, a small island invaded and annexed by Indonesia in 1975. On November 12, 1991, two weeks after Gomes died, approximately 3,500 people were attending a memorial ceremony for the youth at the Santa Cruz Cemetery in Dili, the main city in East Timor.

Without warning, squads of heavily-armed Indonesian soldiers opened fire on the unarmed crowd, shooting indiscriminately in what can only be described as a coldblooded massacre. The estimated 180 to 250 Timorese dead and countless more injured became new statistics in a long history of violent repression.¹ What made this "incident" (as it was described by the Indonesian government) unusual was not the extent of the carnage, but the fact that two U.S. journalists witnessed the slaughter and one New Zealander was killed. Additionally, Christopher Wenner from Britain's Yorkshire Television also shot gripping footage of the massacre, including troops bludgeoning survivors. "Church sources reported that dozens of witnesses were executed and many others have died of untreated wounds sustained during the carnage."²

Liz Gardiner is a post-graduate student reading for a Masters degree in International Politics at the University of Sydney in Australia. She is writing her thesis on East Timor and self-determination. Photo: Angry demonstrator confronts police at Indonesian Consulate in Melbourne, Australia, Therese Ritchie.

1. There are many reports in newspapers from Australia and internationally of the massacre and events in the subsequent weeks. *The Age* (Melbourne), the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Observer* (London), and *The Times* (London) covered the massacre. For more detailed analysis see subsequent issues of *The TAPOL Bulletin* and the *Guardian Weekly* (London).

2. Arnold S. Kohen, "Making an Issue of East Timor," *The Nation*, February 10, 1992, p. 162.

The Indonesian government could not discount this irrefutable evidence. Nor could the international press—which had turned a blind eye to nearly two decades of slaughter—deny the bloodied heads and grim testimony of Amy Goodman and Allan Nairn. Indonesian soldiers had beaten them, fractured Nairn's skull, and pushed their faces in with U.S.-supplied M-16 rifles. Jakarta was left no alternative but to bow slightly to international pressure and try to give the impression that it was taking some action in the aftermath of the Dili massacre.

Inquiry or Whitewash

Because the official inquiry which followed was one of the only examples of even minimal government accountability, its findings are almost as important to the international community as they are to Indonesia. The recommendations of the government-appointed commission, headed by a retired general, contained the right mixture of retribution and rhetoric: Not surprisingly, pragmatism triumphed over justice.

The inquiry held that the army had used excessive force and the two most senior military men responsible for overseeing East Timor were replaced, although undoubtedly they will remain in powerful political positions. The report also noted some of the underlying problems in East Timor and recommended measures to ensure that such an "incident" is not repeated. President Suharto even announced in his traditional year-end speech that improvements in East Timor will have top priority in the government's 1992 economic plan.

What this reaction really means, however, is that the inquiry served its intended purpose. By admitting some fault and punishing (or scapegoating) a few individuals, it

succeeded in “credibly” establishing that the killings were not ordered or condoned by Jakarta, and it effectively isolated the massacre from its historical context. Ironically, the government may actually benefit in the long run. The international community, lulled by reassuring noises from Jakarta, can rest easily in the smug knowledge that the guilty have been duly chastised.

What's At Stake

Although the Dili atrocity is the first time in years that much of the world has even briefly noted the existence of East Timor, the island has economic and strategic importance beyond its size and low public profile. Located at the far eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago, about 250 miles north of the city of Darwin in Australia's Northern Territory, East Timor guards the oil-rich Timor Gap.

In the 400 years prior to 1975, Timor had been a neglected backwater in Portugal's colonial empire. The official language was Portuguese, and the *lingua franca* was Tetum.³ The people have a long history of repression, a notable example of which was the Great Rebellion from 1910 to 1912 in which thousands died in an uprising against the Portuguese colonial rule.⁴ It is estimated that 40,000 Timorese lost their lives during Japanese operations against Australian forces during World War II.⁵ West Timor (the other half of the island), was part of the Dutch East Indies, and as such it was automatically integrated into Indonesia when that country achieved independence from the Netherlands in 1945.⁶ (East Timor remained a Portuguese possession which, according to the U.N., it remains today.)

The East Timorese struggle for self-determination and an end to Portuguese colonial control reached a turning point in 1974 after the overthrow of the Salazar regime in Portugal. In East Timorese three political parties formed: The *Uniao Democratica Timorese* (UDT) wanted a continuing association with Portugal, leading to independence, *Frente Revolucionaria do Timor Leste Independente* (Fretilin) advocated immediate independence, and the tiny *Associacao Popular Democratica Timorese* (Apodeti) called for integration with Indonesia. Fretilin, the most popular party, and the only one which consistently advocated independence, was in control of East Timor by September 1975.⁷

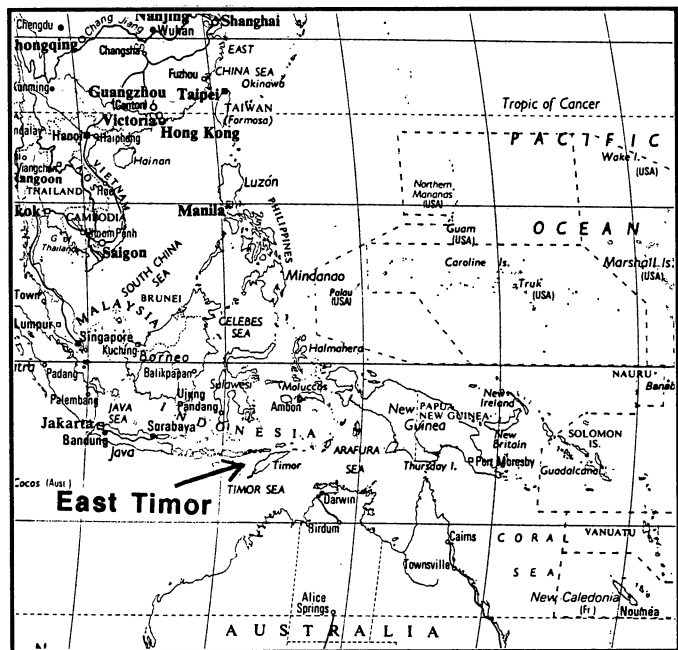
3. Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, *The War Against East Timor* (London: Zed Books, 1984).

4. *Ibid.*, see also *East Timor: Keeping the Flame of Freedom Alive*, Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA), February 1991, p. 3.

5. ACFOA 1991, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

6. *Ibid.*

7. José Ramos-Horta, *Funu: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor* (Trenton, N.J.: Red Sea Press, 1987).



New York Times/The Times (London)

Indonesia Invades, U.S. Winks

Indonesia, however, had other ideas, and a secret cable leaked in Australia left little doubt that an independent East Timor would not be tolerated. The cable revealed that prior to the invasion of East Timor, the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta was under instructions from Henry Kissinger not to involve itself. According to U.S. Ambassador David Newsom, the State Department should keep out of the Portuguese Timor situation and allow events to take their course. Further, if Indonesia were to intervene, the U.S. hoped it would do so effectively, quickly, and not use “our” equipment.⁸

The same cable revealed Australia's position. The then Australian Ambassador to Indonesia, Richard Woolcott⁹ advised the Department of Foreign Affairs in Canberra in August 1975 that the situation in East Timor was going to be messy for some time. He therefore suggested that Australia distance itself as far as possible from the Timor question. Further, he indicated that if and when Indonesia did intervene, it should take all measures to minimize the public impact on Australia of such actions while at the same time privately reassuring the Indonesians that Australia understood their position.¹⁰

The Prime Minister of Australia in 1974, Gough Whitlam, had previously met the Indonesians for informal talks in Central Java, where he told President Suharto that he

8. *Ibid.*, p. 9, from *Documents on Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1968-75*, Hong Kong, 1980.

9. Interestingly, Richard Woolcott is now the head of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

10. Budiardjo and Liong, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Ramos-Horta, *op. cit.*, p. XI.



Fretilin combatants and supporters struggle for self-determination.

thought the best solution would be for East Timor to join Indonesia.¹¹

On December 7, 1975, just nine days after Fretilin proclaimed the Democratic Republic of East Timor, Indonesia invaded East Timor, annexed it, and instigated a mass slaughter.

The Indonesian troops started to massacre the Timorese as soon as they arrived—perhaps 2,000 civilians were killed in Dili in the first few days. Fretilin had formed an army of 20,000 during the 18 months that it had controlled East Timor, and it had been armed by the departing Portuguese. There was soon a full-scale war between it and the Indonesian army. The Indonesian air force bombed villages indiscriminately, and the army used heavy artillery against Fretilin and its civilian supporters. Thousands of people suspected of Fretilin sympathies were arrested, tortured and murdered. Timorese peasants were moved into resettlement centres where they could be properly policed, and the traditional village life of the Timorese was thus utterly destroyed.¹²

Interestingly, the invasion took place the day after President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger completed a state visit to Jakarta. They had done nothing to dissuade Suharto nor did they condemn him after the invasion took place.¹³ Kissinger even told the Jakarta press that “the U.S. understands Indonesia’s position on the [Timor] question.”¹⁴

11. Hamish McDonald, *Suharto’s Indonesia* (Blackburn, Victoria, Australia: Fontana Books, 1980), p. 195.

12. Patrick Brogan, *The Fighting Never Stopped* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), pp. 193-94.

13. John G. Taylor, *Indonesia’s Forgotten War: The Hidden History of East Timor* (London: Zed Books, 1991), p. 64.

14. *Los Angeles Times*, December 7, 1975.

By the following spring, 200,000 Indonesian troops had arrived and by 1979, some 200,000 people—almost a third of the entire population of East Timor—had been killed.

International Reaction

At first, there was some international reaction. In late 1975, the U.N. Security Council unanimously called on “the Government of Indonesia to withdraw without delay all its forces from the Territory,” and required “all States to respect the territorial integrity of East Timor as well as the inalienable right of its people to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV).” Subsequently, the General Assembly adopted many similar resolutions for Indonesian withdrawal and East Timorese self-determination.¹⁵ To this day, the U.N., which still regards Portugal as the Administering power, has not recognized Indonesia’s annexation of East Timor.

Aside from allowing toothless U.N. resolutions, the major powers were variously complicit in the continuing repression; neither China, the U.S.S.R., India, nor the U.S. protested the invasion or annexation. “Thus the four most populous nations on earth supported the fifth, Indonesia, in a small act of genocide.”¹⁶

**“Thus the four most
populous nations on earth
supported the fifth, Indonesia,
in a small act of genocide.”**

Sanitizing Genocide

Until 1989, East Timor was kept virtually inaccessible to the outside world. Most information which did leak out was filtered through official military statements or the handful of carefully chosen and closely guarded foreign observers who were granted special permits. Still, the available evidence is overwhelming: Jakarta’s rule has been consistently repressive, racially discriminatory and brutal. It is destroying Timorese culture and customs, and has placed the economy in the hands of military-run monopolies and migrant Indonesians.

15. Resolutions adopted on East Timor by the U.N.: Security Council Resolutions: 384 (1975) December 22, 1975, and 389 (1976) April 25, 1976. General Assembly Resolutions: 31/53 December 1, 1976; 32/34 November 28, 1977; 33/39 December 13, 1977; 34/40 November 21, 1979; 35/27 November 11, 1980; 36/50 November 24, 1981; and 37/30 November 23, 1982.

16. Brogan, *op. cit.*

Supplementing its arsenal of crude force and economic warfare, the government deployed cultural weapons as well. It tried to eliminate the independence movement through "Indonesianization." This attempt to "integrate" the Timorese has been devastating to the socio-economic life of the people. By any standards of international law, the occupation is a military project which the army controls at all levels. Fretilin survives and continues its guerrilla campaign against the government, but remains vastly overpowered despite its commitment and substantial popular support.

In December 1988, attempting to win over world opinion by showing that the population of East Timor had accepted integration, the Suharto government opened up the territory to a limited number of journalists and tourists without permits. That such minor concessions could pass as a serious public relations strategy is evidence not only of the cynicism of the Indonesian government, but of the almost uniform reluctance by governments around the world to deal with the situation in East Timor.

This refusal by the international community to act reflects the weighty strategic, economic and political posi-

Indonesian rule has been repressive, racially discriminatory and brutal. It is destroying Timorese culture and customs, and has placed the economy in the hands of military-run monopolies and migrant Indonesians.

tion occupied by Indonesia in international relations. After the U.S. defeat in Indochina in 1975, resource- and population-rich Indonesia was in a position to exploit Western fears of the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. U.S. submarines must pass through the Wetar Strait to the north of Timor to join the Pacific Fleet—though how or why an independent East Timor would pose a threat to this activity was never rationally articulated by the West.

Of more substantive concern are the rich oil and natural gas reserves in the Timor Sea which lies between northern Australia and East Timor. The Timor Gap Treaty¹⁷ to exploit these resources was signed between Australia and

17. *Treaty between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the Zone of Cooperation in an Area between the Indonesian Province of East Timor and Northern Australia (Timor Gap Treaty)*: Australian Treaty Series 1991, No. 9, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra.

Indonesia on December 11, 1989, after years of protracted negotiations and came into effect on February 9, 1991.¹⁸

Not surprisingly, the familiar names of transnational corporations such as Shell, Petroz and BHP Petroleum are among those granted exploration agreements.¹⁹

International Aid and Advantage

Strengthened by a tragic twist of fate in the wake of international outcry at the Dili massacre, the movement for an independent East Timor is arguably at its most visible level in years. The global spotlight and re-examination of the question of East Timor has posed a dilemma for Suharto. He has had to tread a fine line. If he responds too weakly, he will face foreign condemnation; if he reacts too strongly, however, he may precipitate a domestic backlash—in particular from the armed forces. His balancing act is complicated by the fact that 1992 is an election year in Indonesia.

The international community, especially the powerful Western nations, has also had to tread a narrow path between condemning a brutal mass murder and not damaging existing or potential economic ties with Indonesia. The difficulty in finding the right course is exacerbated by the fluidity of international relations. More than at any time since World War II, the world is in transition: The economic foundations are shifting and the crumbling parameters of the Cold War spheres of influence are creating an opening for new geopolitical alliances.

Indonesia sits importantly in the midst of the fastest growing region of economic development in the world. In the eyes of Eastern and Western governments alike, it represents a vast, and as yet largely untapped market of 180 million people with enormous commercial potential—a fact well recognized by the Indonesian government.

Jakarta has publicly dismissed continuing criticism of the handling of the Dili massacre and Indonesia's human rights record in general as Western meddling in its internal affairs. In the wake of the attention surrounding the massacre, however, it has been unable to avoid either internal or external repercussions. The Netherlands, Canada, and Denmark have all partially cut aid to Indonesia, and numerous other countries have threatened similar actions if the Dili inquiry proves a whitewash.

18. On February 22, 1991, Portugal filed a case against Australia in the International Court of Justice questioning the legality of the Treaty. (See Communiqué No. 91/6, 22 February 1991, International Court of Justice, Peace Palace, The Hague.) The case has been brought against Australia because Indonesia does not recognize the jurisdiction of the International Court whereas Australia does. The signing of the Treaty between Australia and Indonesia brings into question the violation of the rights of the people of East Timor to self-determination and territorial integrity.

19. See Media Release DP1E91/32OG, December 12, 1991, Alan Griffiths, Minister for Resources, Parliament House, Canberra.

Only Your Best Friends

The most serious concern in the aid-stakes for Indonesia is the reaction of its largest aid donor—Japan—which last year provided \$1.83 billion in economic cooperation and \$1.32 billion in official development assistance.²⁰ More than 260 of the 764 Diet members have signed a petition calling for a drastic change in policy toward Indonesia. Satsuki Eda, a parliamentary leader, said Japan must link human rights to its foreign policy.

"As a close friend of Indonesia, Japan must clearly tell them what it should on human rights," he said. Any re-evaluation would most certainly be cause for alarm in Jakarta. Japanese sanctions, however, are unlikely.

Despite rumblings in the Diet and Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's statement that he considered the situation in East Timor "important," thus far there has been no official response to the investigation. This caution is no doubt influenced by trade considerations. Energy-poor Japan imports 14 percent of its oil from Indonesia and, in 1990 alone according to the Japanese Embassy, exported over \$5 billion worth of goods to the expanding Indonesian market.

"[We] are monitoring the situation," said an Embassy spokesperson in Washington, "and appreciated efforts to look into what and how it happened."²¹ Deputy Foreign Minister Kakizawa could hardly have been more blunt about the motivation for Suharto's response. "We hope Indonesia will continue to take balanced measures in order to gain the consent of the international community."²² As to whether the Japanese government would take some action, "We don't know," continued the spokesperson, "if there will be a decision in the near future."

Meanwhile a bipartisan group in the U.S. Congress is suggesting cuts in or elimination of Indonesia's \$50 million in direct aid; some are recommending termination of the 1991 annual multilateral aid package dispensed by the Intergovernmental Group on Indonesia.²³

President Suharto for his part is toughing it out and has stated that Indonesia will do without aid if it carries political preconditions.

Indonesian Repercussions

Indonesia's internal political balance has also been affected by the massacre, or rather by the necessity to react to it caused by international pressure. Suharto came to power in 1965 after a coup against Sukarno. He inaugurated his U.S.-backed military regime by unleashing "Plan

20. "Diet Group: Stop Economic Aid," *Peacenet*, December 26, 1991.

21. Interview with *CAIB*, February 5, 1992.

22. "The Japanese Response," *TAPOL* (U.K.), February 1992, p. 24.

23. Kohen, *op. cit.*

Witness to Massacre:



From video by Christopher Wenner

Demonstrators and bystanders flee in panic as Army troops open fire on the unarmed crowd, killing up to 250 people.

At the Santa Cruz junction, there were three trucks full of soldiers. And there were also around 1,500 people getting ready to lay flowers in the cemetery [for Sebastiao Gomes, who had been shot a week before]. There were two kinds of troops; some were fully dressed in army uniforms but they weren't carrying firearms. The [others] started getting ready to shoot.

Then their commander...shot once into the air and the troops got down from the trucks. The [other] soldiers who were not wearing shirts and were carrying machine-guns immediately began to shoot at the demonstrators. They fired from a distance of about 10 metres. The shooting went on for about five minutes. Everyone in the front fell as they were hit by bullets. At that moment, the soldiers who were fully dressed and carrying bayonets got down to see whether anyone was still alive, kicking them.... Anyone who still seemed to be moving...was stabbed....

- Paulo, a member of the local assembly.

There was an old man near me who was still alive. A soldier came and stabbed him twice. Dead. Two or three people near the cemetery gate were also not dead. The soldiers took knives and stabbed them to death, too.

-Community leader in interview with BBC

[Then] they blocked the area around the cemetery so that no one could escape. When they found anyone still alive, including me, they told us to strip naked. They threatened us, shouting: "Now, go ahead and pray, your time has come, you're all going to die." I was stripped naked and then beaten with a wooden club. Then one of these fellows grabbed hold of a ballpoint in my shirt and thrust it into my penis. I saw them strike a friend beside me on the head with a knife. After they had tortured me, I was taken to an office. Altogether about 30 of us were taken. When we arrived there, we were again tortured....

-20-year-old demonstrator

Montage of Terror



From video by Christopher Wenner

Wounded by Army gunfire, victim of Dili massacre is held by a survivor as gunfire continues around them.

The people who were arrested were dealt with very harshly. I saw one person who had probably only fainted; when they saw his head move, they struck him with a stone. Someone else I saw dragged alive onto the truck full of corpses; they dragged him off and struck him on the head. After that, he was loaded onto the truck again.

-Manuel Carrascalao, assembly member, brother of Governor

They hit me on the head and it started bleeding. I was taken away in a truck. Some people on the truck were dead. We were all mixed up. When we arrived at the hospital, we were taken to the morgue. The dead ones were separated out. All the lights in Dili went out. It was then that the bodies were taken away.... Goodness knows where they were taken.

-Eyewitness with gunshot wound

Journalists Fired For Reporting Witnesses' Accounts

The above accounts were published in *Jakarta, Jakarta*, a popular Indonesian weekly. They clearly contradicted the sanitized findings of Suharto's inquiry commission. A few days after the issue went on sale, pressure was put on Jakob Oetama, executive director of Gramedia, the publishing house which owns the journal.

"Oetama decided to safeguard his publication by sacking three senior journalists held responsible for the story,"* Seno Gumira Ajidarma, executive editor, Usep Hermawan, domestic editor, and J.J. Waskito Trisnadi, artistic editor.

* "Jakarta weekly publishes testimony by Timorese," *TAPOL Bulletin*, February 1992, pp. 2-4. Statements of above witnesses reprinted from this article. TAPOL, 111 Northwood Rd., Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8HW, U.K., £12/yr.

Jakarta" with the assistance of the CIA, which helped provide hit lists of the potential opponents. Under the plan (which was later borrowed by the Salvadoran government), 500,000 to one million alleged leftists were systematically killed from October 1965 to April 1966.

Given this legacy of military dictatorship, maintaining a democratic image is dicey and in the upcoming election, the issue of presidential succession has become extremely sensitive. The 1988 removal of General L.B. Murdani as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces has strained an already uneasy balance—a strain which will be exploited by the anti-Suharto camp.²⁴ It is too soon to make overall predictions for the coming year, but clearly the widening gap between the army and President Suharto signals a new phase in the country's political history.

There are also grumblings from the Indonesian liberal intelligentsia, whose role will become increasingly significant in the coming years. This sector is issuing more vocal calls for a reduction in government interference in the affairs of individuals and groups and for greater participation in political processes and structures.

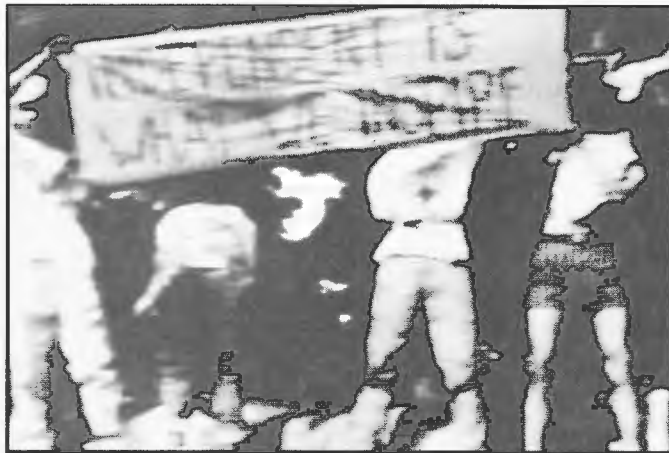
A growing number of students and others are stepping into the newly opened political space to oppose the Indonesian occupation of East Timor and to support stepped-up diplomatic efforts toward self-determination. Ironically for Jakarta, some of these students are the first generation of Timorese who have grown up totally under Indonesian rule. These are the young people who Jakarta had mistakenly calculated would be good Indonesian citizens, espousing *Pancasila*-oriented values and lifestyles.²⁵ "What the soldiers did [in Dili]," said a 13-year-old East Timorese schoolgirl who was at the Santa Cruz cemetery, "has lost Indonesia our generation."²⁶

Despite its attempt to homogenize the population, Indonesia comprises a diverse range of potentially explosive ethnic and regional tensions and it is with acute awareness of this situation that Jakarta maintains a tight reign on its territory. The possibility of independent East Timor igniting secessionist movements throughout the Republic, such as those in the northern Sumatran province of Aceh and in Irian Jaya province to the east, are of major concern. This fear, rather than narrow concern over the "unstable" little island at the end of its eastern archipelago, guides policy on East Timor.

24. While acknowledging rumors that Murdani was removed, a spokesperson for the U.S.-based Embassy prefers to term the General's reassignment to the position of minister of defense, "a promotion." (Interview with *CAIB*, February 5, 1992.)

25. *Pancasila* is the official Indonesian state ideology, based on the five principles of belief in one God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy and social justice. By law, it is the sole guiding principle of all political parties and social and political organizations.

26. *Jakarta, Jakarta* cited in *TAPOL Bulletin*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.



From video by Christopher Wenner

Demonstrators at Dili appeal to foreign media with a banner: "Independent is What We Inspire."

Peace Proposals and the Future

Past policies to subdue East Timor have failed, and it is becoming difficult to hide the fact that a continuing climate of socio-political and economic despotism is no solution. Indonesia and other major players in the international community have continually ignored the proposals put forward by East Timorese resistance leader Xanana Gusmao for negotiations without preconditions under U.N. auspices.

Worldwide support for Timor's case has not coalesced despite the weight of international law, the trend toward recognition of autonomous split-off nations, and even the dubious example of U.S. offensive action against Iraq after its invasion and attempted annexation of Kuwait. Former U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar failed to heed demands that representatives of the East Timorese be consulted and thus far, negotiations have still only included Portugal and Indonesia. Since 1982, there has been a stalemate: Portugal fears a complete breakdown in negotiations, Indonesia refuses to talk about self-determination, East Timor is excluded from the process, and most of the international community watches from the sidelines. As a result there have been no further resolutions and the General Assembly has effectively been silenced.

Does the World Care?

It is a sad indictment of the international political system that it takes a bloody massacre for the world to once again take notice of the plight of the Timorese and sadder yet that after the brief glare of the spotlight has dimmed, East Timor will likely fade again to media non-existence.

Fretilin Representative Speaks

In 1975, the East Timorese were underestimated and dismissed by everyone—Portugal, Australia, the U.S., and Indonesia. It was thought and hoped in 1975 that the East Timorese were not capable of distinguishing between independence and colonial servitude, would not resist Indonesia's military might, and that the whole issue would be sealed in months so that the Western liberal conscience would not be bothered.

After 16 years of brutal Indonesian occupation, it should be clear to all now that the East Timorese are not going to be frightened into submission and will continue to dare to oppose Indonesia's rule.

Indonesia must be compelled by the international community to desist from the occupation of East Timor through a step-by-step process beginning with direct dialogue with credible representatives of the East Timorese resistance movement under the auspices of the U.N. or an acceptable mediator.

—José Ramos-Horta, Overseas Representative of Fretilin

Unless there is sufficient international pressure, the Indonesian government inquiry's superficial findings and inadequate recommendations will give the international community an excuse to ease pressure and ignore calls for the suspension of military aid and the cessation of the training of Indonesian military personnel. Then, pragmatic *realpolitik* responses determined by economic and strategic concerns of the West will continue to be the deciding factors in the fate of East Timor.

Given the consistent history of inaction and indifference, the window of opportunity, tragically opened by Dili, may soon close. Unless there is an international inquiry linking the massacre to the ongoing situation in East Timor, Jakarta will continue the physical and cultural genocide of the East Timorese under a thin veil of "development." And until the U.N. Charter on self-determination is upheld, the interests of major powers will remain the guiding force behind resolutions of territorial independence. Also continuing will be the unconditional resistance of the people of East Timor to Indonesian colonialism and Western compliance; they will stop at nothing less than liberation. ●



Terry Allen

**Interview with
Guatemalan
Indigenous
Leader
Rigoberta
Menchú:**

Legacy of Struggle and Strength

Barbara E. Gottlieb

Rigoberta Menchu is an indigenous Quiché Guatemalan and a world-renowned representative of her people. Author of the influential autobiography, *I, Rigoberta Menchú, An Indian Woman in Guatemala*, she was raised in extreme poverty, as are most indigenous Guatemalans and got her political education early. Her father was a founder of the Committee for Campesino Unity (CUC)—the most important peasant organization in Guatemala. In 1980, members of CUC and other peasant representatives, labor leaders and student supporters occupied the Spanish Embassy in a peaceful demonstration. He was killed along with 39 people when the Guatemalan Army firebombed the Embassy. Rigoberta went on to succeed him as a leader in CUC. Her work unites indigenous and European-descended Guatemalans in the struggle for human rights, demilitarization, and decent treatment for agricultural workers. Rigoberta also carries her people's message to the U.N. Last October, she was proposed for the Nobel Peace Prize.

CovertAction: As we enter 1992, the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the Americas, what are the most important demands of the indigenous peoples of Guatemala and the Americas?

Rigoberta Menchu: First, we would have to analyze this anniversary according to the political situation and the culture of each country. If we speak of the indigenous people of Guatemala, we see there's an enormous number of people and — thanks to the popular movement — a huge number of indigenous people are taking leadership. But Guatemala is living through its own process of change which has to be defined within a situation of armed conflict, a situation of dialogue, a new concept of struggle, and a political solution to con-

**It wouldn't be so hard to find the
real narcotraffickers because
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flicts. Now if we go to Bolivia, if we go to other countries of South America, we find different characteristics but some elements very much in common. But all over, there is a new analysis, a new polemic, a new discussion today of the identity of the peoples, their demands, and the democratic path.

Guatemala is a country where repression is constant. It's an occupied country. In the context of a vicious war, with an Army that maintains the country's economic structure, you don't find the full participation of the people. Those in the seats of power have never shared power. Whatever participation we have is never recognized at the national level — the official level — or by our country's institutions. Instead we see only the elimination of our history, the distorting of our history, by the sectors in power. So one of our demands is to achieve that full participation. There's still a lot that we have to evaluate, but I would say of all our experiences, the most important is that we have managed to involve a very important number of our people.

Their dreams, these aspirations, coincide with the demands raised by the great majority of the Guatemalan people — that is, by the civilian population. It is

Barbara E. Gottlieb, conducted the interview and translated it from Spanish. She is Executive Director of P.E.A.C.E. for Guatemala which raises funds in the U.S. to support community-based economic development and leadership training in rural Guatemala. For more information, write P.E.A.C.E., 3700 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

this civilian society that's suffering the brunt of the militarization. So another of our demands is to get rid of this military character that our country has, in order to assure our people some democracy, to assure them of some peace.

Our demands form a coherent whole, we have responded to the new events happening in the year of the Quincentenary. Like, for example, the resurgence of the Mayan priests. Or like the active presence of an enormous quantity of indigenous people who have been forging Guatemala's true reality. They have shaped reality in the face of great sadness, great pain, and so much blood. Yet this reality has also made it possible for a lot of women to become leading players in our development of organizations, and in this struggle to achieve our dreams. Maybe if they hadn't passed through such painful experiences, they would still be in the kitchen.

As you know, in October Guatemala hosted the Second Continental Encounter of the "500 Years of Indigenous, Black and Popular Resistance." It took us almost two years of work to carry it off with the success it achieved: consciousness-raising, workshops, meetings, and above all, inculcating in our people the need to systematize our experiences and demands. It led to a lot of discussion about what demands to raise during the Quincentenary on behalf of our ethnicity as indigenous

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people. For us the, Quincentenary left some excellent experiences despite its limitations, because it generated political debate on a theme that for years — especially the past 40 years — has not been discussed: the identity of our people, and the values we choose to respect. This is what we want for our future generations.

Now at the continental level, unquestionably it becomes more complicated. Indigenous peoples experience the reality of their own countries, of their own struggles. There is an enormous quantity of specific demands but this doesn't mean there's not a larger perspective. They've been made war against; people have tried to eliminate them during these 500 years. But the same hopes live on in the hearts of our peoples.

What's particularly hopeful today is the new experiences people have been having at the base level: their involvement in organizations, in the development of analysis; the involvement of widows and of the human rights sector.

Today in the United States, we don't hear much talk anymore about armed intervention in Central America. Instead, we hear about the free trade agreement and a "war against drugs." What do these initiatives mean to indigenous people?

We know that these programs are a substitute for the Cold War. For many years, popular struggles — struggles for human rights and indigenous rights — were always accused of being "subversive" or "communist" or linked to the Soviet Union. Now those arguments fall apart. But still there is hunger, misery, contempt, discrimination, and our people keep on struggling and sacrificing to give our children at least one more tortilla. So our struggle becomes a clear testimony against all those who say that the reality here is linked to something else. Really, if our struggles depended on the outside world, they would already have fallen apart. Here what we need is solutions, we need to respond to the tremendous needs of our people.

The war on drugs *is* a war. We know what populations they've been bombing; we know what crops they've been destroying when they bomb the countryside. But if they wanted to attack the drug trade effectively, and all the damage it's doing — including to millions of young people in the U.S. and in other parts of the world — it wouldn't be so hard to find the real narcotraffickers because they're very tightly linked with those in power. As for the free trade agreement, it will be very important to deepen our understanding of what this means. Simply speaking, it is an extension of technology, but it's technology imported from other countries to serve the interests of a minority. It's been used by a minority in the service of exploitation, and it has been converted into a tool in the confrontation.

New technologies offer new forms of employment, such as the *maquila* [assembly sweat shops]. Given the high levels of unemployment in Guatemala, how are indigenous people going to respond?

First, what's key is that new forms of self-defense always emerge. Our people live in permanent resistance. Resistance hasn't come only from the most recent conflicts; we have constantly been defending our traditional values.



Terry Allen
Quetzaltenango, October 12, 1991. Indigenous Guatemalans march for their rights on the 499th anniversary of the invasion by Columbus.

These new forms of employment are just the latest effort to strip our resources. If they had truly come to Guatemala to give jobs to the 50 percent of the population that is unemployed, to bring us social services and well-being, it would be a great advance; we could save thousands of children dying of hunger. But this isn't their purpose. So our people will know how to respond. To confront this, we will have to rely on our unity, on the clear identity of our people, and on our values.

These subjects need to be discussed within the popular organizations. For this we need discussion, outreach. All we've seen so far is the official version. Still, the popular organizations believe that the people must occupy a dignified place in society, because they have won it with their sacrifice, with their blood. They have the right to participate in a new model of development, in the search for that new model, and at least to live within a model that befits our dignity.

What is the role of the CUC, of the Committee for Campesino Unity, in these struggles?

Our organization, the Committee for Campesino Unity (CUC), is 14 years old, we're about to turn 15, and in this time we have given a bit of support to the people who work on the land. We work in the Guatemalan countryside, especially in the struggles of the workers to organize.

Within the tasks that we have to carry out as CUC, I would say the important one now is systematizing the *campesinos'* [rural small farmers or agricultural field workers] struggle to organize. Also, of course, the struggle to have their just demands met. As a lot of our friends know, we have organized strikes, demonstrations, a massive struggle to meet the people's demands. And I think that we continue to move ahead, forging

**After so many years of struggle,
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unity among different organizations working day-by-day in the countryside, in the city, in different organizations.

Really, the CUC, since its birth in 1978, has passed through different stages and probably one of the hardest and most painful experiences is that we too have lived, in our own flesh, the experience of the repression. Throughout these 14 years of struggle to organize, we have lost an enormous number of *compañeros* — men and women, indigenous and *ladino* [mixed indigenous and European descent]. Many of them have been kidnapped, tortured, and then assassinated.

In some ways the government of the United States seems to have lost some of its interest in Central America. If this is true, is it an advantage or a disadvantage for indigenous people?

I don't think they're losing their interest in or changing their relationship to Central America in such a short time. You have to analyze it a little more and take more elements into account. Actually, the United States is in competition with the other world powers, like Europe and the European Community. The United States today

is going through a major crisis, a crisis that's affecting its population. People who weren't poor ten years ago are living in poverty now. The U.S. is the most heavily indebted country. Possibly, it can't find what it needs in order to pacify its people and keep them from seeing that the poverty of millions of people in North America is an inevitable result of wasting so much money on bombs and on wars. So I think their silence in regard to Central America is to calm people down.

What would you say to the international solidarity movement in this Quincentenary year?

I think the important thing is to maintain solidarity with our people — not just maintain it, but develop it. You must not abandon us. You are important for all of Central America, all this solidarity we've counted on for all these years. It's important here in Guatemala, too, even though we've sometimes seemed to be in third or fourth place. Maybe for the first time those who don't know Guatemala will develop the analysis that allows them to see the significance of our struggles.

Because, little by little, we are moving forward. We've carried on a broad struggle for many years, and many people, many stalwart hearts in many parts of the world have accompanied us. We have always said that solidarity is a product of consciousness, a product of love, of love for life and for other people who don't have the advantages that many in this world have. I think that this work should continue on with the same enthusiasm.

According to our ancestors, after so many years of struggle, this period seems to represent the end of 500 years of indignities, 500 years of night. We're moving into the light of a new era for the people. It's a new day. Really, a huge number of people in the world want peace, democracy, dignity, and especially they want to be allowed to develop as full human beings. In the case of Guatemala, we will push with great force for the creation of a "Truth Commission" [an international, non-governmental body that will seek to identify the authors of Guatemala's tens of thousands of human rights violations] where our people can begin to speak, can begin to express some elements of the democracy that has been met with so much repression.

In the area of indigenous needs, after so many years in which we waited for a new dawn to appear, we hope that our voices in this Quincentennial will be heard. That we be given the chance to speak. That you hear our needs. We hope that now, at least, you hear us. That we are respected — as individuals, as peoples, as a region and as a perspective. ●



Guatemala: Indigenous Struggle and Social Change

Francisco Cali

For us, the indigenous people of Guatemala,¹ the fashionable commemoration of the quincentenary of Columbus' landing is not only an irony but also an offense. Whether it is couched in the softer, more sophisticated term "encounter," or actually celebrated as a "discovery," the historical reality cannot be hidden. Yet, despite the legacy of oppression by Spain, local elites, and U.S. government and corporate interests, this anniversary offers us a great opportunity to let this history of resistance and struggle be known.

Now, just as 500 years ago, great changes are occurring in the world power balance. One of the attempts to install socialism — Eastern Europe — has collapsed. U.S. economic dominance is being challenged by two rival blocs — the European Economic Community (EEC), headed by Germany, and the Pacific Basin with the Asian "Tigers," led by Japan. In an attempt to assert its political and economic power and consolidate its own sphere of influence in the Americas, the U.S. is pushing the Free Trade Agreement already in place with Canada onto Mexico and then presumably further south.

This policy is one piece of a pattern of the powerful influence exerted from the North. For over a century it has

been felt in different forms, with different excuses and names. After decades of meddling, the level of U.S. intervention in Guatemala increased dramatically with the 1954 CIA-directed coup against the bourgeois-democratic government of Jacobo Arbenz. In the 1960s the Alliance for Progress was a more subtle, but no less invasive and destructive intervention. The current face of U.S. interference is masked behind Free Trade strategies, aid programs, anti-narcotics and civic action (*i.e.*, medical) campaigns. It continues to threaten the lives and culture of the Guatemalan people, especially targeting the indigenous.

Waves of Terror

The 1954 coup beheaded the agrarian reform policies of President Jacobo Arbenz (1950-54) and ended a period of progress in which indigenous peasants had an opportunity to ameliorate the racial and economic limitations placed on them. But the reform movement and the liberal government of Arbenz threatened not only the interests of the landed elite in Guatemala but those of the U.S. government and U.S.-owned corporations, especially United Fruit Company. The coup restored their stranglehold on the economy and installed Col. Carlos Castillo Armas.

"[H]and picked by the Central Intelligence Agency for his malleability, [Armas] flew into the capital on 3 July 1954 aboard the private aircraft of the abrasive U.S. Ambassador, John E. Peurifoy. In pro-consular fashion, Peurifoy immediately furnished lists of radical opponents

Francisco Cali is a Cakchiquel, and a member of the Highland Peasant Committee of Guatemala, *Majawil Qu'ij* or "The New Dawn Movement." He fled Guatemala and is currently living in exile. Photo: Scavengers/recyclers share Guatemala City dump with the vultures, Terry Allen.

1. About half the 8 million Guatemalans are from a single Maya-Quiché root. There are 22 distinct ethnic and linguistic groups in the nation.



Terry Allen

"The inhabitants of the fields, the inhabitants of the village, they are dust now. Their faces are there, but the memory of them has not disappeared." -*Cakchiqueles Chronicles*

to be eliminated as he had done on his previous posting to troublesome Greece...The bloodletting promptly began with strong racial as well as ideological overtones."²

After the coup of 1954, indigenous land reform activists were again repressed and in battles that followed, inspired by CIA and Guatemalan government-backed committees, *ladinos*³ attacked indigenous communities. Another period of violent repression had begun. From the retraction of educational and economic opportunities, to terrorization at the hands of the army, indigenous peoples were targeted by increasingly sophisticated and systematized methods of exploitation. Nonetheless, we have not stopped struggling or searching for new ways to resist and defend ourselves.

During the 1960s, we began an attempt to elect indigenous mayors. We organized peasant leagues in order to obtain land and start cooperatives to improve our standard of living. While we struggled within the system to improve our conditions, we tried to maintain a relationship with our traditions. The U.S. under Kennedy meanwhile was pursuing its twin policies aimed at economic control and counterinsurgency: While the Alliance for Progress promoted what proved to be superficial and meaningless reforms, the U.S. poured money and equipment into the Guatemalan military. In 1963 after a secret meeting, Ken-

nedy backed an army coup which further consolidated the power of military rule.⁴ It was during this period that a small guerrilla movement sprang up.

In the 1970s, the government responded to demands for land by moving large numbers of indigenous people to other regions that were still fairly unpopulated. But, as always, after the discovery of large deposits of petroleum and minerals such as nickel or copper in some of these colonized regions, serious conflicts arose between the recently arrived indigenous people on the one side and the large landowners and foreign companies on the other. Cases of expropriation of communal lands, mass expulsions of peasants and disappearances of entire villages began to multiply. The

expropriation of peasant lands resulting from the expansion of foreign monopolies, the pauperization of the peasantry, and high unemployment levels in the countryside and cities all affected the indigenous economy. As a result of an increased number of capitalist-type estates and population growth, indigenous people were expelled from their lands and the area which they occupied shrank yet again.

Despite the constant danger, indigenous groups continued to work for land reform. When President Lucas Garcia began his fearsome regime in 1978, he set out to eliminate all the new popular leaders by either murdering or coopting them. Death squads roamed the land and murdered at will. In this atmosphere of terror the reform movement withered. Moves to obtain land were brutally quashed and it became obvious that it was impossible to progress by establishing cooperative land on which indigenous peoples could live communally.

The end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s was a time of labor and peasant unrest. It was marked by barbaric repression and massacres of the indigenous population. Between March and September of 1982, more than four thousand people were killed. Many were disappeared without a trace, and thousands were tortured. The guerrilla insurgency, estimated by the U.S. government to be 80 percent Indian, was growing with "3,500 active combatants, 10,000 Local Irregular Forces and another 30,000 to 60,000 actively involved supporters."⁵

2. George Black, *Garrison Guatemala* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984), p. 16.

3. Recently the term *mestizos*, formerly used for people of mixed Indian and Spanish ancestry has been dropped. *ladino* and indigenous may both be racially mixed. More than defining ethnicity, these terms imply identification and allegiance—for *ladinos* with a Europeanized world view, and for indigenous with traditional Indian culture and values. The term *blancos* (whites) is used for the European elites.

4. Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger, *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (New York: Doubleday, 1982), p. 243.

5. Black, *op. cit.*, p. 104, citing testimony of Dep. Assistant Sec. of State Stephen Bosworth before the House Banking Subcommittee, August 5, 1982.

Roots of Traditional Strength

Despite 500 years of suffering, we, the indigenous peoples of Guatemala look on this anniversary with a sense of hope. Our perspective, among ourselves as well as in relation to Guatemalan society as a whole, is complex and fluid. Our world view incorporates ethnic, cultural, economic or social aspects of life with what is commonly separated out as "political;" it is also responsive to conditions and has different characteristics in different historical moments.

In recent years, two linked tendencies have progressed together. Increasingly, indigenous peoples have participated alongside popular forces promoting social change. At the same time, we have pushed forward those activities which promote the struggle for our immediate interests as Indians. At the second Continental Gathering of the 500 Years of Indigenous and Popular Resistance held in October 1991 in the city of Xelaju Quetzaltenango, 500 people from the Arctic to the tip of South America conferred. An unprecedented 25-35,000 indigenous people from across Guatemala used the protection offered by the international nature of the event to gather and march for their rights.

The diversity apparent at this event and throughout the indigenous movement arises from a conscious rejection of the dominant political power structure and from the necessity to change our relationship to it. It also flows from our own sense of history and culture.

Mayan culture — creator of great advances in mathematics, astronomy, the natural sciences and agriculture — has been said by many to have disappeared. Yet this verdict ignores the reality of living communities which have long sustained the foundations of Guatemalan life. For centuries, we have maintained and developed essential structures and provided new leadership in response to the historical context. We have survived conquest, massacres, the elimination of leaders, and the loss of knowledge. We continue to exist today in spite of 500 years of exploitation, discrimination and repression.

This Land Was Our Land

The issue of land is now and for millennia has been inextricably bound up with the political life of the indigenous peoples in Guatemala. As a direct link to nature, our relationship to land and land tenancy has meaning far deeper than just economics or ownership. For us land is something held communally. The recent phenomenon of land as private property violates our

culture and traditions and serves the interests of large landowners and the foreign monopolies. Seizing our land not only increases their wealth but erodes our communal way of life.

During the colonial period, Spaniards displaced native leadership and imposed an alternative structure which channeled tribute to the colonial masters. Many indigenous groups were denied control over the most fundamental basis of their agricultural communities as their land was taken over by *ladino* and *mestizo* [see footnote 3] elements. Indians, by providing a never-ending source of labor, were then compelled to create the kind of riches demanded by the dominant group but in which we had no share comparable to our contribution.

Setting the Poor Against Each Other

The Spanish also introduced the weapon of racism which has been used to divide the *ladino* and indigenous poor and increase the ability of a small elite to rule. Under the liberal reforms of 1871, laws were passed forcing indigenous people to work on plantations and in public works projects, while exempting *ladino* peasants from this obligation. This division created two levels of exploitation and made *ladinos*, who were authorized to live in indigenous communities, agents for the dominating elites. Indigenous laborers who continued to form the backbone of the economy were paid sub-human wages while we raised crops not only for consumption in the cities but increasingly for export.

Although we work the land, indigenous people do not control it nor do we have the political power to make policy which affects our lives. We are confined by the development schemes of the dominant sectors to *minifundias* (very small farms), which cannot provide sufficient yield for subsistence. To survive, workers must either take on poorly paying temporary work on plantations often necessitating long periods of migration, or employment in petty commerce or crafts. Those few indigenous people who have gained power or wealth have paid the price of forgetting their communities, their language and their customs.

But although whole nations were uprooted and the structure of Indian life was seriously disrupted, our life as a people survives and will continue to do so as long as we retain a communal life which permits us to maintain our languages, our oral traditions, and our customs. ●



Guatemalans join a continent-wide "encounter" of indigenous and popular movements and organize alternative anniversary of Columbus' invasion, Oct. 1991.

Techniques of Repression

Throughout these years of suffering, the government improved its techniques for repressing the civilian population and carried out some of the most secret and bloody killings in the history of the world. The regime of General Efraín Ríos Montt, an evangelical demagogue, was particularly innovative and systematic.

Under Ríos Montt, the army sought to put all Guatemalan territory under strict military control. The "scorched earth" policy was legalized and massacres increased to the point of ethnicide against the indigenous populations. Ríos Montt boasted openly of his murderous policies, stating on Guatemalan television that he had "declared a state of siege so that we could kill legally." On December 5, 1982, after a conference with Reagan he was somewhat muted. "We have no scorched earth policy. We have a scorched communist policy."⁶

The Ríos Montt regime also instituted Civil Defense Patrols which by 1982 had incorporated 40,000 members. All males—officially from 15 (but actually from ten or eleven) to 60 years old—were required to join and to patrol during the night and work without pay for the army during the day. The army also placed these press gangs at the front of troop deployments where they served as cannon fodder and land mine detectors. When they were killed, they were listed as civilian casualties "massacred" by the guerrillas.

Inspiration for technical improvements in repression were international. In addition to U.S. military and politi-

cal support, Israel, Argentina, and Chile have provided expertise and/or aid.⁷ In 1977, when Carter cut off military aid, the Israeli Army played a very important role in training the army and supplying weapons. The Guatemalan Army uses Galil assault rifles and Uzi machine guns; the Israelis have also set up two munitions factories. The "armed village committees in Israeli settlements prefigure Guatemala's ubiquitous Civil Defense Patrols, [and] like the Israelis, the Guatemalans designated tame local mayors from indigenous communities."⁸

Model Villages

The U.S., however, bears major responsibility for the Ríos Montt regime. The General, schooled by the U.S. in the Panama Canal Zone and in counterinsurgency at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, knew the value of winning hearts and minds.⁹ Presenting themselves as the saviors of a pop-

ulation in conflict, the government, as part of its own counterinsurgency strategy, began to implement the Model Village program modeled after the strategic hamlet program used by the U.S. in the Vietnam War.

Although begun in 1981, it was not until after the March 1982 *coup d'état* which brought Ríos Montt to power that the program was widely implemented. It was intended to

"We have no scorched earth policy. We have a scorched communist policy." -Ríos Montt

give the world the idea that the government was concerned and wished to reestablish the democratic life of the country. In reality, these "villages" are concentration camps mostly populated by people who had been able to survive the massacres and political genocide which the government itself carried out and continues to carry out using its security forces. All of the areas in which these model villages are situated were strongly affected by the military's

7. International affiliations continue. In late 1991, *carabineros*, the national police of Chile, signed an agreement to exchange experience and to assist the "technification" of the national police of Guatemala. Given the role of the *carabineros* in kidnapping, disappearing and assassinating their own people, this association does not bode well for Guatemala. As part of this "technification" drive, the government has consolidated the forces of repression under such bodies as the "SIPROCI," a combination of the national police, the army, the military police and the treasury police.

8. Black, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

9. *Diario de Centroamérica* (Guatemala City), March 26, 1982.

6. Holly Sklar, *Washington's War on Nicaragua* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), p. 105.

scorched earth policy. The imposed social and political structures replaced indigenous community structures and were designed to undermine both indigenous culture and institutions and possible guerrilla influence.

In 1989, the Guatemalan government, with the backing of the U.S., added another weapon to its counterinsurgency strategy. Taking advantage of the widespread lack of medical service and general level of poverty, U.S. National Guard units from a number of states rotated through Guatemala providing medical and dental services. They served in highly conflicted areas in which the guerrilla movement was strongest and were in the area of El Aquacate when the Guatemalan Army massacred 22 villagers there. According to villagers served by the military medical units, a visit from them sometimes bore more resemblance to a police interrogation than to a medical examination. Questions often followed the line of "What type of organization do you have?" "Who are your leaders?" and "What type of people visit the community?"

Using Drugs

In 1987, under Reagan, the U.S. added another technique for repression which hits indigenous people particularly hard. Through the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the U.S. has provided the Guatemalan Army with funds ostensibly to eradicate drug production. In fact, the thrust of the program is largely counterinsurgency. With U.S. military aid on hold because of public outcry over

That the U.S. government would give money to the army to fight against itself is absurd.

Guatemala's human rights record, this funding mechanism has been valuable as a conduit for aid and a mechanism for U.S. influence. The irony of the policy is that there are many reports that the army and the government themselves are deeply involved in drug trafficking.

Unlike the South American model, Guatemala has no independent cartels. Instead "some production and most transportation of narcotics seems to be directed by well-placed members of the country's governing hierarchy."¹⁰ "The backing of the military and G-2 (Guatemala's powerful military intelligence unit) is occurring in spite of com-

10. Robert Smith, "U.S. Steps Up Drug War in Guatemala," *Report on Guatemala*, Fall 1991, p. 5. When airport immigration agent Carlos Minera was tried for cocaine smuggling in 1989, he testified that G-2 members were involved in the drug trade.



Prensa Libre

After a Colombian plane with U.S. markings crashed, U.S. DEA agents and Guatemalan soldiers seized cocaine worth \$50 million. Termed "another fierce blow to international narcotrafic," the bust was a boom to the domestic market. Most of the confiscated "blow" went missing the next day.¹¹

mon knowledge that they are responsible for many, if not most, of the human rights abuses and may well be involved in the drug trade themselves."¹² A May 7, 1990, *Los Angeles Times* article speculated that G-2 officers assigned to drug control were being paid not by the DEA, but by the CIA in order to increase that agency's influence. That the U.S. government would give money to the army to fight against itself is an absurd proposition.

While the program has had no significant impact on drug production and trafficking, it has had serious consequences for indigenous Guatemalans. The spraying of lethal herbicides by anti-drug helicopters and planes has damaged the ecology of large tropical reserves and poisoned large numbers of people, animals, fish, and plant life in the targeted areas. Fourteen people died in the Tacuna municipality of San Marcos after showing symptoms of poisoning. Although reports of nausea, respiratory problems, diarrhea among rural residents and death or illness of livestock have been widely reported and denounced, "the protests have been routinely ignored because of heavy U.S. backing of the [spraying] program."¹³

The planes carry other loads too. To escape government violence, some of the 40,000 internal refugees have banded together in remote areas to form Communities of Populations in Resistance (CPR). It is these which the government, in the name of anti-drug policy, has begun to bomb using U.S.-supplied ordnance and equipment—including helicopter gunships and Super Turbo Thrush planes. The population in the CPRs consists largely of indigenous

11. "Possible causas del avionazo," *Prensa Libre* (Guatemala City), October 12, 14, 1991.

12. Smith, *op. cit.*

13. *Ibid.*

civilians who fled their homes. Many were accused of defending human rights or asking for better conditions of work and life for their people, or simply of associating with or living near someone who had been accused of these "crimes." They understood that the government and army would not rest until they were captured. The routine punishment for them and often their families and fellow community members is repression, kidnapping, torture, and/or murder.

The government of Guatemala, however, claims to be an "emerging" democracy and, supported by the U.S., maintains the fiction that the continuing pattern of human rights abuses is committed by rogue elements. In fact, as documented in U.N. reports, it is the general command of the Army, and by extension the government which stands behind it, that are responsible not only for the military abuses, but also for the death squads. Given the Army's level of control over every part of Guatemalan life, it would be absurd to conclude otherwise. It is only because of international pressure that the Army hides coyly behind the mask of these paramilitary organizations.

The Death Squad Army

In the last 15 years, over 100,000 people have been killed by government violence which has targeted all levels of society. There have been 40,000 disappeared, up to one million displaced, 50,000 widowed and 250,000 children who have lost one or both parents. The most extreme violence took place in the early 1980s and slowed down periodically when various regimes attempted to convince the international community to restore normal relations and military aid. In the last year, however, the levels of violence have begun to approach the horrific levels of the last decade.

Although the repression was meant to frighten the population into submission, in some cases it has served to radicalize. In various communities, indigenous peasants have organized themselves in armed self-defense groups or joined the revolutionary movement. In the past, because of the communal spirit preserved by the indigenous people, whole communities turned their support to the URNG (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity). These significant enlistments were the conscious choice of the people, arising out of their situation and their needs.

Despite direct and indirect counterinsurgency campaigns, the URNG has managed to survive. Two years ago the government was saying that the insurgency was only a small group of people running around the mountains and making trouble. But recently the guerrillas have taken over towns despite the sophisticated military and police control. Like any guerrilla force, they could not survive without

popular support. Although their goals are similar to those of the popular movement, their tactics are different and the two groups maintain a careful separation.

When the military and the local dominant class realized the response that the population was giving to the revolutionary movement, one of the ways it acted to preserve its power was by announcing a Democratic Opening. In an election held in December 1985, Christian Democrat Vinicio Cerezo became president.

Like all of those who have been brought to power since 1954 through pseudo-elections, he has not represented any viable alternative to the majority of the Guatemalan population. Before assuming power, he reiterated his proposals made during the electoral campaign that he would not undertake any significant structural change such as profound agrarian reform or a redistribution of wealth. The same commitment to the status quo is also true of the current president, Jorge Serrano. He, too, has manipulated the desires of the Guatemalan people for peace, by paying lip service in his electoral campaign to negotiation and peace. Yet in recent months he has criticized the URNG's proposals in the government-URNG talks, accused noted human rights advocate Amilcar Mendez of working with the guerrillas, and acted recently to polarize the atmosphere and diminish chances for a negotiated peace.

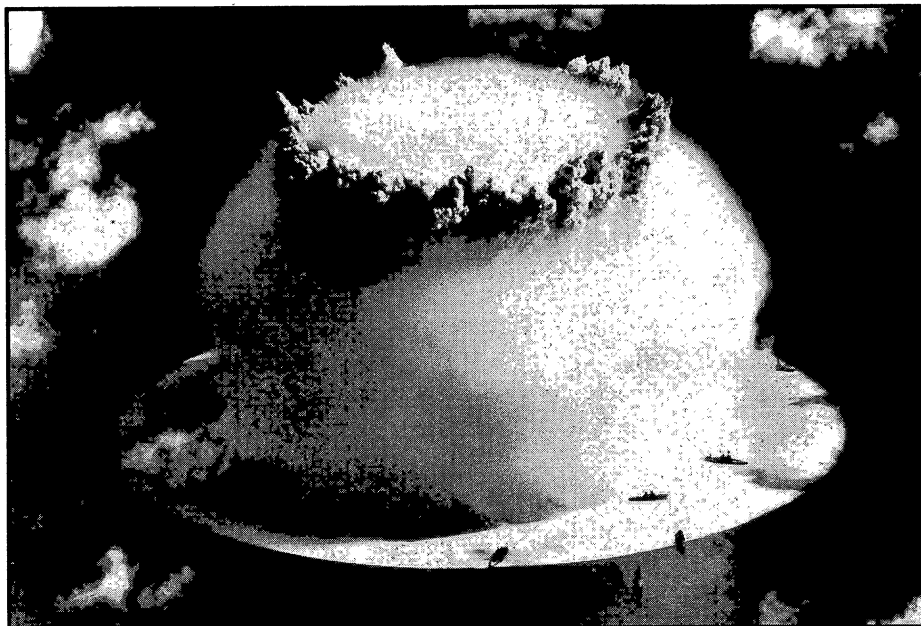
Increasingly though, the people of Guatemala will not be satisfied with superficial programs which are irrelevant to their needs and oblivious to their suffering. After these 500 years of lies, deception, discrimination, and oppression, we indigenous people have realized that no bourgeois political party represents our vital interests. The understanding is spreading that it is the system itself which needs changing. In order to end the terror and repression, to obtain land, to better our way of life, and to develop our communities, our languages and our customs, there is only one path: radical change of the state's structures.

Conscious of what is happening in our country and in remembrance of what our ancestors taught us, our people are calling upon our collective wisdom and hope for the future. We are sure that our journey toward true liberation has begun and we are determined to continue our struggle. The process is a difficult one for our people, but we are sure to come out victorious, because although our journey of liberation is just beginning, the history of our people is a long one. ●

"In this way, we, the descendants, have known our history... This is our genealogy, which will not be lost, because we know our origins and we will not forget our ancestors."

-From Chronicles of the Cakchiqueles

"[Utirik] is safe to live on but is by far the most contaminated place in the world, and it will be very interesting to go back and get good environmental data. Now data of this type has never been available....



While it is true that these people do not live, I would say, the way Westerners do, civilized people, it is nevertheless also true that these people are more like us than the mice."¹

— Merrill Eisenbud

Pax Americana in the Pacific

Glenn Alcalay

In commemorating the quincentennial of Columbus' arrival in the New World, we often forget that the long tentacles of U.S. empire extend well beyond America's shores. Scattered across the North Pacific and stretching to the Asian mainland are island outposts which have served U.S. strategic and economic interests for more than a century. Many of these oceanic societies continue to suffer the disastrous consequences of colonialism in what is referred to as the American Lake.

Barely reported in the West is the concerted opposition to U.S. policies which have shaped much of the political life of the region. In 1984, New Zealand incurred U.S. wrath by declaring itself a nuclear free zone and barring all nuclear warships and aircraft. At U.S. instigation, it was then ousted from ANZUS (the regional defense alliance of Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.) and threatened with trade sanctions.

In Belau, a group of strategic Micronesian islands 500 miles from the Philippines, the U.S. has long coveted military and counterinsurgency bases. Having created the

world's first anti-nuclear constitution in 1979, Belauans became an international *cause célèbre*. In ten referenda in as many years—despite extreme economic and political pressures from the U.S.—they firmly rejected expanded U.S. military presence.

The regional grassroots movement, such as the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) and the 15-member governmental organization, the South Pacific Forum, have also consistently pressed for a demilitarized and independent Pacific.

Destroying/Redeploying Chemical Weapons

Most recently, the entire Pacific community, especially the South Pacific Forum, was galvanized. Following a 1990 U.S.-Soviet chemical weapons accord, the Pentagon transferred 102,000 nerve gas artillery shells to Johnston Atoll from its European stockpile in Germany.² The atoll, part of the Hawaiian archipelago and known as Kalama Island by indigenous Hawaiians, lies 700 miles southwest and downwind of Hawaii. This uninhabited and treeless lump of coral has been a U.S. territory since 1858 when it was claimed by American civilians aboard the schooner "Palestine."

Glenn Alcalay is a Pacific researcher who has just completed a year-long independent study of radiation-related health effects associated with the U.S.'s nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands. He is a contributor to *Confronting the Margaret Mead Legacy*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992). Photo: U.S. A-bomb explodes at Bikini, 1946, U.S. Air Force.

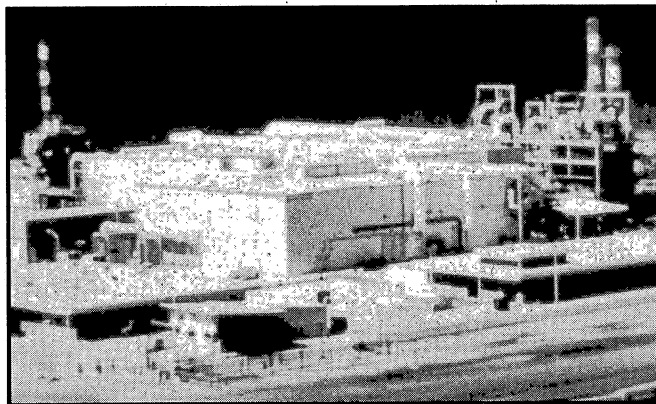
1. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), *Minutes of Advisory Committee on Biology and Medicine*, Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), New York, January 13-14, 1956, p. 232.

2. "In a Switch, Bush Offers to Stop Producing Chemical Weapons," *New York Times*, May 9, 1990, p. A14.

The current transfer of toxic materials is not the first time the U.S. has exploited the atoll's remoteness and lack of indigenous population. During the atmospheric nuclear testing years prior to 1963, the Pentagon exploded numerous hydrogen bombs at Johnston. In one such test, on July 9, 1962, a Thor rocket hurtled a 1.4 megaton H-bomb, "Starfish Prime," 400 kilometers into the stratosphere.³ That same day, residents of Hawaii experienced what came to be known as EMP (electromagnetic pulse). This side effect of a nuclear explosion, which knocks out a potential adversary's circuitry, was later incorporated into U.S. offensive strategic planning.

In 1971, after a series of dramatic protests by the Japanese over the storage of World War I and II mustard gas weapons in Okinawa, the U.S. built JACADS (Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System), a \$150 million incinerator ostensibly to destroy the deteriorating arsenal. Originally slated for storage at the Umatilla Army Depot in Oregon, the waste was rerouted to Johnston after local public outcry resulted in a 1972 law which prohibited the transport of the Okinawa stockpile to the 50 states and the District of Columbia.⁴ The law does not, however, prohibit any of the other numerous U.S. stockpiles from being shipped to and disposed of at the eight continental chemical incineration sites intended to destroy the aging U.S. chemical arsenal. If these facilities are challenged by local protests, and the political cost of keeping them in the U.S. becomes too high, there are suspicions that Johnston Atoll may become the primary disposal site.⁵

Despite the U.S. government's soothing reassurances of safety, independent scientists and downwind populations fear that the 1991 European shipment of chemical warfare agents will have disastrous effects. If the highly carcinogenic polychlorinated dibenzo dioxins (PCDD) and polychlorinated dibenzo furans (PCDF) escape from incomplete burning in the incinerator at Johnston, they will enter the atmosphere as well as the sea surface microlayer, and then pollute the marine food chain.⁶



The Johnston Atoll Incinerator will destroy/store aging U.S. chemical weapons stockpiles transported from Europe.

U.S. Army

to Johnston as a "redeployment."⁷ The use of that term implies that the weapons may be stored for future use or used in training exercises. Such training would violate the U.S.'s public announcement that it would use Johnston Atoll only to destroy the Okinawa and German weapons.

It Doesn't Take A Weatherman

Due west and downwind of Johnston Atoll are the low-lying Marshall Islands in Micronesia. Having wrested these pristine coral specks from the Japanese during the bloody island-hopping campaign of World War II, the U.S. lost no time in converting them into nuclear weapons test sites. After forcibly removing the indigenous Marshallese from Bikini in 1946 and Eniwetok the following year, the Atomic Energy Commission and the Pentagon exploded at least 66 atomic and hydrogen bombs between 1946 and 1958.⁸

On March 1, 1954, at the height of the Cold War, the U.S. exploded its largest and dirtiest hydrogen bomb at Bikini. More than 1,000 times more powerful than the Hiroshima atomic bomb, this fifteen-megaton behemoth, code-named "Bravo," was designed by Edward Teller at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory.

Using the so-called Ulam design, Bravo was intended to produce maximum fallout over an immense area. In preparation, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) established an international radiological monitoring network to track the radioactive cloud as it encircled the earth.

After the fallout from Bravo "accidentally" blanketed several populated islands, the U.S. claimed that last-minute "wind shifts" had been the culprit in the widespread nuclear contamination. Twenty-eight years and many cancers

3. R. Norris, T. Cochran, W. Arkin, "Known U.S. Nuclear Tests," July 1945-December 1988. Natural Resources Defense Council, "Nuclear Weapons Databook," Working Paper series, NWD 86-2, January 1989, p. 31.

4. David Robie, "Paradise in Peril," *Pacific Islands Monthly*, Suva, Fiji, July 1990, p. 10.

5. Ian Anderson, "Protests Grow Over Nerve Gas Disposal," *New Scientist*, London, Vol. 127, no. 1731, August 25, 1990, p. 5.

6. Alfred Picardi, et al., "Review of JACADS: Dec. 1988 Final Sup-

plemental Environmental Impact Statement With Reference to the 1983 JACADS EIS," Report prepared under the aegis of Greenpeace International, February 1990.

7. *Pacific News Bulletin*, Sydney, Australia, August 1991, p. 6. The original article is "U.S. Chemical Warfare; The Pacific Connection," by Peter Wills in *Peacelink*, Auckland, New Zealand, May 1991.

8. Norris, *op. cit.*

later — including at least 23 radiogenic diseases⁹ — Air Force weather personnel stationed on a nearby island reluctantly came forward to challenge the official explanation. “The wind was blowing straight at us for days before, during and after the test,” admitted Gene Curbow, the senior weather technician at the time. “The wind never shifted.”¹⁰

A 1954 Defense Nuclear Agency document on Bravo had confirmed Curbow’s assertion. Just six hours before the detonation “Winds at 20,000 feet were headed for [inhabited] Rongelap to the east.”¹¹ Although the Department of Energy (DOE) admitted in 1978 that at least 14 islands—many of which were populated —were hit with “significant fallout” during the nuclear tests in the Marshalls, it is widely believed that many more islands were contaminated with radioactivity.¹² When asked why he had waited until 1982 to reveal his knowledge of this important information, Curbow replied disingenuously, “It was a mixture of patriotism and ignorance, I guess.”¹³

In fact, one of the reasons for the lack of public information was more sinister: The indigenous Marshallese served as guinea pigs for long-term studies. “Greater knowledge of [radiation] effects on human beings is badly needed,” wrote the Brookhaven National Laboratory in its 1958 report four years after Bravo. “Considerable research is being carried out on animals, but there are obvious limitations in extrapolating such data to the human species. The habitation of these people on the island will afford most valuable ecological radiation data on human beings.”¹⁴

More recently, another document on Bravo from previously classified minutes of an AEC meeting revealed in the most bare-knuckled manner the actual rationale for conducting the follow-up Marshallese radiation studies. In January 1956, two years after Bravo, Merrill Eisenbud, the AEC Director of Health and Safety, addressed the radiation problems in the Marshalls:



Associated Press
AEC official Merrill Eisenbud

Now that Island [Utirik] is safe to live on but is by far the most contaminated place in the world, and it will be very interesting to go back and get good environmental data. Now data of this type has never been available. While it is true that these people do not live, I would say, the way Westerners do, civilized people, it is nevertheless also true that these people are more like us than the mice.¹⁵

The Marshall Islands continue to serve U.S. strategic interests. Kwajalein Atoll, 4,200 miles west of California’s Vandenburg Air Force Base, is well-sited for a \$2 billion secret Pentagon laboratory. Used for development, missile testing, and perfecting ICBM warhead accuracy, the facility is key to “Star

Wars” and the new emphasis on “smart” weaponry.

Strategic Stepping Stones

The indigenous people of the Pacific served the U.S. well. They were not only guinea pigs for studying the latent effects of nuclear testing and donors of land for toxic waste dumps (including a bizarre plan to ship household garbage from the West Coast to the Marshall Islands¹⁶), but they also provide a chain of strategically located military bases.

In 1976, when the *Washington Post* splashed a front-page story about CIA bugging of ongoing status talks in Saipan (near Guam in the Northern Mariana Islands), few Micronesians were surprised.¹⁷ The CIA jungle training base on Saipan had been an open secret for years. It was first used between 1951 and 1963 for training Chinese nationalists from Taiwan in anticipation of a possible U.S.-sponsored invasion of the Chinese mainland, and later became a site for instructing Vietnam counterinsurgency advisers.¹⁸

Tired of their roles as a staging ground for interventions, Micronesians began agitating in 1971 for complete independence from the U.S. The U.S. negotiator for the Micronesian status talks was Nixon-appointee Haydn Williams, a former head of the Asia Foundation in San Francisco with known CIA connections. Donald McHenry, ex-U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, stated that the Asia Foundation itself was a front organization for the CIA and

9. Nuclear Claims Tribunal, *Annual Report to the Nitajela*, Majuro, Marshall Islands, January 1991, p. 26.

10. “Four Veterans Suing U.S. Over Exposure in ’54 Atom Test,” *New York Times*, September 20, 1982, p. B15.

11. “Castle Series, 1954,” Report from the Defense Nuclear Agency, DNA 6035F, Washington, D.C., April 1, 1982, p. 202.

12. “Radiological Survey Plan for the Northern Marshall Islands,” Report of the DOE, Washington, D.C., August 22, 1978, p. II-3.

13. “Four Veterans,” *op. cit.*

14. “March 1957 Medical Survey of Rongelap and Utirik People Three Years After Exposure to Radioactive Fallout,” Brookhaven National Laboratory, BNL 501 (T-119), June 1958, p. 22.

15. AEC minutes, *op. cit.*

16. “Paradise Lost,” *Prime Time Live*, ABC-TV, December 6, 1990.

17. “CIA Bugging Micronesia Negotiations,” *Washington Post*, December 12, 1976, p. A1.

18. Neil Sheehan, et al., *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: Times Books, 1971), p. 138.

specialized in "proper training and education for promising foreign leaders."¹⁹

According to the *Washington Post*, the CIA's task in Micronesia was to discover the negotiating position of those island leaders who pushed for independence. Williams defended the need for intelligence gathering as "useful because the Micronesians are tough negotiators."²⁰ Indeed, Williams' own skills as a negotiator—and the economic, political and military pressure he exerted—brought the Northern Marianas into a permanent affiliation with the U.S. The island of Tinian, launching pad for the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks, is being prepared as America's newest military base near Guam and Saipan in the western Pacific.

As on Guam, the U.S. plan to further militarize Saipan and Tinian promises to wreak havoc on the indigenous people through forced land acquisition, prostitution, and other sociocultural disruptions.

Organizing Against U.S. Bases

The jewels in the string of U.S. military bases which necklace the western Pacific are in South Korea and the Philippines. Now that the U.S. has been forced to vacate Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base (with possible reductions in South Korea), Guam's strategic importance—just off the Asian mainland—will increase dramatically. The largest island in Micronesia, Guam, was captured along with the Philippines (and Puerto Rico) in 1898 as booty from the Spanish-American War. After it was originally claimed by the explorer Magellan in 1521, Spanish troops waged a war



Exposed to radiation from U.S. nuclear testing, Marshall Islanders developed thyroid cancer and other malignancies.

Greater knowledge of [radiation] effects on human beings is badly needed. . . [The Marshall islanders] will afford most valuable ecological radiation data on human beings. —AEC minutes

of extermination against the indigenous Chamorro people. With the help of introduced diseases like smallpox and syphilis, the Chamorros were reduced from an original population of 80,000 in 1668 to fewer than 5,000 in 1741. By 1783 their numbers had been further reduced to a mere 1,500.²¹

The Pentagon stations 21,000 U.S. military personnel, spends \$750 million a year, and controls one-third of Guam's 216 square miles. The current population of 130,000—comprised of mixed blood Chamorros, Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, and Koreans—has been westernized and disrupted by this overbearing presence.

In 1954, Guam became headquarters for the Pacific Strategic Air Command. Andersen Air Force Base, home of the Eighth Air Force, was the only base outside of the mainland U.S. for B-52s until the Pentagon removed them in 1990. Guam is also the central command for the Communications Area Master Station for all western Pacific U.S. naval forces. The magazine at Lake Fena includes 250 earth-covered bunkers which store conventional and nuclear weapons, making it the most important nuclear storage site in the western Pacific.

A vast array of underwater anti-submarine SOSUS hydrophones are positioned just off the island. Naval Base Marianas at Apra Harbor is the largest U.S. naval homeport outside the continental U.S., and includes the westernmost naval ship repair facility on U.S. territory.

The indigenous Chamorros have been protesting to the U.N. and Congress for

years about environmental contamination from the military bases and, along with the people of Guam, have intensified their campaign to retake land seized by the U.S. for military purposes. With growing Chamorro nationalism pitted against a huge influx of military hardware and personnel in the next few years (principally from the Philip-

19. Donald McHenry, *Micronesia: Trust Betrayed* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1975), p. 104. McHenry stated that "Reports in the *New York Times* and *Ramparts* that the Asia Foundation was receiving major backing from the CIA led to extensive suspicions, particularly among young Micronesians, of Williams' past associations."

20. Sheehan, *op. cit.*

21. David Stanley, *Micronesia Handbook* (Chico, Calif.: Moon Publica-

piners), increased social and political unrest is practically guaranteed.

Aloha Hawaii

Hawaii continues the dubious Pacific tradition of serving the U.S. strategic agenda. The island chain has been a target of U.S. territorial ambitions since 1873 when Major General John Schofield decided that Oahu should defend the U.S. west coast from potential attack by an overseas aggressor. Caving in to economic and political pressure from the U.S., King David Kalakaua handed Pearl Harbor over to the U.S. in 1887. Seven years later, soldiers from the U.S.S. Boston participated in the military coup which overthrew Queen Liliuokalani and the Hawaiian monarchy. In 1898, Congress annexed Hawaii, and within four days 1,300 troops landed near Diamond Head creating the first U.S. military outpost in the Hawaiian Islands.²²

By then, Hawaii's population, about 300,000 at the time of Captain James Cook's arrival in 1778, had been reduced to 48,000 through the introduction of venereal diseases, typhus, cholera, measles, tuberculosis, and smallpox.²³

These diseases have been superseded by more modern afflictions. As one of the most militarized spots on earth and home to the 3rd and 7th Fleets, Hawaii bristles with nuclear and chemical weapons. Currently headquarters for the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), Hawaii oversees military operations for more than one-half of the globe with a suzerainty stretching from the west coast of North America to the east coast of Africa, from the Arctic to Antarctica.

Most of the Pentagon's power in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean (including the rapid deployment base at Diego Garcia) falls under the control of the 7th Fleet. The 3rd Fleet supplements the 7th Fleet in the Eastern Pacific for the "forward deployment" strategy of controlling half the world. The Intelligence Center Pacific (IPAC) based at Camp Smith, Oahu, houses the information-gathering operations from all four branches of the armed services. IPAC collects and disseminates intelligence data from satellites, aerial reconnaissance, intercepted communications, and

clandestine activity. Through these means, IPAC provides pertinent summaries, visual displays and analyses to the Commander-in-Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) and all branches of the armed services. IPAC also relies on CIA and National Security Agency (NSA) sources. NSA has recently built a major three-story underground installation at Kunia, Oahu, which houses 1,400 NSA personnel involved in secret operations.²⁴

Some of the vast array of ordnance in Hawaii is deployed in tests which have devastated the ecologically fragile and culturally sensitive environment. For decades, the sacred island of Kaho'olawe near Maui has been used as a target for the Navy (similar to Vieques Island in Puerto Rico) and the annual RIMPAC exercises. The indigenous Hawaiian group, Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, has succeeded in making Kaho'olawe an important local issue by demanding its return to its original Hawaiian owners.

In addition, the Pentagon has established a Star Wars launching pad at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on Kauai. Over the next ten years, it is expected that some 40 test missiles will be lofted into the Kwajalein lagoon in the Marshall Islands 2,000 miles to the west.

The grassroots movement formed an alliance with elected Hawaiian leaders (including Gov. John Waihee, a Native Hawaiian) to oppose both the burning of chemical weapons at Johnston Atoll and the naval bombardment of Kaho'olawe Island. As Japanese and mainland individual and corporate interlopers continue to gobble up the last vestiges of Hawaii's diminishing paradise, local resistance is becoming increasingly mobilized and militant.

From Hawaii to Guam, the U.S. has left no strategic stepping stone undisturbed. Pacific Pax Americana has been accompanied by massive sociocultural destruction: It has uprooted, irradiated and exterminated scores of indigenous peoples. ●

1989), p. 62.

For more information contact: *Pacific News Bulletin*, the official publication of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) movement, P.O. Box 489, Petersham NSW 2049, Australia; *Peacelink*, the magazine of the New Zealand peace movement, P.O. Box 837, Hamilton, New Zealand (Aotearoa); and Project Kaho'olawe 'Ohana, P.O. Box H, Kaunakakai, HI 96748.

tions, 1989), p. 180.

22. Jim Albertini, et al., *The Dark Side of Paradise: Hawaii in a Nuclear World* (Honolulu: Catholic Action of Hawaii/Peace Education Project, 1980), p. 1.

23. J.D. Bisignani, *Hawaii Handbook* (Chico, Calif.: Moon Publications,

Cambodia: A Secret War Continues

David Munro

On November 15th last year Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, the flip-flop prince of Cambodian politics and one-time head of State of Pol Pot's genocidal Kampuchea, returned to Phnom Penh, the capital of his devastated homeland, under an extraordinary spotlight of media and diplomatic attention. Garlanded with flowers, he waved and smiled his way past the subdued population to the Royal Palace, where he took up residence after an absence of nearly 13 years.

Within days, Prime Minister Hun Sen, in a move to lever Sihanouk away from close association with the Khmer Rouge, announced the Prince's appointment as head of state.¹ As befits such a role, the Prince began holding audiences with foreign diplomats, including Charles Twining, the newly-arrived U.S. special representative, whom he warned "not to meddle in Cambodia's affairs." The irony of the tardy reprimand, coming after decades of blatant U.S. interference, cannot have been lost on Mr. Twining or his State Department masters. Over the last 23 years the U.S. has been responsible for much of Cambodia's suffering. Increasing the bitterness of the irony, the U.S. recently steamrolled an agreement through the United Nations under the guise of a "peace plan." U.S. and British protestations to the contrary, the pact is nothing more than a game plan for the return to power of the Khmer Rouge. Indeed, in an unguarded moment, Twining himself, with an incredible dis-

play of diplomatic doublespeak, admitted that although he did not believe they would, "the Khmer Rouge can come back to power again."²

The "Peace" Plan

In essence the peace plan is simple and dangerous. First it mandates the formation of a Supreme National Council headed by Sihanouk with representatives from the current Hun Sen government, the Khmer Peoples National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and the Khmer Rouge.³ The council will run Cambodia until U.N.-sponsored elections sometime in 1993. The Khmer Rouge are already on record that they expect up to 30% of the vote. Since they are experts at coercion and have for at least six years been in-

filtrating cadre into the countryside — where 80 percent of the population lives — the prediction is not unreasonable.⁴

Pol Pot's strategy is direct and ideologically unchanged from the years of genocide. "Refashion — that is, indoctrinate — villagers and build up a network of supporters and cadres," ordered Pol Pot in a secret speech to the party faithful. "The battle in which we are engaged with the enemy [the Hun Sen Government] is one absolutely without respite, without cease."⁵

U.S. and British protestations to the contrary, the U.N. pact is nothing more than a game plan for the return to power of the Khmer Rouge.

David Munro is a documentary film maker and photographer who has specialized in Indochina and issues of war and peace. He has won numerous international awards including the coveted Peabody Award from the University of Georgia and an International Emmy for *Cambodia: The Betrayal*. Wherever possible detailed sources are provided. Such is the delicate and at times dangerous nature of the continuing investigation that some identities and sources have been omitted or concealed for their protection.

1. Khmer is the name for the race which inhabits Kampuchea; Kampuchea is the Khmer name for what was called Cambodia by the French and Cambodia in English. The Khmer Rouge (les Khmers Rouges — red Khmer) were originally the Cambodian Communist Party, later Democratic Kampuchea, led by Pol Pot. The Khmer Rouge still calls the country Kampuchea; the Phnom Penh government of Hun Sen, however, renamed the country Cambodia in 1990.

2. *International Herald Tribune*, November 15, 1991, p. 3.

3. Norodom Sihanouk inherited the throne of Cambodia from his grandfather King Sisowath Monivong in 1941. In 1960, he abdicated in favor of his father, taking the title Prince so that he could enter politics. He dominated Cambodia until he was ousted in a 1970 CIA-backed coup. Hun Sen came to power in 1979 in the wake of the Vietnamese liberation of Cambodia. Until they withdrew in 1989, the Vietnamese forces in Cambodia were the only credible defense against the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Peoples' National Liberation Front (KPNLF) was formed in 1979 out of remnants of the old *Khmer Serai* (Free Khmers), a right-wing political and military group headed by Son Sann, a former Cambodian prime minister under Sihanouk. Both the Sihanoukists and the KPNLF have become better known as the Non-Communist Resistance (NCR).

4. In 1986, while visiting a remote village in eastern Cambodia, I watched a six-man KR armed unit commandeer provisions from villagers. After their departure, I asked why they had cooperated with the fighters and was told that no one would dare refuse them for fear of future reprisals.

5. See Nayan Chanda, "Pol Pot's Plans for Peacetime Cambodia," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, September 9, 1991, p. 12.

Pol Pot expects that Sihanouk, whom he refers to as the "peel," will be elected president in the 1993 elections, at which point he has planned a Khmer Rouge takeover. "After the elections are over," he said, "we shall discard the peel and show our true nature."⁶ Under these conditions prospects for free and fair elections are impossible, for when people are frightened, they will vote the way the man with the AK-47 tells them.

Second, the Peace Plan provides for repatriating the 350,000 Cambodian refugees now in Thailand. But until recently, it made no provision to clear the mined areas that those refugees will have to cross on their homeward journey, areas sown with more than six million mines.⁷ As I will show later, these mines were laid with materiel and training provided by the U.S. and Britain.

Third, the plan demands the partial disarming and demobilization to agreed limits of all the armed forces, including those of the Hun Sen government—the only force since the Vietnamese withdrawal that has defended the country against the Khmer Rouge. Partial demobilization is fine in theory, but the Khmer Rouge are highly disciplined and have already hidden troops and stockpiled weapons and munitions in secret caches all over the country.⁸ If U.N. forces were unable to properly disarm the Contras in Nicaragua, certainly they stand no chance with the Khmer Rouge.⁹

The "Secret" War, the Open Horror

Rep. Chester Atkins (D-Mass.) described U.S.-Cambodia policy as "a cancer on the body politic of America."¹⁰ To understand why the U.S. and its allies have created this situation and support murderers rather than their victims, one has to look back on the pattern of the relationship.

6. Translation of secret minutes of Pol Pot lectures to senior cadre held in 1990 at his headquarters, Zone 87, on the Thai-Cambodian border.

7. *Land Mines in Cambodia: The Coward's War* report by Asia Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, September 1991.

8. See "Khmer Rouge's War Card: Arms Cache," *International Herald Tribune* (New York Times Service), November 12, 1991, p. 2.

9. On October 16, the U.N. Security Council dispatched 116 military and 144 civilian personnel to Cambodia. The unarmed group will "monitor the cease-fire." The budget for the first six months is \$19.9 million. There is a proposal that they be followed by up to 26,000 civilian and military peacekeepers, costing \$1-2 billion. The U.N., however, is broke and will be hard-pressed to meet the costs.

10. Interviewed in *Cambodia: The Betrayal*, documentary film by John Pilger and the author, Central Independent Television, London, 1990.



Associated Press

1982: A beaming Prince Norodom Sihanouk reviews Khmer Rouge troops.

In 1969, the U.S. expanded the war from Vietnam and authorized the secret and illegal bombing of Cambodia. Spearheaded and personally authorized by Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon, these attacks on a neutral country were undertaken in contempt of the U.S. people and Congress. For almost three years, in total disregard for the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent Cambodians, B-52 bombers dropped the equivalent of five times the destructive power of the Hiroshima atomic bomb blast on this peaceful land. The secret war—a secret from the U.S. people and not, of course, from those on whom the bombs fell—killed and wounded more than half a million people and turned Cambodia's eastern provinces into a treeless moonscape.

The carnage wrought by years of bombing, coupled with the CIA-inspired coup which overthrew Sihanouk, plunged the country into civil war. Out of the inferno rose the previously obscure Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge.

At dawn on April 17, 1975, they took Phnom Penh and proceeded to finish what the U.S. had begun six years earlier: hammering this once idyllic and beautiful country back to the Stone Age. They sealed Cambodia's borders and emptied the cities at gunpoint. Those who couldn't or wouldn't leave were summarily executed; the rest, they drove into the jungles and rice paddies to a hell from which possibly two million never returned.

The Khmer Rouge then closed the schools, universities, libraries and hospitals and decreed that from that day forward there would be no teachers, students, lawyers,



Associated Press

Thiounn Prasith represents the Khmer Rouge at the U.N. with the complicity of the Western powers.

U.N. Legitimation

For three years after they were expelled from power, until 1982, the U.S., Britain, a number of other western nations and China, bestowed diplomatic respectability on the Khmer Rouge by recognizing them as legitimate representatives of Cambodia at the United Nations. One grateful Khmer Rouge commander, Nam Phan, who had been responsible for the deaths of at least a quarter of a million fellow Cambodians in Siem Reap province, proudly admitted in a 1982 interview in the film *Cambodia: Year One*, that their allies were "China, the ASEAN nations...and the United States."¹¹

Since support for the Khmer Rouge had by 1982 become a serious political embarrassment, the U.S. and China simply brokered a cosmetic coalition of the Khmer Rouge, Sihanouk and the KPNLF to hold the UN seat. But for the following decade, Pol Pot's man Thiounn Prasith has served as ambassador. It was he who after the fall of Phnom Penh put out the call to all overseas Khmers, especially students, to return and help the revolution. Most were executed as soon as they arrived.

¹¹Interview with the author in *Cambodia: Year One*, op. cit.

doctors, or nurses; no books or newspapers; no mail, phones, radios or clocks; no shops, markets, money or holidays — only work, and death for those who disobeyed the orders of the Angkar.¹¹

11. Khmer Rouge name for the "Organization" or "Highest Authority."

Anyone who spoke a foreign language, who had an education, anyone who wore glasses, who had been friends with foreigners or part of a previous regime was exterminated. Even the peasants did not escape the zeal of Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan's¹² fanatic Maoist vision of a pure Khmer agrarian empire. More than 350,000 peasants from the eastern provinces bordering Vietnam were forced to wear blue scarves, just as the Jews in Nazi Germany were made to don yellow stars. The scarves identified the wearers as "Cambodian bodies infected with Vietnamese minds" and marked them for death.¹³ Between 1975 and December 1978, possibly one-fifth to one-third of the population of six million people were worked, tortured, or starved to death or exterminated.¹⁴

Throughout these years Sihanouk, who had joined forces with the Khmer Rouge after he was ousted by the CIA coup in 1970, lived in his palace in a deserted Phnom Penh. Nominally head of state until 1976 and under house arrest, he was supplied with *fois gras*, caviar and champagne by the Khmer Rouge. He played his part and remained silent about the holocaust, and cannot claim ignorance of what

"After the elections are over," said Pol Pot, "we shall discard the peel and show our true nature."

they were doing to his countrymen since many of his own family were killed. On the occasions when he could have spoken out and told the world of the holocaust — such as his 1976 visit to the United Nations — he remained a propagandist for the Khmer Rouge.

Within days of the end of the war in Vietnam in 1975, the Khmer Rouge set about attacking their battle-worn neighbors, massacring tens of thousands of Vietnamese and Thai in cross border raids. By late 1978, the situation had become intolerable for the Vietnamese. Their calls at the U.N. for a security zone between the two countries were ignored and they found themselves with no option but to invade Cambodia — if for no other reason than to end the murderous campaign against their own people.

12. Khmer Rouge foreign minister and architect of much of Khmer Rouge ideology.

13. See Ben Kieman, "Genocidal Targeting" in *State-Organized Terror: The Case of Violent Internal Repression* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991), pp. 207-26.

14. It is impossible to say exactly how many Cambodians died during Pol Pot's rule. However, research by a number of groups and individuals suggests that the death toll from executions, torture, starvation, and exhaustion was between 1.5 million and 2 million.

It is impossible to find a Khmer who lived through the holocaust who will not admit that the Vietnamese liberation halted the wholesale slaughter. Without their intervention, the killings would have continued until Pol Pot had achieved his dream, even at the cost of exterminating 80 percent of his own people. "One or two million young people," he proclaimed, "are enough to make the new Kampuchea."¹⁵

Unholy Alliance

Driven ahead of the retreating Khmer Rouge army as a human screen, hundreds of thousands of stick-like figures began to stagger over the border into Thailand. At the same time an unholy trinity of Pol Pot, China and the U.S. came into being. The alliance suited all three parties. Both the Khmer Rouge and China were traditional enemies of the Vietnamese, who were underwritten at the time by Moscow. For geopolitical reasons, the U.S. and China had



David Munro

The six million mines littering Cambodia create 80 amputees a day.

"All we're doing is feeding a fucking army," complained one Red Cross official.

a mutual interest in increasing pressure on the Kremlin. In 1979, U.S.-Soviet relations were at a low and rapprochement between China and the U.S. was well under way. Thus, when the U.S. and China aided the Khmer Rouge, they forced the Vietnamese to stay in Cambodia in order to defend the country. Since Vietnam was in turn backed by the Soviet Union, its continued defense of Cambodia not only strained the war-weary Vietnamese, but put an added financial burden on the Soviet Union—a situation which suited U.S. Cold War policy objectives. In short, it was a perfect contract.

Thailand was also drawn deeper into the struggle when China exerted extraordinary pressure on the Thai government to provide sanctuary for Khmer Rouge troops and to permit delivery of millions of dollars worth of arms and munitions to their bases straddled along the Thai-Cambodian border.

15. Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin Books), p. 92.

International aid workers were strong-armed as well. They complained off-the-record that U.S. agents of an organization simply known as "KEG" were exerting daily pressure to deliver food and supplies to the Khmer Rouge army.¹⁶ One Red Cross official complained in 1980, "All we're doing is feeding a fucking army."

But while logistic and material aid went unmonitored to Pol Pot, the U.S. and its allies demanded that the International Red Cross and U.N. agencies impose impossible monitoring conditions on emergency supplies for Cambodia, where most of Pol Pot's victims were still starving.

KEG turned out to be the Kampuchean Emergency Group, a U.S. State Department unit set up to oversee the border operation. According to Lionel Rosenblatt, KEG's State Department spokesperson in Thailand, it was staffed by people who were "concerned that we have information on the life-threatening situations that they [the refugees] may face ...[and] who knew the nitty gritty of aid."¹⁷

On closer scrutiny, however, KEG personnel knew more about the nitty gritty of clandestine warfare and destabilization. When KEG Director Col. Michael Eiland had served as a major in the Special Forces during the Vietnam War, he was part of Operation Daniel Boone—a series of illegal military ventures into Cambodia which culminated in Nixon's "secret" bombing.¹⁸

16. For a complete account of the manipulation of aid to the Khmer Rouge, see Linda Mason, Roger Brown, *Rice Rivalry and Politics: Managing Cambodian Relief* (So. Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983).

17. Interview and investigation by John Pilger, Nicholas Claxton and the author for the documentary film, *Cambodia: Year One*, ATV Network, London, 1980.

18. See William Shawcross, *Sideshow:...*, (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1979), for details on Operation Daniel Boone and Col. Michael Eiland.

Eiland was backed up by a number of other old Indochina hands, including Jack Williamson, who had worked closely with the CIA under cover of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Laos from 1961 to 1973 and then in Phnom Penh from 1973 to 1975.

By early 1980, according to one source close to operations in Thailand, more than 50 CIA agents descended on Thailand to augment U.S. operations in Cambodia. On November 20th, just days after Ronald Reagan's election but two months before his inauguration, one of his foreign policy advisers, former CIA Deputy Director Ray Cline, visited Thailand and secretly crossed the border into a Khmer Rouge base in Cambodia.¹⁹ No one reported officially whom he met or what was said but subsequent events give credence to the report that Cline assured the Khmer Rouge of continued support under the new administration.

And continue it did. When the emergency on the border was over and the refugees had been fed, housed and clothed, the KEG was not dismantled. Instead, Col. Eiland remained at his post in Bangkok and the organization underwent a name change. As the Cambodian Working Group, with representatives from the Thai, Malaysian and Singaporean intelligence services, the operation reportedly helped coordinate military operations for Coalition forces inside Cambodia and supplied satellite intelligence data of Phnom Penh troop positions and movements.

The Working Group has apparently also supervised the flow of certain western weapons, both directly and indirectly, to the Khmer Rouge forces and their Coalition partners. According to a researcher for the *Harvard Human Rights Journal* who spent a year on the border, a U.S. army officer attached to JUSMAG (Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group) in Bangkok, made regular fortnightly visits to the Sihanoukist Non-Communist Resistance (NCR) munitions warehouses along the border to ensure resupply.

Weapons of western manufacture or design have repeatedly been captured from the Khmer Rouge in considerable quantities during battles with the Phnom Penh army.²⁰ They include 81mm mortars, M-16 and M-16A1 assault rifles with the M-203 40mm grenade launchers of U.S. design. Anti-tank weapons, rockets and rifles of French manufacture, and Swedish and German-designed anti-tank weapons. The origin of all of these weapons, with

the exception of the French supplies, which were a gift to Sihanouk from France, is obscure. However, those of Swedish and German design were manufactured under license by Chartered Industries of Singapore, a corporation owned by the Singapore government, which supplied them to the NCR. In interviews, Khmer Rouge defectors have explained how these weapons were channeled from the NCR to the Khmer Rouge forces.

As a leading member of the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), Singapore has been in the forefront of support for the Coalition and has given weapons to the NCR. But not all of these supplies have been paid for by Singapore. Informed sources in Washington have talked about a secret intelligence finding by George Bush in 1990 that authorized monies to be paid to the Singapore government to reimburse them for weapons they were supplying to the Khmer Rouge and their allies.

Furthermore, two ex-members of the U.S. Special Forces have given evidence to investigators from the Defense Investigative Service. The Special Forces, they said, "dumped" tons of U.S. war materiel with the Khmer Rouge and the NCR forces during a series of Special Forces training programs on the Thai-Cambodian border code named "Badge Torch." The men

have been instructed by the investigators that under no circumstances are they to tell the press what they know, but fortunately they informed a member of Congress.

Mining for Misery

Every day nearly 80 Cambodian people are turned into amputees by the more than six million mines which litter the country. For almost 13 years this coward's war against innocent civilians has gone largely unnoticed in the outside world. And it is in these brutal minefields that the most damning evidence of direct and indirect support for the Khmer Rouge by the U.S. and the U.K. can be found.

Since 1983, officers of Britain's elite Special Air Services (SAS) and the U.S. Special Forces have trained select Coalition units in Thailand and Malaysia in, among other things, mine laying and technology.²¹ Although some of the mines that are being used—anti-personnel, "off-route," etc.—are of U.S. or U.K. design, there are a number of ways in which "deniability" is built into operations like this. "It is my understanding that the British are still [July 1990] involved in supplying those sorts of mines," said Simon

***When the Khmer Rouge
returns to power it will be
western governments who
have blood on their hands.***

19. "Reagan Aide Visit to Cambodia Told," *Los Angeles Times*, December 3, 1980, p. 12, and "Thais Furious," *Los Angeles Times*, December 5, 1980, p. B1.

20. *Cambodia: The Betrayal*, op. cit..

21. *Cambodia: The Betrayal*, op. cit.

O'Dwyer-Russell, diplomatic and defense correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*. Various parts are shipped to other countries and then assembled. "There are a series of licensing agreements...world-wide for the sorts of technologies that are in these mines," so that British-designed weapons can be made by an overseas manufacturer, "and this obviously has the advantage of bringing with it the element of deniability...I mean we're not laying mines with 'Made in UK' on them."²²

Although the British training was vehemently denied for years, on June 25, 1991, Armed Forces Service Minister Archie Hamilton was finally forced to admit to the House of Commons that "From 1983 until 1989, Her Majesty's Government provided training to the armed forces of the Cambodian Non-Communist Resistance, that is, the Khmer People's National Liberation armed forces and the Armée National Sihanoukienne..."²³ Although Hamilton went on to deny any direct training of the Khmer Rouge, any assistance to the NCR helps the Khmer Rouge. Furthermore, direct training of Khmer Rouge units has been taking place in Malaysia and Thailand.²⁴ "It's common knowledge that the NCR forces go into battle under Khmer Rouge commanders," said Kraissack Choonhaven, former adviser on Cambodian affairs to ex-Thai Prime Minister Chatchai. When the Khmer Rouge returns to power, it will be western governments which "have blood on their hands," he added.²⁵

From the outset, the Cambodian operation has been so cloaked in secrecy and the U.S. government so adept in concealing information from both legislators and the media that the whisper of "Cambodiagate" has remained just that — a whisper. But the evidence of support — covert and overt, direct and indirect — for the Khmer Rouge over the past 13 years is so great that after a 1990 classified briefing of the Senate Intelligence Committee on the Cambodian situation, members of the committee left sufficiently shocked that one of their number was prompted to remark that "criminal indictments are inevitable."²⁶

22. Simon O'Dwyer-Russell, in an interview with the author and John Pilger, 1990. Part of the interview is in *Cambodia: The Betrayal*.

23. Hansard, House Of Commons, London, June 25, 1991.

24. *Cambodia: The Betrayal*, op.cit.

25. Kraissack Choonhaven, in interview with the author, April 19, 1991.

26. For an excellent analysis of U.S. overt and covert backing of the Non-Communist Resistance (NCR) and the Khmer Rouge, see Jack Col-

For 13 years, the Cambodian people — isolated from the world and barred from all international trade and communications agreements — have struggled virtually alone to rebuild their stricken country.

For 13 years, Cambodia has been the only country in the world denied U.N. development aid and as a result thousands continue to die from the ravages of war and preventable disease.²⁷ For 13 years, western governments have supported Pol Pot and abetted his obscene and murderous policies essentially because the Cambodian people were liberated by the Vietnamese, who came from the wrong side of the Cold War.

Since Sihanouk's rather muted return, Khieu Samphan and Pol Pot's Minister of Defense Son Sen have also returned to Phnom Penh. Pol Pot himself was observed in mid-November secretly crossing the border from Thailand.²⁸ So the murderers and their accomplices are back in the fold, and unless there is an international cry for justice and a call to try the Khmer Rouge leadership for the crime of genocide, it is only a matter of time until the killing starts again.

That this situation has been contrived and allowed to continue by the U.S. government and its allies is unconscionable. That they might now sit back

and do nothing while Pol Pot returns to power in the Trojan Horse of their making — the U.N. Peace Plan — is a crime that the Cambodian people will never forgive. ●

houn, "U.S. Supports Khmer Rouge," *CAIB*, No. 34 (Summer 1990), pp. 37-40.

27. *Cambodia: Year Ten*, documentary film by John Pilger and the author, Central Independent Television, London, 1989.

28. *International Herald Tribune*, November 17, 1991.

**A gift that is more powerful than
a red striped tie and creates
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David Duke Does India

A. Namika

In his newly constructed persona as a respectable presidential candidate, David Duke attempts to portray himself as a dead-again racist. His closet is filled, however, with records of raw bigotry that document his bizarre theories of white supremacy.

Duke's ideology congealed, like milk in the hot sun, when on his return from Vietnam in 1971, he briefly traveled around India. There, his commitment to saving the purity of his race became "a holy obligation"¹ he claims, after he witnessed the devastating sights, sounds, smells and wonders of a once great "Aryan Caucasian" civilization fallen to "ruins and garbage."

Darker Days Ahead

The seminal event in Duke's revelation was the sight of a "dark poor little half-caste Indian girl." His tearful compassion for her was quickly converted to concern for the genetic future of his race. "I wondered if, a few hundred

"While appreciating the sexual energy of the early Indians as displayed on a sandstone relief, I thought it was unfortunate that many of the early Aryans didn't show that kind of energy with the right genetic partners." -Duke

years from now, some half-black ancestor [sic] of mine would be sitting in the ruins of our civilization brushing away the flies."

While Duke revels voyeuristically in Indian poverty and crowding, he quickly and pragmatically turns his revulsion and pity into proof for his theories of racial supremacy. "About a block from the Y.M.C.A.," he records, "a squatting old man grunted as he defecated in the gutter; a little farther on, a bony couple engaged in sexual intercourse while two children sat beside them and played in the dust."

A. Namika is a pseudonym for a U.S.-based Indian specialist on South Asian society and politics who writes regularly for Indian newspapers.

1. All quotes are from "India: My Racial Odyssey" written by Duke in the "NAAWP NEWS," a publication of the National Association for the Advancement of White People, which Duke founded and headed after ostensibly leaving the Ku Klux Klan. Issue 36 is undated but the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University, New Orleans, which houses an archive on white supremacist writings, estimates the date at late 1985 or early 1986.

The parallels between the increasingly less White West and India fill the former KKK Grand Wizard with holy terror. A small number of almost entirely Caucasian scientists and technicians, and the "increasingly pressed Caucasian middle class" sustains the U.S. now, but their percentage of the population is declining. "Every civilization has had a lower birthrate among its most talented and productive [i.e., lighter-skinned] elements" while the dullard "lower classes" turned to sex for "recreation and fulfillment." "As attested by the teeming population, fornication seems to be their most successful endeavor."

The handwriting is on the wall. "Every day," Duke warns, "our nation grows a little darker from massive non-white immigration, high non-white birth rates, and increasing racial miscegenation, and with each passing day we see the quality of our lives decline a little bit more."

"The Brahmins of America are becoming replaced by the pariahs, the untouchables," Duke draws from his Indian experience. "Seeing that child in that setting was my passage into a future time that can happen to America unless everyone who has racial understanding acts to shape, with the power of his will, a future not of racial decadence, but of racial excellence and achievement."

Casting Off History

Although somewhat sensationalized by Duke, the poverty and emiseration he saw in India in 1971 were real. The country had just come through one of the most traumatic economic and political periods in its post-independence history. Centuries of British colonial rule had systematically exploited the indigenous economy. After independence in 1947, the failure of land reforms and increasing concentration of land ownership in rural areas, the rise and brutal crushing of the peasant movement,² and substantial rural-urban migration exacerbated the colonial toll and created the slums Duke describes so vividly.

The "Aryan Caucasians," Duke reminds his readers, created the great Indian or Hindu civilization. "Aryans came down over the Himalayas to the Indian sub-continent and conquered the Aboriginal people," he says, echoing a view generally held by lighter-skinned north Indians. Duke's selective view of history omits the information that

2. V.M. Dandekar and N. Rath, "Poverty in India: Dimension and Trends," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 6, No. 1, January 2, 1971, pp. 25-48; P.K. Bardhan, "On the incidence of poverty in rural India in the sixties," in P.K. Bardhan and T.N. Srinivasan (eds.), *Poverty and Income Distribution in India* (Calcutta: Statistical Publishing Society, 1974), pp. 264-324.

while these primitive Aryans were traversing the northern plains as nomads, the darker-skinned people of southern India had a highly developed Dravidian civilization.

Despite having "read dozens of books" and talked to "Indian college professors," Duke reverses some traditional interpretations of the evolution of the caste system. "Today the word [caste] is usually associated with occupation," Duke claims, "but the occupations were originally evolved on the basis of race." In fact, most historians contend that this religiously sanctioned division of the social order was originally based on occupational divisions that over centuries took on racial overtones. They derive not from a racial, but from a religious Hindu hierarchy of purity and pollution.³

Caste-based occupational divisions have become increasingly obsolete, at least among non-Brahmins for whom the priesthood is still reserved. In fact, some internal mobility has always been possible within the caste system through marriage, kinship and the accumulation of wealth. Duke, however, ignores these factors and attributes changes purely to sexual promiscuity among the higher castes: When the elites passed on their whiter genes, they diluted some of the privilege that was attached to racial purity.

"In spite of strict religious and civil taboos, the ancient Aryans crossed the color line," Duke asserts. "While appreciating the sexual energy of the early Indians as displayed on a sandstone relief, I thought it was unfortunate that many of the early Aryans didn't show that kind of energy with the right genetic partners."

Mad Dogs and ...

The bizarre but dangerous combination of humanism and racism that pervades Duke's article allows his white supremacist readers to self-righteously view racial purity as a sound economic and moral policy. The fundamental assumption of this policy—taken as an act of faith—is that emiseration is caused by a loss of White racial purity. His use of the words *dark* and *light* carry moral verdicts far broader than consideration of color.

"Agra and New Delhi are far cleaner cities (by their standards; all are abominable by ours) than the other large cities of Calcutta or Bombay," Duke says, attributing the difference again to the color of the people living there. "Also, in middle India the people are taller, lighter-skinned, and more sturdily built than those of the hot coastal areas," he notes. "I thought about the corresponding large Negro populations in the southern part of the United States that are thickest in the coastal plains and the river deltas."

Duke finally arrives at the Taj Mahal in Agra which he concedes, "was built long after the great flowering of the



Andrew Lichtenstein/Impact Visuals

At "Duke for Governor" rally, supporters show true colors.

Aryan Civilization, yet it contains many architectural and artistic qualities that reflect the spirit of Aryan culture.... Historical reality slowly began to crowd in on me." Most modern day Indians were "but pitiful reflections of the men and women that walked these grounds centuries ago." Though the story goes that the monument was built by a king out of love for his queen, Duke, "saw it as a funerary monument to the memory of a people who gave the earth great beauty."

Having perhaps spent a bit too much time in the sun, his fantasizing continues. "The rounded dome with its white, bone-like features resembled a huge skull; the spiritual skull of the Aryan people," the Klansman hypothesizes, "a cranium that once housed and held talented and powerful minds, but which now served as the gravestone of a magnificent culture and the genetic treasure that made that culture possible."

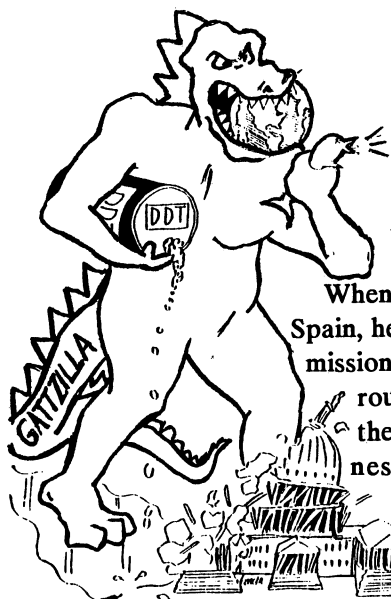
India, Duke asserts, has passed the point of no return. "The people of India cannot sustain the level of culture or the economic well-being the Aryans of India originally created." Duke's sinister objective in this diatribe against India becomes apparent in his conclusions: "It's not, however, too late for America and the West," the presidential hopeful says. "No matter how dark it seems, there is enough genetic treasure among our people to fashion a road to the stars."

"When I get tired and weary in this battle, and I find my character smeared, or my personal life attacked," the martyr for the White race claims, "the face of that dark little girl is there to haunt me, to drive me onward, to tell me in the most graphic human terms what failure in this struggle means for my people."

"I realized in the hot Indian sun that I would never abandon this cause. The flame that burned in me that hot August day in 1971 is white hot and unquenchable."

David Duke received 40 percent of the vote for Governor of Louisiana and is a Republican candidate for president of the United States.

3. For a discussion on caste, see Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); and Ghanshyam Shah, "Social Backwardness and Politics of Reservations," in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, Nos. 11 and 12, 1991, pp. 601-10.



"GATT is Coming: What You Don't Know Will Hurt You" GATTzilla was posterized around the world by anti-GATT activists.

In GATT They Trust

Terry Allen

When Christopher Columbus left Spain, he was essentially on a trading mission seeking a cheaper and faster route to Asia and a way to boost the profits of the wealthy businesses and families who had financed this expedition. After mistakenly bumping

into North America, he quickly realized the best way to reap the wealth. North and South America had a

wide range of natural resources, most of which were easily extracted, cultivated, bartered for, or simply stolen. Any practical strategy of profit maximization required a long-term presence, and that meant colonizing the "New World."

In Columbus' fresh wake, glittering with the lure of gold, followed ambitious European merchants and manufacturers who also recognized the links that bound trade, colonization, and profit. In their wake, slicked with Indian blood, came the colonists.

A few centuries later, in the colonies that were to become the United States, the need to control domestic and international trade remained of paramount concern. From the beginning, many of the most important and controversial political debates centered around such trade-related questions as tariffs, duties, and the regulation of interstate commerce. What was the Boston Tea Party if not a fight over trade regulations and tariffs?

In the original Constitution, Congress was given ultimate authority over the two most important elements of trade policy: the regulation of commerce between the states and between the U.S. and other countries.

For two centuries that power, along with the power to conduct war, have been increasingly removed from Congressional hands and transferred to Executive grip. Regulating terms of trade has proven a useful presidential tool for tinkering with the domestic economy. It also functions effectively to bulldoze the playing field on which the

U.S. meets not only its military and economic rivals, but also its client states—those Third World countries previously bound to Europe by formal colonial ties and now equally chained to the U.S. by debt and dependence.

The Final Stage of the Uruguay Round

George Bush understands, as have most of his predecessors, the utility of trade policies both to subdue domestic opposition and to undermine foreign resistance to the presidential will. While the Gulf War established U.S. military dominance in Bush's New World Order, the economic front is problematic. Domestic recession coupled with the increasing clout of the European and Asian economic blocs, have challenged the ability of the U.S. to maintain the advantage it institutionalized after World War II.

Enter GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. This complex and seemingly obscure set of trade negotiations has been seized by the Bush administration to put real economic teeth into its New World Order. The current and 7th round, begun in Punta del Este, Uruguay in 1986, and therefore known as the Uruguay Round, is struggling to reach a conclusion. The final draft proposal, presented to negotiating governments by GATT Director General Arthur Dunkel on December 20, 1991, was over 500 tediously technical pages long. Buried in the ponderous language are a number of extremely far-reaching policy changes that would, if approved by Congress, dramatically distort the shape of democracy as we know it in the United States today. If President Bush gets his way in these GATT talks, it will also profoundly affect—in ways that could rival the impact of Columbus' arrival—the lives of indigenous and other Third World peoples.

The Dunkel Draft: U.S. Impact

First, under the Dunkel draft proposal, federal law would preempt any state and local laws that had even minor bearing on trade. The impact could extend to such diverse areas as environmental policy, food safety regulations, worker rights, and social policy. It would also include many laws that control or regulate the flow of capital, such as anti-hostile takeover laws and regulations controlling foreign ownership of farmland, airlines, or the media.

Second, it preempts even federal laws in many of these same areas by requiring that a wide range of environmental

This article would not have been possible without the generous assistance of Mark Ritchie of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. His research and analytical support were invaluable. Terry Allen is a co-editor of CAIB and a journalist who has worked in the U.S. and abroad.

and consumer protection regulations be subject to challenge within GATT. If U.S. regulations were more strict than the relatively weak global standards set by obscure and often corporate-dominated international agencies, these more lax standards would prevail. For example, GATT proposes that Codex Alimentarius, an obscure U.N. agency based in Rome, be the standard-setting agency for food safety. Years of infiltration by the chemical companies and food manufacturers have rendered Codex standards weak at best and meaningless at worst. For DDT, for example, Codex permits residues on imported foods up to 50 times greater than those allowed under U.S. law.

Third, the Dunkel draft limits the ability of Congress to impose laws designed to regulate the exploitation of natural resources. For example, laws that limit the export of raw logs from the ancient forests in Washington and Oregon, designed to protect both the spotted owl and jobs, may be challenged as illegal under the proposed plan.

Fourth, it greatly expands the powers of GATT by transforming it into a Multilateral Trade Organization (MTO). Under this new name, GATT rules would begin to apply to an expanded range of items, including services and financial institutions. Although there could be positive aspects to a democratic and environmentally sensitive international regulatory body, the currently proposed structure will merely help the Bush administration pursue its domestic deregulation agenda. A number of Third World citizens groups have labeled this MTO a strategy for "recolonization." It will be used, they charge, to render their national and local governments powerless in a number of important economic, ecological and social policy-making areas.

Fifth, this Dunkel proposal makes the decisions of GATT's dispute settlement panels binding, forcing the U.S. to accept whatever rulings might result from the secret hearings held within the GATT structure. Currently, when a dispute is brought to GATT it is treated like a legal complaint. A panel of three "judges"—chosen for "availability" not expertise—take written and oral testimony from both sides, and then together with the GATT legal counsel render a decision. All testimony is secret, as are the hearings. Instead of the current structure requiring consensus to *adopt* rulings, Dunkel wants to turn the system on its head and require a consensus to *reject* rulings.

Even under the present arrangement, the Bush administration wields enormous influence over the GATT staff and over panel members. The proposed changes in the system would give the White House much more power, especially over domestic policy. If Bush decides he doesn't like a specific U.S. law and if Congress will not change it to his liking, he can simply encourage another country to challenge the U.S. law through GATT. Since the GATT



GATT

Arthur Dunkel, author of current draft.

Buried in the Dunkel draft are a number of extremely far-reaching policy changes that would, if approved by Congress, dramatically distort the shape of democracy as we know it in the U.S. today.

panel hearings are all conducted in secret and are subject to U.S. (i.e., White House) influence, it is likely that the ruling will accomplish what the Congress did not. If GATT declares the offending law as "inconsistent" with our international obligations under GATT, Congress is then faced with an enormous amount of pressure to conform to the GATT panel's ruling, since failure to comply could bring on GATT-sanctioned trade retaliation.

In addition to its potential to erode democratic political process, the massive draft contains many specific proposals that would devastate various aspects of the U.S. economy ranging from family farmers to workers in the textile, steel, auto, coal and timber industries; from small town banks and main street businesses to major manufacturing sectors. A business research group, the WEFA Group, in a January 1992 study, estimated that 1.4 million U.S. jobs would be lost as a result of this accord.¹

Impact on the Third World

Although there has been a great deal of analysis of the potential negative impact of the Dunkel draft in the U.S., a serious examination of likely repercussions on the poor communities in the Third World has only begun.

They fear the draft would mean a surrender of national sovereignty and complete domination of sensitive sectors of their national economy by foreign transnationals.² In India, for example, political parties in the ruling coalition have threatened to bring down the government if it agrees

1. "The Impact of Eliminating the Multi-Fiber Arrangement on the U.S. Economy," The WEFA Group, Philadelphia, January 1992.

2. N. Vasuki Rao, "India Fails to Develop United Front on GATT Plan," *Journal of Commerce*, January 28, 1992, p. 4A.



Cindy Reiman/Impact Visuals

Mexican girl assembles car parts. In a process that will be exacerbated by GATT, U.S. manufacturers, attracted by low wages and few health or safety restrictions, have fled south.

to the sections of the Dunkel draft relating to services and so-called intellectual property, including items such as copyrights and patents.

A wide range of grassroots social movements is also mobilizing opposition to GATT, and recently held a meeting in Sewgram, Wardha (central India) where Mahatma Gandhi launched his 1942 movement against British colonial rule. Calling themselves the "Azadi Bachao Andolan" movement, they have brought together all of the major groups working to stop the GATT in order to "protect India's freedom and fight against re-colonialization." GATT, they charge, "will cripple and annihilate the poor and vulnerable of the Third World," while protecting the transnational corporations from being held accountable.³

Another important area of Third World concern is agriculture. Provisions in the Dunkel draft would further encourage the already damaging expansion of cash crop agriculture in the Third World for export to the U.S., Europe, and Japan. This shift would take land, water, and scarce inputs away from local farmers who are producing food for their families and communities. And by dumping large quantities of imports produced at near slave wages onto the U.S. markets, the policy would ruin the domestic markets for many U.S. family farmers.

Perhaps the biggest concern of the Third World is that the new GATT structure could lead to cross retaliation, whereby their exports of raw materials to the countries of

the North could be blocked if they did not open their banks, insurance or telecommunications sectors to outside investors. These giants from the North would soon be in a position to dominate local sectors and dictate policies which favored their transnational interests.

GATT and the 1992 Elections

President Bush is now under major political attack in two main areas: the disastrous domestic economy and the spending of too much time on foreign affairs. The President's strategists hope that if the Democrats in Congress can be convinced to sign onto GATT, Bush will portray this support as an endorsement of his overall economic approach. His "let's grow our way out of the domestic recession by expanding world trade" approach would then go a long way toward undercutting the ability of the eventual Democratic nominee to critique the domestic economic crisis and help assure a Republican victory.

Given these high stakes, it is not surprising then that Republican Party and big business media "spin doctors" have been working overtime to build support for GATT as part of an overall election strategy. Immediately after the release of the final GATT draft in December, editorials and columns began to appear trying to put the best face on the situation. In an editorial, the *New York Times*, grasping for something positive to say, called the draft a "wily ploy" and a "shrewd tactic" although it was forced to admit the proposed text "may have misstepped in places." The *Times* did mention the concerns of environmentalists who had, according to the editorial, called the plan "monstrous" because "it would interfere with a country's right to set health, safety, and environmental standards."⁴

Perhaps the most ideological spin came in a December 22, 1991, syndicated column from *Boston Globe* writer David Warsh titled, "GATT and Gulf War Offer Legacy of Hope." Warsh argued that Americans suffering under the economic crisis should "Look across the valley of recession to the highly promising peaks beyond." Quoting from the London *Financial Times* to bolster his arguments, Warsh claimed that it was GATT, "not spending on armaments, enabled the West to win the Cold War,...has underpinned the Western world's prosperity," and "determines the livelihood of billions." GATT, he argues is, "along with the U.N., the World Bank and the IMF, part of the sturdy fabric of a suitably loose but effective world government."

Columnist Warsh never mentions when or where the people of the United States decided to subject themselves to a new world government, but he obviously seems pleased.

3. *Third World Economics* (Penang, Malaysia) February 1-15, 1992, pp. 8-9.

4. "A Wily Ploy in Geneva," *New York Times*, editorial, December 28, 1991, p. A18.

Traditional Ploys

Bush's attempt to solve a domestic economic crisis through manipulating world trade is part of a long, well-tested tradition. Soon after the Civil War, large crop surpluses in the U.S. caused a terrible depression in domestic farm prices. First, grain merchants pressured Washington to export the excess to Europe, thereby both increasing foreign revenues and (by depleting domestic supply) increasing prices at home. In Europe, however, this massive influx of grain drove down prices and precipitated widespread crisis and panic. European governments soon closed their markets to protect their food security, effectively ending this outlet for surplus U.S. production.

Some U.S. policy makers then argued that the U.S. should deal with the surplus by following the European example and seize colonies which would become secure overseas markets. After intense national debate, a compromise was reached and the ideology that emerged was called the "open door policy." The U.S. would mostly forego direct colonization in favor of prying open European colonial markets. President Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State John Hay was the most articulate spokesperson for this "open door" approach, applying it first and most vigorously in China. The economic objectives — unlimited and unregulated access to their markets and raw materials for U.S.-based companies — have dominated U.S. relations with the Third World ever since.

These objectives have also been important factors in the internecine quarrels among the industrialized nations. The economic crisis and chaos created by unregulated trade competition fueled both world wars. In World War I, the struggle between European powers for colonial markets and sources of raw materials was crucial. Woodrow Wilson saw the economic component clearly:

Is there any man here, is there any woman, let me say is there any child here that does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry?... [T]he reason that so many nations went to war against Germany was that they thought that Germany would gain a commercial advantage over them.⁵

After World War I the economic hardships created by the imposition of reparations on Germany helped to fire the renewal of dangerous unregulated trade competition in Europe, while conflicts over raw materials, especially



GM Anuc Robotics Corp.

If GATT is implemented, an estimated 1.4 million U.S. jobs will be lost because of either runaway factories or the installation of high tech robotics as at this unstaffed Michigan General Motors assembly station.

oil, brought the U.S. and Japan into direct, and ultimately deadly conflict. On the same day as the Pearl Harbor attack, Japan simultaneously seized the oil resources of the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia, to relieve the strangling oil embargo that had been imposed by the U.S. the previous year.

Efforts to Prevent Wars of Commercial Rivalry

Immediately following the end of the Second World War, there were two important initiatives aimed at preventing yet another war stoked by industrial and commercial rivalries. A European Common Market, it was hoped, would lead ultimately to political unification within the continent that had been the scene of nearly endless warfare.

The second strategy was the proposed International Trade Organization (ITO), an ambitious and very positive effort to create a global institution to regulate trade. This international institution would have established clear and precise rules to regulate the role of global corporations and the ways governments could promote or restrict international trade, while at the same time institutionalizing the advantage of the victor nations.

The ITO was seen by its earliest proponents, including economist John Maynard Keynes, as a part of the Bretton Woods trilogy that included the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 1947 and 1948, some two dozen countries participated in negotiating sessions in Havana and Geneva aimed at both the founding of the ITO and at drafting an agreement based on an initial package of tariff reductions.

On April 28, 1949, when President Truman presented

⁵ President Woodrow Wilson, in a speech in St. Louis in September 1919. Cited in Clarence Sharp, *The Dream of Debs* (Minneapolis: West End Press, 1991).

On April 28, 1949, when President Truman presented the charter of the ITO to Congress, he ran into a brick wall. Congress viewed the agreement as a step toward world government and failed to give it the two-thirds approval constitutionally required for all treaties. The president then removed a loose brick in the constitutional wall and the agreement slid through: The tariff reduction deals assembled into GATT were labeled an "executive agreement" and were brought into force without the approval of Congress. This successful opening for circumventing the Constitution remains useful.

Like its companion structures under the Bretton Woods agreements, the IMF and the World Bank, the early GATT provided the economic underpinnings for U.S. post-World War II global dominance. GATT served to institutionalize the contradictions inherent in the ideology of free trade. First, since the powerful North could unilaterally determine the value of the South's raw materials and currencies, the playing field was from the beginning slanted so that the profits flowed North. Second, jacking the tilt even higher, those products like agricultural goods within the U.S. which required special protection were given special

***Under fast track,
the president has
the power to negotiate trade
treaties, renamed agreements,
in secret.***

status. The selective application of the ideology of "free trade" and the ability of the U.S. to make other nations swallow its rules continue to be a hallmark of U.S. trade policy.

Some analysts see multilateral trade agreements such as the ITO and GATT as a progressive force restricting the ability of transnational corporations to operate beyond the reach of individual nations. Others see their main role as limiting the ability of national governments to regulate corporate—especially transnational—activities through a process of global deregulation. A third group sees a concordance of interests between transnational corporations and the governments of powerful industrialized nations. They assert that the agreements institutionalize the power and advantage of these elites over Third World nations and provide a forum in which those differences which do exist among the elites can be worked out.

Fast Track, Fast Buck

The Bush administration, faced with a rapidly changing global and domestic economic picture, is looking to the current Uruguay Round to institutionalize U.S. financial advantages in the New World Order. Because he can use these agreements to help him circumvent Congress, he is pushing both the Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and the GATT process rather than other mechanisms for setting U.S. international trade policy.

The use of international treaties as executive tools started with Truman but it was not until Nixon that it began to show its full potential. Nixon made significant changes in the way trade policy was set. In place of a two-thirds vote by the Senate after full debate and amendment, he won from Congress the authority for the White House to negotiate foreign trade treaties on the basis of a "fast track" procedure.

Under fast track, the President has the power to negotiate trade treaties—renamed agreements—in secret. Once completed, the President submits implementing legislation to Congress. This implementing legislation, often thousands of pages long, amends every relevant U.S. law to be in compliance with the provisions of the secretly negotiated agreement. Congress is barred from making any changes whatsoever and the time for debate is strictly limited, supposedly to prevent filibusters. In the end, only a rubber stamp vote, either yes or no, is allowed.

The fast track procedure won by President Nixon has turned out to be one of the most important weapons used by the White House in its struggle with Congress over who will control policymaking.

The power of the agreements was further enhanced simply by broadening the definition of trade issues to include anything that "directly or indirectly affects international trade." The White House could then use secret trade negotiations to address a wide range of domestic economic, social, and ecological policies. Laws passed by Congress or even state legislatures which the administration did not like, such as environmental protection measures, could simply be declared "trade distorting" and made illegal as part of a trade agreement. And laws sought by the administration but rejected by Congress, such as the further deregulation of the insurance or banking industry, could be slipped into bilateral or multilateral trade negotiations.

The 1989 negotiation for a free trade agreement with Canada is a good example of the potential for abuse. The Reagan administration used it to secure changes in both Canadian and U.S. laws that helped to promote his deregulation agenda. This agreement resulted in a multitude of harmful social, economic, and environmental impacts on

both sides of the border. Canada, for example, was forced to weaken many of its environmental and food safety standards, such as pesticide regulations. Numerous provincial government programs designed to boost depressed local economies are banned by this accord. Routine unemployment benefits which acted as a safety net for seasonal workers such as fishermen or agricultural workers were targeted as unfair trade practices.

In the U.S., too, the agreement has caused havoc. By opening U.S. borders to large increases in wheat imports, the grain multinationals were able to force family farmers in the U.S. to accept very low, and in some cases ruinous prices.

The Canadian-U.S. Free Trade Agreement was presented to Congress in the form of a 2,000-page piece of implementing legislation. Because this legislation was under the fast-track procedure, Congress had only two options. It could either vote down the entire trade agreement, thereby rejecting potentially beneficial elements, or it could hold its nose and approve the entire package, bad along with good. Used to the stink of protecting its self-interest, Congress approved the agreement.

Making the Reagan Revolution Permanent

The U.S.-Canada agreement was only one aspect of a large Reagan administration strategy for using trade agreements to institutionalize and globalize their deregulation agenda. In 1985 and 1986, the Reagan administration decided to go all out to institutionalize free market and deregulation policies. It launched a strenuous effort to convince the nearly 100 members of the GATT to agree to a new round of negotiations to rewrite the entire set of world trading rules. In September 1986, it initiated the Uruguay Round.

"If all goes according to Republican plan," wrote Washington farm columnist Jonathan Harsch, "it won't make much difference to farm policy who wins in November — or which person the next president picks as his secretary of agriculture.....Good Republicans acknowledge that what they are doing now in the GATT talks should make it virtually impossible for even [pro-farmer populist] Jim Hightower to reverse the direction of U.S. farm policy."⁶

Talks are now in their final stages, with a great deal of continuing conflict between the U.S. and Europe over agriculture. President Bush has fast-track authority in place until June of 1993, which means he must submit implementing legislation before the end of March 1993.

6. Jonathan Harsch, "Washington Farm Scene," *Wisconsin State Farmer*, May 13, 1988, p. 6.

GATT 'Ya

The Reagan/Bush strategy seems to derive from and is strongly backed by the interests of a number of major corporations. They see the GATT negotiations and the fast track procedure as a way to overturn or head off environmental and consumer safety laws. Perhaps the strongest supporters make up the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) Coalition, a lobby consisting of a number of *Fortune 500* transnationals, led by American Express.

President Woodrow Wilson, the originator of the phrase and concept, "New World Order," once gave some advice to business leaders that they seem to have taken to heart in regard to GATT.

If the government is to tell big business men how to run their business, then don't you see that business men have got to get closer to the government even more than they are now? Don't you see that they must capture the government, in order not to be restrained too much by it?⁷

Sound advice for business, it also holds true for citizens concerned with the direction of our society. Policymaking

The selective application of the ideology of "free trade" and the ability of the U.S. to make other nations swallow its rules continue to be a hallmark of U.S. trade policy.

is becoming increasingly multilateral and global. We must, therefore, find new ways of organizing the democratic process to make it possible for people to influence those in power. Citizens throughout the world need to create local, regional, national, and international policies to regulate the dangerous activities of governments and global corporations that threaten our economic health, quality of life, and environmental well-being.

If the current Uruguay Round of GATT does indeed enable Bush and the global corporations to hijack GATT for their own narrow interests, then internationalism will suffer a serious setback. We may also very well lose the possibility of an economically and ecologically sustainable future. The stakes are that high. ●

7. Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom: A Call for the Emancipation of the Generous Energies of the People* (Englewood, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1961).

(continued from p.2) the utter hypocrisy of the Reagan-Bush administrations' policy toward Iraq. Secretary of State George Shultz publicly criticized Iraq in September 1988 for the use of mustard gas against the Kurds. After leaving office in January 1989, Shultz went back to his job at the Bechtel Corporation. As I pointed out, Bechtel in 1989-90 was hired by Iraq as project manager of the PC 2 Project, which built a plant designed to manufacture the chemical precursor for mustard gas.

Vulgar Marxism?

While Hartmann is correct that "population control will never be a substitute for social justice," and also, I would assert that economic policies that generate marginalization promote demographic growth, her basic message is that efforts to limit population growth are socially undesirable; that such growth is not a relevant variable either in affecting the economic well-being of the popular classes or in generating ecological damage: The problem is "the capitalist system." This, regrettably, is typical vulgar marxism. With regard to the first issue, (1) in the context of the capitalist system, more demographic growth promotes more competition for a limited number of jobs and thus undermines wage levels, (2) even in a non-capitalist system, such growth implies an increase in the number of people to be supported by the wages fund, and (3) the non-capitalist system is not on the horizon: look around. With regard to ecological destruction, the "principal cause" is the transformation process of matter from its low to its high entropy form from which all parties capitalists (or socialists as the case may be), workers and consumer are parties to. The issue is treated admirably by Andre Gorz:

When the first world...sounds the alarm and calls for population control the first reaction on the part of the Third World, not to mention the vulgar marxists of the First World, is irritation or rebellion. This oughtn't be surprising... For as long as the First World continues to subsidize and arm regimes that starve their own people and export their colonial products, its fears of population will be viewed with suspicion in the Third World. For all that, the fears are well founded.

Now, since the issue is out of the area of your own expertise, you may be partially excused for publishing the piece, but in the future do beware of dogmatists bearing manuscripts. In any case, the vast majority of your other articles I find socially important as well as interesting.

John W. Barchfield
Guanajuato, Mexico

Betsy Hartmann Replies

I would like to make several points regarding John Barchfield's letter. First, its arrogant tone is all too reminiscent of vulgar male leftism if not Marxism. It is always easier to ride a high horse than to engage seriously and constructively with people with whom one disagrees.

Secondly, at the risk of being accused of vulgar feminism, I think Mr. Barchfield would do well to inform himself about gender, particularly the impact of economic development strategies, whether capitalist or non-capitalist, on women. Then he might read the considerable literature on the history of population control and how it has distorted the design and delivery of health and family planning services. There are a number of Mexican feminists who have written on these issues.

Thirdly, he might also seek to speak with poor women who have been targeted by population programs. Feminist analysis of population control has not emerged from out of the blue, but rather out of the real life experiences of women in many different countries. It may be difficult for middle class men to understand what it is like to be sterilized without informed consent, to have an IUD inserted in unsterile conditions and to be refused treatment for the resulting infection, or to be given hormonal contraception without any information on or screening for contraindications, but it is time they tried. I would also like to note that women in many countries are creating exciting new models of family planning and reproductive health care, which are very different indeed from top-down, population control models.

Fourthly, although I believe that in certain circumstances population growth can be a problem, whether environmental or economic, I do not think that it is the root problem. Nor do I believe that to speak of such factors as inequalities in access to resources, the impact of the debt crisis and structural adjustment, corporate policy, etc., is vulgar Marxism. Surely, Mr. Barchfield has witnessed these forces in Mexico. Does he really believe overpopulation is the cause of that country's economic crisis and environmental degradation? Fortunately, critical country-specific research by Third World scholars is now commencing on the complexities of the population/environment linkage. This should better inform and deepen left analysis of the issue. The work of the Center for Science and Environment in New Delhi is one example.

Lastly, I would like to point out that even if one believes, as does Mr. Barchfield, that overpopulation is a major problem, the way to go about solving it is *not* population control. Birth rates come

down when people have food, education, health and jobs and when women have control over their productive and reproductive lives. There is truth to the old adage: Take care of the population and population growth rates will come down.

The Price of Resistance

My name is Paul E. Cook, and I am a conscientious objector at the Marine Corps brig. I've been here six months with seven more months to go. I've seen firsthand how important publications like yours are, and they are more needed in this world than ever!

My parole evaluation goes for the next couple of months and I'm humbly asking for letters supporting my parole (sent to my parole coordinator). I'm gathering addresses of fellow Gulf War vets who also have stories and photos from the War. We plan to get these out in the public eye, *where they belong!*

My own story includes coming to oppose *needless killing in U.S. wars*, when I got back from Panama with my unit of Marines in 1989. I was told that my beliefs were "too political" for C.O. [conscientious objector] status in 1990.

I got orders to Saudi, "during time of war" in February of 1991. I went to Saudi but refused to have a weapon or contribute except with my radio skills used for medevac purposes only! I was denied the use of chemical protective gear and desert camouflage (I was not given the desert but had green camouflage that stood out against the desert background). I was forced onto the Kuwait border and I was charged with "failure to do my utmost to engage the enemy."

I plan to take part in Anti-Recruiter Videos with the War Resisters League of NYC and plan to do all I can for peace support, (when I get out of the brig)!

Letters of support for my parole would be greatly appreciated!

To: Parole Coordinator, Marine Corps Base Brig, Camp LeJeune, NC 28542.

Paul Cook
Marine Corps Brig, Camp LeJeune

CovertAction welcomes letters. They should be typed, double-spaced, and no longer than 250 words. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Please include your name, address, and daytime telephone number.

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