

Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse in Indian Country

Strategizing to strengthen Nations' Sovereignty

An open letter

ABSTRACT

On August 8, 2022, in anticipation of an important meeting of the leadership of the National Congress of American Indians, the Chairman of the Center for World Indigenous Studies wrote a brief letter to the President of the National Congress of American Indians. The letter was a product of earlier discussions between the Chairman and the President of the two organizations. The central thesis of the letter is a discussion of the emergent political dangers to tribal sovereignty in the United States and elsewhere in the world. The letter discussed the “five horsemen of the Apocalypse. Over the six months since the letter was written, new information became available and is now included in the updated letter. We publish its content in the Fourth World Journal to encourage a broader understanding of the challenges faced by indigenous peoples in the United States and other countries.

This is an open letter originally sent from the Center for World Indigenous Studies to the President of the National Congress of American Indians, President Fawn Sharp, on August 5, 2022, with limited updates and supplemented by information that goes beyond threats to Indian nations inside the boundaries of the United States. Indian Country in the United States and Indigenous nations in Canada, Mexico, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Chad, Nicaragua, Burma, Ecuador, China, and inside numerous other states are in grave danger from organized forces seeking to dismember tribal communities, destroy their governments and dismember nations exercise of

control over their reserved lands and ancestral territories. Indeed, one analysis suggests that within a few decades, nearly half of all indigenous peoples globally will have been destroyed “in whole or in part.”

Three significant threats to the existence and survival of many nations include the existence and proliferation of authoritarian governments controlling states with significant indigenous nations, the growing presence of transnational extractive, agricultural, and pharmaceutical corporations exploiting resources in nations' ancestral territories, and the growing

powerful influence of well-funded extremist organizations lobbying states' governments to promote policies to undermine the political, economic and cultural existence of indigenous nations.

The deliberate breakdown of Indian Country inside the United States and other peoples outside of the United States has consequences for Indigenous peoples globally. Below you will see what we have called the Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse, which points to a global movement of different forces actively working (in some cases together) to break apart tribal coalitions and tribal communities while taking control over valuable natural resources. The "Five Horsemen" are actively moving to gain control over tribal lands and natural resources to enrich the already rich in the US (including the 1% of wealthiest families, major corporations, militias, and mercenary groups. While giving benefits to states' jurisdictions and protecting the states' governments as a protector of the "Horsemen."

This is more serious than the "termination period" between 1944 and 1963 when the US government formally adopted laws to "assimilate Indian people." The reason is that the enormous wealth in the lands and resource reserves in Indian Country is sought by corporations, states, and the federal government to support their profits and limit or eliminate tribal jurisdiction or capacity to defend the land and raw materials on which their survival depends.

Here is a Brief Discussion of the "Five Horsemen"

Indigenous nations of the Northern Hemisphere and nations worldwide are facing the gravest challenges to their existence since the late 19th century. Inside countries like the United States, a political movement of lobbyists, lawyers, academics and foundations, transnational corporations, and even criminal gangs are actively working to undermine tribal use and control over ancestral lands and resources while actively seeking to "divide and conquer" tribal communities with marketing propaganda and deliberate promotion of division over the authority of nations to give or deny their consent. Meanwhile, a growing number of nations are divided over negotiating agreements with oil, gas, and mineral companies emphasizing the development of their resources to advance "green energy" with 50% to 80% of the advanced critical minerals, an estimated 44% of the solar sites developed by energy companies inside indigenous nations' ancestral territories. States such as Canada, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland, and corporations and the major oil, gas, and mineral companies headquartered in those states actively engage in efforts to "alter tribal convictions" about culture through financial enticements and propaganda. Contrary to indigenous nations' interests, the various states and corporations are trashing the environment and breaking down the balance between human needs and the earth's capacity to regenerate and restore after contamination. Russia and China have massive stakes in major

oil, gas, and mineral development corporations. Still, they suppress the indigenous nations by claiming they have no stakes in the activities though virtually all of the resources are being extracted from indigenous nation territories.

The Threats to Indigenous Peoples Noted by the United Nations

As the United Nations Human Rights Deputy High Commissioner Flavia Pansieri noted in her remarks before the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), the “right to self-determination in the political, social and economic spheres is being threatened by the current model for advancing with natural resource extraction.”¹ The Deputy High Commissioner informed EMRIP about the report of James Anaya² that stated, “Natural resource extraction and other major development projects in or near indigenous territories are one of the most significant sources of abuse of the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide.” Anaya’s report was based on a survey of states’ governments, indigenous peoples and organizations, business corporations, and other actors. The UN report pointed to adverse effects on the environment, social and cultural effects, the lack of consultation and participation of indigenous nations in decisions affecting their interests, the lack of clear regulatory frameworks to control exploitation in ancestral territories, and the lack of tangible benefits of exploitation in ancestral territories for indigenous peoples.

While resource exploitation augmented by the involvement of armed mercenaries (Wagner group inside African states and eastern Europe);

and militias (i.e., Bana Mura and 69 other armed groups competing for control over wealth from mineral extraction) is one of the profoundly influential Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse that exploit of indigenous peoples’ territories, resources and populations is only one Horse. The remaining four Horsemen include the systematic and deliberate abolishment of indigenous nations by states’ governments (India, Russia, Burma, United States, China, Indonesia, Kenya, and more), the systematic dismemberment of indigenous nations by extremist organizations such as the Atlas Network that operates in the United States with global links. Their wealthy supporters including Koch Industries and British Petroleum, and the racially motivated “ethnic supremacist,” criminal gangs, cartels and killers of indigenous women (more than 5,172 reports of American Indians and Alaska Native women and girls reported by the National Crime Information Center.³

To defeat the Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse requires a sophisticated, well-funded, and activist intertribal effort combining strong tribal leaders, talented and experienced experts, and a strong ground communications game aimed at tribal communities, urban natives, and potential partners on the broader population. There

¹ Pansieri, F. (2011) “Extraction of natural resources a key cause of abuse of indigenous peoples’ rights.” UN Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner Press Release. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2011/09/extraction-natural-resources-key-cause-abuse-indigenous-peoples-rights-un>

² http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/18session/A-HRC-18-35_en.pdf

³ According to Native Hope – Facts about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. <https://www.nativehope.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-mmiv>

must be an “in-country” and an international dimension to a strategy that must be launched in the next thirty days with a plan to sustain at least a ten-year effort.

What elements make up the movement organized in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Africa’s Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Central Africa, and the Middle East? What drives the movement against indigenous peoples is mainly due to the effects of climate change and demands for “green energy” supporting resources for extractors and commercial and consumer uses.

The Systematic Movement Since 1945

More than 160 indigenous nations have suffered alleged crimes of genocide, with more than 12 million murdered and 40 million displaced from their ancestral lands since 1945.

It is fair to say that since the United Nations began working on what became the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 1972 and the formal adoption of the UNDRIP in 2007, crimes against indigenous nations have increased in social, economic, and political virulence. The main perpetrators of this violence inside the United States, Mexico, Canada, Kenya, and other countries such as Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo, China, and Indonesia are states’ governments and the agencies created by the states, including institutions of law, business, academia, criminal syndicates, and religion. This violence aims to control and plunder nations’ ancestral lands and resources.

While it is obvious that indigenous nations’ “undeveloped territories” are now targeted for “development,” Indigenous nations occupy and exercise inherent sovereignty over their ancestral lands and resources. The lands constitute 33% to 90% of the lands inside states’ boundaries. In Bolivia, the 36 distinct original peoples, including the Aymara, Quechua, Guarani, and Moxeñ, with a collective population of 11.3 million on 28 million hectares (108,108 thousand square miles).

In the United States, indigenous peoples retain sovereignty over their ancestral lands and resources, representing nearly two-thirds of the country’s land mass. States and the US government receive economic benefits from raw materials (petroleum, gas, timber, minerals) from ancestral lands. Indian Nations Raw materials taken from American Indian lands include significant proportions of all raw materials taken from the land inside the United States. Of the total non-renewable raw materials taken from Indian Country, an estimated 30% of coal, 50% of uranium reserves, 20% of known gas and oil reserves, and 17% of the timber of total US production comes from Indian lands. Indian Country west of the Mississippi is estimated to contain 15 million acres of potential energy and mineral resources, including 2.1 million acres already being tapped for its resource wealth.⁴ Of the raw materials produced to the US economy.

⁴ Robert W. Middleton. Hearing before the Committee on Indian Affairs, US Senate. Indian Energy Development: Statement of Dr. Robert W. Middleton, 110th Congress, Second Session, 1 May 2008, http://www.indian.senate.gov/public/_files/May12008.pdf, accessed April 26, 2011.

Now, what is causing all the alarm? What makes us think we are on the verge of a new “termination” era that is even worse than the last. Well, it is about the Five Horsemen!

Horseman 1: U.S. Supreme Court Annulment of Sovereignty

American States’ Rights Groups Seek to Abolish Sovereign Nations

The U.S. Supreme Court, as constituted presently, is demonstrating its commitment to empowering state governments over tribal governments contrary to established tribal laws, agreements with the United States, previous U.S. Supreme Court Decisions, and the U.S. Constitution. A favorable decision in *Castro-Huerta* and prospectively in *Brackeen* will further grant powers to the states to refuse (nullify) to aid in the enforcement of federal laws within its claimed jurisdiction, especially on U.S. Constitutional Grounds.

2022-- *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta*, No. 21-429, 597 U.S.

In the 5-4 ruling on June 29, 2022, the Court ruled that both federal and the state held joint jurisdiction to prosecute non-Native Americans for crimes on native lands. The decision effectively undermines the lawful jurisdiction of American Indian governments and transfers that jurisdiction to states in the federal union.

2023-- *Haaland v. Brackeen* –
Petition in 21-380:

(1) Whether ICWA’s placement preferences—which disfavor non-Indian adoptive families in child-placement proceedings involving

an “Indian child” and thereby disadvantage those children—discriminate based on race in violation of the U.S. Constitution; and

(2) Whether ICWA’s placement preferences exceed Congress’s Article I authority by invading the arena of child placement—the “virtually exclusive province of the States,” *Sosna v. Iowa*—and otherwise commandeering state courts and state agencies to carry out a federal child-placement program.

The decision, if agreed to by the U.S. Supreme Court, would reverse a U.S. Congressional law recognizing the first order of American Indian family rights and the fundamental human right in international law affirming the preservation of communities and families of indigenous peoples.

Horseman 2: Corporate Extremist Land and Resource Grab and Business Success

Indian Country’s ancestral lands are extraordinarily attractive for commercial development and raw materials extraction by transnational corporations, state governments, and right-wing billionaires. This movement is primarily driven due to increasing raw materials limitations on US foreign policy and domestic access to non-tribal lands. The elevation of indigenous peoples’ rights in international law⁵

⁵ Adoption of the International Labor Convent 107 (1952) subsequently updated in International Labor Convention 169 (1989), the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994), and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) combined with references to Indigenous Peoples in other international instruments have had the effect of establishing the rights of Indigenous peoples as a subject of international concern. Indigenous nations have employed this elevated status to advance their powers and influence in domestic state environments as well as international relations.

has caused greater scrutiny of lands and resources inside Indian Country by the US government,⁶ state governments, and transnational mining and development corporations for extraction and development. The international principle advancing the sovereignty and right of Indian governments to exercise their power of consent or declination of consent under the principle of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC)⁷ has increased corporate sponsorship of campaigns to lobby governments and promote propaganda in Indian Country to cast the right of consent as a “veto” that will destroy the economy and powers of federal and state government. The leading lobby network supported by these corporations is the Atlas Network made up of extremist, right-wing lobby, legal, educational organizations, and foundations.

The main difficulty American Indian governments have with businesses and corporations doing business on their reservations and certainly in their ancestral territory results from an inability of tribal governments to establish binding obligations for a fair return on investments and the power of lawful decisions by the governments. Such binding relations through agreement would assure investors that a state

or federal court will enforce the tribal contracts. Tribal Courts are diminished from being able to enforce contracts with companies and investors.⁸ Meanwhile, Transnational corporations engage in their business of extracting raw materials on and near Indian reservations, often under the protective umbrella of state and US federal laws and governance. The result is that Indian nations experience low or minimal returns on resource production from their lands (revenues are split with the state and federal government, where nations sometimes receive less than 20% of the revenues. Their consent is not sought in many instances due to private allotments and individual non-Indian land ownership inside tribal jurisdictions—complicating control over access and extraction of resources.

For Indigenous nations elsewhere in the world, similar problems exist, amplified by corporate involvement in illicit activities involving resource confiscation without indigenous nation consent. In addition, resource extraction or land confiscation by corporations permitted by states’ governments often contributes to the creation of “company towns” that promote unregulated activities such as prostitution established by armed militias and gangs.

⁶ With greater attention being paid to the implications of Indigenous peoples’ domestic and international standing by the United States government, indigenous nations globally have taken more vigorous actions politically and legally to stir concerns by other states.

⁷ Established standard affirmed in Part 1, Para 9., Part 3, Para 11., Part 5., Para 18., Part 6., Para 25., Para 28., Part 9., Para 43., inter alia of the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations (ICRIN); Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights the International Labor Organization Convention 169, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Article 10, Article 11, 2. and Article 19 inter alia) asserting the requirement that no decisions by the parties concerning their mutual concerns shall be declared by their governmental, institutional organs without the full, free, prior and informed consent of the other party.

⁸ Dao L. Bernardi-Boyle, *State Corporations for Indian Reservations*, 26 AM. INDIAN L. REV. 41 (2001), <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/ailr/vol26/iss1/2>. Akee, R., Mykerezi, E., and Todd, RM., 2021 “Business Dynamics on American Indian Reservations: Evidence from Longitudinal Datasets.

Tribal taxation of non-Indian businesses operating inside their jurisdiction is often prevented by claims by states or other municipal authorities to exercise jurisdiction over non-Indian businesses. Extraction businesses avoid taxes altogether due to state and federal preemptions.

Inside the United States, mining on and near Indian Reservations is out of proportion to the total reserved land under tribal jurisdiction. Raw material reserves located explicitly on reservation lands (not including ancestral lands) have been estimated to include 4.2 billion barrels and 18.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas (3% to 10% of the reserves in the United States) and 15% of the total deposits of coal in the United States (15% of the reserves of the US low-sulfur strippable coal), 15% to 40% of the available uranium in the United States and significant unexploited tungsten, zeolite, and bentonite deposits. Copper, vanadium and phosphate, tantalum, lithium, gold, and silver are also in significant quantities on and near Indian reservations.

Businesses on and near reservations include agriculture, mining, utilities, real estate, education, arts and entertainment, construction, healthcare, information finance, manufacturing, professional services, public administration, transportation, wholesale, lodging, industrial agriculture, and food are somewhat successful.⁹ Education, arts, and entertainment, wholesale and retail, and public administration are particularly successful on and near reservations. The study by Akee and Jorgensen (2014) revealed that “tribes are able to innovate and devise solutions that allow for housing and business

development to converge in value” compared to the less successful businesses off-reservation. All of this was demonstrated because of the 2007-2016 Great Recession.

Horseman 3: Organized Extremist Organization: Oppose “Consent” as a “Veto” by Indigenous Nations

Atlas Network is an organization of 500 organizations (161 in the US and 11 in Canada) dedicated to promoting “individualism, market economy and no government involvement in the economy. (Request more information, and it can be made available). Here is the Atlas policy framework):

Corporate-funded libertarian and politically extreme right-wing “think tanks,” including the United States-based Heritage Foundation, Federalist Society, Koch Foundation, and Canada-based MacDonald Laurier Institute¹⁰ are part of the global Atlas Network actively working to undermine indigenous nations. The main focus of their efforts with indigenous communities is to promote propaganda and policies to increase the development of mining, extraction, and development of oil and gas, uranium, and other resources on and under indigenous nations’ lands and ancestral territories.

⁹ Akee, R., Mykerezzi, E., and Todd, R.M., 2021 “Business Dynamics on American Indian Reservations: Evidence from Longitudinal Datasets.

¹⁰ The Ottawa-based Macdonald-Laurier Institute is an active participant in the Atlas Network https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macdonald%E2%80%93Laurier_Institute The Institute supports Daniel Coates and former Assembly of First Nations Chief Ovide Mercredi to influence indigenous communities to transform their decision-making structures and support resource exploitation by corporations.

The Atlas Network is organized with over 500 independent, nonprofit organizations operating in nearly 100 countries. They lobby states' governments and corporations to prevent indigenous nations from implementing and maintaining control over their lands and resources. The Atlas Network makes hundreds of grant and training investments in organizations to promote, support, and strengthen nonprofit organizations to weaken, subvert, obstruct, and disrupt indigenous communities. Members of the Atlas Board of Directors are associated with the Aegis Financial corporation in McLean, Virginia; Wield & Company Banking & Financial Services; and one member of the Board is the former Director for International Affairs in the US Department of the Interior.¹¹ The major funders for the Atlas Network include British Petroleum, British American Tobacco, Koch Industries and the Koch Foundation, and Americans for Prosperity. The nonprofit institutes supported by these, and more transnational corporations directly insert their anti-tribal policies into indigenous communities by concealing their identities. They actively work to divide vulnerable indigenous communities to prevent them from actively controlling access to their ancestral lands and resources so that corporations can more easily use a small amount of money to buy off community leaders.

In countries such as Mexico, an Atlas Network affiliate, the *Instituto Mexicano para la Competividad* (IMCO) presents itself as working to reintroduce competition in the energy market while exploiting indigenous peoples' lands and resources. In Spain, the *Foro Regulación*

Inteligente organization is active in Malaga, and the Free Russia Institute in Lithuania actively promotes less regulation of resource use and development.

While libertarian policies and goals are not inherently evil, extremist policies in sabotaging the authority of indigenous peoples to freely decide who has access to or use of their lands and resources is, however, a dangerous reality. Many indigenous communities are experiencing the breakdown of their social and cultural fabric as a direct result of sabotage of their decision-making abilities by the corporate/think tank network operated by organizations such as the Atlas Network.

Atlas Network Policy Framework

The policies espoused by the Atlas Network, its members and corporate sponsors include the following as stated officially by the Atlas Network:

- Government was never and cannot be the solution to the problems facing Aboriginal groups.
- Prevent implementation of UNDRIP and especially the internationally established process of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) that requires states' governments, corporations, and other entities to obtain the consent of indigenous communities when actions are contemplated that may have an effect on the interests of the communities.

¹¹ The Board of Directors is chaired by Debbi Gibbs, formerly of Gibbs Technologies (with business mainly conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa <https://gibbstech.co.za/about-us>) with a roster including thirteen other members: <https://www.atlasnetwork.org/our-people>

- Declare FPIC and granting of veto authority to indigenous peoples undermining economic development, individual rights, and sovereignty of the state government.
- Encourage policies that allow Indigenous populations to benefit from mining and energy development by promoting their usage and development of natural resources such as gas, potash, uranium, and oil located on their lands.
- Indigenous communities would enjoy greater autonomy from government intervention as well as increased business opportunities and partnerships with companies operating on their land.

Atlas Network Strategy:

- Recruit an individual who is knowledgeable about, and trusted by, indigenous people to lead the effort.
- Identify and empower an advisory team that is representative of the American Indians to champion the policy goals and recommendations of the Institute in their communities.
- Recognize when the Institute's voice isn't the most effective voice and be willing to give the spotlight to more representative voices who will champion our solutions such as Indians supporting the movement for free enterprise, individual rights, and anti-government involvement in the economy.
- Establish connections within the Aboriginal community to develop a 12-person Advisory

Committee composed of reform-minded Aboriginal economists, business leaders, lawyers, public policy analysts, and scholars.

- Lend credibility to the efforts of the Institutes throughout the indigenous community using the Advisory Committee as a “shield against opponents.”
- Remember efforts that seek to challenge the status quo require persistence and flexibility. Many small triumphs over an extended time often result in greater change than a single large victory.

Horseman 4: Climate, Environmental & Biodiversity Collapse

An obvious challenge to tribes everywhere.

Horseman 5: Criminal Gangs, Killing and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, White Supremacists, and Drug Cartels

Armed Groups directly attack, threaten, and forcibly evict indigenous peoples in their ancestral homelands worldwide, notably in the United States, Mexico, Syria, Iraq, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Botswana. The Bundy militias have been active in the Northern Paiute ancestral territories seeking to take land for “ranchers and miners” in the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge created by the United States and taken from the Paiute in 1868. Active armed groups such as the private military company Wagner Group founded by Dmitriy Valeryevich Utkin (a former lieutenant colonel and brigade commander of a special forces unit

owned by billionaire Russian oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin actively target indigenous communities. The Wagner Group is reported to operate in Syria, Libya, Venezuela, Sudan, Ukraine, and the Central African Republic. The company is registered in Argentina and has offices in Saint Petersburg, Russia, and in China's Hong Kong.¹² Extremist Nazi groups sponsored independently include the Base and Feuerkrieg Division that operate near the Washington State located in Spokane near the Spokane Tribe and the Idaho-located Coeur de Lane tribe in the United States are violent private non-state groups.

Killing and Missing Indigenous Women:
<https://thecrimereport.org/2022/05/05/a-crisis-ignored-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women/> An estimated 45,000 women and girls were killed by family members in 2021 worldwide; and in Asia 17,800 with women and girls in Africa at greater risk of being killed by a family member with 2.5 per 100,000 of the female population in Africa compared with 1.4 per 100,000 of the female population in the Americas, 1.2 per 100,000 in Oceania, .8 per 100,000 in Asia and .6 per 100, in Europe.

Gangs and white supremacists led the Anti-Indian Movement of the 1970s through the 1990s and continue to be active on and near Indian

reserves and reservations in the United States and Canada. They are now elected state, county, and federal officials. The Citizen's Equal Rights Alliance in Kalispell, Montana, is one of the most active anti-Indian groups in the United States seeking to terminate tribal governments, abrogate US/tribal treaties, and converting management of tribal resources to state governments.¹³

"Drug traffickers and irregular armed groups pose the greatest threat" to indigenous peoples, stated UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples James Anaya in a 2011 statement.¹⁴ Drug cartels in Colombia and Mexico threaten and force the removal of tribal communities from their lands. Kichwa communities in Peru are struggling to control illicit coca growing on their lands in the district of Huibayoc and also unsanctioned logging of high-value timber from lupuna, misho, marir mari and caupuri trees.¹⁵ Drug trafficking is prevalent on the Saint Regis Mohawk and Tohono O'odham territories cited mainly since they are located on borders between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Drug rings have operated on the Red Lake and White Earth Indian reservations as well. Indian reservations and other indigenous territories provide drug rings with havens without the knowledge of tribal officials. The presence of

¹² Sof, Eric. (2022) Wagner Group: Notorious Private Military Company. Spec Ops Magazine. <https://special-ops.org/wagner-group-notorious-private-military-company/>

¹³ The Center for World Indigenous Studies documented the Anti-Indian Movement in its 1992 publication "Anti-Indian Movement on the Tribal Frontier" (available free at <https://cwis.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Anti-Indian-Movement-on-the-Tribal-Frontier-1992.pdf>). Chuck Tanner, the lead researcher at the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights, issued a Special Report in 2015 with the Montana Human Rights Network and the Native Generational Change (<https://www.irehr.org/2015/10/19/the-american-lands-council-and-the-anti-indian-movement/>)

¹⁴ Deálogo Américas <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/drug-cartels-armed-groups-pose-grave-threat-to-indigenous-rights/#.Y8gxuuLMJhE>

¹⁵ <https://news.mongabay.com/2021/08/drug-trafficking-and-illegal-logging-threaten-indigenous-communities-in-peru/>

drug rings, cartels, and enterprises have been identified and active on the Turtle Mountain, Spirit Lake, and Fort Berthold reservations as well, according to a report by Sara E. Teller of the Legal Reader.¹⁶

The indigenous women targeted for killing and the forced missing of indigenous women and girls as blatant acts of femicide is a chilling threat to indigenous families in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, and other countries in the western hemisphere, but not isolated to the Americas only. The reality of femicide in indigenous communities is present on every continent, and the failure of official state police and investigative authorities to uncover perpetrators is common. The problem of drug gangs and cartels is no less a threat to indigenous communities. Armed groups such as the Bundy Militia, the Wagner Group,

cartels, and criminal acts of femicide are separate but often increasingly common crimes against indigenous peoples.

The “Five Horsemen” challenge organizations dedicated to advancing the rights, and cultural survival of indigenous peoples. Organizations cannot ignore the presence of the appalling mass violence that the Horsemen produce. The reality is that the violence placed on indigenous peoples is asymmetrical, where the power, wealth, and capacity for violence exist and calls on organizations like the National Congress of American Indians and the Center for World Indigenous Studies to produce actions to build capacities in indigenous nations to defend themselves.

¹⁶ <https://www.legalreader.com/drug-traffickers-target-american-indian-reservations-across-the-u-s/>

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