

SWITCHBOARD

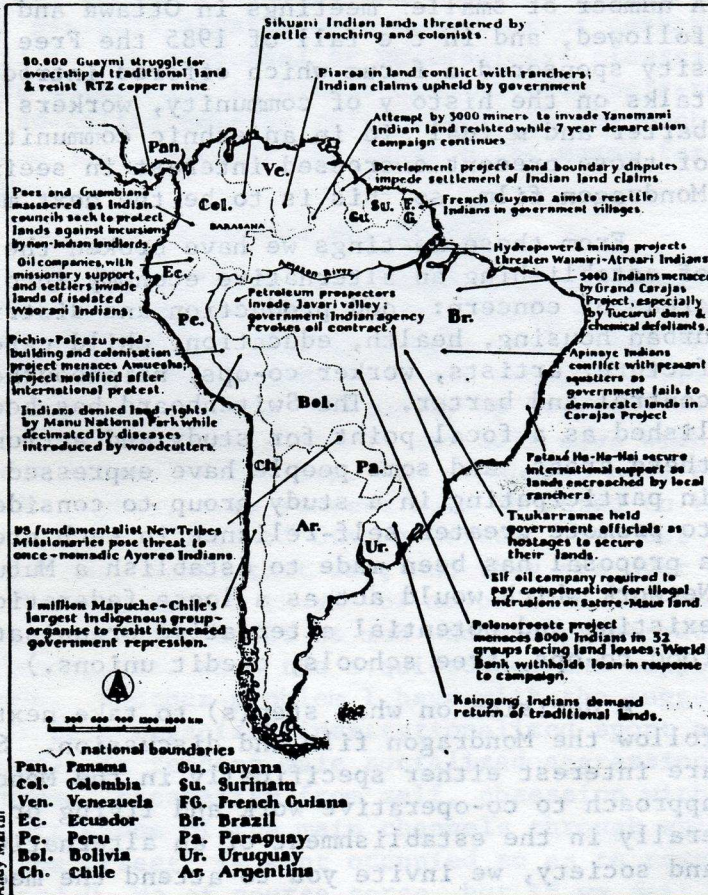
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 COMMUNITY SWITCHBOARD
 24 Ryerson #309, 868-0113
 one block north of Queen, one block east of Bathurst
 open Tues-Sat, noon to 6

FREE

Community Switchboard offers a forum and research facilities to those concerned with analyzing the need for basic social change and establishing an alternative social system, economically and ecologically sound, whose principles of small-scale technology, self and co-operative employment and human scaled social units will contrast with those of the corporate state. Anyone who shares this goal is invited to contact the Switchboard.

Bulletin: The Switchboard will sponsor a showing and discussion of the film *Mondragon* at the 519 Church Community Centre, Tuesday January 21st at 7:30 p.m. The film documents a town in the Basque region of Spain wherein all factories and social services are run co-operatively. Admission free; all welcome.



Map shows a few of the locations in South America where native peoples are fighting for survival. See page 4.

FIRST ALTERNATIVE ECONOMICS FORUM

The Mondragon discussion announced on page one will be the first of a series of open forums to be sponsored by Community Switchboard during 1986 on various aspects of alternative economics. Since 1982 discussions have been held from time to time on the possibility of encouraging people in the social change movement to become self and co-operatively employed, in the belief that it is impossible to seriously oppose policies of the corporate state while being dependent on the state or corporations for one's livelihood. The first such meeting took place in Ottawa, as one of a series of workshops the day following a large anti-Cruise demonstration in the fall of 1982. At this time about sixty people exchanged ideas rising from their own experience. A number of smaller meetings in Ottawa and Toronto followed, and in the fall of 1985 the Free University sponsored a forum which offered introductory talks on the history of community, workers co-ops, barter and mutual aid in an ethnic community. Many of those present expressed interest in seeing the Mondragon film, so this is to be the next meeting.

From these meetings we have broken the question of establishing an alternative economy into several areas of concern: food production and distribution, urban housing, health, education, child care, manufacture, artists, worker co-ops, neighbourhood control and barter. The Switchboard has been established as a focal point for study and action in these areas, and some people have expressed interest in participating in a study group to consider steps to promote greater self-reliance in each area. Also a proposal has been made to establish a Mutual Aid Network which would act as a loose federation of existing and potential alternative organizations (ie food co-ops, free schools, credit unions.)

A decision on what step(s) to take next will follow the Mondragon film and discussion. So, if you are interest either specifically in the Mondragon approach to co-operative work and living or more generally in the establishment of an alternative economy and society, we invite you to attend the meeting.

WORKERS UNDER MORE SURVEILLANCE

Anyone who doubts the need for self and co-operative employment should check out an article in The Nation (21-12-85) which points out that two million workers in the USA are forced to take polygraph tests each year, and 59,000 are denied employment or fired because of refusal to take the test or inaccuracies. Typical questions: are you a homosexual? how often do you change your underwear? have you ever done anything with your wife that could be considered immoral?

Not only are the number of salaried positions constantly diminishing, but conditions imposed on those who do get such positions will constantly become more humiliating as employers take advantage of growing unemployment to rescind the gains the labour movement has made in the past century. Anyone who wants to retain any shred of personal dignity or esteem (except perhaps for a handful in the managerial or professional classes) will sooner or later have to become economically self-reliant. And the so-called counter culture will be not much more than a bad joke until it can furnish the means for so becoming.

FEMINISM VS. SPORTS

In a recent issue we suggested that the social change movement should fund its own daily newspaper, and fill 3/4 of it with sports so people would read the remaining 1/4 devoted to news from our own perspective instead of our opponents'. (Actually by "sports" we meant the whole mish-mash of features and soft news with which newspapers seduce readership, but we should have been clearer.) Anyway, some readers have objected to this approach. Helen Durie of Ottawa writes: "I doubt if you will reach many women that way, and they are over half the population, aren't they?--or maybe it's men that need the education, as it is men who are perpetrating the violence, etc. with the acquiescence and support of most women. Another problem I have with the suggestion is that I feel organized institutionalized sport plays a major role in feeding male socialized aggression, competitiveness, separatism from self, obsession with false heroes, etc.--one of the main channels through which the "man in the street" is kept occupied so as to remain unpoliticized." We of course agree, but if we omit such features won't we just be reaching the converted?

NATIVE PEOPLE FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

Survival International publishes a news magazine and urgent action bulletins concerning threats to the rights and lives of threatened tribal people throughout the world. (the bulletins are on a pay-what-you-can basis; the magazine is \$20/year from 29 Raven St. London England WC2N 5NT.) Among the concerns mentioned in recent issues:

Philippines: Growing counter-insurgency operations of the government have caused widespread suffering among the 45 million tribal Filipinos, in some areas threatening the tribes' continued existence. For instance the Atla, an aboriginal negrito group, have been resettled in strategic hamlets where they suffer severe malnutrition and those suspected of rebel sympathies have been murdered.

India: In breach of international law the World Bank has signed an agreement with the Indian government calling for forcible removal of 60,000 tribal people to make way for a hydropower project. Most will receive no compensation, and join the ever-growing pool of landless agricultural labourers that already make up 27% of the total population of India.

Brazil: Plans of tin mining interests

to invade their lands threaten the Yanomami Indians' survival.

Australia: The Labour government has reneged on its election promises to give the aboriginal people control of their ancestral lands, which mining and pastoral industries want.

West Papua: Over 11,000 refugees have fled into Papua New Guinea to escape escalating violence of the Indonesian military, who are taking tribal lands for a transmigration program backed by the World Bank, Britain and the Netherlands (which has supplied \$26.7 million Dutch guineas for it since 1972.)

Bangladesh: Hundreds of tribal people have been murdered, raped or tortured to death and entire communities destroyed during the brutal army-backed colonisation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Southeast Bangladesh.

Colombia: Government soldiers and leftist guerrillas continue indiscriminate murder of tribal people.

Ethiopia: Forcible relocation and loss of land have created over 2,000 refugees in recent months.

A SHORT HISTORY OF U.S. EXTERMINISM OF NATIVE PEOPLES

It is obvious from the forgoing that genocide of native peoples, through a combination of massacre and forcible assimilation into mainstream culture, is a consistent policy both of the industrialized western nations and the military dictatorships they have established throughout the Third World. Native peoples represent values which the capitalist system cannot buy off or incorporate, and U.S. policy from the first has been one of exterminism.

By the time Ponce de Leon landed in Florida in 1513, Indian towns and agriculture in America were already decreasing due to recurrent drought, erratic flood behaviour and adaptation to nomadic hunting with horses; agriculture was retreating throughout the west, and populations were decreasing in the east and southwest. The Europeans hastened the process by bringing epidemic diseases, the fur trade and eventually military subjugation.

Slaughter of the buffalo deprived the Plains Indians of both their food supply and exchange commodity by the 19th century. By then the Puritan governor of Plymouth had already described the burning alive of 600 Pequot Indians in an ambush on their village as a "sweet sacrifice" and Indians had become the first victims of U.S. chemical-biological warfare when blankets infected

deliberately with smallpox were distributed to them as early as the mid-18th century, this despite the help Indians had given the initial European settlements. When the Cherokee Indians won a Supreme Court ruling over the seizure of their lands, President Jackson brushed the ruling aside and had 100,000 Indians chained in pairs for a death march to Oklahoma on which 40% died. A series of massacres of Plains Indians tribes culminated at Wounded Knee.

By 1890 the number of Indians in the USA had been reduced from 3.5 million to 250,000; since then it has risen to 800,000 most of whom live on the marginal lands of 275 reservations. The U.S. government feels entitled to take even this land away from them at its pleasure, creating the current Cold Mountain confrontation. It has also made native people unwilling guinea pigs in experiments with chemical-biological warfare, ie in Alaska tests of nerve gas and of mosquitoes as potential Tularia carriers. Canada has co-operated with radiation and speculative vaccine experiments on northern native people.

sources:

Karl Butzer: This is Indian Country.
Geographical Magazine, November 1979.
Davis and Zannis-The Genocide Machine in Canada. Montreal, Black Rose, 1973.