

INTRODUCTION

THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF NORTH AMERICA

A Struggle Against Internal Colonialism

The Europeans who began taking over the New World in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were not ecologists. Although they were compelled to realize that the Americas were not quite *uninhabited*, they were not prepared to recognize that these new lands were, in an ecological sense, much more than “sparsely” inhabited. This second hemisphere was, in fact, essentially “full.”

—William Catton
Overshoot

THE standard Euroamerican depiction of “precontact” Native North Americans has long been that the relative handful of us who existed wandered about perpetually in scattered bands, grubbing out the most marginal subsistence by hunting and gathering, never developing writing or serious appreciations of art, science, mathematics, governance, and so on. Aside from our utilization of furs and hides for clothing, the manufacture of stone implements, use of fire, and domestication of the dog, there is little in this view to distinguish us from the higher orders of mammalian life surrounding us in the “American wilderness.”¹

The conclusions reached by those who claim to idealize “Indianness” are little different at base from the findings of those who openly denigrate it: Native people were able to inhabit the hemisphere for tens of thousands of years without causing appreciable ecological disruption only because we lacked the intellectual capacity to create social forms and technologies that would substantially alter our physical environment. In effect, a sort of socio-cultural retardation on the part of Indians is typically held to be responsible for the pristine quality of the Americas at the point of their “discovery” by Europeans.²

In contrast to this perspective, it has recently been demonstrated that,

far from living hand-to-mouth, “Stone Age” Indians adhered to an economic structure that not only met their immediate needs but provided considerable surpluses of both material goods and leisure time.³ It has also been established that most traditional native economies were based in agriculture rather than hunting and gathering—a clear indication of a stationary, not nomadic, way of life—until the European invasion dislocated the indigenous populations of North America.⁴

It is also argued that native peoples’ long-term coexistence with our environment was possible only because of our extremely low population density. Serious historians and demographers have lately documented how estimates of precontact indigenous population levels were deliberately lowered during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in order to lessen the implications of genocide bound up in the policies of the U.S., Canada and their colonial antecedents.⁵ A noted ecologist has also recently determined that, rather than being dramatically underpopulated, North America was in fact saturated with people in 1500. The feasible carrying capacity of the continent was, moreover, outstripped by the European influx by 1840, despite massive reductions of native populations and numerous species of large mammals.⁶

Another myth is contained in the suggestion that indigenous forms of government were less refined than those of their European counterparts. The lie is put to this notion, however, when it is considered that the enlightened republicanism established by the United States during the late 1700s—usually considered an advance over then-prevailing European norms—was lifted directly from the model of the currently still functioning Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) confederacy.⁷ In many ways the Haudenosaunee were indicative of political arrangements throughout Native North America.⁸ American Indians evidenced similar achievements in preventative medicine, mathematics, astronomy, architecture and engineering, all without engendering appreciable environmental disruption.⁹ Such a juxtaposition of advanced sociocultural matrices and sustained ecological equilibrium is inexplicable from the vantage point of conventional Euroderivative assumptions.

Unlike Europeans, Native Americans long ago attained a profound intellectual apprehension that human progress must be measured as an integral aspect of the natural order rather than as something apart from and superior to it. Within this body of knowledge, elaborated and perfected through oral

tradition and codified as “law” in ceremonial/ritual forms, the indigenous peoples of this hemisphere lived comfortably and in harmony with the environment, the health of which was recognized as an absolute requirement for our continued existence.¹⁰

In simplest terms, the American Indian world view may be this: Human beings are free—indeed, encouraged—to develop our innate capabilities, but only in ways that do not infringe upon other elements—called “relations,” in the fullest dialectical sense of the word—of nature. Any activity going beyond this is considered as “imbalance,” a transgression, and is strictly prohibited. Engineering, for example, was and is permissible, but only insofar as it does not permanently alter the earth itself. Similarly, agriculture was widespread, but only within parameters that did not supplant natural vegetation.¹¹

Key to the indigenous American outlook is a firm acknowledgment that the human population may expand only to the point, determined by natural geographic and environmental circumstances, where it begins to displace other animal species and requires the permanent substitution of cropland for normal vegetation in any area. North America’s aboriginal populations never entered into a trajectory of excessive growth, and, even today, many native societies practice a self-regulation of population size that allows the substance of our traditional world views with their interactive environmental relationships to remain viable.¹²

Cultural Imperialism

They came for our land, for what grew or could be grown on it, for the resources in it, and for our clean air and pure water. They stole these things from us, and in the taking they also stole our free ways and the best of our leaders, killed in battle or assassinated. And now, after all that, they’ve come for the very last of our possessions; now they want our pride, our history, our spiritual traditions. They want to rewrite and remake these things, to claim them for themselves. The lies and thefts just never end.

—Margo Thunderbird, 1988

Within the industrial wasteland of the late twentieth century, such traditional perspectives are deformed right along with the physical dimensions of indigenous culture. Trivialized and co-opted, they have been reduced to the stuff of the settler society’s self-serving pop mythology, commercialized

and exploited endlessly by everyone from the Hollywood moguls and hippie filmmakers who over the past 75 years have produced literally thousands of celluloid parodies not merely of our histories, but of our most sacred beliefs, to New Age yuppie airheads like Lynne Andrews who pen lucrative “feminist” fables of our spirituality, to the flabbily overprivileged denizens of the “Men’s Movement” indulging themselves in their “Wildman Weekends,” to pseudoacademic frauds like Carlos Castaneda who fabricate our traditions out of whole cloth, to “well-intentioned friends” like Jerry Mander who simply appropriate the real thing for their own purposes. The list might easily be extended for pages.¹³

Representative of the mentality is an oft-televised public service announcement featuring an aging Indian, clad in beads and buckskins, framed against a backdrop of smoking factory chimneys while picking his way carefully among the mounds of rusting junk along a well-polluted river. He concludes his walk through the modern world by shedding a tragic tear induced by the panorama of rampant devastation surrounding him. The use of an archaic Indian image in this connection is intended to stir the settler population’s subliminal craving for absolution. “Having obliterated Native North America as a means of expropriating its landbase,” the subtext reads, “Euroamerica is now obliged to ‘make things right’ by preserving and protecting what was stolen.” Should it meet the challenge, presumably, not only will its forebears’ unparalleled aggression at last be in some sense redeemed, but so too will the blood-drenched inheritance they bequeathed to their posterity be in that sense legitimated. The whole thing is of course a sham, a glib contrivance designed by and for the conquerors to promote their sense of psychic reconciliation with the facts and fruits of the conquest.¹⁴

A primary purpose of this book is to disturb—better yet, to destroy altogether—such self-serving and -satisfied tranquillity. In doing so, its aim is to participate in restoring things Indian to the realm of reality. My hope is that it helps in the process to heal the disjuncture between the past, present and future of Native North American peoples which has been imposed by nearly four centuries of unrelenting conquest, subjugation and dispossession on the part of Euroamerica’s multitudinous invaders. This does not make for pleasant reading, nor should it, for my message is that there can be no absolution, no redemption of past crimes unless the outcomes are changed. So long as the aggressors’ posterity continue to reap the benefits of that aggress-

sion, the crimes are merely replicated in the present. In effect, the aggression remains ongoing and, in that, there can be no legitimacy. Not now, not ever.

Contemporary Circumstances

We are not ethnic groups. Ethnic groups run restaurants serving “exotic” foods. We are *nations*.

—Brooklyn Rivera, 1986

The current situation of the indigenous peoples of the United States and Canada is generally miscast as being that of ethnic/racial minorities. This is a fundamental misrepresentation in at least two ways. First, there is no given ethnicity which encompasses those who are indigenous to North America. Rather, there are several hundred distinctly different cultures—“ethnicities,” in anthropological parlance—lumped together under the catch-all classification of “Native Americans” (and/or “Aboriginals” in Canada). Similarly, at least three noticeably different “gene stocks”—the nomenclature of “race”—are encompassed by such designators. Biologically, “Amerinds” like the Cherokees and Ojibwes are as different from Inuits (“Eskimo-Aleuts”) and such “Athabaskan” (“Na-Dene”) types as the Apaches and Navajos as Mongolians are from Swedes or Bantus.¹⁵

Secondly, all concepts of ethnic or racial minority status fail conspicuously to convey the sense of *national* identity by which most or all North American indigenous populations define ourselves. Nationality, not race or ethnicity, is the most important single factor in understanding the reality of Native North America today.¹⁶ It is this sense of ourselves as comprising coherent and viable nations which lends substance and logic to the forms of struggle in which we have engaged over the past third of a century and more.¹⁷

It is imperative when considering this point to realize that there is nothing rhetorical, metaphorical or symbolic at issue. On the contrary, a concrete and precise meaning is intended. The indigenous peoples of North America—indeed, everywhere in the hemisphere—not only constituted but continue to constitute nations according to even the strictest definitions of the term. This can be asserted on the basis of two major legal premises, as well as a range of more material considerations. Let’s take them in order:

- To begin with, there is a doctrine in modern international law known as the “right of inherent sovereignty” holding that a people constitutes

a nation, and is thus entitled to exercise the rights of such, simply because it has done so “since time immemorial.” That is, from the moment of its earliest contact with other nations the people in question have been known to possess a given territory, a means of providing their own subsistence (economy), a common language, a structure of governance and corresponding form of legality, and a means of determining membership/social composition. As was to some extent shown above, there can be no question but that Native North American peoples met each of these criteria at the point of initial contact with Europeans.¹⁸

- Second, it is a given of international law, custom and convention that treaty-making and treaty relations are entered into *only* by nations. This principle is constitutionally enshrined in both U.S. and Canadian domestic law. Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution, for instance, clearly restricts treaty-making prerogatives to the federal rather than state, local or individual levels. In turn, the federal government itself is forbidden to enter into a treaty relationship with any entity aside from another fully sovereign nation (i.e., it is specifically *disempowered* from treating with provincial, state or local governments, or with corporations and individuals). It follows that the U.S. government’s entry into some 400 ratified treaty relationships with North America’s indigenous peoples—an even greater number prevail in Canada—abundantly corroborates our various claims to sovereign national standing.¹⁹

Officials in both North American nation-states, as well as the bulk of the settler intelligentsia aligned with them, presently contend that, while native peoples may present an impeccable argument on moral grounds, and a technically valid legal case as well, pragmatic considerations in “the real world at the dawn of the twenty-first century” precludes actualization of our national independence, autonomy, or any other manifestation of genuine self-determination. By their lights, indigenous peoples are too small, both in terms of our respective landbases/attendant resources and in population size(s), to survive either militarily or economically in the contemporary international context.²⁰

At first glance, such thinking seems plausible enough, even humane. Delving a bit deeper, however, we find that it conveniently ignores the examples of such tiny European nations as San Marino, Monaco and Liechtenstein, which have survived for centuries amidst the greediest and

most warlike continental setting in the history of the world. Further, it blinks the matter of comparably sized nations in the Caribbean and Pacific Basins whose sovereignty is not only acknowledged, but whose recent admissions to the United Nations have been endorsed by both Canada and the U.S. (See charts on following pages.) Plainly, each of these countries is at least as militarily vulnerable as any North American Indian people. The contradictions attending U.S./Canadian Indian policy are thus readily apparent to anyone willing to view the situation honestly. The truth is that the nation-states' "humanitarianism" is in this connection no more than a gloss meant to disguise a very different set of goals, objectives and sensibilities.

Nor do arguments to the "intrinsic insolvency" of indigenous economies hold up to even minimal scrutiny. The Navajo Nation, for instance, possesses a landbase larger than those of Monaco, Fiji and Grenada combined. Within this area lies an estimated 150 billion tons of low sulfur coal, about forty percent of "U.S." uranium reserves and significant deposits of oil, natural gas, gold, silver, copper and gypsum, among other minerals. This is aside from a limited but very real grazing and agricultural capacity.²¹ By any standard of conventional economic measure, the Navajos—or Diné, as they call themselves—have a relatively wealthy resource base as compared to many Third World nations and more than a few "developed" ones. To hold that the Navajo Nation could not survive economically in the modern world while admitting that Grenada, Monaco and Fiji *can* is to indulge in sheer absurdity (or duplicity).

While Navajo is probably the best illustration of the material basis for assertions of complete autonomy by Native North American nations, it is by no means the only one. The combined Lakota reservations in North and South Dakota yield an aggregate landbase even larger than that of the Diné and, while it exhibits a somewhat less spectacular range of mineral assets, this is largely offset by a greater agricultural/grazing capacity and smaller population size.²² Other, smaller, indigenous nations possess landbases entirely adequate to support their populations and many are endowed with rich economic potentials which vary from minerals to timbering to ranching and farming to fishing and aquaculture. Small-scale manufacturing and even tourism also offer viable options in many instances.²³

All this natural wealth exists within the currently held native landbase ("reserves" in Canada, "reservations" in the U.S.). Nothing has been said thus far about the possibility that something approximating a just resolution

Table 1 Comparative National Landbases

| <i>Nation</i> | <i>Square Miles</i> | <i>Indian Tribe</i> | <i>Square Miles</i> | <i>Nation</i> | <i>Square Miles</i> | <i>Indian Tribe</i> | <i>Square Miles</i> | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------|--|--|--|--|-----------------------|-------|
| 1. Costa Rica | 19,575 | Navajo | 21,838 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Dominican Republic | 18,816 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Bhutan | 18,147 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Denmark | 16,619 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Switzerland | 15,941 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Netherlands | 14,125 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Taiwan | 13,886 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Belgium | 11,781 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Lesotho | 11,716 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Albania | 11,100 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11. Equatorial Guinea | 10,852 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Burundi | 10,747 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13. Haiti | 10,714 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14. Rwanda | 10,166 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15. El Salvador | 8,260 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16. Israel | 7,993 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17. Fiji | 7,055 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18. Swaziland | 6,704 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19. Kuwait | 6,178 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20. Qatar | 6,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21. Jamaica | 4,411 | Papago | 4,460 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22. Lebanon | 4,015 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 23. Gambia | 4,005 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24. Cyprus | 3,572 | | | | | | | Hopi | 3,862 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Wind River Tribes | 2,947 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | White Mountain Apache | 2,898 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | San Carlos Apache | 2,855 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Pine Ridge Sioux | 2,600 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Crow Tribe | 2,434 |
| 25. Trinidad and Tobago | 1,979 | | | | | | | Cheyenne River Sioux | 2,210 | | | | | | |
| Yakima Tribe | 1,711 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Uintah and Ouray | 1,581 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Colville Tribe | 1,569 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hualapai Tribe | 1,551 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fort Peck Sioux | 1,534 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rosebud Sioux | 1,526 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Blackfeet Tribe | 1,420 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Standing Rock Sioux | 1,320 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jicarilla Apache Tribe | 1,159 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26. Western Samoa | 1,130 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27. Luxembourg | 999 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 28. Mauritius | 720 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Mescalero Apache | 719 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Northern Cheyenne | 678 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Laguna Pueblo | 652 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Fort Berthold | 651 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Zuni Pueblo | 636 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Sisseton | 629 |
| | | Pima | 582 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Walker River | 500 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Duck Valley | 452 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kiowa, Comanche, Apache | 370 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Osage | 340 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spokane | 300 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 29. Tonga | 269 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 30. Bahrain | 231 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 31. Singapore | 226 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 32. Andorra | 179 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 33. Barbados | 166 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Quinault | 200 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Kaibab Piute | 188 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Rocky Boys | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Chippewa-Cree | 162 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Nez Percé | 137 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Hoop Valley | 134 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 34. Malta | 122 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 35. Maldives | 112 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | Couer d'Alene | 108 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 36. Liechtenstein | 62 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 37. San Marino | 23.5 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 38. Nauru | 8 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 39. Monaco | 0.6 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 40. Vatican City | 0.17 | | | | | | |

Source: Vine Deloria, Jr., "The Size and Status of Nations," in Susan Loo and Steve Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices: A Reader* (New York: Longman, 1998) pp.460-1.

Table 2

| Countries with Fewer than 1,000,000 Population | |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Vatican City | 1,000 |
| 2. Nauru | 7,000 |
| 3. San Marino | 20,000 |
| 4. Andorra | 20,550 |
| 5. Liechtenstein | 21,550 |
| 6. Monaco | 23,000 |
| 7. Tonga | 90,000 |
| 8. Maldives | 110,000 |
| 9. Qatar | 115,000 |
| 10. Western Samoa | 146,000 |
| 11. United Arab Emirates | 200,000 |
| 12. Sikkim | 200,000 |
| 13. Iceland | 210,000 |
| 14. Bahrain | 220,000 |
| 15. Barbados | 240,000 |
| 16. Equatorial Guinea | 290,000 |
| 17. Malta | 330,000 |
| 18. Luxembourg | 340,000 |
| 19. Gambia | 380,000 |
| 20. Swaziland | 420,000 |
| 21. Gabon | 500,000 |
| 22. Fiji | 533,000 |
| 23. Cyprus | 640,000 |
| 24. Botswana | 670,000 |
| 25. Oman | 680,000 |
| 26. Guyana | 740,000 |
| 27. Kuwait | 830,000 |
| 28. Mauritius | 840,000 |
| 29. Lesotho | 930,000 |
| 30. Congo (Brazzaville) | 960,000 |

Source: Vine Deloria, Jr., "The Size and Status of Nations," in Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices: A Reader* (New York: Longman, 1998) p.463.

might be effected concerning indigenous claims to vast territories retained by treaty—or to which title is held through unextinguished aboriginal right—all of which has been unlawfully expropriated by the two North American settler-states.²⁴ Here, the Lakota Nation alone would stand to recover, on the basis of the still-binding 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, some five percent of the U.S. 48 contiguous states area. The region includes the Black Hills, reputedly the 100 most mineral-rich square miles on the entire planet.²⁵ All told, naturalization of persons residing within the treaty areas—or those who might wish to relocate there for purposes of placing themselves under native rather than U.S./Canadian jurisdiction—would likely increase the citizenry of Native North America by several millions.²⁶

In sum, just as the indigenous peoples of North America “once” possessed the requisite ingredients of nationhood, so too do we continue to possess them. This is true whether one uses as one’s point(s) of reference the dimension of our territories, the basis of our economies, the size of our populations, or any other reasonable criteria. Perhaps most important in a legal sense, as well as in terms of ethics and morality, we continue to hold our inherent rights and standing as nations because, quite simply and undeniably, we have never voluntarily relinquished them. To argue otherwise, as so many settler officials and “scholars” are prone to do, is to argue the invalidity of the Laws of Nations.²⁷

Internal Colonialism

The sea, O the sea, a *ghrádh-gheal mo chrí*,
Long may it roll between England and me;
God help the poor Scotsmen, they’ll never be free
■ But we are surrounded by water!

—Traditional Irish Song

One of the major problems confronting those seeking to articulate the situation of indigenous nations on this continent has to do with the form of imperialism imposed upon us: “internal colonialism.” Admittedly, the idea is a bit unorthodox. The conventional analysis of colonization ranges from that adopted by the United Nations under Resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960—which requires by strict definition that at least thirty miles of open “blue water” separate colonizer from colonized for a condition of “true” colonialism to exist²⁸—to that of typical socialist thinking, which, with certain

exceptions, adheres to a somewhat less rigid but nonetheless similar interpretation.²⁹

Internal colonialism, on the other hand, is the result of an especially virulent and totalizing socioeconomic and political penetration whereby the colonizing power quite literally swallows up contiguous areas and peoples, incorporating them directly into itself.³⁰ In a closely related variation known as “settler-state colonialism,” the colonizing power exports a sufficient portion of its own population (“settlers”), to supplant rather than simply subordinate the indigenous people(s) of the colony.³¹ Often, under such conditions, the settler population itself eventually revolts against the Mother Country and establishes itself as an independent or quasi-independent sovereignty. Indigenous peoples/nations are consequently encapsulated *within* the resulting “settler-state’s” claimed territory rather than being subject to the more classic formula of domination from abroad.³²

Aside from the U.S. and Canada, the modern world witnesses numerous other examples of this phenomenon. Among these are Australia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Israel, Kurdistan, and most of South and Central America.³³ Until their transformations by African liberation forces, both Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) and South Africa (Azania) fell into this category.³⁴ The same could be said of the host of nationalities encapsulated within the former Soviet Union, as well as those within present-day China.³⁵ Additionally, a variant form of internal colonialism may be seen as prevailing in many of the old compartments of the classic European empires: Zaire vis-à-vis Katanga, for instance, or India vis-à-vis Nagaland.³⁶ By the same token, it is possible to view a number of peoples in Europe itself—the Welsh and Scots in the United Kingdom, for example, or the Basques and Catalans in Spain—as being internally colonized nations.³⁷

Plainly, the magnitude of the problem represented by internal colonialism has been vastly underestimated, or rather arbitrarily discounted, by analysts of virtually every ideological persuasion. One solid indication may be found, however, in a survey conducted during the late 1980s. Conducted by cultural geographer Bernard Neitschmann, it revealed that of the more than 100 armed conflicts then raging around the world, about 85 percent were between indigenous peoples and one or more nation-states presuming to exercise jurisdictional authority over them and/or their traditional territories.³⁸ Little has transpired since then to change things for the better. On the contrary, indications are that escalation has occurred in many quarters.³⁹

This, then, is the context in which the native liberation struggle in North America should be viewed. The agendas of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the more organic warrior societies which have lately (re)emerged in several indigenous nations—as well as armed confrontations at places like Wounded Knee, Oka and Gunnison Lake—have nothing to do with attaining civil rights and other forms of “equality” for native people within the U.S. and Canadian systems.⁴⁰ Nor are they meant to foster some “revolutionary” reorganization of either. Rather, the purpose is, quite specifically, to reassert the genuinely sovereign and self-determining status to which our nations are and have always been entitled.⁴¹

Hence, while we share a common oppressor with our relatives of African, Asian and “Latin” origins—as well as poor whites, whether they realize it or not—the goals, objectives and many of the means of our struggle must be understood in terms necessarily different from theirs.⁴² We, the “Indians” of the North and the “Indios” of the South, alone among the peoples now resident to the Americas, struggle for the liberation of our homelands rather than for the liberation of land on which to build our homes. We, alone among the peoples of the Americas, engage in such struggles on the basis of our cultures—our freely collective societies, born in and thus always indigenous to this hemisphere—rather than struggling to create liberatory cultures allowing the expression of human freedom.

Ours, in a word, is a struggle to achieve *decolonization*. We seek neither to better our “place” within settler-state societies nor to seize the reigns of power over them. Instead, for us, liberation can be found nowhere but in our ultimate ability to detach ourselves from the corpus of the states themselves, dismantling their purported geographic integrity and, to that extent, radically diminishing the basis upon which they wield economic, political and military power. In this, there lies the potential of liberation not simply for American Indians, but for everyone.

Struggle for the Land

We believe that the conscious and organized undertaking by a colonized people to reestablish the sovereignty of that nation constitutes the most complete and obvious cultural manifestation that exists.

—Frantz Fanon
The Wretched of the Earth

The present volume, comprising a considerable updating and revision of the edition originally published by Common Courage Press in 1993, is intended mainly to elaborate upon and amplify certain of the themes raised above. Beginning with a new essay, “The Tragedy and the Travesty,” which traces the convoluted and often untenable legal doctrines through which the U.S. and Canada have sought to rationalize their colonization of Native North America, the book goes on to explore the impacts of such sophistry when applied to the real world.

This is undertaken through a series of case studies ranging from that of the Haudenosaunee in upstate New York (“Struggle to Regain a Stolen Homeland”) to that of the Lakotas on the northern Plains (“The Black Hills Are Not For Sale”), from that of the Lubicon Cree in northern Alberta (“Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree”) to that of the Diné and Newe (Western Shoshone) in the upper Sonoran and Intermountain desert regions of the U.S. (“Genocide in Arizona” and “The Struggle for Newe Segobia”). Numerous other examples might of course have been selected, but those chosen seemed indicative of the rest at the time the book was conceived, and they still seem so.

Each essay was written not only with an eye towards illuminating the motives underlying the various modalities of domination visited by North America’s settler-states upon indigenous nations, but the physical/material, cultural and political effects of this upon the targeted peoples. Here, I have paid close attention not only to Sartre’s famous dictum that colonialism equals genocide—a proposition to which I not only subscribe, but which I seek to validate throughout my work—but to a lesser-known formulation holding that colonialism also equals ecocide.⁴³ The latter idea is taken up most directly in a pair of essays dealing with uranium mining in Canada and the U.S. (“Geographies of Sacrifice”) and water diversion projects in the Canadian north (“The Water Plot”).

A new essay on another of internal colonialism’s more debilitating effects, the systematic displacement of indigenous people from their homelands (“Like Sand in the Wind”), is also included before *Struggle for the Land* wraps up with a piece (“I Am Indigenist”) offering a scenario of what an alternative future for the U.S. portion of North America might look like. It should be borne in mind that this “utopian vision”—commonly described as “dystopian” by statists and white supremacists alike—was/is meant as a discussion paper rather than as a blueprint, and that it might be as readily

applied to Canada (perhaps more so). Much the same can be said of the newly attached appendix (“TREATY: The Platform of Russell Means’ Campaign for President of the Oglala Lakota People, 1982”).

It should also be noted that earlier versions of much of the material contained herein have been published elsewhere. Winona LaDuke’s “Succeeding Into Native North America,” which is included as a preface, first saw the light of day in *CoEvolution Quarterly* (No. 32, 1981). Jimmie Durham’s poem “Buying Time,” which serves as a foreword, is taken from his *Columbus Day* (Minneapolis: West End Press, 1983). John Trudell’s poetry, which appears as preludes to each section of the book, is excerpted from his *Living In Reality: Songs Called Poems* (Minneapolis: Society of People Struggling to Be Free, 1982). Appreciation is due to the authors and their publishers for permission to use the work in its present capacities.

Of my own essays, “The Tragedy and the Travesty” initially appeared in the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* (Vol. 22, No. 2, 1998). “The Black Hills Are Not For Sale” came out in its original form in *Journal of Ethnic Studies* (Vol. 18, No. 1, 1990). Iterations of “Last Stand at Lubicon Lake” and “The Water Plot” were first published in *Z Magazine* (Sept. 1989 and Apr. 1991 respectively). Portions of “Radioactive Colonization” appeared in *Environment* (Vol. 28, No. 6, 1986) and *Akwesasne Notes* (Vol. 18, No. 6, 1986). “I Am Indigenist” made its debut in *The Z Papers* (Vol. 1, No. 3, 1992). Two sections of this introduction were originally presented at the II Seminario sobre la situación de las negras, chicanas, cubana, nativa norteamericanas, puertorriquena, caribena y asiatica en los Estados Unidos in Habana, Cuba during December of 1984 and subsequently published in *Black Scholar* (Vol. 16, No. 1, 1985). Thanks to all publishers for permission to reprint.

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—*Ward Churchill*
Boulder, Colorado
June 1998

I AM INDIGENIST

Notes on the Ideology of the Fourth World

The growth of ethnic consciousness and the consequent mobilization of Indian communities in the Western hemisphere since the early 1960s have been welcomed neither by government forces nor by opposition parties and revolutionary movements. The “Indian Question” has been an almost forbidden subject of debate throughout the entire political spectrum, although racism, discrimination and exploitation are roundly denounced on all sides.

—Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz
Indians of the Americas

VERY often in my writings and lectures, I have identified myself as being “indigenist” in outlook. By this, I mean that I am one who not only takes the rights of indigenous peoples as the highest priority of my political life, but who draws upon the traditions—the bodies of knowledge and corresponding codes of value—evolved over many thousands of years by native peoples the world over. This is the basis upon which I not only advance critiques of, but conceptualize alternatives to the present social, political, economic, and philosophical status quo. In turn, this gives shape not only to the sorts of goals and objectives I pursue, but the kinds of strategy and tactics I advocate, the variety of struggles I tend to support, the nature of the alliances I am inclined to enter into, and so on.

Let me say, before I go any further, that I am hardly unique or alone in adopting this perspective. It is a complex of ideas, sentiments, and understandings which motivates the whole of the American Indian Movement, broadly defined, here in North America. This is true whether you call it AIM, or Indians of All Tribes (as was done during the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz), the Warriors Society (as was the case with the Mohawk rebellion at Oka in 1990), Women of All Red Nations, or whatever.¹

It is the spirit of resistance that shapes the struggles of traditional Indian people on the land, whether the struggle is down at Big Mountain, in the Black Hills, or up at James Bay, in the Nevada desert or out along the

Columbia River in what is now called Washington State.² In the sense that I use the term, indigenism is also, I think, the outlook that guided our great leaders of the past: King Philip and Pontiac, Tecumseh and Creek Mary and Osceola, Black Hawk, Nancy Ward and Satanta, Lone Wolf and Red Cloud, Satank and Quannah Parker, Left Hand and Crazy Horse, Dull Knife and Chief Joseph, Sitting Bull, Roman Nose and Captain Jack, Louis Riel and Poundmaker and Geronimo, Cochise and Mangus, Victorio, Chief Seattle, and on and on.³

In my view, those, Indian and non-Indian alike, who do not recognize these names and what they represent have no sense of the true history—the reality—of North America. They have no sense of where they’ve come from or where they are and thus can have no genuine sense of who or what they are. By not looking at where they’ve come from, they cannot know where they are going or where it is they *should* go. It follows that they cannot understand what it is they are to do, how to do it, or why. In their confusion, they identify with the wrong people, the wrong things, the wrong tradition. They therefore inevitably pursue the wrong goals and objectives, putting last things first and often forgetting the first things altogether, perpetuating the very structures of oppression and degradation they think they oppose. Obviously, if things are to be changed for the better in this world, then this particular problem must itself be changed as a matter of first priority.

In any event, all of this is not to say that I think I am one of the significant people I have named, or the host of others, equally worthy, who’ve gone unnamed. I have no “New Age” conception of myself as the reincarnation of someone who has come before. But it *is* to say that I take these ancestors—as my inspiration, as the only historical examples of proper attitude and comportment on this continent, this place, this land on which I live and of which I am a part. I embrace them as my heritage, my role models, the standard by which I must measure myself. I try always to be worthy of the battles they fought, the sacrifices they made. For the record, I have always found myself wanting in this regard, but I subscribe to the notion that one is obligated to speak the truth, even if one cannot live up to or fully practice it. As Chief Dan George once put it, I “endeavor to persevere,” and I suppose this is a circumstance which is shared more-or-less equally by everyone presently involved in what I refer to as “indigenism.”

Others whose writings and speeches and actions may be familiar, and who fit the definition of indigenist—or “Fourth Worlder,” as we are some-

times called—include Winona LaDuke and John Trudell, Simon Ortiz, Russell Means and Leonard Peltier, Glenn Morris and Leslie Silko, Jimmie Durham, John Mohawk and Oren Lyons, Bob Robideau and Dino Butler, Ingrid Washinawatok and Dagmar Thorpe. There are scholars and attorneys like Vine Deloria, Don Grinde, Pam Colorado, Sharon Venne, George Tinker, Bob Thomas, Jack Forbes, Rob Williams and Hank Adams. There are poets like Wendy Rose, Adrian Louis, Dian Million, Chrystos, Elizabeth Woody and Bernie Bush.

There are also many grassroots warriors in the contemporary world, people like the Dann sisters, Bernard Ominayak, Art Montour and Buddy Lamont, Madonna Thunderhawk, Anna Mae Aquash, Kenny Kane and Joe Stuntz, Minnie Garrow and Bobby Garcia, Dallas Thundershield, Phyllis Young, Andrea Smith and Richard Oaks, Margo Thunderbird, Tina Trudell and Roque Duenas. And, of course, there are the elders, those who have given, and continue to give, continuity and direction to indigenist expression; I am referring to people like Chief Fools Crow and Matthew King, Henry Crow Dog and Grampa David Sohappy, David Monongye and Janet McCloud and Thomas Banyacya, Roberta Blackgoat and Katherine Smith and Pauline Whitesinger, Marie Leggo and Phillip Deer and Ellen Moves Camp, Raymond Yowell and Nellie Red Owl.⁴

Like the historical figures I mentioned earlier, these are names representing positions, struggles, and aspirations which should be well-known to every socially-conscious person in North America. They embody the absolute antithesis of the order represented by the “Four Georges”—George Washington, George Custer, George Patton and George Bush—emblemizing the sweep of “American” history as it is conventionally taught in that system of indoctrination the United States passes off as “education.” They also stand as the negation of that long stream of “Vichy Indians”⁵ spawned and deemed “respectable” by the process of predation, colonialism, and genocide the Four Georges signify.

The names I have listed cannot be associated with the legacy of the “Hang Around the Fort” Indians, broken, disempowered, and intimidated by their conquerors, or with the sellouts who undermined the integrity of their own cultures, appointed by the United States to sign away their peoples’ homelands in exchange for trinkets, sugar, and alcohol. They are not the figurative descendants of those who participated in the assassination of people like Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, and who filled the ranks of the

colonial police to enforce an illegitimate and alien order against their own. They are not among those who have queued up to roster the régimes installed by the U.S. to administer Indian Country from the 1930s onward, the craven puppets who to this day cling to and promote the “lawful authority” of federal force as a means of protecting their positions of petty privilege, imagined prestige, and often their very identities as native people. No, indigenists and indigenism have nothing to do with the sorts of Quisling impulses driving the Ross Swimmers, Dickie Wilsons, Webster Two Hawks, Peter McDonalds, Vernon Bellecourts and David Bradleys of this world.⁶

Instead, indigenism offers an antidote, a vision of how things might be that is based in how things have been since time immemorial, and how things must be once again if the human species, and perhaps the planet itself, is to survive much longer. Predicated on a synthesis of the wisdom attained over thousands of years by indigenous, landbased peoples around the globe—the Fourth World or, as Winona LaDuke puts it, “The Host World upon which the first, second and third worlds all sit at the present time”—indigenism stands in diametrical opposition to the totality of what might be termed “Eurocentric business as usual.”⁷

Indigenism

The manifestation of indigenism in North America has much in common with the articulation of what in Latin America is called *indigenismo*. One of the major proponents of this, the Mexican anthropologist/activist Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, has framed its precepts this way: “[I]n America there exists only one unitary Indian civilization. All the Indian peoples participate in this civilization. The diversity of cultures and languages is not an obstacle to affirmation of the unity of this civilization. It is a fact that all civilizations, including Western civilization, have these sorts of internal differences. But the level of unity—the civilization—is more profound than the level of specificity (the cultures, the languages, the communities). The civilizing dimension transcends the concrete diversity.”⁸

The differences between the diverse peoples (or ethnic groups) have been accentuated by the colonizers as part of the strategy of domination. There have been attempts by some to fragment the Indian peoples...by establishing frontiers, deepening differences and provoking rivalries. This strategy follows a principle objective: domination, to which end it is attempted ideologically to demonstrate that in America, Western civilization is confronted by a magnitude of atomized peoples, differing from one

another (every day more and more languages are “discovered”). Thus, in consequence, such peoples are believed incapable of forging a future of their own. In contrast to this, the Indian thinking affirms the existence of one—a unique and different—Indian civilization, from which extend as particular expressions the cultures of diverse peoples. Thus, the identification and solidarity among Indians. Their “Indianness” is not a simple tactic postulated, but rather the necessary expression of an historical unity, based in common civilization, which the colonizer has wanted to hide. Their Indianness, furthermore, is reinforced by the common experience of almost five centuries of [Eurocentric] domination.⁹

“The past is also unifying,” Bonfil Batalla continues. “The achievements of the classic Mayas, for instance, can be reclaimed as part of the Quechua foundation [in present-day Guatemala], much the same as the French affirm their Greek past. And even beyond the remote past which is shared, and beyond the colonial experience that makes all Indians similar, Indian peoples also have a common historic project for the future. The legitimacy of that project rests precisely in the existence of an Indian civilization, within which framework it could be realized, once the ‘chapter of colonialism ends.’ One’s own civilization signifies the right and the possibility to create one’s own future, a different future, not Western.”¹⁰

As has been noted elsewhere, the “new” indigenist movement Bonfil Batalla describes equates “colonialism/imperialism with the West; in opposing the West...[adherents] view themselves as anti-imperialist. Socialism, or Marxism, is viewed as just another Western manifestation.”¹¹ A query is thus posed:

What, then, distinguishes Indian from Western civilization? Fundamentally, the difference can be summed up in terms of [humanity’s] relationship with the natural world. For the West ... the concept of nature is that of an enemy to be overcome, with man as boss on a cosmic scale. Man in the West believes he must dominate everything, including other [individuals]. The converse is true in Indian civilization, where [humans are] part of an indivisible cosmos and fully aware of [their] harmonious relationship with the universal order of nature. [S]he neither dominates nor tries to dominate. On the contrary, she exists within nature as a moment of it.... Traditionalism thus constitutes a potent weapon in the [indigenous] civilization’s struggle for survival against colonial domination.¹²

Bonfil Batalla contends that the nature of the indigenist impulse is essentially socialist, insofar as socialism, or what Karl Marx described as “primitive communism,” was and remains the primary mode of indigenous social organization in the Americas.¹³ Within this framework, he remarks

that there are “six fundamental demands identified with the Indian movement,” all of them associated with sociopolitical, cultural, and economic autonomy (or sovereignty) and self-determination:

First there is land. There are demands for occupied ancestral territories...demands for control of the use of the land and subsoil; and struggles against the invasion of...commercial interests. Defense of land held and recuperation of land lost are the central demands. Second, the demand for recognition of the ethnic and cultural specificity of the Indian is identified. All [indigenist] organizations reaffirm the right to be distinct in culture, language and institutions, and to increase the value of their own technological, social and ideological practices. Third is the demand for [parity] of political rights in relation to the state... Fourth, there is a call for the end of repression and violence, particularly that against the leaders, activists and followers of the Indians' new political organizations. Fifth, Indians demand the end of family planning programmes which have brought widespread sterilization of Indian women and men. Finally, tourism and folklore are rejected, and there is a demand for true Indian cultural expression to be respected. The commercialization of Indian music and dance are often mentioned...and there is a particular dislike for the exploitation of those that have sacred content and purpose for Indians. An end to the exploitation of Indian culture in general is [demanded].¹⁴

In North America, these *indigenista* demands have been adopted virtually intact and have been conceived as encompassing basic needs of native peoples wherever they have been subsumed by the sweep of Western expansionism. This is the idea of the Fourth World explained by Cree author George Manuel, founding president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples:

The 4th World is the name given to indigenous peoples descended from a country's aboriginal population and who today are completely or partly deprived of their own territory and its riches. The peoples of the 4th World have only limited influence or none at all in the nation state [in which they are now encapsulated]. The peoples to whom we refer are the Indians of North and South America, the Inuit (Eskimos), the Sami people [of northern Scandinavia], the Australian aborigines, as well as the various indigenous populations of Africa, Asia and Oceania.¹⁵

Manuel might well have included segments of the European population itself, as is evidenced by the ongoing struggles of the Irish, Welsh, Basques and others to free themselves from the yoke of settler-state oppression imposed upon them as long as 800 years ago.¹⁶ In such areas of Europe, as well as in “the Americas and [large portions of] Africa, the goal is not the creation of a state, but the expulsion of alien rule and the reconstruction of societies.”¹⁷

That such efforts are entirely serious is readily evidenced in the fact that, in a global survey conducted by University of California cultural geographer Bernard Neitschmann from 1985 to 1987, it was discovered that of the more than 100 armed conflicts then underway, some 85 percent were being waged by indigenous peoples against the state or states which had laid claim to and occupied their territories.¹⁸ As Theo van Boven, former director of the United Nations Division (now Center) for Human Rights, put it in 1981, the circumstances precipitating armed struggle “may be seen with particular poignancy in relation to the indigenous peoples of the world, who have been described somewhat imaginatively—and perhaps not without justification—as representing the fourth world: the world on the margin, on the periphery.”¹⁹

The Issue of Land in North America

What must be understood about the context of the Americas north of the Río Grande is that neither of the nation-states, the United States and Canada, which claim sovereignty over the territory involved has any legitimate basis at all in which to anchor its absorption of huge portions of that territory. I am going to restrict my remarks in this connection mostly to the United States, mainly because that is what I know best, but also because both the United States and Canada have evolved on the basis of the Anglo-Saxon common law tradition.²⁰ So, I think much of what can be said about the United States bears a certain utility in terms of understanding the situation in Canada. Certain of the principles, of course, also extend to the situation in Latin America, but there you have an evolution of nation-states based on the Iberian legal tradition, so a greater transposition in terms is required.²¹ The shape of things down south was summarized eloquently enough by the Peruvian freedom fighter Hugo Blanco with his slogan, “Land or Death!”²²

The United States, during the first ninety-odd years of its existence, entered into and ratified more than 370 separate treaties with the peoples indigenous to the area now known as the 48 contiguous states.²³ There are a number of important dimensions to this, but two aspects will do for our purposes here. First, by customary international law and provision of the U.S. Constitution itself, each treaty ratification represented a formal recognition by the federal government that the other parties to the treaties—the na-

tive peoples involved—were fully sovereign nations in their own right.²⁴ Second, the purpose of the treaties, from the U.S. point of view, was to serve as real estate documents through which the United States acquired legal title to specified portions of North America from the indigenous nations it was thereby acknowledging already owned it.

From the viewpoint of the indigenous nations, of course, these treaties served other purposes: the securing of permanently guaranteed borders to what remained of their national territories, assurance of the continuation of their ongoing self-governance, trade and military alliances, and so forth. The treaty relationships were invariably reciprocal in nature: Indians ceded certain portions of their land to the United States, and the United States incurred certain obligations in exchange.²⁵ Even at that, there were seldom any outright sales of land by Indian nations to the United States. Rather, the federal obligations incurred were usually couched in terms of perpetuity. The arrangements were set up by the Indians so that, as long as the United States honored its end of the bargains, it would have the right to occupy and use defined portions of Indian land. In this sense, the treaties more nearly resemble rental or leasing instruments than actual deeds. And what happens under Anglo-Saxon common law when a tenant violates the provisions of a rental agreement?

The point here is that the United States has long since defaulted on its responsibilities under every single treaty obligation it ever incurred with regard to Indians. There is really no dispute about this. In fact, there is even a Supreme Court opinion, the 1903 *Lone Wolf* case, in which the good “Justices” held that the United States enjoyed a “right” to disregard any treaty obligation to Indians it found inconvenient, but that the remaining treaty provisions continued to be binding upon the Indians. This was, the high court said, because the United States was the stronger of the nations involved and thus wielded “plenary” power—this simply means *full* power—over the affairs of the weaker indigenous nations. Therefore, the court felt itself free to unilaterally “interpret” each treaty as a bill of sale rather than a rental agreement.²⁶

Stripped of its fancy legal language, the Supreme Court’s position was (and remains) astonishingly crude. There is an old adage that “possession is nine-tenths of the law.” Well, in this case the court went a bit further, arguing that possession was *all* of the law. Further, the highest court in the land went on record boldly arguing that, where Indian property rights are con-

cerned, might, and might alone, makes right. The United States held the power to simply take Indian land, they said, and therefore it had the “right” to do so. This is precisely what the nazis argued only thirty years later, and the United States had the unmitigated audacity to profess outrage and shock that Germany was so blatantly transgressing against elementary standards of international law and the most basic requirements of human decency.²⁷

For that matter, this is all that Saddam Hussein stood for when he took Kuwait—indeed, Iraq had a far stronger claim to rights over Kuwait than the United States has ever had with regard to Indian Country—with the result that George Bush began to babble about fighting a “Just War” to “roll back naked aggression,” “free occupied territory,” and “reinstat[e] a legitimate government.” If he were in any way serious about that proposition, he would have had to call air strikes in on himself instead of ordering the bombing of Baghdad.²⁸

Be that as it may, there are a couple of other significant problems with the treaty constructions by which the United States allegedly assumed title over its landbase. On the one hand, a number of the ratified treaties can be shown to be fraudulent or coerced, and thus invalid. The nature of the coercion is fairly well known; perhaps a third of the ratified treaties involved direct coercion. Now comes the matter of fraud, which assumes the form of everything from the deliberate misinterpretation of proposed treaty provisions to the Senate’s alteration of treaty language after the fact and without the knowledge of the Indian signatories.

On a number of occasions, the United States appointed its own preferred Indian “leaders” to represent their nations in treaty negotiations.²⁹ In at least one instance, the 1861 Treaty of Fort Wise, U.S. negotiators appear to have forged the signatures of various Cheyenne and Arapaho leaders.³⁰ Additionally, there are about 400 treaties which were never ratified by the senate and were therefore never legally binding, but upon which the United States now asserts its claims concerning lawful use and occupancy rights to, and jurisdiction over, appreciable portions of North America.³¹

When all is said and done, however, even these extremely dubious bases for U.S. title are insufficient to cover the gross territoriality at issue. The federal government itself tacitly admitted as much during the 1970s in the findings of the so-called Indian Claims Commission, an entity created in 1946 to make “quiet” title to all illegally taken Indian land within the lower 48 states.³² What the commission did over the ensuing thirty-five years was

in significant part to research the ostensible documentary basis for U.S. title to literally every square foot of its claimed territory. It found, among other things, that the United States had no legal basis whatsoever—no treaty, no agreement, not even an arbitrary act of Congress—to fully one-third of the area within its boundaries.³³

At the same time, the data revealed that the reserved areas still nominally possessed by Indians had been reduced to about 2.5 percent of the same area.³⁴ What this means in plain English is that the United States cannot pretend to have even a shred of legitimacy in its occupancy and control of upwards of thirty percent of its “home” territory. And, lest such matters be totally lost in the shuffle, I should note that it has even less legal basis for its claims to the land in Alaska and Hawai‘i.³⁵ Beyond that, its “right” to assert dominion over Puerto Rico, the “U.S.” Virgin Islands, “American” Samoa, Guam, and the Marshall Islands tends to speak for itself.

Indian Land Recovery in the United States?

Leaving aside questions concerning the validity of various treaties, the beginning point for any indigenist endeavor in the United States centers, logically enough, in efforts to restore direct Indian control over the huge portion of the continental United States that was plainly never ceded by native nations. Upon the bedrock of this foundation, a number of other problems integral to the present configuration of power and privilege in North American society can be resolved, not just for Indians, but for everyone else as well. It is probably impossible to solve, or even to begin meaningfully addressing, certain of these problems in any other way. But still, it is, as they say, “no easy sell” to convince anyone outside the more conscious sectors of the American Indian population itself of the truth of this very simple fact.

In part, uncomfortable as it may be to admit, this is because even the most progressive elements of the North American immigrant population share a perceived commonality of interest with the more reactionary segments. This takes the form of a mutual insistence upon an imagined “right” to possess native property, merely because they are here, and because they desire it. The Great Fear is, within any settler-state, that if indigenous land rights are ever openly acknowledged, and native people therefore begin to recover some significant portion of their land, the immigrants will correspondingly be dispossessed of that which they have come to consider

“theirs” (most notably, individual homes, small farms, ranches and the like).

Tellingly, every major Indian land recovery initiative in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century—the Western Shoshone, those in Maine, the Black Hills, the Oneida claims in New York State are prime examples—has been met by a propaganda barrage from right-wing organizations ranging from the Ku Klux Klan to the John Birch Society to the Republican Party warning individual non-Indian property holders of exactly this “peril.”³⁶

I will debunk some of this nonsense in a moment, but first I want to take up the posture of self-proclaimed leftist radicals in the same connection. And I will do so on the basis of principle, because justice is supposed to matter more to progressives than to rightist hacks. Let me say that the pervasive and near-total silence of the left in this connection has been quite illuminating. Non-Indian activists, with only a handful of exceptions, persistently plead that they cannot really take a coherent position on the matter of Indian land rights because, “unfortunately,” they are “not really conversant with the issues” (as if these are tremendously complex).

Meanwhile, they do virtually nothing, generation after generation, to inform themselves on the topic of who actually owns the ground they are standing on. The record can be played only so many times before it wears out and becomes just another variation of “hear no evil, see no evil.” At this point, it does not take Einstein to figure out that the left does not know much about such things because it has never *wanted* to know, or that this is so because it has always had its own plans for utilizing land it has no more right to than does the status quo it claims to oppose.

The usual technique for explaining this away has always been a sort of pro forma acknowledgment that Indian land rights are of course “really important stuff” (yawn), but that one “really does not have a lot of time” to get into it (I’ll buy your book, though, and keep it on my shelf even if I never read it). Reason? Well, one is just “overwhelmingly preoccupied” with working on “*other* important issues” (meaning, what they consider to be *more* important things). Typically enumerated are sexism, racism, homophobia, class inequities, militarism, the environment, or some combination. It is a pretty good evasion, all in all. Certainly, there is no denying any of these issues their due; they *are* all important, obviously so. But more important than the question of land rights? There are some serious problems of primacy and priority imbedded in the orthodox script.

To frame things clearly in this regard, let us hypothesize for a moment that all of the various non-Indian movements concentrating on each of these issues were suddenly successful in accomplishing their objectives. Let us imagine that the United States as a whole were somehow transformed into an entity defined by the parity of its race, class and gender relations, its embrace of unrestricted sexual preference, its rejection of militarism in all forms and its abiding concern with environmental protection (I know, I know, this is a sheer impossibility, but that is my point).

When all is said and done, the society resulting from this scenario is *still*, first and foremost, a colonialist society, an imperialist society in the most fundamental sense and with all that this implies. This is true because the scenario does nothing at all to address the fact that whatever happens is on someone else's land, not only without their consent, but with an adamant disregard for their rights to the land. Hence, all it means is that the immigrant or invading population has rearranged its affairs in such a way as to make itself more comfortable at the continuing expense of indigenous people. The colonial equation remains intact and may even be reinforced by a greater degree of participation and vested interest in maintenance of the colonial order among the settler population at large.³⁷

The dynamic here is not very different from that evident in the American Revolution of the late eighteenth century, is it? And we all know very well where that led. Should we therefore begin to refer to socialist imperialism, feminist imperialism, gay and lesbian imperialism, environmentalist imperialism, Afroamerican and la Raza imperialism? I would hope not.³⁸ I would hope this is all just a matter of confusion, of muddled priorities among people who really do mean well and who would like to do better. If so, then all that is necessary to correct the situation is a basic rethinking of what it is that must be done, and in what order. Here, I would advance the straightforward premise that the land rights of "First Americans" should be a priority for anyone seriously committed to accomplishing positive change in North America.

But before I suggest everyone jump up and adopt this priority, I suppose it is only fair that I investigate the converse of the proposition: If making things like class inequity and sexism the preeminent focus of progressive action in North America inevitably perpetuates the internal colonial structure of the United States, does the reverse hold true? I will state unequivocally that it does not.

There is no indication whatsoever that a restoration of indigenous sovereignty in Indian Country would foster class stratification anywhere, least of all in Indian Country. In fact, all indications are that when left to their own devices, indigenous peoples have consistently organized their societies in the most class-free manner. Look to the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy) for an example. Look to the Muscogee (Creek) Confederacy. Look to the confederations of the Yaqui and the Lakota, and those pursued and nearly perfected by Pontiac and Tecumseh. They represent the very essence of enlightened egalitarianism and democracy. Every imagined example to the contrary brought forth by even the most arcane anthropologist can be readily offset by a couple of dozen other illustrations along the lines of those I just mentioned.³⁹

Would sexism be perpetuated? Ask the Haudenosaunee clan mothers, who continue to assert political leadership in their societies through the present day. Ask Wilma Mankiller, recent head of the Cherokee Nation, a people who were traditionally led by what were called “Beloved Women.” Ask a Lakota woman—or man, for that matter—about who owned all real property in traditional society, and what that meant in terms of parity in gender relations. Ask a traditional Navajo grandmother about her social and political role among her people. Women in most traditional native societies not only enjoyed political, social, and economic parity with men, but they also often held a preponderance of power in one or more of these spheres.

Homophobia? Homosexuals of both genders were, and in many settings still are, deeply revered as special or extraordinary, and therefore spiritually significant, within most indigenous North American cultures. The extent to which these realities do not now pertain in native societies is exactly the extent to which Indians have been subordinated to the morés of the invading, dominating culture. Insofar as restoration of Indian land rights is tied directly to the reconstitution of traditional indigenous social, political, and economic modes, one can see where this leads; the Indian arrangements of sex and sexuality accord rather well with the aspirations of feminism and gay rights activism.⁴⁰

How about a restoration of native land rights precipitating some sort of “environmental holocaust?” Let us get at least a little bit realistic here. If one is not addicted to the fabrications of Smithsonian anthropologists about how Indians lived,⁴¹ or George Weurthner’s eurosupremicist *Earth First!* fantasies about how we beat all the woolly mammoths and mastodons and

sabertoothed cats to death with sticks,⁴² then this question is not even on the board. I know it has become fashionable among *Washington Post* editorialists to make snide references to native people “strewing refuse in their wake” as they “wandered nomadically” about the “prehistoric” North American landscape.⁴³ What is this supposed to imply? That we, who were mostly “sedentary agriculturalists” in any event, were dropping plastic and aluminum cans as we went?

As I said, let us get real. Read the accounts of early European invaders about what they encountered: North America was invariably described as being a “pristine wilderness” at the point of European arrival, despite the fact that it had been occupied by fifteen or twenty million people enjoying a remarkably high standard of living for nobody knows how long. 40,000 years? 50,000 years?⁴⁴ Longer? Now contrast that reality to what has been done to this continent over the past couple of hundred years by the culture *Weurthner*, the *Smithsonian* and the *Post* represent, and you tell *me* about environmental devastation.⁴⁵

That leaves militarism and racism. Taking the last first, there really is no indication of racism in traditional indigenous societies. To the contrary, the record reveals that Indians habitually intermarried between groups and frequently adopted both children and adults from other groups. This occurred in precontact times between Indians, and the practice was broadened to include those of both African and European origin, and ultimately Asian origin as well, once contact occurred. Those who were naturalized by marriage or adoption were considered members of the group, pure and simple. This was always the native view.⁴⁶

The Europeans and subsequent Euroamerican settlers viewed things rather differently, however, and foisted off the notion that Indian identity should be determined primarily by “blood quantum,” an outright eugenics code similar to those developed in places like nazi Germany and apartheid South Africa. Now, *that* is a racist construction if there ever was one. Unfortunately, a lot of Indians have been conned into buying into this anti-Indian absurdity, and that is something to be overcome. But there is also solid indication that quite a number of native people continue to strongly resist such things as the quantum system.⁴⁷

As to militarism, no one will deny that Indians fought wars among themselves both before and after the European invasion began. Probably half of all indigenous peoples in North America maintained permanent warrior

societies. This could perhaps be reasonably construed as “militarism.” But not, I think, with the sense the term conveys within the European/Euroamerican tradition. There were never, so far as anyone can demonstrate, wars of annihilation fought in this hemisphere prior to the Columbian arrival. None. In fact, it seems that it was a more-or-less firm principle of indigenous warfare *not* to kill, the object being to demonstrate personal bravery, something that could be done only against a *live* opponent. There is no honor to be had in killing another person, because a dead person cannot hurt you. There is no risk.

This is not to say that nobody ever died or was seriously injured in the fighting. They were, just as they are in full-contact contemporary sports like football and boxing. Actually, these kinds of Euroamerican games are what I would take to be the closest modern parallels to traditional Indian warfare. For us, it was a way of burning excess testosterone out of young males and not much more. So, militarism in the way the term is used today is as alien to native tradition as smallpox and atomic bombs.⁴⁸

Not only is it perfectly reasonable to assert that a restoration of native control over unceded lands within the United States would do nothing to perpetuate such problems as sexism and classism, but the reconstitution of indigenous social standards that this would entail stands to free the affected portions of North America from such maladies altogether. Moreover, it can be said that the process should have a tangible impact in terms of diminishing such things elsewhere. The principle is this: Sexism, racism, and all the rest arose here as a concomitant to the emergence and consolidation of the eurocentric nation-state form of sociopolitical and economic organization. Everything the state does, everything it can do, is entirely contingent upon its maintaining internal cohesion, a cohesion signified above all by its pretended territorial integrity, its ongoing domination of Indian Country.

Given this, it seems obvious that the literal dismemberment of the nation-state necessary for Indian land recovery correspondingly reduces the ability of the state to sustain the imposition of objectionable policies within itself. It follows that realization of indigenous land rights serves to undermine or destroy the ability of the status quo to continue imposing a racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, militaristic order upon *non*-Indians.

A brief aside: Anyone with doubts as to whether it is possible to bring about the dismemberment from within of a superpower state in this day and age, ought to sit down and have a long talk with a guy named Mikhail

Gorbechev. It would be better yet if one could chew the fat with Leonid Breznev, a man who we can be sure would have replied in all sincerity, only twenty years ago, that this was the most outlandish idea he'd ever heard. Well, look on a map today, and see if you can find the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It ain't there, folks. Instead, you are seeing—and you will see it more and more—the reemergence of the very nations Léon Trotsky and his colleagues consigned to the “dustbin of history” clear back at the beginning of the century. These megastates are not immutable. They can be taken apart. They can be destroyed. But first we have to decide that we can do it and that we *will* do it.

So, all things considered, when indigenist movements like AIM advance slogans like “U.S. Out of North America,” non-Indian radicals should not react defensively. They should cheer. They should see what they might do to help. When they respond defensively to sentiments like those expressed by AIM, what they are ultimately defending is the very government, the very order they claim to oppose so resolutely. And if they manifest this contradiction often enough, consistently enough, pathologically enough, then we have no alternative but to take them at their word: that they really are at some deep level or another aligned, all protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, with the mentality that endorses our permanent dispossession and disenfranchisement, our continuing oppression, our ultimate genocidal obliteration as self-defining and self-determining peoples. In other words, they make themselves part of the problem rather than becoming part of the solution.

Toward a North American Union of Indigenous Nations

There are certain implications to Indian control over Indian land that need to be clarified, beginning with a debunking of the “Great Fear,” the reactionary myth that any substantive native land recovery would automatically lead to the mass dispossession and eviction of individual non-Indian home owners. Maybe in the process I can reassure a couple of radicals that it is okay to be on the right side of this issue, that they will not have to give something up in order to part company with Pat Buchanan on this. It is hard, frankly, to take this up without giggling, because of some of the images it inspires. I mean, what *are* people worried about here? Do all of you really foresee Indians standing out on the piers of Boston and New York City, issu-

ing sets of waterwings to long lines of non-Indians so they can all swim back to the Old World? Gimme a break.

Seriously, one can search high and low, and never find an instance in which Indians have advocated that small property owners be pushed off the land in order to satisfy land claims. The thrust in every single case has been to recover land within national and state parks and forests, grasslands, military reservations and the like. In some instances, major corporate holdings have also been targeted. A couple of times, as in the Black Hills, a sort of joint jurisdiction between Indians and the existing non-Indian government has been discussed with regard to an entire treaty area.⁴⁹ But even in the most hardline of the indigenous positions concerning the Black Hills—that advanced by Russell Means in his TREATY Program, where resumption of exclusively Lakota jurisdiction is demanded—there is no mention of dispossessing or evicting non-Indians.⁵⁰ Instead, other alternatives, which I will take up later, were carefully spelled out.

In the meantime, though, I would like to share with you something the right-wing propagandists never mention when they are busily whipping up non-Indian sentiment against Indian rights. Recall that I said that the quantity of unceded land within the continental United States makes up about one-third of the landmass? Let's just round this off to thirty percent, because there is the matter of 2.5 percent of the overall landbase still set aside as Indian reservations. Now juxtapose that thirty percent to the approximately 35 percent of the same landmass the federal government presently holds in various kinds of trust status. Add the ten or twelve percent of the land the individual states hold in trust. That adds up to a thirty-percent Indian claim against a 45 to 47 percent *governmental* holding.⁵¹ Never mind the percentage of the land held by major corporations. Conclusion? It is, and always has been, quite possible to accomplish the return of every square inch of unceded Indian Country in the United States without tossing a single non-Indian homeowner off the land on which they live.

Critics—that is the amazingly charitable self-description employed by those who ultimately oppose the assertion of indigenous rights in any form and as a matter of principle—are always quick to point out that the problem with this arithmetic is that the boundaries of the government trust areas do not necessarily conform in all cases to the boundaries of unceded areas. That is true enough, although I would just as quickly point out that more often than not they *do* correspond. This “problem” is nowhere near as big as it is

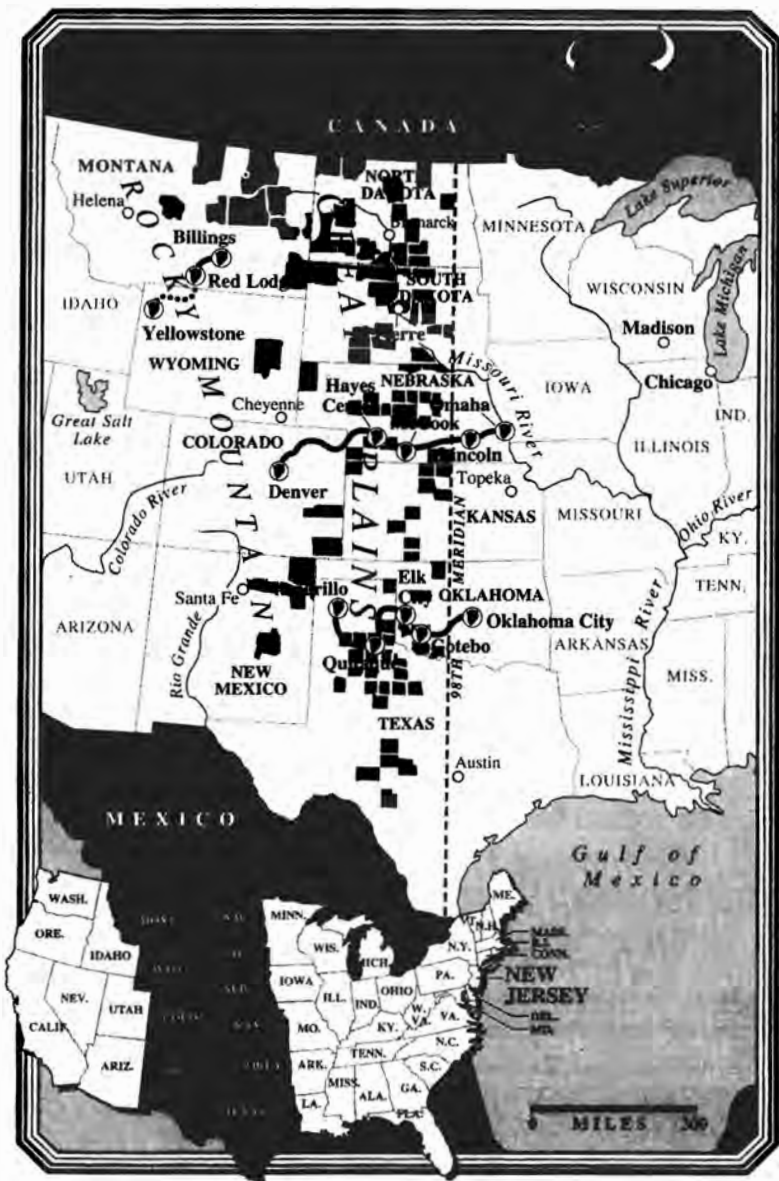
made out to be. And there is nothing intrinsic to the boundary question which could not be negotiated once non-Indian America acknowledges that Indians have an absolute moral and legal right to the quantity of territory which was never ceded. Boundaries can be adjusted, often in ways which can be beneficial to both sides involved in the negotiation.⁵²

Let me give you an example. Along about 1980, two Rutgers University professors, Frank and Deborah Popper, undertook a comprehensive study of land-use patterns and economy in the Great Plains region. What they discovered is that 110 counties—one quarter of all the counties in the entire Plains region falling within the western portions of the states of North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, as well as eastern Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico—have been fiscally insolvent since the moment they were taken from native people a century or more ago.

This is an area of about 140,000 square miles, inhabited by a widely dispersed non-Indian population of only around 400,000 attempting to maintain school districts, police and fire departments, road beds and all the other basic accoutrements of “modern life” on the negligible incomes which can be eked from cattle grazing and wheat farming on land which is patently unsuited for both enterprises. The Poppers found that without considerable federal subsidy each and every year none of these counties would ever have been “viable.” Nor, on the face of it, will any of them ever be. Bluntly put, the pretense of bringing Euroamerican “civilization” to the Plains represents nothing more than a massive economic burden on the rest of the United States.

What the Poppers proposed on the basis of these findings is that the government cut its perpetual losses by buying out the individual landholdings within the target counties and converting them into open space wildlife sanctuaries known as “Buffalo Commons.” The whole area would in effect be turned back to the bison which were very nearly exterminated by Phil Sheridan’s buffalo hunters back in the nineteenth century as a means of starving “recalcitrant” Indians into submission. The result would, they argue, be both environmentally and economically beneficial to the nation as a whole.

It is instructive that such thinking has gained increasing credibility and support from Indians and non-Indians alike, beginning in the second half of the 1980s. Another chuckle here: Indians have been trying to tell non-Indi-



Anne Matthews, *Where the Buffalo Roam.*

ans that this would be the outcome of fencing in the Plains ever since 1850 or so, but some folks have a real hard time catching on. Anyway, it is entirely possible that we will see some actual motion in this direction over the next few years.⁵³

So, let us take the Poppers' idea to its next logical step. There are another hundred or so economically marginal counties adjoining the "perpetual red ink" counties already identified. These do not represent an actual drain on the U.S. economy, but they do not contribute much either. They could be "written off" and lumped into the Buffalo Commons with no one feeling any ill effects whatsoever. Now add in adjacent areas like the national grasslands in Wyoming, the national forest and parklands in the Black Hills, extraneous military reservations like Ellsworth Air Force Base, and existing Indian reservations. This would be a huge territory lying east of Denver, west of Lawrence, Kansas, and extending from the Canadian border to southern Texas, all of it "outside the loop" of U.S. business as usual

The bulk of this area is unceded territory owned by the Lakota, Pawnee, Arikara, Hidatsa, Crow, Shoshone, Assiniboine, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Comanche, Jicarilla and Mescalero Apache nations. There would be little cost to the United States, and virtually no arbitrary dispossession or dislocation of non-Indians if the entire Commons were restored to these peoples. Further, it would establish a concrete basis from which genuine expressions of indigenous self-determination could begin to reemerge on this continent, allowing the indigenous nations involved to begin the process of reconstituting themselves socially and politically and to recreate their traditional economies in ways that make contemporary sense. This would provide alternative socioeconomic models for possible adaptation by non-Indians and alleviate a range of considerable costs to the public treasury incurred by keeping the Indians in question in a state of abject and permanent dependency.

Critics will undoubtedly pounce upon the fact that an appreciable portion of the Buffalo Commons area I have sketched out—perhaps a million acres or so—lies outside the boundaries of unceded territory. That is the basis for the sorts of multilateral negotiations between the United States and indigenous nations I mentioned earlier. This land will need to be "charged off" in some fashion against unceded land elsewhere and in such a way as to bring other native peoples into the mix. The Poncas, Omahas, and Osages, whose traditional territories fall within the area in question, come immedi-

ately to mind, but this would extend as well to all native peoples willing to exchange land claims somewhere else for actual acreage in this locale. The idea is to consolidate a distinct indigenous territory while providing a definable landbase to as many different Indian nations as possible in the process.

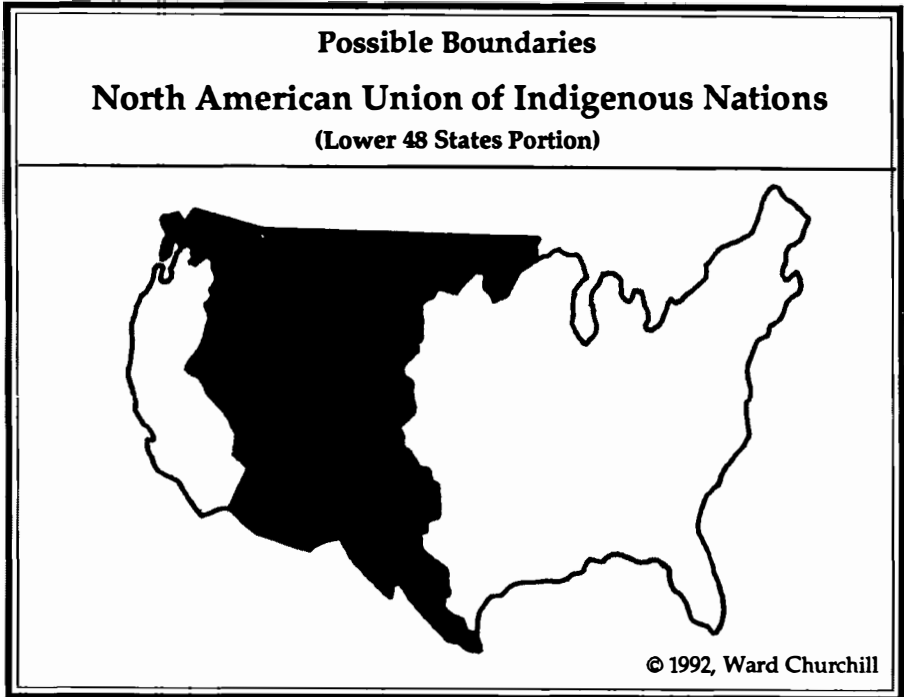
From there, the principle of the Buffalo Commons *cum* Indian Territory could be extended westward into areas that adjoin or are at least immediately proximate to the Commons area itself. The fact is that vast areas of the Great Basin and Sonoran Desert regions of the United States are even more sparsely populated and economically insolvent than the Plains. A great deal of the area is also held in federal trust.

Hence, it is reasonable, in my view at least, to expand the Commons territory to include most of Utah and Nevada, northern Montana and Idaho, quite a lot of eastern Washington and Oregon, most of the rest of New Mexico, and the lion's share of Arizona. This would encompass the unceded lands of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre, Salish, Kutenai, Nez Percé, Yakima, Western Shoshone, Goshutes and Utes, Paiutes, Navajo, Hopi and other Pueblos, Mescalero and Chiricahua Apache, Havasupi, Yavapai and O'odam. It would also set the stage for further exchange negotiations to consolidate this additional territory in order to establish a landbase for a number of other indigenous nations.

At this point, we have arrived at an area comprising roughly one-third of the continental United States, a territory that, regardless of the internal political and geographical subdivisions effected by the array of native peoples within it, could be defined as a sort of "North American Union of Indigenous Nations." Such an entity would be in a position to assist other indigenous nations outside its borders but still within the remaining territorial corpus of the United States to resolve land claim issues accruing from fraudulent or coerced treaties of cession (another fifteen or twenty percent of the present 48 states).

It would also be in a position to facilitate an accommodation of the needs of untreated peoples within the United States, the Abenaki of Vermont, for example, and the Hawaiian and Alaskan natives. Similarly, it would be able to help secure the self-determination of U.S. colonies like Puerto Rico. One can see the direction the dominoes would begin to fall.

Nor does this end with the United States. Any sort of indigenous union of the kind I have described would be as eligible for admission as a fully participating member of the United Nations as, say, Croatia and the



Ukraine have recently shown themselves to be. This would set a very important precedent, insofar as there has never been an American Indian entity of any sort accorded such political status on the world stage.

The precedent could serve to pave the way for comparable recognition and attainments by other Native American nations, notably the confederation of Incan peoples of the Andean highlands and the Mayans of present-day Guatemala and southern Mexico (Indians are the majority population, decisively so, in both locales), and from there, other indigenous nations elsewhere around the world. Again, one can see the direction the dominoes would fall. If we are going to have a “New World Order,” let us

make it something just a bit different from what George Bush and his friends had in mind. Right?

Sharing the Land

There are several closely related matters that should be touched upon before wrapping this up. One has to do with the idea of self-determination or what is meant when indigenists demand the unrestricted right for native peoples. Most non-Indians, and even a lot of Indians, seem confused by this and want to know whether it is not the same as complete separation from the United States, Canada, or whatever the colonizing power may be. The answer is “not necessarily.”

The unqualified acknowledgment of the right of the colonized to total separation (“secession”) from the colonizer is the necessary point of departure before any exercise of self-determination can occur. Decolonization means the colonized can then exercise the right to total separation in whole or in part, as they see fit, in accordance with their own customs and traditions, and their own appreciation of their needs. They decide for themselves what degree of autonomy they wish to enjoy and thus the nature of their political and economic relationship(s), not only with their former colonizers, but with all other nations as well.⁵⁴

My own inclination, which is in some ways an emotional preference, tends to run toward complete sovereign independence, but this is not the point. I have no more right to impose my preferences on indigenous nations than do the colonizing powers; each indigenous nation will choose for itself the exact manner and extent to which it expresses its autonomy, its sovereignty. To be honest, I suspect very few would be inclined to adopt my sort of “go it alone” approach (and, actually, I must also admit that part of my own insistence upon it often has more to do with forcing concession of the right from those who seek to deny it than it does with putting it into practice). In any event, I expect there would be the hammering out of a number of sets of international relations in the “free association” vein, a welter of variations of commonwealth and home rule governance.⁵⁵

The intent here is not, no matter how much it may be deserved in an abstract sense, to visit some sort of retribution, real or symbolic, upon the colonizing or former colonizing powers. It is to arrive at new sets of relationships between peoples that effectively put an end to the era of interna-

tional domination. The need is to gradually replace the existing world order with one that is predicated in collaboration and cooperation between nations. The only way to ever really accomplish this is to physically disassemble the gigantic state structures—structures that are literally grounded on systematic intergroup domination; they cannot in any sense exist without it—which are still evolving in this neoimperialist era. A concomitant of this disassembly is the inculcation of voluntary, consensual interdependence between formerly dominated and dominating nations and a redefinition of the word “nation” itself to conform to its original meaning: bodies of people bound together by their bioregional and other natural cultural affinities.⁵⁶

This last point is, it seems to me, crucially important. Partly, this is because of the persistent question of who gets to remain in Indian Country once land restoration and consolidation have occurred. The answer, I think, is, up to a point, anyone who wants to. By “anyone who wants to” I mean anyone who wishes to apply for formal citizenship within an indigenous nation, thereby accepting the idea that s/he is placing him/herself under unrestricted Indian jurisdiction and will thus be required to abide by native law.⁵⁷

Funny thing—I hear a lot of non-Indians asserting that they reject nearly every aspect of U.S. law, but the idea of placing themselves under anyone else’s jurisdiction still leaves them pretty queasy. I have no idea how many non-Indians might actually opt for citizenship in an indigenous nation, but I expect there will be some. And I suspect some native people have been so indoctrinated by the dominant society that they will elect to remain within it rather than availing themselves of their own citizenship. So there will be a bit of a trade-off in this respect.

Now, there is the matter of the process working only “up to a point.” This point is very real. It is defined not by political or racial considerations but by the carrying capacity of the land. The population of indigenous nations everywhere has always been determined by the number of people that could be sustained in a given environment or bioregion without overpowering and thereby destroying it.⁵⁸ A very carefully calculated balance, one that was calibrated to the fact that in order to enjoy certain sorts of material comfort human population must be kept at some level below saturation, was always maintained between the number of humans and the rest of the habitat. In order to accomplish this, native peoples have always incorporated into the very core of our spiritual traditions the concept that all life forms and the earth itself possess rights equal to those enjoyed by humans.

Rephrased, this means it would be a fundamental violation of traditional native law to supplant or eradicate another species, whether animal or plant, in order to make way for some greater number of humans or to increase the level of material comfort available to those who already exist. Conversely, it is a fundamental requirement of traditional law that each human accept his or her primary responsibility of maintaining the balance and harmony of the natural order *as it is encountered*.⁵⁹

One is essentially free to do anything one wants in an indigenous society so long as this cardinal rule is adhered to. The bottom line with regard to the maximum population limit of Indian Country as it has been sketched in this presentation is some very finite number. My best guess is that a couple of million people would be pushing things right through the roof. Whatever. Citizens can be admitted until that point has been reached, and no more. And the population cannot increase beyond that number over time, no matter at what rate. Carrying capacity is a fairly constant reality; it tends to take thousands of years to change, if it changes at all.

Population and Environment

What I am going to say next will probably startle a few people (as if what has been said already has not). I think this principle of population restraint is the single most important example Native North America can set for the rest of humanity. It is *the* thing that is most crucial for others to emulate. Check it out. I just read that Japan, a small island nation that has so many people they are literally tumbling into the sea, and that has exported about half again as many people as live on the home islands, is expressing “official concern” that its birth rate has declined very slightly over the last few years. The worry is that in thirty years there will be fewer workers available to “produce” and then to “consume” whatever is produced.⁶⁰

Ever ask yourself what is used in “producing” something? Or what is being “consumed”? Yeah. You got it. Nature is being consumed and with it the ingredients that allow ongoing human existence. While it is true that nature can replenish some of what is consumed, this can only be done at a certain rate. This rate has been vastly exceeded, and the excess is intensifying by the moment. An overburgeoning humanity is killing the natural world, and thus itself. It is no more complicated than that.⁶¹ Here we are in the midst of a rapidly worsening environmental crisis of truly global portions,

every last bit of it attributable to a wildly accelerating human consumption of the planetary habitat, and we have one of the world's major offenders expressing grave concern that the rate at which it is able to consume might actually drop a notch or two. *Think* about it. I suggest that this attitude signifies nothing so much as stark, staring madness. It is insane, suicidally, homicidally, and ecocidally insane.

And, no, I am not being rhetorical. I mean these terms in a clinically precise fashion. But I do not want to convey the impression that I am singling out the Japanese. I only used them as an illustration of a far broader pathology called "industrialism"—or, more lately, "postindustrialism"—a sickness centered in an utterly obsessive drive to dominate and destroy the natural order (words like "production," "consumption," "development," and "progress" are no more than code words masking this reality).⁶²

It is not only the industrialized countries that are afflicted with this dis-ease. One by-product of the past five centuries of European expansionism and the resulting hegemony of eurocentric ideology is that the latter has been drummed into the consciousness of *most* peoples to the point where it is now subconsciously internalized. Everywhere, you find people thinking it "natural" to view themselves as the incarnation of god on earth ("created in the image of God") and thus duty-bound to "exercise dominion over nature" in order to "multiply, grow plentiful, and populate the land" in ever increasing "abundance."⁶³

The legacy of the forced labor of the *latifundia* and inculcation of Catholicism in Latin America is a tremendous overburden of population who devoutly believe that "wealth" can be achieved (or is defined) by having ever *more* children.⁶⁴ The legacy of Mao's implementation of a "reverse technology" policy—the official encouragement of breakneck childbearing rates in his already overpopulated country, solely as a means to deploy massive labor power to offset capitalism's "technological advantage" in production—resulted in a tripling of China's population in only two generations.⁶⁵ And then there is India...

Make absolutely no mistake about it. The planet was never designed to accommodate six billion human beings, much less the *ten* billion predicted to be here a mere forty years hence.⁶⁶ If we are to turn power relations around between people and between groups of people, we must also turn around the relationship between people and the rest of the natural order. If we do not, we will die out as a species, just like any other species that irre-

vocably overshoots its habitat. The sheer number of humans on this planet needs to come down to about one quarter of what it is today, or maybe less, and the plain fact is that the bulk of these numbers are in the Third World.⁶⁷ So, I will say this clearly: not only must the birth rate in the Third World come down, but the population levels of Asia, Latin America, and Africa *must* be reduced over the next few generations, beginning right now.

Of course, there is another dimension to the population issue, one that is in some ways even more important, and I want to get into it in a minute. But first I have to say something else. This is that I do not want a bunch of Third Worlders jumping up in my face screaming that I am advocating “genocide.” Bullshit. It is genocide when some centralized state or some colonizing power imposes sterilization or abortion on target groups. It is not genocide at all to recognize that we have a problem and take the logical steps *ourselves* to solve it. Voluntary sterilization is not a part of genocide. Voluntary abortion is not a part of genocide. And, most importantly, educating ourselves and our respective peoples to bring our birth rates under control through conscious resort to birth control measures is not a part of genocide.⁶⁸

What it *is* is taking responsibility for ourselves again; it is taking responsibility for our destiny and our children’s destiny. It is about rooting the ghost of the Vatican out of our collective psyches, along with the ghosts of Adam Smith and Karl Marx. It is about getting back in touch with our *own* ways, our *own* traditions, our *own* knowledge, and it is long past time that we got out of our own way in this respect. We have an awful lot to unlearn and an awful lot to relearn, and not much time in which we can afford the luxury of avoidance. We need to get on with it.

The other aspect of population I want to take up is that there is another way of counting. One way, the way I just did it, and the one that is conventionally done, is to simply point to the number of bodies or “people units.” That is valid enough as far as it goes, but it does not really go far enough. This brings up the second method, which is to count by relative rate of resource consumption per body—the relative degree of environmental impact per individual—and to extrapolate this into people units.

Using this method, which is actually more accurate in ecological terms, we arrive at conclusions that are a little different than the usual notion that the most overpopulated regions on earth are in the Third World. The average resident of the United States, for example, consumes about

thirty times the resources of the average Ugandan or Laotian. Since a lot of poor folk reside in the United States, this translates into the average yuppie consuming about seventy times the resources of an average Third Worlder.⁶⁹ Every yuppie born counts as much as another seventy Chinese.

Lay *that* one on the next soccer mom who approaches you with a baby stroller and an outraged look, demanding that you to put your cigarette out, eh? It is plainly absurd for any American to complain about smoking when you consider the context of the damage done by overall U.S. consumption patterns. Tell 'em you'll put the butt out when they snuff the kid and not a moment before. Better yet, tell 'em they should snuff themselves, as well as the kid, and do the planet a *real* favor. Just "kidding" (heh-heh).

Returning to the topic at hand: multiply the U.S. population by a factor of thirty—a noticeably higher ratio than either western Europe or Japan—in order to figure out how many Third Worlders it would take to have the same environmental impact. I make that to be 7.5 *billion* U.S. people units. I think I can thus safely say the most overpopulated portion of the globe is the United States.

Either the consumption rates really have to be cut in this country, especially in the more privileged social sectors, or the number of people must be drastically reduced, or both. I advocate both. How much? That is a bit subjective, but I will tentatively accept the calculations of William Catton, a respected ecologist and demographer. He estimated that North America was thoroughly saturated with humans by 1840.⁷⁰ So we need to get both population and consumption levels down to what they were in that year or preferably a little earlier. Alternatively, we need to bring population down to an even lower level in order to sustain a correspondingly higher level of consumption.

Here is where I think the reconstitution of indigenous territoriality and sovereignty in the West can be useful with regard to population. You see, land is not just land; it is also the resources within the land, things like coal, oil, natural gas, uranium, and maybe most important, water. How does that bear on U.S. overpopulation? Simple. Much of the population expansion in this country over the past quarter-century has been into the southwestern desert region. How many people have they got living in the valley down there at Phoenix, a place that might be reasonably expected to support 500?

Look at LA: twenty million people where there ought to be maybe a few thousand. How do they accomplish this? Well, for one thing, they have

diverted the entire Colorado River from its natural purposes. They are siphoning off the Columbia River and piping it south. They have even got a project underway to divert the Yukon River all the way down from Alaska to support southwestern urban growth and to irrigate a proposed U.S. agribusiness penetration of northern Sonora and Chihuahua. Whole regions of our ecosphere are being destabilized in the process.

Okay, in the scenario I have described, the entire Colorado watershed would be in Indian Country, under Indian control. So would the source of the Columbia. And diversion of the Yukon would have to go right through Indian Country. Now, here's the deal. No more use of water to fill swimming pools and sprinkle golf courses in Phoenix and LA. No more watering Kentucky bluegrass lawns out on the yucca flats. No more drive-thru car washes in Tucumcari. No more "Big Surf" amusement parks in the middle of the desert. Drinking water and such for the whole population, yes. Indians should deliver that. But water for this other insanity? No way. I guarantee that will stop the inflow of population cold. Hell, I will guarantee it will start a pretty substantial outflow. Most of these folks never wanted to live in the desert anyway. That's why they keep trying to make it look like Florida (another delicate ecosystem which is buckling under the weight of population increases).⁷¹

And we can help move things along in other ways as well. Virtually all the electrical power for the southwestern urban sprawls comes from a combination of hydroelectric and coal-fired generation in the Four Corners area. This is smack dab in the middle of Indian Country, along with all the uranium with which a "friendly atom" alternative might be attempted and most of the low sulfur coal. Goodbye to the neon glitter of Las Vegas and San Diego. Adios to air conditioners in every room. Sorry about your hundred-mile expanses of formerly streetlit expressway. Basic needs will be met, and that's it.

This means we can also start saying goodbye to western rivers being backed up like so many sewage lagoons behind massive dams. The Glen Canyon and Hoover dams are coming down, boys and girls. And we can begin to experience things like a reduction in the acidity of southwestern rain water as facilities like the Four Corners Power Plant are cut back in generating time and eventually eliminated altogether. What I'm saying probably sounds extraordinarily cruel to a lot of people, particularly those imbued with the belief that they have a "God-given right" to play a round of golf on

the well-watered green beneath the imported palm trees outside an air-conditioned casino at the base of the Superstition Mountains. Tough. Those days can be ended without hesitation or apology.

A much more legitimate concern rests in the fact that a lot of people who have drifted into the southwest have no place to go to. The places they came from are crammed. In many cases, that's why they left. To them, I say there's no need to panic; no one will abruptly pull the plug on you or leave you to die of thirst. Nothing like that. But quantities of both water and power will be set at minimal levels. In order to have a surplus, you will have to bring your number down to a certain level over a certain period. At that point, the levels will again be reduced, necessitating another population reduction. Things can be phased in over an extended period—several generations, if need be.⁷²

Provision of key items such as western water and coal should probably be negotiated on the basis of reductions in population and consumption by the United States as a whole rather than simply the region served. This would prevent population shifts being substituted for actual reductions.⁷³ Any such negotiated arrangement should also include an agreement to alter the U.S. distribution of food surpluses and the like, so as to ease the transition to a lower population and a correspondingly greater self-sufficiency in hardpressed Third World areas.

The objective inherent in every aspect of this process should be, and can be, to let everyone down as gently as possible from the long and intoxicating high that has beset so much of the human species in its hallucination that it, and it alone, is the only thing of value and importance in the universe. In doing so, and I believe *only* in doing so, can we fulfill our obligation to bequeath our grandchildren, and our grandchildren's grandchildren, a world that is fit (or even possible) to live in.⁷⁴

I Am Indigenist

There are any number of other matters that should be discussed, but they will of necessity have to await another occasion. What has been presented here has been only the barest outline, a glimpse of what might be called an "indigenist vision." I hope that it provides enough shape and clarity to allow anyone who wishes to pursue the thinking further to fill in at least some of the gaps I have not had the time to address, and to arrive at insights

and conclusions of their own. Once the main tenets have been advanced, and I think to some extent that has been accomplished here, the perspective of indigenism is neither mystical nor mysterious.

In closing, I would like to turn again to the critics, the skeptics, those who will decry what has been said here as being “unrealistic” or even “crazy.” On the former score, my reply is that as long as we define realism, or reality itself, in conventional terms—the terms imposed by the order of understanding in which we now live—we will be doomed to remain locked forever into the present trajectory. We will never break free, because any order, any structure, defines reality only in terms of itself. Consequently, allow me to echo a sentiment expressed during the French student revolt of 1968: “Be realistic; demand the impossible!”⁷⁵ If you read through a volume of American Indian oratory, and there are several available, you will find that native people have been saying the same thing all along.⁷⁶

As to my being crazy, I would like to say thanks for the compliment. Again, I follow my elders and my ancestors—and R. D. Laing, for that matter—in believing that when confronted with a society as obviously insane as this one, the only sane posture one can adopt is what that society would automatically designate as crazy.⁷⁷

I mean, Indians were not the ones who turned birthing into a religious fetish while butchering off a couple hundred million people with weapons of mass destruction and systematically starving another billion or so to death. Indians never had a Grand Inquisition, and we never came up with a plumbing plan to reroute the water flow on the entire continent. Nor did we ever produce “leaders” of the caliber of Ronald Reagan, Jean Kirkpatrick and Ross Perot. Hell, we never even figured out that turning prison construction into a major growth industry was an indication of social progress and enlightenment. Maybe we were never so much crazy as we were congenitally retarded.

Whatever the reason—and please excuse me for suspecting it might be something other than craziness or retardation—I am indescribably thankful that our cultures turned out to be so different, no matter how much abuse and sacrifice it entailed. I am proud to stand inside the heritage of native struggle. I am proud to say I am an unreconstructable indigenist. For me, there is no other reasonable or realistic way to look at the world. And I invite anyone who shares that viewpoint to come aboard, regardless of your race, creed, or national origin.

Maybe Chief Seattle said it best back in 1854: "Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come, for even the white man whose god walked with him and talked with him as friend with friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see."⁷⁸

Notes

1. For what is probably the best available account of AIM, IAT, and WARN, see Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (New York: Viking, [2nd ed.] 1991). On Oka, see Linda Pertusati, *In Defense of Mohawk Land: Ethnopolitical Conflict in Native North America* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).
2. On James Bay, see Boyce Richardson's *Strangers Devour the Land* (Post Mills, VT: Chelsea Green, [2nd ed.] 1991).
3. While it is hardly complete, a good point of departure for learning about many of the individuals named would be Alvin M. Josephy's *The Patriot Chiefs* (New York: Viking, 1961).
4. The bulk of those mentioned, and a number of others as well, appear in *The Indigenous Voice: Visions and Realities*, 2 Vols. (London: Zed Books, 1988).
5. The term "Vichy Indians" comes from Russell Means. See his "The Same Old Song," in my *Marxism and Native Americans* (Boston: South End Press, [2nd ed.] 1989) pp. 19–33.
6. Ross Swimmer is an alleged Cherokee and former Philips Petroleum executive who served as head of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs under Ronald Reagan and argued for suspension of federal obligations to Indians as a means of teaching native people "self-reliance." Dickie Wilson was head of the federal puppet government on Pine Ridge Reservation during the early 1970s, and while in this position, he formed an entity, called the GOONS, to physically assault and frequently kill members and supporters of AIM. Webster Two Hawks was head of the National Tribal Chairman's Association funded by the Nixon administration. He used his federally-sponsored position to denounce Indian liberation struggles. Peter McDonald—often referred to as "McDollar" in Indian Country—utilized his position as head of the puppet government at Navajo to sell his people's interests to various mining corporations during the 1970s and '80s, greatly enriching himself in the process. Vernon Bellecourt is a former Denver wig stylist who moved to Minneapolis and became CEO of a state-chartered corporation funded by federal authorities to impersonate the American Indian Movement. David Bradley is a no-talent painter living in Santa Fe whose main claim to fame is in having made a successful bid to have the federal government enforce "identification standards" against other Indian artists; he has subsequently set himself up as a self-anointed "Identity Police," a matter which, thankfully, leaves him little time to produce his typical graphic schlock. To hear them tell it, of course, each of these individuals acted in the service of "Indian sovereignty."
7. See Winona LaDuke's "Natural to Synthetic and Back Again," the preface to *Marxism and Native Americans*, op. cit., pp. i–viii.
8. Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *Utopía y Revolución: El Pensamiento Político Contemporáneo de los Indios en América Latina* (Mexico City: Editorial Nueva Imagen, 1981) p. 37; translation by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 37–8.
10. *Ibid.* p. 38.
11. Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, *Indians of the Americas: Human Rights and Self-Determination* (London: Zed Books, 1984) p. 83.
12. *Ibid.* p. 84.
13. For an excellent overview on the implications of Marx's thinking in this regard, see the first couple of chapters in Walker Connor's *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).
14. Dunbar Ortiz, *Indians of the Americas*, op. cit., p. 85.
15. George Manuel and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1974).
16. On the Irish and Welsh struggles, see Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Celtic Revolution: A Study in Anti-Imperialism* (Talybont: Wales: Y Lolfa, 1985). On the Basques, see Kenneth Medhurst, *The Basques and Catalans* (London: Minority Rights Group Report No. 9, Sept 1977).
17. Dunbar Ortiz, *Indians of the Americas*, op. cit., p. 89.
18. Bernard Neitschmann, "The Third World War," *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1987).
19. Geneva Offices of the United Nations, Press Release, Aug. 17, 1981 (Hr/1080).

20. For an excellent analysis of this tradition from an indigenist perspective, see Robert A. Williams, Jr., *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

21. On the Iberian legal tradition, see James Brown Scott, *The Spanish Origin of International Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934).

22. Hugo Blanco, *Land or Death: The Peasant Struggle in Peru* (New York: Pathfinder, 1972). Blanco was a marxist, and thus sought to pervert indigenous issues through rigid class analysis—defining Indians as “peasants” rather than by nationality—but his identification of land as the central issue was and is nonetheless valid.

23. The complete texts of 371 of these ratified treaties can be found in Charles J. Kappler, ed., *American Indian Treaties, 1778-1883* (New York: Interland, 1973). The Lakota scholar Vine Deloria, Jr., has also collected the texts of several more ratified treaties which do not appear in Kappler, but which will be published in a forthcoming collection.

24. The constitutional provision comes at Article I, Section 10. Codification of customary international law in this connection is explained in Sir Ian Sinclair, *The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, [2nd ed.] 1984).

25. See generally, Vine Deloria, Jr., and Clifford E. Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

26. *Lonewolf v. Hitchcock*, 187 U.S. 553 (1903). For analysis, see Ann Laquer Estlin, “*Lonewolf v. Hitchcock*: The Long Shadow,” in Sandra L. Cawallader and Vine Deloria, Jr., eds., *The Aggressions of Civilization: Federal Indian Policy Since the 1880s* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984) pp. 215-45.

27. Probably the best exposition of the legal principles articulated by the U.S. as being violated by the nazis may be found in Bradley F. Smith, *The Road to Nuremberg* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

28. A fuller enunciation of this thesis may be found in my “On Gaining ‘Moral High Ground’: An Ode to George Bush and the ‘New World Order,’” in Cynthia Peters, ed., *Collateral Damage: The “New World Order” at Home and Abroad* (Boston: South End Press, 1992) pp. 359-72.

29. For the origins of such practices, see Dorothy V. Jones, *License for Empire: Colonialism by Treaty in Early America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). A good survey of U.S. adaptations will be found in Donald Worcester, ed., *Forked Tongues and Broken Treaties* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton, 1975).

30. The travesty at Fort Wise is adequately covered in Stan Hoig’s *The Sand Creek Massacre* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961) pp. 13-7.

31. Deloria compilation, forthcoming.

32. On the purpose of the commission, see Harvey D. Rosenthal, “Indian Claims and the American Conscience: A Brief History of the Indian Claims Commission,” in Inre Sutton, ed., *Irredeemable America: The Indians’ Estate and Land* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985, pp. 35-86). One must read between the lines a bit.

33. Russel Barsh, “Indian Land Claims Policy in the United States,” *North Dakota Law Review*, No. 58 (1982) pp. 1-82.

34. The percentage is arrived at by juxtaposing the approximately fifty million acres within the current reservation landbase to the more than two billion acres of the lower 48 states. According to the Indian Claims Commission findings, Indians actually retain unfettered legal title to about 750 million acres of the continental U.S.

35. Concerning Alaska, see M. C. Berry, *The Alaska Pipeline: The Politics of Oil and Native Land Claims* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975). On Hawai’i, see the Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’i* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1993).

36. A good exposition on this phenomenon may be found in Paul Brodeur, *Restitution: The Land Claims of the Mashpee, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot Indians of New England* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985).

37. The problem is partially but insightfully examined in Ronald Weitzer, *Transforming Settler States: Communal Conflict and Internal Security in Zimbabwe and Northern Ireland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

38. It is entirely possible to extend a logical analysis in this direction. See, for instance, J. Sakai, *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat* (Chicago: Morningstar Press, 1983).

39. Sharon O’Brien, *American Indian Tribal Governments* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989).

40. These matters are covered quite well in Janet Silman, ed., *Enough Is Enough: Aboriginal Women Speak Out* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1987).

41. The Smithsonian view of Indians has been adopted even by some of the more self-consciously "revolutionary" organizations in the United States. For a classic example, see Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, "Searching for the Second Harvest," in *Marxism and Native Americans*, op. cit., pp. 35-58.

42. The thesis is, no kidding, that Indians were the first "environmental pillagers," and it took the invasion of enlightened Europeans like the author of the piece to save the American ecosphere from total destruction by its indigenous inhabitants; George Weurthner, "An Ecological View of the Indian," *Earth First!* Vol. 7, No. 7, Aug. 1987.

43. Paul W. Valentine, "Dances with Myths," *Arizona Republic*, Apr. 7, 1991 (Valentine is syndicated, but is on staff at the *Washington Post*).

44. A fine selection of such early colonialist impressions can be found in the first few chapters of Richard Drinnon's *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building* (New York: Schocken, 1980). On the length of indigenous occupancy in the Americas, see George F. Carter, *Earlier Than You Think: A Personal View of Man in America* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980). On precontact population, see Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983).

45. For a succinct but reasonably comprehensive survey of actual precontact indigenous material and intellectual realities, see Jack Weatherford, *Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World* (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1988).

46. Jack D. Forbes, *Black Africans and Native Americans: Race, Color and Caste in the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

47. On federal quantum policy, see my essay, "The Crucible of American Indian Identity: Native Tradition versus Colonial Imposition in Postconquest North America," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1998.

48. Probably the best examination of Indian warfare and "militaristic" tradition is Tom Holm's "Patriots and Pawns: State Use of American Indians in the Military and the Process of Nativization in the United States," in M. Annette Jaimes, ed., *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992) pp. 345-70.

49. Referred to here is the so-called "Bradley Bill" (S.1453), introduced before the Senate by Bill Bradley in 1987. For analysis, see the special issue of *Wicazo Sa Review* (Vol. XIV, No. 1, Spring 1988) devoted to the topic. Also see "The Black Hills Are Not For Sale," in this volume.

50. Russell Means and Ward Churchill, *TREATY: A Platform For Nationhood* (Porcupine, S.D.: TREATY Campaign, 1982); appended to the present volume.

51. Barsh, "Indian Land Claims," op. cit.

52. A number of examples may be found in Mark Frank Lindley's *The Acquisition and Government of Backward Country in International Law: A Treatise on the Law and Practice Relating to Colonial Expansion* (London: Longmans Green, 1926).

53. Probably the only accessible material to date on the Buffalo Commons idea is unfortunately a rather frothy little volume. Anne Matthews, *Where the Buffalo Roam: The Storm Over the Revolutionary Plan to Restore America's Great Plains* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1992).

54. For one of the best elaborations of these principles, see Zed Nanda, "Self-Determination in International Law: Validity of Claims to Secede," *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*, No. 13, 1981.

55. A prototype for this sort of arrangement exists between Greenland (populated mainly by Inuits) and Denmark; Gudmundur Alfredsson, "Greenland and the Law of Political Decolonization," *German Yearbook on International Law*, No. 25 (1982).

56. Although my argument comes at it from a very different angle, the conclusion here is essentially the same as that reached by Richard Falk in his *The End of World Order: Essays in Normative International Relations* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983).

57. This is the basic idea set forth in *TREATY*, op. cit.

58. The concepts at issue here are brought out very well in William R. Catton, Jr., *Overshoot: The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

59. For further elaboration, see Vine Deloria, Jr., *God Is Red* (New York: Delta, 1973). The ideas

have even caught on, at least as questions, among some Euroamerican legal practitioners; see Christopher D. Stone, *Should Trees Have Standing? Towards Legal Rights for Natural Objects* (Los Altos, CA: William Kaufman, 1972).

60. CNN “Dollars and Cents” reportage, May 27, 1992.

61. The idea is developed in detail in Jeremy Rifkin’s *Entropy: A New World View* (New York: Viking, 1980). It should be noted, however, that the world view in question is hardly new; indigenous peoples have held it all along.

62. One good summary of this, utilizing extensive native sources—albeit many of them go unattributed—is Jerry Mander’s *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of Indian Nations* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1991).

63. If this sounds a bit scriptural, it is meant to. A number of us see a direct line of continuity from the core imperatives of Judeo-Christian theology, through the capitalist secularization of church doctrine and its alleged marxian antithesis, right on through to the burgeoning technotopianism of today. This is a major conceptual cornerstone of what indigenists view as eurocentrism (a virulently anthropocentric outlook in its essence).

64. The information is in André Gunder Frank’s book, but the conclusion is avoided; André Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review, 1967).

65. See Jerome Ch’en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

66. Paul R. Ehrlich and Anne H. Ehrlich, *The Population Explosion* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990).

67. Extrapolating from the calculations of Catton in *Overshoot*, op. cit.

68. Sound arguments to this effect are advanced in Paul R. Ehrlich and Anne H. Ehrlich, *Population/Resources/Environment* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1970).

69. Paul R. Ehrlich and Anne H. Ehrlich, from their book *Healing the Earth*, quoted in CNN series *The Population Bomb*, May 1992.

70. This would be about fifty million, or less than one-fifth the present U.S. population; Catton, *Overshoot*, op. cit., p. 53.

71. This is essentially the same argument, without ever quite arriving at the obvious conclusion, advanced by Marc Reisner in his *Cadillac Desert* (New York: Penguin, 1986).

72. A good deal of the impact could also be offset by implementing the ideas contained in John Todd and George Tukel, *Reinhabiting Cities and Towns: Designing for Sustainability* (San Francisco: Planet Drum Foundation, 1981).

73. For purposes of comparison, see *Funding Ecological and Social Destruction: The World Bank and International Monetary Fund* (Washington, D.C.: Bank Information Center, 1990). By contrast, the concept described in the text might be dubbed “Struggling for Ecological and Social Preservation.”

74. Many indigenous peoples take the position that all social policies should be entered into only after consideration of their likely implications, both environmentally and culturally, for descendants seven generations in the future. Consequently, a number of seemingly good ideas for solving short-run problems are never entered into because no one can reasonably predict their longer term effects. See Sylvester M. Morey, ed., *Can the Red Man Help the White Man? A Denver Conference with Indian Elders* (New York: Myrin Institute, 1970).

75. Allan Priaulx and Sanford J. Ungar, *The Almost Revolution: France, 1968* (New York: Dell, 1969).

76. See, for example, Virginia Irving Armstrong, ed., *I Have Spoken: American History Through the Voices of the Indians* (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1971).

77. R. D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (New York: Ballantine, 1967).

78. Armstrong, *I Have Spoken*, op. cit., p. 79.