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"No one has ever been able to organize the Indians, but if anyone should, God save us."
—Guatemalan Businessman (1980)

"The presence of the Indian people in the revolutionary popular war—in all its forms of struggle—is a political and military fact that the present government can no longer deny or contain. It is critical to understand this particularity of the Guatemalan revolutionary transformation which the country is undergoing."
—Guerrilla Army of the Poor (1981)

Located in hundreds of small communities scattered throughout the majestic Western Highlands and speaking 22 different languages, Guatemalan Indians are increasingly assuming positions of leadership in the guerrilla movement, and experiencing the brunt of the Lucas government's program of violence, terror, and repression.

Although periodic Indian revolts occurred throughout the Colonial and independence periods, the roots of the current Indian resistance must be traced to the land and labor legislation that accompanied the Guatemalan Reform period in 1871. Beginning in that year and continuing until the fall of the regime of Jorge Ubico in 1944, the entire apparatus of the Guatemalan state—its legislative machinery, its police powers, and its departmental and municipal organization—was geared to mobilizing Indian labor for the demands of the growing coffee economy of the Guatemalan Pacific coast.

Between 1871 and 1944, a vast body of agrarian legislation was passed to satisfy the labor needs of the new class of coffee planters. At the same time, the Guatemalan government instituted a number of laws to expropriate Indian communal lands. In 1884 alone, over 100,000 acres of Indian municipal lands passed into private hands. During this period, ladinos or non-Indians continued on page 2
titled large areas of the Departments of El Quiche, Huehuetenango, Solala, Chimaltenango, Quezaltenango, San Marcos, Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz. They also migrated in large numbers into the Indian highlands, assuming control over local municipal governments and serving as hiring agents for the coastal coffee plantations.

The land and labor legislation of the Guatemalan Reform period explains the present pattern of agrarian poverty and underdevelopment that exists in the highland region. According to the Guatemalan Agrarian Census of 1964, nearly 88 percent of the farm units in Guatemala—microfincas and sub-familiar farms—are too small for subsistence and occupy only 20 percent of the country's land area. On the other hand, a mere 2 percent of the farm units—essentially large coffee, cotton, sugar cane, and banana plantations—control nearly 60 percent of the land area.

Even more revealing is the ethnic distribution of land ownership in Guatemala. The highland region of the country is characterized by the classic munifundia pattern of peasant agriculture with its low productivity, lack of access to credit, and severe soil erosion. Over 90 percent of the farm units enumerated as belonging to Indians in 1964 were insufficient in size to support an Indian family for a year. Moreover, within the highland region itself, there is a clear pattern of class stratification along ethnic lines. According to the 1950 Agrarian Census, in all nine highland Indian departments—with the possible exception of Totonicapan—the average size of ladino farms was significantly larger than that of Indians.

On almost every social indicator, Guatemalan Indians are among the poorest population groups in Latin America. Per-capita income in the Guatemalan highlands is estimated to be below $200 per year. Illiteracy rates reach 80 percent in the countryside. Eighty-one out of every 1,000 babies born in Guatemala die in their first year of life. Population in the nine highland Indian departments has grown at an average rate of 2.5 percent per year.

Faced with these conditions, Indians have been forced to supplement their meager farm incomes by seasonally migrating as farm laborers to the large coffee, cotton, and sugar cane plantations of the Guatemalan Pacific coast. In the late 1960's, this seasonal farm labor stream numbered more than 600,000 people. The average daily wage for farmworkers at this time was 80 cents and living conditions, according to an international Labor Organization study, "were totally unacceptable with regard to hygiene, health, education, and morality."

During the regimes of Presidents Juan Jose Arevalo (1945 through 1950) and Jacobo Arbenz (1951 through 1954), the Guatemalan government attempted to alleviate some of these conditions. The revolutionary governments of Arevalo and Arbenz recognized the historic conditions of economic exploitation and cultural discrimination faced by Indians, and they tried to redirect government programs toward the country's massive peasantry. The specific needs of Indians, for example, were addressed in the Guatemalan Constitution of 1945, the law of Forced Rentals of 1947, and the Agrarian Reform Law (Decree Number 900) of 1952. Anthropological studies indicate that a widespread "sociological awakening" took place in Indian communities during the revolutionary period. For the first time, the government promoted the establishment of schools, clinics, technical assistance programs, political parties, and local agrarian committees in the Indian highlands.

Following the Castillo Armas takeover (a well-recognized CIA-run invasion) in 1954, the Roman Catholic Church began to have a greater influence in Indian communities. With the support of the government and a conservative Archbishop, foreign missionaries were given permission to set up schools, clinics, and parishes in Indian areas. Initially, these missionaries were "anti-communist" in their political philosophy and motivated by a desire to wipe out the traditional religious brother-hoods or cofradías of the Indians. After the second Vatican Council in 1962 and the Latin American Bishops' Conference in 1968, a more socially reformist orientation began to characterize Roman Catholic missionary work.

The Roman Catholic Church played an extremely important role in the development of the cooperative movement in Guatemala. Although some attempts at cooperative formation had taken place during the Arevalo regime, these came to a halt after the Arbenz agrarian reform law was passed in 1952. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, the Church began to promote cooperatives in rural areas. By 1967, there were 145 agricultural, consumer, and credit cooperatives actively
functioning in the country with a membership of over 27,000 people.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the U.S. Agency for International Development provided several million dollars for the further development of the cooperative movement. By March 1976, there were 510 cooperatives in Guatemala, organized into eight large federations, and with a combined membership of more than 132,000 people. Fifty-seven percent of these cooperatives were located in the Indian highlands where, according to reports written at the time, they were having a major impact on Indian political attitudes, marketing strategies, and agricultural techniques.

In 1974, President Kjell Laugerud took the unprecedented step of providing official support for the cooperative movement. Jose Miguel Gaitan, an outspoken supporter of the cooperative movement, was named deputy manager of BANDESA—the national agricultural credit bank—and the government promised several million dollars for cooperative development. A number of cooperative leaders were also invited to the presidential palace to discuss the role of the cooperative movement in the government’s new five-year development plan.

The motives behind the government’s new policy toward the cooperatives became clear following the tragic earthquake that shook Guatemala in February 1976. The Guatemalan earthquake, as many observers have noted, was as much a “class phenomenon” as it was a “natural disaster.” Most of the damage took place in slum areas of Guatemala City and in the Department of Chimaltenango, where the cooperative movement had its greatest strength. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the government proved entirely incapable of directing the national reconstruction effort. Hence, cooperative members sought independent aid from international relief agencies and began the process of local reconstruction themselves.

Just one month after the earthquake, the government also began military operations in the Department of El Quiche. At the same time, a full-scale military effort was launched along the Northern Frontier Strip, where a number of international petroleum companies had been given exploration permits and where, for several years, the government had promised peasant colonists titles to land.

The scope of this militarization of Indian areas came to world attention in May 1978 when members of a special forces unit of the Guatemalan army killed over 100 Kekchi’ Indian peasants in the town of Panzos, Alta Verapaz. Many people hoped that the international attention that focused on the Panzos massacre would bring an end to government terrorism and violence. The Panzos massacre, however, was only the beginning of a more systematic campaign of terror against the Indian peoples of the country.

Throughout 1978 and 1979, the military occupied several towns in El Quiche, kidnapping catechists and cooperative members under the premise that they were assisting guerrilla forces in the area. In January 1980, a group of Quiche peasants went to Guatemala City to protest the military occupation of their communities. The peasants were particularly outraged by the disappearance of seven catechists from Uspantan who the army had kidnapped, executed, and then buried in a common grave near Chajul. After taking their case to the Guatemalan Congress and several radio stations, the Indians went to the Spanish Embassy to seek the assistance of the ambassador in obtaining an investigation of the deaths. The Guatemalan government responded to the peasants by surrounding the embassy with police and then burning it down. Thirty-nine people were killed in this incident, including 30 peasants from Quiche, seven embassy staff members and two Guatemalan politicians.

After the Spanish Embassy massacre, it became clear that only a well-organized and clandestine movement would be able to counter the violence of the government. In 1978, a new organization called the Committee for Peasant Unity (CUC) was formed to defend the rights of farmworkers in Guatemala. CUC is the first labor organization in the history of Guatemala to link highland Indian peasants with poor Ladino workers. While the organization had been forced to function in secrecy and has seen many of its leaders killed, it has the support of thousands of seasonal and permanent farmworkers.

In February 1980, CUC called a strike of 70,000 cane cutters and 40,000 cotton workers, forcing the government to raise the legal minimum wage of farmworkers from $1.12 to $3.20 per day. The following September, another CUC strike of 10,000 coffee pickers almost led to the abandonment of the coffee harvest on fifteen plantations in the municipality of Colomba. The coffee strike was particularly important, because it occurred in an economic sector that employs more workers, provides more tax revenues, and accounts for a greater proportion of export earnings than any other part of the Guatemalan economy.

Currently, two guerrilla organizations—the Guerrilla continued on page 7
Fake a Deal

has bloomed in the more common climate of apathy. Instead of reversing the arms race, the six thousand meetings have institutionalized it.

In the course of all this talk, there have been only a few fleeting episodes in which the superpowers came close to even partially diverting the arms race. These moments of opportunity were found and lost in each side's shifting perceptions of its military and political advantage. And each side has kept at least one eye focused on its image as a seeker of peace, a focus that sharpens considerably, as it is sharpening today, whenever protest erupts.

A History of Illusion

In the service of the status quo, history is best obliterated while illusion is made resilient and recyclable. Taking advantage of this modern axiom, Vice President Bush pointedly recalled in an April speech that just after World War II a generous American proposal for stopping the arms race before it started was met with "a loud 'nyet.'"

It is true that many Americans at that time were anxious to bring the atom under cooperative international control. Even before the 1945 attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, some of the scientists who created the Bomb tried to prevent the dizzying nuclear arms race they correctly predicted it would set off.

In June of that year, a group of them submitted a memorandum known as the Franck Report to Secretary of War Stimson, asking that the first public demonstration of an atomic explosion take place on a remote deserted site rather than over a Japanese city. The report also suggested that the US then renounce the use of this weapon if other nations would do the same. These suggestions were not given serious consideration.

After the Hiroshima and Nagasaki devastation, more scientists, a significant percentage of the public, and even some politicians concluded that the secret of the atom must be shared among all the nations of the world if disaster was to be avoided. Stimson himself, who had supported the bombings, proposed an "atomic partnership" with the Russians.

But other policymakers had quite different ideas. General Leslie Groves, the military overseer of the wartime bomb project, was typical of those who pushed for a hefty military share in the control of the atom. This was the same crew that strongly opposed international cooperation in nuclear development. A debate between them and proponents of civilian and international control raged for months in Congress.

One of the lobbying methods of the Groves group was to whip up public hysteria with scare stories about the need to protect the "secret of the atom" from Russian "atom spies." In reality, "technical secrets" were of secondary importance. The basic principles of atomic explosions were known to scientists from many countries, and American scientists testified that the Russians would have the Bomb within a few years. (What was kept secret was an ambitious and inevitably futile effort directed by Groves to corner the world's supplies of uranium and thorium.)

In 1946, Congress passed the Atomic Energy Act, making it illegal for American scientists to continue to share nuclear information even with England or Canada—whose scientists and engineers had made large contributions to the wartime effort that produced the Bomb, and who, after all, were America's closest allies. The act also gave the military much of the control over nuclear development that it wanted.

Still, there continued to be so much high-level sentiment for international control of the atom that the US submitted to the United Nations what now seems a drastically liberal proposal. The first version of what later became known as the Baruch Plan declared that the United States was willing to submit to a world authority for the Atomic Era.

The Soviet Union was not impressed. Some historians attribute its wariness solely to Stalin's paranoia. The fact is that the "world authority" would have been constituted through the United Nations, which at that time was effectively controlled by the Americans. Soviet suspicions grew—with growing reason—as the plan went through several revisions, each considerably less magnanimous than the last.

One of the early but already fatally flawed versions of the plan was drawn up by a group of scientists, military men and executives from corporations which had played key roles in the Bomb's development. The major drawback of this plan was a requirement that the Soviet Union immediately hand over control of its uranium deposits to the "international authority." The US was asked only to promise to share its nuclear secrets and stop producing bombs at some unspecified future date, whenever the international body could agree on a permanent treaty.

The plan was further butchered when President Truman chose financier Bernard Baruch to translate it into "more workable" terms. Baruch's yet-more-hawkish group insisted on a provision for "swift and sure punishment" of any nation that violated the ban on nuclear development. This threat was clearly aimed at the Soviets, who had already begun a frantic scramble for a nuke of their own.

In the words of journalist I.F. Stone, by this time the proposal "must have seemed to Moscow the blueprint for a world capitalist super-state in which the US would retain its atomic monopoly behind the facade of an international organization under US control." Dean Acheson, then undersecretary of state and one of the authors of the plan, admitted years later that the Baruch revisions "meant certain defeat of the treaty by Soviet veto."

The Soviet counter-proposal, offered by its UN delegate, Andrei Gromyko, called for the destruction of all nuclear weapons in existence and the cessation of their production. The American response came four days before the formal rejection. On July 1, 1946, the US set off its first postwar test explosion over Bikini Atoll.

Alva Myrdal, a Swedish diplomat who spent twelve
years as an arms controller and then wrote a book called *The Game of Disarmament: How the United States and Russia Run the Arms Race*, writes of this period, "The pattern...had been set: both sides would present proposals for disarmament agreements, of often wholesale dimensions, but would be careful to see to it that those would contain conditions which the opposite side could not accept."

**The A-Bomb's Big Brother**

The next serious sidling up to arms control came in 1955, after the arms race had gained considerable momentum. The Soviets had exploded their first atomic bomb in 1949. The US detonated the first hydrogen bomb, massively larger than the fission type, in 1952; the USSR matched this feat a year later.

Arms negotiations had been stuck for years on the issue of inspection of military sites: the US accused the Soviets of wanting disarmament without inspection, while the Soviets felt that US proposals called for inspection without disarmament.

Then, on May 10, in the middle of arms control talks being held in London, the Soviet Union suddenly announced it would agree to the West's plan for international inspection of nuclear sites and to its figures for ceilings on conventional armies. These proposed limits on armed forces were attractive to the Soviets because of their fear that West Germany, which had joined NATO on May 5, was about to rebuild a large army. The Soviets virtually plagiarized their new position from British and French proposals, which in turn closely reflected the American negotiating position.

European diplomats were jubilant at the breakthrough. "It's almost too good to be true," the French delegate enthused. The American and British delegates both issued statements confirming that the Soviet proposals were in large measure the same as theirs.

In Washington, however, the response was strangely restrained. Perhaps because its arms control offers had not been meant to be taken seriously, the US made a startling turnaround of its own. President Eisenhower began making speeches questioning the wisdom of letting Soviets inspect US military sites. After a recess, the US delegate returned to the London negotiations to announce the withdrawal of every previous American proposal—including the ones that were so close to what the Soviets now said they'd go along with.

The Soviets had agreed to every substantial American condition, and the response from the US was that it hadn't really meant it that way. It was this "no," not a "nyet," which scuttled the closest approach to a real arms control agreement ever.

Shortly afterward, a new factor entered the arms control equation. Popular protest against nuclear weapons, which had been extremely muted during the decade following the war, made an appearance.

**Fear of Fallout**

The catalyzing event for the protest was a 1954 American nuclear test on the Bikini Atoll. Fallout from the multimegaton explosion, blown by the wind in an unanticipated direction, rained onto hundreds of Marshall Islanders and a Japanese fishing boat called the Lucky Dragon. The Marshallese were quickly moved to
another island by the US Navy, but many fell ill. (They and their children continue to feel the effects of their exposure to this day.) All the Japanese fishermen got radiation sickness, and one died of it six months later.

The fate of the Lucky Dragon touched off an investigation of the health effects of radioactive fallout. Many prominent scientists, including Albert Einstein and Linus Pauling, supported the disturbing findings, which launched nearly a decade of protest against atmospheric testing.

Unfortunately, the danger from the use of nuclear bombs on real targets was either too little understood or too overwhelming to be targeted by the antitesting campaign. It was the cancer predictions and the strontium-90 in the baby's milk that evoked a frenzy of fear and widespread dissent.

The peace movement picked up the ball and ran. It looked like a winning strategy: concentrate on the fallout, downplay the possibility of nuclear holocaust, and ignore the politics of the arms race.

By the late fifties, a campaign to push for a comprehensive test ban treaty was well under way. It won the backing of significant majorities in the United States, Western and Eastern Europe, Japan, and many other countries. In Britain, ban-the-bomb sentiment grew into a movement, with sit-ins, rallies, and huge demonstrations like the Aldermaston Easter March in 1960.

A group of “nonaligned” countries, responding to anti-Bomb sentiment in their own backyards, worked out a detailed plan for a comprehensive test ban treaty. Most nonnuclear countries declared themselves willing to sign a multilateral ban, despite the fact that it would hamper their efforts to develop nuclear weapons and would thereby institutionalize the superpowers’ monopoly.

The protests and negotiations lasted for several years. These were years during which the arms race passed several important milestones of escalation, with unfortunately little reaction from the testing-preoccupied protest movement. The superpowers first stopped the atmospheric tests, then, led by the Soviets, started them again. The Soviets launched the Sputnik and shot down an American U-2 plane secretly spying over its territory; Eisenhower warned of the military-industrial complex; Kennedy invented a fictional “missile gap” and faced down Khrushchev in the Cuban missile crisis.

The Arms Race Goes Underground

Finally, in 1963, the Soviets again backed down on a long-held negotiating position. This time they gave up their insistence that an agreement cover all kinds of testing. Abandoning the ongoing multilateral efforts to achieve a comprehensive test ban, the US and the USSR began bilateral talks in Moscow. Within weeks, they had concocted a partial test ban treaty.

The partial ban merely moved the tests underground. It was by no means a barrier to further nuclear development on either side: the US was already setting off more test explosions underground or underwater than in the atmosphere.

Not only did the partial treaty fail to contain the arms race, it wound up clearing the way for its escalation. Despite the fact that Khrushchev had given in to Kennedy’s terms, right-wing politicians in the US accused the president of being soft on the Commies. The support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was finally won by the administration’s argument that forcing the tests underground, where they are more difficult and expensive, would hamper the Soviet nuclear advance far more than the American one. But the real selling point for the hawks was Kennedy’s pledge of lots of new, more sophisticated weapons.

As limited as the treaty was, and as sweetened with promises of arms escalation, it met with resistance in the Senate. George McGovern finally exclaimed in exasperation that “the Administration has been called upon to give so many assurances of our continued nuclear efforts...that a casual observer might assume that we are approving this treaty so that we can accelerate the arms race and beef up the war-making facilities of our country!”

To most people, this judgment was not so clear at the time. Alva Myrdal, who had been instrumental in the multilateral push for a comprehensive ban, remembers, “I only gradually experienced this fateful turn of events as a rude awakening. So hopeful were we that we euphorically hailed this agreement as of utmost importance. We took it for granted, as we were told, that it was the first step towards the discontinuance of all testing of nuclear weapons.” Later, Myrdal wrote that the partial ban “can hardly be considered among disarmament measures,” though “it should be given some credit as a public health measure.”

The partial test ban was greeted by the peace movement as its greatest victory. The campaign that had fed on the fear of fallout swallowed the treaty hook, line, and sinker. Then, unprepared to deal with any but the narrowest of nuclear concerns, it practically vanished.

In the following years, underground testing proved adequate for the development of all kinds of new weapons. The most destabilizing of these were MIRVs, multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles, which allow a single missile to deliver numerous nuclear warheads to different targets. Because the number of warheads per missile can no longer be easily verified and because their precision makes possible a first strike against the other side’s strategic missiles, MIRVs helped make arms control more unlikely than ever.

“Why SALT Spells Fraud”

Starting in 1967 and through the seventies, arms control centered on the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT). Two superpower agreements, together known as SALT I, were reached in 1972: one limiting the deployment of antiballistic missiles and another limiting the increase in strategic arms (nuclear-tipped missiles with intercontinental range). SALT II, signed in 1974 but never ratified by the US Senate, established a ceiling on the number of MIRVs each side was allowed.

None of the SALT agreements meant elimination or
even reductions of weapons. On the contrary, in the words of Myrdal, “there is only a haggling over marginal differences in their continued increase.” In fact, the ceilings to which the superpowers agreed were amazingly close to the numbers they had planned to deploy anyway. No limitations at all were placed on tactical (short-range) or conventional weapons or on qualitative improvements of strategic missiles or warheads. Work on the cruise missile, one of the most destabilizing new weapons of the last decade, was begun after the SALT I agreement was signed. According to Fred Kaplan (Boston Globe, July 19, 1982), the cruise program was funded by the Nixon administration “as a bargaining chip to strengthen the US hand in SALT II negotiations.” (The cruise is a small, jet-powered missile that is supposed to be able to evade radar detection by flying close to the ground with the aid of a terrain-following computer guidance system.)

One difference between SALT and earlier arms control agreements is the extent to which commentators immediately saw it as a charade. In 1969, three years before the first treaty was signed, I.F. Stone wrote an article called “Why SALT Spells Fraud.”

Myrdal commented, “By no stretch of the imagination can SALT II be called arms limitation. Instead it is a mutually agreed continuation of the arms race, regulated and institutionalized.”

Keep On Talking

Although arms control is little more than what Stone calls a “theater of delusion,” we can expect endless curtain calls. Talk about arms control will keep pace with new rounds in the arms race.

The arms control ritual allows each superpower to hail its valiant efforts for peace, efforts (each one laments) that have been tragically foiled by the other side. The basic decency of each government is affirmed and support for its ever-escalating arms buildup—and its other policies—is assured.

Thus legitimized, the superpowers are free to continue using the permanent nuclear showdown as they always have. Like the Cold War it complements, “arms control” is a device by which the superpowers control the governments of other countries, their allies, and their own populations.

Marcy Darnovsky is a member of the Abalone Alliance, a California-based anti-nuclear group organizing against both weapons and nuclear power. The original version of this article appeared in their newsletter, It’s About Times. This version is reprinted from Radical America, Vol. 6, No. 4-5.

Guatemala

Army of the Poor (EGP) and Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA)—are also active in Indian areas of Guatemala. The EGP, which was organized in 1975, has been particularly active in the departments of Huehuetenango, El Quiche, and Alta Verapaz, as well as along the south coast around Escuintla. In the northern highlands, the EGP has ambushed a number of army patrols, and perfected a tactic of “armed propaganda.” Guerrilla units will launch lightning raids of towns and plantations, and then hold propaganda meetings in the native languages. Over the past two years, the EGP is reported to have established a firm base among the local indigenous population. The EGP Ernesto Guevara guerrilla front, which was established in Huehuetenango in 1979, is said to be made up almost entirely of Indians.

ORPA has had similar successes among Indian peoples in the center and western parts of the country. In September 1980, ORPA occupied several Indian towns around Lake Atitlan in the Department of Solola, conducting propaganda meetings among local residents, and forcing many tourists to leave the area. In response, the Guatemalan government set up an army base in Santiago Atitlan and then began to terrorize the local Indian population. Gaspar Culan—the director of the Indian language radio station, La Voz de Atitlan—and several other Indians were murdered by the army in one of its anti-guerrilla raids. When the people protested about this incident and other acts of repression by the army to the mayor of Solola, they were told that they could expect no help from the government as long as ORPA continues to function in the area.

During 1981, the civil war in Guatemala became so intense that the government began to kidnap and murder anyone who was involved in rural development work. In February 1981, the army entered the village of Las Lomas in San Martin Jilotepeque in Chimaltenango, burned all of the houses to the ground, and killed more than 85 Indian men, women and children. Death lists in Chimaltenango, at this time, included members of the National Reconstruction Committee, leaders of community unions, and artists’ groups, Christian Democratic mayors, school teachers and lawyers, and even members of the local Alcoholics Anonymous.

There is a common saying in Guatemala that when the Indians begin to rise up, the volcanos that dot the mountain landscape will begin to erupt. Today, the Indians of Guatemala are only beginning to flex their muscles. Someday soon, however, the full force of the volcano will erupt. When that happens, a new Guatemala will be born.

Shelton H. Davis, an anthropologist and member of the Guatemala Scholar’s Network, is the founder of the Anthropology Resource Center (ARC), a past recipient of Resist funds. This article originally appeared in Akwesasne Notes in the summer of 1981, before the Rios Montt government took over in Guatemala. The article is reprinted here from Native Peoples in Struggle, a new book co-published by ARC and the Emergency Response International Network. The book is available from the latter for $12.99. Write E.R.I.N. Publications, PO Box 41, Bombay, NY 12914.
GRANTS

DRAFT INFORMATION ALLIANCE (539 8th Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025).
The Draft Information Alliance (DIA) is a network of "Third World" draft counselors and minority-based draft counseling and education projects throughout California. Their goal is to provide training, education, resource-sharing and networking services in order to strengthen existing draft and counter-recruitment programs in Chicano, Indian, Black and Asian communities. The services that DIA provides are of crucial importance for several reasons. First, minority communities have always been disproportionately affected by the US military. 26% of the casualties of the Vietnam war were Blacks and 16-20% were Latinos. The general population consisted of only 12% Blacks and 5% Latinos at the time. Second, the "poverty draft," which forces minority and other low income youth to enlist in the military as their options for employment, job training and education disappear, has resulted in over 50% minority representation in the "volunteer" army. Finally, issues relating to the draft and military service touch upon cultural values and family relationships as well as social and economic conditions. For all these reasons there is a critical need to train minority draft counselors who can provide the culturally sensitive draft and counter-recruitment counseling that has been lacking in most draft counseling projects. DIA is made up entirely of Chicano, Black and Indian draft counselors with a high degree of participation by Chicano and Black Vietnam Vets. Resist’s grant will be used for general support.

SYRACUSE PEACE COUNCIL (124 Burnet, Syracuse, NY 13203).
The Syracuse Peace Council has been an active group in upstate New York since 1936. Syracuse is only 50 miles from the Seneca Army Depot, one of two storage sites in the US for nuclear weapons being shipped to Europe, most notably the neutron bomb and the Pershing II. Additionally, upstate NY is the site of many military bases, nuclear waste storage sites and toxic chemical dumps. SPC works hard to include a philosophy of non-violence, feminism and anti-militarism in their work. Their vision of the world is a place "where war, violence and exploitation of all kinds (economic, racial, sexual, age, etc.) do not exist." An important part of their work is monthly publication of the Peace Newsletter. They use the publication as a forum for both local and national issues such as: the massacre in Lebanon, local draft resistance updates, civilian based defense, the Freeze, local congressional candidates and Arab-Black community relations in Syracuse. Some task forces and projects of SPC include Upstate Feminist Peace Alliance, Citizens United Against Police Brutality, Cruise Missile Project and Seneca Army Depot, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, Upstate Resistance, East Timor Human Rights Committee, Friends of Central America United in Support, Anarchist Study Group and Animal Rights. Resist’s grant will help suport two European peace activists who are interning at SPC this year.

EL CENTRO CAMPESINO FARMWORKER CENTER (Box 3021, Winter Haven, FL).
El Centro is an organization of Mexican, Haitian, Salvadoran, and American farmworkers. It is based in Polk County, the heart of Florida’s citrus industry, where 25,000 orange pickers live and work. In Polk County there are twice as many workers as there are jobs, and there is no central place for workers to go to find out what work is available. Many of the crew leaders for the migrant industry are unscrupulous: they often cheat, beat and intimidate the workers. Housing that landlords will rent to farmworkers (non-white) with children is in very short supply and bad condition. Doctors and hospitals turn sick people away and the social welfare agencies provide more jobs to middle class whites than services to farmworkers. The prejudice of native rural whites is aggravated by language barriers for both Hispanics and Haitians, most of whom speak little English. About three-fourths of all the Hispanic farmworkers in the county are un-documented (8,000). They are subject to unjust treatment, by both police and migrant officers, in direct violation of immigration laws and regulations. With education, workers are able to counter such violations and avoid deportation. El Centro has recently established a Rights Committee which is comprised of 12 organizers who work on civil rights issues including: immigration, police abuse, crew leader abuse and support of union organizing. Resist’s grant will support this project.

ADDITIONAL GRANTS

MUJERES LATINAS (500 Talbot Ave., Dorchester, MA 02124)

COMMUNITY WORKS (c/o The Paulist Center, 5 Park St., Boston, MA 02111)

SUBSTITUTES UNITED FOR BETTER SCHOOLS (SUBS, 50 E. Van Buren, Rm 810, Chicago, IL 60605)

CLERGY AND LAITY CONCERNED (PO Box 90557, Nashville TN 37209)

8TH INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL CONFERENCE (1145 E. 6th St., Tucson, AZ 85719)

COMMITTEE TO ABOLISH PRISON SLAVERY (PO Box 3207, Washington, DC 20010)

COMMITTEE TO DEFEND THE MEXICANO POLITICAL PRISONERS (PO Box 1073, Alamosa, CO 81101)