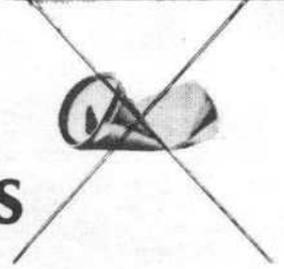


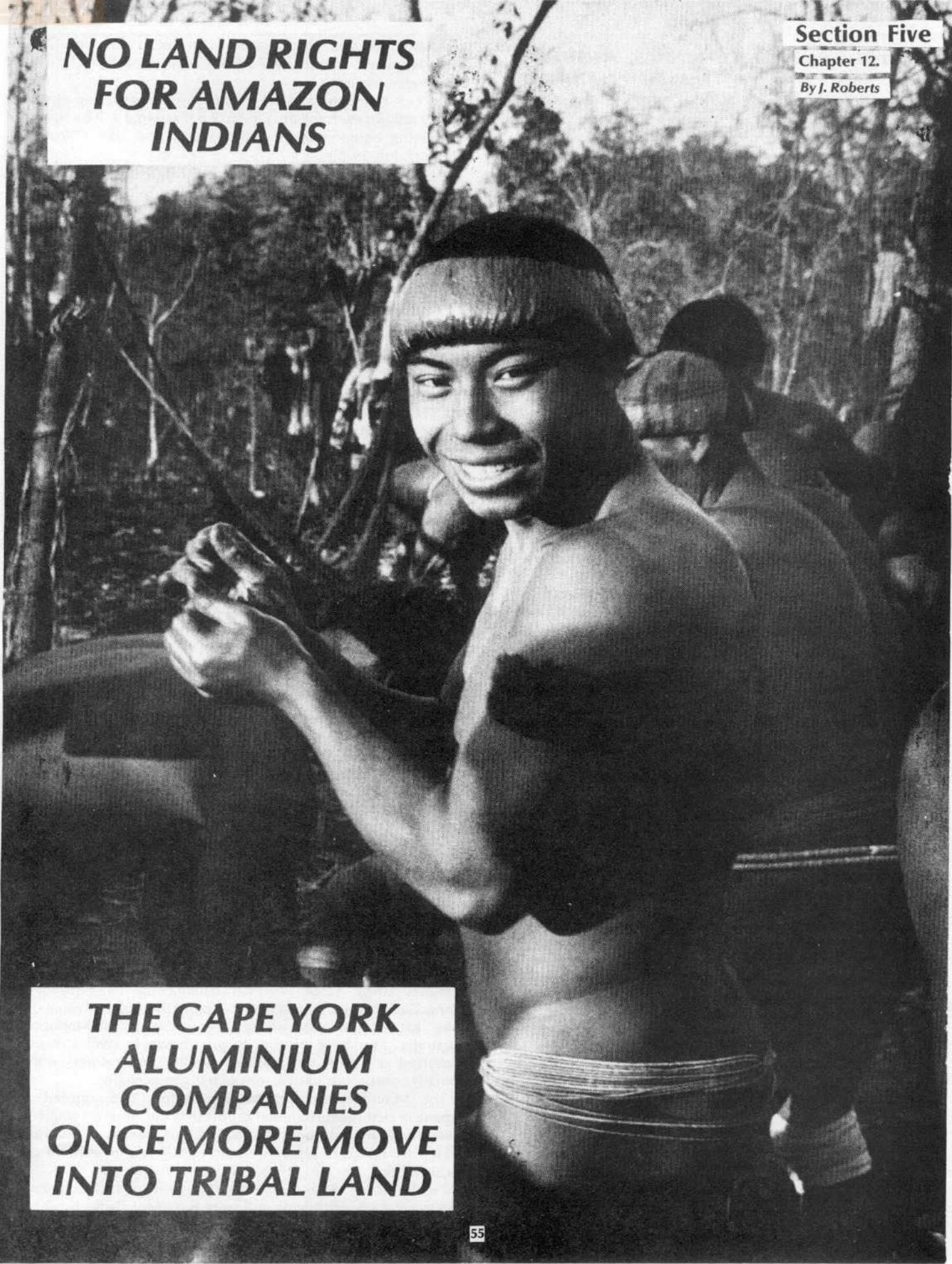
MAPOON — BOOK THREE

**THE CAPE YORK  
ALUMINIUM COMPANIES**  
*and*  
**THE NATIVE PEOPLES**



**COMALCO, R.T.Z., KAISER, C.R.A.,  
ALCAN,  
BILLITON, PECHINEY, TIPPERARY**

# NO LAND RIGHTS FOR AMAZON INDIANS



**THE CAPE YORK  
ALUMINIUM  
COMPANIES  
ONCE MORE MOVE  
INTO TRIBAL LAND**

**"It was Canada in the 50's, Australia in the 60's, and I'm totally confident that it will be Brazil in the 70's". Patrick Delany, Mining Consultant.**

Brazil's bauxite reserves are now believed to be the third largest in the world. The same bauxite companies that carved an Empire in North Queensland with vast mining leases, cattle holdings and the world's largest alumina refinery, are now carving an Empire out of the tribal lands of the Amazon people.

Again there is no serious talk of compensation. These tribes are being decimated today as the Australian Aborigines were — by poisoned food, genocidal massacres, alcohol and white man's diseases. These tribes too, like the Queensland tribes, are river people.

First, let's see what and where these companies are:

# ALCAN

Alcan is the company that holds as its strategic reserve some 536 square miles of Mapoon tribal land in Australia with no mention of compensation, or recognition of Aboriginal ownership of this land.

In Brazil, Alcan is engaged in a major Amazon bauxite venture that will have disastrous consequences for unconsulted Indian nations, unconquered by Europeans until now.

It discovered in 1967 vast bauxite deposits (rumoured to be over 1000 million tons) some 111 km. (70 miles) up the Trombetas River from where it joins the Amazon. Although this puts the deposit some 900 km. (570 miles) from the sea, 50,000 ton freighters can reach within 30 km. of the deposit. Alcan holds control of a mining lease of 70,000 hectares in partnership with Brazilian and other interests.

The deposit of bauxite is some 4-5 metres thick under an overburden of some 4-5 metres. A twenty-eight kilometre railroad will be built from the deposit to the river port. A local lake will be progressively filled with the waste, and an Indian family living by the lake 'relocated'.

The Brazilian government, however, is more solicitous than the Queensland or Australian Government for the welfare of its wealthy elite. It insists that they are allowed a majority holding in the mine and processing plant. Recently it has begun to insist, too, that the ore is processed into aluminium in the country — again, unlike the Australian government.

But, despite these factors, the transnational company giants came running. (True, this was before they heard of the insistence on Brazilian smelting.) Alcan did take a long time to agree to the Brazilian 51% holding in the mine, and perhaps to other conditions. They even closed down their operation in 1972 and sacked 200 staff. But by 1974 they had agreed, and accordingly put together a company to run the mine called "Mineracao Rio do Norte S.A." This is controlled 51% by Brazilian interests — one state company, Companhia Vale do Rio Doce, and one private, Companhia Brasileira de Alumino, and 19% by Alcan — **who will provide the management**; 30% by other foreign companies including RTZ (5%), Reynold's, Billiton, a Spanish government corporation — ENI, and two Norwegian companies — Norsk Hydro and Aardal Og Sunndal Verk. Alcan's 25% interest in the last named

**Footnote:** Rio Norte's mining rights are located along co-ordinates 56°30' West and 1°30' South, close to the right bank of the Trombetas River, Oriximina County, State of Para, Brazil.

company increases Alcan's overall interest in the mine. The other Norwegian company is already a partner with Alcan in a Norwegian smelter.

The U.S. Eximbank and the Irving Trust are providing a loan of \$9.9 million each towards the \$22 million that will be spent on mining equipment for Trombetas in the USA ("World Mining", July 1975).

Alcan itself will have a right to one-third of the output. This will initially be 3.7 million tons. Expansion to a rate of eight million tons a year is planned.

The availability of this bauxite made Alcan toughen their bargaining position in the negotiations in Guyana for a "meaningful participation" by Guyana's government in the profits from, and control of, the Demba bauxite mine. Alcan were not willing to surrender management control. This led to the mine being nationalized. Brazil has allowed them management control of this mine despite the 51% Brazilian interest. Alcan did not need the bauxite immediately and has been going slow on its development. However mining was scheduled to commence in March 1975.

**ALCOA**, Alcan's sister company, founded by the same Mellon family, has taken out an adjacent lease, and so has D. Ludwig (see below). **Pechiney, Kaiser and Aluisse** are all exploring nearby.

## AND SMELTING TOO

According to the Alcoa Bauxite Exploration Manager, Hans Coutinho, over \$3 million dollars is likely to be spent by the aluminium companies exploiting this region. (Herald Tribune, 10-11 May 1975)

Most of this would be put into a proposed giant industrial centre that will refine and smelt the ore on the spot, free of pollution controls, and into the power and port facilities to make this possible.

In late 1973 a preliminary agreement was reached between the Brazilian government and the five major Japanese Aluminum companies for the construction of a 1.3 million tons per year refinery and a 2000 tons per year smelter. A Brazilian partner has plans for another 1000 tons per year smelter. These are to be situated near Belem on the Amazon.

Once again there is a hidden Alcan interest. It owns half of one of the 'Japanese' companies — Nippon Light Metal. It was this company that announced in September, 1974, that it had the contract for a major dam on the Jari River to supply power to this complex. The Brazilian government has announced further schemes for the Trombetas, Tocantins and Xingu Rivers.

But the Brazilian government's wish to give these smelters priority over the mined bauxite, gave Alcan's mining consortium something of a shock. They had expected, it seems, that the Japanese companies would mine their own bauxite. Since Alcan requires bauxite for its expensive Canadian facilities, it must either expand the Amazon mine or take extra from somewhere else — such as Mapoon, Australia. The bulk of the output, however, will still be exported raw with the planned smelter and refinery only initially consuming 300,000 tons of bauxite annually.

The Mining Journal of 12 September, 1975, quoted a Japanese semi-governmental report that the Amazon smelter would now have an output of 320,000 ton per year — half of which would go to Japan. It would require an investment of \$420 million.

The funds for Alcan's mine are to come from a subsidiary of the Royal Bank of Canada and from the Orion Term-Bank of Brazil. They are being given a \$40 million 12 year loan.



## WHOSE LAND ARE THEY ON?

Alcan's bauxite mine lies on the frontiers of extermination — and it will help to extend these frontiers. Between it and the sea, along the Amazon River, most tribes have already been destroyed by settlers, missionaries and traders from Europe who killed deliberately or by bringing in white man's diseases and imposing a foreign culture. (There were some exceptions, particularly among the missionaries, but these were rare.) The Amazon tribes were first contacted by Europeans around 1620.

The Pauxi tribe by the mouth of the Trombetas are reported as exterminated. But this is not true of all the Trombetas River tribes near the mining. Some still just survive. Some clans of the Mura tribe by the mouth of the Trombetas still hold their territory, according to the latest information.

Just upstream from the mining site, the Warikyana, or Arikiena, live. About 300 of them held their land in 1967. (Ref. "Indians of Brazil" Ed. J. Hopper.) On a nearby tributary there are the Hiskaruyana. At least they were there in July, 1972.

However, on the 4th March 1975, the company managing the mine, Mineracao Rio do Norte, under Alcan control, denied that there were any Indians within 300 km and stated that they therefore had no need for a policy on native peoples.

The planned hydro-electric scheme on the Trombetas River for the smelter **will flood and destroy the country of five tribes** — numbering about 5,000 people — (the Parakoto, Charima, Warikyana, Yaya and Tirio). Perhaps in anticipation of this and of the highway being aimed straight at the reserve and being built now, the native people's reserve (or 'Indian Park') created in 1968 has already been abolished!

The "Handbook of South American Indians", Ed. J. Stewart adds to this list of affected Trombetas River Tribes as still

surviving: the Maopitian, Zurumata, Catawian, Pianocote, Tunayana and Dyau. Also Funai, the Brazilian government Indian department, stated in July, 1972 that the Pianocoro, Kaxuyaha and Xaruma were living on this river.

On the Jari River, also to be flooded to supply cheap electricity, live the Tirio, Kaxuyama, Ewarhoyana and Apalai (FUNAI document July, 1972) and the isolated unconquered tribe of the Oyampik. Stewart adds to this list the Aparai on the lower course of the river.

## RIO TINTO ZINC AND KAISER IN THE AMAZON

The Comalco partners on Weipa Aboriginal land in Australia are operating in the same area of Indian land in the Amazon — in the Paragominas area on the border of the states of Para and Maranhao. These operations are being made possible by the new road from Belem to Brasilia through the Indian nations.

RTZ had some 47 bauxite claims filed by 1972 when a conservative estimate of 400 million tons of bauxite in Paragominas was made by the government.

Exploitation of this deposit is now proceeding. A full page advertisement in the "Mining Journal" of May 30th, 1975, placed by RTZ asked for engineers for: "a large pre-production feasibility study of a major open-cast bauxite mine in the Amazon area of Brazil. It is hoped that this study will result in an operation producing several million tons per annum of high grade bauxite. The site team will be Belem based."

RTZ has a 5% share in the Alcan venture mentioned above as well.

In the same area, giant scale cattle operations are beginning to dispossess the local people of vast areas. These operations were begun by KING RANCH and DELTEC and cover 176,000 acres (275 sq. miles).

**King Ranch** Deltec's partner, has its links with RTZ through their Australian subsidiary, CRA. 'Fortune' (June 1969) reported that the vice chairman of CRA, Clarke, is the chairman of King Ranch (Australia) Pty Ltd and manages their 9,754,000 acres in Australia.

**Kaiser** also is exploring the northern side of the Amazon between Manaus and Belem.

## WHOSE LAND IS IT?

Although the Director of King Ranch has been quoted as saying: "But there are NO Indians in the region", the World Council of Churches in a 1972 Memo showed this to be totally untrue.

This is the tribal land of Kaapor (Urubu) and Tembe Indian nations and was set aside as a reserve for them. King Ranch and Deltec was able to obtain some of their land as a cattle station after the Brazilian Minister for the Interior over ruled the half-hearted objectors of FUNAI and abolished the Indian Reserve. (FUNAI is the National Foundation for Assistance to the Indian — the equivalent to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in Australia)

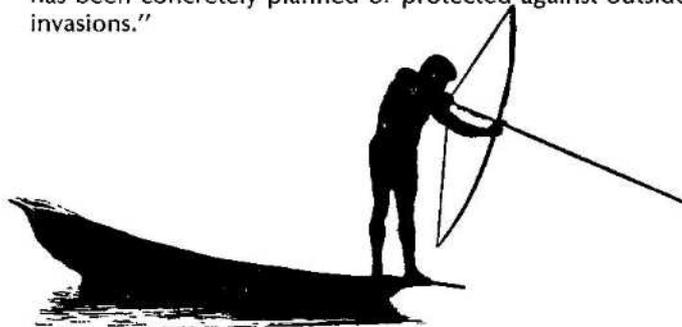
Vast areas are now to be cleared of their Indian inhabitants, their tribes broken up and replaced by cattle and giant barren bauxite pits.

One of the main tribes to be affected is the Tembe. This is what some Brazilian anthropologists had to say:

"The Tembe live on the banks of the Gurupi River, along the border between Para and Maranhao. For several years they were protected against land invasions by a title deed provided by the government of Para. Nevertheless, in the late 1960s, FUNAI began to negotiate with **King Ranch**, a United States-based enterprise, for the transference of the Tembe lands.

"In order to receive financial incentives from the government agency charged with the development of the Amazon region (SUDAM), the **King Ranch** needed a certificate demonstrating that no Indians occupied these lands. FUNAI provided them with the certificate. Then the **King Ranch**, together with the government, began proceedings for the voiding of Indian title, and the Tembe were dispossessed of their lands.

"The invasion of the Tembe Reserve is typical of what is happening to Indian lands all along the **Trans-Amazonic Highway**. By the end of 1973, almost all of the region was occupied by agricultural enterprises, colonization projects, or mining firms. Of eleven reserves created by government decree to receive tribes found along the highway, **not one** has been concretely planned or protected against outside invasions."



# OTHER BAUXITE MINES IN BRAZIL

## NATIONAL BULK CARRIERS (of Daniel Ludwig)

A subsidiary is opening a bauxite mine on his giant 2 million acre (over 3,000 sq. miles) Monte Dourado complex in the Amazon, 250 miles from Belem and adjacent to the Alcoa lease.

About this 'Latin America' reported (March 9, 1973)

"If the position of the average Brazilian employee is bad, the worker in the Amazon region is far worse off . . . For nearly a year rumours have been circulating in the Brazilian press that 'slave labour' conditions exist on certain vast development projects in the Amazon area, notably on the 1½ million hectare forestry and farming estate of the U.S. multi-millionaire, Daniel Ludwig . . . Reports have it that the various companies use armed guards to dissuade workers from either protesting or trying to escape, and it is even suggested that torture is used to keep the workers in line . . ."

## WHOSE LAND IS HE ON?

The map above shows nine Apalai Indian villages to the North and West of Ludwig's massive estate. No protection for their rights, or health, has been provided by the Government.

**Daniel Ludwig owns the company which ships Weipa Bauxite to Gladstone Aluminium refinery.**

**ALCOA** — had a mining lease adjacent to the Alcan and Monte Dourado complex.

**ALCOMINAS** — A joint venture controlled by ALCOA (48%).

**HANNA MINING** (20%) in the state of Minas Gerais, south of the Amazon Basin. It has insured its Alcominas Aluminium operations for \$9.6 million.

**ETHYL CORPORATION (USA)** — They announced February, 1974, that their Brazilian subsidiary had located large bauxite deposits at an undisclosed site in the Amazon.

## SHELL — BILLITON

The Shell Oil owned mining company, Billiton, has a giant prospecting lease of 832 square miles on Weipa and Aurukun Aboriginal land in Queensland, Australia. They plan to start mining in 1982, and already have made detailed plans. This will totally disrupt and destroy one of the most recently colonized tribal groups in Australia and is completely opposed by the tribes.

Likewise in the Amazon, they are planning to take over Indian tribal land.

The E/M Journal of February 1972, stated: "They are reported to have set up five companies, apparently preparing for a big bauxite exploration effort in 1972".

These are centred in Amapa state, on the north side of the mouth of the Amazon.

They have a share in the ALCAN bauxite development on the Trombetas River.

In September 1971 it was revealed that a consortium of Mineracao Tropical Co. and Shell-Billiton had discovered a

"truly gigantic" deposit of lignite in the state of Amazonas near the Brazilian border with Columbia and Peru. (Miami Herald 27/9/74)

Billiton have their biggest Amazon venture in their tin mines in the Upper Amazon Basin. They have seized over 720,000 acres of tribal land (October 1972 figures) to possess part of the world's largest tin deposits.

(Brazil has 10 million tons in its tin reserves, the rest of the world only 7.8 million tons. The USA is dependent on imports for 80% of its needs — and most of the Brazilian tin is in the Rondonia district where Billiton is busy mining.)

In October 1973, Billiton, together with the Itau financial group, an associate of the Rockefeller — Moreira Salles group and the Molybdenum Corporation (Molycorp) and six other mining companies were given prospecting rights in the Aripuana 'Indian Park' (or Reserve) where live the Cintas Largas.



**WHAT DO THESE DEVELOPMENTS MEAN FOR THE INDIAN PEOPLES?**

## **THE TRAGEDY OF THE CINTAS LARGAS**

"Few tribes have suffered as much as the Cintas Largas, whose territory is located at the headwaters of the Aripuana River, along the borders between Mato Grosso and Rondonia states. Throughout the 1960s, they were victims of a series of massacres, which included the slaughter of Indian women and children, the bombing of their villages, and death through "presents" of sugar mixed with arsenic poison."<sup>1</sup>

The Cintas Largas (named for the wide bark cloth belts worn by the men of the tribe) are the largest Indian nation in Brazil, numbering nearly five thousand people, and living in twenty-two different village encampments. They are a forest-dwelling people, who practice hunting, and are thought to be related to the Kawahib group of the Tupi linguistic stock.

Billiton had arrived in the region in 1963, when it established a tin mine under the name 'Ferusá'.

In 1963, the Cintas Largas had their first bitter taste of white man's civilization when an expedition of backwoodsmen and gunfighters (*pistoleiros* in Portuguese) were organized by a Mato Grosso land company to survey the mineral wealth of the region. They first attacked a large inaccessible village by air throwing sticks of dynamite down on the Indians gathered together for an annual feast. Then a band of 'Indian Killers' went in by land to brutally finish the massacre. Chico, their leader, is seen in the photo below proudly displaying his victim whose death is described by Ataide, a fellow murderer who later confessed. Ten years later none of the 4 known murderers have been brought to trial.



"There was a young Indian girl they didn't shoot, with a kid of about five in one hand, yelling his head off. He shot the kid through the head with his .45, and then he grabbed hold of the woman. He tied the Indian girl up and hung her head downwards from a tree, legs apart, and chopped her in half right down the middle with his machete." said Ataide.

Ataide spoke of such Indian hunts as commonplace and Padre Veber told police: **"It is not the first time that the firm of Arruda and Junqueira has committed crimes against the Indians. A number of expeditions have been organized in the past. This firm acts as a cover for other undertakings who are interested in acquiring land, or who plan to exploit the rich mineral deposits existing in this area."**<sup>2</sup>

Finally, in 1968, a FUNAI "pacification" team convinced the Cintas Largas to live peacefully with settlers along the expanding frontier, and in 1971 the Aripuana Indian Park was created to protect the more than 2,000 Cintas Largas and Suruis Indians.

In December 1971, however, there was a turn of events. At that time, headlines in the Brazilian press announced an "Indian uprising" in which a former journalist, in the employ of FUNAI, and a radio-telegrapher, were killed by Cintas Largas who burnt the Indian post station.

In the months following the December 1971 incident, the real story emerged in the Brazilian press. **Seemingly, since the creation of the Aripuana Indian Park, there had been constant land encroachments by mineral prospectors, colonization companies, and the construction of a highway.**

One large land company, Companhia Colonizadora Itaporanga, owned by the wealthy Melhoranca family of Sao Paulo, had settled over 500 families in the Park, and a diamond prospecting company was given authorization by both FUNAI and the Ministry of the Interior to prospect in the area.

For months previous to the supposed "Indian uprising", the Cintas Largas chiefs had communicated their anger concerning these illegal encroachments to Indian agents, and several reports were sent to the FUNAI central office in Brasilia pleading for protection for the Park. At the same time, it became known that weapons were being smuggled across the Bolivian border by the land company and distributed to local colonists for their protection against a supposed "Indian threat". The situation, in other words, was critical, and this was known by the government many months previous to the incidents of December 1971.

These events, though, were only a small part of the story. In March 1971, the Brazilian government passed a series of decrees which outlawed the **individual** prospecting of diamonds and tin (cassiterite) in the region inhabited by the Cintas Largas, declared the territory of Rondonia a major tin development area, and **began to negotiate mineral leases with a number of national and international firms.**

Even previous to this date, exploration activities in Rondonia were being carried out as part of a cooperative program of the National Department of Mineral Production (DNPM), the state-owned Company for Resource Investigations (CPRM), and the U.S. Geological Survey, under the sponsorship of the Brazilian government and the Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of State. In fact, as far back as 1963 (the date of the original massacre of the Cintas Largas), **Billiton**, a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, had established the first mechanized tin mine in Rondonia under the name of FERUSA (Companhia de Mieracao Ferro Union). By October 1970, FERUSA controlled over 720,000 acres of land in various stages of exploration, prospecting, and negotiation.<sup>3</sup>

Later, in November 1972, it was learned that gunmen had been hired to assassinate the Cintas-Largas tribe.

In March 1973, SUDECO, the agency in charge of development of the central-west region, announced the construction of a highway through the Aripuana Park. Some days later, FUNAI announced that it had given permission for the building of the road.

Finally, in October 1973, FUNAI announced that the original demarcation of the Aripuana Indian Park was "hasty", and declared that it would be reduced to one-third of its present size. At the same time, it was learned that ten mining companies were given prospecting rights in the Park, including multinational affiliates of Billington Corporation, Royal Dutch Shell (Billiton), the Itau financial group, an associate of the Rockefeller-Moreira Salles group, and the Molybdenum Corporation (MOLYCORP).

In November 1972, a French physician, Dr. Chiappino, visited the Aripuana Indian Park specifically to observe the medical conditions of the Cintas Largas and Surui tribes. He reported urgently that the **MINING COMPANIES HAD TAKEN THE RISK OF EXPOSING THE NATIVE POPULATION TO EUROPEAN DISEASES — WITH THE RESULT OF MASS DEATHS.**

He wrote: "The situation of the Surui is horrible; twenty Indians have already died since June, two of whom I know

personally. All of the tribe is now scattered in the jungle. More than 40% are sick with pulmonary infections, and are malnourished as a result of the disease ... there is not enough food."

This has happened since **"FUNAI allowed private companies to prospect within the Park"**.

Journal do Brazil — Nov. 21, 1972.



Sources:

<sup>1</sup> 'The Politics of Genocide against the Indians of Brazil' by Brazilian Anthropologists in September 1974. Reprinted in 'SUPYSAUA' — a documentary report on the conditions of Indian People in Brazil — published by **INDIGENA** and **AMERICAN FRIENDS OF BRAZIL**. Can be obtained through International Development Action, Melbourne or from Indigena, P.O. Box 4073, Berkeley, Calif., 94794, U.S.A.

<sup>2</sup> 'Genocide' by Norman Lewis. Reprinted in SUPYSAUA op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> 'Leasing away Indian lives' — Indigena Report in *Brazilian Information Bulletin* Spring 1974.

## It means **GENOCIDE!**

**"From fire and sword to arsenic and bullets — civilization has sent six million Indians to extinction."**

The following article is an abridged version of "Genocide" by Norman Lewis (The Sunday Times, London, February 23, 1969), as published in the pamphlet 'Slave or Dead', (Ata Kando, Holland, 1971), and reprinted in 'SUPYSAUA' by Indigena and American Friends of Brazil 1974.

It seemed that we were expected to suppose that the Indians were simply fading away, killed off by the harsh climate of the times, and we were invited to inquire no further. It was left to the Brazilian Government itself to resolve the mystery, and in March 1968 it did so, with brutal frankness, and with little attempt at self defence. The tribes had been virtually exterminated, not *despite* all the efforts of the Indian Protection Service, but with its *connivance* — often its ardent cooperation.

The Service, admitted General Albuquerque Lima, the Brazilian Minister of the Interior, had been converted into an instrument for the Indians' oppression, and had therefore been dissolved. There was to be a judicial inquiry into the conduct of 134 functionaries. A full newspaper page in small print was required to list the crimes with which these men were charged. Speaking informally, the Attorney General, Senator Jader Figueiredo, doubted whether 10 of the Service's employees out of a total of over 1000 would be fully cleared of guilt.

The official report was calm — phlegmatic almost — all the more effective therefore in its exposure of the atrocity it contained. Pioneers leagued with corrupt politicians had continually usurped Indian lands, destroyed whole tribes in cruel struggle in which bacteriological warfare had been employed, by issuing clothing impregnated with the virus



of smallpox, and by poisoned food supplies.

**"In 1970, contact was established with a group of Paracana Indians. Support for their pacification was given by the United States Steel Company who had obtained a large iron ore concession in the area. On December 18, 1970, a helicopter containing a FUNAI delegate and a director of United States Steel arrived in the area and made contact with 25 Paracana tribesmen. The Indians were given blankets, and immediately were stricken by an epidemic of influenza."**

*"Supysaua" — Op.Cit.*

Children had been abducted and mass murder gone unpunished. The Government itself was blamed to some extent for the Service's increasing starvation of resources over a period of 30 years. The Service had also had to face "the disastrous impact of missionary activity."

Next day the Attorney General met the Press, and was prepared to supply all the details. A commission had spent 58 days visiting Indian Protection Service posts all over the country collecting evidence of abuses and atrocities.

The huge losses sustained by the Indian tribes in this tragic decade were catalogued in part. Of 19,000 Munducurus believed to have existed in the Thirties, only 1200 were left. The strength of the Guaranis had been reduced from 5000 to 300. There were 400 Crajas left out of 4000. Of the Cintas Largas, who had been attacked from the air and driven into the mountains, possibly 500 had survived out of 10,000. The proud and noble nation of the Kadiweus — the Indian Cavaliers — had shrunk to a pitiful scrounging band of about 200. A few hundred only remained of the formidable Chavantes who prowled in the background of Peter Fleming's Brazilian journey, but they had been reduced to mission fodder — the same melancholy fate that had overtaken the Bororos, who helped to change Levi-Strauss's views on the nature of human evolution. Many tribes were now represented by a single family, a few by one or two individuals.

Some, like the Tapaiunas — in this case from a gift of sugar laced with arsenic — had disappeared altogether. It is estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 Indians survive today. Brazil's leading social historian believes that not a single one will be alive by 1980.

Senhor Figueiredo estimated that property worth 62 million dollars had been stolen from the Indians in the past

10 years; cattle and personal possessions. He added, "It is not only through the embezzlement of funds, but by the admission of sexual perversions, murders and all other crimes listed in the penal code against Indians and their property, that one can see that the Indian Protection Service was for years a den of corruption and indiscriminate killings." The head of the service, Major Luis Neves, was accused of 42 crimes, including collusion in several murders, the illegal sale of lands, and the embezzlement of 300,000 dollars. The documents containing the evidence collected by the Attorney General weighed 103 kilograms, he informed the newspapermen, and amounted to a total of 5115 pages.

In the following days there were more headlines and more statements by the Ministry:

"Rich landowners of the municipality of Pedro Alfonso attacked the tribe of Craos and killed about 100."

"The worst slaughter took place in Aripuana, where the Cintas Largas Indians were attacked from the air using sticks of dynamite."

"The Maxacalis were given fire-water by the landowners who employed gunmen to shoot them down when they were drunk."

"Landowners engaged a notorious pistoleiro and his band to massacre the Canelas Indians."

"The Nhambiquera Indians were mown down by machine-gun fire."

"Two tribes of the Patachos were exterminated by giving them smallpox injections."

"In the Ministry of the Interior it was stated yesterday that crimes committed by certain ex-functionaries of the SPI amounted to more than 1000, ranging from tearing out Indians' fingernails to allowing them to die without assistance."

"To exterminate the tribe Beicos-de-Pau, Ramis Bucair, Chief of the 6th Inspectorate, explained, an expedition was formed which went up the River Arinos carrying presents and a great quantity of foodstuffs for the Indians. These were mixed with arsenic and formicides . . . Next day a great number of Indians died, and the whites spread the rumor that this was the result of an epidemic."

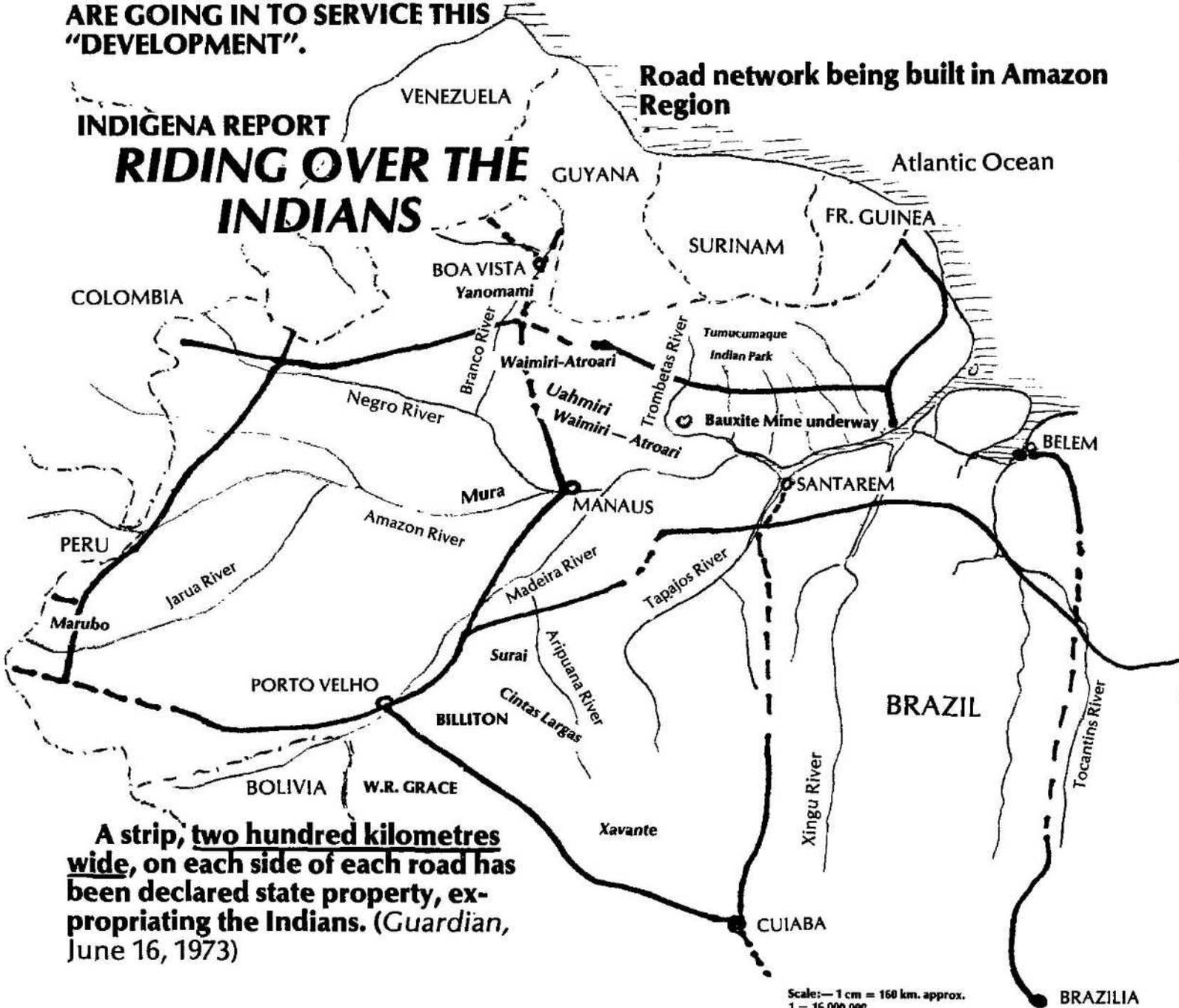
**Between 1900 and 1957 the Indian population of Brazil dropped from one million to less than 200,000.**

AND A REPORT ON THE ROADS THAT ARE GOING IN TO SERVICE THIS "DEVELOPMENT".

INDIGENA REPORT

# RIDING OVER THE INDIANS

## Road network being built in Amazon Region



**A strip, two hundred kilometres wide, on each side of each road has been declared state property, expropriating the Indians. (Guardian, June 16, 1973)**

With the coming of the dry season last July, large earth moving machines began work on the first section of yet another Amazonian highway, this one 2,500 miles long. As mapped, the highway will run from Macapa on the Amapa Coast to Boa Vista in Roraima, on to the town of Icana, then south to Benjamin Constant in Amazonas and thence to the town of Cruzeiro do Sul, where it will link up with the southwestern part of the Trans-Amazonic Highway proper, and finally with the town of Taumaturgo on the Peruvian border (see accompanying map). Along with a number of feeder roads, the northern highway (called the Perimetral Norte) will form a transportation bridge between Brazil and the neighboring countries of French Guiana, Surinam, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru. When finished it will be the last episode in the now famous Brazilian "March to the West."

Estimated costs for road building alone are \$10 million per year, and the first 1,300 mile section from Macapa to a point near the Colombian border is to be completed by 1976. Contracted to build the highway are some of the largest construction firms in Brazil: Constutora Mendes, Jr., Andrade Gutierrez, Rabelo, Camargo Correa, Empresa Industrial e Technica, and Constutora Queiros Galvao. Senhor Sebastiao Camargo Pentead, owner of the largest Brazilian construction company (fifth largest in the world in terms of capital), is ecstatic about the new highway. "The Amazon region," he claimed to a reporter from *The Economist*, "is a blank space in the world. What is happening there now reveals completely unforeseen possibilities. . ."<sup>2</sup>

One element totally forgotten by Sr. Camargo is that the Amazon region, and especially that part planned for the Northern Highway, is the aboriginal homeland of hundreds



of independent Indian nations. This nasty fact, glossed over by the bureaucrats and the businessmen alike, is the human factor which lies behind the Brazilian "National Integration Plan" as it penetrates the vast jungle areas of the Amazon interior. Why does Camargo ignore the Indians' existence? The answer can be found in the other interests that Camargo has. Already he has one cattle ranch along the first Trans-Amazon road, and he and his associates have plans for other such projects along the new Amazon road.<sup>3</sup> Tax rebates and loans for setting up these cattle ranches are only given if the land is classified as "cleared" of Indians.<sup>4</sup> So, Camargo publicly ignores the reality of the Indians' existence — and kills them off privately by either direct methods or the spread of disease.

The government goes along with this process as it is seen as necessary and is equated with progress.<sup>5</sup> A sick joke now circulating among journalists in Brazil is that FUNAI, the national Indian agency established in 1968 to "pacify" the Indian tribes along the new highway system, is totally ignorant of even the number of indigenous peoples and tribes who inhabit this immense area. According to the *Estado do Sao Paulo*, FUNAI has taken up the "number game" as a means of resolving the "Indian question" in Brazil. In most cases the higher ranking FUNAI officials, noted for their anti-

Indian attitudes, have estimated the total number of Indians in the Amazon way below the reality.<sup>6</sup> This is their way of saying that the Indian is not important and that when destruction comes it will not be many people. "Just a handful of poor 'savages' lost out there in the wilderness."

On May 27th of last year, for example, the coordinator of FUNAI in Amazonas, General Ismarth Oliveira, said that there were 20,000 Indians along the proposed new highway. On the 15th of July, after numerous contradictory FUNAI reports, a FUNAI anthropologist argued that there were no less than 160,000 Indians living between Amazonas and the Territory of Roraima in only three of the five sections of the Northern Perimeter Highway.<sup>7</sup> It is a known fact that there are closer to 270 tribal groups in this area of the Amazon, rather than 52 tribes as claimed by FUNAI. According to the Brazilian anthropologist, Eduardo Galvao, these groups are distributed in two major culture areas composing the most densely populated Indian region of Brazil.<sup>8</sup> What will be the fate of these peoples as the new northern highway chops across their aboriginal territories and lands?

## CAMARGO BUILDS AND KILLS

**When he was building the road that opened up Rondonia, Camargo deliberately exposed an Indian chief to the "madhouse" of Sao Paulo. "He was a big chief, powerful, august, and they thought they could stop us building the road. So we took him first to Cuiaba and he started to get worried, though he was still arrogant. Then we flew him to Sao Paulo. It wasn't the buildings, or the cars, I think it was just the pressure of people. He's only had 300 people in his tribe, on earth, and he was the chief. Then seven million all milling round him. He started urinating in his trousers.**

**"He was totally demoralized, broken. Now? He's either back with his tribe or he's died of shock," Camargo laughed.**

Source: Brian Moynahan, "Brazil: The Big Carve-Up," *The Sunday Times Magazine* (London) October 7, 1973.

The effects of road building projects in other areas of the Amazon provide a tragic premonition of what will inevitably happen with the construction of the new northern highway. In 1971, the Paracana tribe was "pacified" along one stretch of the Trans-Amazonic Highway by FUNAI workers, and claimed to be a model case of "integration" into rural Brazilian society. When 40 people were immediately stricken with gripe and tuberculosis the Paracana painted their bodies in black urucum paint as a sign of mourning for the entire tribe. Then, highway workers invaded the village, gave presents to the men, and raped a number of Indian women. Thirty-five people came down with venereal disease, and eight Paracana children were born blind.<sup>9</sup>

Similar conditions are also reported to exist among the Tucarramae Tribe, at one time safe within the protected confines of the Xingu Indian Park, but recently left homeless by the invasion of one section of the Santarem-Cuiaba highway. At the time of this highway invasion, Orlando and Claudio Villas Boas, the directors of the Xingu Park, predicted that within a year we would hear reports of the death and extermination of the Tucarramae Tribe. Now this prediction is a reality. An Associated Press release of November 16, 1973 states that "Four Tucarramae Indians have died this month from the disease (measles), 20 others are in 'danger of losing their lives,' and 70 more are interned in a filthy government-run Indian hospital." A photograph accompanying the report showed several Tucarramae Indians lying on mattresses on the hospital floor, covered only with sheets.<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps the best account of what will happen to the hundreds of Indian tribes who find themselves in the path of the new northern highway was provided by the independent Brazilian weekly *Opinio*, before its censorship and closure last March. "If FUNAI has other plans for the Indians of the

Perimetral," the journal states, "no one knows about them. What is known for certain is that within a short while, in Macapa and other points, the tractors will begin to roll. Thousands of men will swarm along the road. It will surely be the last caravan. And will this ultimate caravan be any different from the others?"<sup>11</sup>

1. "2,500 Mile North Rim Road Is Planned," *Brazilian Bulletin*, November 1972, p.8.
2. "Brazil Survey," *The Economist*, September 2, 1972, p.56.
3. See the excellent article in the *Sunday Times Magazine* (London), October 7, 1973.
4. See *Guia de Incentivos Fiscais* (Editora Abril, Sao Paulo, March 1972) for the tax deductions allowed for investing in the Amazon. American businessmen are also confident about financial prospects in the Amazon, not the least of which is Caterpillar Brazil. In the last two years Caterpillar Brasil has sold 770 pieces of machinery worth \$47 million to the Brazilian army's engineer corps and the seven private construction companies that are building the Trans-Amazonic road. According to *Business Week*, Caterpillar refuses to divulge its sales, but informed sources figure that the company may control more than 70 percent of the \$125 million earth-moving market in Brazil.
5. "Cats Slice Out a Highway in the Jungle," *Business Week*, January 8, 1972, p.34.
6. For the corruption of FUNAI officials see "Development Against the Indians," *Brazilian Information Bulletin*, no. 9.
7. "Funai Pede Verba para a Perimetral," *Estado de Sao Paulo*, August 17, 1973.
8. "Os Indios e a Ultima Caravana," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 16, 1973.
10. "Measles Is Killing Tribe," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 16, 1973.
11. *Opinio*, *ibid*.

This report was written by Indigena, an organization described in the accompanying box.



INDIGENA grows out of our solidarity with the Indian Peoples affected by policies which seek to destroy not only the integrity of Native Nations and individuals throughout the Americas, but also threatens the existence of all forms of life around the world.

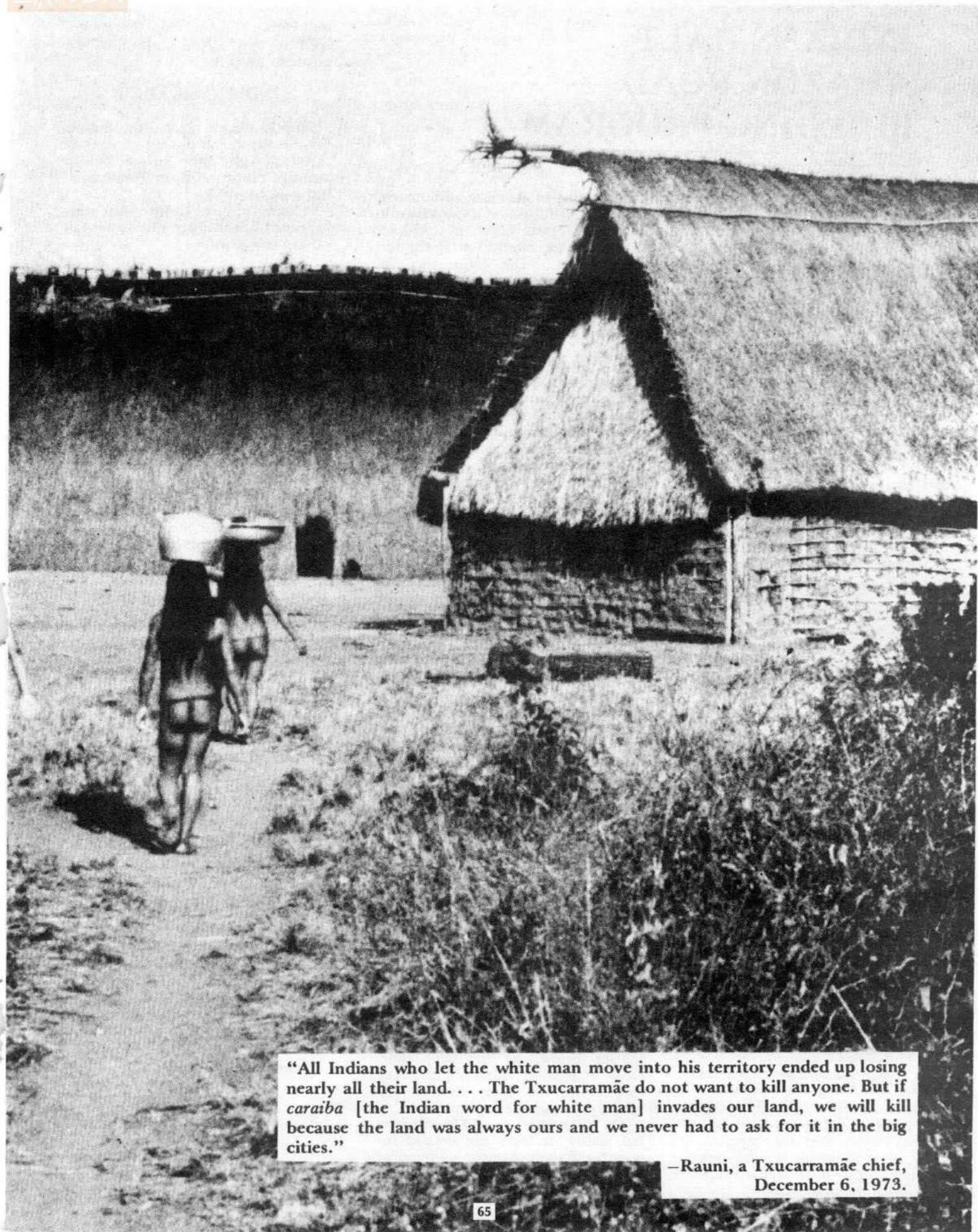
Until now there has existed no organization in the United States specifically concerned with making known these issues and trying to devise some actions to circumvent the exploitation of our brothers and sisters which has its point of departure—and often also its financial rewards—in this country. It is of primary importance that Indian People and other concerned people in North America be involved in preventing a repetition of the intolerable policies that continue to be implemented, and in supporting the struggles of resistance of Native Peoples, which generally receive little or no coverage in the regular media.

Our office in Berkeley, California acts as an information resource and distribution center of recent books, articles, documents, photographs and films on the social conditions of Indian Peoples in the Americas. A 39-page package of articles on the condition of Indians in the Americas is available by writing to us. At present we are working on two major projects: (1) an investigation of North American corporations (e.g., Swift/Armour, King Ranch, Texaco, Georgia-Pacific, etc.) who are on Indian lands of the Amazon region, and (2) a study of the scope and nature of American Missionary activities throughout Latin America.

We need help in finding source materials and clippings from local publications regarding these issues. We need people to do translations. Individuals or organizations can contribute in the particular way that is most suitable and effective for them.

INDIGENA  
Information on the Native Peoples of the Americas  
P.O. Box 4073  
Berkeley, California 94704 USA

INDIGENA



“All Indians who let the white man move into his territory ended up losing nearly all their land. . . . The Txucarramãe do not want to kill anyone. But if *caraiba* [the Indian word for white man] invades our land, we will kill because the land was always ours and we never had to ask for it in the big cities.”

—Rauni, a Txucarramãe chief,  
December 6, 1973.

# INDIANS HALT AMAZON ROAD BUILDING PROGRAM

From "Indigena", Winter 1974-75.

## STRUGGLE FOR LAND AND LIFE

In a confrontation which has pitted bows and arrows against helicopters and Caterpillar tractors, the Waimiri-Atroari Indians have put a halt to one section of Brazil's massive road-building program in the northwest Amazon region of South America.

The Indians' land has been invaded by the Brazilian government's agents and huge work crews, using heavy machinery to tear up the trees and land. Since 1973, the Brazilian government has attempted to put a 600 kilometer road through Waimiri-Atroari territory in order to connect the city of Manaus with the town of



Highway through the Amazon — one of the many which slice through Indian lands.

N.Y. Times

Caracarai along the Venezuelan border. They claim that this segment, BR-174, would provide a vital link with the highly-publicized Trans-Amazon Highway to the south.

According to Brazilian government reports, construction of a vast network of highways was begun in 1970 to "open up the interior of Brazil for development." The huge area in question is about the size of the United States and is inhabited by an estimated 100,000 tribal members of numerous Indian nations.

The actual number of Waimiri-Atroari is unknown, and press estimates vary from 1500 to 5000, but there are generally believed to be about 2000 people. They live in a large tropical forest area along the Alalau, Uatuma, and Jauaperi rivers in the Brazilian territory of Roraima.

Recently, a group of Surui Indian has driven settlers from a section of their reserve (Aripuana). Last summer, Marubo Indians successfully thwarted a group of FUNAI scouts at the Benjamin Constant Indian Post, along the Peruvian frontier. Similar acts of resistance have continued among the 3000-member Xavante nation who, under the leadership of a number of dedicated chiefs, have fought off cattle ranchers in Matto Grosso state.

The road program goes unquestioned in the press, as if it was Manifest Destiny, and Indian nations who have inhabited their lands for countless generations are described as being "in the path" of the highways. The fact is, the roads are being constructed through Indian land and if anything is to be moved, it should be the path of the roads — not the Indians.

During the early months of 1975, the Waimiri-Atroari launched several attacks, killing 12 people, including several agents of FUNAI. This agency, in collaboration with the Sixth Battalion of Army Engineers, has been charged with the subjugation and removal ("pacification") of Indians along the roads. Almost daily, helicopters flew over the Waimiri-Atroari villages, dropping "presents" to the Indians below. At the same time, crews of highway workers with heavy earthmoving machinery were already plowing through the Indians' land.

On December 27, 1974, wearing red macaw feathers and dressed for war, the Waimiri-Atroari, led by chief Maroaga, attacked the Abonari Indian Post, killing 3 *sertanistas*, including the

well-known Gilberto Pinto Figueiredo, head of the FUNAI program in the northern Amazon.

## INDIANS BLAMED

FUNAI agents blamed the Indians for the attack and though ignorant of their language, they conjectured in standard fashion that intertribal rivalries were responsible.

"None of us knows why this happened," said Jose de Aguiar, an official of FUNAI.

## SITUATION GRAVE

At present, a very serious and delicate situation faces people such as the Waimiri-Atroari and their neighbors, the Yanomami, one of the largest Indian nations in the northern Amazon region claimed by both Brazil and Venezuela.

The Yanomami, it is estimated, number about 10,000 people. As plans now stand, the Manaus-Caracarai road will soon cross their territory. The reserve promised them by FUNAI would include only enough land to support 300 tribal members. Thus, the Yanomami also can be expected to fight off the road.

It is of crucial importance to realize that at any moment, a group of crackpot generals or economic planners can mobilize the vast military resources of Brazil and wipe these Indian peoples off the face of the earth. A very powerful sector in Brazil has consistently argued that Indian peoples must not serve as an "obstacle" to national expansion.

One of the few, and most important, things we can do from here is to publicize and create an understanding of what the Waimiri-Atroari Indians are faced with and struggling against. They need our support.

We have just learned at press time that *sertanista* Apoena Meirelles (son of the well-known Indian agent Francisco Meirelles, who "pacified" the Xavantes) has been sent out by FUNAI at the head of an 80-man team in another attempt to "pacify" the Waimiri-Atroari. Fifty men will serve as armed guards, while 30 "lay out gifts and trinkets to gain the tribe's confidence." The Brazilian government has announced that it will continue to build the road.

Shelton Davis  
Marie-Helene Laraque





## **Secret “Integration” Camp**

The name of the place is Crenaque. Like a modern horror story, the secret existence of a concentration camp for Indians in Brazil was confirmed only a little more than a year ago by an ex-FUNAI agent, who resigned in protest, Antonio Contrim Neto, and a follow-up investigation by a reporter for *Jornal do Brasil*, a leading Brazilian newspaper. It still operates today. Secretly built in 1971 by FUNAI (The National Foundation for the Indian) it has become a central detention center for Indian tribal leaders, their warriors, and others who have resisted national “integration.”

The commander of the camp, Captain Manuel dos Santos Pinheiro, of the federal military police, stated:

Yes, the Indians can be a threat to the national security, since when they rebel they create disorder and subversion; in such cases, after being taken prisoner by the Indigenous Guards, they are sent to Crenaque, to re-educate them and transform them into good Indians. Also placed in the camp are Indians who have “disintegrated psychologically” in the “integration process” and are hence useless to the national economy.

Source: *Jornal do Brasil*, August 27, 1972.

# THE BRAZILIAN CHURCH STANDS WITH THE INDIAN PEOPLES

## "He who would have to die must live"

The following is an abridged and edited version of a much longer translation of **Y-JUCA-PIRAMA** provided by the United States Catholic Conference and reprinted in **SUPYSAUA** (op. cit.).

On November 12, 1971, the bishops of the far western region of Brazil declared: "Throughout the country the lands belonging to Indians are being invaded and gradually expropriated. The human rights of Indian peoples are virtually unrecognized, leading to their rapid cultural and biological extermination, as has already happened to so many other Brazilian tribes." (*L'osservatore Romano*, January 30, 1972.)

A Manaus newspaper reported, in connection with the situation in Roraima: "The Indian continues to be a defenseless victim. His lands are invaded, his reservations are plundered and his women are raped. The Boa Vista police know it . . . FUNAI also knows it . . . only we do not know why the Indians must continue to be exterminated under the supposed protection of FUNAI." (*A Noticia*, January 10, 1971.)

**The words of General Bandeira de Melo seem less like those of the President of an agency created to defend the rights of the Indians, than an echo of the words of the large landowners of Amazonia. "With reference to FUNAI guidelines for 1972," Bandeira de Melo claimed, "I stress again that the Indian cannot be allowed to impede development." (O Estado de Sao Paula, October 26, 1971.)**

In Para, ". . . the Indians (Gavioes) have just been moved to another area by FUNAI. But they were so traumatized that the women even aborted their babies in order not to give birth to children, since infants, according to them, made it difficult for the tribe to move. And the tribe was always moving from place to place, fleeing from the white man." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, May 25, 1972.)

A group of them ". . . in rags and starving, arrived in Fortaleza to ask for help" and in their simple language denounced FUNAI because it is headed by civilized men, and "civilized men cheat the Indian." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, December 15, 1971.)

In the north-east, "Xucurus, Fulnios, Pankararus, and Hamues . . . survive in spite of being confined to a fraction of their former territory and wander from place to place always being chased away." (*O Jornal*, April 29, 1973.)

But the real responsibility, as was reported by the Chamber of Deputies in Brasilia, belongs with FUNAI because "it has given permission to mining companies to prospect for ore in the native areas . . ." (*Correio Brasiliense*, December 8, 1971.)

In this rapid review of the Indian situation, it is quite clear, as stated by Professor Newton Maia, Director of the Department of Genetics at the University of Parana, ". . . that Brazilian Indians are being exterminated. With the advancement of white civilization there have been clashes, and it is always the Brazilian Indian who is most affected. This extermination does not take place only because of more powerful weapons, but also from biological causes introduced by the white man." (*Veja*, April 5, 1972.)

Although newspaper reports on the situation of Brazilian Indian tribes have been extensive, they tend to meet with indifference from the Brazilian public, who hold an erroneous view which is both superficial and biased as far as native populations are concerned. For the vast majority of Brazilians, the Indian is no more than a "savage", a relic of the past.

The native population of Brazil is the victim of every conceivable form of injustice. Indian policy itself is attracting the most severe criticism to the point of being "... completely worthless and a mass of contradictions." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, May 13, 1971.) Most important, as the now retired Indian agent, Antonio Gotrim Soares, stated: "An urgent reformulation of the methods of FUNAI is the only way of avoiding the destruction of the Brazilian Indians by civilization." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, April 20, 1973.)

With the exception of a few dedicated and knowledgeable Indian agents, FUNAI is characterized by a total lack of preparation for the mission which it is entrusted to fulfill. It has become, in the words of Dr. Amaury Sadock, an enormous piece of bureaucratic machinery centred in Brasilia "... whose decisions are alien to the well-being of the native community." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, August 9, 1973.)

### WESTERN ECONOMIC "DEVELOPMENT" CONDEMNED

Political leaders of the country do not hide the fact that "integrated and dependent capitalism" has been chosen as the means of "progress" for Brazil. It has also been demonstrated that the "Brazilian model" contemplates a form of "development", which only benefits a small minority of Brazilians, and the powerful international economic groups who they represent. The result of this option, rather than bringing about true development, is the increasing marginalization and theft of the Brazilian people, whether they be craftsmen or laborers, small urban or rural property owners or tenants, leaseholders, sharecroppers, agricultural workers, underemployed or unemployed.

Even more serious is the fact that the country as a whole is becoming more dependent on other richer and stronger nations, which prevents a national development experience, defined and undertaken by the Brazilian people themselves.

All administrative sectors of the government, including FUNAI, have been created to fulfill the political and economic directives contained in the "Brazilian Model".

"When the territory where only Indians live begins to receive colonists, forestry workers and ore prospectors, the authorities resolve the inevitable conflict between Indians and whites — when there are still Indians left — by relocating the native group to another area more removed from civilization and sometimes already populated by enemy tribes." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, November 7, 1972.)

"Today it is the Indian who is of least importance. The Indian is a 'thing' and the policy put into effect by FUNAI proves it." (*O Estado de Sao Paulo*, January 19, 1972.)

The "occupation of Amazonia" forms part of the government's overall development policy, as do the major multi-

national companies who find great opportunities for lucrative investments in mining and forestry operations or in the organization of cattle-raising enterprises.

Claudio Villas Boas claims: "They say it is necessary to open up roads to populate and settle the Amazon. Now the roads are open, and we can see that man is still absent. The forests are being leveled not only to open up the roads, but also to introduce cattle. The only way to conquer the Amazon is with cattle . . . And for this the Indians are being expelled from their reserves and our ecological balance is being savagely mutilated. (Jornal do Brasil, April 21, 1973.)

Minister of the Interior, Jose Costa Cavalcanti, has said: "The development of Amazonia will not stop because of the Indians." (Jornal do Brasil, September 18, 1973.) According to this position, if the Indians are there, but do not produce according to the dictates of integrated and dependent capitalism, if they do not have legal title to the land, if they do not own agricultural enterprises, then they must give way to the new "colonisers", they must withdraw from their lands which "civilization" has now decided to sell or give away to those destined to develop the interior of the country. If the Indians — thus challenged and robbed of their theoretically recognized rights, as well as their natural way of life — die, then let them die. If they resist, they are to be opposed as though they were the invaders of their own lands.

We submit that the real directives behind Indian policy in Brazil are contained in the "Brazilian Model" of development itself. Further, we believe that the only way in which FUNAI's policy can be radically changed is through a complete change in Brazilian policy as a whole. Without this total change, FUNAI or any other agency will be unable to go beyond the limits of a cheap and hypocritical "welfarism" for those who have been condemned to die; an agency which camouflages unprofessed support of large landowners and the exploiters of our national wealth.

Notwithstanding this tragic prospect, or precisely because of it, **the native peoples who are threatened with extinction must be saved. They, far more than the records of humanity, are living humanity.** This is why it is necessary that only persons and entities who are aware, competent, and unbiased should be mobilized to solve this problem.

In the final analysis, there are millions of human beings in the Americas and several thousands in Brazil, who, for centuries, have suffered the gravest injustices inflicted by a "race" which claims to be superior. If the consciences of humanity were equal to the volume of information, such an iniquitous situation would no longer be tolerated. The "Indian Problem" in Brazil cannot be understood, and much less solved, unless it is situated in its international context.

Perhaps most important is the need for a change among ourselves. We must recognize that the Christian entities which are most concerned with "giving assistance" to the Indians often lack socio-political awareness and vision. Accordingly, on the dubious pretext of alienated charity, they frequently betray their mission of tenaciously defending (Indians) from physical and cultural death or respecting their freedom and dignity as human beings.

### A TRUE BRAZILIAN VALUE SYSTEM

In conclusion, we believe that the crucial question is this: What would Brazil be if it truly relied upon the Indians, rather than attempting to annihilate them as at present?

It is quite possible that many capitalist and imperialist-minded Brazilians and authorities fear this question, which shows that, consciously or unconsciously, they support the

extinction of these peoples who, by virtue of their positive values, constitute a living denial of the capitalist system as well as of the "values" of a so-called "Christian Civilization".

Without assuming the idyllic vision of a Rousseau, we feel it urgently necessary to recognize and make public certain values which are more human, and thus more "evangelical", than our "civilized" values and which constitute a true alternative to our society:

1. The native peoples in general have a system of using the land base for the community and not for the individual. There is therefore no possibility for the domination of some by others on the basis of private exploitation of the means of production.
2. All production resulting from labor or the utilization of the riches and, therefore, the entire economy is based on the needs of the people, and not on profit.
3. The only purpose of the social organization is to guarantee survival and the rights of all, not just of a privileged few.
4. The educational process is characterized by the exercise of freedom.
5. The organization of power is not despotic but shared.
6. The native population lives in harmony with nature and its phenomena, unlike our "integration" with various forms of pollution, and the destruction of the natural habitat.
7. The discovery, development and existence of sex enters into the normal rhythm of the Indian's life in an atmosphere of respect, without the characteristics of taboo or idolatry which are manifested in our society and have so much influence over it.

This year, when we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, if we compared these rights with our civilized reality and with the Indian reality, perhaps we would be surprised to discover that the Indians live and respect them more than the nations who were responsible for their formulation.

If we had the courageous humility to learn from the Indians, perhaps we would change our individualistic ideas and our economic, political, social, and religious structures so that, instead of domination of some by others, we could make the world harmonious through co-operation.

The time has come to announce, in hope, that he who would have to die is the one who **must** live.

(December 25, 1973)



Signed by:

- Dom Maximo Biennes (Bishop of Caceres)
- Dom Helio Campos (Bishop of Viana)
- Dom Estevao Cardoso de Avellar (Bishop of Maraba)
- Dom Pedro Casaldaliga (Bishop of Sao Felix)
- Dom Tomas Balduino (Bishop of Goias)
- Dom Agostinho Jose Sartori (Bishop of Palmas)
- Frei Gil Gomes Leitao (Maraba)
- Pe. Antonio Iasi (Diamantino)
- Frei Domingos Maia Leite (Conceicao do Araguaia)
- Pe. Antonio Canuto (Sao Felix)
- Pe. Leonildo Brustolin (Palmas)
- Pe. Tomas Lisboa (Diamantino)

# WHY ARE THE MINING COMPANIES RACING INTO THE AMAZON?

Brazil loves international capitalists, and they love Brazil. The present Brazilian government wants to give the Western powers a vested interest in maintaining the status quo in Brazil as well as in greatly enriching the Brazilian ruling class, allowing it to dominate Latin America.

C.R.A. (of R.T.Z.), in a recent submission to the Australian government, contrasted the tax rates offered to mining companies in five other countries. In doing this, they explained the attractiveness of Brazil. It came lowest on the list with a tax rate half that of the next lowest — South Africa.

## GOVERNMENT INCENTIVES OFFERED

1. Companies established in the Amazon regions before 1982 are totally exempt from taxes for ten years if they are approved of as contributing to the economic development of the region. This exemption is extended to fifteen years if they use very large quantities of local raw materials as do the bauxite companies.
2. Even if not eligible for the above, existing ventures get a 50% tax reduction on money spent developing the region.
3. Import duties on equipment are waived plus accelerated depreciation allowance.
4. Mineral surveying expenses are tax deductible.
5. The government will finance ports, roads, railways and power plants.
6. The law restricting profit remittance abroad has been abolished.
7. No anti-pollution laws of consequence exist in the Amazon Region.

**"Velloso (the Planning Minister) made it clear that environment protection is going to take a back seat to industrial development in Brazil."** Business Latin America March 3, 1972.

The U.S. Government has negotiated protective agreements for U.S. investment with the Brazilian Government and offers OPEC insurance against losses from nationalization, currency regulations and war.

## CHEAP LABOUR

Not only are profits thus assured, but labour costs are extremely low. The share of labour cost in production is 8-20% as against 20-40% in the U.S.A. (Brazilian Information Bulletin, Spring 1974).

The "New York Times", 30/7/72, described the attractions Brazil's "ample and cheap" labour pool has for foreign investors:

**"Industry is new to Brazil and most workers come from wretchedly poor backgrounds . . . And their expectations are still quite low. Besides, labour unions exist mostly on paper and strikes are against the law."**



These "cheap" wages are under government control although inflation is rampant. Between January and September 1973 the price of beans increased by 157%. As a consequence, the infant mortality rate is appallingly high, and rising; in the north-eastern region in some cities it is about 250 per 1,000 births. ("Brazilian Information Bulletin", Winter 1974, page 15.)



## POLITICAL REPRESSION

Trade unions are constantly suppressed by Geisel's government as are all critics. Over 100 people are known to have been arrested, accused of being in "the communist party" in February and May this year (1975) — and many of these were unionists. The tortures practiced on these have been denounced by Church authorities, Amnesty International and other groups. Methods used in Brazilian gaols include electric shocks, beatings, clubs forced into the anus and so on.

### EXAMPLE:

A former Methodist Missionary, Fred Morris, was arrested on 30th September, 1974. After being beaten, electrodes were



Vadillo in Siempret, Mexico City

attached to his toes, then to his right nipple and then to his ear.

**"These shocks seemed to be taking off the top of my skull. A blue-white lightning filled my head. Spasms forced open my mouth in screams then slammed it shut on my tongue. My agony was highly entertaining to my inquisitors; there was much laughter in the room."**

The electrode was then attached to his penis — he was then re-beaten. This was repeated for several days. A wheel with electrified spikes was rolled across his back.

Why was he tortured? He stated the real reason for the torture became evident when: *"my inquisitors began asking me endless questions about Roman Catholic Archbishop Helder Camara, a vocal critic of the regime and a friend of mine."* He added that many more were being tortured as he. *'Time' Magazine November 18, 1974.*



Among the dozens of trade union leaders recently arrested were some of the leaders of the metal workers union and the chairman of the textile workers union.

*"Any Brazilian can tell you where the OBAN torture centre is in Sao Paulo, or the Codi centre in Rio. Everybody knows about the Death Squadron, the off-duty police group that has murdered at least two thousand opponents under mysterious circumstances. You cannot avoid them, because their unlicensed Cadillacs, emblazoned with the monogram E.M. and a skull and crossbones, can be seen prowling with darkened windows along the streets."* (*"The Underside of the Miracle"*, Brazilian Information Bulletin, Spring 1974.)

## AND FREE LAND

The leasing of legally recognized (and supposedly inviolate) Indian Reserves to large mineral extraction companies is now part of the official policy of FUNAI. In December 1973, the long-awaited Brazilian Indian Statute was finally ratified by the Brazilian Congress and passed into law. Contrary to the wishes of the Congress itself, the President of Brazil vetoed that section of the Statute that would have prohibited the leasing of Indian lands.

**"You can buy land out there now for the same price as a couple of bottles of beer per acre. When you've got half a million acres and twenty thousand head of cattle, you can leave the lousy place and go and live in Paris, Hawaii, Switzerland or anywhere you choose!"**

Words of an American rancher in the Mato Grosso where the Xavante Indians are being dispossessed of their tribal lands.

SOURCE: Robin Hanbury-Tenison, *"The Indians of Brazil: A Question of Survival"*, 1973.

## CONCLUSION

We have described the situation in the Amazon at such length because of the similarity between the way the Indians are being treated and the treatment of the Australian Aborigines.

As in Australia, Alcan, RTZ, Kaiser and other mining companies on Indian land, are making profit from the immoral laws of a government. They may well protest that they do but obey the laws of the country — but in Brazil, as in South Africa, Australia, Bougainville, the companies came because of the advantages these laws gave them, dispossessing small tribal nations from their land and culture.

If they protest innocence, let them return the land, even without local legal requirement, and renegotiate their leases with the morally legitimate local land owners and users.

Despite all the dangers, recently the Indian population of the Amazon has begun to grow again. They should NOT be thought of as a dying race. They have begun once more to exert their ownership of their lands. They have survived the worst of the European invasion. There are some 180,000 Indians in Brazil. (1972 figure.) It is only the new advance of the mining companies that endangers their existence and land.



A Yanomamo family; the Amazon.