

**REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE:
CANADA, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE HEMISPHERE**

**March 22-23, 2000
Winnipeg**

On March 23, 2000, leaders and representatives of Indigenous Peoples from Canada, the United States, Guatemala, Panama, and Mexico, business leaders, government officials, and others met to reflect on Indigenous Peoples' issues in the Hemisphere. Organised by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, the roundtable was part of a series aimed at contributing public views to the development of Canada's foreign policy. The participants included, Assembly of First Nations, National Chief Phil Fontaine, Marc Lortie, the Prime Minister's personal representative for the Summit of Americas, Frank O'Dea, Madison Grant, and Chief Lydia Hwitsum, Cowichan First Nation. A discussion paper, prepared by Paul Chartrand for the roundtable, is attached.

1. Framing the Discussion

The day began with a Mayan ceremony conducted by Consuelo Cutzal from the Coordinating Council of Organisations of the Mayan Peoples of Guatemala. As a part of that ceremony, candles were lit and burned until the close of the roundtable. Following the ceremonial opening, David Chartrand, the President of the Manitoba Metis Federation, extended a warm welcome to everyone. He drew attention to the role of the Metis People in founding Manitoba and questioned the commitment of the Canadian government to the Metis as well as other Indigenous Peoples in the Hemisphere. Indigenous Peoples from across the continent continue to face similar challenges, including dislocation and despair.

Steve Lee, the Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD) and the Chair, thanked the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) for helping to organise the roundtable, Paul Chartrand for his discussion paper, and all the guests for coming to Winnipeg. He said that the mandate of the CCFPD is to help Canadians contribute to the development of Canada's foreign policy and to identify policy development needs, options and ideas. He drew attention to work related to Indigenous Peoples' issues the CCFPD has done in the past, including the National Forum on APEC (April-October, 1997) and the National Forum on Circumpolar Relations (May-June, 1998) and a roundtable on "Indigenous Peoples' Art and the Idea of Canada" (March 12, 2000, Vancouver).