



SOUTH PACIFIC SOLIDARITY

Throughout the Pacific Rim wild nature and wild culture are under attack. Loggers tear down the forests. Mining corporations rip open chasms in the earth. Stateless tribal societies are either exterminated or assimilated. But against the death culture rebellion grows. The victorious eco-insurrection in Bougainville, and the strengthening indigenous resistance in West Papua are just two examples.

For ten years the British radical ecological movement has taken inspiration from Pacific struggles, and in return has carried out sporadic solidarity actions against companies and embassies. In the middle of 2002 many decided we needed to consolidate to make sure we give more consistent support. Since then actions and support work has blossomed. Listed below are just some of the solidarity actions that we in SSP (Brighton) have received reports about.

Papuan Prisoner Picket (26/06/02) In response to the arrest of Papuan Highland activist Benny Wenda, a three-person picket is held at the Indonesian Embassy in London. Getting there just before opening, the masked picketeers succeed in turning away quite a few freaked-out embassy staff and visitors. It takes the Diplomatic Police an incredible 45 minutes to turn up—despite being in Grosvenor Square round the corner! Four months later Benny escapes from jail.

Paint Bombs (08/10/02) Toyota are responsible for logging in West Papua, a position that marks them out as clear enemies both of nature and of

the tribal people whose land is logged. One of their main UK bases near Redhill was visited and the front covered in red paint.

RTZ Blockaded In North Wales (08/10/02)

Anglesey Aluminium was blockaded for nearly six hours by a group of 15 people making novel use of a clapped out mini-van and a tripod. The van, laden with two cement filled oil barrels was towed in at 8.30am before irrevocably, and finally, breaking down outside the main entrance to the aluminium smelting plant. Someone stuck their hand through a hole in the side panel and locked onto one of the barrels. The other barrel fell through a hole in the floor of the van, tyres deflated on account of their being slashed and another person stuck their arm in and clipped on. So, that wasn't going anywhere for a while. A long tailback rapidly ensued. Meanwhile a scaffold tripod went round the back entrance just in case anyone had sneaky ideas about slipping in or out that way. After a couple of hours the plant opened an unbeknown third narrow entrance, allowing light freight and traffic access, but larger, heavier vehicles were prevented from entering or leaving for another 3 1/2 hours. A large

number of police arrived but no arrests were made. Anglesey Aluminium are 51 percent owned by Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ) who jointly own the Freeport mine in West Papua—the world's second largest copper mine and the largest proven gold deposit, worth \$40 billion.

Indonesian Embassy Occupation (09/10/02) The Indonesian Embassy in London was occupied in solidarity with the people of West Papua. Occupiers chained themselves to railings in a third floor window shouting “Papua Merdeka” (Freedom for Papua) to the on-looker crowd. The Indonesian flag was pulled down and the Papuan ‘Morning Star’ flag was about to be raised when Indonesian officials dragged the flag raiser who had climbed up the side of the building back into the embassy. A group of activists gathered outside with banners reading ‘Free West Papua’ and ‘Victory to the OPM’. The building remained occupied for nearly an hour. Four were arrested.

New Tribe Missionaries Raided (11/10/02) More than fifty people took direct action against the New Tribes Mission (NTM) UK Headquarters in Grimsby, in solidarity with resistant indigenous people of the Philippines and Papua. NTM have stated that they intend to preach to every tribe on the planet by 2025, such as the Agta of Northern Luzon and tribes in Mindanao. NTM build airstrips in jungles, have their own planes to ferry first missionaries and then businessmen, Coca Cola and the military. First comes Christianity and then corporations. Indigenous movements in West Papua have declared missionaries one of the ‘Four Enemies of Tribal People’ and say that they are as responsible as mining or logging companies for ecological and cultural destruction.

The activists visited NTM wearing West Papuan masks, invaded and occupied the offices. They severely outnumbered the missionaries working there. Essential information and equipment was removed which will prove valuable to research for



“We are not terrorists! We do not want modern life! We refuse any kinds of development: religious groups, aid agencies, and governmental organisations, Just Leave Us Alone, Please!”—The Liberation Army of the Free Papua Movement (TPN/OPM)



“This is a popular ecological revolution that evolved from an act of self defence. We could tolerate the mine no longer. We couldn't stand idle and so we set up a militant type organisation to contain what the security forces were doing to us.”—Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA)



“We are the eco-warriors of the Third World country... So I pulled the GM crops and stomped with my feet. What I felt was, This is it! So this is the poisonous one, it must be annihilated!”—Davao EF! (Philippines)

resistance to NTM. Other people sabotaged and damaged essential computer hardware, software and other office equipment; others argued with workers; others demonstrated outside or in the village nearby with banners. A timing device was planted in a toilet that later opened a valve on the cold water supply leading to flood damage during Friday night and Saturday morning. All the protestors left the scene without arrest, although missionaries attempted—and failed—to stop people leaving. Following the action the cult pulled some strings and the cops raided nearly half a dozen properties over a period of four months. Around twenty people were arrested, but police attempts to frame people failed, and at the time of writing all but one of the cases has been dropped.

BG Group PLC—Making Nature History

(18/10/02) BG are involved in the extraction of

Liquid Natural Gas in occupied West Papua. Activists intervened at the Natural History Museum in a special preview of the *BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year* exhibition sponsored by BG; another example of corporate greenwash. A banner was put at the entrance, leaflets were handed out and we ended up in a long argument with the editor of *BBC Wildlife*. 'If BG Group continue exploiting natural resources soon all we will have left of biodiversity will be the photos.' On other days activists were thrown out by security and the exhibition was well stickered. In 2003 for the first time the competition has no outside sponsor.

BP Targeted at CBI Conference (26/11/02) At the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) conference the BP stall—and its corporate front men—were drenched in fake blood to counter the greenwash the company uses to cover its ecocidal, genocidal business. The action was done against the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline and in solidarity with the tribes of West Papua. Two people were arrested and charged with £5,500 worth of criminal damage. In an apparent attempt to push for assault, one of the blood soaked execs went to hospital—oh dear, maybe he got some in his eye.



Manchester BP Garage Blockaded (18/12/02) Activists blockaded a petrol station in Moss Side, Manchester, for over four hours as an act of solidarity with the people of West Papua. Two scaffolding tripods were erected at the entrance and exit of the petrol station, and an activist was suspended in a hammock hanging from one of the tripods. Others handed leaflets to passers-by explaining about the situation in West Papua.

Demo at PNG High Commission (29/01/03) The Papua New Guinea High Commission was picketed the day PNG intended to launch attacks on West Papuan refugees and OPM camps. News of the demo got to PNG press. Despite being small the demo harassed the staff—there are only three—enough for one to be almost hysterical about it six months later at a meeting of Papuan mission organisations attended by a solidarity activist.



Manchester EF! shut down Angelsey Aluminium

BP AGM (24/04/03) Around 200 campaigners held a noisy demo outside British Petroleum's Annual General Meeting on at the Royal Festival Hall in London. Inside several suited and booted protesters shouted, threw incredibly disgusting liquid stench around and generally caused a disturbance. Called by Rising Tide the action aimed to highlight BP's involvement in global climate change and global genocide, particularly in Columbia, West Papua and along the planned Baku-Ceyhan pipeline.

Timber Merchants Targeted: In early Summer, as we go to press, we have recieved unconfirmed reports that a number of timber merchants stocking Papuan and Filipino timber were targetted across the country, with window smashings and graffiti.

On-the-ground Solidarity Work

As well as solidarity actions 2003 saw people travelling to the Pacific. In January four activists went to the Philippines to make links with EFlers there and travel into tribal areas and make contact. They were the first non-Filipinos to visit eco-radical prisoner Raul Zapata in the nick. Communities were happy to find out about the actions against NTM—who are very active there—and by way of gratitude bizarrely made two of the visiting EFlers honorary 'tribal warrior prince/princess'. Resistance to logging, GM and dams is especially fierce and joint action between Britain and the



Philippines is planned for the future. In March this year, in the latest Agta tribal area to get the loggers attention, a red flag was hung from the trees—signifying death to those who enter.

Prisoner Support and Direct Cash Aid

Solidarity South Pacific (SSP) is presently raising money to send medical aid to West Papua, fund tribal patrols in the Philippines against illegal logging, support radical prisoners and their families, and bring requested educational materials to the no-go zone in Bougainville. Much of this unglamorous funding work can have a real effect. Thanks to exchange rates even small amounts of cash can be a real aid to radicals abroad. In the Majority World you definitely get more punch for the pound. This is not charity—just one weapon of solidarity we have available to us in the relatively monetarised west. Co-ordinated prison support days where lots of people have phoned up and harassed local police stations in West Papua have increasingly been very effective. The Papuan Highland Tribal Council believes this type of pressure has directly resulted in activists remaining alive.

Get Active

Publicise the Struggles: Organise an event in your town. We have films and displays available and someone from the SSP groups will usually be willing to travel to do a talk and film show. Contact us if you are interested. Put up SSP posters in your town, university/school or workplace. Download our poster from the website. If you edit a zine, newsletter, journal or the like, put in an article about the Pacific. Given notice we can write one for you.

Harass the Attackers: Genocide and ecocide in the Pacific is rooted in the global industrial system.

Britain is the base for many of the organisations responsible. The SSP website lists corporations and organisations involved in the destruction—check it out and see if there are any near you. Make sure to tell us (preferably anonymously) of any actions or demonstrations you carry out—we will pass it on to the Pacific peoples concerned. News of even small actions can really raise the spirits.

Raise Funds: Organise benefits, fundraising stalls, or simply donate to one of our direct aid funds. Any money received will go direct—none will be taken out. Cheques or (for more anonymity) postal orders should be made out to 'Agta Support Group' and sent to the SSP Brighton address. A note saying where you want money to go to should accompany any money.

Support Prisoners: Pressuring courts, police stations and prisons can have a real affect, with relatively little effort. You do not need to speak Indonesian, Pidgin or Filipino; English is fine—though we can e-mail you a list of handy phrases if you're feeling adventurous.

To get put on the urgent action 'Papuan Prisoner Support List' email: koteka_prisoner_support@xsmail.com Donations for prisoners and their families in West Papua can be sent to Brighton SSP. For Papuan prisoner support cheques and postal orders should be made out to 'Koteka'. For Philippines prison support cheques should be sent to the same address but be made out to 'Agta Support Group'. More details are in the Prisoners of War section later in the magazine. _



FREE SSP NEWSLETTER

To get a copy of our newsletter and find out more send an SAE to Solidarity South Pacific, c/o SDEF! Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY, UK. We also produce and distribute a number of pamphlets, films and CDs about struggle in the Pacific.

www.eco-action.org/ssp

MISSIONARIES

THE FIRST ENEMY OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

BY WIWA-WEWO, PAPUAN LANI TRIBESMAN

The missionaries poisoned my father and his colleagues with their philosophy. I know, from my deep heart, that they suffer a lot because of being Christianised and civilised. I know that they miss their world, the world that they have experienced, that vanished in the early 1960s, the world that missionaries would describe as “primitive and animist!”

Religious believers are required to believe theirs is the true religion. They stand against the beliefs that already exist in areas where they go and they also condemn other religions as misleading. Their typical statement is this: “There is only one way to heaven, therefore, if you do not do this and that, you are in danger of hell!”

If someone threatens me with anything, a knife, a bow and arrow, a gun, the Gospel, the Koran, culture, education or whatever, then they are terrorising me. Those who terrorise are commonly called terrorists. If I am wrong please correct me, but this is my basic understanding about terrorism. However, ironically, religious groups are called ‘good people’.

No doubt, it is obvious to me that all troubles that come into the Lani community are brought in through the door marked ‘religion’. Therefore, if people come into my village and destroy my life, my worldview, my culture, then the first thing to blame is the religion. They have started the

“Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the NTM exists to assist the ministry of the church through the mobilising, equipping, and coordinating of missionaries to evangelise unreached people groups. Millions of tribal men, women and children are isolated from the Gospel. Someone must go tell them about God’s gift of salvation. Someone needs to live among them, love them with Jesus’ love, learn their culture and language, and then teach the people in their own language about the Saviour. NTM coordinates missionaries, sent by local churches, to take the Gospel to tribal people. Missionaries then plant churches. They disciple believers, translate the Scriptures, and train teachers and leaders, who in turn reach out to their own people and to neighbouring tribes.”

—Taken from the NTM homepage.

NTM US: www.ntm.org

NTM Europe: www.ntm.org.uk

NTM Germany: www.summit-ntm.de

NTM Australia: www.ntmdownunder.org



cultural genocide, and they claim to be ‘good people’, preaching good news and messages of peace. What on earth is this?

It is typical of the West. They have a belief that there is always right and wrong, and that they are best to judge them. This concept relates to all other things like the way of talking, the way of working, the way of governing, the way of farming, and so on. It is clear to me that religions have been used by the civilised community as a tool to brainwash and control the minds of people. When I became a Christian, I can see how foolish I was to respond to this world’s powers. As a Christian, I need to forgive those who kill me, I must forget what happened yesterday, I must give my eyes if my ears are taken away. Religion is a tool used by those in power to control the human beings of this earth.

This is an edited extract taken from the pamphlet *Just Leave Us Alone: A Letter From a Papuan Tribesman*. For a copy send £2.40 (including postage) to the Brighton SSP address listed above. _