



# TREATY COUNCIL NEWS

777 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017  
870 MARKET STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94102

VOL. I, NO. 2 MAY, 1977

## Third Treaty Conference in June

by Jimmie Durham

The Third International Indian Treaty Conference will be held on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in South Dakota at Waktala June 15 through the 19. It is being sponsored by the Treaty Council and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council.

This is a very important gathering because we will work out what we are going to present at the United Nations in Geneva and decide who will be in the delegation. If possible, people should have meetings on their reservations before coming to Standing Rock to talk about what everybody wants to present at the conference and at the UN. In that way we can speak more with one voice. We are asking people to bring information about what is going on at their reservation. Specific treaty violations, such as the effects of allotment, loss of jurisdiction, loss of water and other resources, loss of land, harassment by the cops, BIA bungling and the general situation on your reservation is what we need.

The conference will cover the activities of the Treaty Council in the U.S. and internationally over the past year, and we will talk about better ways to organize ourselves. There will be international guests such as representatives from liberation movements in Africa and other places. We hope there will be Indian leaders from South and Central America attending, but U.S. immigration sometimes makes that difficult. There will be delegates from international organizations, traditional leaders, delegates from tribal councils and maybe a United Nations observer. □

**Treaty Conference Coordinators are:**  
Alan White Lightning, Ted Means,  
and Bill Means.

**For information, contact:**  
Standing Rock Tribal Offices  
Fort Yates, North Dakota 58538  
Telephone: [701] 854-7231.

**Camping facilities and some food provided.**



*Tapson Mawere, a freedom fighter from the African nation of Zimbabwe [Rhodesia], stands in solidarity with Indians at last summer's Treaty Conference at Yankton, S.D. Portions of his address are on the back page.*

## Carter Energy Plan Threatens Indian Lands

by Paul Smith

In the early part of this century, in the teens and twenties, there was a war between Indian people in Oklahoma and oil companies. Many Indians were murdered so that their land and the petroleum beneath it could be stolen. The oil companies responsible for this are now the richest companies in the United States. Very few Osage, Choctaw, Cherokee or other Indians from the area even got royalties from the oil that is legally theirs. Today, these same companies are saying that they have almost run out of oil, and intend to take over Indian lands in the west that are rich in coal and oil. President Carter is working with the oil companies, and together they are making plans to steal those resources, plans that would leave the land destroyed forever.

When the American Indian Movement spoke out for treaty rights and against the theft of Indian lands and resources instead of civil rights, intense repression came down on AIM people all over the country. Deals were made between mining and power companies and the U.S. Government and its puppet Indians. It is clear from the Red Paper, the Black

Mesa, Northern Cheyenne and many other struggles, that Indian people saw the need to fight those companies, while recognizing the need to develop and use our own resources for our people in ways that don't destroy the earth. And it's also clear that only when the people control the land through sovereignty and treaty rights can that happen.

Billions of dollars worth of gold have been taken from the mines of the Black Hills. According to the Fort Laramie Treaty signed between the Great Sioux Nation and the United States, that mining was supposed to take place only with the permission of the Sioux government, and then one half of everything would go to the Sioux people. If that agreement had been honored, the Sioux people today would be in a very strong position, and would have control of their sacred Black Hills.

The U.S. needs Indian lands now more desperately than it ever has before. Its need to exploit the coal and uranium deposits in the south and southwest could provoke the same kind of genocidal war that the oil companies brought down on Indians in Oklahoma 60 years ago — a war that had the President's blessing.

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# USA Convicts Patriot

*What the government did to Peltier is the way that an oppressor must work, because Leonard represents the sovereignty that the Indian people speak of, sovereignty in the sense that we don't have to be oppressed anymore, by any man or government, sovereignty in the sense that we understand that we are a natural part of the creation and that no man or government have a right to change that natural order. Sovereignty in the sense that we understand that all struggles of liberation will not be successful until the people control the land.*

— John Trudell/for the Leonard Peltier Defense Group  
by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz

An all white jury in Fargo, North Dakota found American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier guilty of two counts of first degree murder April 18.

Leonard was convicted on charges of murdering two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Reservation in June 1975.

One of the government's key witnesses, Myrtle Poor Bear, told the court, with the jury absent, that she had been terrorized by FBI agents into signing false statements implicating Peltier. She said she had never met Peltier and was nowhere near the scene of the FBI assault.

The judge, however, ruled that Mrs. Poor Bear's statements were "not believable" and "irrelevant," and would not allow the jury to hear them.

The trial of the Chippewa/Sioux, 33, and father of two, grew out of a shootout at Jumping Bull Compound which is a part of the traditional strong hold of Pine Ridge Reservation. Three people were killed — the two FBI agents and an Indian man, Joe Stuntz. No one was charged with murdering Stuntz.

## FBI ASSAULT

Nearly 300 Bureau of Indian Affairs police, FBI and State police were involved in the assault on Jumping Bull

Compound. Four Indian men were charged with murdering the two FBI agents — Bob Robideau and Dino Butler were acquitted of the charges, and the charges were dropped against Jimmy Eagle.

## ACTIVISTS UNDER ATTACK

Leonard Peltier is one of many Indian activists under attack by United States authorities. Anna Mae Aquash was shot in the back of the head on the Pine Ridge Reservation last year. Joe Stuntz was murdered outright, also. The trials of local activists, Sid Welsh and Paul Skyhorse and Richard Mohawk in California, attest to the deep involvement of the Federal government through its FBI.

## THEFT OF INDIAN LAND AND RESOURCES

What is bringing on this renewed assault? Coal, oil, natural gas and uranium are on Indian reservations in sizable quantities. Companies like Amax Peabody Coal, Utah Mining, and Exxon intend to steal Indian lands and resources. **They know that the Indian movement for sovereignty — the control of Indian land by Indian people — is standing in the way of their plans.**

## COLONIALISM AND JURISDICTION

Nearly a century ago (**Major Crimes Act**, 1887, Act of U.S. Congress), the United States arrogantly assumed criminal jurisdiction on Indian reservations bolstering its system of control, colonialism. At the same time, the United States imposed similar authority on the Native peoples of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, the Hawaiian Islands, Samoa, and Alaska, and began to spread its colonial tentacles through corporate investment all over the world.

Indian people are once again standing up and refusing to accept United States arrogation of authority, and are proclaiming sovereignty. □

## LEONARD PELTIER'S STATEMENT ON JURISDICTION

**Jurisdiction and the racism** of the Federal Crimes Act are issues of the foremost concern at this time. This federal attempt at political persecution is cloaked and hidden by the law and order rhetoric of the federal government propaganda machine.

**I raise the issues of jurisdiction. I am entitled to a trial by my peers in the community I am accused in.** According to your constitution and according to the Treaty of 1868 I cannot be legally denied these rights. We Indian people are the only ones in America who, if accused of crimes against whites in our home communities are forced into a venue change and thus tried on the issues of race rather than crime. **The Federal Crimes Act for reservations is nothing more than racism.** Racism that is exploited by the FBI and the court system. Racism that is used to turn white against Indian.

... we intend to stand one day in the sunlight of full nationhood and abolish the shadows of colonialism that are moving among the various tribes in this land; because we are a politically oriented and spiritually sound people we shall be victorious in our drive; we shall share that victory with all struggling people.

— Darryl Wilson,  
Pitt River Nation,  
which refused to make  
treaties or agreements  
with the U.S.

(Conference on International Law, Feb. 21, 1975. Treaty Council Archives.)

*The International Indian Treaty Council was founded at the First International Treaty Conference on the Standing Rock Sioux 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 City, N.Y. 10017. Telephone: [212] 986-6000.*

*The Treaty Council News is the official bulletin of the International Indian Treaty Council and is published by the American Indian Treaty Council Information Center, 870 Market St., Suite 449, San Francisco, California 94102. Telephone: [415] 434-4917. Staff is Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, Jimmie Durham, Simon J. Ortiz and Paul Smith.*

When natural resources have been discovered on Indian land the United States has proceeded to completely exploit them. In the case of the Black Hills of South Dakota the United States stole the lands and extracted the gold. Presently on the Cheyenne Indian and Crow Indian reservations in Montana, the collusion of the BIA and major oil producers such as Peabody Coal, Amax, Standard Oil, Shell Oil, Gulf Oil, etc, resulted in contracts in which the Indians would receive only one-third of market price for their resources. Indians are not free to contract for themselves or to hire a lawyer without BIA (U.S.) approval so they are unable to achieve restitution. The use of government "front companies" with so called Indians as administrators of said companies, is another government policy used to exploit Indian natural resources.

We have therefore, resolved to initiate the following plan of action to maintain and develop our natural resources:

1. We declare that as nations of Indian people we have exclusive control of our natural resources. We will use these resources to provide food and livelihood for our people, for trade and economic development in non-capitalist, non-exploitative and non-ecologically destructive methods pursuant to our traditional values. The United States through its Federal Power Commission and contrary to tribal desires licenses tribal lands for flooding and other ecological destruction to support power projects.

2. Determine and document what resources we have, and where, by seeking all possible technical assistance.

3. We will defeat the present colonial situations by:

a) Exposing the fraudulent and corrupt lawyers, tribal chairmen and BIA officials who serve as instruments in the theft and destruction of our natural resources, including land, petroleum, coal, natural gas, copper, uranium, gold, timber, water, electrical power, fish and other food sources, air, and human resources such as the labor force and skilled and educated people.

b) Educate people, including our own children according to our traditional methods, values, and including people of other nations, as to what resources actually exist.

c) Bring international pressure to bear in our effort to maintain all of our resources.

d) Expose corporate and government collusion in the theft of our resources, especially by the large multinational corporations, by exchanging data and information with other Third World countries which have been exploited by those corporations and the United States Government.

— from the Red Paper, produced by the delegates of the  
Second International Indian Treaty Conference,  
Yankton, South Dakota, June, 1976

## Treaty Council at Panama Meeting

In January of this year two representatives of the Treaty Council went to Panama to attend a conference of Central American Indians. It was the first time Indians of Nicaragua, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama had ever come together in one place. The Treaty Council was invited to the meeting to inform people about the United Nations Conference in Geneva. Jimmie Durham and Paul Smith were the Treaty Council representatives.

Panama is a country that is presently trying to renegotiate a treaty it was forced to sign by the United States in 1903. The treaty gave the U.S. complete control of the Panama Canal for 99 years. However, even earlier the Spanish had colonized the Indians of the area in the same ways that they and other European

settlers colonized North American Indians.

At the conference, different governments, possibly working with the CIA, brought in their own puppet Indians. The National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Brotherhood were involved in the conference. Some governments have been able to co-opt Indian people, sometimes even traditional Indian people, by playing off one tribe against another.

We talked with many of the people who were not selling out, and they were discouraged at some of what went on. A statement that we read from the Treaty Council was warmly received, and people were interested in participating in the U.N. conference.

Even with all of the problems, it was a very important meeting, and it strengthened the ties between the Peoples of North and South America. □

## Lands Threatened ...

This president, Carter, has introduced a bill in the Senate, called Senate Bill 862, that would create a Department of Energy and give it the authority to have its own private army. Clearly, the only need for this army is to put down the Indian peoples' resistance to his plans. We should not be frightened by this, or feel like the situation is hopeless. But we should begin to prepare ourselves in unity to maintain control of our land and resources. The only other choice in the next twenty years will be our complete destruction.

On the Pine Ridge reservation there is coal, oil and many other valuable natural resources, which the people could be using as they see fit to better their lives. The control of those resources was the basic fight of Wounded Knee 1973. What the people have been doing since then is trying to reclaim the land that is rightfully theirs by treaty. People have been starting things like community cattle projects, community survival schools, reaffirming their traditional government, and many other things.

Like any other reservation, they face constant and serious setbacks, like repression by the U.S. through the FBI and other agencies, harassment by white ranchers and the BIA. This causes factional arguments, divisions and mistrust among the people, as well as imprisonment and so on. But the people are still determined and continue to move forward, building their Nation.

At the first International Indian Treaty Conference, traditional leaders pointed out that we cannot win by each reservation or nation fighting all these battles alone, but that we must figure out how to come together in strategic unity and still "protect our flank"; that is, still fight the battles on each reservation.

For example, we just lost the Rosebud v. Kniep case over jurisdiction of the Rosebud Reservation. That, in effect, terminates half of the Rosebud reservation. This is not the fight of just the Rosebud people, or of the Sioux people, or a few lawyers or some Indian organizations. This has to be seen as a concern for all Indian people and directly related to the question of natural resources on Indian lands.

There are no ready, easy solutions. The United States keeps us poor and dependent and they will continue to oppose every move we make, by whatever means necessary. Time is short. This summer Indian people need to come together and find unity, strength, ideas and strategies. □

# Sovereignty and Resistance

by Simon J. Ortiz

Sovereignty is not a new concept to Indian people. We have known about it more than we generally acknowledge. The older people talk about it. "This is the way we have always done things. This is our way, not the Americans," they say. "It is our responsibility to accept and carry on the ways of our grandfathers and grandmothers who worked and struggled for their lives," the younger ones say. The people mean the exercise of traditions, viewpoints, Indian self-government and other items which are uniquely our own. Because we have been aware of the idea of ourselves as Indian people, sovereignty, as a way of action not just an idea, has been a part of our lives more than we have realized. We know too that the idea and act of resistance has been with our People since we have heard the older people insist upon "our way, not the Americans." And, more and more, we are realizing their existence and practice in our ordinary and daily lives and the people are receiving courage from this knowledge.

The exercise of language, expressed most clearly and emphatically through the oral tradition of literature and history, is a form of sovereignty. The U.S. government and its accompanying institutions — Christian missionary, State and private educational systems — tried to suppress Indian languages. In fact, they tried to stamp them out totally.

Indian children enrolled in schools were punished for speaking their languages. They were ridiculed and often beaten physically for speaking "Indian." Their parents were asked to speak with their children in English. In order to fully accomplish the purpose of turning Indian children into English-speaking Americans, children were taken from their home communities and families starting in the 1800s and enrolled in boarding schools. The placement of large numbers of Indian students in such schools decreased in the 1950s, but numbers of Indian children and families are still caught in the predicament. Although these severely suppressive measures were taken by the U.S. government, Indian children continued to speak among themselves when they could. Even though they were admonished against doing so, parents and grandparents talked with their children in their languages upon their return to their homes and families. The people continued to know their children as their own, not the Americans'.

Although Indian languages were suppressed by the Americans, the people continued to perceive and express themselves as Indians. The people continued to think and feel as Indian people although many began to use English under duress. In much the same way that Indian religion was forbidden to practice, thereby going underground and disappearing for all public purposes, Indian languages were pushed into the background. English became the pri-

mary language because this was the language allowed in federal and Christian schools. Nevertheless, the core of Indian religion exists among the people, and we continue to perceive and express ourselves as Indian people.

Native religion has not vanished because its core value, which is based upon the meaning and assurance derived from the people's responsible relationship with the universe and its other beings, is necessary to Indian life. The human capacity for love, for survival, for meaningful struggle, for acquiring knowledge through experience, exists in our lives because the perception and expression of ourselves has not been stamped out. Like the religion which surges within the life of the people, the language of the people informs, inspires, and creates the meaningful context in which we are able to thrive.

The continued existence of Indian religion and language, embodied with knowledge and values and perception and expression which are necessary to Indian life, is an act of sovereignty. To practice their usefulness and continued existence in our ordinary and daily lives, but especially in the exercise of our native self-government, is sovereignty. And for the people to believe it and do it in the face of the destructive goals in the American government and corporations is resistance. Resistance is an act of sovereignty. □

**Sovereignty  
for the People.**

My name is Tapson Mawere. I am chief representative of the Zimbabwe African National Union and have been acting in that capacity since 1973. ZANU today is engaged in a liberation struggle. It has reached the proportions almost of conventional war. But in 1974, when we were going to be victorious in a few months, the U.S., Britain, France, West Germany along with South Africa, literally bought some African leaders. Our liberation struggle was headquartered in Lusaka, Zambia, and in March of last year, all our leadership were arrested and are still in jail. All our entire high command was arrested and are still in jail today. And everybody thought that was the end of the fighting in Zimbabwe.

But this is where organization comes in. Today the struggle is going on even more fiercely than before. It's because of the strength of organization. We have to be organized. Our leaders, from time to time, are going to be picked away from us, but organization does not depend on one person. It's not one person. All of you here are leaders. You should be prepared to be assigned a duty and do it. I started by saying every struggle is fought on many fronts. Conferences, as we are having here, we share ideas, publicity, whatever can be done in the forums of the United Nations, legislative approaches, legal approaches, all this has to be done. But: **the fundamental thing is the organization.** We are organized anyway, whether we like it or not, because we are lumped together in the same circumstances. We all have a thorn in our feet. It's we ourselves that have to bend down and pull it, or else the pain is going to be with us forever. We ourselves have to do it. It's not easy. It's never easy. Just like the brother pointed out, the forces are against us are full time. They have the resources which they have taken away from our land, and they use those resources to permanently cripple us, our ability to act for ourselves. But, there is only one thing they cannot take away from us: that is our minds. Once we have accepted it up here, once we have accepted that **we shall be free, it's a matter of time . . . ten years, twenty years, fifty years, we are going to be free.** Nothing can stop us. We start being free by feeling that way, that ability to be free and the means shall be found. Let's get organized. It's that simple. Belong to an organization. Be prepared to be assigned, and do what is required of your organization.

Maybe the scope is widening. I have met the brother and sister from Australia, right here. You can see the scope is widening. We are consolidating our forces. So brothers and sisters, the message that I leave with you is that we have ourselves. We must not allow that to be taken out of our minds, that ray of hope. **Freedom starts here, it starts from our thinking.** Everything else shall be given unto us. And once again, brothers and sisters, let's go.