

Onondaga Nation
August 9-14, 1981
via Nedrow, New York

COMMUNIQUE NO. 4

To the Indian People of Guatemala:

Greetings to all Native people in Guatemala. Greetings to the Chiefs, Clanmothers, Medicine people, Faithkeepers, women, men, and children. Greetings from the Elders Council, and Indian Nations in the north.

We have heard about your trouble, and we are concerned for your well-being. We know that there is a great struggle for people's minds taking place in your country. We see that your lands are being taken away; we see that the people are being arrested without warrant; we see that they are imprisoned, tortured, and killed. We know about this because our people in the north have suffered in the same way; from the same oppressor, and for the same reason - Indian land.

We urge you to hold your lands; we urge you to keep your spiritual ways; we urge you to keep your ceremonies. We urge you to keep your language, and not let the schools take your children and teach them foreign ways. We urge you to protect your chiefs and women. This way you will survive. We know that you have a great culture and history; great traditions of weaving and art. You are proud people, and we urge you to continue.

We know that you are oppressed by a military dictatorship that allows a death squad to rape and murder your people. We know that you are suffering, and we share your suffering. We know that the military dictatorship is supported by dollars allocated by the Congress of the United States. The present Administration has stated that human rights will no longer be its policy, and that it will support dictatorships regardless of their murderous policies. We are gravely concerned with the overbalance of the military in the administration of the United States. The emphasis is on war and military hardware.

When warriors lead a nation then you will have war. The Elders are concerned that on our continent the American people are being prepared for war. The Elders are concerned that religion is being used on our continent as a tool to dictate a moral direction to war. We recognize this because we have been oppressed by the same tool.

We say to you: Hold to the spiritual ways of our Grandfathers, and stand where we have always stood - in the spiritual center of our lands. We are not with the spiritually bankrupt capitalist, nor are we part of an ideological left that has eliminated spirituality from its doctrine. We stand in the spiritual center of this great Turtle Island, and we carry no flags but our own.

We demand that these foreign powers on our lands respect the Indian Nations, our cultures, and our people. We hold these lands for the Great Spirit.

The Elders Circle and their Runners see the world moving in the direction of war that will be the most destructive catastrophe in the memory of people. We see the youth of Nations on a destructive rampage without direction, and with no respect for parents or elders because parents and elders have nothing to teach, and have turned this work over to institutions with no hearts.

We have leaders in control of powerful nations whose only ethic is economics. Our Mother the Earth is undergoing tremendous abuse and exploitation under the guise of progress.

We call on all people from the Four Directions of this earth to join hands and return to the spiritual ways of respect, love, and peace.

Daw Nay Toh

The Elders Circle
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