

Nov.-Dec. 1987

# CUSLAR

Free (donations welcome)

A project of the Center for Religion, Ethics & Social Policy  
Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University  
Ithaca, NY 14850

## This Issue:

**Haiti: The Roots  
Run Deep**

page 4

**Haiti- Interview with  
Locksley Edmonson**

page 5

**Struggle for Land and  
Power: The Campesino  
Confederation in Perú**

page 7

**Pablo Neruda**

page 18

**Contra Landmine  
Kills Franciscan Priest**

page 19



NEWSLETTER

## Editorial: Reagan, Arias and the Prospects for Peace in Central America

On August 7, 1987, the Presidents of five Central American countries agreed to undertake efforts to restore peace to the region by implementing the provisions outlined in a plan authored by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias. In joining together to sign this document, the leaders broke with precedent, suggesting that perhaps at long last the pressures to bring an end to the violence and destruction in the region could no longer be ignored. Although Reagan initially declared support for the Arias plan, stating on August 9th "I welcome this commitment to peace and democracy by the five Central American presidents," actions taken by his administration both before and since its signing belie this statement. A review of these actions can leave no doubt that the Administration is determined to block the plans progress.

As the last round of the Contadora Peace negotiations stalled, talk of an indigenous Central American Peace plan surfaced with Arias taking the lead role in its design. Although the Reagan administration, as usual, paid lip-service to the idea of a new plan, behind the scenes they sent a loud and clear message of disapproval to Arias. By i) failing to disburse \$140 million in aid allocated to Costa Rica, ii) placing severe restrictions and total bans on Costa Rican imports, iii) refusing to intervene (as was customary) on Costa Rica's behalf in the renegotiation of debt with commercial banks, and iv) stalling for over seven months in the appointment of a new ambassador to the country, the administration hoped to convince Arias to abort the plan in its embryonic stage.

Nevertheless, the plan continued to gain momentum. As the signing date neared, President Reagan, with the help of House Speaker Jim Wright, came out with his own version of a plan for bringing peace to the region, which, unlike the Arias plan, placed special requirements on Nicaragua. Despite undeniable pressures to embrace the Reagan-Wright plan, Arias continued to push his own plan, and on August 7th, succeeded in gaining the signatures of the four other Central American presidents.

On August 12th, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger qualified Reagan's earlier statement of support for the peace plan, relaying concerns about the military fate of the Contras under the plan. In his weekly radio address August 16th, Reagan himself articulated the administrations' intent to continue supporting the Contras in spite of the Arias plans' stipulation that all foreign aid to insurgent forces cease. Just one day earlier, Philip Habib, a career diplomat with long-term experience in Latin America, resigned. His resignation signified a victory for those within the Administration who, like Weinberger, advocate a military solution to the Central American crisis over those who support attempts to bring peace to the region through negotiated settlement.

On August 18th, U.S. diplomats to the five Central American countries were brought home for a special briefing on the peace plan which included a lecture on the Viet Nam-Hanoi peace treaty as an example the unreliability of communist governments. The representatives were ordered to convey Washington's skepticism over the potential success of the plan back to their respective posts.



During the same period in which Reagan and his pro-Contra allies were rallying support for their anti-peace plan efforts, Nicaragua was making significant steps toward implementing the provisions outlined in the plan. Daniel Ortega was the first of the presidents to establish the prescribed National Reconciliation Commission; among its members is outspoken Sandinista critic Archbishop Obando y Bravo. In addition, within weeks of its signing, the Nicaraguan government had invited 3 previously expelled priests to return to the country, established local groups in the war zones to facilitate the extension of amnesty to contra foot soldiers, and in a good faith gesture, dropped a World Court suit it had filed against Costa Rica for allowing the contras to operate out of their territory.

By September 9th, the Administration had made known its intentions to Congress and the Central American countries; \$270 million would be requested for the Contras, in spite of the peace plan, and regardless of the significant steps Nicaragua had already taken toward implementing the requirements of the plan. On September 23, just a few days after the opposition newspaper La Prensa was allowed to resume publishing without censorship, Congress allocated \$3.5 million dollars in so-called humanitarian aid to the Contras for the interim period between September 30 and the time when a new request would be made.

Since the passage of these funds, the Administrations' attacks on the peace plan have not subsided; nor have Nicaragua's steps toward fulfilling the plans requirements. The day after President Arias was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, Secretary of State George Schultz vowed that the Administration would fight to keep alive the Contra army, a blatant violation of the plan.

Most recently, in its attempts to derail the plan the administration has put forth the notion that the Sandinistas' refusal to dialogue with the Contras threatens to destroy the plan. In reality, as it was written the plan does not require negotiation with armed opposition. It has been a long-standing policy of the Sandinistas that they will not sit down with the Contra; to do so would lend legitimacy to a group which, because of its original and continued relationship to the United States, is politically illegitimate. Thus their firm refusal to negotiate with Contra leadership in no way violates the plan. Rather, it is the Reagan administration, with its diplomatic and economic sleights-of-hand, military stunts and propaganda ploys which poses the real threat to the realization of peace in Central America. Δ

-Kathy Simmonds





Early in 1986, the people of the poorest nation in the hemisphere made international headlines. After weeks of protest that could no longer be ignored, Jean-Claude Duvalier left the island nation on a U.S.-supplied jet bound for France. Baby Doc, and his father Francois "Papa Doc," before him ruled Haiti for 29 years. The Duvalier dynasty was brutally repressive. Haitians lived in fear for their lives as the Duvaliers' private militia--the *Tonton Macoutes*--tortured, kidnapped, and murdered those who resisted the tyranny.

The overthrow of Duvalier on 7 February 1986 has been called the "uprooting." Yet the roots of tyranny remain deep. Repression has remained strong, the formally disbanded *Tonton Macoutes* have apparently resurfaced, and the country remains governed by a provisional government headed by Duvalierist officials. It is highly questionable whether the elections for a President and an Assembly will occur as scheduled on 29 November.

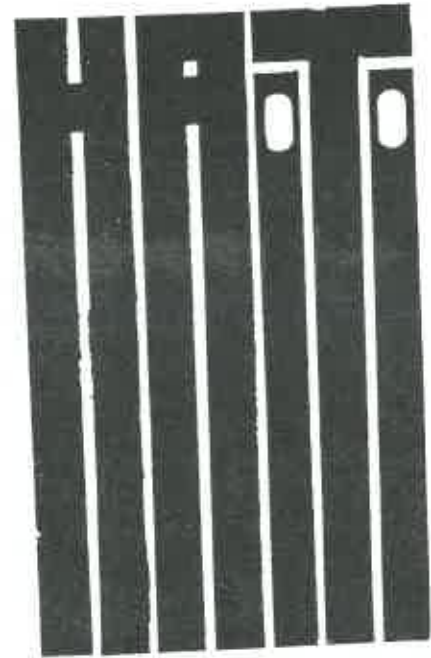
The roots of faith and rebellion also run deep in Haiti, however. By their willingness to put their lives on the line, the Haitian people have declared that they will resist a return to dictatorship.

Relatively little attention is being paid to Haiti by most of the mainstream media now that stories of Duvalier's departure and ill-gotten wealth have lost their immediacy. With this issue of the *Newsletter*, CUSLAR provides a glimpse into Haiti today. A background sketch introduces an interview with Locksley Edmonson, a professor of Africana Studies who recently visited Haiti as part of a fact-finding commission. Our focus on Haiti concludes with an analysis of the prospects for change.

# Haiti:

## The Roots

### Run Deep



#### The Present Crisis

Since Haitian slaves won their independence in 1803, Haiti has been governed by a continuing series of authoritarian regimes, including an occupation by the United States from 1915-1934. After a brief democratic opening (compared by many to today's situation), Francois Duvalier was installed in 1957 by the Army which had overthrown the popular

leader Fignole. In part to prevent the Army from doing the same to him, Duvalier created the *Tonton Macoutes* which served as the dictator's private militia. The *Macoutes* also formed a wide base of support for Duvalier because its membership was drawn from the poor black majority which had before always been subservient to elite mulatto rule.

The dictatorship's control was weakened as Papa Doc's successor, his son Jean-Claude, married Michele Bennet of the mulatto elite. The Bennets shared broadly in the embezzlement of the nation's resources along with Duvalier and his cronies. The Bennets' rise in power infuriated the black middle class and elite, as well as the *Macoutes*, thus driving a wedge in the dictator's support.

Baby Doc would, in all likelihood, have remained in control if not for the massive popular uprising against him. The Catholic Church played a vital role in the rebellion through its *Radio Soleil* which provided a voice for peasant discontent and spread the word of the increasing protests. Also crucial was the *Ti Legliz* (Little Church) movement. The *Ti Legliz*, inspired by the teachings of Liberation Theology, provided havens for small group discussion, reflection and planning. With the murder of four schoolchildren on 28 November 1986, the people of Haiti took to the streets to draw the dictatorship down. The on-going, mostly non-violent resistance grew to the point where the U.S. administration, and some of Duvalier's closest associates removed their support.

Hope, struggle, and repression continue to describe Haiti today. A remarkably liberal constitution was overwhelmingly approved in what was perhaps the most honest election Haitians have participated

in for decades. The constitution calls for a President and a representative Assembly to replace the provisional National Governing Council (CNG) in February of next year. Whether the elections scheduled for this month (29 November) can occur is doubtful. This past June, the CNG attempted to take control of the elections from the independent election oversight commission and to disband a militant trade union, but were rebuked in both efforts by a broad general strike. Protests calling for the ouster of the CNG have been met with increasing violence by the armed forces.

In late August 1987, A fact-finding commission sponsored by the Caribbean Conference of Churches visited Haiti. A member of the commission was Locksley Edmonson, a Jamaican-born political scientist, currently a visiting professor with the Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell. Edmonson shared some of his impressions of Haiti with CUSLAR.

### Interview with Locksley Edmondson

C: Can you give us briefly your impression of the situation and the purpose of the committee?

E: The Caribbean Conference of Churches is a very progressive regional religious body, very heavily involved in social issues, issues of justice, the Caribbean as a zone of peace and development, guided to a great extent by liberation theology. They got an invitation to visit Haiti from the Protestant Federation of Haiti which initiated the mission. So they set up the fact finding mission, a nine member committee, made up of only two formal religious clergy people: the

Roman Catholic archbishop of Kingston Jamaica; as you know Haiti is predominantly Roman Catholic, in terms of Christian religions, and also the secretary general of the Caribbean Conference of Churches. Apart from those two they drew on a range of Caribbean peoples with different skills, expertise and interests. There were three academics, a jurist, a human rights activist, and a medical doctor. Its important to realize that the Caribbean presence meant alot. So often external actors are becoming involved for better or worse in the situation, and the United States of course is a permanent presence there. The three main institutions in Haiti are said to be the Haitian army, the Church and the U.S. government. We from the Caribbean felt that Haiti is very much a Caribbean problem. Haiti has wanted very much to join the Caribbean fold, the Caribbean community. Many members of the Caribbean community have not been very happy with the domestic politics and we see now an opportunity where Haiti could break

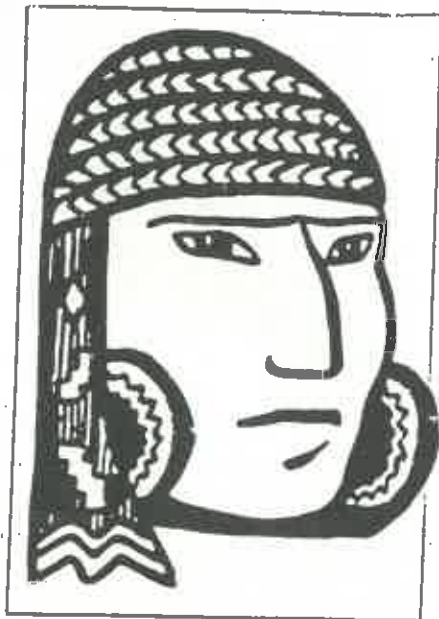
away from a very wretched past into the community. The feeling, on the part of the Caribbean Conference of Churches, was that Caribbean governments were not doing enough to help assist or alleviate the situation. So from that point of view, the Commission also was inserting a 'diplomatic' presence. An additional objective was to bear witness, so to speak. I think it was a sign of solidarity, and I think this was part of the reason the Protestant Federation felt that a team like this would bring support to the Haitian people. Another function, whether intentional or not was, I think that our presence there helped to free up the climate to promote further dialogue.

*C: Does the church have a role as a sanctuary for criticism of the provisional government in Haiti?*

*E: Very much so. As you know the church played a very important part in Duvalier's overthrow, but the church is part of the society and did*

Continued on page 12





### For Land and Power

*In the context of a sharpening crisis in the country, with severe repression on the one hand and a wave of nationalizations on the other, Perú's largest peasant organization held its Seventh Congress in Lima August 21-25. The Confederación Campesina del Perú (CPP) was founded 40 years ago. We publish below some excerpts from the document passed at the congress.*

◊ **For a new national agrarian policy for feeding the people:**

The agricultural policy followed by the Ministry of Agriculture has been to subordinate the agrarian economy to the interests of the agri-business monopolies and to impose new landlords on the countryside. Aid programs based on political control have been used to manipulate, divide and repress the organized peasant movement.

The Peruvian peasantry demands the resignation of the minister of agriculture because he represents a neo-landlord bourgeois policy and conciliation with the

agri-business monopolies linked to imperialism.

The Seventh National Congress of the CCP calls for a new agricultural policy including the following points:

- For a national policy of feeding the people, with fair prices for the producers. Participation of genuine peasants' organizations in setting prices.
  - For direct participation by the peasants' organizations in the mechanisms for trading in the principal farming and ranching products and for centralizing trading in these products.
  - The state commercial banks must devote the bulk of their financing and placements to agriculture, giving preference to food production, medium-sized farms and the agri-industrial projects of agricultural producers.
  - The Banco Agrario del Perú (BAP) must devote 100 per cent of its placements to small farmers and peasant cooperatives.
  - For a genuine democratization of credit, with interest-free credit being extended to all the peasant communities and peasant producers, with the opening of BAP offices in the country's agricultural provinces. Business credit for peasant organizations that decide to sell their products directly.
  - Nationalization of the multinational Nestle company and its handing over to the workers and milk producers in the Cajamarca valley.
  - Extension of the nationalization and democratization of the agri-industries of milling, oil-bearing products, dairy products, brewing, and of the cotton and wool industry, and trading in these products.
- ◊ **We reaffirm our determination to fight for the land and for strengthening the peasant communities:**
- Continue the land occupations as a means of a just and democratic struggle in the countryside. Organization of the peasantry

to develop a national campaign for this.

- The handing over of new lands for cultivation to the peasant and native communities and to landless laborers.

- Delivery of titles for communal lands, developing peasant communal agriculture by establishing communal enterprises.

- Support for the working partners in the agricultural cooperatives on the coast that keep the cooperatives intact.

◊ For peace with social justice, amnesty for political prisoners now!

In view of the failure of the counter-insurgency strategy applied by the military and the APRA\* government, in view of the stepped-up violence, militarization and the "dirty war," the activity of paramilitary gangs and the division of the peasant patrols by the formation of "civic patrols" under the control of the police, the governors and the APRA party, in view of the fact that hundreds of people, mainly peasants, are being held as political prisoners, we agree on the need for:

- National mobilization of the peasants and the popular masses against the repression and militarization, against all abuses of authority by the APRA government. Organization of provincial and departmental civic and political strikes, as occurred in Cusco and Quillamba.

- For the withdrawal of the armed forces and police from the emergency zones; for the establishment of civilian regional governments that will pursue a policy of peace with social justice.

- Organization of mass self-defense and peasant patrols and development of urban patrols.

- Defense of human rights and elimination of torture, kidnappings, "disappearances," massacres and illegal executions. Immediate release of our political prisoners and social fighters and an end to the trials against them.

- We reject violence against the peasantry

- APRA stands for the American Popular

**8** Revolutionary Alliance



and its natural organizations exercised by any group or organizations, and such violence is all the more to be condemned when it takes terrorist forms.

◊ For the defence of the peasant and native communities:

Our peasant communities must be able to develop their original higher civilization, their qualities as creative peoples. The native communities in the Amazonian jungle and the fringes of the jungle must be given back the vast lands that have been stolen from them.

Historically, the enemies of the communities, including the Peruvian state, have tried to defeat us, divide us, and disperse us. They have sought to legitimize the denial of our Andean culture and the native culture of the people of the Amazonian jungle. We have never been regarded as participants in changes in, and transformation of, Peruvian agriculture and society.

The attempts of the APRA government to divide us and manipulate our demands have failed. President Alan García's offers and the agreements we made for our communities have remained unfulfilled promises. Therefore, we agree to call for:

- Repeal of the anti-community laws.

- Direct participation in the discussion on drafting the regulations of the Law on



Peasant Communities, for which we must draft our own alternative.

- For land, development and regional governments with the participation of the peasant and native communities.

- Rejection of the native communities bill drafted by the APRA government without our participation.

- To demand justice for all the native communities that have been fighting to defend their territories and natural resources.

0 In view of the national crisis, it is necessary to fight for people's power and a democratic people's national government.

The gravity of the national crisis requires developing a national people's alternative distinct from that proposed by the reactionary right, which is the enemy of the people and the Peruvian nation. It is necessary to defeat the APRA government's conciliation with Peruvian and imperialist monopolies. It is necessary to defeat the growing militarization of the country.

We have been fighting nationally to forge our revolutionary unity and build a National People's Assembly that, together with the left organizations, can become an

alternative government and power that can defeat the people's enemies.

Such an alternative can only be built by mobilizing the people. Therefore, we call for a national farmers' and people's strike on the road to forging the National People's Assemblies.

We agree to support the fight for autonomous democratic and decentralized regional governments

International solidarity with our sister people of Nicaragua and the revolutionary democratic government of Nicaragua.

Solidarity with our sister peoples in struggle in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador and Palestine. Δ

Reprinted from *International Viewpoint*, September 28, 1987.

For further reading on the Peruvian situation:

Land or Death-The Peasant Struggle in Perú by Hugo Blanco; © 1972, Pathfinder Press, Inc. NY 10014

The Committee on U.S./Latin American Relations (CUSLAR) is a Cornell University-based group which works in Ithaca and the surrounding area to promote greater understanding of Latin America and the Caribbean. We are particularly concerned with the role of the United States in influencing the social, political and economic conditions of the region.

The CUSLAR Newsletter provides CUSLAR members and other concerned individuals with the opportunity to present information and analysis on topics relevant to Latin America and the Caribbean. The positions of the authors do not necessarily reflect the positions of CUSLAR as an organization. If you are interested in writing an article for the Newsletter please call the CUSLAR office. We also welcome your suggestions and letters to the editors.

# NEWS BRIEFS

## Death Squads in Colombia

The human rights situation in Colombia has been deteriorating rapidly this year. Since its founding in 1984, over 470 members of the *Unión Patriótica* (UP), a centrist political party, have been assassinated. The number of attacks against academics, students and labor leaders has also increased. Finally, the government has issued an official statement admitting the existence of death squads, putting their number at about 140, and implicating military personnel with the death squads.

The UP claims that the actual number of death squads is closer to 300. Amnesty international, meanwhile, says that the government is putting too much blame for murders on illegal death squads composed of unidentified civilians. AI says that much of the "death squad" activity is actually carried out by military and police personnel, in uniform or in civilian dress.

Death squad activity has been directed not only against *Unión Patriótica* members. August and September saw a rise in attacks against university professors and students. On August 13 students at the Universidad de Antioquia held a one-day hunger strike, ending in a mass march of over 8000 people in the streets of Medellín to protest attacks against students and professors. Five students and two professors had been shot in the head in the previous 45 days. The DAS--government security forces--have been implicated in at least one such attack, a case in which the student survived but was left blind. In addition a DAS member was discovered undercover in a student assembly meeting. He was carrying a revolver and a notebook containing a list of

50 student leaders and accounts of student conversations in the university cafeteria.

Also, in the end of August the *Unión Patriótica* turned over to the Attorney General a hit list of party members and labor leaders that they said the FARC guerrilla group had confiscated from Colombian military intelligence personnel. By that time, one person on the list had already been assassinated.



In the beginning of October, the DAS issued a report on death squad activity. The report detailed the activities of death squads, some with names like *Alianza Anti-Comunista Americana* (AAA-American Anti-Communist Alliance), *Rambo-Muerte a Revolucionarios de Urabá* (Rambo-Death to Revolutionaries of Urabá)

and *Terminator*. There are some death squads linked directly to drug traffickers.

The number of people killed by such groups is well over 1000 for this year, leading *Latin American Weekly Report* to state that "political violence in Colombia has reached a level, in terms of cold body-counts, almost three times worse than that of Argentina in the early stages of its 'dirty war' in the mid-1970's."

Source: *Latin American Weekly Report*.

### Bank Nationalization in Perú

Perú's President Alan García has been receiving increasing criticism of his economic program. His announcement of plans to nationalize all banks in the nation, and subsequent approval by the congress, met with a varied response, most of it quite negative. Many people expect rising inflation, and most business people are saying that they will postpone or cancel investment plans. This could be the biggest blow to García's economic plans, because even with favorable tax incentives for investments, business people have been reluctant to invest. Catholic University professor and well-known economist Javier Iguiniz stated that he thinks that "industrialists will continue to squeeze industrial capacity to the maximum" rather than make new investments. In addition, many bankers are now saying that they will forcibly resist expropriation if necessary, and some have even begun sleeping in their banks. Since the government is running on a deficit, industrial investment is very important to the future viability of the economy, and a showdown could come very soon as the treasury is projected to run out of money some time next year.

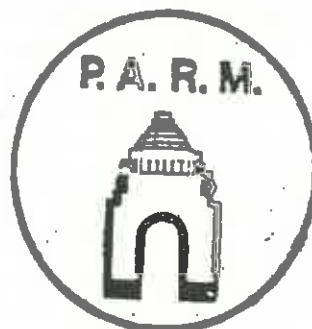
Sources: *Latin American Weekly Report*, *NACLA Report on the Americas*



### México's Presidential Elections

The Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI-Institutional Revolutionary Party) which has ruled Mexico for the last half century, has named its next presidential candidate: Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Salinas de Gortari is the minister of programming and budget control, and is responsible for the current economic policies of the government. At 39 years old, he is the youngest person ever to be named as PRI candidate. According to tradition, aided greatly by fraudulent election practices, Salinas de Gortari should be elected president of México in the national elections next July.

Even if Mexico's next presidential election were an open contest, the left is in a position to present only a weak opposition. Efforts to pull together a united left front have been damaged by the announcement that a key coalition leader, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, will run for president with the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM). In the past, the PARM has worked closely with the PRI. The move by Cárdenas may deeply hurt the budding socialist coalition in Mexico. Δ



not act independently. Nonetheless the church was perhaps the only opposition type institution in the society, and was able both to receive the protest and channel it. To become viable and relevant the church but had to take that position. Historically, there existed a very suspicious relationship between the church and the Duvalier government, and Duvalier used his influence to eliminate foreign clergy and localize the clergy in Haiti. Paradoxically, this clergy then became more and more sensitive to the discontent of the people. So by the 1980's, another generation of clergy was coming through, that could not help but be part of that movement. Many of them became very radicalized through that experience.

*C: How is Haiti preparing for the upcoming elections, and what groups in Haiti are in favor of or opposed to the elections?*

E: We had gone there feeling that the provisional government was the main element which would not want elections. The 'right', so to speak, is skeptical about any notion of electoral democracy in the true sense. The arm elites, the ex-Macoutes, even some of the business interests are concerned more with stability than change. We were a bit rudely shaken up however when we realized that many of the true democrats also do not want elections now for entirely different reasons. Some of these anti-Duvalierists really want true and fair elections and are not yet prepared to concede that they cannot be held, but most are certain that free and fair elections cannot be held in the present climate of Haiti. Their argument therefore is that it is better in the short run to have no

elections at all, than to participate in a sham election, where all sorts of nonsense can take place. In this regard, they also implicate the United States Government; they feel that all the U.S. is interested in is a show of so-called electoral democracy-- just put the machinery in place, get somebody through the process, and then everything will be fine, but behind the scenes will be the army pulling the strings. That is their fear... but here arises a problem: the constitution mandates that a new president should be installed by next February. This constitution was popularly accepted through a massive referendum-- the most democratic constitution they've had in their history. Here is the dilemma: if something is done to abort the transition to a new leadership, might it not also reflect on the wider constitution. So the paradox is that the true progressive democrats are skeptical about the prospects of holding free and fair elections, and they had certain concrete reasons for this fear. Remember in June, the government had tried to abort the independent electoral commission. We met the members of the commission in late August and they had been reinstalled to do their job. But at that point they had not yet had one penny come in to run the elections during November and they didn't have an office, so nothing was on target. And here we're speaking about a country which doesn't have the habit and practise of elections; its not as if you have an electoral machinery that you can reactivate and update. You literally have to start from scratch. In addition, as a result of the deterioration of security, candidates were finding difficulty campaigning, traveling out in different parts of the country-- a



prerequisite of elections being that candidates can travel and sell themselves. In this context therefore, many of the radicals doubted that the actual elections at this time could be free and fair. One argument goes that if the electoral commission could be put into effect in its tasks, that anxiety would erode somewhat. The danger of course is that if the true democrats withdraw from the process, it makes it even easier for the anti-democratic forces to manipulate the elections. In addition the peasants, the masses apparently don't want the elections now and are skeptical of them; after all how can the government which is persecuting them preside over true and fair elections in their interest. There is a high degree of alienation from the process. It is not an opposition to elections, but again an alienation from the possibility of fair elections.

*C: What could possibly change with the elections, say a center or perhaps even a left leaning candidate won, could that president do anything about the upsurge and repression of the Macoutes and the remnants of the dictatorship... What changes could be made?*

E: We know that the elections are not the panacea for everything... What I think is the importance of the elections in the long run, if it can be pulled off, is not that there will be some immediate transition, but just the fact that this was a process mandated by the people themselves. I think the constitutional process is far more important than people believe. It was a popular constitution, mandating certain methodologies toward liberty and freedom, and I think just if one

mechanism is in place, that in itself will help to keep the movement going. Its going to take a massive I-dont-know-what to change the wretched economic situation of Haiti. Some of the candidates are individually very bright people, but not many of them have really popular roots and bases-- this is



another source of skepticism over the election. I don't have any illusions that given a new president in February, they are going to turn the show around at all, but if the idea of a presidency which can share power with a popularly elected legislature comes into place this would be incremental. Many people are saying that this is a potential turning point, and they do

not mean that the problems of poverty would be alleviated, but that the Haitian people are at a stage of political awareness; I've never seen so much active democracy at work in a non-democratic environment. The system which they are trying to put in place will at least attempt to guarantee that there is more popular input into decision making. I think that's the only short run thing that one can hope for at this particular moment. Out of this election may come some genuine leader and leaders. Now of course, there comes the fact that constraints are not only internal but also external; the power of the United States is a factor to be reckoned with. The sad truth is that in the third world in general, its policy has been to dampen any real social revolution. And it's not surprising that there is a high degree of anti-Americanism. One of the problems about western democratic style elections in third world environments, and this is a real problem, is that increasingly many of these elections are being determined by external forces. Democracy is supposed to be above all responsive to the popular will of a people. The perception is that any U.S. involvement could taint the electoral process and even technical assistance would be suspected.

*C: You mentioned that the people are skeptical because they are being persecuted. Who do they perceive as being responsible for this?*

E: Whether this persecution is taking place directly by decree from the top is questionable. Not everyone says that General Namphy is doing it. There are also some former Tonton Macoutes who went underground who may not

necessarily be in the army, but they are using the protection and links in the army to resurge. Some people think that the Macoutes are taking preemptive measures. It is important to remember that after thirty years of power, Duvalierism still has an important role in Haiti. Some of the Duvalierist interests are still around, after all Duvalier had to strike bargains with some of the elite in order to retain power. One factor which is hard to assess is the army itself. The question is whether it is as united as it appears to be. A minority feels that there are within the army some truly democratic forces who are fully prepared to entertain and respect a civilian government and to work under it. Hopefully if a democratic transition takes place these people could move to the forefront.

*C: Recently there has been alot of concern that the Tonton Macoutes is again functioning in Haiti. Can you tell us about that aspect of the current situation?*

E: The Tonton Macoutes were identified in the popular image as a group of armed thugs-- Duvaliers private security forces. Yet now the word 'macoutism' is being used in a much



wider sense, conveying a wider network of support for Duvalierism--the far right. Be that as it may, what they have said in recent times is that some of the former Macoutes are resurging, but it doesn't seem that they are resurging as an organized group. There is a lot of violence and armed groups wreaking havoc on the population, and they wonder if this is not part of the attempt to lead to a further breakdown of law and order so that the government will have reason to clamp down on the situation; also to drive fear into those who want genuine change. So there is some clear revival of Macoutism, but it is difficult to pinpoint whether its formalized by the army, recruiting the Macoutes for a particular purpose.

*C: Can you tell us more about the role of the United States; could Haiti become in some sense a situation where the U.S. really controls the shots?*

*E: The United States always plays a relatively important role in Haiti, but the issue is to what extent will the Haitian people be able to neutralize some of the consequences of U.S. involvement. Some people occasionally consider the prospect of open U.S. intervention. Don't forget that this has happened in Haiti. The U.S. occupied Haiti from 1915 to 1934, and that memory is still there, although most people feel that they could not do that and get away with it now. The democratic instincts of the Haitians are just too much aroused. In spite of the political and economic mess they have been in, the Haitian people have a great self-confidence; a clear commitment to do something about their situation.*



## Possibilities for Change:

### An Analysis

by Bob Greene with Rosie Vanek

What are the possibilities for meaningful change and democracy in Haiti at this time? Although it is crucial to remain optimistic, the likelihood for fundamental change is slim, whether the elections occur or not.

The power of the dictatorship did not collapse with the flight of Jean-Claude Duvalier. The roots of Duvalierism and *Macoutism* remain deeply embedded in Haiti. Ex-Duvalier aides, including a former finance minister and army chief of staff have declared their candidacy for president--this despite a constitutional ban on Duvalierists running for office for 10 years. Much of the extensive violence which has seen hundreds killed (there are bodies found nearly every morning) in recent months has been attributed to a

reemergent *Tonton Macoutes*. Yet the CNG has been unwilling or unable to curb the terror or bring former *Macoutes* to justice.

Evidence exists, including the admission of a high Duvalier official, that Jean-Claude Duvalier virtually chose his successors. Three of the most powerful leaders in the provisional government include Duvalier's Army chief of staff, his personal military advisor, and a colonel (now brigadier general) who was reported to have been involved in a drive to wipe out the Haitian Communist party in 1969-1970 by killing several hundred persons even loosely affiliated with the party. The elites who gained wealth under the Duvaliers, and those poor who gained a kind of self-respect as members of the *Tonton Macoutes*, remain very active in today's Haiti--the infrastructure of the dictatorship remains. In such a situation, elections may only provide a surface of democracy and draw attention away from broader, more fundamental change.

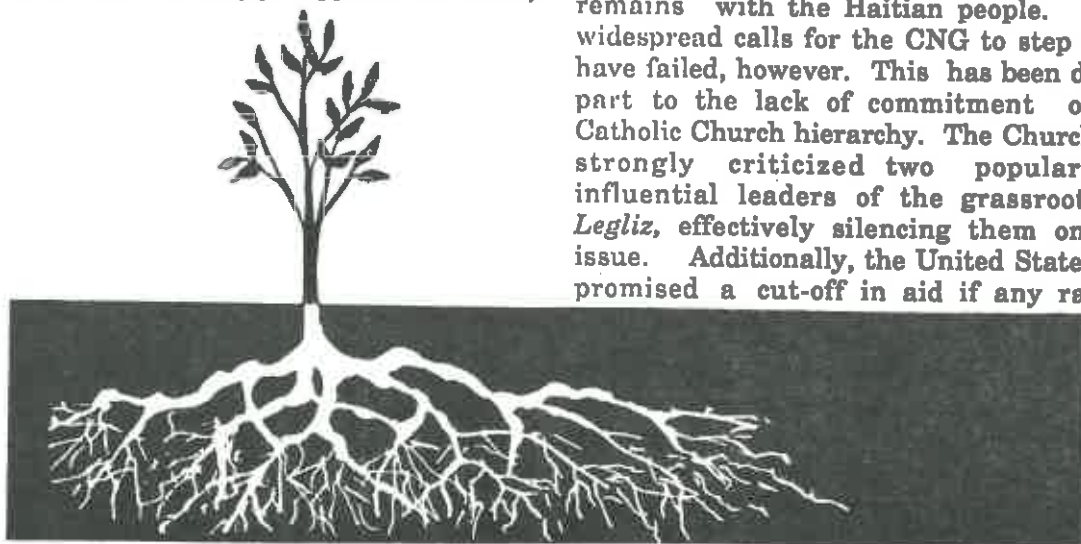
The United States government continues to pursue its interests in Haiti; liberation is clearly not of interest. The Reagan administration strongly supports the CNG,

and by recently certifying that progress on human rights has been made, cleared the way for the release of the remaining portion of the \$1.6 million in military aid provided this year. Just as in El Salvador, elections are being supported by the U.S. administration as evidence of democracy--without at the same time ensuring freedom of the press, of speech, as well as freedom from ignorance, hunger, disease or terror. Illiteracy remains at over 80%, and infant mortality is 135 per 1000 births (the Hemisphere's highest).

The U.S. through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Bank have outlined plans that would increase Haiti's dependence on export crops, while further cutting foods grown to feed the local population.

International businesses, for instance U.S. baseball manufacturers, play a dominant role in the Haitian economy, although Haiti receives little or no tax benefits and only a few thousand minimally paying jobs. Will a new Haitian president challenge the existing economic order?

The main chance for Haitian freedom remains with the Haitian people. The widespread calls for the CNG to step down have failed, however. This has been due in part to the lack of commitment of the Catholic Church hierarchy. The Church has strongly criticized two popular and influential leaders of the grassroots *Ti Legliz*, effectively silencing them on this issue. Additionally, the United States has promised a cut-off in aid if any radical





changes in the CNG occur, or if the elections do not occur--thus blocking the will of the people for dramatic change.

With the CNG likely to remain in power, many who have been calling for a boycott of the elections are now urging participation. This is despite the increased violence, including the recent assassination of a second presidential candidate, leftist Yves Volel. There is a keen fear that otherwise the Duvalierists will be elected by default.

It is hoped that the rightwing's terror will not keep the people from the polls. As leading human rights advocate Jean-Claude Bajeux has stated, "I think there is a kind of rage that what has happened to Volel is so unfair and the fact that the police lied so blatantly. This will mobilize people to vote."

Clearly, the mobilization and courage of Haiti's poor will continue to be challenged for the predictable future.

#### Sources of Information:

*Christian Science Monitor*, Oct. 15, 1987.  
*Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 12, 1986.  
*Caribbean Contact*, Oct. & Aug., 1987.  
*New York Times*, Oct. 14, 15 & 20, 1987.  
*In These Times*, Sept. 9-15, 1987.  
*Latin American Weekly Report*, July 16 & Sept. 17, 1987.  
*NACLA: Report on the Americas*, May/June, 1987.  
*National Geographic*, Nov., 1987. \*  
*CUSLAR Newsletter*, March, 1986.

\*Excellent photographs if weak analysis. Δ

The interview with Locksley Edmondson was conducted by Rosie Vanek and Bob Greene

Looking for a truly unique holiday gift?

Nicaraguan Coffee

Available in the CUSLAR office



Support justice in Central America

#### U.S. Marine Interventions in the Caribbean Basin Between 1899 and 1934

Cuba .....	1898, 1906-09, 1912, 1917-1933
Puerto Rico .....	1898 and thereafter
Nicaragua .....	1898, 1899, 1910, 1912-25, 1926-33
Colombia .....	1902, 1904, 1912, 1903-14
Honduras .....	1903, 1907, 1911, 1912, 1919, 1924, 1925
Dominican Republic .....	1903, 1904, 1914, 1916-24
Haiti .....	1914, 1915-34
Mexico .....	1913, 1914-17, 1918-19
Guatemala .....	1920
Panama .....	1921, 1925

This poem was taken from a book by Pablo Neruda titled *Los versos del Capitán* (The Captain's Verses) a book of primarily love poems written in tribute to Matilde Urrutia, whom he later married. Pablo Neruda, a Chilean, is considered by many as the greatest poet of the twentieth century. His fiery poetry addresses the human condition and is both highly personal as well as highly political. In 1971 he received the Nobel Prize in recognition of his position as one of the most important figures in contemporary poetry. Pablo Neruda was not an ivory-tower poet; he was also widely known as a dedicated political activist. Throughout his life he was involved in the struggle of the masses for freedom and equality. As a young man he fought in the Spanish Civil War and toward the end of his life acted as the Chilean ambassador to France. Pablo Neruda died on September 23, 1973 in Santiago, Chile 12 days after the violent overthrow of Salvadore Allende. It is said, by some, that he died of a broken heart.

## LAS VIDAS



### EL MONTE Y EL RIO

En mi patria hay un monte  
En mi patria hay un río.

Ven conmigo.

La noche al monte sube.  
El hambre baja al río.

Ven conmigo.

Quiénes son los que sufren?  
No sé, pero son míos.

Ven conmigo.

No sé, pero me llaman  
y me dicen: "Sufrimos."

Ven conmigo.

Y me dicen: "Tu pueblo,  
tu pueblo desdichado,  
entre el monte y el río,  
con hambre y con dolores,  
no quiere luchar solo,  
te está esperando, amigo."

## LIVES



### THE MOUNTAIN AND THE RIVER

In my country there is a mountain.  
In my country there is a river.

Come with me.

Night climbs up to the mountain.  
Hunger goes down to the river.

Come with me.

Who are those who suffer?  
I do not know, but they are my people.

Come with me.

I do not know, but they call to me  
and they say to me: "We suffer."

Come with me.

And they say to me: "Your people,  
your luckless people,  
between the mountain and the river,  
with hunger and grief,  
they do not want to struggle alone,  
they are waiting for you, friend."



## Franciscan Killed by Contras in Nicaragua

*On July 3rd 1987, a land mine planted by the contras exploded killing Franciscan Pastor Tomas Zavaleta, who was the administrator of an agricultural production and training project in the Parish of San Jose de Matiguas in central Nicaragua. Fr. Ignacio Urbina, his co-worker, was seriously injured. We publish below some extracts from an interview with Ignacio Urbina that was published in a special edition of Mustard Seed, a monthly Franciscan publication.*

How long have the Franciscans been working in this region of Matiguas? Will they continue to work there as normal?

I don't have exact dates, but the friars have been working here some 35 years. Of the first four that came two are bishops and the other two have died. We will continue our work in Matiguas as we have, but you can't call working in the middle of combat normal, with bombs and helicopters. We live with the peasants and sometimes during attacks we are three and a half hours laying on the ground, taking cover.

**Do the Franciscans in Nicaragua have problems with the government?**

No. Absolutely not.

**Is there persecution of the Church?**

There is no persecution of the Church. The Church has not been persecuted here for proclaiming the Gospel.

**What is the relationship between the project and the government?**

In no way has the government obstructed the project, very much the opposite, they gave help where they could. "Father", they would say to me, "because of the military situation we cannot help the people in this zone. It is good that you have taken this work." The project is independent of the government. This I was always very careful in protecting, that in the co-operative not even a little politics was pursued. This is because if the co-operative takes one or the other political position it would endanger the lives of those in the co-operative. Δ

**JOIN THE HARVEST**  
**3 BRIGADES TO NICARAGUA**

☐ Dec. 8-28  
☐ Jan. 3-17  
☐ Jan. 8-30

**Approx. cost: \$500**  
(including round trip U.S. - Mexico City)

Information/Applications available at CUSLAR

Special need for health care and language training

## Calendar

- November 5    **Films:** *Women of El Planeta* and *Bread and Dignity*  
8:00 pm - Anabel Taylor Hall Auditorium - Free
- November 10   **Guatemalan Student, Marvin Perez, speaks about the human rights situation in Guatemala and the state of student organizing.**  
7:30 pm - One World Room, Anabel Taylor Hall - Free
- November 16   **Brigadistas Speak! Returned volunteers speak about their experiences in Nicaragua.**  
7:30 pm Commons Coffeehouse, Anabel Taylor Hall
- November 19   **Film: *The Two Worlds of Angelita***  
8:00 pm - Anabel Taylor Hall Auditorium - Free

\* An introductory study group on Central America has recently formed. New member are still welcome. For more information call CUSLAR: 255-7293.

\* Information and applications are now available on Nicaragua Harvest Brigades for December-January. For details call the CUSLAR office : 255-7293

### \*CUSLAR HOLIDAY GIFT ITEMS\*

CUSLAR is selling the following items for Holiday Gifts. They are available at the office, G29 Anabel Taylor Hall and at all CUSLAR sponsored events.

Calendars:    Guatemalan Rainbow Calendar - \$12.00 - 15.00  
                  Let Nicaragua Live! - \$8.00-10.00  
Cashews from Honduras - grown on a cooperative - \$6.00 / lb.

\*Come by the office or call (255-7293) for details!\*

**CRESP**  
**Anabel Taylor Hall**  
**Cornell University**  
**Ithaca, NY 14853**

**Non-Profit Organization**  
**U.S. postage paid**  
**Permit 448**  
**Ithaca, NY 14850**