

The what, when, why and How of

PA*RTIZANS

* In 1978 a delegation from the North Queensland Land Council (NQLC) toured Europe, at the invitation of CIMRA (Colonialism & Indigenous Minorities Research/Action). After a demo. at RTZ HQ in London, and an abortive interview with the company's staff, the NQLC asked CIMRA to establish a monitoring & action group on RTZ's activities, which could make global connections. PARTIZANS (People against Rio Tinto Zinc and its subsidiaries) was duly founded. It operated as a sub-group of CIMRA until 1980 when a meeting of indigenous and supporting groups at the Black Hills Survival Gathering, South Dakota (USA), targetted RTZ, and Union Carbide, as the two multinationals most involved in the nuclear industry which also trespassed most heavily on Aboriginal & native American land. Partizans then blossomed in its own right.

* The following year it held the first ever international tribunal on a multi-national before a jury of shareholders.

Then, in 1982, when RTZ chair, Anthony Tubke tried to prevent two Aboriginal shareholders speaking at the company's AGM, Shorby O'Neill carried the Land Rights flag onto the platform, followed by two dozen other incensed shareholders. Police were called and the dissidents violently ejected [see photo overleaf] This action was reported across the globe: from Brisbane to Brazil.

FLASHBACK TO THE 1982 AGM OF RTZ: A WATERSHED.

* Partizans, together with CIMRA (the two groups have shared offices and key personnel for ten years) has also organised numerous pro-Aboriginal actions - including sit-ins at Queensland House and Australia House - helped establish an Aboriginal Embassy in the early 1980's, assisted groups in Europe, published widely and - most recently - was a prime mover in organising against the departure of the so-called First Fleet Re-enactment Voyage.

* Partizans / Cimra also pioneered the Boycott BP campaign, after BP announced a stake (49%) in the Koolberrys Downs uranium mine

* Its main area of activity is to oppose RTZ and CRA (Conzinc Rio Tinto Australia) in numerous ways