

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Slow Death for an Indian Nation

Since early 1972 Indian agent Claudio Villas Boas had been camped in the jungle of Brazil's Amazonia. Finally, on February 4, 1973, after 382 days of patient waiting, several members of the Kranhacãcore tribe emerged from the surrounding foliage to exchange gifts with him: beads and machetes in return for bows and arrows. His constant presence and the gifts that he had left hanging across a trail had finally overcome the fears of the Kranhacãcore, who had never before been contacted by non-Indians. (The beginning of his efforts to communicate with this tribe was documented in "The Tribe That Hides From Man," shown nationwide by National Educational Television on January 8.)

Claudio Villas Boas and his brother, Orlando, have spent more than 30 years in Brazil's interior and are considered by many to be the world's leading authorities on Native Americans. They have dedicated their lives to the protection of Brazil's Indians, and their work earned them a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971. As members of Brazil's National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), they have made first contact with many Indian groups living within the unexplored regions of Amazonia.

On February 5, however, one day after making contact with the elusive Kranhacãcore tribe, they announced their intention of quitting FUNAI and leaving the Xingu National Park, an Indian reserve established largely through their efforts. According to Dr. Shelton Davis, an anthropologist at Harvard University who follows Brazilian Indian affairs, "The announced departure of Orlando and Claudio Villas Boas from the Xingu National Park and their retirement from FUNAI are entirely predictable. They are outraged by the malicious way in which the Brazilian Ministry of the Interior and FUNAI have refused to protect Indian land and territorial rights.

"In late 1970," he continued, "the lifelong struggle of the Villas Boas brothers was literally undermined when the Brazilian minister of the interior announced that 8,213 square kilometers of the Xingu Park would be alienated and one section of the Xavantina-Cachimbo highway would cut across the northern section of the park.

"This land encroachment, flagrantly illegal under Brazil's own federal consti-



Orlando and Claudio Villas Boas with Indian companion

tuition," Davis said, "uprooted several Indian groups and, through contact with the highway crews, generated a major flu epidemic. Now FUNAI refuses to protect the Kranhacãcores in their legitimate rights to property."

According to Davis, Brazil's present administration has completely abrogated the legal rights of Indians, and he feels Orlando and Claudio Villas Boas will leave their posts "so as not to be implicated in what can only be described as the systematic extermination—yes, I mean genocide—of Indian peoples in Brazil."

For most of us the word *genocide* conjures up such images of bloody massacres as the "battle" of Wounded Knee. In practice, however, genocide is usually a far more gradual and less spectacular kind of communal death, involving loss of native lands through both illegal and quasi-legal encroachment, loss of livelihood, the disappearance of native culture, and, ultimately, obliteration. Therefore, if any government permits encroachment on Indian land, whether by miners, hunters, or colonists, it is in fact committing genocide. The current exploitation of the Brazilian interior by cattle and mining interests, accompanied by a surge of road building, has caused more genocidal incidents than even the Villas Boas brothers can cope with.

As the brothers stated in a recent interview by the Brazilian paper *Jornal do Brasil*: "If a reserve for the Kranhacãcore is not immediately demarcated, and if a rigorous protection policy is not also developed, the destiny of the Kranhacãcore, as of so many other Indian nations, will be their ultimate destruction and disappearance." SALLY BATES

Keeping Ahead of the Joneses

Richard A. Easterlin, professor of economics, University of Pennsylvania, reports that money can indeed buy happiness, but only if you have more money than the people around you. Past research in this country has suggested that the level of "happiness" is in direct proportion to personal income. However, in a comparative analysis of 19 countries, a summary of which appeared in the journal *The Public Interest*, Professor Easterlin found that rich societies aren't any "happier" than poor ones.

"Each person acts on the assumption that more money will bring more happiness," he concludes, "and, indeed, if he does get more money, and others do not (or get less), his happiness increases. But when everyone acts on this assumption and incomes generally increase, no one, on the average, feels better off." Happiness thus derives not from keeping up with the Joneses but from keeping ahead of them. □

Research Ethics Revisited

Since the American Psychological Association (APA) adopted its first code of ethics two decades ago, the profession has pushed its research forward into more visible and sensitive areas of the psyche and the society. Today there is less emphasis on rat responses. Rather, a researcher may stage a fake robbery and film bystanders' reactions or, to measure a subject's self-esteem, inform him (wrongly) that he has flunked a test. In some experiments the participants are clearly harmed by the experience.

In order to sensitize its members to the ethics of human experimentation and provide relevant standards, the APA recently released perhaps the most exhaustive treatment of the problem in all the scientific disciplines. The APA report discusses the use of deception, invasion of privacy, the creation of physical or mental stress, and the administration of drugs—in fact, any technique that threatens the welfare of the subject. However, the report stresses that human ethics and scientific ethics are often in conflict, that there are no absolutes, and that the final decision rests with the researcher. The only "thou shalt" is the insistence that the subject emerge unharmed—"or at least that he is exposed only to minimal risks to which he knowingly and freely consents." □