

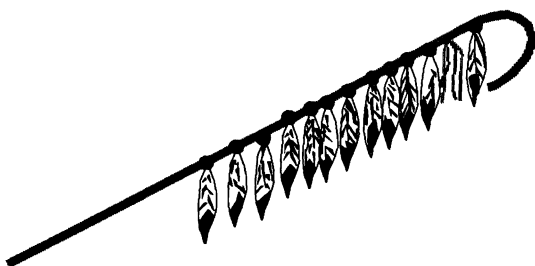
## MIAMI OF INDIANA



Unlike their cousins in Oklahoma [see Miami], the Miami of Indiana have not received the federal recognition that increasingly brings prosperity and status to many American tribes. The federal government claims that the Miami of Indiana have so integrated into the society

of Indiana that their culture has been totally obliterated. The Miami of Indiana disagree (How the West Was Lost, *The Discovery Channel*, 5 Feb. 1995).

Perhaps because of this ongoing struggle, the Miami of Indiana have rejected the modern flag form and adopted an early Native American flag-like object (vexilloid) as their symbol, and refer to it as their “flag”. It is an actual staff with either twelve eagle feathers or twelve turkey feathers attached, depending on the situation, celebration, or ceremony. It is used on formal occasions to symbolize the tribe in place of a flag.



This usage may be similar to the old traditions of the Kiowa and those still employed by certain bands of California Miwok [see Olemitcha Miwok]. The “flag” of the Miami of Indiana may seem unique, but many tribes use both a modern flag—a rectangular piece of cloth—as well as an object similar to the “flag” of the Miami of Indiana. In the “Grand March”, a powwow’s opening parade, tribes often use the flag of the United States, the flag of the host tribe, perhaps the “POW-MIA” flag, and a tribal “traditional flag”, similar to the Miami vexilloid. Some, such as the Comanche, use a “coup stick”; the Miami and others use a spear. The Miami’s “flag” flies, as no other flag could, in the face of those who insist the Miami of Indiana have lost their heritage. ☛