THE WORLD COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES:
AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL PROTEST

by

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Abstract

In response to an almost universal perception on the part of aboriginal peoples of the injustice done to them by the intrusion and take-over of their territories by immigrant-dominated societies, a number of indigenous peoples' groups have arisen on the international scene. One such transnational non-governmental organization is the World Council of Indigenous Peoples. The objects of this thesis are to recount the conditions that precipitated the need for a transnational indigenous peoples support group, to chronicle the formation and work of the WCIP, and to evaluate the organization in terms of why it has (or has not) been a success and in terms of the extent of its success.

Success is herein measured in relation to the responses to WCIP activities of its three primary target groups - individual national governments, international bodies (particularly the United Nations), and its own support base, the indigenous peoples of the world. Four questions are posed with respect to these groups: Have there been policy shifts or concessions granted by national governments that are directly attributable to WCIP activities? Have bodies such as the United Nations adjusted their programmes and polices to coincide with WCIP demands? Has the WCIP succeeded in encouraging the mobilization of indigenous support for indigenous causes; has it affected the emergence and
consolidation of indigenous political activity? To what extent has the WCIP succeeded in effecting changes in the political, economic, and social conditions of the peoples it seeks to benefit?

The 'elements of success' employed in this study to analyze the WCIP's potential for effectively eliciting responses from its target groups have been adapted from various case studies of national, transnational, and international pressure groups and were chosen because of their relevance to the World Council's experience: they accurately indicate the reasons for the WCIP's successes and failures. The elements are: the purposes and goals of the organization, the structure and internal dynamics of the organization, the consolidation of a support base, the organization's legitimacy, the degree of factionalism within the organization, the amount and source of the organization's funding, the use of self-appraisal, the nature of the targets of the organization, and the selected tactics of the organization.

Examination of the WCIP's work suggests that its chief success has been in mobilizing its own support base. While the World Council has influenced its other targets to a limited extent in specific situations, has brought about increased awareness of social and political injustice towards native peoples, and has gained support for its activities from influential quarters, so far there have been few if any
fundamental, widespread, substantive changes in the attitudes and policies of national elites and of officials of international governmental organizations towards social, economic, and political relations with indigenous peoples that are obviously the result of WCIP activities. This is primarily due to the radical nature of certain WCIP goals, which demand a fundamental shift in the attitudes of state governments and international society in general; to recognize indigenous peoples as nations with rights to self-determination might mean an altered international order. Such a challenge to established authority is not likely to meet with immediate success. Still, the World Council's work constitutes a necessary first step; in ensuring the existence of an ongoing support base with a shared purpose, it has created a platform from which the challenge to governments to alter their stance towards indigenous peoples may someday succeed, for reasons of expediency if not morality.
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CHAPTER ONE

THE INDIGENOUS POSITION: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

The cause of the indigenous peoples of the world has attracted considerable attention on the international scene in the last decade or so. The shared grievance of the aboriginal nations, of the so-called Fourth World, centers around their common historical experience: the dispossession of their lands, of their self-sufficiency, and often of their very right to existence as distinctive peoples, by invading nations that can realistically be characterized as colonizers. The fact that indigenous peoples worldwide find themselves politically, socially, and economically dependent upon the dominant societies of the states within which they exist has precipitated the emergence of a group consciousness and shared sense of the injustice of their position. In response to this universal indigenous perception, various international agencies have risen to champion the cause of the scattered First Peoples. In the vanguard of these is the aboriginally-conceived non-governmental organization known as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.¹

This study examines the conditions that precipitated the formation of a transnational body representative of indigenous peoples, the reasons for the inadequacy of the protection of aboriginal rights by the international human rights regime, and the emergence and operational history of the World
Council. The purpose of the thesis is to discover why the WCIP has or has not been successful and what degree of success it has had in improving the position of aboriginal peoples since its inception in 1975. Chapter One introduces the concept of internal colonialism as an explanatory device to set the stage for the development of international indigenous political activity, and states the case of aboriginal peoples. Chapter Two explores the failure of conventional international human rights groups to successfully protect aboriginal rights. Chapter Three chronicles the WCIP's formation and operational history. Chapter Four details the 'strategy of analysis' used in evaluating the WCIP's ability to influence the behavior of its targets. It discusses the elements that determine a pressure group's success or failure: purposes and goals, which determine the degree of receptivity with which an organization's targets will listen to its demands; structure and internal dynamics, which affect an organization's ability to wield influence; consolidation of a support base, which can be called upon to give weight and immediacy to the organization's demands; legitimacy, as perceived by an organization's targets and constituents, which is necessary for its demands to be taken seriously; factionalism, which affects the organization's credibility in the eyes of its targets; funding, which determines the intensity and scope of activities the organization may undertake; self-appraisal, which permits the organization to deploy its resources
efficiently; the nature of the targets of the organization, which determines how amenable to pressure they will be; and the selected tactics of the organization. Chapter Five applies these 'elements of success' to the WCIP and thus sets out the reasons for the WCIP's success or failure as a transnational pressure group. Chapter Six presents the conclusions reached as to the extent of the World Council's success.

The extent of the WCIP's impact as a transnational lobbying group -- particularly on principal targets such as individual national governments, international bodies such as the United Nations, and its own support base, indigenous peoples which have been denied legitimacy by colonizing governments -- may be determined by exploring a number of questions. Have there been policy shifts or concessions won from national governments that are directly attributable to WCIP activities? Have bodies such as the U.N. adjusted their programmes and policies to coincide with WCIP demands? Has the WCIP succeeded in encouraging the mobilization of indigenous support for indigenous causes; has it affected the emergence and consolidation of indigenous political activity? Finally, to what extent has the World Council succeeded in effecting changes in the political, economic, and social conditions of the peoples it seeks to benefit? The answers to these questions will reveal the measure of the WCIP's success.
Internal Colonialism and the Case for Aboriginal Rights

The fact that a need exists for a representative body such as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples can be seen in the common historical and contemporary circumstances in which aboriginal peoples find themselves. An understanding of the 'indigenous position' makes it clear that the formation of a body such as the WCIP was a logical and necessary step if the indigenous peoples of the world are to make any progress towards correcting a situation that they perceive as unjust and intolerable. A review of the manner in which indigenous peoples have come to occupy their present niche in the international scheme of things leads to the possibility that if indeed their position is as intolerable as they claim, then the governments of the states which have enveloped them can be seen to have a moral responsibility to take at least some steps to correct the injustice.

The histories of many and various countries -- Canada, Australia, Mexico and Guatemala, to name a few -- have in common one feature in particular. The territories of such states were originally inhabited solely by distinct aboriginal peoples organized in relatively small-scale, land-based societies existing as independent, self-governing units which exercised control over geographical areas and which traded and warred with other such units. At various stages, colonizing nations such as Britain, Spain, and Portugal asserted sovereignty over these territories and eventually introduced
settlers, followed by their own legal, economic, and political institutions. In most areas settlers gradually came to outnumber the original people, but even in South African and Central and South American countries where indigenous peoples constituted the majority of the population, the new institutions became dominant. "Sovereignty over the land was essentially a matter of effective occupation." By the end of the 19th century, most, if not all of the homelands of the aboriginal peoples had been taken over by foreign states: "the territories of the Indians, the Maori, the Aboriginals, the Sami, and the Ainu had been incorporated within states not of their creation."

By processes ranging from peaceful agreement to duplicity to forcible dispossession, the land of the indigenous inhabitants was acquired by the settler regimes. In some areas, such as Tasmania, the east coast of Canada, and parts of Central and South America, the natives were systematically exterminated so that the land could be freed for settlement and development. European diseases such as smallpox, tuberculosis, measles, influenza, and typhoid, introduced accidentally or otherwise, also contributed to the decimation of indigenous populations.

The policies of the colonial governments towards their acquired subjects ranged from the more common strategies of assimilation and integration to outright extermination. Aboriginal cultural, economic, and political systems were
denied legitimacy by colonial authorities even in those indigenous societies which displayed irrefutable and considerable organizational and technical skills, advanced political structure, social stratification, cultural bodies, and sophisticated philosophical and world views.\(^5\) It was generally the case that colonizers assumed the 'obligation' of Christianizing and 'civilizing' their new subjects. By denying the legitimacy of indigenous cultural, social, economic, and political patterns, the colonial governments were able to justify their own occupation of the land and the imposition of their own patterns and systems of authority.\(^6\) "The dominant theme has been the 'westernization' of [indigenous] groups -- by the 'formal' processes of conquest, conversion to Christianity, and education, or by 'informal' processes such as racial mixture, conscription, migration to the cities, and the penetration of commercialization to remote regions."\(^7\)

Whatever the path taken by colonization -- whether brutal or indifferent -- and whatever the motives behind it--economic, military, political, or spiritual -- the result was similar: indigenous peoples were subjugated, demoralized, forced to adopt alien ways, and reduced to the status of second or third class subjects. The enormity of the wrong done to once self-sufficient peoples was downplayed and excused by popular sentiments that expansion or colonization was inevitable, that territory was necessary to secure or
defend other territory, that colonized areas needed effective
government, that massacres or other atrocities perpetrated
against native inhabitants were the exceptional actions of
out-of-control military factions, that bringing civilization
to the wilderness could only improve the lot of the 'savages',
and that in any case, 'progress' was inevitable.

While independence came eventually to practically every
colonial area large enough to be organized as a sovereign
nation, the gaining of independence by the colonies brought no
change to the status of aboriginal peoples; they remained
colonized peoples, subject to ruling classes which exercised
economic, ideological, political, and racial domination. This
new colonial relationship is the predominant regime under
which Fourth World peoples find themselves today. While the
position of indigenous peoples under this regime is by no
means identical to that of classically colonized peoples, in
that indigenous peoples are usually numerical minorities in
the states which envelop them and do not always have easily-
defined territories that are geographically distinct from
those of their colonizers, the concept of 'internal
colonialism' seems to accurately characterize the position in
which indigenous peoples perceive themselves to be.

The internal colonialism model has been used by Boldt,
Hechter, Tennant, and Thomas, among others, to describe the
structural and cultural status of contemporary indigenous
peoples (and other territorially-based ethnic minorities)
which find themselves in a position of continued subjugation in a post-colonial independent nation-state. Internal colonialism is a continuum of the social structure of the new nation and is bound to the policy of the national government which sees in it practical economic and political value. Conditions associated with internal colonialism include "geographical displacement; forced acculturation and destruction of indigenous values; subjection to an external culture; and political and social subordination based on the assumption" of racial, ethnic, or cultural inferiority. Use of land and resources are restricted and the subjugated peoples are subjected to "varying degrees of administrative supervision, social discrimination, suppression of culture and denial of political and other rights and freedoms." These are conditions commonly experienced by indigenous peoples today.

The internal colonialism model is useful in that it opens the way to the possible conclusion "that the subjugation [of native people] has no greater moral justification in an independent state than in a colony." This is not the "perspective commonly maintained, in its own interest, by the non-indigenous ruling group." The internal colonialism model permits an understanding of the moral and logical basis for the claims of indigenous peoples to 'aboriginal rights' to some measure of economic, political, and cultural independence; it makes the notion of aboriginal rights
"comprehensible within, and compatible with, a non-native conceptual framework."¹³

If the colonial analogy is accepted, the assertion that the world community is under some obligation to take the demands of indigenous peoples seriously becomes plausible. International accords such as the Charter of the United Nations and the U.N. General Assembly resolution entitled "the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples" passed in 1961, refer to the inalienable rights of all peoples which were original inhabitants of colonized territories to political self-determination and to the pursuit of economic, social and cultural development. They have as their stated goal the elimination of "colonialism in all its forms and manifestations."¹⁴ While the U.N. may not have had the situation of aboriginal peoples in mind when making such statements, which are considered to apply only in classic colonial situations or to overseas colonies, in principle its point of view appears to agree with that of aboriginal leaders -- that the rights of indigenous peoples are not extinguished by the actions of a new sovereign and that as peoples, they have a right to choose their own paths. Apparently, states have "no more right to assert permanent sovereignty over the land" and original inhabitants "than did, say, the British in Kenya."¹⁵
The traditional colonialist justification for depriving a people of its independence -- the philosophical basis of colonialism, internal or otherwise -- is that the imposition of authority and the removal of independence is in some way beneficial to the people so subjugated.\textsuperscript{16} This argument is designed to mask overt racism, which is disreputable; nevertheless, the argument is undeniably racist and has been dismissed as "paternalistic sophistry," leaving colonialism without a valid justification.\textsuperscript{17} Whatever the explanations given for the treatment of indigenous peoples, political and economic considerations alone dictate the relationship of native peoples to governments.

If one accepts the internal colonialism model, one may also be persuaded to accept that, according to the logic of their position, indigenous peoples do have a valid claim to a measure of control over their own lives, if not to the complete restoration of their property and independence. It is not reasonable to suppose that governments are likely to accede to demands for the outright return of land and resources to original peoples; to make such concessions would not only be impractical, but would be against the interests of the governments which made them. Realistically, the solutions available to each indigenous people will vary according to its circumstances and to the nature of the particular country in which it exists. The very best possible outcome for indigenous peoples may entail the gaining of special minority
group status within a country which could include rights to a limited form of self-government (comparable to municipal government), some rights to land and resources which permit a measure of economic self-sufficiency, and recognition of a right to remain culturally and socially distinct in terms of education and language. Secession is an impractical and improbable option for most indigenous peoples, and indeed, is recognized as such by most indigenous leaders.

What Do the Indigenous Peoples Want?

There are a number of conditions common to contemporary indigenous populations under internal colonialism. Generally, native people "lead marginal lives, characterized by poverty and dependence." They endure substandard levels of physical health, complicated by inadequate health care, nutritional standards below those of the majority population, inadequate housing, and poor sanitation. Depression, alcoholism, and high suicide rates are common, indicating the frustration that accompanies trying to maintain one's identity in the face of an alien lifestyle. They also find themselves subject to legal systems which are foreign to their philosophies, which have no relation to their culture, and which tend to work against them. Often native people do not understand their legal rights due to linguistic and cultural barriers and are not able to use the systems to their advantage. Legal, social, and political impotence are sustained by the failure
of educational systems to provide adequate levels or types of education; curricula are often irrelevant to the needs of native people. Imposed patterns of worship which repress traditional modes are also them norm.

The 'system' by which native peoples are often trapped usually translates into the 'welfare system.' Apparently benevolent legislation combined with political and physical repression "keeps people alive at a subsistence level but blunts any attempts at revolt while turning them into captive consumers for industrial products." It is a covert but effective "form of pacification." It is self-perpetuating in that eligibility for welfare is best established by being totally dependent, and by embracing dependence, by abandoning traditional lifestyles, native groups are economically retarded and rendered unable to compete. Non-native society often criticizes natives for apparent apathy and unwillingness to better their conditions; however, continuing oppression through poverty, poor health, stereotyping, lack of education and job opportunities, and so on, tends to crush initiative.

In certain areas of the world the plight of indigenous populations is still more dire. Practices such as extermination, sterilization, relocation, and forced assimilation have not been entirely abolished in many Third World countries. Quite often the violence committed against indigenous peoples in countries such as Guatemala and El Salvador is an indirect result of economic-political power.
struggles within and between the developed countries for control and defense of investments and other interests within these countries. Giant multinational enterprises with mining, oil, and lumber interests are frequently the cause of the victimization of native groups. In the haste to make way for profitable development -- for highways, hydro-electric dams, mineral extraction projects, and the like -- national governments sometimes uproot, re-locate, and otherwise abuse indigenous populations within their borders. The real and perceived demands of transnational corporations substantially affect human, civil, and political rights, which are subsumed by interests which yield more immediate and tangible results. The economic and political conditions in Central and South America make these areas the 'hotbeds' of aboriginal rights violations today.

Perhaps the most significant common denominator of all contemporary indigenous peoples is the fact of their separation from their land. It is rare for aboriginal peoples of any state to have any title to the land they dwelt on for generations prior to colonization. Land is the most important element of aboriginal claims; it underlies all other claims. "The moral claim of indigenous peoples differs from that of other subjugated groups in that it includes and rests upon the fundamental claim of land and use of resources which derives from prior and rightful occupancy."
The land has both economic and spiritual significance for aboriginal peoples. Material standards of living are derived ultimately from the land and its resources; native peoples are aware of this and seek a role in determining the manner of land and resource use and a fair portion of benefits derived from their exploitation. At the same time, an adequate land base is necessary for the way of life which is basic to aboriginal culture and identity. Stavenhagen expresses it as follows: "The Indian is a man who is integrated in his traditional community which is bound to the land ... culturally and psychologically, he ceases to be an Indian when he becomes separated from the land .... The Indian needs the land because without it he loses his social and ethnic identity." The unique relationship of aboriginal peoples to their land is further explained by Tennant: "Indeed, the only way in which an aboriginal community could of its own accord cease to exist, that is, forsake its aboriginal nature, would be knowingly to give up claim to land;" and by Davis: "the lesson to be learned from native peoples everywhere is that 'aboriginal' land rights define the only legitimate relationship of a man to the land"; and by Deloria: "the tribal-communal way of life, devoid of economic competition, views land as the most vital part of man's existence ... it supports them, tells them where they live and defines for them how they live." It is their center, that which secures their identity; they are not abstracted from it.
Such are the conditions faced by indigenous peoples under internal colonialism. There are two main patterns of response to these conditions taken by subjugated peoples. The first is assimilation, which is an individual process in which one separates from the corporate structure of the indigenous community and becomes integrated into the dominant society. The second is consolidation of the community through a process known as "boundary maintenance." The latter pattern, which is inherent in the concept of internal colonialism, is the one turned to by the majority of native peoples.

The continuity of distinct cultural groups peripheral to the dominant institutions of society is largely dependent upon those groups perceiving themselves as being separate and distinct communities and employing devices to maintain the difference -- the chief device being the erection and maintenance of "cultural boundaries" vis-a-vis other groups. Indigenous groups justify such constructs in terms of preserving their heritage, but in fact such boundaries allow for resolution of "internal contradictions arising out of external impact," for the continuation of group identity, while permitting the incorporation of "elements of the majority's culture or political system" which impart new vitality and viability. The maintenance of cultural boundaries has been assisted by the tendency of dominant societies to keep indigenous peoples at arms length, allowing the survival of traditional indigenous socio-cultural,
political, and economic institutions and of a certain philosophical uniqueness.

With a collective sense of identity, the emergence of group solidarity, and a clear delineation of cultures, the way is open for indigenous peoples to be placed "on equal conceptual and moral footing with immigrant cultures." Substantial economic and political inequalities between dominant and indigenous groups may thus be regarded as unjust and illegitimate, as "part of a pattern of collective oppression." In recent years various states have witnessed a resurgence of native cultural and political activity. This has been precipitated, according to Peterson, by a "worldwide period of internal expansion and development ... during the 1960s," by the generalization of "middle class liberal values," and by "aboriginal activism within a context of growing world awareness of Third and Fourth World peoples and general failure of the assimilation policy at a time of increasing acceptance of cultural pluralism and ethnicity." The coincidence in timing of national aboriginal rights movements all over the world has resulted in an international movement, bolstered by a universal indigenous perception of shared grievances and goals. "The struggles vary within the historical contexts in which they take place," yet they have much in common.
Effective political adaptation in response to subjugation includes, "at its fullest extent": selective adaptation of cultural elements "for the purpose of facilitating group survival in post-contact circumstances; formation and maintenance of a comprehensive organization to emphasize group identity and to conduct transactions within the ruling majority; pursuit of minority unity in order to maintain group identity and to provide support for the organization; establishing relations within the majority which are able and willing to provide resources or support; and lobbying government in order to defend and promote group interests."  

Such political adaptation is found at the international as well as at the national level. Indigenous political organization has shown all of these developments.

It has become the norm for indigenous peoples to refer to themselves as 'nations.' In Canada, for instance, 'First Nations' is generally understood (at least by people aware of indigenous issues) to refer to indigenous tribal-cultural groups. Common usage of the term is found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, which defines 'nation' as a "large number of people of mainly common descent, language, history, etc., usually inhabiting a territory bounded by defined limits and forming a society under one government," or as a "tribe of North American Indians." It is understandable that indigenous peoples that once existed as independent, self-governing, culturally distinct groups and that exercised control over
geographical areas perceive themselves as nations. A continuing sense of nationhood is further fostered by the fact that indigenous peoples differ from other minority ethnic groups in that they alone can claim land, aboriginal, and sometimes treaty rights accruing to them as the original inhabitants of a territory. Unlike all others, they are not immigrants and have no other homeland. The appellation 'nation' for an indigenous people is not entirely unreasonable. However, the sense in which 'nation' is commonly used in the international arena, that is, in reference to a sovereign state, makes the use of the term in respect to indigenous peoples somewhat suspect to some political scientists.

'Self-determination' has become the catch-all phrase used to express the goal of indigenous nations. The phrase has come to have a variety of meanings and is often used imprecisely. However, there are two primary meanings that can be attributed to it. The first is external autonomy or the right of a people to independence and international status, to territorial integrity and non-violation of its boundaries, to governance of its own affairs without outside influence. The second meaning is internal autonomy or the right of a people to determine the form of its own government and to participate in that government, or the right of a minority people within or even across state boundaries to special rights to protection and non-discrimination and possibly to cultural,
social, and economic autonomy for the preservation of group identity.\textsuperscript{39}

Aboriginal leaders generally understand self-determination in terms of internal autonomy. The phrase is seen to include the right to traditional lands and resources, the right to exist as distinct peoples, the right to cultural and economic development, and the right to communal self-government. Land rights are primary; the claim to land "implies and includes the claim to continued functioning of the community in that place."\textsuperscript{40} However, secession of indigenous communities from the states in which they exist is usually not part of the indigenous scenario.

Boldt identifies two possible options faced by indigenous peoples: independence, or geographically defined territorial nationalism, where an aboriginal group gains nation-state status; or institutional autonomy, where an aboriginal group has control over a social-political economic space without specifying a geographical space, special status in relationships with the central government, political equality as a group with the rest of the state, and retention of identity. A third option exists: institutional autonomy within a defined geographical space within an existing state's borders. This option seems to be the goal sought by most indigenous peoples; it is a solution that is possible within the context of existing states.
The ambiguity surrounding the notion of self-determination poses a significant obstacle to those struggling towards that ideal. As Michael Asch points out, "in the classical scenario ... the resolution of the rights of an indigenous population to self-determination ... is accomplished through the establishment ... of a nation state founded on an indigenous sovereignty -- the breakup of existing nation-states." To demand 'self-determination' is seen by most non-aboriginal people as demanding complete independence. Existing national elites almost certainly will reject a demand which could destroy the accepted international order and the present structure of states. Indigenous leaders are aware that such an extreme position will evoke little more than hostility from national elites of states within which indigenous peoples dwell. It is politically expedient for indigenous peoples to take a less revolutionary approach to self-determination. Yet no matter what meaning the term is intended to convey, its use tends to create resistance.

A restructuring of existing political systems in a manner that would guarantee aboriginal peoples the exclusive political and legislative authority deemed necessary for survival and development as distinct peoples, and the recognition of a subsisting (or still-existing) title to land and the rights that flow from it, seems to be the solution most widely-sought by indigenous nations. This willingness to accept less than total independence is indicative of a major
difference between indigenous peoples and classically colonized peoples. The solution sought by indigenous peoples makes sense particularly when indigenes are numerically overwhelmed by the immigrant population and where their communities are encapsulated by the state. Many indigenous peoples are too small to make statehood a practical option. It is only where indigenous people make up the majority of the population, and/or where their territory is geographically separate from that of the governing power that political decolonization and subsequent statehood may be conceivable. Some African and Pacific indigenous groups, such as the African National Congress and the Kanaks of New Caledonia, aim for the revolutionary overthrow of an entrenched colonial political-economic-social order.

Such is the indigenous position. Having been divested of their land, self-sufficiency, and integrity as peoples, the indigenous nations of the world seek redress and restoration of that which they feel should never have been taken from them. From their point of view, it does not seem reasonable that reparation has not heretofore been made, for they are convinced of the historical and moral injustice of the situation. A need for a mechanism to work towards bettering the conditions of aboriginal peoples is indicated, and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples formed in response to that need.
1. The terms 'indigenous', 'aboriginal', and sometimes 'native' are used here interchangeably. The same is true of the terms 'people' and 'nation.' The latter two terms are controversial due to the differing nuances and interpretations associated with them. According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, a 'people' is a number of persons composing a community, tribe, race, or nation. A 'nation' may be defined as a large number of people of mainly common descent, language, and history, usually inhabiting a territory bounded by defined limited and forming a society under one government, or alternately, as a tribe of North American Indians. Both terms are extremely nebulous and are not readily accepted as applying to indigenous groups by all political scientists. However, it is generally the case that indigenous groups once existed as self-governing peoples with territorial land-bases, distinct languages and cultures, and conscious knowledge of shared tribal achievements. On the basis of a historically independent political, economic, and socio-cultural identity, many native groups, including the WCIP, claim nationhood for modern indigenous peoples. According to the WCIP's definition, an indigenous people or nation is composed of the existing descendants of a people who inhabited the present territory of a country at the time when persons of a different culture of ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them, and by conquest, settlement, or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial condition and who today retain their own social, economic, and cultural customs and traditions, under a state structure the institutions of which incorporate mainly the national, social, and cultural characteristics of the predominant population. The definition is not altogether satisfactory, for its scope is very broad; nevertheless, it is accepted for the purposes of this thesis.


5. Many indigenous groups, such as the Iroquois and other confederacies, had considerable organizational skill, advanced political structure, cultural bodies, philosophy, and world view. The despotic, homogenous Incan empire extended
from northern Ecuador into northwest Argentina and central Chile, and was highly centralized, urbanized and socially stratified, with skilled agriculturalists, artisans, and architects. See Dorothy V. Jones, License for Empire (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 27, 263, 259.


10. Tennant, p.4.  
11. Ibid.  
12. Ibid.  
14. Ibid., p.32.  
15. Ibid., p.34.  
17. Ibid.  
18. Frideres, p.185.  
20. Ibid., p.131.


27. Davis, p.62.


29. Tennant, "Native Indian Political Organization ...," p.5-7. Tennant also identifies additional possible responses: passive endurance, organized violence, revitalization or messianic movements, social breakdown, and personal demoralization.


31. Schwimmer, p.142.

32. Tennant, "Native Indian Political Organization...," p.5.

33. Ibid.

34. Hechter, p.42.


37. Tennant, "Native Indian Political Organization ...," pp.6-7. Tennant attributes this description in part to the work of Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth.


41. Asch, p.34.
CHAPTER TWO

THE INTERNATIONAL APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS:
ABORIGINAL RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS

'Aboriginal rights' refer to those prerogatives accruing to peoples of a territory derived from the fact of their occupancy of certain lands since time immemorial, that is, in practice, from their having existed in a particular place as a group prior to colonization or annexation by external governments. The survival of these peoples, whose traditional territories often transcend the boundaries of the nation-states that have subjugated them, poses a variety of complications for private human rights organizations and for international governmental agencies, such as the United Nations, which purport to represent the 'peoples of the world.'

This chapter discusses the international approach to aboriginal rights by international government bodies, particularly the United Nations, and by specialized non-government bodies concerned with the protection of human rights. Such agencies have been ineffectual in their attempts to protect the interests of indigenous peoples. It will be argued that only a group organized and operated by indigenous peoples themselves, such as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, has the potential to effectively protect and promote their own rights.
Aboriginal Rights at the United Nations

A spokesman for the Inuit Committee on National Issues (Canada) has stated: "In our view, aboriginal rights can also be seen as human rights, because these are the things that we need to continue to survive as a distinct people ..."1 Aboriginal rights have been dealt with, to some extent, as human rights issues by intergovernmental bodies such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, regional and national bodies, and numerous governmental and non-governmental or private institutions. The formal and informal mechanisms in place for enforcing certain minimum standards of behavior by governments towards their citizens should technically work in favor of Fourth World nations, yet because of problems inherent in aboriginal rights issues, and because of inherent limitations of the United Nations human rights regime, they almost consistently fail to do so. Even the specialized measures taken by the United Nations to curb aboriginal rights violations have been ineffectual.

The most visible provisions for universal human rights protection and promotion are the United Nations' loose collection of rules, institutions, and practices with regard to human rights. Supplementing the United Nations regulations are the numerous human rights covenants and conventions of national governments or regional intergovernmental organizations, which have much the same content as the U.N.-
generated rules, and much the same effect. Accordingly, only the U.N. provisions will be dealt with here.

Concern for human rights is expressed in the Charter of the U.N. in several references and by the 'International Bill of Human Rights,' which consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, with its Optional Protocol pertaining to the rights of individuals to appeal rights violations. Other acts which contribute directly to the U.N. human rights regime are the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and various declarations dealing with things such as the abolition of slavery, statelessness, and the rights of women, children, and refugees. Many of these statements were generated by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the main standing committees of the U.N. which is devoted to social, cultural, and humanitarian matters. The ECOSOC, having been given a specific mandate to deal with human rights, has established a Commission on Human Rights which has in turn set up various sub-committees, including one for the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities. Together these instruments provide a common standard of conduct by which alleged invasions of rights can be judged by world opinion.
While problems faced by native peoples have "been on the broad political agenda of the U.N. for perhaps twenty years," and have been dealt with to some extent according to conventional standards, it is only recently that they have surfaced and been recognized as specifically indigenous questions.\(^4\) In 1982, the Commission on Human Rights' Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities established a Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The founding of the Working Group, which receives reports from governments, international organizations, and NGOs, has been hailed by the Indian Law Resource Centre as a "major advance in the development of the rights of Indigenous Peoples." It is the first permanent U.N. forum devoted to indigenous problems.\(^5\) Also associated with the Sub-Commission is Special Rapporteur Jose R. Martinez, who for the last ten or so years has been preparing a Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous People.\(^6\) Finally, the review board of the International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Labour Organization's Convention on Protection of Indigenous and Other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries have dealt specifically with the problems of native peoples.\(^7\) The possibility of establishing a U.N. Commission for Indigenous Populations has even been discussed.\(^8\) Together, the U.N. measures reflect a new
perception of the need for international standards for the
treatment of indigenous populations.

Despite U.N. conventions, commissions, and declarations,
which might appear to give sufficient protection to indigenous
peoples, the organization's performance in the realm of
aboriginal rights has been dismal. Its failure to serve the
interests of indigenous peoples is attributable to several
factors, including the tendency towards narrow or unfavourable
interpretation of provisions, the tendency for the
international community to ignore aboriginal issues or to fail
to perceive them altogether, and the inability of the U.N. to
effectively enforce implementation of its provisions. These
constraints result from the United Nations being composed of
nation-states which consistently base their activities on
perceptions of national interest and from a reluctance on the
part of member states to focus on issues that they perceive as
domestic.

To examine the U.N.'s tendency towards narrow
interpretation of provisions, one may begin by observing the
agency's attitude towards self-determination. The U.N.
Charter's first article refers to the principle of self-
determination of peoples, and the Covenants of the
International Bill of Rights state that "all peoples have the
right to self-determination as well as related rights to
freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources." The
U.N. has assumed a supervisory jurisdiction over the process
of decolonization, which has been highly supported by almost all members in "classic colonial situations." Self-government was not considered appropriate unless the colony was ethnically and/or culturally distinct and geographically separate from the administering power. To date, indigenous enclave populations have not been perceived by the international community as colonized peoples. Despite the fact that their own leaders see their position as being practically and philosophically the same as that of classic colonies, indigenous peoples have been treated as all minority groups are treated; their problems have been looked on "in terms of economic exploitation, racial discrimination, and human rights" in general. It has not been recognized that their situation should be looked upon in terms of decolonization and self-determination.

Another instance of limited interpretation of U.N. statutes can be seen in the application of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which entered into force in 1951. Genocide, which entails "a commitment of acts with intent to destroy or decimate a natural, ethnic, racial, or religious group," does not necessarily imply physical eradication. Cultural genocide has been defined by an ECOSOC draft convention as "destruction of the specific characteristics of a group" through such acts as forced removal of children from the group, prohibition of the use of the national language, systematic destruction of
historical and religious monuments or their diversion to alien uses, and destruction or dispersal of documents and objects of historical, religious, or artistic value.\textsuperscript{13} All of these acts have, at one time or another, been perpetrated against native peoples by national governments, and massacres of Indian populations have been documented recently in Paraguay, Bolivia, and Guatemala, despite explicit U.N. provisions which should have guarded against exactly such atrocities.\textsuperscript{14}

Inadequate protection of aboriginal rights by the U.N. system sometimes occurs because certain kinds of human rights violations, including those affecting indigenous peoples, are simply not noted since they are among the prevailing prejudices and blind spots existing within societies that U.N. officials and state delegates represent. For instance, "as an indicator of the mentality of many governments, one ambassador from a Latin American country reported recently that there are practically no indigenous peoples in Latin America."\textsuperscript{15} This assertion may reflect an imminent reality if reports of genocide on the parts of governments of certain countries towards their indigenous citizens are true, and if difficulties of recognition and acknowledgement of indigenous rights persist at both governmental and intergovernmental levels.

Because human rights rules confer rights on individuals but remain obligations of states, implementation is a problem.\textsuperscript{16} States' agents in the U.N. cannot realistically be
expected to enforce internationally guaranteed rights when this means implementing regulations against themselves for their own violations. Neither will they initiate actions which do not directly enhance their own interests. States tend to be passive with regard to human rights issues, providing the status quo is not disturbed. As former Secretary-General U Thant has observed, "legally, the membership of the U.N. has done an admirable job on human rights. The necessary texts exist, but practically, where does an individual or group of individuals find recourse against oppression within his own country?"17 The fact that the system is set up to research, report, communicate, and record with no real means of enforcing provisions, means that recommendations to states may or may not be acted on. Even the most innocuous implementation provision -- the reporting requirement -- has been undermined as unreliable, and delinquent reports are the norm.18 In addition, U.N. covenants bind only those states which are party to them, and these are generally those which do not conduct systematic violations of human rights in the first place.

As noted above, the inconsistent application of the prohibition against genocide and other U.N. rights provisions, the failure to note certain violations of aboriginal rights, and the inability to successfully implement U.N. rights provisions are attributable to certain limitations inherent in the U.N. The United Nations is an organization of states, and
the U.N. organs which deal with decolonization, self-determination, genocide, and other human rights rules are controlled by national governments which, rightly or wrongly, act according to their perceived best interests. It is therefore understandable, for example, that the application of the principle of self-determination has been restricted to non-contiguous territories. So many states have indigenous peoples within their borders that to allow a precedent to be set by acknowledging the right of native peoples to self-determination could alter the distribution of power in the international system. National governments are often unwilling to support any mechanism which might detract from their political-economic spheres of influence, and this unwillingness applies to aboriginal rights provisions. Obviously, the U.N. human rights regime fails to address the roots of aboriginal rights issues, which are economic and political, more than cultural and psychological.

Due to a deference to a concept of a world order dominated by sovereign nations, there is a definite reluctance on the part of the U.N. to focus on issues which pertain to the domestic affairs of member states, or which cut across normal political and ideological lines. Because indigenous issues are perceived to be domestic concerns, interpretation of the U.N. rights provisions has frequently excluded indigenous peoples. Sensitive to criticism of human rights violations in their own countries, governments are also
hesitant to condemn other governments for such violations. "One human rights official, for example, predicted that no governments are likely to bring up the issue of American Indians in the United States because they are afraid to set precedents which might be applied to themselves as well. Almost every country, he noted, has indigenous peoples." It is in fact a Charter pledge to prohibit intervention in the domestic affairs of member states, making reprimands for violations difficult to justify to certain states, and there are states which do not support the U.N. regime because they perceive its provisions to be invasive of their sovereignty.

Such built-in limitations lead to the conclusion that the U.N. human rights regime is a less-than-ideal mechanism for protecting human, and especially aboriginal rights. The U.N. system does have value however, in that it acts as a clearing house for information on aboriginal rights issues, provides the means by which to inquire further into particular incidents, assists in bringing some transgressions to the attention of world public opinion, and encourages the observance of certain standards of behavior of governments. Yet as things stand, it is unlikely that the U.N. can solve the problems of indigenous peoples. Therefore, the development and protection of aboriginal rights must be left in other hands. Transnational non-government organizations seem to be the parties most likely to take the initiative to protect indigenous interests.
Aboriginal Rights and Non-Governmental Organizations

Ledor-Lederer contends that international (or transnational) non-government organizations (NGOs) are "the main social countervailing power to the state." They have certainly proven to be increasingly significant actors in all global patterns of transaction, and have come to serve an essential role in the preservation of human rights. Bodies such as the International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, and the World Council of Churches deal directly with human rights issues, not having the degree of vested interest in preserving the status quo or in otherwise protecting national interests at the expense of human rights that government structures have. They have a legitimate, autonomous identity and a unique role vis-a-vis the U.N. and other international governmental organizations (IGOs) and national governments, since there are no other agencies with the desire and organizational capability to meet the needs they serve.

Human rights NGO's, including those concerned specifically with aboriginal rights, attempt to inform and influence public opinion by increasing the public's awareness and understanding of issues, and by exerting pressure on national governments and IGOs. By appealing to internalized norms (that is, by shaming) or by damaging a government's reputation in the eyes of relevant others (such as the
internal populace, politico-military allies, or the world public) "they generate a protest intended to change the repressive behavior of target authorities."\(^{21}\) NGOs play non-partisan political roles in the human rights regime, and moral indignation is the motivating force behind their articulation of "the organized outrage of common humanity" and their activities to safeguard human rights and freedoms.\(^{22}\)

Many NGOs in the human rights field have been accorded some kind of consultative status with various universal and regional bodies. The U.N. Economic and Social Council is one such agency which has extensive formal consultative arrangements with pressure groups. ECOSOC status means having "general and special consultative status and the right to submit written statements on subjects of an organization's expertise."\(^{23}\) The classes of ECOSOC status for NGOs are: I, for NGOs concerned with most activities of the Council; II, for those with special competence in a few areas; R (Roster), for ad hoc consultations of certain groups.\(^{24}\)

The acknowledged purposes of NGO-ECOSOC consultation are "to enable the Council ... to secure expert information and advice" and "to enable organizations which represent important elements of public opinion to express their views."\(^{25}\) Unarticulated functions which benefit the U.N. are the dissemination of information about the U.N. in order to mobilize and formulate public opinion in its support, and the implementation of U.N. programs through NGO capabilities.\(^{26}\)
Consultative arrangements also give NGOs access to special reports, notices of events, summaries and records of debates and decisions, and other information necessary for lobbying activities and formation of programs and strategies. This access is especially significant to scantily funded bodies concerned with human rights.

Human rights groups see the pressure group function at the U.N. as extremely important. Promoting, initiating, and criticizing ideas, programs, and practices, are methods used to influence government thinking and activities. Further, interest groups at the U.N. may serve as representatives of 'the peoples of the United Nations' which are not adequately represented by member-state governments.

Often human rights organizations at the U.N. are accused of making slanderous and politically motivated attacks on member-states and with interfering in the domestic affairs of states. This enmity is a continuing and fundamental problem inherent in U.N. - NGO relationships. Since violations of human rights are most likely to involve governments as violators, human rights organizations inevitably become critics and antagonists of governments. Confronted by such criticism, governments make accusations that political considerations motivate their accusers, and that they interfere with domestic sovereignty. They insist that such NGO behavior is contrary to an ECOSOC resolution which forbids 'unsubstantiated or politically motivated acts' against member
states, and which threatens to suspend or withdraw the consultative status of an organization which engages in such activity.\textsuperscript{28}

It is indeed "quite possible and even probable for private transnational organizations to develop, in effect, their own foreign policies," yet in the case of human rights groups, such policies are generally non-partisan and legitimately directed.\textsuperscript{29} It is the purpose of human rights groups to call attention to violations of rights, and it is necessary that they, as independent entities, be able to criticize actions of the U.N. and its members and to bring different points of view to the fields with which they are concerned. Without this ability, they would be no more than organs of the U.N. There is a case for retention and strengthening of the role of interest groups at the U.N. as independent moral and political critics, for if reporting of all violations of human rights were left to governments or to NGOs wholly concerned with serving the U.N., countless violations would proceed unheard of and unrelieved.

Support from private international institutions for indigenous peoples' rights dates back as far as 1853, when the Anti-Slavery Society of Britain established the Aboriginal Protection Society to pressure English politicians to deal with native questions. The lobbying engaged in by this organization led to a British House of Commons Report on the problems of indigenous peoples and caused the British Colonial
Secretary to send word to officials in the Colony of Vancouver Island in 1858 that "the feeling of this country would be strongly opposed to the adoption of any oppressive measures towards the Native Indians." The Society was also active on issues relating to native peoples of Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific Islands, Africa, and South America.

In more recent years, there has been a surge in the number of groups that have emerged to deal with specifically indigenous problems. Organizations such as the London-based Primitive Peoples Fund or Survival International and the International Working Group For Indigenous Affairs of Denmark operate with very modest resources, but have received support from and stimulated interest among other organizations, such as the Minority Rights Group, Amnesty International, and Pax Christi International. Still, mainstream human rights NGOs such as these are frequently obstructed in their pursuits of aboriginal rights by the same hindrances that have prevented IGOs such as the U.N. from adequately protecting aboriginal rights. Chief amongst these is the reluctance or inability to see aboriginal issues except within the accepted framework of state supremacy.

One incident which illustrates this limited type of perception was a cooperative effort of human rights NGOs of both East and West on behalf of political prisoners in Chile that yielded a report to the Commission of Human Rights which, despite being based on 'thorough' investigations of conditions
in Chile, failed to touch an area crucial to the issue. Either the human rights organizations involved did not come across any information concerning the treatment of the Mapuché Indians by the Chilean military junta, whose activities were the object of the inquiry, or they chose not to bring it up. There was apparently reluctance to interfere with what was perceived as a domestic matter. It was left up to two representative indigenous peoples groups not ranking as NGOs at the U.N. to reveal in a special conference report the extent of the genocide being committed against the Mapuché.\textsuperscript{32}

Because indigenous peoples have encountered barriers to the implementation of their rights which stem from their unique position, it is important that there are bodies which represent them that have an intimate understanding of the nature of aboriginal demands and of the obstructions to be overcome in order that they be met. It falls particularly to those NGOs whose members directly represent indigenous peoples to further their cause. There exist several such groups, most with limited special interests or regional orientation. The World Council of Indigenous Peoples is foremost amongst aboriginal interest groups for it has the most universal scope and support.
Notes

1. Quoted in Asch, p.27.


4. Sanders, p.4.

5. Ismaelillo and Robin Wright, p.163.

6. Ibid.


11. Sanders, p.4.


14. Wiseberg and Scoble, p.249. At a 1977 International Treaty Conference, delegates from fifteen countries in the Americans testified about genocide and ethnocide used to annihilate peoples in order to take control of their land and resources.


19. Chiang, p.204.


25. Chiang, p.94.

26. Ibid., pp.94-95.

27. Feld, p.196.


32. Chiang, pp.276-278. The International Treaty Council and the National Mapuché Federation were the groups involved.
CHAPTER THREE
THE FORMATION AND OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF
THE WORLD COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Background: International Indigenous Political Organization

There is a long tradition of lobbying by native peoples in support of their claims. New Zealand Maori delegates travelled to Britain to present their grievances to the Monarch in 1882, 1884, 1914, and 1924. British Columbian Indians made similar journeys in 1906 and 1909. In all cases, whether audiences were granted or not, the delegations were advised to return home to deal with local or national governments. Similar results, or lack thereof, came of Maori and Iroquois Confederacy appeals to the League of Nations. Indigenous peoples did not accept the popular view that they were simply domestic issues and international appeals from aboriginal groups continued in the form of petitions to the United Nations, although that body had no mandate to deal with private submissions.

With the striking cultural and political revival among indigenes in many parts of the world, separate aboriginal peoples began to organize even more effectively, carrying their demands to the U.N. by means of various non-governmental agencies and compelling national governments to see indigenous questions as distinctive human rights issues requiring a special response. More recently, as noted in the previous discussion of cultural boundary maintenance, there has been a
marked attempt by native leaders to develop a concept of an international native community, to "enhance a sense of commonality and group consciousness" which includes "recognition of a shared history of oppression, cultural attitudes, common interests, and hopes for the future."³ It was recognized that formal organizations that are perceived to represent a clear-cut constituency, reflect a collectively determined policy, make cogent and coherent arguments, and operate with bureaucratic structure allowing orderly interaction with governments on a legitimate basis, are essential for effectively influencing governments to act in native interests. The consequence of having finally arrived at these perceptions and realizations was the beginning of collective organization on a truly international level resulting in the establishment of international indigenous pressure groups. The National Indian Brotherhood of Canada in 1974 was the first indigenous peoples' group in the Western Hemisphere to gain consultative status with ECOSOC. Others followed, including the U.S. based International Indian Treaty Council and Indian Law Resources Center, the Elders Circle of the Four Directions, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Consejo Indio de Sud America, and most notably, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, which has the most encompassing purpose and mandate.⁴
The WCIP: Operational History

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples was brought into being primarily due to the efforts of George Manuel, a Shuswap Indian from the interior of British Columbia. Manuel was actively involved in Canadian native organizations, serving as the president of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) from 1970 to 1976. He travelled extensively in this capacity and thus came into contact with indigenous leaders in Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, the South Pacific, and South America, as well as with international bodies concerned with the problems of native peoples, such as the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, the International Labour Organization, and the World Council of Churches. His experiences led him to perceive the need for a truly international lobby group to represent the concerns of indigenous peoples.

At the 1972 General Assembly of the NIB, the idea of an international-level organization was discussed and Manuel was given a mandate to organize an International Conference of Indigenous Peoples at which representatives of various First Nations could debate the need for a representative world body. It was at this time that the NIB decided to apply for Non-Governmental Organization status with the United Nations Economic Council; this status was granted in 1974 on the basis that the NIB represented indigenous peoples and with the
understanding that it would transfer its status to a transnational body as soon as an appropriate one was formed.

Preparatory meetings were held in Georgetown, Guyana, and Copenhagen, Denmark, to lay the groundwork for the conference. These meetings were attended by representatives from the National Congress of American Indians (U.S.A.), the Greenlanders Association, the Nordic Sami Council (Scandinavia), the Maori Council of New Zealand, Minka (Coordination Centre for Promotion of Indigenous Peoples) of Bolivia, the Unidad Indígena (Indigenous Unity) of Colombia, and the Aborigines of Australia, as well as by NIB organizers. Delegates all agreed on the need for an international and united indigenous effort, and contacts were made with indigenous peoples in twenty-four countries. Although attempts were made to reach indigenous groups in the U.S.S.R., China, and elsewhere in Asia, such contacts were not established.

The conference itself was held over a five-day period in October of 1975 in Port Alberni, British Columbia. It was the first time that indigenous peoples from so many countries and continents had assembled to exchange ideas and seek solutions to common problems. Represented were indigenous groups from twenty states: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Finland, Greenland (Denmark), Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Sweden, the United States, and Venezuela.
While differing ideological orientations caused some tension, particularly between Central and South America and 'western' based representatives, the delegates were able to work out their differences and agree unanimously on the need for an international body to represent aboriginal interests, and so created the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.  

The objectives of the WCIP are centered around the concept of self-determination for indigenous nations. The WCIP Charter cites U.N. provisions for self-determination for peoples and declares that the WCIP's purpose is to support this principle with regard to indigenous peoples. According to a WCIP Draft International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the right to self-determination can be realized "by the free determination of an Indigenous People to associate their territory and institutions with one or more states in a manner involving free association, regional autonomy, home rule, or associate statehood as self-governing units." In pursuit of this ultimate end, the World Council seeks recognition of a number of aboriginal rights, including aboriginal title as a binding principle of international law, the right of each indigenous people to control its own land and natural resource base, the right of indigenous peoples to educate their own children according to their own cultural models, and the right of each aboriginal nation to govern its own community on political and administrative levels.
While working towards self-determination for all indigenous peoples, the WCIP pursues a number of more immediate aims, these being to ensure unity among indigenous peoples, to facilitate meaningful exchange of information, to strengthen political and cultural organizations of indigenous peoples, to contribute towards abolishing the use of physical and cultural genocide and ethnocide, to participate in combating racism, to ensure political, economic, and social justice for indigenous peoples, and to promote and support the principle of equality among indigenous peoples and the peoples of nations who surround them.9

The 'indigenous peoples' who plan, conduct, and control the activities of the WCIP and who make up the constituent base of the organization are defined in the 1975 Charter to be those peoples who lived in a territory before the entry of a colonizing population, who continue to live as a people in the territory, and who do not control the national government of the state within which they live.10 As of 1983, the WCIP claimed to represent approximately sixty-three million people in twenty-six countries.11

The WCIP defines a member as a national organization or association of national organizations representative of indigenous peoples of any given country; that is, the WCIP recognizes representatives of indigenous peoples by 'country'. It should be noted that in the eyes of indigenous people, a 'representative' does not necessarily have to be
democratically elected; any member of an indigenous community who takes it upon himself to express the views and needs of that community is generally considered by its members to be genuinely representative, as is any organization stemming from the community which concerns itself with the needs of community members. There were already representative organizations existing within a number of countries before the WCIP was established. Some organizations emerged subsequently, in response to the WCIP's formation. Often there was more than one organization in a particular country and because of this circumstance the Charter established that three delegates from each country would be permitted to attend General Assemblies. These delegates are to be selected from the various representative bodies of each country's indigenous peoples by the WCIP Executive Council. The Sami of Scandinavia, however, who "prefer to be represented as a people and not on the basis of the three states within which they live," in fact send to General Assemblies only three of the nine representatives to which the Charter entitles them.12 The decision to allow the Sami to be represented as a people does not affect the representation of any other indigenous people, as the Sami are the only indigenous population within the WCIP whose territory extends over more than one country (Norway, Finland, and Denmark) where there are no other indigenous peoples.13
The primary policy-making organ of the World Council is the General Assembly, which meets every two years or at agreed upon intervals. The General Assembly makes recommendations to its members, to regional groups, and to other international agencies, directs the preparation of reports and studies, determines affiliations with other international bodies, decides on rules of procedures, budgets and memberships, elects and directs the Executive Council and the President, and directs the Secretariat. Decisions concerning overall direction and general policy are made by the Assembly. On matters of concern to all members, the General Assembly provides a forum for discussion, debate, and standardization of positions and actions. Although each of the WCIP's member countries may have three delegates present at a General Assembly, each country is allowed only one vote. The World Council has held four General Assemblies to date -- the 1975 founding meeting in Port Alberni, Canada, the 1977 meeting in Kiruna, Sweden, the 1981 meeting in Canberra, Australia, and the 1984 meeting in Panama.

The implementation of decisions made in the General Assembly rests with the WCIP Executive Council. The Executive Council consists of the President and five regional representatives -- one from each of five regions: Nordic, South Pacific, South America, Central America, and North America. Regional representatives are elected by the General Assembly from the national delegates present. Council
decisions are made by majority vote and four of six Council members constitute a quorum. Originally it was intended that the Executive Council would direct the Secretariat in administrative and program matters, but as the Secretariat came to function continually, it in practice took control of operations. At the most recent General Assembly it was officially confirmed that the Secretariat is to direct the Executive Council. This unusual development will be further discussed in a later chapter. In March of 1977 the Executive Council was incorporated in Canada as a non-profit organization in order to obtain formal legal and tax status with the U.N. and funding agencies.

Four regions out of five have thus far developed organizational structures and communications systems that function as regional mechanisms of WCIP. The Consejo Regional de Pueblos Indígenas de Centro América, México, y Panamá (CORPI) -- or the Regional Council of Indigenous Peoples of Central America, including Mexico and Panama -- was formed in 1977. The Consejo Indio De Sud America (CISA) -- or the South American Indian Council -- was formed in 1980. The Nordic Region (Samiland), consisting of northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland, has its secretariat in place. The South Pacific Region established its secretariat in Canberra, Australia, in June of 1984. Efforts are being made to establish a North American regional forum. The regional organizations are expected to spearhead action on matters of exclusive concern
to their membership and area, directing the support required from other regions.

In 1977 the WCIP, which had been operating out of National Indian Brotherhood of Canada offices, established a secretariat at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. The Department of Native American Studies at that university provided facilities, equipment, furniture, services, and at times, temporary financial support. The Department also permitted one of its staff members -- Marie Smallface Marule, who had been instrumental in founding the WCIP -- to render part-time service to the organization as Chief Administrator of the Secretariat.17 WCIP headquarters remained in Lethbridge until April 1984, when it was moved to Ottawa, Ontario, in order to be more centrally located and in closer proximity to United Nations headquarters.

The Secretariat has generally operated with three full-time employees. It functions in two languages -- English and Spanish. It maintains financial and other records and coordinates General Assemblies, Executive Council meetings, and a variety of conferences, workshops, and seminars. The Secretariat conducts extensive correspondence with member organizations, transnational and national NGO's, governments, U.N. agencies, individuals, and with other indigenous and non-indigenous bodies. It prepares and submits innumerable proposals and financial requests to various funding agencies. Until 1984, the Secretariat prepared and circulated a
quarterly newsletter which kept members and other interested parties up to date on WCIP activities and concerns and related indigenous issues. The newsletter was discontinued at the time of the Secretariat's move to Ottawa due to funding shortages.

The WCIP Secretariat has, through its organizational, fund-raising, and public relations activities, facilitated the development of indigenous organizations at all levels, particularly the regional. It has assisted indigenous individuals and groups at times of crisis by supplying information, engaging in emergency fund raising, and reporting situations to governments and transnational and international agencies. Most importantly, it has been active in producing substantive proposals and in formulating strategies and tactics. The size, expense, and bureaucratization of the central Secretariat have been minimized by the existence of five regional bodies with their own secretariats. This decentralized structure has substantially enhanced interaction and communication between member and regional organizations and the central Secretariat, as it allows even the most isolated and resource-poor indigenous groups access through the regional secretariats to the central Secretariat and vice versa.

The WCIP has suffered from insufficient funding since its inception. As George Manuel has pointed out, the World Council represents "low income and in the majority of cases,
no income, constituents" who are simply not able to contribute financially. The organization is therefore dependent upon external funding, and while various private bodies as well as government agencies have contributed to offsetting travelling, conference, and secretariat expenses, the WCIP is often hard pressed to find the money for its day to day operations. It has had better success in raising money for specific projects such as Executive Council meetings, cultural exchange projects, and General Assemblies than for equally essential ongoing organizational support. Consequently, the scope of its activities has been somewhat restricted.

Non-governmental bodies such as the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, the World Council of Churches, and the International Labour Organization, as well as various national governments, including those of Guyana, Sweden, Norway, and Canada, provided the funding which permitted the WCIP to hold its first organizational meetings. In the early years of its operation, the World Council encountered difficulty in finding a government willing to take the first step to provide ongoing support, and thus funding was obtained in a piecemeal fashion. In 1977, the WCIP was in deficit and in danger of bankruptcy. Secretariat Chief Administrator, Marie Smallface Marule, undertook a trip to Scandinavia in search of financial assistance. It was the Norwegian government's commitment to provide a one year grant and further assistance contingent upon the Canadian government's
financial involvement that allowed the WCIP to continue operations. In 1979, the Canadian government began to provide ongoing support through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Once the precedent had been set, matching contributions from Norway through the Foreign Affairs Emergency Fund were forthcoming. Since that time, the WCIP has been able to rely on relatively continuous (if insufficient) funding from these sources.

The submission of detailed proposals for financing to governmental agencies such as CIDA and the Norwegian government has been the WCIP's principal method of fund-raising. In the latest submission to CIDA for funding, it is noted that up to half of the WCIP's staff time is spent preparing submissions and financial reports for funding agencies, and that effective use of development assistance is not possible until an expertise is developed for the basic data and reporting requirements of most funding agencies.²⁰

While the WCIP's major source of funding is government grants, there are also a multitude of private foundations and religious bodies that make significant contributions and a few private individuals who have made small donations.²¹ In an application to ECOSOC for consultative status, the WCIP stressed that "the diversity of donors ensures that the Council will be able to remain politically independent."²² Now that the WCIP is assured of at least minimal continued support for its work, its future is not immediately
threatened. However, financial resources are still very limited, and certain important projects can not yet by accommodated.\textsuperscript{23}

The WCIP's primary targets, the objects it seeks to influence, are the government elites of states within which indigenous peoples dwell and the organization's constituent base -- the aboriginal peoples of the world. Secondary targets are international governmental agencies, the U.N. in particular, that may be able to influence the behavior and policies of governments towards their indigenous citizens, transnational and national non-governmental agencies that might support and further the WCIP's objectives, and the world public, whose opinion and influence may induce governments to recognize indigenous peoples' rights.

Formal recognition of the WCIP as a legitimate spokesman for aboriginal peoples came relatively early from at least one of its targets -- the United Nations. The World Council inherited the NGO consultative status in the U.N. Economic and Social Council that was previously held by the National Indian Brotherhood. The formal application for the change was made in 1978 and came in 1979, after the organization had been incorporated, as required by the U.N., following its first Executive Council meeting. Originally having Roster status, the WCIP was upgraded to Category II Consultative status in 1980.\textsuperscript{24}
ECOSOC status has allowed the WCIP to address numerous recommendations and resolutions to the U.N. Secretariat. Specifically, the WCIP has registered protests against the Brazilian government's "policy of genocide and ethnocide" being carried out against its indigenous citizens.25 It has circulated papers on "International Law and Indigenous Peoples," "A Strategy for the Socio-Economic Development of Indian People," and "The Impact of the Nuclear Arms Buildup on the Resource and Land of Indigenous Peoples," to name a sample.26 It has also prepared and presented a statement on the United Nations Third Development Decade and the Emerging International Economic Order.27

ECOSOC status has opened the door to the WCIP's participation in numerous undertakings in cooperation with governmental, private, international, and national agencies with related interests. Foremost among these is the U.N. itself. The WCIP actively supports the various human rights covenants and declarations approved by the U.N. It has participated extensively through its affiliates in various U.N. sub-commissions, working groups, and special conferences. One of these U.N. bodies is the ECOSOC's Working Group on the Rights of Indigenous Populations.

At the U.N.-affiliated International NGO Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the Land, of September 1981, the WCIP participated extensively, presenting papers prepared by the Secretariat, such as "Indigenous Philosophy and the Land" and
"Land Rights of the Indigenous Peoples: International Agreements and Treaties, Land Reform and Systems of Tenure." The World Council has a close relationship with many NGO's, regional and transnational, with numerous indigenous aid organizations, and with religious groups concerned with issues affecting native peoples. Some of these bodies are the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, a research and documentation center based in Copenhagen, Amnesty International, a group concerned with the treatment of political prisoners, the Promotion of Popular Development Indigenous Aid Agency of Mexico, and the National Centre for Assistance to Indigenous Missions (CENAMI), a Catholic Church support group. Groups such as these maintain direct and regular contact with a surprising array of indigenous movements at transnational, national, regional, and local levels, and often provide the WCIP with information and reports on numerous aboriginal-associated topics, as well as with valuable support for the promotion of WCIP principles and programs. The World Council's association with indigenous support groups has not gone unnoticed in international circles; in fact, the WCIP has in the past been nominated jointly with the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs for the Nobel Peace Prize.

One example of the support received from other organizations is the recent statement by the World Council of Churches (WCC), an internationally respected and highly
visible group, approving of WCIP statements on land rights of indigenous populations. The WCC noted that "the denial of political power has allowed treaties to be abrogated (Canada, USA, New Zealand); land to be expropriated (Mexico, Puerto Rico, Guatemala); people to be forcibly relocated (Brazil, Paraguay, Philippines); and policies of assimilation to be implemented (Chile, Australia, Colombia)." It declares its solidarity with indigenous peoples in promoting their land rights, and makes an appeal to member churches to support the struggle for land rights with significant financial and human resources.

Cooperation with indigenous support groups has also taken the form of co-sponsoring and participating in a variety of conferences and workshops. The Congress of Americanists, 1979, the First National Congress of Indian of Equador, and the Northwestern Regional Conference on the Emerging New International Economic Order are a few of the cooperative ventures in which the WCIP has been involved. Such conferences are instrumental to the WCIP in spreading its philosophy and influence.

The WCIP is actively seeking to consolidate, maintain, and expand its present support base. One of its specified objectives is to increase membership especially in Asian and South Pacific areas. Expansion is sought through cultural exchanges, diplomatic and investigatory tours, sponsoring trips for indigenous leaders to other areas of the world, and
sponsoring of and participation in various congresses and conferences intended to expand channels of communication and broaden the scope of contact with indigenous peoples.  

Much work has also been done to strengthen member organizations and the links between them by assisting with finding sources of funding, supporting various projects, and assisting in developing organizational and technical skills and supervisory capability. The WCIP is aware of the vital importance of consolidating and broadening its base so that it may speak from a position of strength to the international community.

The WCIP is engaged in a wide range of activities of the type that might cause it to be categorized as a 'tutelary' body; that is, its activities are directed in large part towards seeking out, documenting, and dispensing information about indigenous rights issues and violations with the intention of using findings to bring guilty parties to the attention of the world public, in the hope that their behavior will be changed. Information and documentation is also brought together by the main Secretariat and made accessible to any indigenous group requiring it. Research is, indeed, the basis of all other activities.

Collecting information on matters concerning indigenous peoples is accomplished in a variety of ways. Research studies on genocide, ethnocide, international law, land rights, and on particular political situations are conducted
by Secretariat staff, by specially appointed commissions of inquiry, and by regional and national affiliates. Monitoring and evaluating instances of involvement by outside agencies and governments in indigenous affairs at national and international levels are also undertaken. Status-quo minded agencies, such as the World Bank, frequently fund or implement projects on health, education, community development, or on economic development in native communities and the WCIP analyzes such agencies' policies and their implications for indigenous peoples. In collecting material relevant to indigenous issues, the WCIP also relies on exchanges of experience and information with organizations with similar concerns and participates in conferences and workshops on related matters. Investigatory tours undertaken by WCIP representatives have resulted in the collection of data on specific crises faced by indigenes in Norway, Chile, and Nicaragua, among other places. The research papers, reports, and studies yielded by all these information-gathering techniques are filed for access by and distribution to indigenous groups, governments and intergovernmental agencies, and national governments, as required. A sample of titles available to interested parties includes: "The Mapuche of Chile and the Threat of Law," 1980; "Native Policy in Australia and New Zealand, Termination and the Menominees," 1982; "Indigenous Peoples and International Law," 1977; "Global Energy Transitions and the Indigenous Alternative,"

In attempting to inform and educate world public opinion -- that amorphous force which is perceived to influence the actions of national governments -- the WCIP has sought publicity for its concerns and causes through the mass media, publications, and petitions. By bringing to the attention of the world community the concept of indigenous rights and the difficulties faced by native peoples everywhere in having them recognized and respected, the WCIP hopes to create a general international consensus which will force governments to alter their policies in favor of indigenous peoples. World public opinion may be the greatest weapon available to the WCIP.

The major publicity tool that has been used by the WCIP was its quarterly newsletter. It was published in English and Spanish from December 1982 to February 1984 and contained a wealth of information, including reports on activities and articles and editorials on indigenous issues. Material for the newsletter was submitted by sources throughout the Secretariat's network of contacts. Topics covered ranged from "Guatemalan President Orders Massacre" to "Australia's First Aboriginal Dentist" to a very comprehensive chronology of upcoming international events and conferences which might have been of interest to members. As a means of liaison, communication, promotion, and public relations, the newsletter
was invaluable. It reached regional secretariats, national and tribal indigenous organizations, individual subscribers, indigenous media, U.N. agencies, other NGO support groups, and funding sources. Its discontinuation, due apparently to funding shortages, created a gap in the WCIP's publicity capabilities.

Conferences, workshops, and limited projects have been undertaken by the WCIP and its regional affiliates on numerous occasions for a variety of purposes. Conferences, often co-sponsored by groups with compatible aims, have focused on issues such as racism and racial discrimination, economic difficulties encountered by indigenous peoples, energy and technology selection as it concerns indigenous peoples, and international indigenous legal rights. The WCIP weeks to enhance policy formation, exchange of information, and education of the public with such programs. Projects to benefit particular indigenous communities have included the Central American region's Community Kitchen Workshop, the Cooperative Shop Project and Educational and Commercial Exchange Projects for Native Peoples of Mexico, and the South American secretariat's Leadership Training and Languages Workshop. Such projects assist in answering "the need to unify and strengthen concrete actions in political, ideological, technological, scientific and cultural fields for the revival process of the Indigenous movements."
Direct lobbying of national governments in response to specific situations has been used by the WCIP to protest such malfeasances as torture and persecution of indigenous political activists in Colombia, the passing of a law by the Chilean government which effectively terminated Mapuché land rights, and a government of Canada policy regarding land claims of the Blood tribe, to name a few. A less confrontational approach to relations with governments—negotiation—has also been employed by the WCIP with considerable success in situations which were perceived not to demand dramatic and drastic confrontation. Since 1982, representatives of the World Council have been meeting regularly with government officials in Nicaragua in attempt to establish equitable treatment of the Miskitu Indians of that country, who have been forcibly displaced from their territory by the Sandanista government. As a result of WCIP efforts, the government has made some "major unilateral concessions" with respect to aboriginal rights, although it does not admit that the WCIP was the catalyst for these changes. Specifically, the government has recognized that the aboriginal peoples have a right to remain in their traditional areas and has expressed its intent to allow them to re-establish their villages as well as to "respect other special rights," particularly the right to a measure of political and socio-cultural autonomy. The World Council has also conducted negotiations with the government of Guatemala, where
the native Mayan people are subject to severe exploitation, repression, and persecution by government forces. WCIP representatives were invited by the Guatemalan Minister of Foreign Affairs to observe elections in that country in November of 1985.48

The WCIP's first ten years of experience as an international lobbying group led it to make some structural and procedural changes at its Fourth General Assembly. The direction of the Executive by the Secretariat in tactical and day-to-day activities was confirmed at that Assembly, in recognition of what had become practice. It was decided that a direct approach to government officials regarding rights violations was to take priority over indirect methods of pressure, as negotiation seemed to yield more results. Finally, it was determined that a study would be made of the possibility of restructuring the WCIP so as to open up membership to a greater constituency, which would mean accepting membership from indigenous peoples outside of the established regions.49 These adjustments were practical responses to the demands placed upon the WCIP in its role as the defender of the interests of indigenous peoples.
Notes


2. Sanders, "The Re-Emergence of Indigenous Questions in International Law," p.3.


5. See Appendix for WCIP Chronology of Events.

6. Details concerning the formation of the WCIP may be found in Sanders, "Formation"; Ha Shilth Sa, December 4, 1975, pp.8, 10; World Council of Indigenous Peoples, "History of the WCIP Secretariat," (WCIP Secretariat, unpublished document).


9. WCIP "Charter," Section I.


11. "UNESCO Application," p.3. An August 15, 1985 telephone interview with Rodrigo Contreras, present WCIP Secretariat Coordinator, revealed that thirty-one countries were represented at the Fourth General Assembly by delegates from twenty-six countries.


13. Ibid.

14. Contreras interview. Two Vice-Presidents were also listed as having attended the Fourth General Assembly,
although there does not seem to be any provision for them in the Charter. The Regional structure may have been altered somewhat. According to a brief account of the Fourth General Assembly in Centro de Informacion y Documentacion Indo Americano (CINDIO), "Special Report on Guatemala," no.2 (Feb., 1985), pp.24, 25, there are now five Regional Councils affiliated with the WCIP -- North, Central, and South American, Nordic Sami, and Pacific Regional, with the Inuit Circumpolar Conference about to establish a sixth one. This has not been confirmed by official WCIP documents or in interviews.

15. Contreras interview.


17. Details concerning Secretariat may be found in WCIP, "History of WCIP Secretariat," (unpublished document), and in Sanders, "Formation."


23. Contreras interview.


27. Ibid., p.18.


29. Manuel.


34. "Four Year Report," pp.4-20,25,34,35.

35. Training was to be accomplished in part by inviting individuals from member organizations to share in Secretariat work on a rotational basis, according to the "Preliminary Report," pp.3-8.

36. Onuf and Peterson, p.337.

37. WCIP, Revised "Submission to CIDA," (June 1983), p.3.


41. The newsletter will be continued if funding can be found, according to Rodrigo Contreras, present Secretariat Coordinator.


43. "Submission to CIDA," pp.5-7,8.

44. Ibid., p.8.


46. Contreras interview.


48. Contreras interview.
CHAPTER FOUR
A STRATEGY OF ANALYSIS

The Determination of Success

Assessing the dynamics of success and failure of any pressure group is a complex undertaking, and there can be no certainty in the end as to which factor or combination of factors was ultimately responsible for causing a target to alter its behavior. Most changes in the international system are brought about by multiple causes; it is often difficult to isolate monocausal-effect relationships in particular cases. A target may be subject to simultaneous pressures from various domestic as well as external sources, and it is not reasonable to assume that the activities of a single organization are always the decisive element in eliciting change. Furthermore, the impact of NGO activity is often indirect, or manifested incrementally, or only apparent after a delay. Such subtle and difficult-to-detect influence is often the type employed by agencies that lack the financial resources to provide needed services or materials. Money is a powerful source of influence that is generally available only to governments, multi-national corporations, and inter-governmental organizations, and not to NGO's active in the field of human rights. The impact of non-economic means of pressure is difficult to assess; it is not always possible to know with certainty whether such influence is relevant in the formation of any particular policy.
Gamson points out that "success is an elusive idea," and Jean Meynaud insists that there is no scientific means of evaluating an international (or transnational) non-governmental association's work and influence. Indeed, for the most part the apparent safety of quantitative data must be left for the insecurity of softer forms of evidence, such as anecdotes, as one seeks to assess an NGO's success. Various case studies of interest groups use a multitude of different variables and standards to measure potential and actual effectiveness. Scoble and Wiseberg insist that effectiveness is usually not treated at all, on the assumption that a group must be effective to have survived long enough to study. They note that most case studies treat organizations "in a non-systematic manner which simplistically equates activity with impact." To avoid such a mistake, this analysis of the work of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples makes use of criteria or standards of measurement which have been used to determine the 'success' or 'effectiveness' of pressure groups in case studies by Chiang, Constas, Feld, Gamson, Hudson, Frideres, and Scoble and Wiseberg. This chapter will look at a number of elements adapted from such studies to be used to evaluate the success of the WCIP.

Social protest of the type undertaken by NGO's such as the WCIP -- that is, protest in reaction to some action by government authorities -- involves a challenging group, a set of targets that must alter decisions or policies to correct a
situation to which the challenging group objects, a constituency which the challenging group seeks to mobilize, either to activate an already committed constituency or to create a commitment to act collectively (or both), and a beneficiary which will be affected positively by the changes sought.\(^4\) The latter two groups may be identical. The challenging group may be international with regard to one or more of its membership, its tactics, or its selected targets.\(^5\)

Success may be looked upon, broadly speaking, in terms of outcomes which fall into three basic clusters. The first relates to the fate of the challenging group as an organization -- its internal development, strength, and competence, and the healthy growth of its membership. The second relates to the question of whether the challenging group is accepted by its targets as a valid spokesman for a legitimate set of interests. The third cluster relates to the distribution of new advantages to the group's beneficiaries; it focuses on whether the beneficiaries gain new advantages during the challenge and its aftermath. 'New advantages' may be simple material benefits or relatively intangible value changes, procedural changes, shifts in the scope of authority, or other changes not immediately perceivable.\(^6\)
Elements of Success

The elements upon which an organization's success is dependent are: purposes or goals; structure and internal dynamics; existence of a support base; legitimacy; internal factionalism; funding; self-appraisal; targets; and tactics. Together, these things make up an organization's 'international capacity,' a term devised by Jean Meynaud to describe the qualities of internationally or transnationally organized bodies that determine the degree of influence they are able to exercise. Skilful use of international capacity should result in goal attainment.

1. Purpose and Goals

A group's purpose is important to the degree of goal attainment that can be expected, primarily because the receptivity of a group by its intended targets depends in part on the nature of its objectives. The more radical the demands of a pressure group -- that is, the more it attacks "the legitimacy of present distribution of wealth and power" -- the less inclined its antagonists will be to yield ground. Whenever the status quo is threatened, progress may be extremely slow in coming, if it comes at all. NGOs engaged in activity in essentially non-economic fields -- social, cultural, or religious -- find it particularly difficult to achieve success when their demands are revolutionary, while groups concerned with industrial, commercial, financial, or technological areas tend to be taken more seriously and thus
have more influence, particularly if the changes they seek can be accommodated within the system. If the pressure exerted does not have an economic component, that is, if the protest group is not able to offer monetary incentives to influence its target's behavior, leverage is diminished.

2. Structure and Dynamics

Of primary import to a pressure group's proficiency are organizational structure and internal dynamics. The establishment of a framework to provide unified purpose, direction, and activity is essential to the successful pursuit of goals and for this reason an institutional group, as distinguished from an issue-oriented group, is more likely to meet with some degree of success. In making this distinction, Pross characterizes an institutional group as having organizational continuity and cohesion, an understanding of government sectors which affect it, stable membership, concrete and immediate operational objectives, and credibility.\(^{18}\) Gamson agrees that such qualities, found in what he terms a 'bureaucratic' group, are important to success, and adds that such a group is further characterized by its having a charter stating the purpose of the organization and provisions for operation, and organization divisions such as officers or executives, division heads, and rank and file members. In his work, Gamson has noted that "imitating the form of one's antagonist eases the development of some sort of working relationship," and that a bureaucratic
form keeps an organization ready to act in a coordinated manner.19

The basic structure of an organization determines its methods of work, its efficiency, and its potential effectiveness. Also important are the level of skill of an organization's executive officers, the prestige and personal contacts of its leaders, and the strength of its members. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of structure as it relates to efficiency is the existence of an activist secretariat with a substantial research capacity, allowing it to play a political role, formulating substantive proposals and galvanizing support for the organization. The degree of expertise of those doing the actual work -- the skill in application of tactics -- has much to do with success, as does the number and nature of functions and activities -- the scope of activity -- undertaken by the agency.

3. Consolidation of a Support Base

The mobilization and consolidation of a constituent base is a primary step for any human rights group that hopes to wield influence in the international system. Level of social development, political sophistication, and literacy rate of a target constituency contribute to its ability to understand an organization's message and organize in response to it. For this reason, a human rights group must generally spend a proportionately greater part of its resources educating and mobilizing potential constituents in Third World countries.
than in developed countries. The broader and stronger the support for an organization's programmes and policies, the more likely targets are to pay attention to its demands. Having a purposefully united, sizeable support base enables a group to issue challenges from a position of authority, and thus contributes to its potential for success.

4. Legitimacy

Interest group theorist D.B. Truman asserts that in order to be effective, a political interest group must be perceived as having both procedural and substantive legitimacy. Its targets in particular must perceive that the organization conforms to the 'rules of the game' in its activities, and that it is capable of representing values widely held among its members. Both actual methods and stated or imputed ends must be generally accepted by an organization's members, its constituency, and its targets, in order that legitimacy be bestowed upon its pressure policies. To determine a group's legitimacy, an observer may look at its internal structure and dynamics, at its degree of independence, at the number of national representatives, at the strength and distribution of membership, at the general perception of its moral authority, and at the degree of receptivity to its demands on the parts of its targets. Receptivity, as an indication of perceived legitimacy, can be measured by the amount of initiation of consultation with an interest group undertaken by its antagonists or other targets, by the existence of ongoing
negotiation or communication between an interest group and its targets, by the degree of formal recognition of the interest group as a representative of a certain constituency by its targets, and by inclusion of the challenging group's leaders or members in positions of status or authority in the targets' organizational structure.21

It might be added that legitimacy is not only necessary to a group's success but may also be looked at as a type of success in itself. A pressure group which is perceived as a legitimate representative of a constituency has achieved success simply by establishing itself as a force to be reckoned with.

5. Factionalism

A lack of consensus within a group may cause perceptions of decreasing legitimacy and authority. Indeed, the internal unity with which a challenging group meets the world has great impact on the total influence it can wield.22 Internal division is almost impossible for protest groups to escape, for even with the best intentions, disagreements over strategy and tactics, over priority of sub-goals, and over relative emphasis in pursuit of short or long range solutions are difficult to avoid. In addition, there may be national or other rivalries within a group over control of the organizational apparatus, often with power as an end in itself as the motivation, and this may substantially weaken a group.23 Disunity, discord, and distrust may be "helped along
by hostile outsiders" with an interest in damaging a group's credibility and effectiveness.\textsuperscript{24}

Gamson suggests that lack of internal cohesion may be overcome by the centralization of power so as to achieve unity of command, and that centralization of power is directly associated with success.\textsuperscript{25} A group has a centralized power structure if there is essentially a single center of power within the organization; decentralized groups have chapters or divisions that maintain substantial autonomy, separate identity and importance. Decentralized groups are more likely to develop harmful factional splits and therefore centralized groups may be better equipped for success.\textsuperscript{26} Once again, the importance of structure to success comes into play.

6. Funding

Financial resources -- the amount and source -- indicate the potential intensity of a challenging group. Funding may come from dues, from private and public grants, from publications revenue, or from direct or indirect donations from national governments. An interest group that must depend on governments for funding is in danger of becoming subject to government manipulation or control, or may find that its perceived legitimacy as an independent and international group is impaired. As to the amount of funding available, it is necessary that it be sufficient to allow an organization to effectively play its role. The size of the budget determines the amount of research that may be done, the ability to
maintain a viable headquarters, the capacity to undertake international philanthropic work, and so on. Feld suggests that the larger the annual budget and the greater the number of paid staff, secondary offices, membership meetings, and publications, the greater is the organizational effectiveness and the higher the potential for influence.27

7. Self-Appraisal

Self-appraisal and the ability to refocus direction and priorities when necessary are important to a group's effectiveness and may be the key to longevity. Scoble and Wiseberg observe that very few political pressure groups publish the bases and results of self-inquiry into past and continuing activities, and those that do attempt to appraise their own behavior generally use growth as the primary yardstick. As they point out, healthy growth statistics are "only negative proof of potential effectiveness, not of effectiveness itself."28 Challenging groups need to make serious, rigorous, and periodic efforts to review their goals, the adaptation of their institutional structure, and their tactics. Their purposes require rational introspection, flexibility, and a willingness to experiment with structure and methods. Internal crises, external events, and rising needs may all precipitate the need for changes and reallocation of resources in order for the group's continued existence and usefulness.
8. Targets

While targets and tactics are logically or analytically separable, it is difficult to consider one without the other, since "the target predetermines the tactics which can be employed," or alternatively, internal group characteristics predetermine the tactics which will be available and can be employed and these in turn "limit the potential targets of the group." The choice of targets is also dictated, to a large extent, by the objectives of a pressure group. As in other aspects of interest group analysis, the interrelationship between goals, structure, targets, and tactics is most complex.

Most activities of international or transnational political pressure groups in the human rights field are directed towards national governmental elites, for government policies have direct effect on the people that challenging groups seek to benefit. Other non-governmental and governmental groups, national, transnational, and international, are also prime targets, both because of their potential influence on national governments and because their activities may directly affect the lives of relevant populations. Other targets include the mass media, and through them, the world public; these are important to the extent that they influence those with power and authority to act as the group wishes in particular situations. Finally, a challenging group has a target constituency -- a support base
that is wishes to increase or mobilize -- which gives authority and legitimacy to the group's actions in the eyes of the world community.

Human rights NGO's have come to recognize that international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and regional development banks are relevant targets of their activities. In recent years, international lending agencies have at times insisted in their terms for financing particular projects that their clients implement programs to protect peasant or indigenous populations. The World Bank has issued a policy statement saying that it intends to minimize adverse impact on tribal peoples by development projects it funds. National development projects constitute one of the most serious threats to the survival and well-being of indigenous peoples throughout the world; the influence that such lending agencies exercise over national governments makes them a target of rights groups. It is for the same reason that MNEs have also become targets.

Internal characteristics of targets have much to do with the success of a challenging group's pressure policies. When the target is a national government, the level of the state's economic and social development, the government's perceived best interests; and the nature of the state's social and political system -- ideological orientation, degree of political freedom allowed citizens, government control over
means of communication, domestic legitimacy of dominant political groups, and power of opposition groups -- all affect how readily it will respond to demands.31

Generally, an NGO has more pronounced effect in industrially advanced countries with pluralistic orientations. Such countries have a greater number of transnational NGOs operating in them than do developing countries and are more tolerant of having demands placed upon them by external groups.32 Third World governments are often adamantly "anti-imperialist" and have an overriding concern with national autonomy, or more urgently, with their national unity, and are thus often suspicious of pressure groups which they perceive to be interfering with sovereignty or domestic authority. On the other hand, national political elites in any type of country have a certain capacity to lose touch with their own societies, to isolate themselves from their own masses, and thus find it difficult to believe that political discontent and dissidence are genuine and legitimate, and that externally-based interest groups are not conspiratorial enemies.

In the case of human rights groups, a target government's attitude towards citizens that an NGO seeks to benefit is also important to successful lobbying. Political action taken in the aid of a group of people that is the majority of a state's population may be perceived as especially threatening to the ruling elite and resisted accordingly, while in countries
where the intended beneficiaries are distinct minorities and politically non-threatening to the entrenched majority, it may be that a more accommodating attitude to pressure group demands is prevalent.

That NGOs do influence the behavior of their targets is unquestionable, although success may only mean preventing further disintegration of conditions. Organizations can 'raise the consciousness' of targets. They may cause governments to take into consideration things that might otherwise go unnoticed. By taking advantage of opportunities presented by NGOs and their initiatives or by seeking to deny, modify, or bypass their concerns, target authorities alter their actions. Also, by generating public pressure on a world-wide scale, NGO activity may cause national authorities to take a position on a previously ignored issue. By inducing such value-allocating activities, NGOs make a difference to their causes.

9. Tactics

There is a wide range of tactics -- methods of employing international capacity -- available to a transnational pressure group; the selection of tactics appropriate to a group's particular purposes is important to its success. The fact that NGOs possess limited powers influence the types of activities on which they embark and the procedures employed for the attainment of ends. Not being able to command obedience, the NGO must rely primarily upon securing
cooperation by providing information and by argument. There is heavy dependence upon research, reporting, and other similar public relations techniques. Enormous volumes of information are collected, collated, and distributed, with hope of producing effective suasion. NGOs attempt to wield moral influence to achieve their ends and are in a position to demand concessions which sovereignty-bound IGOs and national governments are unable to attempt for fear of compromising their own interests. They need and are able to pursue serious political purposes with flexibility and a willingness to experiment with various tactics.

Analyses of political interest groups often distinguish between tactics which are aimed at elites and tactics which seek to mobilize and polarize part or all of a mass. The significance of this distinction lies in whether the group seeks to change elite behavior in a specific situation, a short-term goal, or whether it seeks to change the sociopolitical environment -- the attitudes and opinions of a public or an electorate -- such that any political elite will have to act in the desired manner in a given situation, a long-term endeavor. Most permanent organizations develop both of these types of goals, and thus engage in both short and long-term tactics. Because of limited resources, an interest group is likely to designate primary and secondary tactics as they designate primary and secondary targets. According to Scoble and Wiseberg, it is also possible to distinguish
between prepolitical resource-generating tactics which are "instrumental preconditions to political actions" and manifestly political tactics. Fund-raising and constituent base mobilization and consolidation are obvious examples of resource-generating activities, and both are undoubtedly essential to the subsequent success of political tactics.

The tactics used by human rights NGO's to be discussed here are researching and reporting, publicity-seeking, utilizing U.N. consultative status and other governmental connections, using resolutions to focus the attention of those who might be able to affect a situation, coordinating activities with other agencies, conducting meetings, workshops and limited projects, and direct lobbying and negotiation, as these are the main tactics used by the WCIP.

a. Research: Exerting influence through research and reporting is a primary method used by challenging groups. By gathering data which intergovernmental agencies find difficult to acquire, or which governments will not report, and by relaying this to relevant authorities -- governmental or intergovernmental -- as well as to the media, it may be possible to influence the activities of national governments. There is more evidence of wisdom in the assertions and goals of NGOs when they can present carefully prepared research documents providing substantiating data to back their opinions, than when they make short, pithy pronouncements on issues, that often seem to ignore facts.
b. Publicity: The creation of publicity for their causes is another principal technique used by NGOs. Creating public support for particular campaigns or attempting to educate public opinion in the larger view is accomplished by use of available media; thus, professional public relations is very important for successful political action. News media, publications such as newsletters, petitions, reports on research findings, and communiques may all be used to further the purposes of a challenging group. Dissemination of information on an NGO's activities and purposes not only serves an educational purpose, but also helps to keep the constituent base and members informed. Ideally, action on the part of a pressure group should create publicity, publicity should create support, and support should result in action on the part of a target group. The cycle is self-perpetuating; a systematic feed-back loop is the aim.

c. United Nations Consultative Status and Other Governmental Connections: Another vehicle for achieving success in attained NGO objectives is provided by formal and informal contacts with IGOs and government agencies. Access to decision-making processes of IGOs is pursued by challenging groups to further their objectives and most significant human rights NGOs have thus acquired Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. For the private organization, ECOSOC status "means gaining some of the stamp of officiality which we associate with government." It also
gives access to a corpus of information and a range of contacts that would otherwise be most difficult for a group with limited resources to attain. Finally, ECOSOC status gives a pressure group access to a forum where its protests and resolutions can be aired and ensures an international audience for its statements. These functions are important to success and are so recognized by interest groups operating in the international arena.

While NGO statements, ideas, and recommendations may be considered seriously by U.N. bodies, it remains the case that ultimately the member-states of the U.N. must take the decisive actions in response to NGO initiatives. Therefore, in order to effectively influence the U.N. or other IGO policies, it is necessary for interest groups to exert pressure at the national as well as the international level. Having contacts with decision-makers and other elites in countries where they have offices or members is often at least as important as having U.N. consultative status. An NGO's officials must cultivate personal relationships with those holding authority in the countries in which they operate in order to be truly effective.

**d. Resolutions**: A highly visible and popular method by which private pressure groups attempt to exert influence is by addressing recommendations or resolutions to national governments or to the world at large. "This is a means whereby a group can express its concern about an issue to
those individuals who may be able, if not willing, to rectify the situation." Resolutions are often dramatic in content—formulated so as to attract maximum attention to a cause. Over-use of this method may cause intended targets to simply ignore overblown statements and demands. Judicious use of the resolution, however, may aid an organization's struggle.

e. Coordination of Activities: Coordinating activities with other NGOs, IGOs, national governmental agencies, and national support groups with similar aims brings a challenging group the strength that comes with unity and inevitably enhances chances for success. Interconnections between NGOs and overlapping memberships of individual members in various interest groups create an ever-expanding network on a worldwide basis, covering all contingencies. Mutual cooperation is especially useful between research-oriented groups and action-oriented groups, as interdependence of tasks allows one to provide information and the other to act upon it. For these reasons, pressure groups strive to strengthen linkages between themselves and potential allies.

f. Meetings: Another technique used by international pressure groups to influence targets is that of organizational meetings. Hudson distinguishes between three types of meetings: the "manifestation," which is primarily for prestige or publicity reasons, at which little work is actually accomplished; the "congress," attended by large numbers of delegates, which is productively inefficient except for a
degree of policy formation; and the "colloquium," or "symposium," where a "small group of leaders study a problem and reach a decision," which may be discussed and revised to some extent by delegates at a larger meeting. It is during the last type of meeting that agendas are set, plans of strategy are organized, and results are predetermined to some extent. All three types are important to the interest group -- the first for publicity, the second for legitimacy, and the third for furthering objectives.

g. Workshops and Projects; h. Lobbying and Negotiation: Workshops, conferences, limited-scope projects, and lobbying of and negotiation with national elites are among the most direct tactics used by pressure groups to influence targets. These techniques are generally used to serve short range objectives, to elicit immediate changes in specific crises or problem situations. By engaging in such high profile activities, human rights organizations attract the attention, and possibly the support, of the world public, as well as directly serving the needs of their constituents.

The elements which affect the success of a pressure group in terms of, first, its health as an organization, second, its acceptance by its targets as a valid spokesman for its constituency and, third, its enhancement of the fortunes of its intended beneficiaries, provide a framework for the analysis of an actual human rights NGO. This framework should be useful in analysing the success of any challenging group
operating in the international arena, as all such groups must
meet similar demands on their competency and overcome similar
constraints on their activities, in part because they must
deal with a set of targets that almost always includes
national governments. The World Council of Indigenous
Peoples, while having a unique purpose and mandate, is no
different than the majority of global human rights groups in
the way it operates and seeks to influence its targets, and
its success should therefore be measurable in terms of the
elements of success which have been delineated in this
chapter.
Notes


2. Scoble and Wiseberg, p.22.

3. See Chiang; Dimitris C. Constas, "The Capacity of International Organizations to Exercise Political Pressure," *Revue Hellenique de Droit International* 26-27 (1973-1974); Feld; Gamson; Hudson, Frideres, Scoble and Wiseberg; and Wiseberg and Scoble. The author has selected elements according to their apparent usefulness in the case studies in which they were developed. Some of the elements are used in more than one study.


7. Ibid., p.41; Constas, 354.


10. Scoble and Wiseberg, p.18; Constas, pp.352.355.


14. Constas, p.351; Scoble and Wiseberg, pp.18-20; Wiseberg and Scoble, p.254; Feld, p.204.

15. Chiang, p.61; Gamson, pp.41-108; Feld, pp.11,176,201; Scoble and Wiseberg, pp.17-19; Wiseberg and Scoble, p.253; Hudson, pp.405-409.

17. Gamson, p.41.

18. Pross, p.10. The distinction is also noted in Frideres, p.254.


21. Gamson, pp.28-?.


24. Ibid., p.103.

25. Ibid., p.93.

26. Ibid., pp.104-105.

27. Feld, p.187.


29. Ibid., p.20.


32. Feld, p.204.

33. Ibid., p.19.

34. See Hudson, pp.405-406; and Scoble and Wiseberg, p.17.


37. Ibid., pp.17-18.

38. Feld, p.197.

40. Ibid., pp.409-410.
41. Feld, p.201.
42. Wiseberg and Scoble, p.255.
43. Hudson, p.408.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE WCIP'S PERFORMANCE

The Elements of Success

The elements which determine an organization's success (or which together make up its international capacity) are its purpose and goals, structure and dynamics, support base, funding, legitimacy, degree of factionalism, attempts at self-appraisal, targets, and tactics (which may include research and reporting, publicity seeking, use of U.N. consultative status and governmental contacts, resolutions, coordination of activities with groups with compatible aims, meetings, workshops and projects, and direct lobbying and negotiation). While not all of these elements are controllable by the organization, it may maximize its chances for success by working towards optimum conditions, as discussed in the previous chapter, in each of the areas. This chapter will discuss the strengths and failings of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in relation to each of the elements of success. Such analysis will reveal the reasons for the potential and actual effectiveness of the organization.

1. Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the WCIP is to some extent of the status quo-disrupting, non-economic variety that entrenched elites resist most vigorously. The WCIP's professed ultimate aim is self-determination for the indigenous peoples of the world, a goal which the World Council sees as being possible within the
context of existing states. Such a goal may pose a threat to
target governments in that its attainment could require a
surrender of certain tracts of land, of control of certain
resources, and of a measure of authority over indigenous
peoples within a state's boundaries. This may be unacceptable
to many targets and particularly to Third World governments,
whose grip on their territories, economies, and citizens is
often uncertain. Unfortunately, the World Council may
inadvertently arouse extreme opposition to its goal of self-
determination, as that term may be (incorrectly) interpreted
as a demand for all target governments to yield to their
indigenous citizens the land and political power necessary for
their existence as independent, sovereign nations. Such a
demand is more radical than that which the World Council means
to make, and certainly challenges the legitimacy of the
present distribution of wealth and power in the international
system.

There is great potential for conceptual confusion and
outright resistance to the WCIP's cause generated by the
ambiguous use of the term 'self-determination'. The range of
possibilities implied by the term and the WCIP's propensity to
leave it only loosely defined suggest that for the WCIP, self-
determination remains essentially at the level of what Sally
M. Weaver calls a "value-notion" -- "an unarticulated, vaguely
conceptualized ideology or philosophy."\(^1\) The use of such an
imprecise term can not help the WCIP towards the achievement
of its goal and is undoubtedly an obstacle to its eventual realization on a universal basis.

The World Council recognizes the long-term nature of its primary aim and thus concentrates its resources on medium and short range goals, such as constituency-mobilization and improving conditions for specific indigenous peoples. By addressing secondary objectives, by dealing with concrete situations which require immediate solutions that do not necessitate drastic changes in the socio-political environment, the WCIP is able to achieve success more readily. In Nicaragua, for example, the WCIP has persuaded the national government to adopt a more accommodating attitude towards its indigenous peoples, whose rights had previously been flagrantly abused. In awakening and consolidating a constituent base the WCIP has also experienced success. In the few years of its operation the WCIP has managed to develop a "sense of political relatedness among native groups scattered across most of the world" and has acquired a degree of credibility with national governments and various other of its targets in doing so. The organization has drawn together indigenous peoples from different parts of the world to work together for specific shared goals which have been conceptually clarified and defined (to some extent) by the WCIP and its supporting associations. It has aided in raising group consciousness, in developing political awareness, confidence, and acumen, and in stimulating organization of
indigenous peoples that had not previously taken the first steps towards changing their depressed status. The WCIP has successfully initiated the formation of a reference group that legitimizes its struggle.

2. Structure and Dynamics

The WCIP's organizational structure and internal dynamics follow the formula for success in most aspects. As an institutional group, it has established a framework which promotes unified purpose, direction, and activity, and which enables it to deal with national governments, the United Nations, and other organizations on an ongoing basis. It is formed so as to provide decentralized operation, yet coordinated international action, and it remains a truly representative organization of grassroots organizations. Constituent participation is channelled through representative political organizations at various levels -- local, national, regional, and international. The organizers of the WCIP have recognized that constituency mobilization is essential to its development and strength and thus, regional organizational development has always been a high priority. Evidence of this can be seen, for instance, in the considerable extent to which the World Council has aided in procuring funding to enable its regional bodies to become established and to function.

Effective organization is dependent not only on structure, but on dynamic leadership as well. The WCIP has fared well in this respect. In its early years, leadership
was provided by its founder and first president, George Manuel, who had come from the strong political tradition of British Columbia Indians, having served as head of a major national indigenous organization for six years. He brought with him to the World Council personal prestige and numerous international contacts that proved to be significant to the development of the organization.

The first Chief Administrator of the Secretariat, Marie Smallface Marule, was also instrumental in paving the way for the organization's cause in the early years, having extensive background in indigenous politics and holding an academic position at the University of Lethbridge, which consequently provided technical and human resources that allowed the Secretariat vigorously to pursue WCIP objectives. Succeeding Secretariat staff have continued to play an activist role, resulting in the Secretariat's being placed in charge of the organization's activities. This somewhat unusual departure from the traditional pattern in which the Executive controls Secretariat activities was taken from the practical need for those who do the actual work of the WCIP to be able to make on-the-spot decisions.

The apparently expanded role of the Secretariat is, in practical terms, less incongruous with the World Council's representativeness than it would first appear, for it is often the case that a continually functioning secretariat comes to have a key role in determining day-to-day activities of an
organization. It has in the past been common for the Secretariat Coordinator of the WCIP to make tactical decisions without first consulting with the Executive Council, for there have usually not been the resources available to stage a meeting of the globally-scattered Executive Council members in time to deal effectively with crises situations. In such cases, the Coordinator has, out of necessity, acted without guidance. It would appear that this practice has now been endorsed by the General Assembly. It is possible that the flexibility and creativity in meeting challenges allowed by this approach could enhance the World Council's overall effectiveness. On the other hand, in terms of the World Council's legitimacy as perceived by outside observers, allowing the Secretariat to "direct" the Executive Council could adversely affect the World Council's progress. An appointed secretariat which is acknowledged to take precedence over an elected executive body would appear to indicate a reversal of the organization's representative nature, and the World Council's targets and constituent's alike may view this development with alarm and skepticism as to the organization's actual representativeness. Such negative perceptions may be tempered, however, by the fact that the Secretariat is an appointed body and its staff can be quickly removed by the Executive Council, which hired it in the first place, if the Council's overall policies and directives are ignored.
The World Council has two structural features in particular that have generated some controversy within the organization. The first is the make-up of the Executive Council. As noted, the various member countries of the WCIP are grouped into five regions, each of which has one representative on the Executive Council. Some indigenous peoples are not satisfied with being represented by a member of another group; they do not feel their interests are properly taken care of. This is true in the South Pacific region, for example, where the Maori and the Aborigines resist being represented by one another. In Northern Europe, the Inuit of Greenland insisted on being represented separately from the Sami of Scandinavia, and for this reason left the WCIP to join a regional Inuit organization -- the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (which has sense become affiliated with the WCIP). Certain American Indian peoples have also expressed wishes to be represented on the Executive Council as separate peoples.³

The other difficulty posed by the WCIP's structure is the restrictiveness of the regional arrangement. Indigenous populations in non-Scandinavian Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are virtually excluded from membership by the present structure. A group of Kurds, representative of populations in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria, and the Soviet Union attended the Second General Assembly in Sweden in 1977. Representatives of the Ainu of Japan and of tribes from
Thailand and India were present at the Third General Assembly in Australia in 1981. The addition of a region would be necessary to accommodate any of these groups.  

In light of these considerations, arguments have been put forth in favour of representation by peoples rather than by region or country. Proponents of this view point out that the basic right being claimed by indigenous peoples is the right to self-determination and by international law, as set forth in U.N. conventions, this is a right of peoples, not of national or regional bodies. Also, to use peoples as the category is to recognize indigenous custom, while to use country is to recognize colonial law. Finally, national indigenous political organizations do not always represent all the indigenous peoples within a country or region; to ensure that no group is totally excluded from the organization, it is argued that representation must be by peoples. These arguments are theoretically and politically strong, for they emphasize the goals of the indigenous struggle.

On the other hand, the current arrangement, organization by country, has in its favour certain compelling arguments. To begin with, organization by country is politically necessary, as national governments control the social and economic policies which affect the lives of indigenous peoples. To deal effectively with national governments, interest groups must emulate governmental structure and organize at the national level. Countries are the recognized
units of international law and it is necessary for the WCIP to work within the international arena. Also, the goal of indigenous peoples is self-determination -- which is conceived by the WCIP to be possible within the existing structure of states. This goal accepts the reality of states while seeking to promote a new relationship with them.

Organization reflecting state structure is also necessary for practical reasons. A drastic increase in numbers would be involved if representation on the basis of peoples were to be implemented. With possibly hundreds of indigenous peoples being represented separately at Executive Council meetings, chaos would be inevitable. Indigenous peoples with small populations or with few resources which are unable to attend WCIP gatherings might be totally excluded from participation. The present structure ensures the representation of such groups. Finally, where an indigenous people lives in more than one country, there is usually no trans-state indigenous organization representing the whole, and national bodies must be relied on. (The Sami, as noted, are an exception).

Taking the various arguments into consideration, the WCIP has chosen to retain, for the time being, the present manner of representation. Organization along national lines remains the rule, but exceptions are permitted in cases such as that of the Sami, where there is a history of separate political organization, or where large populations warrant representation by peoples. This flexible approach to
representation appears to be the most reasonable way of accommodating the greatest practical number of indigenous peoples within the organization.

3. Consolidation of a Support Base

As previously mentioned, the mobilization and consolidation of a broad indigenous constituency is one of the WCIP's main areas of emphasis. The World Council has directly caused the emergence of several identifiable indigenous political organizations -- one being the National Aboriginal Conference of Australia -- and has fostered a global awareness on the part of indigenous peoples that they share a common purpose.7 Constituency-building is perhaps the most important activity for the continuing viability of the World Council, as world-wide backing enhances the likelihood of its targets taking the organization seriously and regarding its statements and resolutions as authoritative and representative of a unified assemblage.

On the other hand, while the attention paid by the WCIP to its membership base and political 'representativeness' may enhance the prognosis for the organization's success, it may also have negative connotations for success. The broader the collection of aggrieved groups encompassed by the WCIP, the greater the number of countries that are threatened by the organization's anti-status quo objectives, and the stronger the challenge becomes. The WCIP may be perceived as a force for serious disruption of the structure of many countries. It
is unlikely to attract many allies or make much headway if it poses a threat to so many. Thus, a large and active constituency may be both an advantage and a hinderance to the WCIP's success.

4. Legitimacy

The WCIP appears to be perceived by both its targets and its constituency to have procedural and substantive legitimacy. It has certainly developed a structure and internal processes that conform to the 'rules of the game' and that contribute to its ability to function practically and efficiently while allowing it to represent the values and needs of its members. The World Council has recognized the ironic necessity of adopting a politically expedient, government-like structure in order to be potentially effective as an anti-consensus group, for to be recognized as legitimate, it must make some concessions to conventional forms.

The WCIP's legitimacy should also be enhanced by the obvious independence of its decisions and activities. Its purposes are not compromised by any government or organization, although it does accept funding from such sources. With regard to its legitimacy in terms of its national and transnational representativeness, the World Council accepts for membership any national or regional indigenous organization that wishes to join and places no limit on the number of members from a given country, thus
making it truly representative. The WCIP does not fully represent the interests of all indigenous peoples worldwide due to the limitations of the regional structure, lack of money, diversity of peoples, and sheer geographical distance, among other problems inherent in the task. The fact that the World Council has managed to overcome these overwhelming constraints to the extent that it has, however, says much about it intentions to be legitimately representative.

One way to determine the legitimacy of an organization is to look at the degree of receptivity on the part of its targets to its programmes and activities. Receptivity to the WCIP has increased steadily over its period of operation. In 1975, just after the WCIP's formation, it was viewed with suspicion in some quarters. For example, the First International Indian Treaty Council, a U.S. based organization of Indian people, initially refused to recognize the WCIP as representative of Indian people, alleging that it had evolved from Canada's National Indian Brotherhood, which was "financed by the Canadian government and the CIA through the Institute for Latin American Studies" and stating that it could not "claim to be an organization of Indians" or to represent Indians. This accusation has been abandoned as, over time, the WCIP's activities have proven it to be a genuine contributor to the indigenous cause, and the two groups now participate jointly on various U.N. working groups and committees.
Receptivity towards the WCIP is further indicated by the organization's formal U.N. ECOSOC status, by its regular consultation on indigenous issues with bodies such as the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, by its participation in negotiations with governmental elites such as Nicaraguan officials, by its invitation from the government of Guatemala to observe elections in that country, and by the willingness of certain governments to fund its activities. The recognition afforded the World Council as a legitimate spokesman for indigenous peoples augments its potential for influence and success.

5. Factionalism

Factionalism, in one form or another, has plagued the WCIP since its inception. Political tensions and conceptual misunderstandings between regions were apparent at even the first meetings (although these have proven to be less significant than divisions that developed later). Differing ideological orientations have in the past been manifest in a degree of disunity between representatives from, on one hand, Central and South America, and on the other, Northern Europe, North America, and the South Pacific. 10

The WCIP founding conference brought out not only common interests of the various indigenous groups that attended, but the differences between them as well. Flexibility and patience were required by all involved. Interpreting and ensuring that terminologies were understood were time-
consuming but necessary activities, for in many cases, the language used was the third language of delegates.\textsuperscript{11} Differences first became apparent when the conference attempted to select a chairman. When New Zealand nominated Sam Deloria, a Sioux Indian, for chairman, Colombian delegates instantly objected and stated they wanted a 'neutral' chairman. "This suggestion was immediately supported by other Spanish-speaking delegates, and 'anti-gringo' and 'anti-Norteamericano' sentiments became obvious." Eventually, the matter was settled with the selection of three co-chairmen -- a Canadian, a Greenlander, and a Panamanian.\textsuperscript{12} There was also disagreement over whether the term 'Indigenous' or 'Indian' should be used. As the organization has matured, this type of dissidence has subsided, but its occurrence shows that there are differences between factions which must be accommodated.

National or local level divisions have also been apparent. Again, to use an example from the organization's early years, once Port Alberni in British Columbia had been selected as the site for the first conference, the native leaders from other Canadian provinces decided to have nothing to do with it, anticipating that the WCIP would be dominated by B.C. indigenous leaders who would direct their energies to serving the interests of their own peoples, to the exclusion of other Canadian native groups. In fact, Canadian delegates to the conference were all British Columbian native leaders. Thus, the Inuit, the Indians of Eastern Canada, and Indians
from the Prairies were not represented. Even today there is less than total enthusiasm for the WCIP among certain Canadian indigenous groups, although it is not obvious whether this attitude is due to indifference, to dissimilar objectives, or to the perception that the WCIP is not useful to their causes.

More serious and currently dangerous to the WCIP are the internal divisions which have recently troubled the organization. In a January 1984 edition of a Canadian Indian newspaper, a WCIP news release quotes founder George Manuel as condemning the attitude of certain "three piece suit Indians" who attempt to use the WCIP as a promotional vehicle to further their own political and personal ambitions and to gain prestige in international circles. Marie Marule also speaks of the dangers of an "entrenched Indian elite" which is motivated to support the status quo because of the personal advantages it brings. She argues that if such "opportunists" or "assimilationists" were to gain control of the World Council's direction, it could easily become an "instrument of non-indigenous manipulators," such as government elites, and the interests of indigenous communities would be discarded. Certainly the World Council's effectiveness would be severely impaired if it were to become a vehicle for the personal aggrandizement of its leaders. On the other hand, one of the problems of indigenous leadership, WCIP leadership included, arises from the need to come to terms with target elites so as to deal with them effectively.
This may leave indigenous leaders open to suspicion that they are 'playing the government's game' for their own advancement. This dilemma is not easily resolved and if it results in a high turnover of personnel, the consequence could be an insecure, inexperienced leadership.17

Certain WCIP executive members have alleged that unscrupulous persons have attempted to gain acceptance and influence in the WCIP by promising politically naive delegates from Central and South America international travel, scholarships, and grants in return for their support.18 Similar changes have been levelled against the ruling classes of Central America who are said to be trying to "insinuate themselves into the membership of the WCIP" through approved indigenous leaders.19 A change of venue from Mexico to Panama for the 1984 General Assembly was a direct result of such attempted manipulation.20

There has also been contention between certain factions concerning the diversion of Scandinavian funds into financing the formation of a Geneva office. One side perceives this to be a superfluous and wasteful expenditure, undertaken primarily for reasons of personal prestige.21

Yet another rift experienced by the World Council has resulted in the move of the Secretariat from Lethbridge to Ottawa. There is reluctance on the part of former WCIP Executives to discuss the move and present members of the Executive prefer to attribute little significance to it, but
it is apparently indicative of the ascendancy of one faction
over another. There has been a shift of power and possibly
in overall direction. It seems that emphasis may have moved
away from the organization's grassroots beginnings towards
high-profile professional indigenous lobbying. Still, it is
too soon to know whether the exchange of one set of advantages
for another, the substitution of the neutral, indigenous
surroundings of the University of Lethbridge for the more
central and accessible location of the Canadian capital, will
bode ill or well for the organization in the long run.

It may be that the World Council's decentralized nature
contributes to internal power struggles. Its regional
organizations certainly have a great deal of autonomy and
separate identity, as do national member organizations, and
because certain schisms appear to be rivalries for control of
the organizational apparatus, it does seem to be the case that
the decentralized structure aggravates some problems that
might have been avoided by a strong central command. However,
one of the World Council's greatest strengths is precisely
this decentralized structure, which allows for maximum
grassroots participation. There is need for a balance between
the requirement for centralized control and the necessity for
the greatest possible participation.

The latest bouts of factionalism at the World Council are
too recent to analyze fully. At this point in time, internal
division, while undeniably present, does not seem to have
caused significant weakening of the organization, although it may have caused a shift in priorities or methods. It may be noted that the existence of factionalism is evidence that the WCIP is perceived by some indigenous leaders to be worth fighting over; this in itself implies that the organization is of some consequence. It may be that the WCIP will suffer decreased credibility or effectiveness because of internal contention.

6. Funding

While governments have been the major financial contributors to the WCIP, their involvement in this capacity has not compromised the organization's independence in any appreciable way, as priorities and projects are generated from within the organization by the needs of its constituency. The limited amount of funding available, however, has had a negative effect on the World Council's capabilities. The organization's budget is not sufficient to allow it the latitude of operation that its directors would like, although due to ongoing Norwegian and Canadian government grants it is assured of at least enough funding to maintain its current level of activity into the foreseeable future. Its headquarters, research capacity, and lobbying activities are secure, but intensity of activity has been limited. It must be concluded that the state of the WCIP's funding leaves much to be desired; increased funding would certainly enhance its potential for success.
7. Self-Appraisal

The WCIP Secretariat has made some attempts to examine the organization's goals and priorities. The 1977-1981 "Four Year Report," prepared by the Secretariat, acknowledged a need for a reassessment of the organization's philosophy and ideology and for a review of membership to ensure that it fully endorses all that the World Council stands for. It recognized that objectives and priorities must be directly related to and based on indigenous philosophy. Unfortunately, the Report made no attempt to actually appraise the WCIP's work to that date.

In a February 1984 newsletter article, the Secretariat drew attention to the glaring lack of a clear strategy for the WCIP's global campaign. The article pointed out that this omission had resulted in certain contradictions in positions being taken and in statements being issued by the organization, in confusion about priorities, and in 'diverse expectations and perceptions of the role and functions of the Secretariat." Additionally, the article expressed concern over the degree of WCIP involvement in the U.N. community. It stressed the need for careful research and data collection on the U.N. and its various organs and agencies, on their roles and functions, and on the politics within the political and bureaucratic sectors of these bodies, "with special attention given to the realities of the decision-making process." It recommended an assessment of the gains from U.N. lobbying in
terms of time and effort -- serious considerations for an organization with very limited resources. To accomplish such an assessment, the report suggested an examination of the experiences of other indigenous groups in the U.N. system, "such as the Palestine Liberation Organization, the National African Congress of South Africa, the Kanaks of New Caledonia, and the Micronesians."

Another aspect of U.N. involvement recognized as requiring re-consideration was WCIP participation in other U.N.-NGO activities. The article noted that failure to coordinate or divide labour among WCIP member organizations in this regard had resulted in duplicated efforts and wasted time. There is the possibility of the WCIP becoming involved in so many NGO activities that it loses direction, making it essential that the organization develop first, a specific focus and strategy for lobbying, and second, some criteria for evaluating results achieved from such activity.

To meet these needs a proposed Plan of Operation was put forth by the Secretariat, identifying the priorities of the WCIP and its "general goals and many short and long term objectives." The Plan defined the roles of the Executive Council, the Secretariat, and the individual member organizations and their national associations. Regional coordination was also examined. Unfortunately, there seems to have been no further action taken on this matter; the Plan
was neither adopted nor rejected by the Fourth General Assembly in 1984, and no mention of it has since been made.

However, the structural, procedural, and tactical changes made during the Fourth General Assembly show that there have been efforts made to correct some perceived shortcomings. Controversy over the role of the Secretariat was resolved by placing that body in control of operations and priorities. Incidents demanding immediate attention or relief -- such as famine situations or unjust imprisonment of indigenous dissidents -- have been designated the top priorities of the WCIP. More emphasis is to be placed on direct lobbying and negotiation with government elites in seeking rectification of wrongdoing. These adjustments indicate that the WCIP is willing to adapt in whatever manner is required by its commitment to indigenous peoples. Such flexibility indicates that the organization might be expected to retain the vitality and sense of purpose that characterized it at its inception. Still, there is a real need for the World Council to conduct regular, systematic evaluations of its activities. This would ensure that resources are being utilized in a manner that best benefits the WCIP's constituency.

8. Targets

A pressure group's targets are more often a matter of necessity than of choice and consequently the WCIP has not been able to select the sort of targets that contribute to success. The primary targets of the WCIP are national
governments, as these are the bodies which usually have the greatest influence over conditions faced by indigenous peoples. (In the case of Third World governments which are too ineffective to overcome contradictory domestic or external pressures that adversely affect indigenous peoples, that influence may be potential rather than actual). National elites are among the most intractable of targets for a human rights group which lacks economic means of suasion or is less than resource-rich in terms of capability, and for this reason, the WCIP's chances for success are diminished by having this particular target group to deal with. (Of course, this is a difficulty that is encountered by most interest groups.) The World Council's other primary target -- its own constituency -- stands to benefit from the organization's activities and is therefore more easily influenced to support its programs and goals. Secondary targets -- the United Nations, other intergovernment and non-governmental agencies, and the world public -- may be somewhat more amenable to influence than national elites, as they do not have as great a stake in the present distribution of power and wealth in the international system.

Certain internal characteristics of the WCIP's targets have affected the success the organization has had in influencing them. It is generally the case that the WCIP has been more readily accepted in industrial advanced western-oriented countries than in Third World countries. The targets
that have been successfully induced to contribute financially to the World Council and its regional affiliates are almost all based in western industrialized countries (with the exceptions of the governments of Guyana and Panama).  

The difference in attitude of governments of developed countries as opposed to less-developed countries is also manifest in their respective responses to indigenous political activity within their countries. Western governments frequently support and even fund indigenous political organization, while Third World governments tend to take steps to inhibit such development. For example, most of the delegates to the Port Alberni founding conference represented organizations which had the funding and acquiescence of their home governments for their international activities. The Maori delegates represented a body which was established by legislation -- the New Zealand Maori Council -- and which receives annual grants from the New Zealand government. In contrast, some delegates from South America had to be almost smuggled out of their countries or had to leave under false pretenses, and communication with certain delegates was almost impossible due to government monitoring of mail. Brazil did not allow its Indian representatives to leave the country to attend the conference. The three Paraguayan delegates and their interpreters were reportedly arrested, jailed, and tortured shortly after their return from the conference as a
result of their involvement in the movement to promote legal rights for Paraguay's native peoples.30

Because Central and South America are the crisis areas of indigenous rights violations, it is unlikely that organizational initiative to form a body such as WCIP could have come from these areas, where indigenous leaders are hindered from taking effective organizational action by physical restraint, lack of funding, of opportunity, and of experience. As the WCIP "Four Year Report" acknowledges, the threat posed by effective indigenous organization to the entrenched authorities of Central and South America, where the indigenous population is a numerical majority, enkindles violent opposition to WCIP involvement with indigenous leaders there.31 The World Council must move cautiously and diplomatically in countries such as Guatemala and Nicaragua, lest its efforts on behalf of its constituents backfire and result in increased repression of the people it seeks to aid.

On the other hand, the cumulative effect of the funding from a number of western governments made the founding of the WCIP possible. The fact that government sponsored, politically autonomous indigenous activities is fairly common in western industrialized countries may be indicative of a recognition by governments that native populations have survived as distinct political communities, that they have not been and will not be integrated into the political life of the
state, and that stable means of political accommodation, other than integration and assimilation, must be sought.32

9. Tactics

In carrying out the resource-generating activities of fund-raising and constituency-mobilizing, the WCIP has met the preconditions necessary for it to engage in goal-directed tactics. The tactics used by the WCIP, discussed in the previous chapter, are researching and reporting, publicity-seeking, using United Nations consultative status and other governmental connections, addressing resolutions to targets, coordinating activities with similarly interested agencies, holding meetings, sponsoring workshops and limited projects, and engaging in direct lobbying of and negotiation with governments. Of these, researching and reporting, conducting workshops and projects, lobbying, and negotiation are the World Council's principal methods of employing its international capacity. Since it seeks to alter both particular situations and, in the long run, the international sociopolitical environment, the WCIP aims its tactics at elites and masses, primary and secondary targets, as appropriate.

a. Research: Central among the World Council's political activities are researching and reporting facts about the conditions encountered by indigenous peoples and about violations of their rights. The WCIP, through its central and regional secretariats and member organizations, has conducted
numerous extensive studies on a multitude of issues of concern to aboriginal peoples. It has accumulated a data base and developed the expertise and contacts that together impart credibility and authority to its reports, statements, and recommendations on specific situations and issues. The WCIP's research capabilities are the base for its other tactical activities, particularly for lobbying and negotiating.

Reports submitted by WCIP member organizations vary widely in degree of detail and militancy. Members from Canada and Australia, for example, are likely to make more scathing observations and evaluations, more concrete demands, and more vehement declarations than are members from Bolivia or Argentina. Greater bureaucratic capabilities, analytical skills, levels of education attained, and availability of economic resources account for the higher degree of political sophistication and the superior reporting that come from members from developed states. Variance in the tone of reports may also be affected by the possibility of threats of reprisal that reporters may encounter in countries where indigenous peoples are subjected to physical repression. Those preparing reports in such countries may deem it shrewd to be less outspoken than would be possible in countries where human rights are enshrined. Even with subdued reporting, indications are that the World Council's research endeavors have been important in bringing indigenous issues to the
attention of authorities that might have some bearing on their outcome.

b. Publicity: The use of publicity to educate the world public about indigenous issues and demands so as to bring pressure to bear on target governments has been a less-than-skillfully-employed method of influence for the World Council. Although the WCIP has on occasion used letter-writing campaigns and mass petitions to seek publicity, with the exception of the excellent and comprehensive though short-lived newsletter, publication by the central secretariat of materials for public consumption has been somewhat neglected, as have other public relations techniques. For instance, the week-long founding conference attained only minimal coverage in the Vancouver Sun, British Columbia's most prominent newspaper, and in the nationally popular Toronto Globe and Mail, "partly as a result of the conference's restrictions on the press." The local indigenous paper making this comment held out little hope that the organization would be heard from again. Fortunately for the WCIP, this pessimism was unfounded. More skillful utilization of the news media on the part of the organization would likely have avoided such perceptions and benefitted its cause as well.

One of the few instances of the WCIP attracting useful media coverage was during negotiations on patriation of the Canadian Constitution. According to Marie Marule, who was Secretariat Coordinator at the time, the WCIP in concert with
national indigenous support groups succeeded in stirring up considerable media attention which resulted in the mobilization of a nation-wide and internationally-supported protest on behalf of Canada's native peoples, whose interests were being virtually ignored by all parties to the constitutional process.35 A second incident which gained the WCIP some media coverage was Sami activist Nils Somby's illegal entrance to Canada to avoid arrest by Norwegian authorities for alleged terrorist activities. The indigenous 'Nuxalk Nation' of British Columbia adopted Somby according to traditional practices and claimed that he could not be taken into custody by Canadian authorities because as a member of that tribe, he was no longer subject to Canadian immigration laws. The World Council's position on the matter of the Nuxalk Nation's competency to grant Somby immunity from Canadian law was widely publicized (at least within Canada), briefly focusing the attention of the public on the WCIP and its views.36

Publicity-seeking is an important activity for the WCIP, for only by making known the plight of indigenous peoples, by changing the understanding of the world public of indigenous issues, and by creating widespread support for its philosophy and programmes, may sufficient pressure by brought to bear on national governments to make a difference to the indigenous position. As its newsletter was the WCIP's best public
relations instrument, it is likely that this is an area to which it will again direct resources when funding permits.

c. U.N. Consultative Status and Other Governmental Connections: The WCIP has made extensive use of its formal ECOSOC Consultative Status to put pressure on errant national governments and to gain support for its programmes. The U.N. stamp of official recognition contributes to the WCIP's legitimacy and authority in the eyes of the world, making the organization a more likely candidate for funding and other types of support. The U.N. has responded to WCIP recommendations, proposals, and protests in part by instituting in 1982 a Working Group on Indigenous Populations through the ECOSOC's Commission on Human Rights' Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The World Council has taken a leading role in representing indigenous perspectives at meetings of this Working Group (although several other indigenous groups are also involved), and seems to enjoy the highest status of any indigenous peoples group in U.N. circles. The Working Group has used the WCIP's Draft International Convention on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a statement regarding the position and demands of indigenous peoples, as a starting point for its own activities. The prestige that the World Council enjoys within the U.N. network ensures that its representative have standing in the international arena.
Direct connections with government officials have also been significant to the World Council's work, as is illustrated by the ongoing discussions between WCIP representatives and Nicaraguan government officials which have resulted in the alleviation of certain pressures on indigenous peoples of that country. Other formal and informal connections with national elites have also proven useful in the past, allowing the WCIP to benefit at least some of its constituents.

d. Resolutions: The use of the recommendation or resolution to present demands in forceful and concise terms is another relatively important method of influence used by the WCIP. Resolutions have been generated by the WCIP on issues ranging from genocide in Guatemala to the maintenance of a nuclear-free Pacific. A particularly dramatic example of this technique may be seen in the Draft International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which may be one of the most significant of the WCIP's contributions to the indigenous rights movement. This document, which incorporates all the rights native peoples perceive themselves to have that require special protection under international law, takes a form slightly different from the majority of WCIP resolutions, but amounts to the same thing, in that it is a statement of policy and position. The Covenant has the potential to become the centerpiece of special human rights claims on behalf of indigenous peoples in the same way that the International Bill
of Human Rights occupies this position with regard to universally held human rights. The Covenant's importance to the future of the struggle for indigenous rights had been widely acknowledged by international authorities, particularly by the U.N.'s Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

The Draft Covenant is a prime example of a resolution used to focus international attention on an issue of great concern, and as is often characteristic of the 'grand gesture,' it is somewhat unrealistic in the magnitude of what it sets out to embrace. It is a radical document, demanding as it does that governments surrender control over land and resources, over education and language, over political and social institutions, and over other assorted powers that states currently exercise with respect to indigenous peoples living within their territories. The Covenant also proposes a ratification procedure that permits not only states but also indigenous peoples to ratify the Covenant, so that a state would be bound to honor the Covenant if it had been signed by an indigenous people living wholly or partly within its boundaries. This provision is blatantly incompatible with the concept of state sovereignty. While the Covenant is unlikely to win state approval because of its radical content, it is nevertheless an important instrument for creating greater international recognition, promotion, and protection of indigenous rights, having been published as a statement of the indigenous position in books, for distribution at interest
group meetings, and by U.N. committees concerned with indigenous matters, among the other places.40

e. Meetings: Meetings are not only necessary functional operations, but as Hudson has suggested, they may be used tactically to aid in legitimizing and publicizing an organization's purpose and activities. Parallels can be drawn between Hudson's prototypes and the three types of meeting common to the WCIP. His "manifestation" is illustrated by the World Council's 1975 founding conference. There have been few, if any, other gatherings of such high profile and symbolic significance to the cause of indigenous rights as the first coming together of indigenous peoples from all over the world. Unfortunately, the publicity gained from this meeting was less than overwhelming; as noted, newspaper accounts were rather disappointing, at least in Canada. Still, it was a most significant gathering for the WCIP and for indigenous peoples in general, even if it was not completely effective in announcing to targets that a challenge to their authority was imminent.

The "congress" finds its parallel in the WCIP General Assembly, where delegates from the World Council's five regions meet to discuss broad policy matters. At the most recent General Assembly, main topics of discussion included overall direction of the organization, ideological issues, and plans for drawing up a statement of purpose.41 These discussions did not result in any substantive decisions, as is
typical of the 'congress' type of meeting, but the meeting did
serve to renew and confirm the WCIP's mandate and thereby
remind targets of the WCIP's legitimacy.

The "symposium" or "colloquium" corresponds to the WCIP
Executive Council meetings held at least twice yearly. It is
at these meetings that policy is confirmed, strategy is
determined, and tactics are decided upon. Without these
meetings, events would out-pace the organization's ability to
respond, and its usefulness would be severely constrained.
(The new powers of the Secretariat also help to ensure that
the WCIP is not left behind by events.).

f. Coordination of Activities: The WCIP has an extensive
network of contacts with international, transnational, and
national governmental and non-governmental agencies with
concerns similar to its own, yet is has made little use of
such contacts in terms of co-sponsoring activities such as
conferences, projects, and lobbying efforts, in order to
augment its own authority and intensity and to extend its
range of influence. This is certainly an area in which the
World Council is weak.

g. Workshops and Projects: Workshops and limited-scope
projects or conferences are frequently used and highly visible
methods by which the WCIP exercises its international
capacity. A great many of these activities serve educational
purposes and aid in disseminating information to various
targets about the WCIP's philosophy and programs. Still other
such enterprises, sometimes undertaken in conjunction with compatible indigenous support groups, provide direct assistance to specific indigenous groups in need of financial, organizational, technical, or other aid. Examples of projects of this type are the Cooperative Shop Project and Educational and Commercial Exchange Projects for Native Peoples of Mexico, co-sponsored by the WCIP and its Central American secretariat.

h. Lobbying and Negotiation: Direct lobbying of or negotiation with national governments are used with increasing frequency and success by the WCIP in defense of indigenous rights. It was decided at the last General Assembly to engage in these types of activities on a more regular and intensive basis. This decision was a response to the perceived need for rapid and decisive action in countries where indigenous peoples and individuals are most severely persecuted. The WCIP hopes to affect tangibly the cultural, economic, and political emancipation of these parties as rapidly as possible.

It is often difficult to know with certainty if protest actions and ongoing negotiations have any effect on the attitudes of governments. Often there is no apparent impact. On the other hand, it may be that at least some government officials are made aware of indigenous issues by WCIP activities. An example of successful lobbying by the WCIP is the protest against the government of Canada during the initial drafting of that country's new constitution, when
native peoples affected were not consulted regarding content. The objections voiced by the WCIP and other indigenous groups received significant public support, resulting in subsequent consultation between the government and Canadian native peoples; though the outcome was less than satisfactory to the indigenous 'First Nations,' at least a response was evident.43 A more dramatic example of successful negotiation is visible in the positive response of Nicaragua's Sandanista government to the WCIP's bid to better the position of the Miskitu Indians of that country. Such a victory validates the WCIP's raison d'etre.

i. Supplementary Tactics: There are at least two supplementary tactics which have been employed by the WCIP from time to time. In occasional emergency situations, the World Council has financially or otherwise aided indigenous individuals faced with persecution from national governments to escape life-threatening danger. Such instances are not revealed to the public and are generally known only to Executive Council members and to key organization workers who have been directly involved. This secrecy is necessary for a number of reasons, but particularly to insure the safety of individuals involved and for the sake of ongoing relations with the national governments involved. The ability to respond effectively to such crises seems to indicate a flexibility which might contribute to the World Council's success in meeting the needs of its constituents.
The other supplementary tactic used by the World Council involves claiming success for activities which were not necessarily successful. This tactic of last resort is likely aimed at enhancing the WCIP's reputation or visibility in hope that subsequent activities will receive more attention or have more impact than did previous ones. There is, however, a danger that employing this tactic will in fact lead to a decline in the organization's credibility.

Conclusions

Analysis of the World Council's performance in relation to the elements of success reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the reasons for its potential and actual success.

The WCIP's strengths lie in its perceived legitimacy, and in its skillful use of certain tactics, namely research and reporting, governmental contacts, resolutions, meetings, workshops, projects, lobbying, and negotiation. The other elements of success, purpose and goals, structure and dynamics, support base, and targets are areas in which the WCIP has both strengths and weaknesses. The radical nature of the organization's purpose and long-term goals makes the potential for achieving them slight; short-term goals are less controversial and should be more easily attained. The apparent ascendancy of the Secretariat over the Executive Council, and internal contention over the make-up of the
Executive Council and over the manner in which indigenous peoples are represented by national organizations or by regional bodies, weaken the WCIP in terms of structure and internal dynamics, while other structural features seemingly contribute to organization's strength. The existence of a broad support base should contribute to the WCIP's success, but it may also contribute to increasing the hostility and intractability of target governments which are threatened by the extent of the organization's support. Targets are dictated by the organization's purpose and cannot be chosen for optimum 'approachability' or 'receptivity.' Having national governments as primary targets is not conducive to success, for they stand to lose some degree of power and influence by acquiescing to WCIP demands. International bodies and the indigenous peoples of the world are more accessible and promising targets, the first because they have less at stake than national governments, and the second because they have much to gain from the WCIP's campaign.

Funding, factionalism, self-appraisal, and the tactics of publicity-seeking and cooperation are the areas in which the WCIP is weakest. The organization might improve its chances for successfully attaining its goals by selectively focusing its energies on improving its performance with respect to these elements.
Notes


4. Ibid, p. 11.


8. Chiang, p. 169, note 122. The date of this protest is given as 1974, but the WCIP was not formed until the following year.


13. Ibid. Canada's delegates were George Manuel, National Indian Brotherhood President, who represented status Indians; Gloria George, National Council of Canada President, who represented Metis and Non-status Indians; and George Watts, former Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs Executive, who replaced a representative of the Indian Brotherhood of Northwest Territories, who could not attend, who in turn was to have replaced the President of the Inuit Tapirisat, who was not interested in attending.


15. Marule interview.

16. Ibid.

17. Little Bear et al., xx.


20. Marule interview; and Contreras interview.

21. Ibid.

22. This impression was given by Marie Marule and in discussion, by an anonymous former WCIP employee.

23. Contreras interview.


26. Ibid.


32. "Four Year Report," i.

33. For example, the Secretariat headquarters in Ottawa rarely seems to be open. The interviewer who eventually spoke with Rodrigo Contreras made many attempts to talk to someone in the WCIP who could grant an interview. Even after making an appointment, she found the office to be closed upon her arrival.


35. This claim, made by Marie Marule, may be somewhat inflated. Many Canadian indigenous groups were involved in lobbying activity at this time. It is difficult to know just how much influence the WCIP contributed to the overall effort. It should be noted that in claiming success for questionable success, Ms. Marule is employing what amounts to a last-ditch tactic for influence.

36. Marie Marule indicated during the interview that publicity had been nation-wide. One newspaper which provided coverage was the *Lethbridge Herald*, Oct. 13, 1984.

37. This assertion was made by Marie Marule.
39. Ismaelillo and Robin Wright, p. 164.
41. Contreras interview.
42. Ibid.
43. Marule interview.
44. Interview with anonymous former WCIP employee.
45. See Chapter Three, note 46 and above, note 35.
CHAPTER SIX

THE WCIP'S SUCCESS AS AN INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE GROUP

By explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the WCIP, the previous chapter has answered the question "why has or has not the WCIP been a success?" This chapter will discuss the nature and extent of the success the World Council of Indigenous Peoples has met in its role as an transnational pressure group by answering the four questions posed at the outset of this analysis. Those questions were: Has the WCIP succeeded in encouraging the mobilization of indigenous support for indigenous causes; has it affected the emergence and consolidation of indigenous political activity? Have there been policy shifts or concessions won from national governments due to the activities of the WCIP? Have bodies such as the United Nations adjusted their programmes and policies to coincide with WCIP demands? To what extent has the WCIP succeeded in effecting changes in the political, economic, and social conditions of the peoples it seeks to benefit?

Success as Indigenous Political Activity

Has the WCIP succeeded in encouraging the mobilization of indigenous support for indigenous causes; how has it affected emergence and consolidation of indigenous political activity? The World Council's success in stimulating indigenous political activity and in mobilizing a constituency has been
quite extensive. It has motivated the emergence of numerous political organizations - in South and Central America, in Australia, and in the Pacific Islands. Through its regional affiliates it has assisted various indigenous communities to organize politically, supplying training and support and aiding in locating funding sources. Most significantly, it has succeeded in defining and directing a transnational movement which may in time achieve its objectives.

While fullest success with respect to its target constituency might entail the mobilization of a single, united front composed of all the indigenous peoples of the world, organized so as to best cope with the realities of international politics, this is at best an unlikely scenario. The diversity of peoples and the logistical difficulties that would be encountered by a genuinely universal movement would likely make such a movement impossible. The actual success with which the WCIP has met thus far in regard to its target constituency should therefore be recognized as truly significant.

Success as Concessions From National Governments

Have there been policy shifts or concessions won from national governments due to the activities of the WCIP? A few concessions and policy shifts by governments in response to WCIP efforts have been visible. The Nicaraguan governments' alteration of its policy towards its indigenous peoples is an
obvious example, and probably represents the WCIP's greatest success with respect to the first of its target groups, national governments. Other instances of success with respect to this group, such as the government of Canada's yielding to pressure to consult with indigenous groups prior to patriating the constitution, are not as dramatic or as obviously attributable solely to the WCIP's work.

Fullest success with respect to target governments would entail the constitutional recognition by those governments of all the social, cultural, economic, and political rights of indigenous peoples that are demanded by the concept of self-determination (as interpreted by the WCIP). This would mean adjustments to the existing structure of states to accommodate the 'First Peoples' as distinct communities with special rights. The WCIP's success in influencing target governments has been on a much lesser scale, primarily serving secondary or short-term objectives which do not require any fundamental changes in the attitudes of governments. Examples of lesser success vis-a-vis national governments include such achievements as persuading the governments of Norway and Canada to fund WCIP activities. The fact that this funding is only sufficient for a 'bare-bones' operation indicates that the World Council's success in influencing national governments, even in minor ways, has been modest indeed.
Success As Policy Changes by the United Nations

Have bodies such as the United Nations adjusted their programmes and policies to coincide with WCIP demands? International bodies, the U.N. in particular, have instituted certain limited programmatical changes in response to WCIP demands. Perhaps the most important such development was the WCIP's influence on the formation of the United Nations' Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which has continued to look to the World Council to represent the indigenous perspective on issues within the Working Group's mandate.

The fullest success possible with regard to international bodies would be for indigenous peoples to be recognized by them as having certain rights to self-determination, as far as that is possible within the context of existing states. This would encourage national governments to yield to aboriginal peoples those political, economic, social, and territorial rights necessary for them to exist as distinct peoples. The World Council's successes in this area are, once more, on a much lesser scale, but even such limited achievements as gaining ECOSOC status and being invited to participate on various UN committees concerned with indigenous issues should assist in fostering the development of an international environment receptive to the concept of indigenous self-determination.
Success As New Advantages for Indigenous Peoples

To what extent has the WCIP succeeded in effecting changes in the political, economic, and social conditions of the peoples it seeks to benefit? The World Council's progress in changing the conditions of its intended beneficiaries is difficult to ascertain as there is little if any documentation describing substantive improvements in the lives of indigenous peoples. The Nicaraguan government's capitulation on WCIP demands concerning the treatment of its indigenous peoples should have resulted in new advantages for them, but there is no confirmation available that improvements have taken place. Other instances of improved conditions for native peoples are as difficult to detect, or to attribute to WCIP efforts. Even though there have allegedly been cases of the World Council aiding indigenous individuals directly in particular crises situations, lack of proof makes it impossible for the WCIP to claim success with respect to its constituents.

Ideally, success in changing the conditions experienced by target beneficiaries would result in the realization of self-determination for all indigenous peoples, the establishment of economic viability of indigenous communities, and the elimination of all social inequalities and outright persecution currently faced by indigenous peoples. However, any tangible benefit that might be delivered to an indigenous people or individual attributable to WCIP efforts would not be
trivial, for if a single life were to be improved upon even slightly, success would be realized.

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples: An Analysis of Political Protest

The WCIP's chief success has been in respect to its own constituency. Its principal achievements have been to unify and mobilize a broad constituent base, to aid in the development of various indigenous political organizations, to arrive at a widely agreed upon formulation of what indigenous peoples want in terms of self-determination as nations, and to establish itself as a legitimate representative of indigenous peoples and thus ensure its continuing existence. There has been less success in terms of influencing national governments and international bodies, and practically no success in winning new advantages for its constituency. These failings point to the conclusion that in absolute terms, the World Council does not wield any real political power. It is a relatively young organization, however, and it may be that it has taken the first steps towards building what could someday become a politically significant organization.

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples' contribution to aboriginal rights must be judged qualitatively rather than quantitatively. In its first decade of operation, it has defined a standard, assembled a support base, and established an ongoing framework for influence which has the potential to
bring about substantive changes in the interaction pattern of
the global political system. Although impact may be
undramatic and slow, inroads have been made. It remains to be
seen whether the challenge can be sustained.
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Appendix

Chronology of Events, 1975-1985


March 1977 - The WCIP is incorporated in Canada as a non-profit organization.

October 1977 - WCIP Secretariat is established at the University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta.

1977 - The Central American WCIP Regional organization, the Consejo Regional de Pueblos Indigenas de Centro America, Mexico, y Panama (CORPI) is formed.

August 1977 - The WCIP Second General Assembly is held at Kiruna, Samiland, Sweden.

1979 - The WCIP is granted United Nations Economic and Social Council Non-Governmental Organization status.

1980 - The South American WCIP regional organization, the Consejo Indio De Sud America (CISA) is formed.

May 1981 - The WCIP Third General Assembly is held at Canberra, Australia.

September 1981 - The WCIP presents position papers at the International NGO Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the Land.

July 1982 - The first seminar held by an Indigenous organization in South America is sponsored by CISA and held in the central forest of Peru.

November 1982 - Institution of a joint CORPI and WCIP Commission to meet with Nicaraguan government officials and Aboriginal community representatives to investigate the situation of the Aboriginal people on the Atlantic Coast.

December 1982 - Publication of the first WCIP Newsletter.

March 1983 - The second CISA Congress of Indian Organizations and Peoples of South America.

October 1983 - Jose Carlos Morales, WCIP President, accepts an invitation to join the Board of Directors of the International Institute for Ethnic Groups' Rights and Regionalism.

December 1983 - At a WCIP Executive Council meeting held at Lethbridge, Alberta, the Executive resolves to jointly sponsor the Alaska Native Claims Review Commission of Justice Thomas Berger, in accordance with the request of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference.

April 1984 - The WCIP Secretariat Headquarters is moved from Lethbridge, Alberta, to Ottawa, Ontario.

June 1984 - The first meeting of the WCIP Pacific Regional organization is held.

September 1984 - the WCIP Fourth General Assembly is held in Panama.