

September 28, 2000

Communique #4

Contact:

Grahame Russell

416-654-2074

grussell@rightsaction.org

www.rightsaction.org

CHIXOY DAM / RIO NEGRO MASSACRES REPARATIONS CAMPAIGN:

to get full compensation and just reparations
from the World Bank & the Inter-American Development Bank
for indigenous (Mayan-Achi) survivors of the Rio Negro community
destroyed by construction of the Chixoy Dam in Guatemala

Communique #4 is a call for a formal UN investigation into the Chixoy Dam and the responsibility of the World Bank to compensate and provide reparations to the surviving members of the Rio Negro community.

Communique #5 [forthcoming] Interview with Carlos Chen, a survivor of the Rio Negro community, and one of the principal activists working for human rights, compensation and reparations.

*** Please publish, copy and re-distribute this information

*** If you do not wish to receive these emailings, please let us know

*** Contact our office if you would like to financially support this work and/or get involved yourself

Dear friends,

Rights Action staff-person Annie Bird is in Prague, participating in education, advocacy and protest activities, related to the Annual Meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Prague (Czech Republic).

Along with the Italian-based Campaign to Reform the World Bank, Rights Action is requesting that Mary Robinson, High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations, initiate a formal and complete investigation into the role of the World Bank and the Chixoy Dam project.

She and Jaroslava Colajacomo of the Campaign to Reform the World Bank, are available for interviews and participation in public events.

[anniebird@hotmail.com]

United Nations Palace press release

Thursday, September 28, 2000

Rights Action

[US, Canada, Guatemala]

info@rightsaction.org

t: 416-654-2074 [Toronto]

Campaign to Reform the World Bank

[Italy]

jaroslava@usa.net

00-39.338.3279035 (in Prague)

t: 202-783-1123 [Washington DC]

Annie Bird & Grahame Russell Jaroslava Colajacomo

--- At the UN Palace Meeting, NGOs Ask Mary Robinson to formally Examine
World Bank Role in Chixoy Dam Massacres ---

If a representative of Rio Negro, Guatemala had been allowed to come to Prague, he would have told World Bank officials and the international press that in 1982 more than 440 people from his community were killed because of their peaceful opposition to the construction of the World Bank sponsored Chixoy dam.

Instead the Reform the World Bank Campaign and Rights Action have asked Mary Robinson, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to formally carry out an in-depth investigation of the role of the World Bank in this project, and then to call on the World Bank to take responsibility for their actions and make reparations to the victims of the genocide which occurred in Rio Negro; "genocide" as defined by the United Nations sponsored truth commission. Reparations should correspond to the recommendations of the truth commission.

The decision to financially support the Chixoy dam (Rabinal, Baja Verapaz) was taken by the World Bank [and the Inter-American Development Bank] in 1978, in spite of the massive State sponsored repression against the Guatemalan civilian population. In 1978, the WB initially supported the project with a \$72 million loan and followed with an additional \$44.6 million in 1985.

Despite five years of international pressure, the Rio Negro survivors have never received proper compensation for all that they lost or that was stolen from them, much less have they received reparations for the violence they endured, the lives they lost or 18 years of extreme poverty.

While the WB obliges impoverished nations to pay off debts of failed projects from the loans made to corrupt and repressive governments, the Bank refuses to pay its own debts.
