



# TREATY COUNCIL NEWS

777 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA, NEW YORK, NY 10017  
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## Seventh Treaty Conference In June

The International Indian Treaty Council is sponsoring, and the White Earth Ojibwe Nation is hosting, the 7th International Indian Treaty Conference (which the White Earth Tribal Council unanimously endorsed), where we expect two thousand to four thousand participants. The Conference will be held June 4-11, 1981, at White Earth, Minnesota. We will meet to develop the Great International Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation for the Survival of the Indigenous Indian Peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

All Indian organizations, tribal governments and concerned people are invited to participate together in "A Spirit of Friendship and Cooperation—Indigenous Peoples Treaty Conference." Commissions will be set up to address concerns and document contemporary problems, for example Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples, International Treaties and Agreements, Indigenous Philosophy and The Land, Trans-National Corporations and The Land, Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Nuclear Disarmament, Hunting and Fishing Rights and International Indian Prisoners' Rights.

We ask that Indian individuals and organizations bring documents to be presented at these commissions. Delegates and documentation from the Treaty Conference will be chosen to participate at the



International N.G.O. Conference: Indigenous Peoples and Their Land in Geneva, Switzerland, September, 1981.

We will have pow-wows every night. Concerts will be staged throughout the Conference. The Conference will be held on a nine-mile area campground with camping facilities, horses, boats, canoes, archery range, lake, beach-front, and wooded areas. Singers and dancers are encouraged to attend. There will be housing available for only 500 elders and international guests. All others attending will be camping. The nearest airports are Fargo, North Dakota, 70 miles from the conference site, or Bemidji, Minnesota, 60

miles away. The Conference will be followed by a four-day Annual Ceremonial Celebration hosted by the White Earth Anishinabe Nation on June 12-15, 1981.

### Information Contacts

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777 U.N. Plaza  
New York, NY 10017 (212) 986-6000  
**White Earth Indian Nation**  
P.O. Box 481  
White Earth, MN 56591 (281) 983-3285  
**Federation of Survival Schools**  
1209 S.E. 4th  
Minneapolis, MN 55414 (612) 379-1550

## Big Mountain Diné Nation

The United States Government has for many years been attempting to forcibly remove 6,200 Diné (Navajo People) from their own nation. This is happening in an area which has come to be called the Joint Use Area (JUA) of the Navajo and Hopi tribes.

The Diné and Hopi Nations have peacefully co-existed for 400 years. The United States government's attempt to remove the Diné from their own Nation came about as a settlement to the so-called Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute. The dispute is between the colonial governments which are recognized by the United States. The Traditional governments have no quarrels with one another.

Most of the people in the JUA are traditional, and many of them are elders. To forcibly remove them would be a form of spiritual, mental, and physical genocide.

The alleged reason for this settlement is so the Hopi Tribal Council can obtain some extra grazing land for cattle so as to increase the illegal Hopi Tribal government's profits. The real reason that the United States is infringing on the sovereign rights of the Big Mountain Diné nation is that the JUA sits on top of 21 billion tons of coal, wanted by Peabody Coal Company and other energy corporations.

The Diné People of Big Mountain have refused to leave their land. On October 28, 1979, the Big Mountain Diné Nation issued a Declaration of Independence. Since that time a foreign force (the United States Government) has attempted to fence the area off into partitions, and to starve the people out by reducing livestock. Most recently, the government has attempted to reduce the livestock and to

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## IITC Information Office Reopens

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) is once again opening an information office in San Francisco with the primary purpose of publishing a newsletter. The information office will also distribute information regarding Indian struggles throughout the Western Hemisphere and build on our existing research and documentation center now functioning in the United Nations office in New York.

Bill Wahpepah (IITC Board member), Charlene St. John and Michael Lane (AIM for Freedom Survival Group, Oakland) will initially staff the office. They will be guided by an all-Indian advisory board of professional and traditional people including Jack Forbes, Aileen Goddard, Dennis Jennings, Aggie Williams, Norma Knight,

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# IITC: History & Update

The International Indian Treaty Council is a Non-Governmental Organization (Category II) in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council and is a member of the Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations for Human Rights.

The International Indian Treaty Council was formed in 1974 at the First International Indian Treaty Conference in Mobridge, South Dakota. This conference was attended by representatives of ninety-seven (97) Indian Nations in the Western Hemisphere. (One more Indian Nation was added in 1980.)

The result of this conference was a Declaration of Continuing Independence for Indigenous Peoples of the Western Hemisphere and a mandate to open an office in New York City, New York in order to most expeditiously relate to the International community, informing them about treaty rights of Indians of the Western Hemisphere and about human rights violations and denial of land rights of these indigenous peoples. The purpose was also to bring information and concerns of the international community back to the various Indian nations. The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty between the United States government and the Great Sioux (Lakota) Nation was selected by the delegates to spearhead their entrance into the international community because of its legal strength and clarity.

The office was opened in 1974 and Non-Governmental Organization status was granted to the organization February 10, 1977.

Since the opening of the International Indian Treaty Council office, there have been a variety of projects, services and United Nations activities which the organization has been active in.

The first major project of the Interna-

tional Indian Treaty Council was to begin publication of an international newsletter. This newsletter contained news of recent events relating to Indian people in the Western Hemisphere, news of the United Nations and on an international level. The newsletter was used as a vehicle to bring information on the work and issues within the United Nations back to Indian people in their respective nations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The second major project of the International Indian Treaty Council was to help sponsor and organize witnesses and testimony to be given at the International NGO Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas which took place in Geneva, Switzerland from the 20th to the 23rd of September, 1977.

The conference resulted in a final resolution by the officers of the conference making recommendations in the legal field, economic field, and the social and cultural fields. It also resulted in a Declaration of Principles for the defense of Indigenous Nations and Peoples of the Western Hemisphere. The recommendation was also made to declare and observe October 12 as International Day of Solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas.

Since 1977, a representative of the International Indian Treaty Council has attended on a yearly basis the Commission on Human Rights in order to address a number of items on the agenda. At the thirty-sixth session, the IITC contributed to the Working Group on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

Also, the International Indian Treaty Council sent representatives to attend the United Nations Water Conference in Argentina soon after obtaining NGO status

making valuable contributions to the conference.

Aside from the United Nations-sponsored conferences and activities, the International Indian Treaty Council has been involved in a number of other projects and activities.

It has sponsored conferences and seminars in New York and around the United States on international law, treaty issues and updates on the situations of indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere, as well as the various work and projects of the International Indian Treaty Council.

Since the 6th International Indian Treaty Conference at Ft. Belknap, Montana, June 27-July 2, 1980, we have been involved in many international activities.

The International Indian Treaty Council took a delegation of thirteen people representative of seven Indian Nations to Rotterdam, Holland from November 24-30, 1980. The IV Russell Tribunal came together in order to consider violations of the rights of the Indians of the Americas. Moreover, testimonies were received from other indigenous peoples of other continents who have continued to be victims of genocide and ethnocide.

During the 34th, 35th, and 36th, and now the 37th Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland we have continued to testify and present documentation on:

1. Land and Treaty Rights
2. Health Effects
3. Political Prisoners

Testimony on violations of Human Rights is also given on behalf of Indian People in South and Central America.

The Non-Aligned Movement has extended full observer status to the International Indian Treaty Council at the Non-Aligned Nations Tri-Annual meeting scheduled for 1982 in Baghdad, Iraq.

In early 1980 the Treaty Council became involved in another special project

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## Black Hills

The Black Hills of South Dakota are the Holy Lands of the Lakota (Sioux) Nation. They are the spiritual center of the Lakota People. Any desecration of this land is an attack on the spirituality of the Lakota People.

The Black Hills, for the last one hundred years, and other parts of the Lakota Nation have been illegally occupied by a foreign power (United States of America). This same foreign government had signed a treaty with the Lakota Nation one hundred years ago recognizing the Black Hills as being within the boundaries of the Lakota Nation. The boundaries were determined by the 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaty and encompass the land area of western South Dakota, including the Sacred Black

Hills, and parts of North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska.

At this time transnational energy corporations are making plans to rape the Black Hills with the assistance of the United States of America. These companies include Kerr-McGee, Union Carbide Corporation and the Tennessee Valley Authority. They are looking for "precious" minerals, among them gold, taconite, iron ore, coal, and uranium. These acts will desecrate the land and poison the water, clearly acts of genocide against a sovereign nation.

Recently, on April 4, 1981, Lakota people established a spiritual camp in the Black Hills to re-establish rightful jurisdiction. This is a non-violent occupation which is even justified under the laws of the United States Government. Under the United States legal system this action is justified by the American Indian Religious

Freedom Act (PL 95-341) and by United States legal code (16 USCS-479) which states that within a national forest a school is entitled to two acres and a religious organization is entitled to one acre.

On the same day, Indian people established a spiritual camp in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. This is in support of the action taken in South Dakota.

It is the right of the Lakota People under the law and otherwise to retain this land for religious and educational practices.

Letters of support should be sent to:  
International Indian Treaty Council  
777 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017  
Yellow Thunder Camp  
c/o Black Hills Alliance  
P.O. Box 2508  
Rapid City, SD 57701

# Grenada

The International Indian Treaty Council had the honor of participating in a conference dealing with Workers in the Caribbean in Free Grenada, January 9-11, 1981. Grenada is a small island off the northeast coast of South America. The people of Grenada liberated this island from the dictator, Eric Geary, on March 13, 1979 under the leadership of the New Jewel Movement. The New Jewel Movement was the movement which was fighting against the exploitation of the Geary regime which had totally exploited the people and the resources of Grenada.

Bill Wahpepah, Kickapoo, and Bill Means, Lakota, represented the Treaty Council in Grenada and found the first English-speaking island to be liberated from colonialism in the Caribbean was well on the way to building a Free and democratic nation. People of all ages are enthusiastically involved in rebuilding the institutions which had exploited them for so long. Education is a priority with the new Government and a literacy campaign is now reaching out to all ages of the society to teach basic skills in the communities and train teachers at the new Teachers College.

The conference opened with the introduction of the various delegations which included Puerto Rico, Antigua, Cuba, Martinique, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guy-

ana. General statements regarding the situation of workers in the region were made and a historical perspective was given on the development of colonialism in the Caribbean. Colonizers in the region are the United States, England, Holland and France. Many of the strategies and tactics used to exploit the original inhabitants (Indians and, later, African people brought to the islands during the slave trades) were the same tactics used on Indian people in this country; mainly physical extermination, confinement and the creation of a totally dependent economy.

Prime Minister Maurice Bishop addressed the conference on two occasions and made it very clear to everyone that Grenada is not influenced by outside governments and will continue to develop a nation based on the needs of the people with maximum participation by the people. Grenada has been accused of being dominated by Cuba, but the Prime Minister exposed the continuous efforts to destabilize the Government of Grenada by violence, economic manipulation, and propaganda by the same governments and institutions that were accusing Grenada of being Communist or dominated by Cuba. The Prime Minister indicated that the people of Grenada considered Cubans to be their brothers and he thanked the Cubans for their involvement in providing over one hundred doctors and medical workers as well as technicians helping to build a new International airport. This commitment indicates true

solidarity and has no strings attached, the Prime Minister noted.

Grenada is a small island, with a population of one hundred ten thousand people. The average temperature is 82 degrees.  
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and Dagmar Thorpe. This board will contribute articles as well as being actively involved in the overall functions within the office. We hope with this cross-section of Indian people and their concerns we can meet the needs of more Indian people in the region as well as internationally.

As most of our readers know, we previously had an information office at 870 Market Street in San Francisco, but due to staff changes and lack of funds the office closed in June of 1979. Since 1979 Bill Wahpepah and other Indian people have become actively involved in international relations and networking in the western U.S. and the Pacific region and have expanded the support for Indian people in the West. We have re-opened the information office because of this hard work and the need to expand our operations to fulfill our obligations to work and communicate with as many Indian people as possible.

The IITC information office will also publish other materials which are relevant to the survival of Indian Nations. The office will also build a stronger alliance with the indigenous people of the Pacific and strengthen our ties with the many support efforts dealing with Latin America. Many people do not realize that the peasants, campesinos, rebels, and other names used in the media are Indians being killed in El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia and other areas of Central and South America. This kind of information will be a very integral part of the newsletter and the office functions.

We hope that those people who had subscriptions to Treaty Council News and were suddenly cut off will re-establish contact with our office and we will try to work out the difficulties. IITC would also like to invite Indian people, organizations, nations, etc., to contribute articles at any time to the Treaty Council News.

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of a humanitarian nature. In Iran to attend a solidarity conference, staff members of the Treaty Council became involved in a mail exchange effort between the Americans being held in Iran and their families in the United States. This effort was with the approval of the Iranian government and the students holding the Americans. This effort continued for several months until international events forced its suspension.

## Geneva Conference: 1981

The International Indian Treaty Council and the Sub-Committee on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Apartheid and Decolonization of the Special NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) Committee on Human Rights will co-sponsor a seminar, "International NGO Conference on Indigenous Peoples and Their Land." The Conference will be held for three and one-half (3½) days during September 14 through 21st, 1981, in Geneva, Switzerland at the Palais de Nations. Delegates to the Conference will be chosen at the 7th International Indian Treaty Conference at White Earth, Minnesota, June 4-11, 1981. People interested in the conference should bring documentation to the Treaty Conference so we can begin to organize our documents and delegation.

The 1981 Conference will be an update to the previous International NGO Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas—1977, where approximately 400 delegates and observers attended, including 100 representatives of indigenous organizations. Representatives of the indigenous peoples gave oral and written evidence to the International community of the ways in which discrimination, geno-

cide and ethnocide operate in the context of the brutal colonization committed to open the way for plunder of land and resources by commercial interests seeking maximum profits. This Conference recommended that October 12 be an International Day of Solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and that documentation from the conference be presented to the United Nations Secretary General and to appropriate organs of the U.N.

The 1981 Conference Commissions will be as follows: 1) Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples, International Treaties and Agreements; 2) Indigenous Philosophy and The Land; 3) Trans-National Corporations and Their Effect on the Resources and Lands of Indigenous Peoples; 4) Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Nuclear Disarmament. The first day of the conference will be devoted to plenary sessions. The next two days will cover the Commissions, and the last one-half day will be open to finalize documentation. You are invited to participate with us in any way you feel would be the most beneficial to the conference, within the stated context. Fund-raising efforts will be ongoing and all organizations are urged to help raise delegation costs.

# The Sami Nation

The Sami People, also known as Laplanders, are indigenous people of Northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland. They have their own language and way of life. The Sami have been persecuted for hundreds of years. Their most recent persecution comes from Norway.

The Norwegian government plans to build a hydro-electric plant on the Alta River, one of the last remaining large rivers that does not have a dam. The Alta River runs through the heart of unspoiled Sami territory. The proposed power plant roads, power lines, flooding, etc., will seriously change the ecology of this area, an area vital to the survival of the Sami.

As a form of protest, five young Sami men took part in a 36-day hunger strike. The hunger strike came after several weeks of a non-violent sitdown action by the Sami People and Norwegian supporters.

Today, at the Alta River Project, construction has been halted temporarily as contract negotiations are being renewed with construction workers. At this time, the Sami People are speaking out to the people of the world in an appeal for termination of the Alta River Project.

The International Indian Treaty Council is very concerned about the present threat to the Sami Nation. We have in the past, and we now again take a definite stand in support of the Sami People. The proposed hydro-electric project is just another example of energy development coming before the natural rights of indigenous peoples throughout the world. We protest against the infringements upon the Sami People for the irreparable damage to their vulnerable ecological area and to their way of life.

The IITC has sent letters and telegrams to the Norwegian government stating our

concern over the present situation, and we urge other people to do likewise. People are also urged to send letters and telegrams of support to the Sami People.

Letters of support for the Sami People can be sent to:

**SAMI AIGI**  
9730 Karasjok  
Norway

**The Norwegian Government**  
**Prime Minister Gro Harlem**  
**Brundtlands**  
Dep. Oslo 1 Norway

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greens and the beaches are as beautiful as any around the world. The economy is based on agriculture, with the main crops being spices, sugar cane and bananas. Cooperative farms are beginning to replace the former large corporate farms. Unions are now legal in Grenada with 80% of the workers belonging to them.

Our visit to Grenada was very encouraging. We were able to see a tiny country with a big heart carrying out a giant revolution. The leadership of the country is young but well respected and totally qualified. We hope that more of our people will be able to visit Grenada to see that Indian people do not stand alone and that we can build a nation if we work hard toward a common goal.

The Government of Grenada has supported the Treaty Council in our work at the United Nations and they have made a commitment to expand this work in the future.

"Forward Ever, Backward Never" is the rallying cry of Grenada that still echoes in our minds when we think of the new allies for the Red Man of the Western Hemisphere.

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go ahead with removing the people.

The Traditional Hopi government and residents of Teesto, a community in the southern portion of the JUA, also oppose the so-called settlement. They see this as a threat to their Sacred Ways and to their natural rights.

The human rights of the Diné and Traditional Hopi are being violated. A foreign government is trying to completely control and dominate a sovereign nation. This attempted act of genocide must not be allowed to continue.

Letters, messages and calls of protest and support may be sent to:

Peter MacDonald  
Tribal Office  
Window Rock, AZ 86515 (602) 871-4941

Chairman Sekaquaptewa  
Hopi Tribal Office  
New Oraibi, AZ 86039 (602) 241-2305

James D. Watt  
Secretary of the Interior  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20515 (202) 343-7351

If you wish to help, please contact: Larry Anderson (602) 729-5104

**ENDANGERED DINÉ:**

**The Big Mountain Peoples**



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