

THE SYSTEMATIC GENOCIDE OF NATIVE NATIONS
BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

NATIVE NATIONS HAVE BEEN VICTIMIZED BY A SERIES OF GOVERNMENTAL ATTACKS, FROM THE INVASION OF THE EUROPEANS IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT, WHICH RESULTS IN AN OVERALL POLICY OF GENOCIDE. THE MOTIVES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, IN ITS ATTEMPT TO ELIMINATE THE NATIVE NATIONS, IS PART OF A WORLDWIDE SYSTEM OF IMPERIALISM, WHICH SEEKS TO CONTROL LAND AND RESOURCES OF COLONIZED THIRD WORLD NATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING PROFIT.

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prepared by the Native American Solidarity Committee
in coordination with the American Indian Treaty Council Information Center

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 260 (A) (II) OF THE UNITED NATIONS
CONVENTION ON WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, INCLUDING
GENOCIDE (DECEMBER 9, 1948) READ AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE II:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a) Killing members of the group;
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

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DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT (20th CENTURY) GENOCIDAL POLICY

STERILIZATION ABUSE

Sterilization is a permanent form of birth control. In some cases it is necessary for medical reasons, but all too often, particularly for Third World people, sterilization abuse occurs. Sterilization abuse refers to the occurrence of sterilization when there is no knowledge or consent, or a lack of sufficient information about the risks, the alternatives or the ramifications.

General Population:

An Association for Voluntary Sterilization study showed that there has been a three-fold increase in sterilizations since 1970. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare sterilizes some 3000 women per year. The Federal Government reimburses the hospital or doctor 90% of the costs of sterilization for welfare women, compared to 50% reimbursement for abortions. (1)

The recently Carter-endorsed Hyde Amendment will cut off all Medicaid abortions, but sterilizations will continue to be reimbursed. A 1973 study shows that sterilizations are being done primarily to Third World and welfare recipient women. Statistics show that the following people, within the United States, have been sterilized:

20.1% Black women; 24% Native American women;
21.7% Chicana women and 16% white women. (2)

Other Third World Nations - Sterilizations Performed:

- * 35.2% Puerto Rican women of child bearing age;
- * 40,000 women in Colombia were sterilized between 1963-65 by Rockefeller funded programs;
- * In India, the government intends to implement compulsory sterilization after two children;
- * Since the junta in Chile, 40% of the health budget for the entire country is now spent on "family planning". (3)

Welfare Recipients:

19.7% of Third World women on welfare have been sterilized;
7.3% of white women on welfare have been sterilized. (4)

According to statistics from Dr. Hellman's office (Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs, Public Health Service of the Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW)), an estimated 150,000 low-income persons have been sterilized annually, under U.S. funded programs. (5)

As recently as 1973, bills were introduced into five state legislatures which would make sterilization mandatory for welfare recipients. These bills have not been passed to date. (6)

Native Americans in the United States:

24% of Native women have been sterilized. 19% are of child bearing age. For every 7 babies born, one Indian woman is sterilized. The Indian birth rate has been steadily declining since 1965. In 1973 in Claremore, Oklahoma, of 132 women sterilized only 32 of these were for therapeutic reasons (medically required). (7)

In Oklahoma City, of 15,000 women of child bearing age, 1,761 were sterilized within 46 months.

In the Aberdeen area, of 9,000 Native women, 740 were sterilized in a 46 month period.

In Phoenix, Arizona, of 8,000 women, 784 were sterilized. (8)

In 1973, as it was becoming clear that sterilization was increasing at an alarming rate, Senator Abourezk of South Dakota asked for the General Accounting Office to perform a study on sterilization abuse in the Indian Health Service (IHS) areas.

In April of 1974, the HEW had passed a series of regulations in response to a U.S. District Court order, including a moratorium on sterilization of persons under 21 years of age, or mentally incompetent.

The GAO Report:

Between 1973 and 1976, in four out of twelve IHS areas, 3,406 sterilizations were performed on Native women. Of these, 3,000 were between the ages of 13 and 44.

In the GAO Report (B-164031-5), it was concluded that consent forms used by IHS were not in compliance with regulations, and that the moratorium was being violated. Several different consent forms were being used. The most widely used form did not:

- 1) indicate that basic informed consent had been orally presented;
- 2) contain written summaries of oral presentations;
- 3) contain a statement notifying subjects of their right to withdraw consent.

The GAO Report, although an important exposé of sterilization abuse of Native American women, has one major weakness. When doing the study, the government investigators failed to interview patients to determine if they were adequately informed before consenting to sterilization. Instead, they relied totally on documents found in the medical records of the institutions performing the sterilizations.

Consent Forms and Federal Guidelines:

About the only form of protection which is provided to low-income women is a set of federal guidelines for Medical Assistance recipients. The consent forms provide that there must be a detailed

explanation of the sterilization procedures, its risks and side effects, and alternative birth control methods; it also provides for a 72-hour waiting period between information and surgery, and written understanding that benefits cannot be withdrawn if the patient refuses sterilization. (9)

The GAO Report states that 30% of Indian Health Service sterilizations were performed at "contract" facilities, in which the doctors are not required to adhere to consent form requirements, and monitoring of consent procedures is not conducted. According to Dr. Connie Uri (Cherokee, medical consultant to Northern Cheyennes in Montana) the forms are not written in a way that women understand what they are signing. They are written in English rather than a Native tongue, and are presented at times such as during labor, when the woman is under great stress or sedation and is easily coerced into signing the form. Of women below 30 years of age, 95% regret the operation later. According to Dr. Uri:

"There must be a moratorium on sterilization in the Indian Health Service until an Indian panel is set up and regulations are handed down to safeguard our women...the consent forms must be rewritten so that they are fully understood and in our own languages. The policy of informed consent must be instituted...The establishment of a patient's advocate is further recommended."

Indian health workers, medicine men, and other Indian people have put together a new consent form which includes, among other things, a six-month waiting period between the time of informed consent and the surgical procedure, giving the woman time to consider the consequences for her nation. Husbands must also sign the form.

CHILD STEALING

The mass removal of one nation's children from their homes and cultural heritage by another nation - to be reared in the homes of the second nation - is genocide, as defined by the United Nations Convention on Genocide.(1)The United States, which conspicuously did not endorse this convention, pursues a systematic policy of child stealing against Native American Nations.

This child stealing is mainly carried out in two ways: removing Native children from their homes and putting them up for adoption or in foster homes; and by placing them in white run boarding schools removed from their communities.

Adoption:

Surveys by the Association of American Indian Affairs show that from 25-35% of all Indian children under 18 are removed from their homes by child welfare officials; 85% of these children are placed in non-Indian homes. (2) In most cases, the parents and family of these children do not understand the document and legal proceedings involved, and are not represented by an attorney.

The reasons given for the separation of Native children from their homes almost always reflect the racism of the welfare worker as well as the poverty of the Native family; thus the oppression of Native people is used to justify further oppression. For example, homes are called "unfit" because there is no running water, or because two or more children are sharing one bed. "It isn't necessary for Indian children to have one bed apiece" said one Native mother, "Our children learn sharing right from the start." (3) This lack of respect for Indian ways means that Native families are prevented from being adoptive parents even if they are relatives of the children involved; yet non-Indian parents receive governmental subsidies for caring for the children that their parents were "too poor" to keep.

Norma Jean Serena, a Creek-Shawnee woman, was involuntarily sterilized and her three children taken from her by welfare officials for so-called "socio-economic" reasons because she associated with Black people. In another incident, Mrs. Delphine Shaving Bear asked for temporary care for her son while she went to look for her other two children; her request for help was used as a pretext to file a "neglect petition" and place her son with foster parents. (4) Margaret Townsend, a Paiute of Nevada, had her children forcibly taken from her and placed in foster homes after she was arrested - for the first time in her life - for driving while intoxicated. (5)

The Native American Child Protection Association (NACPC) was formed to prevent what is seen as the wholesale abduction of Indian children. According to Bernice Appleton of the NACPC, there is a shortage of white babies for adoption, so, since not too many whites want Black babies, they are coming for next - and that's Indian. This is coupled with a lack of understanding of Indian custom, which interprets extended family situations as signs of "neglect". NACPC has recommended that Indian children only be placed in homes in which there is at least one Native parent. (6)

BIA Boarding Schools:

Another means by which Native children are removed from their homes and families is by placing them in white run boarding schools.

According to the BIA annual school census for 1973, 68% of all Indian children attended public school; 26% attended federal boarding schools; and 6% attended mission and other "private" schools. In that year the BIA operated 195 schools with an enrollment of 51,180 Indian, Aleut and Eskimo children and 19 "dormitories" for 3,871 children in public schools. Of all Indian children in federal schools, over two-thirds (33,672) were in boarding schools. (7)

The purpose of these schools is to assimilate Native children into the culture of their oppressor, and to downgrade and destroy their own culture. The curriculum of BIA schools is designed to meet the standards of the state in which they are located and to provide for the "special needs" of the children. These include enrichment courses in English (none in Native languages), and "courses designed to overcome (sic) educational and other cultural deficits that result from isolation and deprivation." (8)

This education is compulsory and thorough. Indian children in federal boarding schools are encouraged to attend Christian church services; and those in day schools are given "released time" for Christian religious instruction. Meanwhile, the teachers and textbooks conspire to downgrade the importance and viability of Native religions.

A Blackfoot woman who lives on Long Island is being charged with "negligence" because she objected to the racism of her child's teacher and withdrew her daughter from school. (9)

The effects on the children in the boarding schools are the worst, however. Recently, two young boys froze to death while running away from a BIA boarding school, trying to get to their homes 50 miles away. At Intermountain School in Utah, students are handcuffed and beaten. Senator (now Vice President) Mondale made this report on the Fort Hall, Idaho reservation:

"The subcommittee was told during its visit to the reservation that the suicide rate for teenagers was perhaps as high as 100 times the national average...We were told that suicide had occurred as early as 10 years of age." (10)

In one school on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation there were a dozen suicide attempts in 18 months among fewer than 200 students. (11)

As a result of this child-stealing policy, implemented through the foster homes and adoptive agencies and the boarding schools, one-half of Native American children are removed from their own culture, traditions and nation at an early age.

The U.N. Convention on Genocide states that imposing measures intended to prevent births within a group of people and forcibly transferring the children of one group to another group are acts of genocide. Stealing children and sterilization of women are direct attacks on nationhood. Sterilization must continue as a birth control choice for women, but for Native people it should be seen in the context of national identity. If an Indian woman is a member of a 3,000 member nation, sterilization has serious consequences for the survival of the nation as a whole. Indian children are the future for all Indian Nations. When the United States takes these children away, they are undermining the struggle of Indian peoples for sovereignty, self-determination and independence.

HEALTH SITUATION OF NATIVE AMERICANS

Some of the most clear-cut examples of colonial oppression and genocide can be cited within the overall health situation of Native peoples. Several aspects of this area are results of direct shortcomings of the Governmental body in charge of Indian health care, the Indian Health Service (IHS). Others result from psychological and social effects of oppression and colonization: high suicide rate, alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental illness.

Prior to the coming of the white man, Indian people were not plagued with serious health problems and disease. In fact, the drastic reduction in population (a decrease of over 30 million) was largely due to disease brought by Europeans, to which Indian people had not developed an immunity.

The Indian Health Service (IHS):

The Indian Health Service is a branch of the Public Health Service under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, which claims to provide a "full health program including curative, preventive, rehabilitative, and environmental health services through an integrated system of hospitals, health centers, and health stations" (1) for Alaskan and American Natives. The IHS operates under an annual budget of \$280,999,000 (fiscal year 1975) (2).

Despite these proclamations, the IHS hospitals are old and run down and seriously understaffed. A 1969 study on all six Navajo area IHS hospitals showed a total deficit of 273 nurses (3). The majority of health workers hired are not Indian people. The extremely high rates of infections and communicable diseases, malnutrition, infant mortality and short life span, indicate that the IHS is not preventing and curing health problems. Indian people are clearly not in a position of control over their own lives. Within the boundaries of their colonial situation, U.S. agencies such as the IHS only serve to inhibit the possibility of such control.

Infections and Communicable Diseases:

These are more prevalent among Indians than non-Indians due primarily to crowded housing conditions, unsanitary waste disposal, lack of insect control, improper food handling and refrigeration, unsafe and poor water supply, and lack of nutritious food. The most common infectious diseases among Indians are upper respiratory infections, influenza, pneumonia, dysentery, gastroenteritis, and streptococcal infections. Trachoma, a disease virtually unknown to the general population, still affects Indian people. Otitis media (middle ear infection) ranks high

among reportable diseases. (4) Some 38% of Native children were found to have serious hearing handicaps by age four. (5) The death rate for tuberculosis is four times as high among Indians as non-Indians. (6)

Respiratory infections are extremely common, and in children they frequently produce serious bronchiectasis, which is rare among children in other parts of the country. On the Rosebud reservation, where because of the cold climate, people spend much of their time in small, crowded houses, Indians are 40 times more likely than the general population to contract strep throat and scarlet fever. (7)

Infant Mortality:

The infant mortality rate for Native Americans is about 31% more than that of whites in the U.S. The documentation of risk factors predisposing to illness in infants adds insight into some of the fundamental problems faced by Native Americans. Infants (0-12 months) are found to have a very high incidence of morbidity if they have three to five of the following risk factors:

1. low birth weight;
2. respiratory distress at birth;
3. congenital defects;
4. child neglect;
5. alcoholism in one parent;
6. more than 5 brothers or sisters;
7. mental problems in parents;
8. living in high-risk community;
9. overcrowded home. (8)

Life Expectancy:

In addition to the high percentage of infant mortality and morbidity, the poor status of Indian health is exemplified in the comparative statistics on life expectancy, which is 47 years for Native people compared to 70.8 years for the general population. (9)

Malnutrition:

More than 75% of all Indians in the United States suffer from malnutrition and related diseases. (10) According to a BIA response to a U.N. Study on Discrimination of Indigenous Peoples (1972), Indians and Alaskan natives suffer from dietary deficiency brought about by the fact that they are at the lowest level of the economic scale in terms of the entire population. A 1961-62 Survey on Nutrition findings stated that 77% of Blackfeet Indians of Montana were found to have a diet rated "poor" or "very poor". Between 1964-69, 28 cases of Marasmus (a severe nutritional disease) were found to exist among Navajo infants. (11)

Kwashiorkor, an extreme protein deficiency, is another acute, often fatal nutritional disease frequently diagnosed on reservations.

Psychological and Social Effects of Oppression:

Alcoholism, often defined as a social disease, is prevalent among Native Americans. Cirrhosis of the liver due to alcoholism is the fourth leading cause of death among Native peoples. In addition, a high percentage of traffic accidents, one of the leading causes of death, are alcohol-related. San Juan County, New Mexico provides a blatant example of the effects of alcohol on Indian people. In 1973, 83% of all persons arrested were Native; and 85% of these arrests were for alcohol related offenses. The full magnitude of these figures are realized when it is understood that the Navajo population accounts for only 35% of the total population in San Juan County. Over a five year period in Farmington, New Mexico, over 15,000 Navajos were arrested for alcohol-related offenses at a rate of over 300 Navajos per month. Over 80% of all persons arrested in Farmington are Navajo and about 90% of these arrests are alcohol-related.

Widespread violations of liquor laws by retailers is one of the main reasons for the present situation regarding alcoholism. Retailers sell to persons already drunk, to minors, and to Navajo children. The violations exist because there is no enforcement of the liquor laws. As one member of the Coalition for Navajo Liberation put it, "Liquor brings a lot of money to San Juan County, both for the county and for the State. Approximately \$7million comes from liquor sales alone in San Juan County." (12)

Suicide, alcoholism, glue and paint sniffing, delinquency and broken homes are all considerably more common among Indians than among the general population. Mental illness thrives at an alarming rate. The director of the Alaskan Native Medical Center has suggested that the high rate of mental retardation is largely due to the residual damage of acute infectious diseases of early in life. (13) Homicide and suicide accounted for 222 deaths per 100,000 population among Indians in 1964, nearly triple the national average. In a 10-year period, this death rate rose 22.5 percent among Indians. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in the 15-19 year age group, at a rate three times as great as that among the general population. (14)

Chemical Warfare - Mercury Poisoning:

A subtle yet highly dangerous form of genocide is the use of chemicals to invade and infect the environment of a people, thus causing physical and mental destruction to those exposed. Dryden Chemicals Ltd., a branch of the multi-national corporation, Reed International, is responsible for the contamination through mercury poisoning of the English-Wabigoon river system and the destruction of two Ojibway communities in northwest Ontario.(15) Reed International, based in Britain, is one of

Europe's largest paper and packaging corporations, whose holdings extends through 44 countries around the world. As a result of mercury contamination of much of the water in Ontario, 798 deaths have been cited so far. The Anishabeg people of the area were told to "reduce the amount of fish they eat," although fish is the major source of protein for those people. The Canadian government did not inform the Native peoples of their findings on the contamination of their waters, or explain to them the effects of mercury poisoning. (16)

Methyl mercury is a cumulative poison. It is completely absorbed from food and slowly excreted from the body. Once absorbed, the mercury is transported by the blood throughout the body. After the mercury reaches the brain, it usually concentrates in specific areas, principally in the cerebellum, resulting in brain damage and serious mental and physical disorders. Numbness of the extremities, loss of peripheral vision, hearing difficulties, and speech disorders; psychological disorders, loss of equilibrium, muscle spasms, loss of memory, inability to write or read, deformity, coma and death, all are symptoms of mercury poisoning.

Methyl mercury poisoning has a high affinity for placenta and fetal tissue. This means that pregnant women can actually be protected from the poisoning themselves, while the mercury is trapped inside the womb. Toxic effects on the new-born infant may appear as slight mental retardation, or in extreme cases, the child will show symptoms of cerebral palsy and severe retardation. Such poisoning is irreversible and can occur up to 3 years after the mother is exposed. (17)

LAND AND RESOURCES

Essentially, the struggle of Native people for sovereignty and self-determination is the fight for control over their land and resources.

Land:

The question of land has historical importance, as it was the Europeans' greed for land which was a driving force behind their invasion and attempted conquest of Native Americans. The present land base of the United States empire -- from which the United States has come to control much of the world -- is land that was stolen from Native American Nations through war, military invasions, and broken treaties. The history of this theft is a long and bitter one.

The intensifying fight of the United States to gain control over reservation land is not mysterious. Recent discoveries of vast amounts of resources under this land has led to a heightened battle for control by the U.S. The U.S. also is attempting to squash the national liberation struggle of Native Nations by taking over their land base.

A few examples from recent history will illustrate this point:

In 1903, the state of South Dakota arbitrarily and illegally divided the Rosebud Reservation into counties; white people moved onto the land and demanded jurisdiction. Congress subsequently granted white people the right to settle on this land.

On April 4, 1977, the Supreme Court ruled against the Rosebud Sioux of South Dakota -- declaring that the Sioux no longer had legal rights to the land because so many white people were living on the reservation. (1)

Another example is that only a year after the Western Energy Supply & Transmission Association Group had begun to move into Black Mesa, New Mexico, it became obvious to the four states involved that some very basic changes had to be made. In 1967 a group composed of officials from the states of Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico formed the Four Corners Regional Development Commission. They employed the Westinghouse Corporation to study the potential of developing an urban center in the Four Corners Area. The money for the project was designated for Urban Renewal from HUD funds. The project was carried out, and U.S. News & World Report (6/23/69) published the results:

"Covering 288,000 square miles -- about 8% of America's land area -- the program for the Four Corners Economic Development is to

include: an ultra-modern city of 250,000 with the latest techniques in housing prefabrication, education and business; a variety of recreational areas, including ski resorts, tourist ranches, and Indian villages and archeological ruins; a network of new roads and airports that would convert one of the most inaccessible areas of the United States into a center of commerce and tourism; agricultural projects to make more abundant use of land that is now mainly devoted to agriculture and sparse grazing.

"The work would cost a total of more than a billion dollars in both public and private funds. Indians would compose a minority of this urban population...

"The land being considered for this ultra-modern center is largely owned by the Navajo, Hopi and Ute tribes. The water that would be used for this project also belongs to these people... overnight the land would be transformed. And that, of course, is the real objective of the Four Corners Regional Commission: to hurry along the loss of a life-style which could never make any state rich."

Another case, U.S. v. Winans, 198 U.S., 371, 381 (1904) states that "...the treaty was not a grant of rights to the Indians, but a grant of rights from them -- a reservation of those not granted." This is a critical concept in regard to the question of reservations, treaties, and the fight for reclamation of land and resources. Many times, history reads that the United States granted or allotted land to the Indians -- when, in fact, the land was not the property of the United States to give, and such power to grant only rested with the sovereign Native Nations.

Water & Resources:

90% of the land on many reservations is leased by the BIA to white ranchers, oil and coal companies, or other non-Indian lessees. Large corporations have a long history of interest in the mineral and timber-rich lands of Native Americans. According to a report made by the Federal Energy Administration in 1975, "over 2.7 billion dollars of oil and gas; 187 million dollars of coal; 349 million dollars of uranium have been produced from Indian lands" in recent years, in addition to "over 434 million dollars of lead, zinc, phosphate, copper and limestone." (2) Also, 90% of all uranium in the United States, and more than 1/3 of all coal, rests on Indian land.

Water is a primary resource that is affected by corporate control and expansion.

"Indian rights to the use of water from all sources which arise upon, traverse, border upon or underlie Indian reservations in the arid and semi-arid Western United States, are imperatively required by the Indians if they are to survive as distinct and independent people." (3)

The Winters Doctrine, arising out of a Supreme Court decision in 1908 ruled that Indians have all rights to water resources which are available to their reservations. However, this decision has consistently been violated by the Department of the Interior. History is full of cases in which the Secretary of the Interior arbitrarily seized Indian nations' rights to water use and transferred these rights to white owned corporations. There also have been consistent and aggressive attacks to limit or totally destroy the Winters Doctrine.

In reference to the 1868 Great Sioux Nation Treaty made at Fort Laramie, U.S. v. Powers, 305, U.S. 527, 533 (1939) stated:

"Manifestly, the Treaty of 1868 contemplated ultimate settlement by individual Indians upon designated tracts where they could make homes with exclusive rights of cultivation...Without water, productive cultivation has always been impossible."

The Council on Economic Priorities, in a study of federal leasing policy, noted that:

"The diversion of large quantities of water to coal developments will severely strain the water resources in the west and pre-empt agriculture in favor of coal development even in non-mining areas." (4)

There is a direct connection between coal and strip mining and water rights. This can be seen clearly in regard to the Navajo-Hopi Reservation at Black Mesa. There are 508,000 acre feet of water on this land. Although the Hopi do not live on Black Mesa, their land receives the Mesa's run off. The Hopi do not use wells, but their springs feed from the deep aquifers since they live at the edge of the Mesa's structural basin.

By strip mining the coal and poorly reclaiming the land, the area will not be able to support its present agricultural crops, nor its grazing sheep. Strip mined lands need water to be effectively reclaimed; Peabody Coal Company has not allocated water for this purpose. While the company expects rainwater to provide the necessary moisture the National Academy of Science points out the impossibility of lands reclaiming themselves when the annual rainfall is less than 10", as it is in the Southwest. In fact, the removal of coal from the Black Mesa, threatens the very existence of the Navajo and Hopi Nations with immediate extinction. This is because 2,000 - 4,500 gallons of

water per minute will be pumped from underground wells at Black Mesa to slurry a mixture of coal and water to one of the power plants.

Also, the open strip-mined coal pits allow rainwater to dissolve sulfuric acid and other chemicals from the coal and thus the very meager amount of water which eventually will reach the Hope will be contaminated and unfit for consumption. Not only will the crops which are irrigated from these springs sicken and die, but, more significantly, so will the people. (5)

Forty-two other plants such as the Peabody plant in Black Mesa, are planned for the Powder River Country. These types of plants will ruin the land, pollute the air and use all the water from the Yellowstone, Powder and Bighorn basins and the Boysen Reservoir -- Wind River. (6)

Air Pollution:

Air pollution is another aspect of the problem in regard to land and resources. When the first stage of the power plant that Peabody is presently building reaches its completion, the air basin over the entire Southwest will be carrying a pollution load greater than that of New York and Los Angeles combined.

Coal miners of Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia and other states are quite familiar with the effects of constantly breathing coal dust; coal dust is the major cause of silicosis, or black lung disease, common among many miners. Although open cut mining displaces the dust more readily than shaft mining, the combined effects of smokestack soot from the 60+ story tower, mining dust and pulverized coal will affect surrounding areas with a large supply of dirty air and haze. (7)

Sulphur dioxide is one of the most common gasses produced by combustion of coal and related minerals such as oil. When it mixes with moisture in the air, it forms sulphuric acid. Sulphuric acid has long been used as a plant poison, and is the major cause of eye and nose irritation in such cities as Los Angeles and Newark. Carbon dioxide, produced by automobile exhaust, is only 1/4 as toxic. Also fly ash and other toxic chemicals can be emitted into the air and spread over a large area, generally affecting plant, animal and human life from coal mining. (8)

Department of Energy Bill: (9)

Although generally unknown to the U.S. public, there is presently a new bill being circulated inside Congress, the House of Representatives, etc, whose purpose would be to establish a Department of Energy in the executive branch by vesting in this Department

the functions of other agencies and Departments that presently deal with energy management and policy.

The Secretary of the Department of Energy would acquire the powers of the Department of the Interior relating to energy. This includes:

1. all aspects of federal leasing procedures, such as production rates;
2. research and development aimed at increasing solid fuel mineral production; and
3. functions related to "coal and analysis".

Federal leasing, as defined by the bill, gives the lessee (e.g., Exxon, Peabody, etc.) the "exclusive right and privilege of exploring for, developing, producing, or any or all of these, oil and gas, coal, oil shale, tar sands, and geothermal resources on land or interest in lands under Federal jurisdiction."

These provisions would, in short, abrogate Indian national sovereignty (what little remains) over their natural resources.

Furthermore, and perhaps the most serious part of the bill, is the fact that the Department would be authorized to call out "Armed forces personnel in carrying out his functions." Members of the Armed Forces detailed for service in the Department of Energy "shall not be subject to direction or control by his Armed Force or any officer thereof directly or indirectly...." This means that the Secretary would have at his disposal a personal army responsible to no one but himself, to use whenever he feels necessary to acquire coal or other resources. (from places like the Cheyenne and Crow reservations).

Whether or not this bill will be passed as is, or altered (since certain forces in the ruling class may not agree with the total and blatant power given to the oil companies), remains at this time unclear. However, given the already existing military operations on reservations, the devastating effects of the bill -- which gives the Secretary of the Department of Energy a standing army, free to invade, at his wish, Native reservations -- on the Native American fight for sovereignty and self-determination, for control over their land and resources is clear.

The destruction of land, air and resources by the United States is in total disregard of the ramifications upon Native people, their loss of land and resources, their illnesses, their deaths -- and is clearly no less than another aspect of the genocidal attack.

MILITARY AND LEGAL REPRESSION

Cointelpro:

The Minnesota Citizens' Review Commission of the FBI was formed in late 1976 to investigate and make public reports of harassment and extra-legal activity by the FBI and other federal law enforcement agencies. Their findings show that the FBI used its Counterintelligence Program (Cointelpro) to "neutralize", in the most brutal sense of the word, national liberation struggles inside the United States.

Cointelpro was established by the FBI in 1956. It was a program which, in the words of the Minnesota Citizens' Review Commission, "combined vicious aspects of psychological warfare and officially sanctioned vigilante terrorism against those, especially non-whites, who chose to challenge existing policies." (1) The primary goals of Cointelpro, as described by J. Edgar Hoover in 1968 were to:

1. Prevent coalitions of Black groups;
2. Prevent the rise of a Black 'messiah' such as Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael or Elijah Muhammed;
3. Prevent violence on the part of Black groups;
4. Prevent Black groups and leaders from "gaining respectability by discrediting them" to the Black community, the "responsible" as well as the "liberal" white community, and the followers of Black groups;
5. Prevent the long-range growth of Black groups, especially among youth. (2)

Due to the recent scandals in the FBI and the Nixon Administration, Cointelpro itself was officially dismantled in 1972, but a look at recent events on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota, will show that such tactics are still being used against Native American (and Black) activists -- and in fact, have intensified. Now they simply go under a different name, or no name at all.

Wounded Knee - 1973/ Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota:

As stated by the American Indian Movement in 1973:

"The Indian peoples who have tried to function through the White man's system since the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, who have seen their land taken away and their hopes destroyed, saw the first real effort in years to regain power over their lives in the liberation of Wounded Knee."....

"At Wounded Knee, we finally said, 'The hell with that [U.S. Government tyranny]. You are going to honor your treaty with us from now on and we are going to force you to do that because if you don't you will have to kill us.' That was the point of Wounded Knee."....(3)

Since Wounded Knee, it is believed that more than three hundred people have been murdered on the Pine Ridge reservation, a large number of them AIM members or supporters. The FBI, in conjunction with the reservation police and Justice Department, intends to destroy the American Indian Movement by whatever means necessary. (4)

When the seige of Wounded Knee ended, the front lines of the struggle moved from the bunkers on Indian land to the United States Courts. Over 400 arrests arose out of Wounded Knee. Out of the 317 indictments, only 138 were prosecuted in the courts and in these cases the government had only a 7% conviction rate. This unusually low conviction rate does not mean that the government failed in its attempt to repress AIM, but rather reflects the government strategy of tying up AIM members in legal battles which the United States "wins" even when it "loses". (5)

Harassment and violence by the FBI and BIA on the reservations themselves have not stopped. Beatings by the BIA police and goons have become a fact of life for residents of the Pine Ridge reservation. Frequently, homes are firebombed and shot at. (6)

"Arrests without warrant in hand, including women and children; the use of paid informants, the offering of bribes to young Native Americans in exchange for collaboration; the misuse if not abuse of federal grand jury system; open perjury and contempt of court actions; circulation of false and provocative information; the use of military armament, tactics, and personnel; the intimidation of old people and children; open contempt and racially motivated slander; the use of "goon squads" to accomplish the dirty work; and the clearly repressive tactic of ignoring violence against AIM followers, but reacting with vigor at the slightest hint of violence by an AIM member, are but a sampling of FBI tactics on South Dakota reservations in these past few years." (7)

Specific Paramilitary Operations:

On two separate occasions, the United States Civil Rights Commission has investigated complaints of improper FBI conduct on the Pine Ridge reservation, and in both cases has been highly critical of the Bureau. The Civil Rights Commission noted that: the FBI is conducting a full-scale military operation on the reservation." (8)

As well as the FBI and BIA in general, there have been specific programs developed to repress the Native American movement. One such program was Operation Garden Plot, which had its practical application at Wounded Knee -- which in certain respects was a testing ground for theory and tactics being promoted at SEADOC and the California Specialized Training Institute. The practice of Garden Plot at Wounded Knee shows how SWAT-type units fit into an overall plan for domestic counter-insurgency. (9)

The U.S. Marshal's Service Special Operations Group (SOG) was developed in 1971 by Wayne Colburn. Originally it was created to protect federal buildings and property during the 1971 'May Day' anti-war demonstrations. SOG, however, has also seen action in evicting AIM members from Alcatraz Island and the Twin Cities Naval Air Station. The entire force of SOG was called into Wounded Knee in 1973. (10)

The use of SWAT teams was seen most clearly on Pine Ridge during June of 1975, after the deaths of Joe Stuntz Killwright, an AIM member, and two FBI agents. The FBI conducted a paramilitary operation claiming to be seeking anyone connected with the shootings. During this time homes and autos were surrounded by the fatigue-clothed counter-insurgency units of the FBI-SWAT squads; helicopters hovered overhead while sometimes as many as 20 agents threatened people by brandishing automatic weaponry of AR-15 and M-16 types. (11)

This FBI terrorism -- combined with local BIA police units' repressive actions; state law enforcement agencies; goon squads and local vigilante groups, such as "Custers Avengers" -- has put Indian people under continual seige, carried out on a multitude of levels, of a colonial occupying army on their land.

Particular Attacks on the American Indian Movement:

All these actions have been directed against Native peoples in general and against the American Indian Movement (AIM) and its leadership in particular. AIM leaders have been subjected to repeated "legal" frame-ups, which have required great amounts of time and money; imprisonment and brutalization; and even assassination attempts, such as the shooting of AIM leader Russell Means on three separate occasions.

Prisons:

The use of prisons in this repressive attack by the U.S. government is a very important aspect. Certain facts speak for themselves:

- * Leonard Peltier has been sentenced to two consecutive life terms for the alleged murder of two FBI agents on June 26, 1975, during an attack by the U.S. on the Pine Ridge reservation. (12)

- * Dacajaweah (John Hill) remains in prison as a result of the Attica Massacre, in which Rockefeller and the State of New York murdered 43 people and seriously injured over 80 others. (13)
- * The fact that Leonard Crowdog is now out of prison, does not take away from the intensity of the attack levied against him since 1973 -- which attack was clearly because he is a spiritual leader of the Sioux people and AIM, and participated at the liberation of Wounded Knee. (14)
- * The continual harassment of Russell Means by the government, through efforts to bring false charges against him, resulting in at least 9 different charges/trials and his having spent time in and out of jails over the past four years. (15)
- * Paul Skyhorse and Richard Mohawk both face life in prison if convicted for charges of first degree murder. They have been held without bail since October, 1974 in maximum security solitary confinement. Their case has gone through the longest discovery -of-evidence pre-trial proceeding ever held in United States Courts.. (16)
- * AIM leader Dennis Banks still fights extradition, although he is out on bail, arising out of his arrest on January 24, 1976 after six months as a political fugitive from South Dakota. (17)
- * The arrest of Kamook Banks when she was six months pregnant and her placement in solitary confinement is another example of this abuse. (18)

These are only a few examples of the ways in which courts and imprisonment have been and are being used against the American Indian Movement.

As was referred to earlier in this paper -- in reference to alcoholism -- there is a larger question to be raised around the prison

system. In Montana, for instance, although only 4.6% of the population is Indian, between 25-30% of the prisoners at Montana State Prison are Indian. (19) In this same respect the overall parole rate of non-Indian prisoners was on the average, during 1974, 51% greater than for Indian prisoners at South Dakota State Prison. (20)

When we see statistics such as the above, and also see that in New York State from 75-84% of all prisoners in state penitentiaries are Black and Latino, it is not hard to conclude that the prison system in its very essence, today does not in any way serve to "rehabilitate" anyone -- rather it serves as "concentration camps" expressly made for Third World people, who are the victims of national oppression and colonization.

All these aspects of repression -- from the governmental agencies to out-and-out murder -- are only one manifestation of the overall genocidal policy being carried out against Native American Nations.

CONCLUSION

This documentation of genocide in the 1970's should not lead one to think that this is the first time in history that genocide and acts of brutalization and repression have been committed against Native American people.

Since the coming of the Europeans in the 15th Century, brutal acts of genocide have in fact been the norm. Through wars, disease, forced removal operations, and outright massacre, the population of Native Americans has declined from an estimated 25-35 million to about 1-1/2 million presently, having reached its lowest point of about 300,000 at the turn of the 19th century. By this same time most Native people had been forced onto U.S. controlled reservations, on what was thought to be barren land.

The history of Europeans colonizing the continents of North and South America is not only the history of the murder and repression of Native peoples. The enslavement of African peoples brought to this continent to create profit for European slave-owners, is also a part of that history. And with the development of capitalism in the 19th century, the increasing thirst for cheap labor and resources as well as new markets brought the colonization of nations outside the boundaries of the United States Empire. The Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico are examples of nations colonized at the turn of the century. U.S. imperialism, in this manner, increased its control over much more of the world.

Still today, the United States dominates the economy of Puerto Rico, has control through its many multi-national corporations over much of Latin America, Asia and Africa, and props up regimes favorable to U.S. imperialists in countries as repressive and racist as South Africa.

We also can see from this document, that the policies continue to be perpetuated against Native people, although the form and tactics have altered since the invasion by Europeans. Through its network of governmental agencies, the United States carries out much of its work. The Indian Health Service fails to administer adequate health care, and forcibly sterilizes Native women. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, under the Department of the Interior, and in cooperation with the multi-national corporations maintains complete control over natural resources, as well as all other aspects of life on reservations. BIA boarding schools remove children from their families, their culture and their nations, to place them in white run schools. Military attacks take place through the means of the FBI, U.S. Army, SWAT-type units, goon squads and BIA. And, as well, the U.S. has also recruited for its interests, local white ranchers who have organized vigilante groups -- much like the KKK, who also further the attacks on Native peoples.

At certain times the genocidal policy has intensified. During the late nineteenth century, when U.S. expansion was threatened by the fierce resistance of the nations of the Great Plains, and in the 1920's during the oil boom in Oklahoma, are two clear examples.

We see, once again, this heightening. With the United States being cut off around the world as oppressed nations rise up and reclaim control over their lives, land and resources, the United States desperately looks inside its own borders once again. With the high amounts of coal, iron, uranium etc., that lie under reservation land, it is no wonder that the United States wants to kill off all Native people.

The other aspect is, of course, the necessity of the United States to fight to smash national liberation movements, wherever they arise, whether inside, crossing, or outside the borders of this country. Hence, if there are no more Native nations, then the land and resources will lie for the taking, and if there are no more nations, and thus, the fight for self-determination and sovereignty is defeated, the Empire will continue longer.

It is clear from this documentation -- which in itself barely touches on the depth of the oppression and repression of Native Americans -- that there is a systematic genocidal policy being carried out by the United States Government. There is in fact a war being waged inside the borders of this country -- which has many fronts -- but in fact whose ultimate task from the United States' point of view, can be none other than total genocide. The total destruction of Native American Nations.

The fight for sovereignty, self-determination and independence continues -- and the longest war goes on.

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