
LUKANKA

Lukanka is a Miskito word for “thoughts”

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Fourth World nations worldwide claim and assert autonomy or self-government. These nations assert the power to exercise political, social, strategic, and cultural dominance over their peoples and ancestral territories. Asserting and defending such authority by these nations presents states with a perceived threat to their sovereignty and territorial integrity. The perceived threat of Fourth World nation autonomy has led to frequent military attacks, political subversion, and the persistence of cultural and mass violence perpetrated against Fourth World peoples initiated by states’ governments or private militias. While states have adopted declarations and international and domestic laws stating the virtues of human rights policies, Fourth World nations are not protected from these enactments.

The Rome Statue that created the International Criminal Court does not provide for the prosecution of states or private militias for crimes against Fourth World nations. Reference to Fourth World nations under terms such as “indigenous peoples” are not identified as beneficiaries of acts



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to prevent or punish human rights violations. The 1947 first draft of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (<http://www.preventgenocide.org/law/convention/drafts/>) included language directly relevant to cultural or violent attacks on Fourth World peoples, such as “forcible transfer of children to another human group,” “prohibition of the use of the national language in private intercourse,” or

“prohibiting the use of the language of the group in daily intercourse or in schools,”

These were understood as pathways to assimilate and dominate Fourth World peoples and thus reduce the populations coercively.

These and similar terms in the initial April 1948 Draft Convention on Genocide prepared by the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide were omitted in the December 9, 1948, Convention adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The crime of genocide was narrowly defined to mean “mass murder” defined by the experience of the Jewish Holocaust. As a

result, acts that would be considered cultural genocide perpetrated by states were set aside since authors of the Convention readily recognized that few UN member states would ratify the convention lest they be considered potential defendants before an international court. At the time, the 1948 negotiations were being conducted to between members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide between representatives of China, France, Lebanon, Poland, the USSR, USA and Venezuela to prepare a draft Convention on the Crime of Genocide that would eventually serve as the foundation for the International Criminal Court of 2002. The United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Sweden, and Norway had embarked on the domestic policies of sterilizing Fourth World nation women against their will. Fourth World nation birth rates were reduced per woman by as much as 50% resulting in significant population declines. Placing Fourth World children in non-native family homes has been practiced by governments in many countries resulting in lost cultural knowledge, family cohesiveness and community continuity. Forced removal of Fourth World children to state and religious administered residential schools in the states of Canada, United States, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, China, and India would have been considered a crime under the Draft 1947 Convention (barring the use of native languages, connections to traditional family and community ties, diets, clothing, and violent punishment of children resulting in the death of many for “not

following the rules”). State-based international laws ignore evident crimes committed by states, businesses, organizations, and private militates, avoiding criminal charges against states. Despite committing apparent cultural destruction and mass violence crimes against Fourth World peoples, the legal system instead focuses only on “individual” acts committing violent crimes against a “people in whole or in part.” The decision to narrow culpability for horrific crimes committed by entities resulted in immunity for institutions designed to destroy whole peoples.

Indeed, the Center for World Indigenous Studies has documented more than 160 acts of political or violent genocide committed against Fourth World nations since 1945, resulting in an estimated 12 million deaths. No State has been held accountable for acts of cultural destruction or mass violence resulting in deaths. Forced relocation programs, children forced into residential schools, massively coerced female sterilization, and the use of public schools to obstruct the use of native languages and cultural learning further amplified the fundamental reality that States globally have systematically sought to prevent the exercise of self-government and continued used of ancestral territories using coercive measures and force. Meanwhile, State development policies accelerated the extraction of raw materials from Fourth World ancestral territories; thus, undermining or destroying natural environments on which peoples relied for food, shelter, and medicines.

These facts even more, affirm the fundamental conflict between nations asserting their right

to govern themselves and their territories versus the claims of states to sovereignty and territorial integrity. Many states including, Canada, the United States, South Africa, Kenya, Russia, and China, engaged in systematic state-sponsored genocide to intentionally depopulate Fourth World nations to destroy them as peoples in “whole or in part.” The depopulation programs of female sterilization forced residential school re-education programs with the resulting killing of children, and forced relocations continued for more than forty years after the UN adopted the International Convention on Genocide.

The depopulation of Fourth World nations by states’ governments accelerated the urgent efforts to formalize self-government and protection of ancestral territories. Describing some influential nations that exercise self-governance reveals how extensive Fourth World nation political authority globally is. The Haudenosaunee (Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, and Tuscarora) have for more than a thousand years exercised governance over their territories under their Constitution, the Great Law of Peace. The Mayan-speaking peoples of southern Mexico (Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Chol, Tojolabal, Zoque, and Mam) under the banner of the Zapatistas declared their autonomy governing through their councils the schools, health clinics, and cooperatives plus a defensive military force. The more than 30 million Igbo in Nigeria proclaimed the Republic of Biafra as their central government and, after attacks by the central Nigerian government, established their government in exile in 2009. The Sámi of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia

declared their governing authority through their parliaments, courts, and media outlets, and the Māori proclaimed their distinct political authority in New Zealand. Other nations, including the Mapuche of Chile, the Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, and Syria, the Tibetans through their government in exile, and the West Papuans through their government in exile, assert their separate and distinct political authority from the state. After suffering murderous attacks by the Islamic State in the Levant (ISIS) in 2014, the Yezidi in Iraq proactively established their central government of the Nation of Ezidikhan, affirming their more than 6,770 years of autonomy in Mesopotamia. Many more Fourth World nations affirm their power of self-governance, exercising their political authority over their ancestral territories.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) meeting in General Assembly on October 24, 1974, in San Diego, California (U.S.) unanimously adopted the “American Indian Declaration of Sovereignty” in partial response to the depopulation programs of the United States. The Declaration’s purpose was to strengthen the will of American Indian communities to govern themselves and exercise their inherent powers. The Declaration stated in part,

The Government of the United States of America, in negotiating, said solemn treaties, did recognize Aboriginal sovereignty and, by its sacred honor, did agree to honor, preserve, protect, and guarantee to other states and nations and

to the Aboriginal Tribes and nations those inherent sovereign rights and powers of self-government and self-determination afforded every sovereign nation of the world.

The Declaration was signed by NCAI President Mel Tonasket, President (Chairman of the Colville Confederated Tribes), Ernie L. Stevens, First Vice President (Chairman of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin and Katherine Whitehorn, Recording Secretary (Osage).

The American Indian Declaration of Sovereignty was initially drafted by a small and young group of Indian writers, and tribal law advocates meeting in the home of Colville Tribal Member and engineer Wendall George. I had the honor as a 28-year-old policy writer to join Wendall George, Ken Hansen, later to become Chairman of the Samish Tribe, Bobbi Miller (Minnis was her married name in years to follow, a Wenatchee and niece of historical leader Colville Confederated Tribes leader Lucy Covington), and Sherwin Broadhead, an attorney and former staff member of Senator William Bora of Idaho and Superintendent of the Colville BIA Agency drafting the American Indian Declaration of Sovereignty. The knowledge that the Colville Confederated Tribes had weathered a decade of the United States government's tribal termination policy intensified the working group's focus on self-government to prevent further U.S. government coercion of tribal members. More than 100 tribes had gone through the termination of members' tribal affiliation, coerced into moving from their reservations to urban settings. The 1953 U.S. government tribal termination policy sought to end the existence of tribal communities

and assimilate tribal members into cities such as Denver, Los Angeles, and Albuquerque threatening the very existence of native peoples in the United States. A declaration of sovereignty was seen by members of the working group as the only way to preserve tribal cultures from forced elimination. This small working group, along with NCAI Executive Director Chuck Trimble, was called the *Colville Mafia* by NCAI President Mel Tonasket.

The National Congress of American Indians Declaration did not stop the US government's continuing efforts to assimilate and reduce American Indian populations. The coerced sterilization program continued, forced and the process of pushing tribal members off the reservations and into the urban centers continued into the 1980s.

Before the Declaration many other nations elsewhere in the world made similar declarations of sovereignty or independence in response to political, and economic coercion and frequently violence prompted by state and corporate efforts to forcibly remove Fourth World peoples from their ancestral lands.

In this issue of the Fourth World Journal, we are pleased to share the insights and analysis of seven authors revealing in considerable detail the challenges and accomplishments of Fourth World nations as they face often systematic state government efforts to eliminate them. Yet there are some nations driven initiatives to turn aside culturcide and other violence in favor of constructive measures for social, economic, and political self-determination.

Dr. Eric Cheyfitz, in his article **Responsibilities Into Rights, The Settler-Colonial Translation of Native Social Systems into Western Law** discusses Indigenous kinship systems and their characteristics before colonization. These systems were based on extended kinship networks that included humans and other elements of nature. Political power was not institutionalized, but rather consensus was managed among participants. Settler colonialism has brought these systems into conflict with state formations, but they persist in various forms. Examples of Fourth World communities resisting capitalist and extractive industries are mentioned, such as those in the Amazon rainforest, Idle No More in Canada, and the Zapatista villages in Mexico. Indigenous kinship systems are behavior-based and governed by responsibilities, not rights. The land is seen as an inalienable connection to the Earth. Navajo culture is cited as an example, where kinship is based on intense solidarity and governed by moral rules.

In **Fourth World Nations vs. The States' "Nation-Destroying" Projects from 1946 to 2020: Post-WWII Wars, Armed Conflicts, and Indigenous Military Resistance**, **Dr. Hiroshi Fukurai** examines global armed conflicts between nations and states from 1946 to 2020. The analysis is based on empirical data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) and the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO). Other relevant datasets, such as the Correlates of War (WCO), Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID), Minority at Risk (MAR), and Konflikt-Simulations-Modell (COSIMO), are

also mentioned. The focus is on the UCDP/PRIO dataset, which provides up-to-date and regionally detailed information on armed conflicts, military confrontations, and violent battles worldwide. The findings reveal that most post-WWII conflicts involve the state and Fourth World nations, particularly in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. These conflicts often revolve around territorial disputes, control of governments, and bureaucratic authority. The article highlights the destructive consequences of state and state-assisted corporate projects on biodiversity and the environment, posing threats to the survival of both human and non-human life on Earth.

From Reconciliation to ReconciliAction by **Nancy Dyson** and **Dan Rubenstein** discuss their experience as childcare workers at St. Michael's Indian Residential School in British Columbia in 1970. The authors witnessed the mistreatment and abuse of Indigenous children at the school and were fired for speaking out against it. Years later, Dyson and Rubenstein felt compelled to share their story and apologize for not advocating for the children after leaving the school. They discovered that many of the children they knew had suffered early deaths due to the tragic legacy of the residential schools, including alcoholism, drug addiction, and suicide. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was established to inform Canadians about the experiences of residential school survivors. The TRC's reports revealed that the abuses witnessed by the author were widespread across the country. Over 150 years, 132 residential schools operated in Canada, forcibly taking 150,000 Indigenous children. Many children died

in these schools, while others were left broken and disconnected from their culture. The author, with encouragement from Chief Robert Joseph and others, published a book in 2021 titled “St. Michael’s Residential School: Lament & Legacy.” The book includes the author’s firsthand account and excerpts from the TRC reports. It explores the intentions behind the establishment of residential schools and the knowledge of ordinary Canadians about them.

In his **Peer Reviewed** article **Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Knowledge in the Era of (Re) colonization, Insights from a Rural Indigenous Santal Community**, **Dr. Mrinal Debnath** examines the effects of colonial practices and policies on indigenous peoples and the environment. It highlights the need to restore indigenous ecological consciousness and alternative ways of knowing to rebuild communities and protect the planet. The elimination of indigenous cultures and knowledge is discussed, emphasizing the damaging influences of modernity and Western values. The study is based on Fourth World nation perspectives and employs a qualitative case study methodology, including in-depth interviews and field observations. The data is analyzed using NVivo software, and the findings reveal issues of injustice, oppression, and dehumanization faced by indigenous communities. The paper emphasizes the importance of ecological education and calls for sustainable education policies and practices to address these challenges and promote respect for indigenous cultures and the environment. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants are protected, and

the research findings are shared with them for feedback and clarification.

Dr. Chika Ezeanya-Esiobu Ph.D. writing with **Opal Almerico, Sakura Arai, Franny DePhillips, Michael Dickson, Ge Xiyang, Goodhue Angelina, Sarah Johnson, Kawai Hiromi, Zama Kunene**, analyzes the recently released White House First-of-a-Kind Indigenous Knowledge Guidance for Federal Agencies in **A Critical Review of the United States Government’s Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge: The Department of Education in Perspective**. Their analysis aims to integrate Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge into decision-making processes. The article emphasizes the need for Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to be included in K-12 curricula and discusses possible solutions to achieve this. It critically reviews the government guidance and highlights successful collaborations between federal departments and Indigenous communities in environmental preservation. Dr. Ezeanya-Esiobu and her coauthors suggest that the guidance falls short of fully recognizing Indigenous knowledge as an equal entity and focuses more on how the government can benefit from it. It argues for a deeper understanding and respect for Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing rather than using TEK solely to solve problems Western science creates. The article concludes that natural solutions can be generated by embracing and valuing Indigenous knowledge independently.

In **Genocide Today, The Guarani-Kaiowa Struggle for Land and Life** researcher **Dr. Antonio Augusto Rossoto Ioris** reports

on the ongoing genocide of the Guarani-Kaiowa indigenous people in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul, referred to as “Kaiowcide.” This genocide is not just a result of violence or murder, but a systematic practice rooted in agrarian capitalism and the expansion of the national territory. It is driven by mainstream development, economic growth, and private property interests, which justify genocidal actions. The competition for land and limited social opportunities in an agribusiness-based economy contribute to the genocide. The Guarani-Kaiowa have been subjected to assimilation, confinement, abandonment, and confrontation, with the aim of eradicating their religion, identity, and geography. Despite recurrent genocides, the Guarani-Kaiowa have shown resilience through creative adaptation and collective resistance. The article highlights the violence and intimidation faced by indigenous peoples fighting for their ancestral lands and emphasizes the need for awareness and action to address this ongoing genocide.

Kieren Daley Laursen is a Salmon Recovery Intern for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) in the United States. He writes in **Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Come Together to Share Common Vision for the Future of Pacific Northwest**

Salmon about the cultural significance of salmon to Indigenous people in the Pacific Northwest and the challenges faced by salmon populations in the region. He highlights the health benefits and economic importance of salmon to Tribal communities. The article also explores the collaboration among Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) and other Tribal organizations to address salmon recovery. ATNI Resolution 2022-25 calls for strategic and coordinated action to protect and restore salmon populations. The document, “We are all Salmon People” outlines a shared vision and guiding principles for salmon recovery. The collaboration emphasizes the need for clean water, rebuilt ecosystems, and steady flows to support salmon populations. The article emphasizes the importance of federal agencies and governments working with Tribal Nations to achieve effective salmon recovery. The collaboration aims to demonstrate unity and advocate for the protection of salmon and Tribal rights.

