



Pan-Tribal Confederacy of Indigenous Tribal Nations

The Only Multi-Racial Worldwide Indigenous Confederacy In Existence

Indigenous News From Brazil

Friday, September 4, 2009, 9:04 AM

Dear sisters and brothers spread all over Gaia:

On 24 working days in August 2009...

Instead of plane tickets for a return trip to Brasília offered by the NGO Thydewa I choose my motorcycle (and fuel money). Doing the trip on the ground much more can be done on the ways (detours) to and from the capital.

On Friday, July 31st, I leave for the Xacriabá Native American Reservation in northern Minas Gerais where I arrive two days later. In the Xacriabá village Rancharia I meet with chief Agenor to talk on the indios-on-line (www.indiosonline.org.br), and the opportunities for First Americans when going on-line together. So far there is not one computer available for the Xacriabá people within their territory though. I also report on recent events in the South of my state Bahia where conflict between the Tupinambá people defending their legal land rights and the alliance of local ranchers, politicians and business has been turning fiercer and where agents of the Federal Police, instead of chasing the illegal invaders of Native territory, abducted and subsequently tortured – including electro-shock sessions! – four Tupinambá men and one woman. I also passed on information on the upcoming parliamentary meeting of the Agriculture Committee called by the Ruralistas for August 12th.

The Ruralistas are the real rulers of Brazil. Mighty landowners, agro-business people and Congress members whose election campaigns were financed by the former and who thus vote as debtors always in their sponsors' interest. They constitute the majority within the legislative body. Nothing goes without or against them. (A brief explanation why land reform is eternal talk but never action in Brazil. And why, consequently, over 50 million people know about hunger in this probably richest country of the world.)

It goes without saying that the Agriculture Committee – their Committee – is particularly hostile towards all conservationist initiatives and proposals for territorial rights of First American Nations. The upcoming meeting on August 12th was called upon request of the Ruralistas of Bahia. Ever since a commission of anthropologists contracted by FUNAI (Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs) has come to the conclusion earlier this year that the Tupinambá people of Bahia's deep south in fact have legal historical rights to a larger Reservation than their actual one the local oligarchies are up in arms.

Intensified smear campaigns and persecution of Tupinambá leaders and activists add to the “regular situation” of big ranchers occupying, exploring and destroying with impunity vast areas of the current Reservation, exploiting Natives as de-facto slaves, sixteen Tupinambá activists killed over the last year and a half... (Wounded Knee still keeps bleeding down here with no world attention.) “Normalities” in

our country. Nothing of all this ever makes it into the big media. Often in the very hands of, or economically dependent on, the posse behind the perpetrators. Facts, by the way, characteristic of almost all Native American Reservations in Brazil and facts that clearly demonstrate that the country as a state under the rule of law is nothing but mere fiction.

FUNAI has meanwhile composed a draft bill based on the facts found by the above-mentioned anthropological commission. Before the Federal Ministry of Justice will decide on the bill the Ruralistas of Bahia asked the president of the Congress' Agriculture Committee Fabio Souto for a meeting to show "the negative consequences" of a possible expansion of the Tupinambá Reservation. President Souto quickly corresponded. The meeting was called, many representatives of the Ruralistas (from both Southern Bahia and the two Houses of Parliament) invited. Knowing that the meeting would be live on TV Câmara (the TV channel of the House of Representatives) they only invited Dr. Márcio, president of FUNAI, from "the other side". With the obvious intention of putting all possible pressure on him. Not one indigenous representative was invited! Quite the contrary: the Ruralistas tried every trick to keep the meeting as secret as possible and at very short notice so that the Tupinambá people could not appear and "disturb". However, it did not work out their way. Friends and friendly organizations drew the Tupinambás attention to the intended public relations massacre. The uninvited thus mobilized and got ready too.

On August 4th, I arrive in Brasília and check into the Youth Hostel. Throughout the following days I participate in the II Regional Indigenous Seminar on Information and Communication Technologies held at the Indigenous Peoples Memorial as a member of the indios-on-line delegation. A seminar that brings together indigenous peoples representatives of 21 countries and where all of us work hard, mostly till nine or ten at night, in order to discuss and learn to operate the Global Indigenous Portal (www.ictindigenousportal.org). The Portal is the latest berth for the vessel of the aboriginal voice and the myth between tradition and modernity. Apart from turning the unedited electronic transcription of multiculturalism, the aperture between ancestral knowledge and technology, into reality, we also knot new contact lines and nets and exchange many ideas and experiences.

On August 11th our indios-on-line delegation is received in the Federal Ministry of Culture by Minister Juca Ferreira (also from Bahia). We talk on the explosive situation in the South of Bahia and receive promises of support. We also manage to revive the Thydewa project "Esperança da Terra" (Hope of Earth) which for months has been stuck in the very same Ministry. We thus hope now to be soon able to inaugurate an information and education centre for indigenous youth from all of Brazil right in the epicentre of Atlantic Rainforest destruction and boiling anti-Native attacks in the South of Bahia. Sort of a repartition wigwam transmitting knowledge traditionally kept inaccessible to Brazil's waste people fringe society, indigenous or not, by the really ruling oligarchies and lobbies such as the Ruralistas.

On August 12th we go to Congress and participate in the Agriculture Committee's meeting. Nice (?) surprise for the Ruralistas. Instead of a Native-free meeting 50 members of First American nations appear. Among them eleven indigenous chiefs from the South of Bahia. The menu of lies and punches below the belt on the part of the visibly annoyed Ruralistas is the customary:

- There are no more (Tupinambá) Native Americans;
- (Nevertheless) They are liars and idlers;
- Reservations for Native Americans push small farmers into famine and ruin;
- Food supply in the South of Bahia is/will be at risk;
- The indigenous people and FUNAI are manipulated and controlled by foreign groups and interests whose objective is to undermine Brazilian sovereignty and to create small independent states within the state;

- The FUNAI (anthropological) report is a bundle of lies;
- The report is unconstitutional;
- It is a conspiracy with the aim of hurting local producers;
- The Natives present in the Agriculture Committee's meeting are, in reality, Brazilians dressed up as Indians;
- .

and so on...

“Arguments” too mediocre and too obviously demagogical to be worth a reply at all.

Anyways, the strong presence of the other – uninvited – side foils the planned propaganda massacre on the Tupinambá people and the thrashing of the FUNAI president too. Although it should not have been possible according to the Ruralists' script two indigenous women dignitaries speak up in the meeting, one Tupinambá and one Kaingang. A Congress woman from Bahia and a male colleague of hers, uninvited just like the Natives, also take the floor. Non-ruralist voices that join a secure and tranquil and eloquent FUNAI president additionally encouraged by the massive indigenous presence.

It definitely does not turn out to be the easy match the alliance against conservation and indigenous rights had worked for. Quite the contrary. And everything, including bluntly racist aggressions, goes live on TV (till 13:00 hours).

Early next day I race towards the North. In the state of Tocantins I will scour indigenous villages of the Javaé (plus Tuxá and Karajá), Krahô Canela and Xerente peoples. Mostly on “roads” which aren't listed in any road map of the world. I'll get stuck in streams, mud or deep sand, I'll fall flat on my face and under the bike. Often I'll ride eleven hours per day until I'm saddle-sore. I'll report to the indigenous communities about the seminar in Brasília and the new virtual tools for Native Peoples. I'll also explain how and for what purposes they might be used or useful. And last not least I'll certainly learn a lot from our meetings.

On Sunday, August 23rd, I come back home in the early afternoon. After 3879 sometimes crazy kilometres. Exhausted, but happy and satisfied.

In summary, I can (again, since this is not the first time neither the first such experience) say that the indigenous societies in Brazil are at high risk. Their general situation has been improving – especially on – legal – paper. This, however, in Brazil doesn't necessarily mean the same thing in reality. The anti-indigenous alliance continues to burn down everything that still dares to look like unspoiled nature. Around the Reservations and sometimes right within them. Especially where ranchers, often identical with the local political strongmen, illegally occupy indigenous lands.

Natives without unspoiled nature (and, thus, without hunting grounds and game) cannot survive.

Rivers have been dammed up and diverted so extensively, spring water areas devastated by fire raisers so successfully, that they are drying up.

Natives without water cannot survive.

The water that still flows through the Reservations is frequently polluted by pesticides used by agrobusiness and ranchers. So much that fish and birds die on a huge scale.

Natives without proteins (and feathers for their craft) cannot survive.

By the way, almost all of these criminal activities against life, including that ultimate goal called genocide, are being committed in alleged areas of environmental protection. Like on world's largest fluvial island Bananal, just to mention one example.

Authorities?

Supervision and persecution?

Rule of Law?

Naïve questions of people who have no empirical notion of the dire Brazilian reality: there is no conservation whatsoever in this country. Period.

As if all these efforts against the indigenous societies' survival were not yet enough of a serious threat, there are still another two powerful agents of ethnocide active within the Reservations: alcohol and stupefaction TV. Probably the toughest and most endemic enemies for cultural survival as far as I could observe it over the years.

To corrupt the socially close-knit (and thus) uniting indigenous culture is a prime interest on the part of the anti-indigenous Ruralista alliance. Hard liquor made of sugar cane – cachaça – thus flows massively into the Reservations and devastates the multi millennial social order. Fathers (?), already victims and slaves to the booze import from the dominant society, offer and rent (or sell) their daughters, sometimes still pre-adolescent children, for another drink when visiting Brazilian towns next to the Reservation. Sometimes girl traders come directly to “their business partners”. Domestic violence is another relatively new phenomenon caused by ethnocide agent cachaça. Drunken men beat up their spouses. In this regard, the Native villages are really becoming integrated parts of the macro-Brazilian socio-culture.

Indispensable indigenous family structures are breaking up and Brazilian public schools – at least throughout the Northern and North-eastern regions – are administrators of profound ignorance at best. According to my experience, however, they come generally closer to something as (un-) official slaughterhouses of imagination and thought. It doesn't matter where, in or outside the Reservations.

We thus find Native children frequently self-“educating” them in front of a TV where they are infiltrated with all the awful junk that the big Brazilian TV channels (like Globo, SBT, Record, Band...) are oozing out everyday. It's the quick lane to extermination of any possible critical brain activity. Mixed into this (intended, as it seems) garbage flow are raining consumption appeals on First American children totally unprepared for such psychological capitalist warfare. What follows is a radical alienation from their cultural tradition as egalitarian and non-consumer and/or throw-away-society people. Radical and probably irreversible. With their heads and hearts intoxicated this way today's children might tomorrow be young folk turning their back on tradition and cultural manifestations rather “programmed” to search for the “golden possibilities” of the dominant consumer society in nearby Brazilian cities. A search that as a matter of routine ends very often for them in the bigger but hidden side of the current cannibal capitalism: in a favela (shanty town) or on skid row or in suicide. Everything perfectly as the Ruralistas and their honourable women and men in Congress wish. Perfidious genocide in the name of their order and their progress. Order and progress that simply destroy everything possible with the ultimate goal of making richer and richer still all those who are already stinking rich.

However, I hope firmly that the new tools – indios-on-line and the Global Indigenous Portal – will find new users among the First Americans visited. And I hope that these will again spread the word and bring aboard more new users still.

I hope very much that these updated bows and arrows will help to empower their identity and self-affirmation as indigenous people – with pride and wit – also when they are travelling, studying, working (...) within the dominant society.

I hope that handling these instruments together with other aboriginal persons from other indigenous peoples from all over Brazil and/or Gaia they will become stronger and ever more stimulated to strengthen their cultural, social and political resistance concerning the current global suicide society.

I hope that by using and sharing their ancestral wisdom they can finally teach the blindfolded masses of our planet on how humanity can re-enter into a path of life in partnership with Mother Earth and not against her, against each other and against a future that will still include the human race on Earth.

One World, One Love.
arDaga Widor