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THE BRAZILIAN CAPABILITY  
FOR PROTECTING THE NATIVE POPULATION IN THE GUAPORÉ VALLEY  
FROM THE EFFECTS OF PROJECT POLONOROESTE

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A report to the World Bank of findings obtained during a mission to Brazil undertaken in the company of Dennis J. Mahar and Florent Agueh during the period Sept. 20 - Oct. 12, 1980.

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Introduction

Project Polonoroeste, a monumental "development" scheme which proposes to transform all of Rondônia and nine municípios of Mato Grosso at a single stroke, was originally designed as if this region were entirely free of native inhabitants. In fact, the area is the traditional homeland of more than 25 tribal groups, whose population probably still exceeds 8,000. In an effort to protect these residual ethnic minorities, the World Bank has made access to its resources contingent on their inclusion in the overall development project. The National Indian Foundation (Funai) is to be entrusted with adapting the concept of development to the special needs of these tribal peoples. The recent mission to Brazil, of which this report is an outcome, was aimed at evaluating the Funai's competence in this respect. Since it was not possible to investigate the entire area that will come under the influence of Project Polonoroeste, a spot check was made, focusing on the so-called Nambiquara Indians who live in the Guaporé Valley of Mato Grosso. The harmful effects of the proposed "development" project on these Indians has received much popular attention, so it is reasonable to suppose that the Funai would put forth its best efforts to assure their welfare.

I arrived in Brasília on Sept. 22 and stayed through Sept. 25, working with Funai personnel in order to fully understand the details of the plan to assist the Guaporé Valley Nambiquara as encompassed in the Projeto de Apoio às Comunidades Indígenas da Área de Influência da Rodovia Cuiabá-Porto Velho. I had received a copy of this document in Washington, on my way to Brazil. On Sept. 26, I flew to Cuiabá, and on the next day to the Sapé ranch, in the southern part of the Valley. The expected logistical support was not immediately available, and I was forced to make do with what transportation I could find in order to carry out the initial part of the survey. On the night of Sept. 29, a car and driver finally caught up with me, and this expedited my reconnaissance of the central and northern parts of the Valley. On Oct. 3, I flew back from Vilhena to Cuiabá, and on Oct. 5, I returned to Brasília for further discussions with the Funai.

This report consists of three parts. In the first, I present an assessment of what the natives of the Guaporé Valley need to assure their survival in the face of further rapid "development". In the second part, I discuss the assistance which the Funai proposes to render and compare it with real needs. Finally, in the third part, I discuss the Funai as an organization, evaluating its ability to prepare and execute a realistic program.

## Background

The traditional inhabitants of the Guaporé Valley belong to a dozen different territorially-defined bands. The extent of each band's territory is clear to its members and the members of adjacent bands. The typical territory includes both forest and savanna; villages are usually built at the edge of the savanna but near the gardens, which are in the forest. Before recent depopulation, there were several villages in each territory. Villages are moved from time to time so that the people can remain near their gardens, which are made in a new place each year so as to let the soil recuperate from the strains of agricultural use. The people of each band hunt within their own territory and exploit other resources located there for both food and implements. Many bands have a monopoly on some scarce resource which is traded with adjacent bands. The individual's identity as a member of a particular band depends on the territory in which he was born. Bands are not socially autonomous, however, and intermarriages are frequent. Mixed couples tend to live alternately in the territories of the two bands to which they belong. Thus a social fabric covers the geographical landscape, bounded where intermarriage between adjacent groups does not occur. A constellation of intermarrying bands is not perceived of as a political unit by the individuals who compose it, however. They do not feel that

Early Brazilian exploitation of the Guaporé Valley was extractivist, involving ipecac in the south and latex in the north. There were many bloody encounters, but the ipecac gatherers treated the land much as the Indians did, taking what it produced and leaving the ecology largely unchanged. In the early 1960s, however, the land passed under individual ownership, and a decade later deforestation began. Timber of commercial value was sold for lumber and other trees were felled and burned. Grass was planted and beef cattle were put out to pasture.

According to estimates received before this trip, 70% of the Guaporé Valley has now been deforested. While my survey of the region was far from systematic, I have the impression that this figure may be exaggerated. In fact, the pace of "development" seems to have slowed down. The many thousands of coolies who were brought in to clear the forest have moved on. In some places, land that was cleared has never been made into pasture and has grown up in brush. Ranchers told me that it will cost nearly as much to re-clear these areas as to clear virgin forest. My traveling companion from the Funai, Hildegart Rick, commented that the cattle we saw looked skinny compared to those in her home state of Minas Gerais. Highway BR-364, which was well maintained by the army corps of engineers (5<sup>o</sup> BEC) from my arrival in the region in 1967 through my last visit in 1977, has been allowed to deteriorate until it is nearly

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Impassable. I was told that it was graded only once during the past year. It has become a maze of detours, where trucks have made their way across the savanna rather than negotiate treacherous mud and sand traps. Meanwhile, the 9<sup>o</sup> BEC is constructing the so-called "variant", BR-174, between Pontes e Lacerda and Barracão Queimado. I was told that construction had only gotten as far north as Rio Pindaituba, however, and that there seemed to be very little equipment for such an undertaking.

Mortality among the native population has been high, owing to the introduction of Western diseases without the equally firm introduction of Western medicine. Some bands have become extinct; others, reduced to their last two or three members, are no longer viable. Table 1 lists the bands in the Guaporé Valley and their population as of about October 1, 1980. In addition, there would seem to be a band to the south of the upper course of the Rio Piolho that is still evading contact with Brazilians, and there is a group called Thoočokirhú to the west of the Rio Colorado which is just coming into contact with settlers. Thus, the total number of Indians in the Guaporé Valley is probably well over 300.

Table 1.

Nambiquara Bands in the Guaporé Valley

Katditaunlhu (Sararé)	35
Wasusu (Galera)	43
Waikatdesu/Alakatdesu	20
Aladndesu/Erahitdaunsu	31
Yotdunsu	20
Kwalinsadndesu	22
Nandesu/Aigngutdesu	14
Negarotê	31
Mamaindê	58
Total	<u>274</u>

A comprehensive program of assistance to the Indians in the Guaporé Valley was established in 1975 when, at the invitation of the Funai, I set up the "Nambiquara Project". Two Indian Agents whom I brought to the region, Sílbene de Almeida and Marcelo dos Santos, are still there. Sílbene is responsible for the Indians in the Guaporé to the south of the Rio Piolho; Marcelo is responsible for those to the north. Through discussions with these men and with the Indians themselves, I was able to make a rough determination of what will be needed to assure the Indians' survival when a paved road is built through their region.

Land

Brazilian society classifies all the natives of the Guaporé Valley as "Nambiquara", together with other people who live to the east, on the Chapada dos Parecis, and to the north, in Rondônia. The name "Nambiquara" is arbitrary, and the people to who it is given speak three different languages that are not mutually intelligible. In the mistaken belief that



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they all constitute a single political entity known as a "tribe", the Brazilian government created in 1968, a single, large "Nambiquara Reservation". It was composed of territories belonging to three of the nine bands that traditionally lived on the Chapada dos Parecis as well as land belonging to a completely unrelated and uncontacted group called Salumá. It was assumed that the Guaporé Valley could be cleared for Brazilian occupation by moving its traditional owners to this reservation. The Wasusu and Aladndesu bands were moved in 1973 and 1974, but they walked back home.

The failure of this attempt at removal was blamed on the inability of forest dwellers to adapt to an arid savanna. A new area, in the southern part of the Guaporé Valley, between the Rio Sararé and Rio Galera, was interdicted. This meant that the owners of property in the region were supposed to stop "developing" their lands while the Funai determined whether or not a reserve could be made there. The Funai hoped that all of the bands in the Guaporé Valley could be concentrated in this region, which contained the same sort of ecological conditions they were used to. The Waikatdesu band and the four bands collectively known as Hahaindesu were moved there at the beginning of 1975. The Hahaindesu returned home in less than four months, the Waikatdesu after four years. It is arguable that with better preparation and stronger support this attempt at resettlement might have succeeded, but the Funai concluded that it was simply not possible to move the Nambiquara



and it would be necessary to make a little, separate reservation for each village.

Table 2.

Traditional Territories and Reserves

	traditional territory (hectares)	reserve (hectares)
Katditaunlhu (Sararé)	135,000	0
Wasusu (Galera)	100,000	13,480
Waikatdesu/Alakatdesu	65,000	0
Alacidesu/Erahitdaunsu	100,000	10,400
Yotdunsu	65,000	0
Kwalinsadndesu	85,000	21,842
Nandesu/Aigngutdesu	150,000	
Negarotê	125,000	12,161
Mamaindê	170,000	0

In January, 1977, the interdiction was removed from the area between the Sararé and Galera, except for a small piece comprising about 17,000 hectares, where the legal impediment to "development" was retained in favor of the Katditaunlhu band, which is native to the area. It was stated that other areas would be demarcated for other bands, although no specific commitments were made, nor did the Funai undertake to demarcate a reserve for the Katditaunlhu themselves. At the beginning of 1980, engineer Reinaldo Florindo made an aerial reconnaissance in the Sararé together with Indian Agent Sílbene de Almeida. As an outcome, an area of 69,340 hectares has been delimited. This means that a precise description of limits has been written. It does not imply any commitment to demarcate.

As early as 1965, a district commissioner of the precursor of the Funai asked the state to make a reservation in the Sararé. Instead, the land on which most of the Katditaunlhu had their villages was sold to Oscar Martinez of Araçatuba. In 1968, the headquarters of a ranch named Sapé Sararé were implanted, about 7 km from the major village complex. The Funai committed itself to removing the Indians, which it has never been able to do. The ranch has cleared the forest right to the edge of the villages. The Katditaunlhu, who numbered 57 in 1968, and perhaps twice this figure a couple of years earlier, are now reduced to 35. If the Funai waits a little longer, it will not be necessary to demarcate. There won't be any Indians left.

In the central part of the Valley, small reserves have been demarcated for the Wasusu, Aladndesu and Hahaindesu. The Wasusu reserve was made at the southern extreme of the area which that band has traditionally used most intensively. Outside the reserve, to the north, are several village sites to which the Indians commonly return, and gardens still in production. In addition, there is a series of caverns stretching north along the escarpment, each of which is sacred to a particular band. After death, the spirits of a band's members go to live in its sacred cavern. This area, of great importance not only to the Wasusu, but also to other bands, was apparently not made a part of the Wasusu reserve because of the presence of the Fazenda Guanabara, which was opened during the unsuccessful removal of the Wasusu to the Nambiquara Reservation.

The ranch has only cleared about 120 hectares, however, and could be indemnified.

The Aladndesu reserve was reduced in size because of pressure brought against the Funai during the process of its demarcation. The area is low and unhealthy. The principal streams carry runoff from the nearby ranches that have made massive use of toxic defoliants. Cattle invade the Indians' gardens and destroy their crops. The best hunting area is outside the reserve, to the east, where maps show a "Fazenda Baguá". This ranch simply does not exist, however, and there is no reason why the area could not be added to the Aladndesu reserve.

The Hahaindesu reserve was also reduced in size during its demarcation. It was created, moreover, on the erroneous assumption that there existed a single band by this name. Luckily, it was positioned so as to take in a small part of the traditional territories of two bands, the Kwalinsadndesu and Nandesu. The Yotdunsu, which local Brazilians also class as Hahaindesu, feel that they are only visiting when on the Hahaindesu reserve, and continue to spend much time in their own traditional territory, on what is now part of the Zillo ranch.

No land was demarcated for the Waikatdesu/Alakatdesu because it was hoped that they would stay in the area to the

South of the Valley where they were moved at the beginning of 1975. They returned to their traditional homeland, however, after losing many members to malaria, and having four women taken by the Katditaunlhu. They currently occupy two small villages, one of which is in a place that has been deforested on all sides, as if the ranch that owns the land intended to make sure that no reserve would be created there.

In early 1980, some members of the Funai proposed that a single reserve be established in the central part of the Valley, incorporating the present Wasusu, Aladndesu and Hahaindesu reserves as well as an area for the Waikatdesu and Yotdunsu. This option became known as the "elephant" proposal, from a fancied resemblance between the configuration of the reserve and the silhouette of that animal. The back of the "elephant" extended along the escarpment of the Chapada dos Parecis, and its front and back legs were corridors that went down to the Rio Guaporé. In view of the difficulties the Funai had encountered in demarcating existing reserves, the "elephant" option was quite unrealistic. Still, it is clear that the Indians need a considerably larger area than they currently have.

First, an area should be set aside for the Waikatdesu and Yotdunsu. A single reserve for the two groups could be made to the west of the "variant" on the streams known as Piolhinho and Dois Irmãos. Ideally, this reserve should be

Second, provisions must be made that will give the Indians more room to hunt and fish. It may be expected that eventually the descendants of the people alive today will get their protein in other ways. At that time, even if there is some increase in population, a series of small reserves may be adequate. But that day cannot be hastened, despite the hopes of those who urge the rapid integration of the Indians into the Brazilian population. And until that day comes of its own accord, the natives of the Guaporé Valley will continue hunting and fishing. This requires the use of an area much larger than that contained in their little reservations. It would be ideal if their right to use such an area could be institutionalized by the granting of hunting and fishing privileges throughout the Valley. A law guaranteeing them fishing rights in the Guaporé would be an acceptable substitute for the "elephant's" legs. Moreover, since ranchers are supposed to leave at least 25% of their properties forested, the Indians' problems would be solved if they could enjoy hunting rights in these areas. This is no longer possible, however; the Funai would have had to retain hunting rights in behalf of the Indians when the properties were originally sold.

Quite apart from the needs of the Indians, a strip along the escarpment of the Chapada dos Parecis should remain forever forested. Most of the streams that water the Valley rise here.

Without the forest to hold the moisture from the rains, they would dry up. Thus, it is in the interest of the whole region to maintain a ribbon of forest along the escarpment. Since there is a general reluctance to see land made into Indian reserves, the creation of a forest preserve might be considered. A long narrow area extending north from the Wasusu reserve to the headwater of the Piolhinho would contain the caverns that are sacred to all the bands and provide an additional area for hunting. Unfortunately, however, Brazilian law does not let Indians make use of areas set aside as ecological preserves. Thus, I can only recommend that a long, narrow strip of land to the east of the "variant" be added directly to the Wasusu reserve.

In the north end of the Valley, only the Negarotê have land demarcated, and their reserve turned out much smaller than originally intended, owing to an error in the map on which it was plotted.

The Mamaindê were moved to the east of highway BR-364 in June of 1973 and encouraged to build villages in an area which was added to the Nambiquara Reservation later that year, in virtue of their presence. The place was outside their traditional territory, had poor soil and little game. Nevertheless, they stayed for several years, partly because a particularly helpful missionary built his house there. After he returned to England, however, the Mamaindê moved back to their

traditional homeland. Indian Agent Marcelo dos Santos has requested that an area of 63,400 hectares between the Rio Cabixi and the Rio Pardo be demarcated for them, contiguous to the Negarotê reserve.

The establishment of an adequate system of reserves is the first prerequisite of any program of assistance. Experience in the United States and in other parts of Brazil shows unequivocally that Indians with their own lands can be self-sufficient, while Indians who are made landless become a burden to both themselves and the national society.

### Health

Demographic data for the Guaporé Valley prior to 1975 are incomplete and untrustworthy. They do suggest, however, that groups just coming into contact suffered a rapid decrease in population. The size of the Sararé group, for example, dropped from 57 in 1968 to 38 at the end of 1975, and the Aladndesu band shrank from 46 in 1969 to 26 in 1975. Genealogical studies suggest that the overall population of the Valley in 1975 was probably less than a third of what it was in 1960.

The leading causes of death are respiratory ailments, measles, malaria and infant diarrhea. Under the Nambiquara Project, almost all the Indians have been vaccinated against measles and tuberculosis, although the campaign arrived late



in the Mamaindê, where five active cases of tuberculosis are now under treatment. In addition, the two Indian Agents, with occasional help from under-paid paramedics, have been able to treat some of the other diseases. As a result, the population has been rising at an average annual rate of 2.1% since 1975. The average birth rate has been 7.8 per hundred per year, and the average death rate has been 5.7 per hundred per year.

The Project personnel would have been even more successful if their medical efforts had not been spread so thin. This becomes apparent when the Sararé is compared with the rest of the Valley. In 1976, Indian Agent Sílbene de Almeida realized that the Sararé band was so far away from the other bands that he would not be able to attend to it properly. For this reason, he worked out an agreement with the Missão Cristã Brasileira, according to which the members of this institution would care for the Sararé while Sílbene cared for the central Valley. Unfortunately, the missionaries have frequently been absent from the region; during their absence at the beginning of 1979, eleven people died. Over the course of the five-year period, the death rate in the Sararé has been 8.5 per hundred per year, and in the part of the Valley attended directly by the Nambiquara Project, 5.1.

This is a distinct improvement over pre-1975 conditions. Still, the Indian Agents are barely holding the line, and

people who died over the last five years were under fifteen years of age. In fact, 30% of the babies born during this period did not survive their first year. With just a little more medical assistance, the population would rise dramatically.

An adequate health program would involve more paramedical personnel and facilities located in the vicinity of each village, so that sick Indians could receive help before it was too late. A small infirmary, including a room for a nurse or paramedic to live in, a consulting room, a pharmacy and space for three or four beds, is now nearing completion in the Aladndesu village. Material has been acquired to build a similar installation at the Wasusu village. Other infirmaries of this type should be built in the Sararé, and near the Waikatdesu, Hahaindesu, Negarotê and Mamaindê. Ideally, each infirmary should get its water from a well, and have a septic tank to handle sewage. The well could also supply safe water to villagers. This is particularly important for the Aladndesu, whose present source of water may be polluted. A paramedic (técnico de enfermagem) should be assigned to the Sararé, the Waikatdesu and the Negarotê; a registered nurse might be more appropriate for the Aladndesu, where health has been poorest. The two Indian Agents, based in the Hahaindesu and Mamaindê, would do their own paramedical work. The Wasusu, who enjoy relatively better health than other groups in the Valley, need no permanent paramedic; one could get there from another village in the event

an epidemic. There is now one microscope in the Valley, in the Hahaindesu. Every infirmery should be equipped with a microscope, stethoscope and blood-pressure kit, although this equipment might be shared by the Waikatdesu and Aladndesu, and by the Negarotê and Mamaindê. The ready availability of a microscope is especially important, as it permits differentiation between the two types of malaria P. falciparum and P. vivax, which require different kinds of treatment, and it makes possible appropriate treatment for different kinds of intestinal parasites. The paramedics and Indian Agents should take short courses (estágios) to learn to use the microscopes for these purposes.

### Education

The Nambiquara Project opened a school in the Campo part of the Nambiquara region (to the east of BR-364), in 1975. It taught literacy first in the Nambiquara languages, with the help of people from the Summer Institute of Linguistics/Wycliffe Bible Translators, and later in Portuguese, with a professional teacher from São Paulo. The program was highly successful, but the school had to close down after 1977, when the SIL/WBT was prohibited from engaging in further activity among the Indian population of Brazil. Experience gained in this effort could be put to good use in mounting a program for the Guaporé Valley, and some of the people already trained could be used as bilingual teachers' aides. The literacy program should be

supplemented by a specially designed course that would begin from the Nambiquara's present knowledge of mathematics (or rather the absence thereof), and teach them what they need to know in order to handle money and participate effectively in the national market economy. A school, consisting of a screened-in shed with a couple of tables and benches, should be built in each of the larger villages. Since the Nambiquara will not sit still for regular-length school years, two competent teachers could take care of the entire Valley. They would hold classes in each village for a period of two or three months, and then move on.

#### Economic Assistance

The Nambiquara have come to rely on the national society for axes, hoes, kettles and many other necessary goods, and in the future their needs will increase and diversify. In order to satisfy these needs, they must sell goods or services. For ten years, they sold artifacts as souvenirs to the tourist trade, but the value paid for their handiwork did not keep pace with inflation, and last year the Indian Agents who work in the Nambiquara Project decided that it would be necessary to develop alternative sources of income.

The development of new economic activities, like more formal education, depends upon learning. And learning depends on motivation. You cannot teach a person to read, to speak

foreign language or to raise cows unless he wants to learn.

If he does want to learn, it is only necessary to provide the opportunity. The school founded by the Nambiquara Project was successful because it attended to the Indians' explicit requests, first to learn to read, and then to learn Portuguese. A successful program of economic assistance must also begin with what people want to learn, which may be different in every village.

In the Sararé, an influential leader has been working at a nearby sawmill, and is building himself a new house of wood. It would seem wise to capitalize on this interest by setting up a little sawmill (there is a pint-sized model on the market), and training the Indians to run it. In the north, the Negarotê and Mamaindê are becoming involved in rubber-tapping, which promises to be quite lucrative. With 10,000 latex cups and 50 tapping knives they could expand their production considerably, and with a small truck (such as a Mercedes 608), they could get it to market without having to pay exorbitant transportation costs to third parties. The central part of the Valley seems more oriented toward agriculture. Indian Agent Sílbene feels that tree crops would work out well, in terms of both what the Indians would have to learn, and the probable market for the produce. Together, he and Marcelo would like to plant 1200 orange trees, 500 coconut palms, 100 avacado trees, 350 mango trees, 50 breadfruit trees and 50 jabuticabeiras. Raising animals for consumption is

ISA somewhat problematic among the Nambiquara, but experiments in this direction should continue in the hope of developing an alternative source of protein before the game animals in the Valley are entirely wiped out. Silbene would like to continue experimenting with raising pigs and chickens and to try a small herd of dairy cows in a couple of villages. As a first step in caring for domestic animals, the Nambiquara seem to take quite well to horses and mules. The few animals the Project has been able to acquire should be supplemented with 12 work horses and six mares and three studs for reproduction. Six horse-drawn carts are needed. As for personnel, one agricultural technician and one veterinary technician, assisted by four laborers, should be able to get all the projects under way. The two technicians should have a broad knowledge and be flexible - able to work with slash-and-burn agriculture, rice cultivation and tree crops in the one case, and cows, horses, pigs, chickens and dogs, in the other.

#### Administration

The area should remain under the general supervision of the two Indian Agents who are now there. Silbene has been there for five years, Marcelo for four, and they are intelligent, sincere, dedicated, understand the problems of the region and have the confidence of the Indians. The division of responsibilities follows a natural boundary, since Marcelo assists the people who speak the Northern Nambiquara language, while Silbene is responsible for the Southern Nambiquara, whose

language he speaks quite well. These two Indian Agents should be assisted by the personnel mentioned above, as well as one mechanic capable of caring for all kinds of vehicles and equipment. They should have broad powers of decision, including discretion in hiring such project personnel as are available locally (laborers, mechanic).

A post headquarters already exists on the Hahaindesu reserve, and another should be built on the Mamaindê reserve. Another vehicle should be bought for use in the Sararé. This and the vehicles of the two Indian Agents, should be Toyota pickups, and they should be traded in every two years. One tractor (preferably a large CBT with a plow and a blade for grading) would be adequate for the entire Guaporé Valley as well as the rest of the Nambiquara, to the north and east. Four chain-saws are needed.

The three Indian Agents who currently conduct the Nambiquara Project rent jointly a simple board house on a back street in the city of Vilhena, which has grown up in the northern part of the Nambiquara region. This provides a place for them to stay when they have a need to go to town, a place for Indians to stay when they go there to trade or for medical treatment, and a place to store crude rubber until it can be sold. A house of this type - perhaps a little bigger - should be bought or rented by the Funai. It would not need to be fancy, nor would there need to be any full-time caretaker. It would only need to serve as a store-room and a temporary shelter for



### The Funai Proposal

The Funai proposal for assisting the Guaporé Valley Nambiquara is implicit in the Projeto de apoio às comunidades indígenas da área de influência da rodovia Cuiabá/Porto Velho, a 122 page document that was put together under the coordination of Alencar d'Avila Magalhães and Nadir Maria Alverica. The coordinators are both economists who work in the Assessoria de Planejamento (ASPLAN), in the central offices of the Funai, in Brasília. Nadir has worked there for about five years; Alencar for two months. Neither has ever visited the Nambiquara region or had any experience working with Indians.

The document consists of a few preliminary considerations followed by many pages of tables showing buildings to be built, material and equipment to be bought, and personnel to be hired. The objectives of the project are given in three paragraphs on page 7, which do little more than restate the coercive Brazilian policy that Indians should be "integrated" into the national society. Page 8 says that the area comprehended by the program is "all of the Indian reserves existing in the region considered as coming under the influence of the Cuiabá/Porto Velho highway," which leaves out all the Indians who do not happen to live on reserves. On the next page it is stated that the scope of the project "is not restricted to the Indians

who are now known and live in villages,\* but also includes all those who may perchance appear within the area of the program."

A close reading leads one to suspect this means that Indians not yet in contact with Brazilian society would also be included in the project only if they happened to appear inside the reserves. This is not an improbable interpretation, considering the statement that "58 native villages are presently known in the area of the program, with an approximate total of 4,686 Indians." I asked Alencar and Maria the source of these statistics, and they replied that they were compiled from yearly questionnaires filled out by Indian Agents. This means that only Indians attended by official Indian Posts were counted. In fact it is clear throughout the document that the proposed aid is not oriented toward assisting the Indians as people, but toward augmenting the staff and facilities of Posts.

#### Land

On page 14 of the Funai proposal there is a table showing the various areas reserved for Indian use in the "area of influence" in the state of Mato Grosso. The first entry is labeled "Galera", a designation that is commonly used for the Wasusu, who live on the headwaters of the river of that name.

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\*The notion that "wild" Indians are nomadic until "settled" in villages is a stereotype that has been part of Brazilian prejudice for centuries.

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The number of villages and population given against this label show, however, that it is intended to refer to the Northern Nambiquara, more than 100 km away. The population of 209 includes all the Northern Nambiquara, both in the Guaporé Valley and elsewhere. The area given as demarcated (12,250) refers to an area demarcated for the Negarotê alone, and not for all the Northern Nambiquara.

In my initial discussions at the Funai on Sept. 23, Hildegart Rick, an anthropologist with the Department of Native Resources (DGPI), was designated to answer any questions I might have about land. She began by reading a two page background statement on the history of the struggle to secure adequate reservations for the Nambiquara. It was a "just-so" story that blatantly ignored the corruption and bad faith that has characterized the whole process. Whoever prepared the statement was apparently unaware that I have been intimately involved in the land struggle since 1968 and probably know better than anyone in the Funai what really happened at each step of the way. I asked for a xerox of the statement, but it was never forthcoming.

Next, Hildegart insisted on explaining the process whereby the Indians' rights to a particular piece of land come to be recognized. First, the land is interdicted on the basis of information from a sertanista. (A sertanista is someone who "pacifies" "wild" Indians.) Second, a Work Group is sent out from Brasília to study the situation. It is composed of an

anthropologist, an engineer, and the Indian Agent responsible for the area. By engineer, she said she meant a topographer or an agronomist - "someone who knows how to define boundaries on a map." The Indian community is also consulted. Third, the findings of the Work Group are analyzed back in Brasília, and if they meet with approval, an area is demarcated. I asked Hildegart to name an area in which this system has been employed, and she had to admit that the procedure had only been developed recently, and has yet to be followed in its entirety.

The Sararé is listed on page 14 of the Funai proposal, with an accurate count of 35 people, and an indication that 69,340 hectares have been "delimited". Elsewhere (p.25), the intention to demarcate this area is signified. Reinaldo Florindo, the engineer responsible for the proposal, told me frankly that the possibility of an area this size being demarcated is extremely remote.

For the central part of the Valley, the Funai proposal lists the Wasusu and Aladndesu reserves, but the Hahaindesu reserve inexplicably fails to appear, and the Waikatdesu are ignored. I asked Hildegart why the demarcated areas had not yet been registered with the Serviço de Patrimônio da União, as the law requires. She said it had not seemed worthwhile to register them, since they might still be changed. She said, "We know that these little reserves do not attend to the interests of the Indians," and suggested that if the "elephant"

proposal were not viable, then something similar would have

to be done. It is still not clear to me why registration of title to lands already demarcated should await possible future modifications.

Hildegart said that a Mamaindê reserve had been created by decree, but when I asked for the number and date of the decree, she discovered that she had been wrong - the Mamaindê area had only been "delimited". During a meeting on October 7, the president of the Funai said that demarcation of the Mamaindê reserve had already begun. The next day I was told that he was mistaken - he had confused the Mamaindê band with an Indian Post in Acre named Mamoadate. Even if the Mamaindê area is only "delimited", it should appear - as does the Sararé area - on page 14 of the Funai proposal. But it does not. I was told confidentially that the creation of an adequate reserve for the Mamaindê is very unlikely since one of the property owners who would be affected is the close relative of a prominent politician.

#### Health

The Funai proposes to build an infirmary for the Sararé, Wasusu, Aladndesu and Negarotê. Since land has been demarcated for all these groups except the Sararé - where the intention to demarcate has been expressed - it seems clear that the Funai will only build infirmaries on demarcated land. Thus, the medical needs of the Waikatdesu and Mamaindê are ignored.

Why the Hahaidesu are also ignored - with land demarcated and one of the largest populations in the Valley - is not clear.

The equipment to be supplied to these infirmaries (p. 82) does not include microscopes, stethoscopes or blood-pressure kits. The Funai proposal provides for an artesian well and septic tank on each Indian Post, as well as two more somewhere else in the Nambiquara area, although the framers of the proposal were unable to say exactly where. In addition, the construction of 50 privies is planned. Silbene assures me, however, that the hygiene of Nambiquara excretory habits is completely adequate to the situation in which they live, and that privies will go unused, as they have in other tribes where they have been foisted upon people who did not want them.

Dr. Aldo Olmos Molina, Chief of the Health Division, was assigned to answer my questions about health. He particularly emphasized the success of the vaccination campaign, although he was only able to give the percentages of people vaccinated among the Northern Nambiquara, and these figures were in round numbers (80%, 90%). He had no statistics for the people in the Guaporé Valley south of the Rio Píolho. He complained - as if it were my fault - that recently-contacted Nambiquara refuse injections. I did not know what to tell him. I have never had any problems in giving injections to the Nambiquara, no matter how recently they were contacted.

Dr. Molina's explanation of "Dietary Supplements" (p. 74)

particularly interesting. He said the long-range goal of the nutrition program is to bring about a change in what Indians eat, so that they will have a more balanced diet. Since I suspect that dietary deficiencies are more a matter of what the Indians have to eat than what they choose to eat, I asked in what respect the present Nambiquara diet was imbalanced. Dr. Molina said he did not know, but that the Funai would enter into agreements with universities that would conduct appropriate research. I asked what sort of supplements would be given if the major deficiency turned out to be protein, and he said powdered milk. Apparently, however, this dietary supplement would only be furnished to children under six years of age and women who are pregnant or lactating.

According to a scheme which Dr. Molina seemed to think especially clever, the National Institute of Food and Nutrition (INAN) would buy agricultural surpluses from the Indians and then give them back at a later time. When he said this, I thought at first I had misunderstood. "You mean," I said, "That if the Indians grow more corn than they need, INAN will buy it from them and give them something else, like beans."

No, Dr. Molina corrected me. INAN would give back the corn itself. "Indians don't know how to store things up," he explained.

I wish he could have been with me a few days later when



I visited a Wasusu house that was four meters high and filled to the top with corn.

### Education

According to the table on page 90 of the Funai proposal, five schools are to be built on "Indian Post Nambikwara". Alencar, who answered most of my questions about education, explained that three of these would be in the Guaporé Valley, located in the Sararé, the central Valley and the Mamaindê. The total number of students expected is 256, although it is not clear how these are divided among the five schools. There will be a Coordinator of Education at the Funai district headquarters in Cuiabá. Each Indian Post will have at least one teacher. Each school will have at least one Bilingual Monitor, and it may also have a Teacher and a Teacher's Aid. The function of the Teacher is to plan the course; the Teacher's Aid administers it; and the Bilingual Monitor "transposes" it into the native language. Nadir thought that the schools would be in session throughout the regular school year; Alencar thought that the schedule might conform to the needs and habits of the Indians.

Page 92 indicates that Nambiquara students will be the beneficiaries of a school lunch program, but only beginning in 1984. I asked why the delay. Nadir explained that Indians are unfamiliar with Brazilian food, and would probably throw it away if it were given to them now. The lunch program can

only begin, she said, after they have learned to eat Brazilian food at a time of day that is convenient to the functioning of the school.

The co-framers of the Funai proposal were unaware that a successful literacy program had been conducted among the Nambiquara from 1975 through 1977, at which time a curriculum was developed, logistical problems were solved, and food was supplied by the national school lunch program.

#### Economic Assistance

On page 23, the Funai proposal states the aim of agricultural promotion: "It is intended in this sector that instruction and orientation be given to all native communities in the area, to the effect that they should grow their own food."

I was surprised by the assumption that native communities that have been self-sufficient for thousands of years did not know how to grow their own food. I expressed my doubts to Nadir, and she said that while the Indians know how to grow things, the Funai would "help them produce enough to sustain the whole group." Alencar said that the community would be able to plant whatever crops it wished, and assistance would aim at increasing the yield. "The agricultural technician might, for instance, induce a community that has been planting only five hectares to plant eight hectares or to use draft animals." On page 105 it is stated that an agricultural technician would be designated

to each "local unit" (Indian Post), which would mean a total of one and one half for the Guaporé Valley and 20 for the entire "area of influence". However, the list of personnel to be hired (p. 49) provides for only two for the entire "area of influence", one of whom is to work out of Cuiabá, and the other, Porto Velho (p.50).

Each of the three Indian Posts into which the overall Nambiquara area is divided is to get a tractor and a big set of attachments (pp. 112, 115). I asked what, precisely, these tractors were for, and Alencar answered at length without mentioning a single crop or saying whether a tractor would be used to plant, cultivate or harvest it. He finally admitted that tractors had just been included in the budget so that they could be bought if they should eventually turn out to be necessary. Nadir said that when the Indians see the surrounding ranchers using tractors, they will want to use them, too.

To help the Indians acquire the economic goods they need from the national society, the Funai proposal foresees the establishment of trading posts called cantinas reembolsáveis (p. 21). Alencar explained how a cantina reembolsável works. There is a store, stocked with the things the Indians usually need. It is run by an Indian Agent, or an Administrative Aid, if there is one. When an Indian wants something, he asks for it, and it is debited against his account. When he sells his crops or the latex or Brazil nuts he has collected, he pays

What he owes. It is expected that eventually the Indians themselves will take over the operation of the trading post. I find it interesting that the Indians are expected to build up a debt first and pay it later, and I wonder how long it will be before they really take over the business. These worries may not be pertinent to the Nambiquara, however, for although three trading posts are to be built in the region (p.45), no money is being appropriated to run them (pp. 111 - 112).

### Administration

The relative importance of this category to the framers of the Funai proposal is indicated by the fact that it is given priority of place, right after the introduction, in the document under study. Much of the section involves construction to be undertaken, and personnel to be hired.

The table dealing with construction (pp. 42 - 45) shows that the Nambiquara region is to receive three post-headquarters buildings, three garages, three storerooms, three residences and three landing strips, in addition to the infirmaries, schools, and trading posts already mentioned. It is not clear why three new buildings for post headquarters are planned, since a table on page 15 indicates that headquarters buildings in reasonable repair already exist for the Northern Nambiquara and on the Nambiquara Reservation. This table does not show any post headquarters for the Guaporé Valley, however, and Alencar and

Nadir said that one would be built there in a place as yet to be determined. They were unaware that a post headquarters had been built on the Hahaindesu reserve two years ago. Moreover, a good landing strip near the post on the Nambiquara Reservation was opened in 1975. It would appear that the framers of the Funai proposal decided to give the Nambiquara three of everything, without bothering to find out what they already had, or seriously considering what they really need.

According to the table on page 40, the Funai will employ a total of 130 persons to work within the area of influence of Project Polonoroeste. Of these, 16 will work directly with Indians, 29 will work primarily in offices, and 85 will provide services (radio operators, drivers, artisans, laborers, etc.). Of the money paid out in salaries, 26% will be used to pay those who work with the Indians, 31% to pay office workers, and 43% to pay those who provide other services (pp. 49 - 50). This seems to be a peculiar distribution of both manpower and financial resources, and I questioned the need for certain kinds of personnel.

I ascertained that the radios to be employed transmit and receive the spoken word, so that a knowledge of code is not necessary in order to use them. I asked why, under these circumstances, 13 radio operators were to be hired. Why couldn't the Indian Agents operate their own radios? Alencar

did not know, and called in Lamartine Ribeiro de Olevira, Coordinator of Project Analysis for ASPLAN (Planning Advisory Council). Lamartine admitted that 13 radio operators really were not justifiable, but he said they had been included in the project so that they could be contracted if they were needed later on. I then asked if 13 drivers were really necessary. Alencar said that some Indian Agents must have a driver because they, themselves, do not know how to drive. I questioned the need for five full-time mechanics, and Alencar explained that they would service not only cars but also tractors and other equipment. I then asked about the need for 13 full-time tractor drivers, suggesting that the Indians could learn to drive tractors. Alencar said that whereas Indians could be taught to drive, they didn't know what to do when things went wrong. Thus, specialized tractor drivers were necessary not only to drive and teach the Indians how to drive, but also to take care of the equipment. I said that in this case there appeared to be some overlap between the duties of the tractor drivers and the duties of the mechanics. Alencar said that this was not so; the tractor drivers would take care of small problems and the mechanics would take care of big problems. At this point I wondered why, with so many mechanics, no electronic technicians were being contracted to take care of the radios. Lamartine said that electronics technicians were hard to find and demanded exorbitant salaries. Alencar said that if a radio broke down, this would not be as important as if a tractor broke down right at the beginning of a harvest.

I suggested that a radio could break down right at the beginning of an epidemic. Lamartine then said that the Funai planned to buy many cheap, simple radios, so that every Indian Agent could have two - one for regular use, and one to serve as a spare.

He proposed that they could be contracted if one needed later on. I then asked if 13 drivers were

needed. On page 21 of the Funai proposal it is stated that an

"Intermediate Support Base" will be created near the Nambiquara

Reservation "in consideration of the complexity and singular characteristics of this tribal group." I asked Alencar to

explain what, precisely, were the "singular characteristics"

of the Nambiquara that made this measure necessary. He was

at something of a loss, but finally managed to suggest that

the phrase referred to the Nambiquara's low state of acculturation

and the large size of their area. I do not find these char-

acteristics the least bit singular; within the "area of influence"

the Cinta Larga and related groups are, on the whole, less

acculturated than the Nambiquara, and they occupy a much larger

area.

that this was not so; the tractor drivers would

The facility is referred to in the Funai proposal

(eg. pp. 42-43) as "Support Base Uirapuru." Alencar said

that its location had not yet been decided, but Nadir argued

that it should, in fact, be built at Uirapuru, on highway

BR-364 at the head of the Juina, since there is already a

settlement with a gasoline station, and a landing strip there.

She was unaware that this location is outside the Nambiquara area.



"Support Base Uirapuru" would have a permanent staff of 12, including an Administrator, an Administrative Assistant, tractor drivers, mechanics, artisans and laborers. A headquarters building is to be constructed, as well as a mechanics shop, a garage, a storehouse, 12 residences and a dormitory (for Funai people who are there temporarily - and Indians, too). There are to be seven vehicles, including a caterpillar and an ambulance (although there are no medical facilities). All together, the permanent staff members and their families would constitute a community larger than any Nambiquara village, and it is surprising that an infirmary and a school have not been included in the plan.

### Conclusion

The plan of assistance to the Indians in the Guaporé Valley contained in the Projeto de apoio às comunidades indígenas da área de influência da rodovia Cuiabá/Porto Velho suffers from a lack of information on the part of those who developed it. The plan was drawn up by people who have had no experience with Indians of any tribal group. They did not visit the Nambiquara region to assess the situation before writing the plan, nor did they ask the Indian Agents who have worked in the region for four and five years to make recommendations, nor did they make adequate use of the yearly reports and other background information on the Nambiquara that should have been in their own files. Since the planners did not understand the problem, their solutions are not appropriate.

It is clear that the Funai project would benefit Brazilian society. It would create jobs and provide a market for products manufactured by Brazilian industry. It is not at all clear that it would benefit the Indians, however. In fact, a plan conceived with such insensitivity to their needs could only be harmful. Rather than protect them from the effects of Project Polonoroeste, its implementation would add insult to injury.

It is hard to understand how the Funai could present the World Bank with such a project. Does the Funai fail to realize that its program is divorced from reality and likely to prove counterproductive, or does it suppose that the World Bank will fail to notice? Either the Funai is hopelessly incompetent, or it cynically assumes that the World Bank does not really care whether the project is effective.

#### Funai Capability

Apart from the shortcomings of the specific plan under evaluation, there is a serious question as to whether the Funai can legitimately be expected to prepare and execute any plan that will benefit the Indians. The Funai is beleaguered with problems of a general, structural nature related to its place within the broader Brazilian context, as well as specific concrete problems resulting from events over the course of the past year.

Structural Problems

The Funai is in an awkward position as an agency of the Brazilian government that is supposed to assist victims of the Brazilian conquest. Conflict between agencies is a normal feature of bureaucratic organization, and when the interest groups served by competing agencies belong to the same society, conflict may be healthy and productive. But when an agency is entrusted with protecting many, small helpless societies against a powerful aggressor, every compromise is a defeat. The Funai needs structural safeguards to make it proof against coercion and pressure from other sectors of Brazilian society. As it is now constituted, however, there are many structural flaws which inhibit effective action in behalf of the native population.

The most obvious weakness is the Funai's subordination to the Ministry of the Interior. The Minister is much too accessible to persons whose interests are in conflict with those of the Indians. Every Minister of the Interior since the establishment of the Funai has intervened so as to restrict its freedom of action. Many Brazilian indigenists believe that the Funai should be an independent agency, responsible only to the president of the country.

The Funai was set up as a private foundation so that it could accept funds from a variety of sources. Unfortunately, however, this structure promotes an entrepreneurial mentality

which tends to exploit Indian land and labor in order to show a profit. Indian welfare would be better served if the Funai were a public, non-profit agency.

Under Brazilian law, Indians are wards of the state, and the Funai is their legal guardian. When the guardian of a minor acts contrary to his interests, there is legal recourse. But when the Funai acts to the detriment of the Indians, there is none. Some mechanism should be instituted that would make the Funai answerable for its actions.

Funai financing and accounting procedures result in an uncertain and discontinuous flow of capital. The ability of Indian Agents to provide consistent, year-round assistance is undermined by a lack of funds during the first part of every calendar year. This is reflected in mortality rates. Over half the deaths in the Guaporé Valley from 1975 through 1979 occurred during the first four months of the year. The Funai cannot carry out any adequate program of social assistance until it finds a way of assuring a continuous flow of financial resources.

The internal structure of the Funai promotes conflict between departments, impedes adequate planning and evaluation, and keeps the central bureaucracy insensitive to input from its agents in the field. In the project under study, for example, evaluation of economic activities is consigned to the Planning Advisory Board (a division of the Administrative

Superintendency), while evaluation of health and education programs is consigned to a division of the Department of Community Planning (p.120). This distribution of responsibilities makes it almost impossible to take into account the influence of education on economic production and the impact of economic productivity on health. A competent firm of management consultants should be hired to study the Funai and propose a complete re-organization.

Many jobs in the Funai have been awarded with little regard for the qualifications of the prospective employee or whether, in fact, there is a job that needs to be done. In particular, the proliferation of Ajudâncias (local sub-districts) in recent years is more a reflection of the number of ex-army officers needing jobs than of the requirements of effective administration. As a result of these nepotistic recruitment practices, the Funai has developed an administrative staff whose size is out of all proportion to its legitimate needs. I asked for - and was denied - a breakdown of personnel according to whether they worked in administration or in the field. It is known, however, that well over half the annual budget is used to pay administrative expenses, and I would estimate that there is at least one office worker for every person who actually deals with Indians. Because of the way administrative personnel are recruited, they have little understanding of the problems that Indian Agents in the field have to face. Often they do not particularly care, and in some cases the primary motive for taking a job with the Funai

would seem to be the "gratuities" that can be received from people whose interests conflict with those of the Indians. If the Funai is ever to be effective, it must rid itself of employees who are incompetent and corrupt and institute recruiting practices that will fill its ranks with skilled workers who are committed to serving the Indians.

### Concrete Problems

On November 1, 1979, the president of the Funai, Adhemar Ribeiro da Silva, was forced to resign by a coalition of senators and governors, including the governor of Rondônia. The consensus among experts on Indian affairs is that he had been doing his job too well. He was replaced by Col. João Carlos Nobre da Veiga, whose administration earned the wrath, within a few months, of almost everyone in Brazil who is concerned with the welfare of the Indians.

An early decision to decentralize the Funai was seen as handing the Indians over to regional interests that would be more susceptible to pressures from local people who wanted to relieve them of their lands. Col. Nobre da Veiga and his department heads quickly lost the respect of the technical personnel who worked under them. In April some of these dissatisfied workers formed the Brazilian Indigenist Society, an organization whose bylaws required that its officers have at least two years' experience in working directly with Indian communities.

This insistence on field experience was in reaction to the attitude of their superiors, who seemed insensitive to the needs of the Indians. In an interview published in the Correio Brasiliense on June 23, Col. Nobre da Veiga admitted that he knew nothing about Indians, but asserted that "to administer the Funai it is not necessary to understand Indians. It is only necessary to understand administration."

On May 5, there was an angry confrontation between Col. Nobre da Veiga and members of the Shavante tribe. They claimed that they had been defrauded of their lands by Funai employees including Laia Mattar e Rodrigues, who was currently working as a special advisor to the Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior, even though she was under investigation for corruption. Nobre da Veiga called the police to maintain order.

As a result of this incident, Odenir Pinto de Oliveira, Chief of the Funai subdistrict responsible for the Shavante, was relieved of his duties. He had supported the Shavante's land claims, and was accused of inciting them. At about this time, another Subdistrict Chief was also "re-assigned". He had accused the local police of complicity in the slaying of two Indians. An Indian Agent in Boca do Acre was called in for defending the Apurinã tribe's right to their lands. Rafael José de Menezes Bastos, an anthropologist who had worked in the Community Planning Department for five years, was fired. No reason was given. José Carlos Meirelles and



Antônio Luiz Macedo, Indian Agents who worked at Post Mamoadate, in Acre, were fired. Col. Nobre da Veiga explained: "A Funai staff member should, more than anything, act as a judge between two cultures, that of the Whites and that of the Indians. When he begins to defend one side more than the other he becomes biased and for this reason undesirable."

On June 2, four Indians from Posto Mamoadate arrived in Brasília, demanding demarcation of their lands and the reinstatement of the two Indian Agents who had been fired. The Indians wanted the press to be present at their interview with Col Nobre da Veiga, but he pushed the reporters out of his office. One of the Indians later made a signed statement that he offered them money to drop their land claims. Seven Funai staff members resigned, saying it was impossible for them to go on working in an agency whose policy had become "anti-Indian". Col. Nobre da Veiga denied that there had been any change in policy. He said there was a "dynamic adaptation to the new Brazilian reality within a pragmatic vision," and "a flexible strategic delineation before the obstacles confronted." He ordered troops to occupy Post Mamoadate. Mário Andreazza, the Minister of the Interior, said that the resignations were a "simple administrative problem with no serious implications."

On June 16, 30 or 40 Indians representing 12 or 15 tribes invaded the Funai and demanded the resignation of Col Nobre da Veiga and several department heads. They said they were tired of "waiting for promises that are never kept," and

Acervo  
threatened that blood would be spilled if the Funai failed to listen. After a long and stormy meeting, Col Nobre da Vega announced that they were being manipulated, and said that it was not "up to the Indians to decide who will run the Funai."

A letter signed by 21 staff members was sent to the Minister of the Interior. It outlined 19 instances in which "a complete ignorance of the reality and requirements of native affairs" had rendered the directors of the Funai "incapable of defending the rights of the native peoples," and called for them to be replaced by "public servants of good character with experience in Indian work." All 21 signatories of the letter were fired. Col. Nobre da Veiga said he was not worried about filling their positions. "Lots of people want to work in the Funai," he said.

Dr. Maurício Corrêa, president of the Brazilian bar association (OAB), published a statement in support of those who were fired. "It is the indeclinable duty of the administrator in the face of any accusation," he wrote, "To investigate it, even though he may later punish the authors if it should prove to be unfounded."

The Funai sent the Minister of the Interior a 30-page reply to the accusations. The tone of the rejoinder is set in its opening paragraphs. The letter by the 21 began with the affirmation, "Brazilian indigenism has a historical commitment to the physical and sociocultural survival of the native

peoples." One would not expect an agency entrusted with the welfare of the Indians to take issue with this statement. But the Funai reply spends two paragraphs picking it apart:

This affirmation is diametrically opposed to the Indian Statute in two respects: the expression "native peoples" is ambiguous and undefined in Law 6,001, and this instrument establishes an ultimate goal of integration into the national community.

.. The Brazilian State cannot tolerate the existence of peoples or nations within its single, culturally integrated and politically sovereign nation-state. This initial affirmation is ambiguous and unacceptable, although very common in certain political-literary circles which attempt to use minority groups as instruments of international intrigue. Brazil cannot accept any statement to this effect.

These paragraphs distort an affirmation of the Indians' right to cultural self-determination so that it appears to suggest the signatories' participation in international intrigue and makes their dismissal a patriotic act. This line of argument is maintained throughout the document. The directorship of the Funai does not defend itself against the accusation that its policies are harmful to the Indians, but suggests, rather, that its accusers are incompetent and enemies of the State.

This aggressive counterattack was written by someone with considerable experience in manipulating information. It was not written to convince the Minister of the Interior, who issued a statement that Col. Nobre da Veiga continued to have his "full confidence". It was written to bait those who sympathized with the people who had been fired, to make them angry so that they would reveal themselves and perhaps even resign. The badgering and provocative tone of the Funai

"defense" strongly suggests that the events of the previous weeks were not just a product of chance, but results of a conscious policy aimed at identifying and eliminating staff members who were genuinely concerned about the welfare of the Indians.

According to Rafael José de Menezes Bastos, more than 50 career indigenists have been fired or have found it necessary to resign from the Funai. An acquaintance who has managed to remain told me frankly that she does not know how much longer she can hold on. Roque de Barros Laraia, who has served for many years on the Indigenist Council, a body that is supposed to establish policy for the Funai, charged that the so-called anthropologists hired to fill vacancies "have no field work experience and would scarcely be accepted into graduate school." While the caliber of the technical staff has deteriorated, the directorship has been taken over by military personnel. My informants affirmed that there were no fewer than 36 colonels in the Funai, at least half of whom had come from the much-feared National Information Service and National Security Council.

Col. Nobre da Veiga himself was previously employed as head of Security and Information in the Rio Doce mining conglomerate. He is a racist whose low opinion of Indians was evident in the meetings I attended. He stated, in an interview published in the Folha de São Paulo on September 14, that "The biggest problem of the Funai is that in the past innumerable

"defense" strongly suggests that the events  
areas were declared native areas without there having been any  
weeks were not just a product of chance. The  
consultation with interested parties such as the IBDF [Brazilian  
Institute of Forestry Development], the National Department  
of Mineral Production, DNER [National Highway Department],  
INCRA [National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform]

and the state governments." Called to testify before the  
House Subcommittee on Native Affairs, he characterized Article  
198 of the Brazilian Constitution as "extremely violent, hard  
and implacable" in its defense of the Indians' right to their  
lands, and said that the Funai was trying to lessen its impact.

Col. Claudio Pagano, who is now Director of the Depart-  
ment of Native Resources (DGPI), formerly worked for INCRA,  
an agency whose promotion of colonization is opposed to the  
interests of the Indians. All Funai files dealing with land  
have now been rated "classified", and are no longer available  
for public inspection.

Col. Ivan Zanoni Hausen, Director of the Department of  
Community Planning (DGPC), came to the Funai from the Air Force.

I was told that during the Medici regime he belonged to the  
Burnier Squadron, which is reputed to have gotten rid of so-  
called communists by flying out and dropping them in the sea.  
One person who was arrested and interrogated at that time has  
positively identified him as a torturer. He has stated that  
"The Indian Statute is a book of poetry to feed the fantasies  
of eggheads," and he told one of his former subordinates that

the Indians should be treated exactly like his two mongoloid children. Interviewed on television, he said that the disturbances in the Funai were "provoked by international communism."

In August, 80 representatives of 33 organizations for the defense of the Indians who met together in Brasília issued a statement calling the present Indian policy "a scheme of the colonels in the Funai which has as its final objective the progressive ethnocide of the native peoples." The Indians themselves - those who have found a voice - clearly agree with this negative assessment. When Pope John Paul II visited Brazil, he received a delegation of Indians representing 18 tribes. They gave him a list of "enemies of the Indians" that included the Minister of the Interior and the President of the Funai. Their spokesman said, "We are being finished off by projects, enterprises and invaders that rob our very lives."

If Project Polonoroeste is carried out, land values will rise vertiginously, there will be a new influx of settlers, and the pressures on the native population will be redoubled. More than 8,000 Indians in Mato Grosso and Rondônia will be affected. To entrust their welfare to the Funai as it is now constituted would be criminal.