

For more information regarding the contents of this booklet contact:



A.I.M. Interpretive Center
1113 East Franklin Avenue Suite 210A
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404
P# 612-886-2107 F# 612-871-2176
E-mail: info@AIM-IC.com
www.AIM-IC.com

To make a donation visit our website—All donations are tax exempt

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*To book speaking engagements contact:
A.I.M. Interpretive Center Office*

International Indian Treaty Council
The Redstone Bldg.
2940 16th Street Suite 305
San Francisco, CA 94103



*Clyde & Peggy Bellecourt's Grandsons: Eric & Eldon
Our Future*



American Indian Movement



"Past, Present & Future"





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Letter from Clyde Bellecourt
A Founder and National Director of AIM



“If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian he can live in peace...Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. Give them all an even chance to live and grow. All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the Mother of all people, and people should have equal rights upon it...We only ask an even chance to live as other men live. We ask to be recognized as men. We ask that the same law shall work alike on all men...Let me be a free man...free to work, free to trade, free to choose my teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to think and talk and act for myself – and I will obey every law, or submit to the penalty.”

Chief Joseph ~ Nez Perce, 1879

I lived here 77 years. This whole reservation was in total darkness and somewhere these young men started the American Indian Movement and they came to our reservation and they turned that light on inside and its getting bigger - now we can see things.”

*Gladys Bissonette, ~ Oglala Lakota
Civil Rights Organization Leader, Wounded Knee 1973*



“A few more moons, a few more winters, and not one of the descendants of the mighty hosts that once moved over this broad land or lived in happy homes, protected by the Great Spirit, will remain to mourn over the graves of a people once more powerful and hopeful than yours. But why should I mourn at the untimely fate of my people? Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. It is the order of nature, and regret is useless. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come, for even the White Man whose God walked and talked with him as friend to friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see.”

Chief Seattle 1854 ~ Suquamish

American Indian Movement Our Story

In 1968, Minneapolis and the Minnesota reservations reverberated with reports of beatings, arrests, and drastically low education results for American Indian children.

The American Indian Movement (AIM) was formed and the first order of business was to create safe schools, where Indian children could learn their own culture, in environments that were supportive of children and valued parents and families.

While keeping the community safe, AIM was instrumental in the creation of several Minnesota and National nonprofit organizations, including the Legal Rights Center, Indian Health Board of Minneapolis, Heart of the Earth Survival School (Minneapolis), Red School House (St. Paul), International Indian Treaty Council, Federation of Survival Schools, MIGIZI Communications, Circle of Life Survival School, American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center (AIOIC), Anishinabe Akeeng, the Elaine Stately Peacemaker Center, National Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media, Food Connection, and the Native American Community Clinic.



MAIC Healthy Nations Youth Leadership Graduates receiving diploma and gifts from AIM at the 23rd Annual *On the Red Road* PowWow, celebrating sobriety.

What is The American Indian Movement?

Things will never be the same again and that is what the **American Indian Movement** is all about...

They are respected by many, hated by some, but they are never ignored.

They are the catalyst for Indian Sovereignty...

They intend to raise questions in the minds of all, questions that have gone to sleep in the minds of Indians and non-Indians alike...

From the outside **AIM** people are tough people, and they had to be...

AIM was born out of the dark violence of police brutality and the voiceless despair of Indian people in the courts of Minneapolis, MN...

AIM was born because a few knew that it was enough, enough to endure for themselves and all others like them who were people without power or rights...

AIM people have known the insides of jails; the long wait; the no appeal of the courts for Indians because many of them were there...

From the inside, **AIM** people are cleansing themselves; many have returned to the old traditional religions of their tribes, away from the confused notions of a society that has made them slaves of their own unguided lives...

AIM is first, a spiritual movement, a religious re-birth, and then the re-birth of dignity and pride in a people.

AIM succeeds because they have beliefs to act upon.

The **American Indian Movement** is attempting to connect the realities of the past with the promise of tomorrow...

They are people in a hurry, because they know that the dignity of a person can be snuffed by despair and a belt in a cell of a city jail...

They know that the deepest hopes of the old people could die with them...

They know that the Indian way is not tolerated in White America because it is not acknowledged as a decent way to be...

Sovereignty, Land and Culture cannot endure if a people are not left in peace...

The **American Indian Movement** is then, the Warrior Class of this Century who are bound to the bond of the Drum, who vote with their bodies instead of their mouths...

THERE BUSINESS IS HOPE.

*Words and thoughts by
Birgil Kills Straight, Oglala Lakota Nation.
Richard LaCourse, Director, the American Indian Press Association
1973*

Original Objectives American Indian Movement (A.I.M) - July 1968

We the concerned Indian Americans, residents of the Minneapolis area, organized to upgrade the conditions in which the urban Indian lives and to improve the image of the urban Indian.

We the Concerned Indian Americans, to be known as the American Indian Movement (A.I.M), residents of the Minneapolis and greater Minneapolis area, do hereby adopt the following goals:

Our main objective is to solicit and broaden opportunities for the urban Indian in order that he may enjoy his full rights as a citizen of these United States.

Short-term Objectives

- *Establish a program to better the Indian housing problem.*
- *Establish a program directed toward Indian youth.*
- *Establish a positive program for employment of Indian Americans.*
- *Establish a program to educate industry in the area of Indian culture and its effect on the Indian.*
- *Establish a program to improve the communications between the Indian and the community.*
- *Establish a program to educate the Indian citizen in his responsibility to his community.*

Long-term Objectives

- *To generate unification within the Indian people.*
- *To inform all Indian Americans of community and local affairs.*
- *To encourage Indian Americans to become active in community affairs.*
- *To bring the economic status of Indian Americans up to that of the general community.*

“All of the original AIM objectives have been met and exceeded”
Clyde Bellecourt AIM Founder and National Director



The AIM Interpretive Center

In 2011, The Heart of the Earth Survival School, Inc changed its name to the AIM Interpretive Center to expand on its original mission to include the construction of an Interpretive Center that would house AIM historical records and media.

The AIM Interpretive Center is currently located in Minneapolis, MN and researchers, scholars, students and the community are welcome to view AIM Photographs, speak with AIM Members and research the archives. To provide the information you are requesting please call 612-886-2107 to schedule an appointment.

Other programs the AIM Interpretive Center provides are: Native Youth and Culture Programming, AIM Traveling Exhibit, Native Social Justice, Native Education and History Seminars and a Speakers Bureau.

Archives of the AIM Interpretive Center

The Archives is the final repository for official and unofficial records of the American Indian Movement. Its primary purpose is to aid the community's memory-keeping by collecting documents of the history of AIM, and to provide source material for students, scholars, members of the community, and other interested persons who wish to understand the impact of AIM's activism and programming, and the organization's role in the ongoing struggle for social justice and dignity for all peoples.

The Mission of the Archives is

- To promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, programs, and goals of the American Indian Movement.
- To appraise, collect, organize, describe, and preserve records of historical, legal, fiscal, and/or administrative value to the American Indian Movement Interpretive Center.
- To provide adequate facilities for the retention and preservation of such records.
- To serve research and scholarship by making available and encouraging the use of collections.
- To implement records management by formulating policy and procedures that will ensure the collection and preservation of archival materials.

“Now that the American Indian Movement continues a 45-year history of successfully working with thousands of Indian youth and adults, its mission still focuses on those yet to be born.”
Clyde Bellecourt AIM Founder and National Director

THE TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES

20-POINT POSITION PAPER

PREAMBLE

AN INDIAN MANIFESTO FOR RESTITUTION,
REPARATIONS, RESTORATION OF LANDS FOR A
RECONSTRUCTION OF AN INDIAN FUTURE IN
AMERICA

THE TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES

We need not give another recitation of past complaints nor engage in redundant dialogue of discontent. Our conditions and their cause for being should perhaps be best known by those who have written the record of America's action against Indian people. In 1832, Black Hawk correctly observed: *You know the cause of our making war. It is known to all white men. They ought to be ashamed of it.*

The government of the United States knows the reasons for our going to its capital city. Unfortunately, they don't know how to greet us. We go because America has been only too ready to express shame, and suffer none from the expression - while remaining wholly unwilling to change to allow life for Indian people.

We seek a new American majority - a majority that is not content merely to confirm itself by superiority in numbers, but which by conscience is committed toward prevailing upon the public will in ceasing wrongs and in doing right. For our part, in words and deeds of coming days, we propose to produce a rational, reasoned manifesto for construction of an Indian future in America. If America has maintained faith with its original spirit, or may recognize it now, we should not be denied.

Press Statement issued: October 31, 1972

THE TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES 20-POINT POSITION PAPER

We want to have a new **RELATIONSHIP** with you... an **HONEST** one!
OUR 20 POINT PROPOSAL
October 1972, Minneapolis, Minnesota
"TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES"

FOR RENEWAL OF CONTRACTS- RECONSTRUCTION OF INDIAN COMMUNITIES & SECURING AN INDIAN FUTURE IN AMERICA!

- 1) RESTORATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY-MAKING AUTHORITY:
- 2) ESTABLISHMENT OF TREATY COMMISSION TO MAKE NEW TREATIES:
- 3) AN ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE & JOINT SESSIONS OF CONGRESS:
- 4) COMMISSION TO REVIEW TREATY COMMITMENTS & VIOLATIONS:
- 5) RESUBMISSION OF UNRATIFIED TREATIES TO THE SENATE:
- 6) ALL INDIANS TO BE GOVERNED BY TREATY RELATIONS:
- 7) MANDATORY RELIEF AGAINST TREATY RIGHTS VIOLATIONS:
- 8) JUDICIAL RECOGNITION OF INDIAN RIGHT TO INTERPRET TREATIES:
- 9) CREATION OF CONGRESSIONAL JOINT COMMITTEE ON RECONSTRUCTION OF INDIAN RELATIONS:
- 10) LAND REFORM AND RESTORATION OF A 110-MILLION ACRE NATIVE LAND BASE:
- 11) REVISION OF 25 U.S.C. 163; RESTORATION OF RIGHTS TO INDIANS TERMINATED BY ENROLLMENT AND REVOCATION OF PROHIBITIONS AGAINST "DUAL BENEFITS":
- 12) REPEAL OF STATE LAWS ENACTED UNDER PUBLIC LAW 280 (1953):
- 13) RESUME FEDERAL PROTECTIVE JURISDICTION FOR OFFENSES AGAINST INDIANS:
- 14) ABOLITION OF THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS BY 1976:
- 15) CREATION OF AN "OFFICE OF FEDERAL INDIAN RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY RECONSTRUCTION":
- 16) PRIORITIES AND PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED NEW OFFICE:
- 17) INDIAN COMMERCE AND TAX IMMUNITIES:
- 18) PROTECTION OF INDIANS' RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND CULTURAL INTEGRITY:
- 19) NATIONAL REFERENDUMS, LOCAL OPTIONS, AND FORMS OF INDIAN ORGANIZATION:
- 20) HEALTH, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATION:

A VOICE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



The International Indian Treaty Council was founded in 1974 at a gathering by the American Indian Movement in Standing Rock, South Dakota attended by more than 5000 representatives of 98 Indigenous Nations.

The symbol of the sacred pipe uniting the hemisphere was chosen for the IITC by the elders to represent the common bonds of spirituality, ties to the land and respect for traditional cultures common to all Indigenous Peoples.

The IITC supports grassroots Indigenous struggles through information dissemination, networking, coalition building, technical assistance, organizing and facilitating the effective participation of traditional People in local, regional, national and international forums, events and gatherings.

In 1977, the IITC became the first organization of Indigenous Peoples to be reorganized as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with Consultative Status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The IITC focuses on building Indigenous Peoples' participation in key U.N. fora such as the Commission on Human Rights, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the Conference of the Parties of the Convention of Biological Diversity, UNESCO and the Commission on Sustainable Development. In recent years, IITC has also participated in the International Labor Organization (ILO), U.N. World Conferences, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Archeological Congress to systematically address concerns vital to Indigenous Peoples.

The IITC submits testimony, documentation and formal complaints to these fora as well as to the U.N. Center for Human Rights and the Organization of American States (OAS), to redress grievances, increase awareness and impact the development of international standards protecting the rights and survival of Indigenous Peoples. The IITC also focuses on dissemination of information regarding the U.N. and opportunities for involvement to grassroots Indigenous communities, and works to educate and build awareness about Indigenous struggles among non-Indigenous Peoples and Organizations.

A long time ago my father told me what his father told him. There was once a Lakota Holy man called Drinks Water, who visioned what was to be; and this was long before the coming of the Wasicus. He visioned that the four-legged were going back into the earth and that a strange race had woven a spider's web all around the Lakotas. And he said, "When this happens, you shall live in barren lands, and there beside those gray houses you shall starve." They say he went back to Mother Earth soon after he saw this vision and it was sorrow that killed him.

Black Elk, Oglala Lakota Holy Man

DECLARATION OF CONTINUING INDEPENDENCE BY THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL AT STANDING ROCK INDIAN COUNTRY JUNE 1974

PREAMBLE

The United States of America has continually violated the independent Native Peoples of this continent by Executive action, Legislative fiat and judicial decision. By its actions, the U.S. has denied all Native people their International Treaty rights, Treaty lands and basic human rights of freedom and sovereignty. This same U.S. Government, which fought to throw off the yoke of oppression and gain its own independence, has now reversed its role and become the oppressor of sovereign Native people.

Might does not make right. Sovereign people of varying cultures have the absolute right to live in harmony with Mother Earth so long as they do not infringe upon this same right of other peoples. The denial of this right to any sovereign people, such as the Native American Indian Nations, must be challenged by truth and action. World concern must focus on all colonial governments to the end that sovereign people everywhere shall live as they choose; in peace with dignity and freedom.

The International Indian Treaty Conference hereby adopts this Declaration of Continuing Independence of the Sovereign Native American Indian Nations. In the course of these human events, we call upon the people of the world to support this struggle for our sovereign rights and our treaty rights. We pledge our assistance to all other sovereign people who seek their own independence.

INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL DECLARATION

The First International Treaty Council of the Western Hemisphere was formed on the land of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe on June 8-16, 1974. The delegates, meeting under the guidance of the Great Spirit, represented 97 Indian tribes and Nations from across North and South America.

We, the sovereign Native Peoples recognize that all lands belonging to the various Native Nations now situated within the boundaries of the U.S. are clearly defined by the sacred treaties solemnly entered into between the Native Nations and the government of the United States of America.

We, the sovereign Native Peoples, charge the United States of gross violations of our International Treaties. Two of the thousands of violations that can be cited are the “wrongfully taking” of the Black Hills from the Great Sioux Nation in 1877, this sacred land belonging to the Great Sioux Nation under the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. The second violation was the forced march of the Cherokee people from their ancestral lands in the state of Georgia to the then “Indian Territory” of Oklahoma after the Supreme Court of the United States ruled the Cherokee treaty rights inviolate. The treaty violation, known as the “Trail of Tears” brought death to two-thirds of the Cherokee Nation during the forced march.

The Council further realizes that securing United States recognition of treaties signed with Native Nations requires a committed and unified struggle, using every available legal and political resource. Treaties between sovereign nations explicitly entail agreements with represent “the supreme law of the land” binding each party to an inviolate international relationship.

We acknowledge the historical fact that the struggle for Independence of the Peoples of our sacred Mother Earth have always been over Sovereignty of land. These historical freedom efforts have always involved the highest human sacrifice.

We recognize that all Native Nations wish to avoid violence, but we also recognize that the United States government has always used force and violence to deny Native Nations basic human and treaty rights.

We adopt this Declaration of Continuing Independence, recognizing that struggle lies ahead – a struggle certain to be won – and that the human and treaty rights of all Native Nations will be honored.

The International Indian Treaty Council recognizes the sovereignty of all Native Nations and will stand in unity to support our Native and international brothers and sisters in their respective and collective struggles concerning international treaties and agreements violated by the United States and other governments.

All treaties between the Sovereign Native Nations and the United States Government must be interpreted according to the traditional and spiritual ways of the signatory Native Nations.

We declare our recognition of the Provisional Government of the Independent Oglala Nation, established by the Traditional Chiefs and Headmen under the provisions of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty with the Great Sioux Nation at Wounded Knee, March 11, 1973.

We condemn the United States of America for its gross violation of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty in militarily surrounding, killing and starving the citizens of the Independent Oglala Nation into exile.

We demand the United States of America recognize the sovereignty of the Independent Oglala Nation and immediately stop all present and future criminal prosecutions of sovereign Native Peoples. We call upon the conscionable nations of the world to join us in charging and prosecuting the United States of America for its genocidal practices against the sovereign Native Nations; most recently illustrated by Wounded Knee 1973 and the continued refusal to sign the United Nations 1948 Treaty on Genocide.

We reject all executive orders, legislative acts and judicial decisions of the United States related to Native Nations since 1871, when the United States unilaterally suspended treaty-making relations with the Native Nations. This includes, but is not limited to, the Major Crimes Act, the General Allotment Act, the Citizenship Act of 1924, the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, the Indian Claims Commission Act, Public Law 280 and the Termination Act. All treaties made between Native Nations and the United States made prior to 1871 shall be recognized without further need of interpretation.

We hereby ally ourselves with the colonized Puerto Rican People in their struggle for Independence from the same United States of America.

We recognize that there is only one color of Mankind in the world who is not represented in the United Nations; that is the indigenous Redman of the Western Hemisphere.

We recognize this lack of representation in the United Nations comes from the genocidal policies of the colonial power of the United States.

The International Indian Treaty Council established by this conference is directed to make the application to the United Nations for recognition and membership of the sovereign Native Nations. We pledge our support to any similar application by an aboriginal people.

This conference directs the Treaty Council to open negotiations with the government of the United States through its Department of State. We seek these negotiations in order to establish diplomatic relations with the United States. When this diplomatic relations have been established, the first order of business shall be to deal with U.S. violations of treaties with Native Indian Nations, and violations of the rights of those Native Indian Nations who have refused to sign treaties with the United States.

We, the People of the International Indian Treaty Council, following the guidance of our elders through instructions from the Great Spirit, and out of respect for our sacred Mother Earth, all her children, and those yet unborn, offer our lives for our International Treaty Rights.



Bill Wahpapah, Vice Chair and Phillip Deer, Chair, IITC, 1977

What is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

The Adoption of the Declaration by the United Nations

On September 13, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, affirming that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples and have the right to self-determination, along with an array of related rights, including rights to traditional lands and territories.

The United Nations is the world's major international organization. It is made up of 193 Member States, including the United States, and all of the other countries of the globe that are widely recognized as independent states, with little exception. All of the Member States are represented in the General Assembly, and the overwhelming majority of them – 144 – voted in favor of the Declaration. Only four – the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – voted against it, while eleven abstained, and thirty-seven members were absent.

Notably, the four countries that initially opposed the Declaration have switched their positions to 'supporting' the declaration as a non- legally-binding document. Australia announced its support for the Declaration in April 2009, New Zealand in April 2010, Canada in November 2010. Finally on December 16, 2010, the United States endorsed the Declaration.

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Summary

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- [Article 2:](#) Equality
- [Article 3:](#) Self Determination
- [Article 4:](#) Distinctive Characteristics
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Leonard Crow Dog,
AIM Spiritual Leader

A Brief History of the American Indian Movement Preamble

by Laura Waterman Wittstock and Elaine J. Salinas

In the 45 years of its formal history, the American Indian Movement (AIM) has given witness to a great many changes. We say formal history, because the movement existed for 500 years without a name. The leaders and members of today's AIM never fail to remember all of those who have traveled on before, having given their talent and their lives for the survival of the people.

At the core of the movement is Indian leadership under the direction of Thunder Before the Storm - Clyde H. Bellecourt, and others. Making steady progress, the movement has transformed policy making into programs and organizations that have served Indian people in many communities. These policies have consistently been made in consultation with spiritual leaders and elders. The success of these efforts is indisputable, but perhaps even greater than the accomplishments is the vision defining what AIM stands for.

Indian people were never intended to survive the settlement of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere, our Turtle Island. With the strength of a spiritual base, AIM has been able to clearly articulate the claims of Native Nations and has had the will and intellect to put forth those claims.

The movement was founded to turn the attention of Indian people toward a renewal of spirituality which would impart the strength of resolve needed to reverse the ruinous policies of the United States, Canada, and other colonialist governments of Central and South America. At the heart of AIM is deep spirituality and a belief in the connectedness of all Indian people.

During the past forty five years, The American Indian Movement has organized communities and created opportunities for people across the Americas and Canada. AIM is headquartered in Minneapolis with chapters in many other cities, rural areas and Indian Nations.

AIM has repeatedly brought successful suit against the federal government for the protection of the rights of Native Nations guaranteed in treaties, sovereignty, the United States Constitution, and laws. The philosophy of self-determination upon which the movement is built is deeply rooted in traditional spirituality, culture, language and history. AIM develops partnerships to address the common needs of the people. Its first mandate is to ensure the fulfillment of treaties made with the United States. This is the clear and unwavering vision of The American Indian Movement.

It has not been an easy path. Spiritual leaders and elders foresaw the testing of AIM's strength and stamina. Doubters, infiltrators, those who wished they were in the leadership, and those who didn't want to be but wanted to tear down and take away have had their turns. No one, inside or outside the movement, has so far been able to destroy the will and strength of AIM's solidarity. Men and women, adults and children are continuously urged to stay strong spiritually, and to always remember that the movement is greater than the accomplishments or faults of its leaders. Inherent in the spiritual heart of AIM is knowing that the work goes on because the need goes on. Indian people live on Mother Earth with the clear understanding that no one will assure the coming generations except ourselves. No one from the outside will do this for us. And no person among us can do it all for us, either. Self-determination must be the goal of all work. Solidarity must be the first and only defense of the members.

In November, 1972 AIM brought a caravan of Native Nation representatives to Washington, DC, to the place where dealings with Indians have taken place since 1849: the US Department of Interior. AIM put the 20—Points proposal directly before the President of the United States.



HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT (AIM) 1968 To Present



July 28, 1968

- AIM is founded on July 28 to combat the history of police brutality and racism experienced by Indian people in the Twin Cities of Minnesota and to bring needed governmental funding into the Indian community. Similar conditions would lead to the formation of a national network of AIM chapters in 16 cities/communities across the country.

1969

- AIM Members found Indian Health Board, the first urban health clinic in the nation dedicated to the care of Indian people.
- AIM participates in the 19-month occupation of Alcatraz Island that reclaimed abandoned federal land in the name of Native Nations. First Indian radio broadcasts from Radio Free Alcatraz are heard in the Bay Area of San Francisco.
- AIM issues challenges to local and national church bodies to “live up to their ideals of Christianity and brotherhood” by supporting Indian people in their efforts to determine their own needs, priorities, and actions. Challenges presented to the Minnesota Council of Churches, Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., U.S. Congress on Evangelism, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the National Council of Churches.
- Under pressure from AIM, Minneapolis Mayor Arthur Naftalin, proclaims the first Indian Week to honor and recognize the contributions of American Indian people. It was the first Indian Week celebration to occur anywhere in the country.

1970

- Legal Rights Center opens in Minneapolis through the activism and support of AIM, African American activists, and progressive attorneys committed to addressing the overrepresentation of Indian youth, adults, and people of color in Minnesota's correctional system. To date, the Center has provided legal representation to nearly 40,000 Indigenous clients and outreach and services to an additional and outreach to an additional 4,000 people each year.
- Per treaty agreement, AIM reclaims abandoned building at Naval Air Station at Fort Snelling with plans to develop education program to serve the Indian community.
- AIM assists the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe of Wisconsin in their takeover of Winter Dam, a dam controlled by Northern States Power that flooded much of the reservation land. This led to legal action and the return of over 25,000 acres of land to the tribe.

1971

- AIM travels to Washington, DC to protest the historic misuse and abuse of tribal land and resources by the BIA and calls for the Citizen's Arrest of John Old Crow, Deputy Commissioner of the BIA. Twenty-four AIM members are arrested, but quickly released when BIA Commissioner, Louis Bruce, drops the charges.

1972

- Heart of the Earth Survival School in Minneapolis, and Red School House in St. Paul, both founded by AIM, open to provide a culturally-based educational alternative for Indian children who have dropped-out or are being pushed-out of public schools.
- Trail of Broken Treaties March on Washington, DC ends in occupation of Bureau of Indian Affairs Headquarters, and presentation of AIM's 20-Point Plan demanding the restoration of 110 million acres of land to Native People.
- AIM under the leadership of Clyde Bellecourt and Lehman Brightman founder of Americas before Columbus removes Catholic Priest from Holy Rosary Catholic Church designated as overseer of all Lakota ceremonies by the US Bureau of Indian Affairs from the Sundance Circle on the Pine Ridge Reservation in SD. Today, Indigenous Peoples throughout the western hemisphere continue to self-determine, and retain the spiritual sovereignty of ancient practices set forth by the American Indian Movement on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in the summer of 1972.

1973

- At the request of Lakota elders and the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO), AIM leads the 71-day takeover of Wounded Knee, S.D., to protest corruption on the Pine Ridge Reservation and over 60 unsolved murders of Indian people never addressed by the judicial systems of South Dakota or the U.S.
- The We Will Remember Survival School is founded on the Pine Ridge Reservation by AIM members as a tribute to the 250 Lakota people massacred at Wounded Knee in 1890 and those participating in its 71-day occupation in 1973

1974

- AIM establishes the International Indian Treaty Council at the request of tribal elders who foresee the need for an international forum for the discussion and defense of Indian treaty rights.
- AIM is invited by Sinn Fein, the political arm of the IRA, to establish a Gaelic language school, modeled after the Survival Schools, to reintroduce the indigenous language to children of Ireland. AIM is invited to lead the Bloody Sunday March in Derry, Northern Ireland.
- Clyde Bellecourt (AIM) founder invited to address the World Council of Churches, in Montreaux, Switzerland, following Wounded Knee 1973 AIM charges the U.S government with gross violations of treaties, human rights, and genocide of Indian Nations, where whole tribes were erased from the face of the earth in collusion with Christian religion.

1975

- U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development selects AIM to sponsor Little Earth of United Tribes, the only Indian preference Section 8 Urban Housing program in the country.

1977

- MIGIZI Communications is founded with AIM support to counter misrepresentation and falsehoods promulgated about Native Peoples in the major media. MIGIZI produces First Person Radio, the first nationally distributed Indian radio news magazine in the country.
- The United Nations, for the first time, formally recognizes indigenous peoples of the world by granting the International Indian Treaty Council Non-Governmental Organizational (NGO) status.

- AIM calls for the enactment of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act that ends the nearly 100 years of persecution by the government and religious institutions that forced the practice of Indian religions underground.
- AIM establishes the first prison education program in the country to provide educational enrichment and spiritual healing to incarcerated Indian adults. This program becomes an international model replicated throughout the U.S. and Canada.

1979

- American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center (AIOIC) founded by Clyde Bellecourt and started by AIM to train Indian people for living-wage jobs. AIOIC is recognized by the U.S. Dept of Labor as one of the premier workforce development programs in the country, taking 45,000 people off the welfare rolls and putting them on payrolls.

1981

- Dakota AIM establishes the Yellow Thunder Camp in the Black Hills of South Dakota in honor of Raymond Yellow Thunder, a Lakota man, tortured and brutally murdered by whites in Gordon, NE. The camp was established to exert the Lakota People's claim to the Black Hills under the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty.

1983

- KILI Radio Station, the first Indian-owned and operated public radio station in the U.S., is founded by AIM in Porcupine, S.D.

1984

- Federation of Native Controlled Survival Schools is created by AIM to advocate and promote culturally-based educational alternative programs in the U.S. and Canada. Sixteen survival schools from the U.S. and Canada are members.

1988

- AIM opens the Elaine Stately/Peacemakers Center to provide out of afterschool cultural activities and divert them away from gang involvement and other risk-taking behaviors. The Center offers the first organic gardening program for Native youth in the Twin Cities.
- AIM sponsors the first Annual On the Red Road New Year's Powwow to provide Indian families and community members in Minneapolis with a culturally-based, sober opportunity to come together to celebrate the New Year.

1989

- AIM secures the boat landings for tribal members as they are physically attacked and threatened by racist groups, Protecting America's Rights and Resources (PAAR) and Stop Treaty Rights Abuse (STA), while exercising their treaty rights to spear-fishing in northern Wisconsin lakes.

1990

- 1st Annual Youth & Elders International Cultural Gathering is held on the land of Philip Deere, Muskogee Creek spiritual leader, in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

1991

- In the past 44 years AIM has been successful in getting over 1,400 high schools, colleges, and universities to change their racist sports team names, logos and mascots that denigrate Indian people, their tribal names and their traditional way of life.
- National Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media is founded by AIM to protest the use of Indian names and mascots by sports teams. Demonstrators, led by AIM, protest the Washington Redskins logo and name during the 1992 Super Bowl held in Minneapolis.

1994

- The Minneapolis Star-Tribune agrees to stop using professional sports team names that refer to Indian people.

1996

- AIM joins with indigenous people from throughout the Americas at the first and second Intercontinental Encounter for Humanity and Against Neo-Liberalism in the rainforests of Chiapas, Mexico.

2000

- First-ever Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the World is established in the United Nations after many years of advocacy by AIM and the International Indian Treaty Council.

2001

- AIM representatives join the Zapatista Army's National Liberation March for Peace, Justice, Dignity, in Zocolo Plaza, Mexico City

2003

- Native American Community Clinic is founded by AIM and three female doctors. The clinic has served 14,000 community members since its founding.

2006

- AIM plays a lead advocacy role in the adoption of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Minneapolis Public Schools and the Minneapolis American Indian community that publicly recognizes and apologizes for the historic failure of the public schools to adequately educate Indian children. The MOA is the first of its kind in the country.

2007

- The United Nations "Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" affecting 375 million Indigenous people from around the world, passes the United Nations General Assembly after more than 30 years of ceaseless effort by AIM and other indigenous peoples
- AIM and the International Treaty Council negotiate an agreement with the government of Venezuela to provide heating fuel to low-income Indian people living on reservations throughout North America.

2010

- AIM Interpretive Center is founded to identify, collect, and archive the millions of photographs, media, documents, art, and Internet content of the Movement. The Interpretive Center's goal is to educate current and future generations of Indian and non-Indian people about AIM's legacy of activism and the true history of colonialism and its impact on Indigenous peoples.

2010 to Present

- AIM continues to sponsor the Annual International Youth & Elders Gathering. In 2012, the 22nd Annual Gathering and Sundance was held in Pipestone, MN
- AIM continues to fight for justice for American Indians and other Indigenous peoples through its involvement in the International Indian Treaty Council, and through its ongoing work to improve the quality of life for Indian people through the many organizations it founded. These organizations continue to address the most pressing needs in the American Indian community including health, education, housing, legal advocacy, job training, and media.



First International Treaty Council, Geneva, Switzerland 1977

Letter from Clyde Bellecourt A Founder and National Director of AIM

Dear AIM Relatives and Friends:

July 28, 2014 AIM will be celebrating the forty sixth anniversary of the founding of the movement. AIM is one of the most significant spiritually guided indigenous organization to ever take place in Indian country in known history. Thank you for taking the time to read our recorded history of AIM in this booklet you are all part of this history.

Traditional leaders, visionaries and spiritual medicine people of many different tribes have told me and others in the movement, that a new awakening would come at a time in our history, when we would be so beaten down by the U.S government in collusion with the Christian Church and white European education (*boarding schools*) to the point that we felt nothing could be done, to change the conditions we were forced to live under. In these prophesies the elders have told us, that this new awakening is the American Indian Movement. At the heart, AIM is deeply rooted in spirituality, and a belief in the connectness of all indigenous peoples.

AIM has founded and developed the most prestigious programs in Health: Indian Health Board, Native American Community Clinic, Housing: Little Earth of United Tribes, Employment: AIOIC and the Legal Rights Center which main focus was Indian Child welfare protection. AIM has also Prison work spiritual ceremonies. AIM challenged the Minnesota Council of Churches to put the Division of Indian Work, under the control of Indians for Indian people. AIM programs have brought millions of dollars in services to our communities and for our people.



Eddie Benton-Benai, Grand Chief,
Three Fires Society



Thomas Beanyacya,
Telling the Hopi Prophecy

AIM was successful in the revival of our Sacred Ceremonies which were outlawed by the US government, and nearly destroyed by organized religion within the churches. In 1978, I coordinated the longest walk from California to Washington DC defeating 24 legislated bills, designed to terminate all treaties—and forced the US government to pass the American Indian Religion Freedom Act.

AIM responded to the call for help from our elders in Wisconsin and Minnesota who were exercising the treaty rights both on reservation land, and land that was ceded. Super right wing organization with weapons of mass destruction attacked our traditional people they called themselves PARR (*Protect American Rights & Resources*) and STA (*Stop Treaty Abuse*) after a long struggle the Federal court in Wisconsin ruled in favor of our treaties, and eventually the US Supreme court up help our right to spear net and fish not only on our nations land, but also an off reservation ceded territory.

AIM through its International Political arm the International Indian Treaty Council, carried our treaties all the way to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, after gaining non government organization status in 1977. Indigenous peoples from all over the world joined this great movement, and organized the Permanent Forum on the Rights on Indigenous People under Bill Means leadership, and many years of struggle reaching out to Indigenous people all over the world. In 2007 The United Nations headquarters located NY, NY passed, the “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” AIM now represents over 375 million Indigenous people around the world.

It has not been an easy path spiritual leaders and elders foresaw the testing of AIMS spiritual strength and stamina; doubters, infiltrators, those who wish they were in the leadership, and those who didn't want to be but wanted to tear the movement down or take it away, have met with dismal failure.

We continually urge our men, woman, and children to stay strong spiritually, self determination must be the goal of all our work. Solidarity must be the first and only defense of our members. I thank all of you for making this organization the greatest movement in history.

With American Indian Movement Love,
Thunder Before the Storm
Aka Clyde Bellecourt
A Founder and National Director of AIM

