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Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853

The Roots of the Haitian Revolt

Introduction

On November 28, 1985, during a spontaneous demonstration in the town of Gonaives, three youths were shot and killed by the Haitian Army. The events that followed over the next two months brought down the Duvalier regime of 28 years. It was indisputably a victory for the Haitian people when, on February 7, Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier, President-for-Life, boarded a U.S. Air Force C-141 cargo plane and was flown out of Haiti. With him on this night flight to France were his wife, Michelle Bennett Duvalier; his children, including Nicholas, the four-year-old next president-for-life according to the Haitian Constitution; his mother; his father-in-law, Ernest Bennett, Sr.; his brother and sister-in-laws; and other family members and their retinue. It was entirely appropriate that Duvalier should leave accompanied by members of his extended clan—their greed was certainly an important contributor to his downfall.

According to U.S. sources in Port-au-Prince, the capital, Duvalier left only \$10,000 in foreign exchange in the Haitian treasury.

At the time of his departure he had, however, \$450 million on deposit in foreign banks while the Central Bank of Haiti was owed \$400 million by its own government (Memo, 1986). Duvalier is also reported to have at least \$400 million in non-liquid assets. Major contributions to this wealth have come from the longstanding practice of appropriating both the national treasury and foreign aid. In fact, in early 1962 the U.S. administration prepared for an invasion of Haiti to unseat Dr. Francois (Papa Doc) Duvalier (father to Jean-Claude), after he brazenly pocketed \$6 million in U.S. development aid. President Kennedy was dissuaded at the last moment by advisors who reminded him of the recent Bay of Pigs fiasco in Cuba.

Corruption was not limited to the presidency, but was widespread at every level of the Duvalier regime. In 1985, for example, "\$300,000 of U.S. assistance was appropriated by then Minister of State Merceron from a USAID supported account in the Ministry of Agriculture: (USAID) Director Jerry French was reduced to a supplicant role, delivering a letter asking Merceron to put the dollars back in the account." During the construction of a

U.S. funded irrigation system in the South of Haiti, workers found they were often not paid and cement for building canals and bridges disappeared — the Haitian agronomists and engineers supervising the project were making additional income as well as additions to their homes. Such theft was extremely common and stymied development in a variety of ways, not the least of which was the development of a class of people who had a strong interest in maintaining their privileged position.

Class Basis of the Regime

Dr. Francois Duvalier, a country doctor, was elected president of Haiti on Sept. 22, 1957. Papa Doc was placed in power by a coalition of poor urban blacks and the intermediate classes, both urban and rural (Nicholls, 1985). He had won the support of poor black Haitians by defending black power (negritude) in the face of a mulatto-controlled government and economy. Francois brought many blacks into positions of power in the government and further opened the army to blacks, thereby providing a means for some poor blacks to ascend to the middle class. Papa Doc carefully maintained the illusion, if not the reality, of middle class political-economic opportunity and black lower class racial equality while at the same time practicing non-interference and de facto promotion of the interests of the mulatto trading elite. Jean-Claude, who became president in 1971, managed to destabilize almost every part of this political balancing act.

In 1981, Jean-Claude Duvalier married Michelle Bennett, the mulatto daughter of a minor businessman. Many lower and middle class blacks saw this as a further sign that he was favoring the mulatto elite, a perception originally based on his placement of mulatto elite in visible positions of power in the government (ibid). Within three years, her father Ernest Bennett Sr. was the largest of the seven principal traders controlling coffee exports, as well as the owner of Air Haiti airlines, the island Toyota dealership, and other businesses. By September 1985, the other six major coffee exporters had met with Jean-

Claude to issue an ultimatum — either he forced his father-in-law to start paying taxes or they themselves would stop. Coffee is Haiti's major source of foreign exchange. Taxes on its export accounted for seven percent of Haiti's national budget between 1980 and 1983, income the national government could ill afford to lose (IMF, 1984).

Duvalier had also alienated members of a newly-developing national bourgeois class who, along with U.S. and other foreign investors, are owners of some 240 transformation industries⁸ and other domestic manufacturing plants. This sector has increasing importance in the Haitian economy due to its growth and to declining per capita agricultural production and exports. Exports of light manufactures increased in value from \$77 million in fiscal year 1980 to an estimated \$158 million in fiscal year 1984 (IMF, 1984). Still, 1984 was an unsettling year for Haitian development planners. Investment in industry declined by 30% in that year alone. In a report prepared by USAID for the Haitian government, analysts outline some of the reasons for declining investments. They cite, among other reasons, a lack of public investment in infrastructure, an unreliably corrupt governmental structure in which pay-offs would be made but desired results would not be forthcoming, and significant loss of work time due to an unreasonably great number of holidays — many of which would be called on the spur of the moment. (They pointed out that at the least the 22nd of every month was in danger of becoming a holiday due to its numerological significance to the Duvalier family). In January 1986, the Association of Haitian Industry finally withdrew its official support from the Duvalier regime.

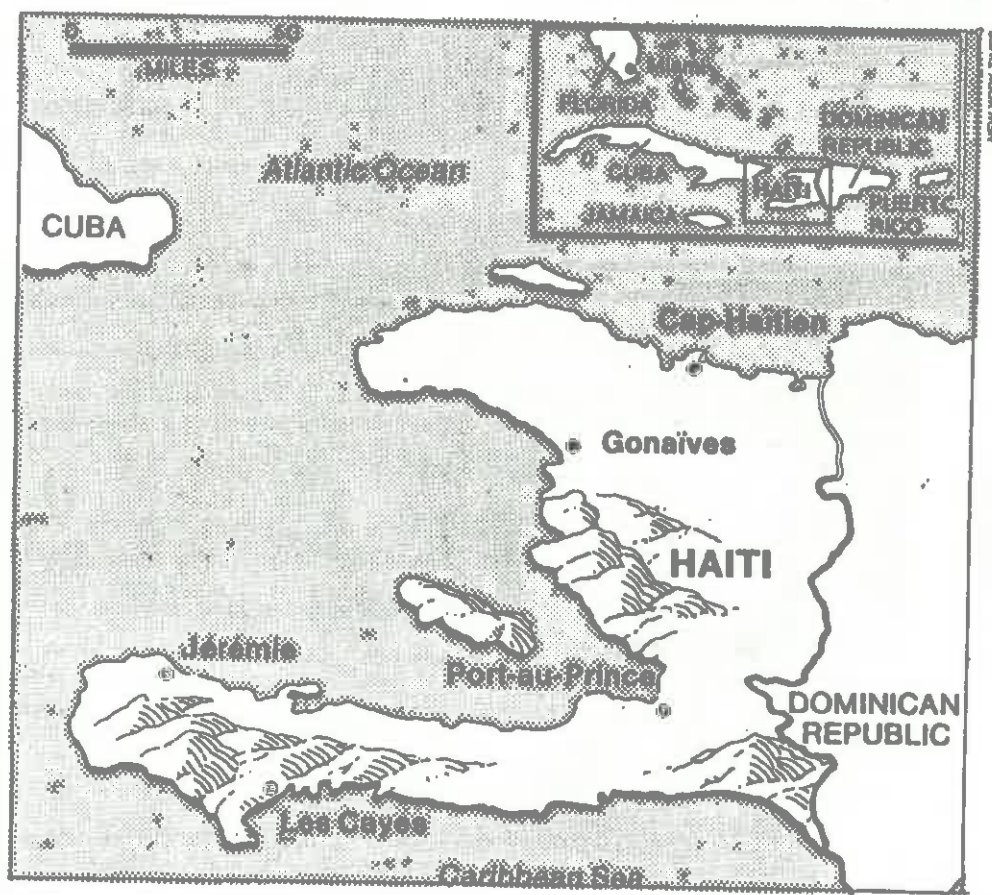
Any discussion of Duvalier's power must include the role of the Tonton Macoute — the Volunteers for National Security — and of the army in the maintenance of that power. Papa Doc Duvalier had been acutely aware of the role of the army in removing previous Haitian heads of state. He therefore took steps to ensure that he would not suffer the same fate. He shortened the hierarchies of the army and

ended the chain of command for each of the seven branches of the forces at the presidency. He then instituted a system of rotating officerships to assure that loyalties would not develop in the ranks. Still not confident that the army would repulse a challenge to his rule or that they would not mount their own, Duvalier created a counterforce — the infamous Macoute. Papa Doc encouraged a widespread belief that he was himself the Baron Samedi, the god of death in the voodoo religion, and was content that many Haitians viewed these henchmen as Tonton Macoute — the bogeymen and Baron's assistants in popular voodoo culture. The Macoute had no legal power to arrest, imprison, or punish; theirs was the extra-legal power to steal, extort, and even murder in a society with an ad hoc approach to civil liberties, and in which power accrued to those who were the most unscrupulous. One

could become a Macoute simply by buying a uniform and paying off someone higher up in the organization. Unlike other citizens, you would then have the right to own and carry a firearm. The symbol of the Macoute was a turkey vulture eating carrion. With the fall of Baby Doc Duvalier, peasants and the urban poor are taking their revenge on the Tonton Macoute. Reports of public humiliations, beatings and stonings are common, with details of the decapitations of particularly sinister Macoutes appearing in the exile press (Haiti Progres, 1986).

The Immediate Trigger

Although the revolutionary activity which has convulsed Haiti has deep roots, an immediate source of anger on the part of Haiti's poor was a diesel shortage that began in early November, 1985. A shortage of diesel



fuel might seem irrelevant to the vast majority of Haitians, most of whom are too poor to afford even a bicycle. The significance of such a shortage becomes apparent, however, once one understands that at least 70% of the population depends for survival on income generated from the crops grown on small landholdings and sold in towns or other rural areas. Many women earn extra money by marketing their own and other peasants' production. This produce is, to a large extent, transported from market to market on trucks that are diesel powered. A shortage of diesel therefore results in a diminution of income for Haiti's peasants and a reduction in the amount of Haitian-grown food in urban and other markets. Nearly every segment of society was thus affected.

Even if a fuel shortage has wide-ranging ramifications for Haiti, why blame the regime? Because the shortage was a result of a lack of foreign exchange to purchase fuel — a lack which was linked in the minds of Haitians, and no doubt in reality, to the lavish spending of the first family. On a pre-Christmas buying spree in Europe, Michelle Bennett spent more than seven million dollars on real estate — a

castle in the French countryside and an apartment in Paris — and topped this with a \$1.7 million bill for designer clothing. Even as Madame Le President was disbursing the treasury on Parisian luxuries, an oil tanker pulled out of Port-au-Prince harbor with its diesel fuel cargo still aboard because the government could not find the funds for its purchase. On November 28, therefore, when a truck carrying diesel fuel passed through Gonaives on its way to Duvalier cronies in the more northern city of Cap-Haitian, residents were angered. They demonstrated in protest and the army was sent in. Three students were shot. Soon other towns — Jeremie, Petit Goave, Hinche, Les Cayes, St. Marc — joined the protest, now angry not only at the greed of the ruling family, but at a government that would shoot Haitian youth in broad daylight and with little provocation.

The Referendum Backfires

In response to pressure from the U.S. to demonstrate movement towards democracy, Duvalier amended the Haitian constitution to provide for the position of prime minister — appointed by him — and to legalize opposition political parties, given that they would swear



allegiance to the president-for-life. Duvalier called a referendum on the amendment for July 22, 1985: a "yes" vote endorsed the change, a "no" vote was supposed to simply indicate support for the lifetime presidency as provided for in the constitution prior to amendment. In the towns, some Catholic clergy advocated a boycott of the referendum. Many people — urban and rural — decided to boycott because they realized no real choice was being offered. Other people decided that a "no" vote would be a vote of "no confidence" in the government.

In Port-au-Prince, observers described busloads of people being driven from one polling place to the next to enable them to vote "yes" repeatedly. In a typical rural village, the central polling place for the region was located in the headquarters of the local Volunteers for National Security (the VSN or Tonton Macoute). The official voting procedure was to place a white token for "yes", or a red token for "no" in a box. When citizens came to vote they were asked whether they wanted to vote "yes" or "no". If they said "no", they were asked their name and address, or were simply refused. If they said "yes", they were given a handful of white tokens to deposit in the box. When the final vote was "tallied", the government announced over two million in favor of the amendment, with fewer than a hundred "no" votes being registered.

The government declared a major victory in the referendum. What actually happened was that people started talking about the possibility of electing officials, of making real moves toward democracy. Ironically, it was Duvalier and his "referendum" which made this a public issue. The parallels with Marcos and the Philippine elections are striking.

Liberation Theology

The referendum did not inspire the first voice of opposition against the Duvalier regime. Among the voices already raised were those of many Catholic clergy who, influenced by liberation theology and interpreting the Pope's message to the Haitian people in the most liberal way possible, had intensified activities



on behalf of the country's poor. About 80 percent of Haitians have adopted Catholicism, usually in a melange with the laws, customs, and rituals of voodoo. Those pressing for change included a majority of the Haitian bishops. In 1983, the Church issued a manifesto demanding basic rights: free speech, education, sanitation, freedom from hunger and unnecessary illness, and the right to elect a president and government officials. The document was written in Kreyol, the language of 95 percent of Haiti's population, as well as in French. The message was proclaimed from the pulpit and was broadcast by the Catholic radio station, "Radio Soleil"—a frequent target of Duvalier's strongarm tactics and closed by him in the early days of the revolt. This promulgation of liberation theology provided an ideology of rights for all Haitians, not just a privileged few.

The preamble to this chapter of church/state confrontation was inadvertently written by Papa Doc himself. In the mid-1960's, Francois Duvalier expelled top officials

of the Church—all of whom were foreigners—as well as some members of the local clergy, because he suspected they were too close to the mulatto elite and were therefore a threat to his power. Today, about two-thirds of Haiti's Catholic clergy are native Haitians—including all of the Bishops—whereas before the expulsion two-thirds were foreigners. This clergy has proven itself to be responsive to the needs and rights of the poor, in part because many of Haiti's priests, brothers, and sisters are themselves peasants or urban poor.

Haiti's bishops issued a statement on the occasion of Christmas 1985, in the midst of the revolt. It said in part:

They have walked towards Peace but has Peace found them?

Where does Peace take root in the land of Haiti?

"Peasants without land, elderly without support, abandoned children, priority rights unrecognized, such as the right of speech, to plan freely and responsibly for a family, to receive education, to produce for a fair return, to exist and be recognized as a human being."

This is all that the youth wanted to cry out to the adults.

Is there a border between youth and adults?—

The borders are found in divisions created by:

- the lack of education towards peace
- the weakness caused by institutional lying
- the contempt for liberty
- the lack of societal responsibility
- the distrustful monologue
- the hardness of heart
- the degradation of situations
- the one way vision

Pope John Paul II invited youth to become aware of the hope inside them.

Impoverishment - Prelude to Revolt

As with many other revolutionary periods, this one was preceded by a rapid worsening in the standard of living, for urban poor as well as for peasants. Haiti is a country

of drastic income inequality: the top 1% of the population receive 45% of the nation's income; the next 10% receive 25%; and the remaining 89% share only 30% of the national income (World Bank, 1982). According to the International Monetary Fund, although Haiti has a rising minimum wage—now up to \$3.00 a day—Haiti's real wage index for 1984 was 79.1, down from an index of 100 registered in 1981 (IMF, 1984). It is important to note also that many workers, including many who work in industry, are exempted from Haiti's minimum wage law. Rural wages, which are not regulated by law, have not risen appreciably since the mid-1970's. In many areas they remain in the range of 30 to 40 cents (U.S.) per 5 hour day for women and 60 to 80 cents for men (Zuvekas, 1978). These are the wages in an economy in which a pound of locally produced raw sugar costs \$.34, a pound of flour \$.27, a gallon of refined cooking oil \$6.60—in other words, in which the cost of many foodstuffs is approximately the same as in the U.S. The cost



"We're holding firm, as strong as a monkey's tail." Faced with a Haitian leader, Washington finally cut the string.

of food increased an average of 337% between 1970 and 1982, with ground corn, a staple for peasants and the urban poor, leading the way with an increase of 650% (World Bank, 1984)

Life was rendered additionally hard for peasants in the early 1980's when, in response to an outbreak of African swine fever, a program was undertaken to totally eradicate the indigenous pig. The disease had been identified previously in the Dominican Republic and was most likely introduced to Haiti through a contaminated ham sandwich carried on an Air France flight to Port-au-Prince and then inadvertently fed to a Haitian pig. African swine fever, as this demonstrates, is highly contagious. The Canadian, American, and Mexican pork industries together insisted that the entire population of Haitian pigs be killed. Should the disease have entered the North American continent, it is likely that the industry would have incurred drastic losses, at least for several years.

Pigs have been called "the savings bank of the peasantry" and truly no investment in rural Haiti could match the pig in terms of potential return on investment. Before the eradication, new-born piglets could be bought for \$2.50. In less than a year of grazing and rooting in gardens, and fattening on backyard scraps supplemented with surplus avocados and mangoes, pigs could be sold for \$60-70. Families could send their children to school, pay medical costs incurred through illness, or survive cropping shortfalls more easily because of the pig. Now peasants can purchase a kid or lamb for \$5 to \$8, but after fattening these animals will be worth only about \$18 or \$22 on average respectively.

The efficiency with which resources were mobilized to round up and dispatch every last pig in the country suggests that there are no insurmountable technical barriers to dealing with many of the scourges that make life miserable and tenuous for most Haitians, especially infants and children. Eradication of the pigs may not have prompted Haitians to speculate about the possibility of controlling human



diseases long since banished from neighboring countries but it did focus their discontent on the government. The loss of the pig population was deeply mourned by peasants and remained a central topic of conversation for years. Despite promised programs of repopulation with modern breeds, peasant producers sensed that their own survival was threatened by the passing of the hardy Haitian pig. From experience, they were also able to correctly predict that much of the new stock, when reintroduced, would be appropriated by persons with influence despite any intentions on the part of aid organizations to favor peasant cooperatives.

While peasant producers, petty merchants, urban workers, and the unemployed all had reasons to fear and revile the Duvalier regime, it is no accident that the revolt was spearheaded by people of school age. In Haiti's contracting economy, parents have been sending their children to school at great sacrifice to the whole family—there is no free education in

Haiti. These students discover, however, that jobs are simply unavailable even for those who have completed several grades. Parents continue to send their children to school at great relative cost so that they may escape what is seen as the inevitable poverty of the countryside. Students acquire urban values and aspirations at school but little in the way of practical skills applicable to the realities of village life. They are reluctant to continue being peasants and some even develop a disdain for peasant life. They have, however, little prospect of fulfilling their employment expectations and face a continuation of grinding poverty and political repression. Haiti's negative growth economy and police state kleptocracy simply could not meet the expectations of its youth.

United States Interest in Haiti

Haiti is only 580 miles from Florida, but more important in a strategic sense is its proximity to Cuba, just 40 miles across the Windward Passage. The U.S. Executive Branch lists its main priority in Haiti to be containment of the "communist threat", but there is an equally important motivation in maintaining a

government friendly to the U.S. Although many Americans don't realize it, the island of Cuba houses a U.S. naval base: Guantanamo. The base was established under the Platt Amendment of 1901, and it is unlikely that Cuba will be willing to renew the lease when it expires at the end of this century. The U.S. is already investigating Haiti as a potential location for the relocated base—it offered to buy the Isle de la Tortue from the Haitian government in the summer of 1985, but was refused. Other concerns of the U.S. Executive Branch in their stated order of priority are: "Holding the line on refugee flows to the U.S.; containment of Haiti as a transshipment point for illicit drugs and narcotics into the U.S. (Michelle Duvalier's brother, Ernest Bennett, Jr., is a convicted drug dealer); economic development, especially designed to revitalize the stagnant agricultural sector and support for the development of an independent private sector; and improvement in the promotion and protection of human rights."

Human rights did not always come last with the U.S. Executive. Under pressure from President Carter, who made improvements in



human rights a condition for the continuation of American aid, Duvalier was forced to take minor steps to liberalize his regime. With the minimal freedoms accorded them, an opposition began to organize: newspapers were started, radio stations began broadcasting—all critical of the government. Within four weeks of Reagan's victory in the November 1980 election, Duvalier had shut down the fledgling democratic media, and had exiled or imprisoned many of those who had dared criticize him, all with the complete confidence that aid would continue undisturbed under the new administration.

According to reliable sources in Haiti, the U.S. played a key role in the removal of Duvalier. It was reputedly the Ambassador to Haiti, Clayton McManaway—a senior foreign service officer who began his career in the CIA and was assigned to Haiti two years ago—who was instrumental in the negotiations leading to Duvalier's departure and the establishing of the new government. Action was finally taken after the embassy discovered evidence that several thousand Haitians had been killed by Tonton Macoute and soldiers in January's anti-Duvalier riots. McManaway was fearful that the mid-February Mardi Gras carnival would become a bloodbath and that Haitians would become radicalized if their struggle to topple the government went on too long.



Conclusions

The revolt persists in Haiti. As of this writing demonstrations continue with the demand that the junta, composed of four army officers and the head of the Haitian Human Rights League, be purged of its Duvalierist elements. Many schools are still on strike, with reprisals threatened in the city of Les Cayes, for example, against any teacher who dares hold classes. Cabinet ministers closely tied to the past regime are finding that their staff are refusing to work for them. Victims of the Tonton Macoute continue to make their own justice, having grown impatient with the non-action of the junta. Workers in Port-au-Prince industries are beginning to unionize. Those at the Haitian American Sugar Company (HASCO) are striking. They are demanding democratic worker-controlled unions to replace existing organizations controlled by the Tonton Macoute, and the nationalization of the company, one of Haiti's largest. Teachers have organized regional and national unions. Peasants in the Cul-de-Sac Plain are burning plantations and taking over the land. Grassroots development groups have been founded in several towns replacing the Duvalier-controlled municipal councils. Intellectuals in Port-au-Prince have established support organizations to welcome back exiles, search for the "disappeared," and to assist people who have suffered injustices under the previous regime in seeking redress and reparations. They are also offering technical and legal assistance to all those wanting to establish associations, unions, cooperatives, etc. (Haiti Progres, 1986a). There is a clamor in the press and in the streets for justice and sweeping reforms. It is only the Catholic Church hierarchy that seems to be backing down—asking that people be patient, that they guard against the incursion of communism. The new government, as well, blames communists for the persistence of revolt after the fall of Duvalier. It is a charge without substance. Smallholding peasants and traders are unlikely candidates for communism and the overwhelming tenor of the resistance has been democratic and surprisingly pro-American—at least so far.

The Haitian people's expectations are high but will be hard to meet because most of the basic conditions of Haitian society and its economy have not changed. It will require tremendous struggle for Haiti's people to make a better life for themselves. But hard work, struggle, and sacrifice are nothing new to Haitians. They have persisted in the face of unlikely odds ever since they defeated Napoleon's army in 1804 and proclaimed their independence as the first country in the western Hemisphere in which all people were free.

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JoAnn Jaffe is a graduate student in Development Sociology. She has recently returned from 13 months of field research near Les Cayes, Haiti.

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Protest Leaflet from Les Cayes

Jesus is the only head for life in which all is good and true
We are the youth of Les Cayes
We send a tip of the hat in solidarity to the youth of Port-au-Prince

Today this Friday December 13 makes exactly eight days since we took to the streets a secondtime to say we're agreed with (the youth of)
Gonaives, jeremie, Petit Ouve...and we're against all wicked people
who are mistreating youth, beating them, killing them in broad daylight.

This demonstration is called: Solidarity
Solidarity with Jean Robert Cius, Michel Makenson, David Israel (the
three young men killed in Gonaives)
Solidarity with all youth who love their country,
Solidarity with Radio Soleil (the Catholic Radio station closed by
Duvalier for criticizing the government)

This demonstration is called Protest
Protest with the story of the bridle in the mouth of our Radio Soleil
Protest against all the criminals who are governing us.

The assassins of the three youth in Gonaives are assassins of Les
Cayes youth.
He who says Jeremie, says Les Cayes.
We form one body in Christ. The nose takes the blow, the eyes flow
with water.

Up until the present they have not yet judged the Gonaives assassins
the way they must.

Up until the present they have not yet arraigned nor let go our
brothers and sisters that the prefect of Les Cayes along with the
president of the Duvalierist party had arrested, beat, and maltreated
on the second and third of December.

Up until the present our teachers whom they arrested and beat in the
middle of our classrooms have not yet found a just reparation.
We the youth of Les Cayes are hatching a historic surprise that is
ready to burst forth.

When this historic surprise bursts forth it's going to burst like a
burst of thunder—a burst of thunder that puts order in place of the
disorder that passes for order.

In the meantime, we are ready to raise the blue and red flag.
We are ready to begin tearing up the old photos that we don't want to
see at all, at all, at all.

We are ready to banish misery for life, to banish hunger for life, to
banish torture for life, to banish unemployment for life.

Yes, the air has come for us to breathe. We're tired. We must yell.
We must protest, because the game is too badly played. And you
Port-au-Prince, are you in the game? Port-au-Prince where are you?
What are you doing with your ace of spades?

Along with the youth of Jeremie we in Les Cayes say, "We are going to
continue to shoot the marbles until they are completely broken."

-The Youth of Les Cayes
(translated from Kreyol by JoAnn Jaffe)

*The transformation industry sector receives unfinished goods which, after the application of large amounts of labor—in Haiti, relatively unskilled—are exported either for sale or to another assembly point for additional manufacturing processes.

Costa Rica Update

In national elections held February 2, the Partido de Liberacion Nacional (PLN) candidate Oscar Arias Sanchez was elected president of Costa Rica. Apparently Arias' victory over rival Rafael Calderon came as a shock to many, breaking the precedent of single-term alternation between Costa Rica's two main parties. Arias will succeed President Luis Alberto Monge of the PLN, who also surprised people by finishing his term with better standing in public opinion polls than when he began. Although Arias, 44, obviously owes part of his victory to Monge's successful career, Arias established himself during his campaign as a leader for a new generation of the PLN, thus distancing himself from Monge's camp. He aims to fill the cabinet with people even younger than himself, although the PLN party apparatus has maintained enough positions in the legislature to limit his ability to act without their approval.

Arias was often promoted as the "peace candidate" before the elections, but this is only in contrast to the hostile rhetoric of his opponent, Calderon, toward Nicaragua's Sandinista government. In an interview on election eve Arias was quoted as saying, "One does not choose one's neighbors." [Costa Rica's northern border is with Nicaragua, and ARDE, a contra group, has been operating out of northern Costa Rica for five years.] "It is better to have diplomatic relations with a neighbor than not to have them . . . The Sandinistas are not now actively trying to undermine Costa Rica because they are too busy trying to defend themselves and stay in power. But once they are consolidated the race would be between a totalitarian nation — Nicaragua — and a democratic one." Concerning Costa Rica's traditional posture of neutrality, which has been an important issue of debate in Costa Rica in recent years, Arias stands to the right of President Monge. During the election campaign, Arias opposed a constitutional amendment that would make the proclamation of neutrality official.



However, since his election, Arias has taken a considerably more progressive stance on both the issue of Costa Rica-Nicaragua relations and neutrality. Arias now opposes US aid to the contras and favors the constitutional amendment on neutrality which he previously opposed. He has also emerged as one of the most outspoken advocates for a diplomatic solution to conflicts in the region. In part, Arias' more conciliatory tone since the election may be the result of a change in Costa Rican public opinion. National Public Radio reported that in two USIA (United States Information Agency) public opinion polls on the issue of attitudes towards the Sandinistas, 69% were against the Nicaraguan government in July 1985, but in a second poll taken in November, only 39% were opposed. Characteristically, the higher (and earlier) figure was the only one reported by the USIA.

While the Sandinistas and neutrality are significant issues to the president-elect, Arias himself has admitted that his country's economic situation is the most important problem for his new administration to deal with. With a foreign debt of approximately \$4 billion, Costa Rica, like many Latin American countries, has had difficulties even keeping up with interest payments. Renegotiation of debt payments and a larger distribution of foreign aid to projects concerned with "future development" are among Arias' proposed solutions to the debt crisis. If Arias is unable to alleviate Costa Rica's economic problems, he will probably have difficulty ending his term with the same popularity as outgoing President Monge.

Kathy Simmonds

Refugee Testimonies

First of all, the war has caused us great suffering. We were forced to leave our homes and then they were burned. Just since I've been living in the refugee camp here I was taken by the army in a little house over there. The army came here by helicopter; we thought they came from San Vincinte. When they came they took us away and we couldn't give class. That's what we do; we are a Committee of the Displaced set up to teach our children how to read. But after we started giving classes here someone went around saying that we were guerrillas.

They brought me to a little chapel in La Ceiva where they took refugees, to some small houses near the chapel. As they brought people there they pushed them around and mistreated them. I had a cold and was coughing up phlegm. A soldier said, "That's the last time you're going to spit at me," and so he started hitting me. He took his gun and struck me in the mouth twice with the butt of his gun. Another soldier later took a large stick and pounded on my feet, saying that the shoes I was wearing were those that guerrillas used. I told him this was the first time I had heard that it was a crime to wear shoes.

After the army had gathered us all together they asked us what we needed. We said we needed food, clothing, medicine and a teacher for our children. So they said, "No, you can't have one." I asked, "What's wrong with teaching children?" and they replied, "It's only guerrillas who teach children. If you have a

teacher it's going to be a guerrilla." And with the same stick they had used to beat my feet someone hit me in the back, very, very hard.

Later I overheard them talking. They said, "Well, what should we do with this guy [me], should we kill him right now? Or should we take him with us?" The other one said, "No, let's take him along and we'll kill him somewhere along the way." There were eight soldiers there, and then one real tall soldier came in and said, "Oh, just let him go." And then the others started arguing with him, and they said, "No, no, we're not finished with him yet." Some of them tried to kick me in the balls, and I curled my legs up. So they said, "See, you're a guerrilla. He's a guerrilla." And I said, no, that I didn't have anything to do with the guerrillas. All I did was take care of my field. After they talked back and forth on the radio they eventually let me go.

My companion was beaten up badly by the soldiers. They had a bayonet and they stuck it into his back eight times. They also told me that I could be a guard and they would give me a gun, so I could pay my debt to them [for not killing me]. I said I didn't want to join either side in the fighting, that my job was to feed my children. The lieutenant suggested that I take a gun and go fight the guerrillas, "and I'll make sure you don't get beaten up again."

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Later he came back, after they had let me go, and asked, "Are you mad at me?" I said I wasn't mad at him. And he said, "Well, you just made me want to kill you."

I think this question about teaching children is important. They try to prohibit it. It isn't that we

I can tell you that, since 1979 I have suffered heavy blows. They killed my eldest child in the Plaza of San Vicente (I am from San Vicente). She was 26 years old. Her name was Isabel. Since then we have suffered many blows from the enemy. The craters that the bombs left were bigger than this house, they completely destroyed 3 houses. All the people fled to the hills. We spent 14 days on the mountain without eating, with all our small children. Many of the children died of hunger and thirst.

Before leaving the mountain they took a woman out of her home and her two young daughters. They said to the woman, 'Ma'am, lend us your daughters'. They were young girls, one was 14, the other 17. They raped them, and threw them face down to the ground dead. They had destroyed their bodies and tied their clothes around their heads.

We walked all night through the mountain. We would continue throughout the night since we couldn't walk during the day, only moving at night. We couldn't sleep. We couldn't eat.



From there after walking and walking, God knows how we all were able to do it, we arrived at a place where there was a contact with the Archdiocese of San Salvador. We didn't know what had happened with our other companions. They (those of the archdiocese) took us out of our hiding places,

had any great titles to teach or anything. But we asked for teachers and they said we should find one of our own people to teach. So I became a teacher. The only way we are going to get out of this is by helping our children. They are our future. What we ask for is for our children, but they always say it's for the guerrillas. That's all I can tell you.

one by one, group by group, small children and old people. These were people connected with the archdiocese of San Salvador in San Jose de la Montana. I had been traveling with two of my small children and three grandchildren, five small ones in all. We hadn't been able to harvest crops in any of the places we had wanted to. All of the crops had been burned, the houses too, in our place of origin. There is nothing left there. Everything has been burned, all the people have been forced to leave. There is nothing left but the mountain itself.

We arrived here (in the refugee camp) last June (1985), since we had been kicked out of our homes because the armed forces were nearby and they didn't want us there. They would come towards us screaming obscenities at us, threatening us with bombings. They said that the first person they would kill would be the priest who came occasionally to study the bible with us.

Right now we want all this bombing to stop, so we can go back to work in peace. I hope that some day we can return to our small plots, our birth places.

So many terrible things happened during our long pilgrimage. It was during our trek that a woman gave birth to a child. She stayed behind. A half an hour after her child was born, the soldiers came and put a machine gun to her head. After killing her and her new born infant they also killed all the other women and children who couldn't run anymore. There were about 45 who were killed. This same kind of thing happened time after time, in small town after small town throughout San Vicente.

Uruguay - A Brief History *

From the early 1900's to the late 1960's Uruguay was a stable democracy in a continent plagued by political turbulence and social unrest. Uruguay's democratic institutions took hold early in the century, under the leadership of President Jose Batlle y Ordóñez, when the state began playing a paramount role in promoting social justice and welfare. The policies of national consensus designed by Batlle brought both political stability and economic prosperity. By the early 1950's, Uruguay had the highest per capita income, as well as the lowest illiteracy and infant mortality rates, in Latin America.

However, after the Korean War, international demand and prices for Uruguay's traditional exports - wool, beef, and hides - began a steady decline. Real wages fell 24% in the

private sector and 40% in the public sector. By 1967 the state could no longer finance its welfare programs, and the country's social and political stability began to disintegrate.

In 1967 an urban guerrilla organization called the Movement of National Liberation ("Tupamaros") became quite active. When the police failed to wipe out the Tupamaros, the government put the military in charge of the police. The chiefs of the armed forces formed a joint command in December 1971 to carry out an "antiterrorist" campaign. The government proclaimed a "state of internal war" in 1972 and the Congress enacted various measures that suspended civil rights.

Despite the fact that by their own admission they had completely wiped out the Tupamaros by early 1973, the armed forces demanded a greater role in political decision making. Rather than permitting the restoration of suspended rights after the Tupamaros' defeat, the military forced President Juan Maria Bordaberry to decree on June 1st, 1973, an indefinite suspension of basic constitutional rights, without congressional approval. Four weeks later, Bordaberry, with the army's backing, illegally dissolved the elected Congress and transferred legislative powers to a newly created Council of State, whose members he named. Uruguay's military regime effectively began on this date, June 27, 1973, for thereafter, the armed forces were in control.

During this period, Uruguay had one of the highest ratios of prisoners to population in the world, ranging from a high of around 6,000 in 1975 to 800 in early 1984. (It is important to note that the gradual decline in the political prisoner population over the years did not result from an "amnesty" or any improvement in the administration of military justice. Rather, the great majority of political prisoners released by 1984 had served, in full, an average six-year sentence for such vaguely defined crimes as "insulting the morale of the armed forces", for distribution of political materials, and for other nonviolent activity.)



Amnesty International has estimated that between 1973 and 1979, one in every 500 Uruguayans was imprisoned for political reasons and one in every 50 was detained for interrogation. The brutal treatment accorded to political prisoners has been a major focus of concern of international human rights organizations.

On November 25, 1984, as part of a process of transition to civilian government agreed upon by the armed forces and some of the political parties, Julio Maria Sanguinetti was elected president of Uruguay. Although flawed, this election marked a first step toward eventual restoration of civilian control.

The new government, however, faces economic and social problems that would severely strain even the most stable democracy. At the end of 1984, inflation and unemployment were 17% and 15% respectively, and Uruguay's \$5.3 billion foreign debt was partic-

ularly staggering given annual export earnings of only \$1 billion. Demands upon the new government came from all quarters. Some 30,000 former public sector employees, fired by the military government for political reasons, demanded reinstatement and compensation. In addition, the new government was called upon to reassert civilian control over the armed forces, lift all political proscriptions, free the remaining political prisoners, and rebuild the entire education system. These problems make it unlikely that Uruguay can return to the kind of social welfare state that flourished until the early 1960's, or be free of the military's political influence.

*This summary is taken from *With Friends Like These: The Americas Watch Report on Human Rights and U.S. Policy in Latin America* (Ed. Cynthia Brown, Random House, Inc., NY, 1985. pp. 72-91).

Uruguayan Trade Unionist's Perspective

Carlos Manfrini is a representative of the Transport Union in Uruguay. He visited Cornell in February for a seminar for International trade unionists. Excerpts from an interview with him follow.

Starting in 1973, we had 12 years of dictatorship, during which the social organizations were finding ways of struggling for freedom. The costs were high — many people were put in jail and tortured.

The labor movement participated actively in the fall of the military regime, undermining it at all levels. The unionists of this generation, who were formed in the struggle against the dictatorship, were young people, at times inexperienced, but with an undeniable calling to struggle, to be revolutionary.

Today they asked me the reason behind unionism. Unionism is this: it is a revolution and it is a change. All those who aim for ideals of social justice, ideals of change, are necessarily going to have to be revolutionary. When we talk about revolution, we aren't talking about taking up arms. This would be necessary only if there were another coup, and dignified and free people who wanted to have free children would have to do it.

In 1973, we were part of a movement, of which there have been very few in the world: the general strike against the dictatorship, a strike in which the workers became exhausted. They were permanently punished by the repressive forces that are still intact in my country. In spite of all this, we resisted for more than 20 days, paralyzing the whole country.

Q: Which unions were involved in this?

In this were involved, fundamentally: the dock workers, transport workers (the union I'm in), rubber workers, bankers, and many other industries that are less strategic. They did their work, with errors that today we can see, but, at the time, what the Uruguayans did was a heroic achievement.

Q: How many workers participated in the movement?

In this movement, there must have been 80% of the workers of Uruguay; that is to say, more than 100 thousand workers. It was an enormous movement.

Q: What happened to them after the strike?

After the strike the repression came — prison, torture for the union leaders. There are companeros who were prisoners for more than 12 years, for having done absolutely nothing. We have the case of Hector Rodriguez, who was the textile leader for many years. He was a prisoner for 12 years and still doesn't know why. He was tortured several times.

Later, after the union movement had been squashed, the CNT (National Workers Commission) resurfaced in an illegal form. In 1976-77, the organizers were detained, serving their sentences in the same inhuman conditions as the other political prisoners.



In 1980, a new law was passed which the dictatorship called the Law of Professional Associations. (They couldn't call unions unions.) In spite of all the bad things in this law, it did allow breathing space for some organizing. After long discussions, we decided to begin a union organization to try to overthrow the regime.

We workers were involved in a very active struggle throughout the period of the fall of the dictatorship, participating in various organizations together with political groups and parties, including some of those that were outlawed at the time. We all sat at the same table discussing the measures that were going to be taken. These were measures of peaceful resistance — several demonstrations, some in the presence of international organizations, like the one we had during the International Conference of Free Trade Unions. (They were visiting Montevideo, looking at the Uruguayan situation.) At that demonstration there was a conflict with the repressive forces (with beatings, etc.).

Besides this, we participated in the movement for the release of those who were in prison. Part of our resistance was the traditional banging of pots outside our homes to call attention to our demands. We used all forms of resistance open to us.

Q: When the unions were clandestine during the dictatorship, what were they doing?

At that time we struggled to eliminate from our union those who were in any way identified with the regime. It was in this way that we were able to carry out various strikes under the full dictatorship. We carried out the first of these in 1976, the day which theoretically the elections should have taken place. The strike was very evident — we held out for four hours in the face of the naval sharp shooters that were trying to force us to work.



Later, in 1980, we studied the situation of our union members. Transportation had at that time very few people working for them, but those who did worked shifts much longer than 8 hours. Here this must seem ridiculous, but it was for this that we were imprisoned. Our efforts to work only 8 hours meant that Montevideo would be left without any transportation a large part of the day. We were looking for the precise moment to strike, and they really didn't like this much. In 1980, we had a strike during a mini soccer tournament that was held in Uruguay. During a time when the dictatorship wanted to make a good impression, they found themselves in the middle of a transportation strike, something which must have left a big impression on the visiting journalists.

And so we continued struggling and fighting for a long time until November 27, 1984, a day in which all the people came together at the obalisco (a statue located in the center of the city), crying "For a Democratic Uruguay without exclusions" (calling for the participation of all economic and social sectors).

Q: What are the changes that you are proposing now? What is the political program of the trade unions?

The government is a centrist one (leaning towards the right). It is headed by Dr. Sanguinetti, with a Minister of Labor, Fernandez Faingold, who has attempted to slow down the workers movement. He has been open to dialogue, but he hasn't put forth solutions that meet the needs of the workers.

In our country we have a foreign debt that is close to \$4.3 billion. The CNT is against paying back the foreign debt. We workers can not be paying back this damned inheritance passed on to us by the military regime, money which was given not for development projects but rather for maintenance of a rigid authoritarian structure that was only serving a very small social group — the national and international bankers, large industrialists, and some large landowners. The rest of the country received nothing from this assistance, nothing in terms of a development program, nothing that allowed us to get out of this economic boondoggle.

A country in this state, of course, is not going to move forward. We need major structural changes. It is necessary that we carry out an agrarian reform. We have to break all the chains of dependency that we now have. We are a dependent country with submissive governments that repeatedly have said yes to the demands of imperialism. We have to nationalize our foreign commerce and we have to nationalize the banks (which are almost all subsidiaries of foreign banks). These are three important measures that Uruguay must carry out if we want to recreate a different country. If we want to change to become a more just, more balanced society, we are going to have to take these fundamental measures.

The present government in Uruguay doesn't mention this because this never was and never will be part of the platform of a conservative government.

In the elections, the great majority of Uruguayans were divided into three different groups of voters — one third, or a few more, voted for the present government, another third voted for the national party (center left), and the final third for the leftist coalition, the Frente Amplio. From this we can see that two thirds of the Uruguayans were demanding a change. This is unfair — a democracy can't be based on the desires of only one third of the society.



It is basic for Uruguay to understand that it is not a question of just overcoming its own problems; Uruguay must get out of its situation within a Latin American context. Little by little colonialism first, and then imperialism later, extracted Latin America's wealth day by day. It is the people who have been cheated, the governments that have always found a way to be more docile with their masters. The time has come for this dispossessed Latin America to come together in some way to find liberation.

Q: How could this cooperation among Latin American nations be obtained?

I believe that they will have to form a Latin American parliament, a serious parliament where all participate. It is true that we Latin Americans have a major problem in Central America, a problem that could make all of our dreams for unity fall apart, because Contadora, despite its great efforts and good intentions, so far has had no practical outcome.

Concretely, we have to have a situation in which the contras in Nicaragua would not be supported, governments like that of El Salvador would not be supported, and dictatorships like that of Pinochet in Chile or Stroessner in Paraguay would not be maintained.

The problem is the future. We will have to be able to assure that people feel happy in a much more united society, a more just society, where there is peace, where there is bread, and where there is liberty.

In Latin America there are many people who are suffering, many people that have difficulties. We have an unemployment level of 13.7%. We did have an illiteracy rate of 0%, now it is 17%. We have to change all this. We have a great challenge in front of us. It all depends on how much we dream, how creative we are, to be able to attain lasting freedom.

Carlos Manfrini

Translated by Mary Jo Dudley

Letter from Uruguay

Vicky Furio, a friend of CUSLAR who worked with Pax Shalom in Ithaca until August, 1984, has been working for a program called Servicio Ecumenico de Reintegracion (SER, Ecumenical Reintegration Service) in Uruguay since June, 1985. SER was formed in November, 1984, in order to help former political prisoners and exiles resettle. It is supported by seven local church bodies, both Catholic and Protestant, in Uruguay. The following is taken from a letter Vicky wrote in January, 1986.

The first several months (after the SER was founded in 1984) were spent giving "emergency aid" for food, housing, health and education to the hundreds of people who had just been released from prison. It was incredible. It was a very difficult but very moving time. Some 1,000 former political prisoners came to us, those released in 1985 and earlier. They all had certain characteristics in common — they were quiet, gentle, and humble, with many health problems — physical and psychological, as you can imagine, very thin and very pale. Some of them were in for 12, 13 years. It's incredible. Long, hard years. Hardly anyone has come out of it without some scars. But the most notable quality was their kindness, which is a product of an amazing solidarity in prison. They had created an almost perfect society among themselves. They have a tremendous loyalty among themselves, even now, out of prison. For a long time, people talked about how they were too sweet for the new world around them. They weren't used to people being mean or selfish. They took a real battering in the "real" world. More wounds to cure.

After a few months, you could see the change. They were starting to look healthier physically and emotionally. And many have really made miraculous progress to date. But after the initial changes, so many serious problems remain — family? broken? shattered? outside the country? reconstructable? a place to

live? money? food? work? friends? normality? health? Lots of people slept on someone's couch, on the floor, for months. The help we gave them really was essential for meeting some basic needs as they got their lives back together. It wasn't a heck of a lot but enough to get by. Many of them immediately took advantage of the second part of the program, which is to help finance some work project — a business venture, a service or shop, agricultural production, etc. — that they propose. They develop the idea, present the budget, and it is studied for viability and financial possibilities. If it is approved, we give them half the seed money as a loan and the other half as a donation (generally). And the business of life begins.



We have over 300 projects presented, 140 approved and functioning. Most of them creaked along for many months, very wobbly and unsure of whether they were going to be able to produce a living from them. But now, most of the earlier projects are doing ok — with lots of problems to work out, a lot of need for technical advice, financial needs to improve or expand — but they're making a living. Many people were imprisoned from 18 to 30 years of age — they never got to learn a

trade or study a profession. What do you do at age 30, just out of prison and in a country with 30% unemployment and industry halted? Or if you're 45 or 50 and you've had your livelihood destroyed by your imprisonment — the business you had doesn't exist, or you were thrown out of the bank, school, office you worked in for political reasons? How are you going to start again at your age, with no money, no place to live, and health problems caused by prison and torture? I tell you, it's nothing short of miraculous to see so many people pulling through, re-making their lives, in the fullest sense of the word.

One of the men who spent 9 years in prison and has a small ceramics shop going

now told us how he's been able not only to get on his feet and meet his needs but also to reunite his family and create a very beautiful relationship with his son and daughter-in-law who work in the shop with him. There are lots of similar testimonies. Even those who are not doing so well say that they don't know what would have become of their lives if it hadn't been for the SER — that someone cared about them and was able to help in some way, financially, emotionally.

Although we've only been able to touch a small part of the population in need, it's a real success story. It makes all the paper work worthwhile.

Vicky Furio

Contadora Update

By the end of 1985, almost three years after they began, the Contadora peace negotiations were at a standstill. The negotiations, named after the Panamanian island where the sponsoring countries of Panama, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela first met in January of 1983, were intended to end the conflict in Central America. But in that three year period tensions had escalated alarmingly, a long series of treaty drafts had been rejected, and the positions of the US allies and Nicaragua were still far apart. Some US State Department officials were privately saying that Contadora was dead. Since then the negotiations have been revived and while an agreement does not seem near at least the process is moving again.

At least part of the credit for this revival is due to the newly-elected President of Guatemala, Vinicio Cerezo. Cerezo had publicly called for a new peace initiative for the region and held talks with other Central American heads of state during his inauguration. In mid January the foreign ministers from the Contadora nations and from the Contadora support group (Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay)

met on the Venezuelan island of Caraballeda. The document they prepared endorsed the Contadora treaty and added some new provisions. All the affected Central American countries have accepted in principle the Caraballeda statement, an important step towards a final agreement.

The new provisions in the Caraballeda statement call for a reopening of bilateral talks between the US and Nicaragua, an end to US support for the contras, explicit US acceptance of the Contadora treaty provisions (though the US would not be expected to sign the treaty), full pluralist democracy in every country, and immediate moves towards "national reconciliation" (i.e., talks between governments and guerrillas). The Contadora treaty itself has been through many drafts, but the basic theme has been to eliminate big power rivalries from the region. Specifically, the treaty would require the removal of all foreign military advisors, ban all arms imports and foreign military exercises, close all foreign military bases, end arms smuggling and support for guerrilla movements, limit army sizes, and require coun-

tries to allow on-site inspections by the special Commission on Verification and Control that the treaty establishes. In short, the treaty addresses the concerns of both Nicaragua and the US and its allies.

Although there are still problems that have to be worked out between countries in the region, the major stumbling block to the Caraballeda initiative is the United States. The State Department has repeatedly indicated that the US would not sign a protocol pledging to respect the provisions of the Contadora treaty. On February 10th, the eight foreign ministers who met at Caraballeda spoke with US Secretary of State George Shultz. He rejected their pleas to reopen talks with Nicaragua and stop aid to the contras. According to the New York Times, Peru's Foreign Minister, Allan Wagner Tizon, openly rebuked Shultz and said that the US was pushing the Sandinistas toward the Soviet Union. Since then the Reagan Administration has formally requested \$100 million from the Congress to aid the contras, making its opposition to Caraballeda plain.

Throughout the Contadora negotiations the United States has tried to portray Nicaragua as the obstacle to peace. Yet Nicaragua is the only country to agree to sign the treaty. When they said they were ready to sign, in September of 1984, the US said it was a trick and accused Nicaragua of dishonesty. It immediately lobbied its allies to ask for revisions in the treaty. By October of 1984 a secret national Security memo could claim "We have effectively blocked Contadora group efforts to impose a second draft of a revised Contadora Act" At the same time the U.S. was publicly praising the Contadora peace process.

This obstruction of the peace process has continued. A week before the September 1985 Contadora meeting, there was a secret meeting between US Under Secretary of State Elliot Abrams and the US Ambassadors in Central America. A document prepared from the meeting stated that "it's necessary that we develop an active diplomacy in order to hinder

the attempts at Latin American solidarity that could be directed against the US and its allies..." On October 2nd, Secretary of State George Shultz met with representatives of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala in order to prepare positions for Contadora. Shultz proposed at this meeting that Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, both firm US allies, be added to the Contadora support group, apparently to weaken the Contadora process. Throughout the fall the US let it be known that it would continue to "pressure" Nicaragua.

In spite of these efforts, the Caraballeda initiative has restored momentum to the Contadora process. There is evidence that the US was taken by surprise by Caraballeda, and in the aftermath the US response was rather confused. But the US is in a position to directly block the treaty. Nicaragua has stated that it cannot afford to reduce the size of its army or send home its military advisors unless the US pledges noninterference in Nicaragua and stops supporting the Contras. As a result it isn't clear how the negotiations can be concluded. What is clear is the US's attitude toward Nicaragua and the negotiations. George Shultz has recently called Nicaragua "a cancer in Central America that has to be removed," and as Tom Wicker has asked, who negotiates with a cancer?

Mike Burckardt

Sources:

International Policy Report
Latin America Weekly Report
Latin America Update
Mesoamerica
New York Times (Feb. 11, Feb. 14)
Center for International Policy,
"Contadora Update"

Contra Aid Update

The House is expected to vote on the Reagan Administration's \$100 million contra aid request on March 19. According to the "compromise" aid bill passed last June, a negative vote on the present bill in either the house or the Senate kills it. Since losing 3 out of 4 votes in House subcommittees, the Administration has been searching for a "compromise" that would allow the aid to pass. It is crucial to continue writing and calling our Congressional Representatives and the White House to voice our opposition to any form of contra aid.

U.S. TAXPAYER EVERYTOWN, USA		0000
PAY TO THE ORDER OF <u>The Contra</u>		19 <u>86</u>
<u>One Hundred Million</u>		\$ <u>100,000,000</u>
		00/100 — DOLLARS
MEMO <u>for murder and</u> <u>the destruction of schools</u> <u>and health centers —</u>		<u>Ronald Reagan</u>

On Saturday, March 1st, over 150 Ithacans responded to the Pledge of Resistance call to demonstrate against contra aid. Nearly 1,000 of these postcards were sent to the White House and to New York State Senators.

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 a 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 office is in G-29 Anabel Taylor Hall at Cornell (255 7293). The office is open to the community on weekdays. Weekly meetings are held on Mondays at 5pm in Anabel Taylor.

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 letters to the editors.

No Military or Economic Aid for Guatemala

Once again the foreign aid appropriations process has been set in motion, not only for aid to the anti-Sandinista contras, but also for aid to Guatemala and El Salvador.

Reagan's Request for FY 87 Aid to Guatemala

Security Assistance:

IMET (International Military
Education and Training)* \$.5 million
FMS (Foreign Military Sales) \$10.0 million
ESF (Economic Support Funds) \$70.0 million

Economic Assistance:

Development Assistance (AID) \$40.0 million
PL 480 Title I (Food Aid) \$19.0 million
PL 480 Title II (Food Aid) \$4.69 million

Total Aid Request: \$144.190 million

*IMET funds are not subject to any conditions or restrictions.

The Guatemalan aid process is different from previous years in that it will *not* go through an Authorizations process. It will go immediately to Appropriations because the Authorizations bill has already been approved for fiscal years 1986 and 1987.

Representative Matt McHugh is a key figure influencing aid to Guatemala because of his membership in the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, one of the groups considering this aid *now*. McHugh seems to have been "won over" by Cerezo and the arguments that this "new democracy" should be supported. He must be challenged on this position.

Guatemala should be given aid *not* for merely holding an election but for establishing democracy. Everyone (including Cerezo) assumes that the military will maintain control. We should look for evidence that the human rights situation has changed and that killing and disappearances have stopped. Any military or economic aid approved will be administered through the same army that is responsible for 50,000 to 75,000 civilian deaths in the last 5 years. We must not support this.

Economic aid in general, and ESF in particular, goes to prop up a government that continues an inhuman war of counter-insurgency against its own population. Development Assistance is targeted to areas of the greatest conflict in the highlands — the sites of the most intensive counter-insurgency warfare by the army. The same army that burned these villages is asking for money to rebuild them. Development Assistance functions to consolidate Army control over local populations.

Call or write immediately, demanding no Military or Economic Aid to Guatemala.

If you are not in McHugh's district, please contact Rep. David Obey, Chair of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee.

write: Rep. Matt McHugh
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

write: Rep. David Obey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

or call: 273-1388 or (202) 225-6335

or call: (202) 225-3365

JOIN OTHERS IN A LOCAL CALL-IN ON TUESDAY, MARCH 18

Calendar

- March 13
8:00 pm "The US, Nicaragua, and the World Court: The Legal Issues"
a talk by Harvard Law Professor Abraham Chayes,
Anabel Taylor Hall Auditorium.
- March 16 - 21 Central America Week, see page 12.
- March 20
8:00 pm CUSLAR Films: "Hour of the Furnaces - Part III", is a film
concerning liberation in Latin America. "Doctora", is a film about
a woman doctor working with Bolivian Aymara and Quechua Indians.
Uris Auditorium
- April 3
8:00 pm CUSLAR Film: "Living at Risk", is the story of a Nicaraguan family.
Uris Auditorium
- April 10
7:00 pm "The Impact of Policies on Women in Socialist Countries:
China and Nicaragua", a talk presented by Carol Smith, Anthropology
Department, Duke University. 32 Warren Hall
- April 17
8:00 pm CUSLAR Film: "Hungry for Profits", a film which makes the
connection between first world corporate profit motives
and third world hunger. Uris Auditorium
- April 18
12:20 pm "Rural Women and State Policy: The Latin American Agrarian
Reform Experience", a talk by Carmen Deere, Economics Department,
University of Massachusetts, Seminar Room, East Sibley

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