PROGRESS TOWARD THE SURGEON GENERAL'S OBJECTIVE OF FULL IMMUNIZATION FOR CHILDREN AGE TWO

		PERCENT OF CHILDREN IMMUNIZED FOR:				
		Polio	Measles	Rubella	Mumps	DTP
WHITE	1980	83.0%	84.8	84.4	81.5	89.4
	1985	79.5	82.7	78.6	80.8	88.0
NON-WHITE	1980	62.8	69.0	73.4	70.7	68.0
	1985	56.5	74.7	66.9	64.2	69.1
Goal for 1990		90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0

Source: Children's Defense Fund

is committed to providing free accessible immunization or it is committed to unwarranted deaths. It's that simple.

Blaming the Victims

Instead of developing programs to achieve universal immunization, US public health officials try to explain declining immunization rates by blaming the victims. "Immunization clinics and physicians are there to serve the public," CDC spokesman Dean Mason said, "but they can't do much if the public doesn't respond." In fact, when immunization is available and its availability is publicized, people do respond. "Ignorance is not the basic problem," Kay Johnson contends, "and access to appropriate health care is."

Barry Ensminger, who ran a highly successful immunization campaign in New York City a few years ago, agrees. The initiative used commercials featuring Muhammed Ali, coupons for free Big Macs, messages in Spiderman comics, ads in subway cars and buses, notices on milk cartons, and even skywriters to publicize the need to get immunized before enrolling in school. But, Ensminger says, it shouldn't be necessary. If children were receiving regular health services, he contends, they would get their vaccinations automatically.

A regular source of care is critical because full immunization is a process that should begin at two months of age, continue on a recommended schedule, and be completed by two years of age, except for two final booster shots. Laws in all 50 states requiring vaccinations before school enrollment have achieved a 95 percent immunization rate for school-age children but that is too late to protect pre-schoolers who are the most vulnerable. State laws requiring immunization for licensed day care users affect only a small portion of young children.

Some health officials are coming up with gimmicks to promote immunization—like Chicago's idea for a car raffle open to parents whose children have been vaccinated. A door-to-door campaign like Maputo's, which is carried out by volunteers from youth groups, women's organizations, and high school students, would be more effective. So would a free national health care system, such as Mozambique's.

Short of that, New York City's new pre-school initiative has some promising components. One is an effort to get private physicians and hospitals to "think immunization" whenever they see a young patient. Because hospital emergency rooms are the only source of health care for many low-income people, it could make a significant difference if physicians routinely checked on and administered immunizations no matter why the child was there.

The New York City Bureau of Immunization is also working with organizations and "underground" networks in immigrant communities to publicize the fact that you don't need a green card to go to the health department and that undocumented immigrants can use the clinics without fear.

Commitment Lacking

Immunization has been modern medicine's greatest success story. It has eradicated smallpox entirely and could conceivably eliminate other childhood diseases if high enough immunization levels are maintained. But to do so requires a national commitment that in the 1980s has been sorely lacking. Recent experience with another vaccine is further evidence of a chilling disregard for the health of children of color.

In 1984, the CDC recommended prenatal screening for Hepatitis B for all high-risk women, including Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Haitians, sub-Saharan Africans, IV drug users, and health care providers. If the mother is a carrier, explains Dr. Jane Lin-Fu, Chief of the Genetics Services Branch of the Health Resources and Services Administration, the chance of her baby being infected through the birth process is very high, but if the mother is known to be a carrier, the newborn child can be vaccinated. About 85 to 90 percent of vaccinated babies will be protected.

A recent CDC survey found, however, that only about 40 percent of obstetricians were able to name two or more high risk groups and only 28 percent knew the treatment procedure for babies born to infected mothers. Despite the CDC's recommendation and the endorsements of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics, Lin-Fu reports angrily, "nothing happened—I think because this was largely a minority issue."

--Madeleine Adamson, Gary Delgado

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TREATY RIGHTS, ENDLESS WRONGS

Anti-Indian sentiment is nothing new in this country. But in the last few years, it has taken especially virulent, violent, and well-organized forms.

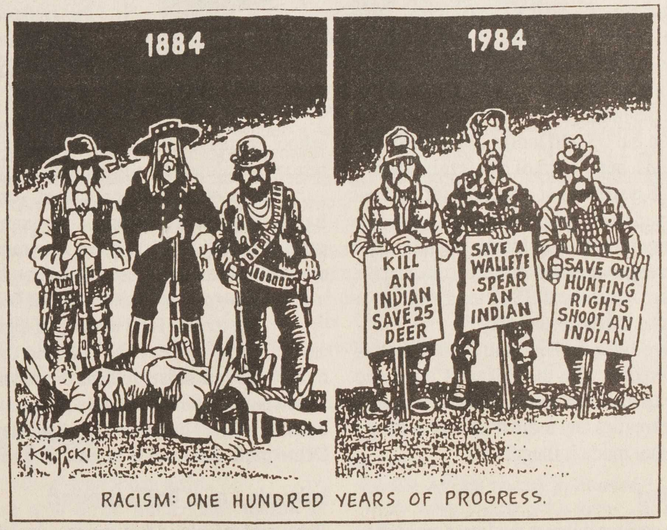
- Crowds of demonstrators sling rocks and racial slurs at Chippewa spearfishers in northern Wisconsin,
- A popular bumpersticker there says, "Save a Fish, Spear an Indian,"
- Treaty Beer is marketed in the Midwest and Northwest to raise funds for anti-treaty rights organizing,
- *Outdoor Life*, a Times-Mirror magazine, urges readers to fight the "Indian land grab,"
- Indian-owned radio station WOJB receives bomb threats and its billboard is defaced with racial epithets,
- A cross is burned on the Kitsap Reservation,
- A Lumbee candidate for a North Carolina judgeship is murdered,
- A Republican Congressional candidate runs on a platform of "curtailing special privileges granted by out-dated Indian Treaty rights."

The current wave of anti-Indian activity is a reaction to a series of Indian legal victories over the last two decades. The "Boldt" and "Voigt" decisions in particular, which reaffirmed treaty-protected hunting and fishing rights, sparked militant protests in Washington State in the late 1970s and in Wisconsin over the last few years.

Northern Wisconsin is the current hot-spot, home to the most prominent of the anti-treaty organizations, PARR or Protect Americans' Rights and Resources, and to the more belligerent Stop Treaty Abuse, sponsors of Treaty Beer.

The groups formed after a federal judge ruled in 1983 that treaties signed with the US government guarantee the Chippewa Indians the right to hunt and fish on public lands. During the Chippewa's brief spearfishing season last year, the anti-treaty groups staged fierce demonstrations. On one occasion, nearly 450 protestors kept the Indians from landing their boats for almost six hours until enough police finally arrived to disperse the crowd.

This spring, a combination of bad weather and large contingents of law enforcement officers equipped with riot gear kept the demonstrations smaller. But some protestors, including a Republican Congressional candidate, took to the water. Anti-treaty boaters, often outnumbering the Chippewas, played loud music, dragged anchors, and otherwise tried to disrupt the fishing. The leader of Stop Treaty Abuse was arrested for ramming a parked vehicle occupied by several Indians.



Mike Konopacki

"Equality for All Americans"

In March, at a PARR conference in Racine, a national coalition calling itself Citizens for Equal Rights (CERA) was founded. Its president is the organizer of the Montana group, All Citizens Equal. Other groups in the network have similar names—Equal Rights for Everyone in Wisconsin, Totally Equal Americans in Minnesota, and the North Dakota Committee for Equality.

As tribal attorney James M. Jannetta told a Congressional committee this spring, these groups have wrapped themselves in the flag and "appropriated and perverted the language of racial equality to launch a virulent attack on the very existence of Indian tribes."

PARR literature attacks the "special, superior" rights granted to Indians by "outdated, unnecessary and flawed" treaties." Arguing that "the framers of the constitution never intended that such special rights and privileges would exist in this great nation," PARR says it is "dedicated to the preservation and protection of all our natural resources, nationwide; and, more importantly, dedicated to once again bringing about equality for ALL Americans."

The goal which Indian journalist Jose Barreiro heard repeatedly at PARR's 1987 founding convention was to do away with Indian treaty rights to reservations, hunting and fishing quotas, and water rights "once and for all." Since then, Barreiro said, PARR has backed away from the 'final solution' language and takes a public stand against violence. But like the rest of the network, PARR's rhetoric and activities belie its self-proclaimed dedication to equality and environmental protection.

If PARR is so interested in protecting resources, asks Jim Schlender, executive administrator of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, why do they only object to