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Having graduated from a boarding school noted in the study, I also find it difficult to give generous credit to institutionalized school experiences for developing such a complex process as identity, particularly since these schools were historically designed to "de-Indianize" Indians. My view is further influenced by knowing that most of my peers in boarding school appeared to have their ethnic identities well resolved before coming to school. In addition, my recollection of ten years in boarding school contradicts another of McBeth's observations, i.e., boarding school experiences reinforced tribal rather than Pan-Indian identity. This was perhaps because everyone knew they were Indians and it was, therefore, more important to accentuate tribal differences. On the other hand, group solidarity was evident at certain times, especially during sporting contests and when all opponents, Indian and non-Indian, were viewed as "Outsiders."

Again, my experiences during the 1950s and 1960s were different from those of people who attended in the 1920s. Boarding schools have changed and so have the attitudes of Indians toward them. McBeth offers us an opportunity to see this as well as to ask some new questions regarding the contemporary role of boarding schools on the lives of Indian children and their families. McBeth allows her informants to speak for themselves, thus presenting through their reminiscences a positive side of boarding school experiences. Her work is a welcome addition to the literature on Indian education and studies on institutionalization and ethnicity.

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Columbus Day. By Jimmy Durham. Minneapolis: West End Press, 1983. 88 pp. \$4.50 Paper.

During the past decade several members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) have acquired a certain celebrity, both within circles of Native American activism and—by virtue of mass media exposure—before the nation as a whole. Certainly this could be said of Russell Means, whose post-Wounded Knee accolades

have included everything from interviews in *Penthouse* to portraits by Andy Warhol. The same holds true for Dennis Banks, whose exile in California as a fugitive from South Dakota Governor William Janklow's brand of justice, made him for a brief period something of a national *cause célèbre*.

In a grimmer fashion the 1975 execution-style murder of Anna Mae Aquash on the Pine Ridge Reservation has gained her a recognition she was denied in life, including a full-length documentary film, a book devoted to depicting the meaning of her life and work and a number of printed treatments. Similarly the conviction under suspicious circumstances and double-life term sentence of Leonard Peltier for the deaths of two federal agents has earned him increasing recognition as a political prisoner.

In one sense all of this is trivial, the stuff of which myths are made and, occasionally, are pabulum serving the ego strivings of insecure politicians. Still celebrity, for better or worse, tends to allow the recipient of such attention access to a relatively wide forum. If one is denied such access, as is usually the case for Indians and other groups outside the political pale of contemporary America, it is frequently impossible to make one's views heard. All too often throughout U.S. history the inarticulate are reduced to either impotence or nihilism. This consideration is hardly trivial.

If AIM were restricted entirely to the ranks of those who participated in the occupation of Wounded Knee (an untenable proposition in itself), of the well over 300 people involved, only a scant handful have acquired the requisites through which to express the meaning of their actions. Leaving aside possible questions of whether anyone other than media-elected "leaders" have anything of importance to say, we can ask instead whether the AIM rank and file has the capability of articulating itself coherently and effectively on such matters.

In large part the question would be merely academic were it not for the recent publication of a slim volume by a relatively obscure press in Minneapolis. The book is entitled *Columbus Day*. It was written by a Cherokee named Jimmy Durham. In terms of real public exposure he is perhaps best known for a reference notation at the rear of Pete Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, wherein it is brought out that "the Means women" hold Durham in low regard while Russell Means considers him to have been a "main man." Hardly a definitive description. In

actuality Durham became the first director of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) after the Oglala Lakota elders mandated the formation of the organization at the founding conference in 1974.

As IITC director Durham performed brilliantly. He was instrumental in bringing about the 1977 United Nations subcommittee hearings in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives of indigenous nations from throughout this hemisphere were for the first time allowed to explain their perspectives on the nature of Indian-White relations. He was equally instrumental in annualizing these hearings, obtaining Non-Governmental Organization status for IITC and opening formal discussions between IITC and a number of recognized governments.

Clearly this is no small range of achievements. Yet Durham has somehow always been ignored when it came time for public utterances regarding "the movement." Perhaps for this reason, perhaps for others, he left IITC in 1981, eventually to become director of the Society for a Community of Artists in New York, a position he currently holds.

With the publication of *Columbus Day* Durham simply and finally obliterates any speculation that he can organize but not communicate. To be straightforward about it: notwithstanding John Trudell's excellent *Living in Reality* (Minneapolis: Society of People Struggling to Be Free, 1982), Jimmy Durham's book is the single most eloquent and hardest-hitting literary effort yet to emerge from the AIM milieu.

Utilizing a devastating mix of prose and poetry, Durham rapidly and lucidly covers a wide range of related subjects. He discusses the essential nature of Native American traditionalism, the ongoing need to maintain it and the nature of the threat to it (as represented by an examination of the history of Indian/White relations). He concludes with an examination of the mentality of the usurping culture which has invaded and come to dominate this hemisphere.

Durham's ability to sum up a complex situation in very few words is nowhere better displayed than in the latter connection. In reference to an official U.S. government response (presented by a Mr. Mezensky) to 1979 IITC testimony in Geneva, Durham observes:

This tragic situation is growing steadily worse, even though we presented these statistics to the [United Na-

tions] Human Rights Commission's 34th session, at which time Mr. Mezensky stated Indian people were "free to criticize" Under the circumstances, that is like saying Indian people are free to scream under torture. (p. 103)

Nothing more need be said on the matter.

Such is the care with which Durham has chosen his words; such is the crushing effect of what he delivers. Elsewhere he troubles himself to explain succinctly why he produced this book:

I want my words to be as eloquent
As the sound of a rattle snake.

I want my actions to be as direct
As the strike of a rattle snake.

I want results as conclusive
As the bite of the beautiful red and black coral snake. (p. 8)

In terms of both words and action one can only conclude that he has succeeded admirably. Indeed, as concerns his words, stunning seems a more appropriate description. And, given the power of his argument, one is compelled to wish him every success in achieving the results he says he seeks.

Jimmy Durham has written essays and poetry for years. They have gone all but entirely unpublished. In view of the quality of his writing as represented by *Columbus Day*, such a situation seems altogether irresponsible on the part of periodical and book publishers. One can assume now, however, that since a "product" has been delivered and can be fully assessed, elements of the publishing industry, both large and small scale, will be queueing up to bid on more of the same.

Further, if Durham's effort is in any way indicative of the potential of even a fraction of the hundreds of essentially inarticulate AIM members still alive today, we can only hope that they, too, are willing to put their material into print. Hopefully, the publication of *Columbus Day* signals the end of the pre-packaged and pre-selected (by the mainstream media) "movement spokesperson" as the exclusive source of information concerning both AIM and its motivational forces. If this is so, Durham's book will inevitably become much more than itself.

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