To the Editor:

Is it novel? Is it arrogant? Is it unconstructed old-fashioned imperialism? What explains the offering of resolutions to the Annual Meeting of the Association calling for American to interfere directly in the political affairs of the Philippines? Ru

Of the six resolutions moved at the 87th Annual Meeting, only one, number 4, on "Lack of Antikrepologieal Sensitivities" was a matter on which the majority of members of the Association could and should act as citi-

zens of the US and its states. Resolution 2, on discrimination against AIDS carriers, may have been stimulated by political debates within the US but made no reference to these; we can only presume the mover in tended that the Association's approval of this resolution in support of political action. Resolu-

tion 6, on the Calza Norte Project in Bra-
zil, was more of a politically sophisticated manner, specifying the relevance of the cause to the Association (reported also in the Oc-
tober Newsletter). We assume that the ABA could and should act as citi-
zens of the North American anthropological community the ethical and moral reper-
cussions that are even more directly dam-
aging to the Yanomami than symbolic killings, and both are the ap-
pearance of a symbolic rather than a practical category (Bruce Albert, "Violence, "Anthropology Newsletter, January 1989, p 7).

The recent publicizing of Chagnon's writ-

gings in Brazil through the mass media is a repetition of the same situation. Precisely at

this moment the over-9000 Yanomami in Brazil are affronting the effects of an invasion by nearly 20,000 miners in the largest gold rush of Amazonia since Serra Pelada in the State of Pará. At the same time, an intermin-

isterial committee is once again carrying out a preliminary survey prior to the definition and demarcation of Yanomami territory. We suspect that such publicity is being used as a racial instrument at this precise time and in this context, which is being used by the powerful lobby of mining interests as an excuse for the invasion of these Indians' lands. Four Yanomami have already killed by miners in Au-
tumn 1987, not to mention the untold numbers of Yanomami who have died since 1974 as a result of constant bombings by the mining companies, highway workers and coloniza-
tion projects. It is very difficult to know what percentage of Yanomami murdered by miners and highway workers are not recognized as such because of the silence of the Yanomami people, through resolutions and as a consequence of a compliant to the Organization of American States in 1980-81. We urge the AAA to take the necessary steps to call to the attention of the North American anthropologi-
cal community the ethical and moral repercus-
sions of their writings for critical situa-
tions such as this.

To the Editor:

The recent appearance in the Brazilian press of two articles on the Yanomami indi-

ans based on Napoleon Chagnon's latest pa-

per on Yanomami "violence" ("Leitioes-

ties, Black Revenge, and Warfare in a Tribal


To conclude, the Brazilian Anthropologi-

cal Association (ABA) feels that it is funda-

mental to insist on the need to bring to the awareness of North American anthropol-

ogists the political consequences of the aca-
demic images they build about the peoples they study. The case of the Yanomami in Brazil, who have been suffering a brutal pro-
cess of land expropriation which is justified in discriminatory images based on dubious scientific conclusions, is in this respect particularly grave and revealing. Since 1979, the American Anthropologi-
cal Association has taken an active role in the inter-
national campaigns to defend the Yanomami people, through resolutions and as a con-
stitute of a compliant to the Organization of American States in 1980-81. We urge the AAA to take the necessary steps to call to the attention of the North American anthropologi-
cal community the ethical and moral repercus-
sions of their writings for critical situa-
tions such as this.

Most of the ABA criticisms of my work in general and my recent Science article in par-
cular fall into the same intellectual press coverage of scientific reports, (2) the accuracy of my ethnographic portrayal of the Yanomami, (3) the use of biological theo-

ries in explanations of human behavior, and (4) my alleged "sensationalism." I address only these and end with (5) a comment on the AAA policy of "reci-

pience." I agree that some members of the press wrote stories based on my Science article that

Corre do Carvalho

January 1989 3

Anthropology Newsletter
Dear Dr. Judith Lisanskv

I am astonished that the AAA has accepted for publication in the AN an accusation against one of its members, without considering its possible accuracy, that he is (1) falsifying and manipulating data, (2) doing so with a "libelous" intention, (3) violating the AAA's code of ethics, (4) doing or saying things that are deliberately misleading, and (5) doing or saying things that are deliberately harmful to others. The AAA's action in this case suggests that it has lost its credibility as an organization.

Sincerely yours,

Napoleon Chagnon

University of California-Santa Barbara

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