

COALITION FOR NAVAJO LIBERATION



"Will we let ourselves be destroyed in our turn without a struggle, give up our homes, our country bequeathed to us by the Great Spirit, the graves of our dead, and everything that is dear and sacred to us? I know you will cry with me, "Never! Never!"

Tecumtha (Tecumseh) 1800



A Brief History of CNL

In April 1974, the bodies of three Navajo men were found near Farmington, N.M. The bodies were severely beaten, tortured and burned. Three white youths confessed to the mutilation murders and were sent off for psychiatric testing.

The incident is not uncommon for northwestern New Mexico. A few weeks before it happened, three other mutilated Indian bodies had been found. Four others were to be discovered a few weeks afterwards.

This outrage could no longer be tolerated. It was time for racist killings and beatings of Indians to stop. It was time to demand dignity and respect. It was time to demand productive jobs and decent housing. In general, it was time to unite and fight for the democratic rights of the Navajo people.

So the Coalition for Navajo Liberation (CNL), a united front of Indian organizations, was formed. The immediate goal of CNL was to fight the racism that motivated the brutal murders. Local, state and national officials were called upon to investigate the racism and to do something about it. Marches and rallies of thousands of people were organized to pressure officials to act.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights responded to CNL's efforts. It promised to investigate community attitudes in Farmington toward Navajos. It also promised to study the economic development of the Navajo reservation.

With this significant victory, CNL established itself among the Navajo people. Navajos from throughout the reservation started looking toward the coalition for guidance and direction in their individual struggles against injustice.

And CNL did not let them down. Soon, the coalition was helping its people in all kinds of ways. It was helping them file suits against racist northern New Mexico police departments. It was initiating struggles for better health care in the reservation. It was pressuring public officials to provide Navajos better jobs. It was assisting Navajos in getting the essential social services due them from the government. In fact, Navajos deserted racist and bureaucratic government offices, in obvious preference for CNL's services and treatment.

In July 1975, the New Mexico Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights studied the community

attitudes in Farmington toward Navajos. The study confirmed what CNL had been saying: Racism against Navajos is institutionalized in the Farmington area.

In September 1975, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, itself, investigated the economic and social conditions on the Navajo reservation. Again, CNL's statements were confirmed as the commission admitted that Navajos are a colonized people.

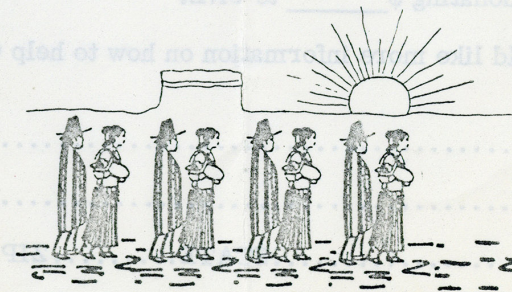
Today, after the government has done little more than confirm the racism and oppression suffered by Navajos, CNL is still spearheading the fight for Navajo Liberation. It is currently fighting monopolistic energy companies that are trying to build coal gasification plants on Navajo lands.

The companies are promising jobs to Navajos in exchange for the right to tear up Navajo land. CNL is fighting this deal, which will shortchange the Navajos.

If the deal goes through, the companies will mine the land for up to 75 years, and the resulting erosion will make the land unproductive for hundreds of years after the companies leave.

Meanwhile, the jobs open to Navajos will only last 10 to 15 years, since most will be hired as construction workers. It is estimated the building phase will last only 10 to 15 years. Once the plants are built, the majority of the jobs will require highly skilled and educated people. This is an automatic exclusion of Navajos because as a colonized people, they have been denied an adequate education.

The building of coal gasification plants on Navajo lands may mean an immediate drop in the unemployment of Navajos. But in the long run, the rate will remain the same or increase. Furthermore, the social unrest caused by the erosion of the Navajo land base will more than off set any short term drop in their unemployment rate.





FIGHTING ENERGY COMPANIES
AND ALL OTHER ATTACKS ON
THE NAVAJO PEOPLE REQUIRES
MONEY AND A UNITED EFFORT.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP
CNL AND THE NAVAJO PEOPLE,
SEND A DONATION TO CNL c/o
LUCY KEESWOOD, OR CALL (505)
268-9044.



Coalition for Navajo Liberation
c/o Lucy Keeswood
P.O. Box 173
Waterflow, NM 87421

_____ I am donating \$ _____ to CNL.

_____ I would like more information on how to help CNL.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY.....STATE.....ZIP.....