



TREATY COUNCIL NEWS

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Distraction: Another U.S. Tactic

In the last few months there have been nine bills introduced in the Congress of the United States that directly affect Indians. One, introduced by a congressman named Cunningham, would terminate all Indian reservations and would abrogate all treaties made between Indian Nations and the United States. Others would seriously reduce water, fishing and hunting rights.

These bills have stirred controversy in many parts of Indian Country. There have been many different ideas expressed about how we should deal with this kind of an attack. What follows is the position of the International Indian Treaty Council, taken from decisions and documents from the three Treaty Conferences held since 1974.

At the founding conference of the International Indian Treaty Council in 1974 there was a lot of discussion on how we would deal with the constant problem of U.S. congressional acts and laws. We asked ourselves first: What new act would possibly be more destructive to us than the 1871 Appropriation Act which states that the U.S. would no longer consider us as nations of people? Every action of U.S. Indian policy is now based on that act and has brought us nothing but sorrow. Then we asked ourselves what law or act has done us any good at all. The answer was: None. They have all been destructive to us.

At that 1974 conference we said very clearly and in unity that it is absurd for a colonized people to look to their colonizer for justice. We said very strongly that we would look to ourselves to gain our freedom and then to international help and help from oppressed Americans in that struggle for freedom.

Many Indian people, especially elders, stood up and said we must no longer go to courts or to congress and beg for justice. It was obvious to us — and still is — that the U.S. government is out to destroy us and take our land. We declared we would not fall into the trap of dealing with congress or with congressional acts in any way. We declared that, as nations and peoples, we would deal with the U.S. only through its State Department.

The Treaty Council has consistently taken that position. Congressional acts, public laws, BIA policies and regulations are all tricks to keep us from dealing with our real issue: Freeing ourselves from colonization. We said and still say that it



THERE WILL ALWAYS BE GOVERNMENTS TRICKS TO
KEEP US FROM TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

does not matter to us what congress does because we know it will be against us. We know that our job is to get ourselves together and take control of our lands and of our lives.

We think the Cunningham Bill is a trick. The Bill is a trick to take our attention away. It is not even written well enough to be considered as a congressional bill. The Cunningham bill has no chance of passing just because it isn't written right to be a bill.

Some people say, "Well, maybe that's true, but Lloyd Meeds or somebody will come up with a bill that is written right and it will pass." The Treaty Council says, "So what?" The state of South Dakota just took over half the Rosebud reservation. Are the Rosebud people supposed to say, "We got to fight the Cunningham Bill because if it passes they'll take away the other half?" Or the Navajo reservation which is being destroyed by strip mining, pollution, and erosion: Are they supposed to fight some congressional bill because

otherwise they might be double destroyed? It's like putting your attention to swatting flies when a bulldozer is coming right at you. The bulldozer is the whole colonial policy of the U.S. government.

In 1976, the Treaty Council at Yankton declared that one of our major priorities is to gain control of our land and resources. We said that one of the ways we will achieve that is by "exposing the fraudulent and corrupt lawyers, tribal chairmen, and BIA and other government officials who serve as instruments in the theft and destruction of our natural resources" and by "exposing corporate and government collusion in the theft of our resources, especially the multi-national corporations."

Here we are today, on the brink of total destruction through what the corporations are doing to our lands. Those multi-national energy outfits, mining and timber companies are behind every congressional act against Indian people. They are the

(continued on page 4)

The People of Angola and the Sahara



Freedom fighters of the Western Sahara desert, fighting for the liberation of their people. They are also approaching the United Nations for international support.

The Human Rights Commission of the United Nations will meet for six weeks in Geneva, Switzerland beginning in February. Jimmie Durham of the U.N. Office will attend the meeting for the Treaty Council. If anyone has documentation about human rights violations that should be presented in Geneva, they should send it immediately to the Treaty Council in New York.

The Treaty Council is planning a women's conference to take place sometime this year for the purpose of starting a women's organization. All Indian women who are interested should contact our offices in New York or San Francisco.



A few weeks ago the Treaty Council met with two representatives from the liberation movement of the Western Sahara, the Polisario Front. The Saharans were colonized by Spain until recently. After they got free of Spain, other countries — Morocco, Mauritania, and France, began trying to take them over because of the natural resources in the Sahara. The Saharan People are committed to winning their freedom, no matter what the odds.

The representatives we met with expressed their solidarity with the Indian struggle and said an article about us would be in their newsletter. They presented us with the emblem of their movement — a drum with crossed rifle and guitar. The drum and guitar are traditional with the Saharan tribes.

The Polisario Front is beginning, like us, to approach the United Nations.

We invited them to come visit the reservations, where they would be treated like brothers and sisters.

Angola is a new nation in the United Nations. It was colonized by Portugal for 500 years.

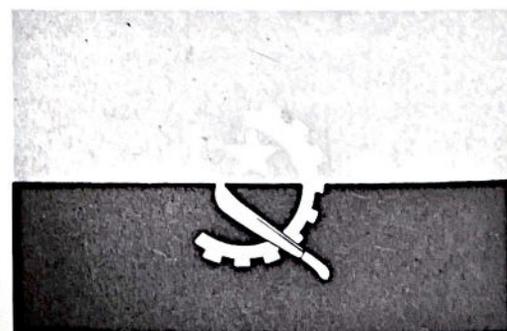
They won their independence only after many years of war against the Portuguese invaders. Now a free people, they must begin the long hard struggle to develop their country. All the while the CIA is trying to break them up because the U.S. wants control of their resources. The Angolan people say, "A luta continua, a vitoria e certa" meaning "The struggle continues, victory is certain." Their struggle is an example to us. □



Six million people live in Angola, a country about the size of Alaska. Angola is rich in oil, diamonds and minerals. It is the third largest coffee producer in the world, and grows large crops of cotton, sugar cane, and rubber.

Whoever controls Angola has access to this great mineral wealth. For centuries, European nations and, more recently, the United States, have fought for this control.

The International Indian Treaty Council was founded at the First International Indian Treaty Conference on the Standing Rock Reservation, co-sponsored by the Standing Rock Tribal Council and the American Indian Movement in June 1974. Four thousand delegates from 97 nations directed the Treaty Council to work for international recognition of the sovereignty of Indian Nations. The International Indian Treaty Council has consultative status in the United Nations with offices at 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017. Telephone: [212] 986-6000. The Treaty Council News is the official bulletin of the International Indian Treaty Council and is published monthly by the American Indian Treaty Council Information Center, 870 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94102. Telephone: [415] 434-4917. Staff for the Treaty Council News is Jimmie Durham, Fern Eastman, Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz and Paul Smith.



This is the flag of the African nation, The People's Republic of Angola. The cog-wheel represents the people of Angola who work in the factories, mines and oilfields. The machete, or caetana, is the tool of the farmers and the traditional weapon in the fight for independence. The star stands for all nations who are helping each other fight for independence and progress.

photo courtesy Polisario Front/Guardian

Graphic courtesy People's Press

Graphic courtesy People's Press

Development: The People's Vision...

by Jimmie Durham

You can hear people talking on every reservation today about development. What does it mean? It seems to mean different things according to who is doing the talking. Almost everybody will agree that we had a pretty good life a couple of hundred years ago and they will also agree that for this century we have suffered by being dependent on the U.S. Government. So people say development is the way to get out of that dependency and the poverty that it brings.

Up to that point everybody agrees, but then we have to start talking about realities.

Whenever a traditional Indian stands up in a tribal council meeting and starts talking about following our Indian ways someone else will say, "Well, we can't go back to four hundred years ago," as if the traditional Indian ways are impractical.

We think that Indian ways are the only practical ways for Indian people. What is practical about the way we have been forced to live in this century? Every year some part of the government comes up with new plans and programs for the reservations, but they are never practical. Experience shows us that they never work, no matter how well done the "studies" and the paperwork. It is the government and its bright ideas that got us into this dependency situation in the first place. The Government has also convinced some people that the only two alternatives are going backwards 400 years or following government ideas.

But the people have a vision of what our lives could be like.

It is a true vision of freedom, so, of course, it is practical.

On Pine Ridge people have been talking and planning about development for a couple of years. First, they took stock of what the reservation has in the way of resources. The first resource they have is a group of committed people who want to work together. Then they did enough research to get a fair idea of the natural resources on their reservation, and talked about which of those resources could be used for the people's needs without destroying or polluting the land.

They found that they had industrial gravel, iron, magnesium, natural gas, petroleum, coal (although strip-mining would not be allowed), possibly geothermal energy and hydroelectric energy.

But, of course, the people have no real control at this time, and no capital to begin using those resources. To let the corporations come in and take them at a rip off price and mess up the land in the process, would not be the answer. Under present conditions the people would never see the money anyway.

Besides, what is needed is some immediate development which the people could do right away.

Some things that are being planned and talked about concern community agricultural projects.

In and around the United Nations, scientists are now studying ecology-oriented, community-controlled development of "natural" agriculture. That is, using the plants and animals that fit into the ecology of the area.

On Pine Ridge that would mean developing a base economy on raising buffalo and pheasants. That would be just like cattle and chickens, only cheaper, healthier and more environmentally sound. This would be coupled with community-controlled gardens and farms, basically to raise table vegetables (some of which could be canned and possibly sold), corn, buckwheat and sunflowers. Wojapi used to be made with bone marrow, sunflower seeds and roots, and chokecherries. That dish provided much protein and all the necessary vitamins. The buffalo and pheasant could provide meat and eggs for use and sale.

Industry could be developed from that economic base. For example, some of the profits could go to starting a bone meal factory, a processing and rendering plant, a packing plant and a fertilizer plant. Then with more profits from those plants the people could start a cannery, a moccasin and shoe factory, a buffalo robe and coat factory, even a hairpipe bone factory. At the same time, community crafts cooper-

atives could be developed and other community projects like auto mechanic shops, tobacco shops, etc. All of which would serve the people while providing jobs and income.

Those plans could be carried out by the people themselves, using primarily the income from these projects to develop the next project.

Then in a few years there would be enough income and organized communities so that the people themselves, instead of the corporations, could develop and use some of the natural resources. The beginning of this plan today is a survival school and a community cattle project and the Treaty Council at Pine Ridge. But the first step, of course, is organizing the people to work together in the traditional way. If people get discouraged after a few months or "fall off the wagon" that weakens the whole vision.

No real development can happen on any reservation unless it is community controlled and involving all the people in the collective, cooperative way that worked so well for us for so many thousands of years.

That means political organizing, because naturally the powers that be will fight against that kind of real development.

We can get international financial and political help for that kind of development, but only when the people are committed to working together on it, no matter what.

With that kind of development, we can be truly free, and dependent on no one but ourselves and what the earth provides. □

...and the Government's Plans

The U.S. Government, and its agencies and puppets, has kept us in poverty and dependence for more than a hundred years. Each year we get poorer and lose more land, while the corporations get richer from our resources. Each year the government comes up with some new plans for economic development. The strings attached to those plans make them look more like spiderwebs.

We've heard a rumor that one tribal council has received a grant to start its own coal strip-mining outfit. If that is true, it means the companies get an even better deal than they have now. They would not have to invest in equipment, yet they could still buy the coal at a cheap price. (Who else would the tribe sell it to?) And the land would still be destroyed.

There is now a new plan for economic development on Pine Ridge. The primary idea is tourism. What kind of development is that? In the first place it makes people dependent on tourists. In the second place it has no reality. In the third place it degrades people. In the fourth place, it has been proven on every reservation that

tries it to be economically unfeasible — it doesn't work.

The Government wants to keep us down so their tricks will get more and more sophisticated. But there is a clear and simple test for any plan that anyone comes up with: Does it serve the needs of the people? Is it controlled by the people with no strings attached? Does it contribute to the freedom, dignity, and independence of the people?

If it does not do all of those things completely, we can be sure that any given plan or program will ultimately work against us.

Finally, we can make our own plans. The people know what they need and want without any advice from government or government-trained "experts," without help from hippie "farms" or rich people. We can get good advice and help from people in countries who have experienced problems like ours — countries in Africa, for example, and others who have liberated themselves and are on the side of liberation. □

ones who are the immediate danger. President Carter has a plan for an energy department which is a plan for the corporations to steal the last of our resources and destroy the last of our land with official government enforcement. The energy plan that Carter is pushing calls for an army under the energy department. That army would move on us whenever the corporations decided it was necessary.

A real part of that danger is that so many so-called Indian leaders, such as the leadership of the NCAI and the NTCA and others are misleading Indian people and playing right into the hands of the multi-national corporations.

We must keep in mind that it is the loss of land and resources that has decreased our sovereignty. Without a land base we die as peoples. We can reverse this by fighting for restoration of land and control over our land and resources. We are involved in a land struggle, not just an enforcement of treaties. We must take the offensive and not fight defensively. Rather than fighting congressional bills which seek to lock us into a defensive position, we must raise our demands and organize both

the American public and the international community to support these demands.

There are a number of demands we could raise: First we should demand to be paid for past losses in **Land** instead of money.

Land must be added to existing reservations.

Land must be provided to those Indian peoples who have no land base.

A land base must be created for Indian peoples who are becoming extinct.

All decisions concerning the exploitation and use of all natural resources, including water, must be made by Indian people concerned, through their true representatives. The U.S. must deal with the legitimate representatives of the people.

All matters concerning Indians on their land base must be made by their own people. The U.S. has no criminal or civil jurisdiction on Indian land. The U.S. and state governments may not tax nor interfere in any way with the internal matters of Indian people. Indian people arrested off Indian land may be extradited to their own people for trial.

And, the U.S. government must be

required to provide reparations: financial aid, technical assistance, medical and educational facilities, obligations it has made through treaties, agreements and congressional acts, without strings or guidelines, to be administered by Indian people themselves, according to their own traditions and lifestyles.

These are the kinds of demands we must raise in response to the Cunningham Bill or any other attack.

The hard work of organizing ourselves to control our own land is much more important even though it is more difficult than organizing short-term sentiment around threatening congressional acts which just serve to divert our energy and purpose.

The emergency issues before us today are death, poverty, and disease, sterilization, child-snatching, Church and BIA brainwashing in schools, murder and repression by police and FBI. Yet, Indian people are being pressured to drop everything to try to get congress to not pass a bill that was really passed in 1871. The U.S. would like nothing better than for us to fall into this trap.

More important, here we are on the brink of really getting ourselves together as a liberation movement, and of getting some solid international support and mass support in this country. Yet, some people want us to drop all that work which will really get us somewhere and go back to twenty years ago and a dead-end fight with congress.

We have a chance now, for the first time this century, to really get together and make real progress. Why should we go back to congress to say, "Don't do this new act to us,"? Let's work on what we have to do. □

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THE GENEVA CONFERENCE: Official report by the "International Indian Treaty Council on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas, September 20-23" held at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. Includes speeches by Indian delegates, U.N. and international organizations, observers and delegates, Commission reports, and the Final Resolution of the Conference. Special edition, 35 pages with photos on heavy beige paper, \$1.50.

THE GREAT SIOUX NATION: Sitting in Judgement On America by Dr. Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz. An oral history of the Sioux Nation and its struggle for sovereignty, based on and including testimony heard at the "Sioux Treaty Hearing" held in December, 1974 in Federal District Court, Lincoln, Nebraska. 224 pages; 22 photos. \$5.95 paper; \$10 cloth. (For more than two copies please order from Random House, Westminster, N.J. 021157.)

DECLARATION OF CONTINUING INDEPENDENCE poster: The founding document of the International Indian Treaty Council. 11" x 17" poster in yellow, red, and blue, \$1.00.

TREATY COUNCIL NEWS back issues:
 May: Carter's Energy Plan, Pelitier convicted, Sovereignty and Resistance, statement from African freedom fighter.

June: Vigilantes, Rosebud vs. Knlep, Dependence and Independence. July/August: Complete report of the Third Treaty Council held at Wapala in June. September: The Treaty Council: Three years at the U.N., solidarity statements from Africa and Vietnam. November: International Solidarity, Indians tour of U.S.S.R., Netherlands, East Europe. December: Geneva resolutions presented to U.N., AIM conference. \$1.00 for each issue.

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Marie Sanchez, from the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Montana, in the CuChi Tunnels, former liberation army headquarters outside Ho Chi Minh City [previously Saigon].

She returned from her trip to Vietnam in late December and in next month's issue she will report on her impressions of the Vietnamese people and the nation they are rebuilding.