



# Fight for the Forest: Chico Mendez in His Own Words

*Chico Mendez, Tony Gross*

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"They would have to kill us all to destroy our movement and they can't. I don't get that cold feeling anymore. I am no longer afraid of dying."-Chico Mendes, November 1988 Chico Mendes, the charismatic founder of the Brazilian rubber tappers union, was murdered by a hired assassin on 22 December 1988. As a trade union leader, he won international acclaim for his role in the non-violent campaign to protect the Amazon rainforest, on which the rubber tappers depend for their livelihood. In *Fight for the Forest*, Chico Mendes talks of his life's work in his last major interview conducted just weeks before his death. He recalls the rubber tappers' campaign against forest clearances and their struggle to develop sustainable alternatives for the Amazon.

*In this edition, environmental lobbyist Tony Gross, expert on Amazonian affairs and a friend of Chico Mendes, follows the trial, conviction and release of Chico's assassins and examines Brazil's environmental policy under President Fernando Collor de Mello.*

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