



# CUSLAR Newsletter

SUMMER/FALL 1999

Jubilee 2000

Human Rights  
and Pinochet

Bombs in Vieques

A Cup of Justice,  
Please...

Fujimori and the  
IAHCR



The Committee on U.S.-Latin American Relations





*"the Biblical tradition calls for a Jubilee year, when slaves are set free and debts are cancelled."*

This June, the G-7 annual economic summit was held in Cologne, Germany. At this summit, the richest and most powerful countries in the world faced an uncomfortable item on the agenda. How—and IF—to alleviate the foreign debt of the poorest and most severely in-

debted countries of the world, including many countries in Latin America. Over 17 million signatures collected world-side were presented at the summit in support of debt relief for poor countries.

In the wake of the debt crisis of the 1980s, as developing countries became unable to pay even the interest on outstanding foreign loans obtained in the late 1970s, the World Bank and IMF imposed draconian structural adjustment measures on indebted nations in order to ensure that first-world creditors continued to profit on their investments to the rest of the world.

These measures have not been successful in solving the debt crisis—in fact, the imposition of austerity, cuts in social services and education, and the lowering of wages has caused an actual decline in the economies of poor countries. As a result, indebted governments are even less able to pay the debt. Debt in Latin America alone has doubled from 1970-1990 to more than \$700 billion dollars, much of that from unpaid interest. The real result of this vicious circle has been a decline in the standard of living for citizens of indebted countries, increased hunger and poverty, lowered educational levels, and a rise in the repression of social movements.

The world-wide Jubilee 2000 campaign was founded in Great Britain in 1996 and has emerged as the anti-debt movement's most visible institutional figure at the close of the 1990s. Jubilee 2000, with national and regional grassroots campaigns throughout the Americas, Africa, and Europe, has as its mission to eradicate the debt for countries "unable to meet the basic needs of their people or achieve a level of sustainable development that ensures a decent quality of life."

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*"It's not that Third World countries are getting poorer, it's that we're getting richer."*

The Committee on U.S./Latin American Relations (CUSLAR) is a Cornell University based group, founded in 1965, which seeks to promote a greater understanding of Latin America and the Caribbean. The members of CUSLAR are a diverse group of people united in our concern about the role of the U.S. in the social, political, and economic affairs of the region. Within this context we support the right of the people of Latin America and the Caribbean to self-determination, and support their efforts to free themselves from a legacy of colonialism, exploitation, and oppression. CUSLAR works for peace, justice, and understanding in U.S./Latin American relations through education, solidarity, and support of human rights.

If you are interested in writing or editing for the Newsletter, please call the CUSLAR office at (607)-255-7293. Articles and letters to the editor should be sent to: CUSLAR, 316 Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, 14853. You can also email us at [cuslar@cornell.edu](mailto:cuslar@cornell.edu). The **CUSLAR Newsletter** is published 4 times a year.

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# In Brief...



## ***Military Aid to Colombia***

The long neglected conflict in Colombia is emerging as Latin America's major crisis as U.S. policy makers and military leaders call for increased U.S. aid for the Colombian military. Drug czar Barry McCaffrey has requested \$40 million in aid for "regional intelligence programs," part of a nearly \$600 million emergency aid package to Colombia. McCaffrey says that Colombia is in an "emergency situation" and has recommended that the U.S. invest another \$1 billion in counter-drug efforts in the Andean region, with about half of it going to Colombia.

Congress has tripled U.S. military assistance to Colombia this year, making it the third-largest recipient of U.S. security assistance in the world, after Israel and Egypt. The overwhelming imbalance in U.S. aid to Colombia—\$230 million in military assistance, less than \$10 million for development, judicial and law enforcement and human rights—only serves to pull the U.S. closer to the "most abusive military forces in the hemisphere, without reducing illicit drug production or contributing to stability or democracy" states Winifred Tate, from the Washington Office in Latin America.

## ***Contras, Torture, and Mass Graves in Honduras***

On August 12, Sara Ponce, Honduran special prosecutor for human rights, announced that investigators had unearthed three mass graves at a former military base near the Nicaraguan border of Honduras. The base, called El Aguacate, was

built in 1983 by the U.S. CIA for use by the Honduran military, the CIA, and the Contras, the U.S.-client army who battled the ruling left-wing Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua throughout the 1980s. The base was closed in 1990.

The Associated Press quoted Ponce as saying that not only is there is a mass grave on the base over 500 meters wide, but that she also believes that there are at least 48 other such graves in the nearby vicinity. She also asserted that these graves were most likely cemeteries for victims of the Contras, and that the Honduran military had removed soil from the area in an attempt to conceal evidence.

## ***Pardon for Puerto Rican Activists?***

A conditional pardon is being granted to 11 of 15 Puerto Rican prisoners currently being held in U.S. jails for independence related activities, according to an announce from Bill Clinton on August 11. Many of these prisoners, all activists in the movement to achieve full independence for the U.S. protectorate, have served as many as 19 years of their current sentences, some of which are as long as 90 years. These pardons, though, are conditional, and a number of the prisoners have already rejected the conditions. As part of the release agreement, the activists would have to renounce violence, agree not to associate with independence activists, and cease discussion of Puerto Rico's political status. The president of the Puerto Rican Independence

Party, Ruben Berrios Martinez, deemed these conditions "insulting and abusive."

## ***Chileans Protest Widespread Unemployment***

An official unemployment rate of 10.8% (with 15.4% in the Santiago area) brought over 5,000 Chileans into the streets on August 10 in protest. The current rate of unemployment is the highest in Chile in 17 years. Organized by the Unitary Workers of Chile (CUT), the protest saw workers and the unemployed call for an end to the government's "Laid Off Worker Protection Program" which pays unemployment benefits out of funds saved by workers themselves while they are employed, and ask the government to initiate a job creation program. After most of the demonstrators had cleared the area, about 200 protesters allegedly begin a series of altercations with police which led to 20 arrests and 2 injuries. The CUT stated that a national strike was a possibility if the government ignores its demands.

## ***NAFTA Dead in Chile***

August 9 saw Chilean foreign minister Gabriel Valdes tell reporters that Chile had given up hope of joining the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA). Valdes made the announcement following a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, citing congressional

*Continued on next page*



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opposition in the U.S. Valdes said that Chile would rather seek a separate trade agreement with the United States.

### ***Colombian Comedian Murdered***

Jaime Garzón, a popular Colombian radio and television comedian, was assassinated by two men on a motorcycle in Bogota on August 13. Garzon was on his way to the Radionet studios in Bogota where he hosted a daily morning radio show. Two days of demonstrations of protest and grief followed his death, with 50,000 filling the Plaza de Bolivar on the 13th and over 150,000 taking part in a march and mass at the plaza the next day. Garzon was well-known across Colombia for his political satire, from which he spared no one. As willing to parody drug traffickers as leftist rebels, rightist politicians, U.S. officials, and even himself, his supporters came from all ends of the political spectrum, including President Andres Pastrana calling Garzon a friend, and leftist leader Antonio Navarro Wolff crying next to Garzon's coffin.

### ***Light Sentences in Guatemalan Massacre***

25 members of a military patrol who killed 11 and injured 25 campesinos in a 1995 attack on a northern Guatemalan farming cooperative were given light sentences by a three judge panel on August 13. Twelve of the soldiers were given sentences of five years in prison, while the remaining 13 received four year sentences. The judges declined to hand down the death penalty citing inconclusive ballistics evidence. All of the convicted soldiers have already spent three years and nine months in jail, time which will be subtracted from the new sentences. They

also have the option of avoiding jail time by paying a fine of five quetzales (\$.66) for each remaining day of their sentences. One of the lawyers who worked on behalf of the families of those killed stated that she believed that such light sentences were the result of an agreement between the court and the Guatemalan army. Rigoberta Menchu Tum called the trial a "legal farce."

### ***Chávez to Lead Venezuelan Constitutional Reform***

The constitutional assembly ratified Hugo Chávez as Venezuela's president on August 19, a largely symbolic move since his supporters control 92 percent of the assembly. Chávez and his supporters contend that the assembly, which has six months to write a new constitution for Venezuela, has supreme power over all the branches of government and can dissolve Congress and the courts.

Chávez's presidential campaign was based on the need for a new constitution, saying it would help end corruption and assure social justice for the poor. Other changes would give him the right to succeed himself in office and would vastly expand his power at the expense of the legislature and judiciary.

In his final speech before voting began, Chávez sought to frame the choice facing Venezuelans in the starkest possible terms. "You are either with God or with the devil," he said. "There are only two positions here...those of us who want profound change and those who refuse to lose their privileges."

Chávez's opponents say that he wants to replace an imperfect democracy with a one-man dictatorship, and they contend that the assembly is the country's last chance to avoid authoritarian rule.

### ***Food and Medicine to Cuba***

Farm groups and other advocates for ending the US food and medicine embargo on Cuba achieved a milestone victory when the US Senate voted August 5 to allow US producers to sell food and medicine to public institutions such as Cuban hospitals and schools. "This is a triumph for the American farmer, the people of Cuba, and common sense, and restores US policy to the moral high ground," said Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT) regarding the 78-28 vote. The amendment to free food and medical sales to Cuba and other countries was sponsored by Senator John Ashcroft (R-MO) as part of the Agriculture Appropriations bill. The Amendment would now remove existing sanctions of food and medical products to Cuba by allowing general one-year licenses. The amendment also removes end-use monitoring and removes the ban on financing of sales from private US sources, two provisions which would make sales practical for US companies. The entire Agriculture Appropriations bill will now be reconciled in conference committee with the House, where legislation to free sales to Cuba - the Cuba Food and Medicine Security Act - currently enjoys the cosponsorship of more than 150 US Representatives.



***The CUSLAR News Briefs***  
are compiled by Sam Costello  
and Hannah Wittman



# HUMAN RIGHTS AND PINOCHET

*the facts behind the crime* by Sudeb Mitra

*From the nitrate deserts, from the submarine coal mines, from the terrible heights where the copper lies buried and is extracted with inhuman labor by the hands of our people, a freedom movement of magnificent proportions sprang up. That movement raised a man named Allende to the presidency of Chile to carry out reforms and measures of justice that could not be postponed, and to rescue our national wealth from the claws of foreigners ... Here in Chile, in the middle of enormous difficulties, a truly just society was being erected, based on our sovereignty, our national pride, and the heroism of the best of Chile's population. On our side, on the side of the Chilean revolution, were the constitution and the law, democracy and hope". Pablo Neruda, Memoirs*

The September 1970 elections in Chile brought a leftist coalition government to power. It was called Popular Unity (UP) and Dr. Salvador Allende was its Presidential candidate. This was a major event in Latin America, when a Socialist candidate became the President based on a popular mandate.

The new government immediately started expropriating coal, iron and nitrate mines. By July 1971, the giant US owned copper mines were nationalized. Workers received an increase of almost 200 percent on their basic pay; a ceiling of about \$1200 per month was placed on public salaries. Rents were fixed at 10 percent of family income. Almost all private banks were nationalized. Allende instituted a program where every child received

a half liter of milk daily. The Popular Unity also initiated reforms in agriculture; the primary beneficiaries of the several agrarian reforms were agricultural wage-workers and tenant farmers. The Popular Unity government pioneered sweeping structural reforms aiming at redistribution of wealth and greater control of the national economy, thereby creating the foundations of a more egalitarian society.

These reforms were seen as a serious threat to all vested interests. Every effort was undertaken to disrupt the social and economic reforms. In fact, even before 1970, the US government intervened to prevent Allende from coming to power by heavily supporting the traditional party candidate.

When Allende finally came to

power in 1970, the Nixon administration became determined to disrupt social and political life in Chile. Two "lines" were proposed; one was the "soft line", which, in Nixon's words, was to "make the economy scream" and the "hard line" was to aim for a military coup. The US ambassador to Chile, Edward Korry, was given the task to implement the "soft line". He described his work as follows: "to do all within our power to condemn Chile and the Chileans to utmost deprivation and poverty."

In a speech given at the United Nations on December 4, 1972, Dr. Allende said, "We find ourselves faced with forces which operate in the shadows, without a flag, with powerful weapons, posted in the various places of influence. .... From the very day



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of our electoral triumph on the fourth of September 1970, we have felt the effects of a large-scale external pressure against us which tried to prevent the inauguration of a government freely elected by the people, and has attempted to bring it down ever since, an action that has tried to cut us off from the world, to strangle our economy and paralyze trade in our principal export, copper, and to deprive us of access to sources of international financing."

On September 11, 1973, a right-wing military coup overthrew the Popular Unity government. Dr. Allende was murdered. A democratically elected government was thus overthrown by force. The Commander of the Army, Augusto Pinochet, became President of Chile. The junta immediately unleashed a program of massive terror against the working class, students, supporters of the Allende government and other sectors of the general population.

Within months, Chile created records of every form of human rights violations. The cruelty and barbarism of the military junta reached extraordinary heights that drew the world's attention and condemnation. According to a 1975 Amnesty International Report by Rose Styron, "of a population of 10.6 million, estimates of executions and

death-after-torture ranged from 20-50,000. Some 90,000 have been detained and interrogated for at least several days, and of the 18,000 on the prison lists for January 1974, approximately 8000 remain in January 1975." She continued, "torture in Chile is not isolated sadism but state policy, fashioned cleverly to create conformity by terrorization, dehumanization, and destruction of the will through prolonged incalculable pain."

In December 1973, the paramilitary DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional) was set up under the direct control of Pinochet. Modeled on the Brazilian Death Squad, the DINA torture center became well-known for sadist methods of 'interrogation'. Thousands of students and professors were dismissed from the universities. People suspected of any left-wing orientation lost jobs; many were reported "missing".

Styron noted in her report, "citizens have disappeared altogether for lack of satisfactory identification. Their bodies float in the Mapocho River or lie bullet-ridden on its banks. Families find missing relatives in the morgue, grotesquely mutilated. Pictures smuggled out, of corpses missing eyes, noses, limbs and genitals are eloquent testimony to torture." Doctors were not spared; on March 26, 1974, AI received "an anguished appeal from the Chilean doctors them-



selves." The physicians of Allende's Health Policy staff - Jorge Klein, Eduardo Paredes, Enrique Paris all disappeared after their arrests.

Workers became particular targets of the military junta. When dock workers in San Antonio called a strike, "their leaders were dragged under trucks and killed." Municipal buildings, schools and hospitals were used as detention centers. Women prisoners were brutally raped and subjected to electric shocks. The famous folk-singer Victor Jara was beaten to death. The junta also did not spare the residence of Neruda; they ransacked and vandalised the Nobel Laureate's house in Santiago. Even US citizens were not spared. Styron reported, "James Ritter, a young American physics professor who was arrested and tortured in Estado Chile, was interrogated by a Chilean detective who said he had graduated from the International Police Academy in Washington, D.C., in 1965. 'Don't try any funny stuff,' he warned. 'I was trained in your country.'"

Torture, murder, rape, disappearances continued unabated. Innumerable cases have been documented by Amnesty International, U.N. Commission on Human Rights, the Women's

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International League for Peace and Freedom and other human rights organizations.

The support system for the poor and defenseless of the Allende years was gone. The poverty level increased from about 20 percent to about 40 percent. According to James Petras, "under the Allende regime, Chilean labor received close to 50 percent of the national income. By 1980, however, after five years of crisis and draconian antilabor measures, this share was reduced to 43 percent and by 1989, after seventeen years of military dictatorship and free market reforms, to 19 percent."

ITT and Dow Chemical were all back in Chile and got back the nationalized enterprises. Robert McNamara at the World Bank gave \$133 million, the IMF gave \$420 million and the Inter-American Development bank gave \$400 million. Pinochet also received support from several Latin American dictatorial governments, mainly from Brazil. James Petras pointed out that the combined weight of the secret police, US financial support, and big business consolidated Pinochet's position.

Kissinger played a key role in destabilizing the Allende government; his main concern was that the success of social democracy in Chile would inspire similar experiments in other Latin American countries, including southern Europe. Noam Chomsky writes, "He (Kissinger)

was worried that successful economic development, where the economy produces benefits for the general population - not just profits for private corporations - would have a contagious effect."

### *The Current State of Affairs*

Judges Manuel García-Castellón and Baltasar Garzón of the Spanish National High Court (Audiencia Nacional) have taken the courageous stand to extradite Pinochet.

On 24 March 1999 the English House of Lords confirmed its ruling that a former Head of State is not immune from prosecution for an international crime, and that Augusto Pinochet could be extradited for the crimes of torture and conspiracy to torture committed after December 1988, when the UK ratified the Convention against Torture.

The Chilean government has made various attempts this summer to exonerate Pinochet from responsibility for his crimes, saying that "Pinochet is an internal problem of Chile and will be solved by Chileans. Foreign intervention should not be permitted." Nevertheless, on 4 June 1999 the Bow Street Magistrate decided that extradition hearings would begin on 27 September 1999.

Pinochet's detention in Britain has finally diminished his larger-than-life image in Chile and dispelled the lingering mystique of the once omnipotent mili-

tary, reports Anthony Faiola of the Washington Post. Political analysts say the often tense democratic transition since Pinochet stepped down in 1990 has been fortified by the arrest. In the past few months, they note, Chile's emboldened judicial system and democratic politicians have accomplished more on human rights than they had in years.

In addition to the Spanish extradition, Pinochet is the subject of 635 other pending lawsuits in Chile. France, Belgium and Switzerland have also issued extradition requests for Pinochet.

The Pinochet lesson has been a strong one for other dictators worldwide, fearing to leave their homes even for medical treatment. The spread of the "Pinochet Syndrome," says Reed Brody of the Human Rights Watch, "shows how far we have come from the days when despots could terrorize their own populations, secure in the knowledge that at worst they would face a tranquil exile."

For the sake of justice, this ruling is important step in bringing to trial other "respectable" people who share a great burden of responsibility for human rights violations in Chile and in many other parts of the world.

*Sudeb Mitra is a Cornell PhD and a CUSLAR member.*



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# Dodging Bombs in Vieques

by Robert L. Rabin Siegal

On April 19, 1999, a U.S. Navy pilot launched two five hundred pound live bombs from his FA18 jet that missed their target at the bombing range in Vieques, Puerto Rico, destroying the Navy's observation post. The bomb killed David Sanes Rodriguez, a civilian security guard, and injured several others.

David Sanes' death was the chronicle of a death foretold. For decades Viequeses have been clamoring for an end to the bombings and shelling on the island, and for an end to the U.S. military presence. As the Washington Post indicated in its editorial "Island Casualty" on Monday, May 3, David's death "is more than an isolated incident. It is the latest instance of predictable harm to the people of Vieques that goes back through decades of military neglect of island interests." The editorial correctly added that the military could find another site, as there simply should be no bombing on an inhabited island.

This was not the first time that the Navy missed its target. Fishermen complain about the great number of unexploded bombs in the coastal waters of Vieques and the destruction caused to coral reefs and other elements of the marine environment by stray bombs from jets and ships.

Vieques is an island municipality of Puerto Rico, six miles south of the main island. 72% of its population of approximately 9,000 live below the poverty level, suffering over 50% unemployment. Studies by the University of Puerto Rico School of Public



Vieques, Puerto Rico. Ruben Berrios, leader of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, speaks to a rally protesting the death of David Sanes Rodriguez, killed after U.S. F-18 fighter jets dropped two 500-lb bombs on Vieques during practice runs for combat in the Balkans. AP/R. Figueroa

Health indicate that the people of Vieques experience a 27% higher cancer rate than the rest of Puerto Rico. Environmental and health experts throughout Puerto Rico relate the abnormally high cancer rate to the environmental degradation caused by U.S. Navy and NATO bombing (the Navy "rents" Vieques to NATO and other countries for bombing practice) on the small island.

Since the 1940's, the U.S. Navy controls 3/4 of Vieques' 33,000 acres. The western end is used as an ammunition depot while the eastern third is a bombing and maneuvers area. Military expropriations in the 1940s caused a social and economic crisis that lasts to this day. The Navy controls the highest points on the island, the best aquifers and most fertile lands, extensive white sand beaches, and hundreds of archaeological sites.

Large-scale ecological destruction is the result of over half a century of bombing and experi-

mentation with new weapons systems. In his study titled "Vieques: The Ecology of an Island Under Siege," Professor José Seguinot Barbosa of the University of Puerto Rico explains that the "eastern tip of the island constitutes a region with more craters per kilometer than the moon." He adds "the destruction of the natural and human resources of Vieques violates the basic norms of international law and human rights. At the state and federal level the laws pertaining to the coastal zone, water and noise quality, underwater resources, archeological resources and land use, among others, are violated.

The Navy was recently forced to admit that 263 Depleted Uranium projectiles were fired from a Harrier Jet into the impact area at Vieques during training for the war in Yugoslavia in February. Documents from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission indicate that only 56 DU rounds were retrieved and because of the



danger of unexploded conventional ordnance in the area, the search for the rest of the DU was postponed until August. Depleted Uranium is linked to the Gulf War Syndrome that poses a serious threat to the health of the people of Vieques, who already suffer an alarmingly high cancer case rate.

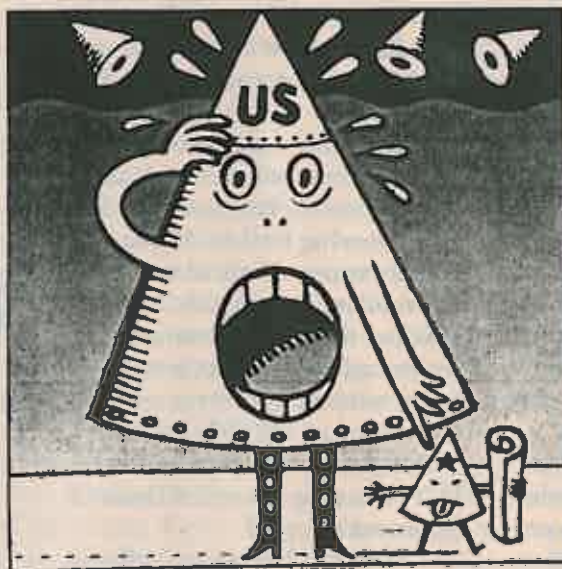
Fishermen have for decades struggled to get the Navy to stop bombing and leave the island. Giant military ships destroy fish traps and bombing, and other maneuvers impose severe restrictions on fishermen's entry into some of the best fishing areas around the island. On numerous occasions fishing boats have been damaged by naval gunfire and fishermen have been severely hurt by exploding bombs close to their fishing activities.

Since the April 19<sup>th</sup> killing of David Sanes, groups of Viequeses and supporters from the main island of Puerto Rico have been occupying several areas inside the bombing zone to block the possibility of renewed bombing and/or maneuvers. A group of young Viequense men and women, along with university students from Puerto Rico, have maintained a permanent vigil at a giant cross placed close to site where Sanes was killed. The area has been renamed Mt. David.

The Puerto Rico Independence Party (PIP) has for over a month maintained a permanent protest camp about a mile from Mt. David, also in the bombing range. On the North coast of Vieques (both Mt. David and the PIP camp are on the South coast of the island), a group of fishermen and other residents have occupied the Yayi Key while a group of

Vieques teacher together with the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques (CPRDV) have erected a chapel and hold a position of Icacos Beach, directly across from the Yayi Key. All of the protest camps are within Navy restricted zones and make up part of the impact area and eastern maneuver area.

Representatives of the CPRDV have traveled throughout Puerto Rico and in many cities in the U.S. to bring the issue to the attention of the public. In July, the Comité participated in U.N. deliberations on the decolonization of Puerto Rico.



As a result of the killing of David Sanes and the clear and firm consensus across all ideological and religious lines in favor of putting an end to the military presence on Vieques, the Governor of Puerto Rico appointed a Special Commission on Vieques with members from the three major political parties, the Catholic Church, Vieques fishermen and the Mayor of Vieques. There appears to be consensus among the members of the commission in favor of the position of the community—total demilitarization, decontamination, devolution (return of all lands to

the people) and development. The CPRDV recommends the creation of a land trust to keep and maintain the lands rescued from the navy in the hands of the community of Vieques. The Committee also recommends the establishment of a continuing education and training program in order to adequately empower the community of Vieques to manage its own resources, including but not limited to its hotels, restaurants, agricultural projects, small factories, and scientific and environmental projects.

The CPRDV is a non-partisan grass-roots organization dedicated to ending all U.S. military activity on Vieques and to promoting the sustainable development of the island. Community and civic leaders in Vieques of all political ideologies founded the Committee in 1993.

The people of Vieques need *your* support in this historic moment. We ask environmental, ecumenical, peace, and trade union organizations and individuals to show solidarity by bringing up the issue of Vieques at the workplace, in schools, at community and religious meetings. Help us enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century clearly on the road to peace and justice for Vieques, a paradise invaded.

*Robert L. Rabin Siegal is a member of the Comité Pro-Rescate y Desarrollo de Vieques, and Director of the Vieques Historic Archives. Donations for this struggle can be sent to the CPRDV at Box 1428, Vieques, PR 00765. For more information, email bieke@coqui.net*



# FUJIMORI YANKS PERU FROM INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COURT

LIMA, Peru, July 8.

After a ruling that Peru must retry four Chileans convicted of terrorism by secret military courts, Peruvian President Fujimori convinced his "controlled Congress" to pass a law removing Peru from the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The court is a legal arm of the Organization of American States (OAS), designed to give people in the Americas who feel they have been denied their human rights a neutral body to appeal to beyond their own judicial systems, which are often corrupt or government manipulated. Peru ratified its acceptance of the Court's authority in 1981.

The IAHRC found that Peru's military court, which condemned the Chileans to life sentences, had not guaranteed the accused their full rights to a legal defense. The Chileans, members of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), were found guilty of "treason against the fatherland," theoretically a

crime that cannot be committed by foreign citizens.

The 66-33 vote angered human rights groups, which charged the decision to withdraw from the IAHCR would turn Peru into a human rights pariah and make it harder for Peruvians to find justice. The court is the hemisphere's top human rights court, and its rulings are considered obligatory by states that have signed the pact. By withdrawing from the court, Peru will not be able to appeal to it in the future.

The Inter-American Human Rights Commission, which is to convene in October, also included a full hearing for Lori Berenson, a U.S. citizen who had expected full vindication from the Commission and the OAS. Berenson was sentenced to life in prison after being convicted of terrorism by a military court in 1996. Fujimori's decision to withdraw from the IAHCR is a significant setback to Berenson's appeal.

Peru has had more OAS human rights cases filed against it

than any other nation in South America, with nine out of twenty cases. It is followed by Argentina, which has three cases.

Peru follows Trinidad and Tobago in withdrawal from the IAHCR, which pulled out on May 26 in a bid to prevent death-row prisoners from appealing to the court. (AP 7/9/99, WP 7/8/99, IPS, Latinamerica Press 7/26)



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The results of the 1999 G-7 summit included a promise of forgiveness of \$60 billion of foreign debt of 33 poor "qualifying" countries. \$45 million was added to the debt alleviation program for Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)—a World Bank/IMF supported plan that *continues* to impose structural adjustment programs on countries receiving debt relief. Sixteen additional countries were added to the program, including Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Guayana as new Latin American beneficiaries.

Join the Jubilee 2000 campaign in your community in demanding an end to the chains of debt and structural adjustment! Recognize that debt and structural adjustment are not only "brakes on development," but also instruments of control over the political and economic sovereignty of developing nations!

On **September 25**, march from DeWitt Park to the Commons, where a paper chain of 2000 links will be presented to Congressman Maurice Hinchey.

Contact your **representatives in Congress** and ask them

to support the Leach Bill ("The Debt Relief for Poverty Reduction Act—H.R. 1095), which would cancel most of the bilateral debt owed to the US by poor countries, and establish Human Development Funds to ensure that money saved from debt relief goes toward poverty reduction.

Show that you support every country's right to grow develop freely, without the burden of the chains of debt.

—Hannah Wittman



# A Cup of Justice, Please!

by Emily Levitt

Picking up a few things at the store has become increasingly difficult for the conscientious consumer. Once we could drop into the supermarket and find a choice pint of strawberries to take home for shortcake, but now we peer warily at labels hoping that they're grown locally without pesticides or genetic doctoring. But fortunately, there's something that consumers can finally feel good about, and that's the coffee you drink.

While it can be debated whether or not coffee is a necessity in your life, for millions of small farmers, there is no doubt. Your cup of joe is what puts food on their tables and clothes on their backs. Coffee is second only to petroleum as the largest item of international trade and over half of the coffee produced is grown on small farms. Whether they're the indigenous of Chiapas or the Amazonian tribes of Peru, the opportunity to receive a fair price for coffee beans is slim. Due to the debt crisis experienced by most developing countries, communities suffer from poor health care, education, and infrastructure due to government cuts in social spending. For many workers there seems to be little hope of improving their standard of living. However, even though the coffee industry is notorious for exploiting its workers and perpetuating rural poverty, consumers can actually help break the cycle of poverty by supporting fairly traded coffees.

"Conscious" coffees first became popular in Europe in the 1970s and are now finding their way into the U.S. market under labels like Equal Exchange. Formed in 1986 by three concerned consumers, Boston-based Equal Exchange aims to re-

form the coffee industry by stimulating demand in the U.S.A. for fair trade coffee among the world's largest coffee consuming population.

Fair trade labels certify that farmers receive a guaranteed minimum price regardless of how the market falls. Equal Exchange, a worker-owned cooperative, also offers valuable preharvest credit, encourages sustainable farming practices, and purchases beans directly from democratically-run, small farmer cooperatives in Latin America and beyond. By buying direct, they bypass the middlemen who traditionally pay the farmers the lowest price possible for their crop. Receiving a fair price for their products helps farmers stay on their land.

The majority of Equal Exchange's coffees are organic and shade-grown, which preserves the forests, migratory bird habitats, and local ecosystems and protects growers and consumers alike from harmful chemicals. Most plantation or estate coffee is grown on land that has been clearcut of forest growth and requires chemical pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. But coffee actually flourishes under the shade of trees, which also provides a shield against crop-ravaging pests. By receiving a price double or triple of what middlemen pay, small farmers can afford via fair trade to grow the coffee less densely under the shade trees, and can receive a price fifteen cents higher per pound if the coffee passes organic inspection.

The Ithaca area has adopted Equal Exchange coffees in many popular stores and cafés in support of the fair trade movement. Thanks to Greenstar Coop., Oasis Natural Grocery, the Ithaca Bakery, Collegetown Bagels, and Top's Supermarkets, you can now enjoy a delicious cup of justice by asking for Equal Exchange.

*For more information about Equal Exchange or where it can be found in your area, call 781-0303 or contact "<http://www/equalexchange.com>"*

Emily Levitt is a graduate student in Nutrition at Cornell and a CUSLAR member.







# *school of the americas-- on its way down...*

Opponents of the U.S. Army's School of the Americas celebrated a victory July 30 on Capitol Hill, when the House of Representatives cut 10 percent of the \$20 million in federal funds earmarked next year for the school that has trained thousands of Latin American military and police officials. The rest of the school's funding comes from the Pentagon budget.

The 230-197 vote during debate on the fiscal 2000 foreign operations spending bill marked the first congressional setback for the school since religious activists launched a campaign to close it a decade ago. The school's graduates include some of the worst murderers and human rights abusers in Latin American history.

"All these years of going to prison, fasting and protesting, it's been a long, hard struggle," said Father Roy Bourgeois, the Maryknoll priest who launched the campaign after graduates of the school were linked to the 1989 murders of six Jesuit priests and two women in El Salvador.

The school, located at Fort Benning near Columbus, Georgia, had survived four previous House votes since 1993. Many of the 60,000 Latin American soldiers that have been trained in commando tactics, military intelligence, psychological operations, and other civilian warfare techniques have been responsible for actions including massacres of entire communities, rape, and torture.

## **What YOU Can Do::**

1. The amendment to cut funds to the SOA is not included in the Senate version of the bill. It is important to contact members of Congress who will be on the conference committee and urge them all to keep this provision in the final version of the bill. Contact CUSLAR at 255-7293 for a list of Congressmen and Senators on the Conference Committee.

2. Support HR 732 and S873, the new House and Senate Bills which call for the complete and immediate closure of the SOA. These bills need 30 more co-sponsors. Contact your Representative in Congress and express the need to cut ALL funding to the School of the Assassins!

3. Join Father Roy Bourgeois at Cornell on Monday, October 4th at 8:00 for a presentation on the school of the Americas in the One World Room at Anabel Taylor Hall.

4. Attend the 10th Anniversary Commemoration Rally to Close the School of the Americas, taking place **November 19-21 at Fort Benning, GA.** 10,000 participants will keep the positive momentum rolling! Contact CUSLAR for info on traveling to Georgia.



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# CUSLAR'S Poetry Page

*El Pan de Cada Dia, Nancy Bacelo.....Uruguay*

*Me sorprende en lugares  
donde nunca estuviera  
por ejemplo en este  
café lejano y solo  
sobre una mesa oscura y destenida  
me sorpredo llamandote  
diciendote  
que ese tango que suena  
y dice "corazón no le hagas caso"  
ese tango  
sonando en medio de la lluvia  
que quieres  
me deshace*

I surprise myself in places  
where I would never be  
for example in this  
café remote and lonely  
at a dark, faded table  
I surprise myself calling out to you  
telling you  
that the tango playing  
saying "never mind, my hear:  
that tango  
sounding in the middle of the rain  
what do you expect  
it destroys me

*translated by Nora Weiser from the collection  
El Pan de Cada Día, 1975*



I scatter flowers of War, I, of the smiling face  
Since I come along with war.  
I am quetzal bird and I come flying,  
Through difficult passages I come along with war.  
I am beautiful blackbird with red neck,  
I come flying: I come to become flower,  
I, into bloodstained Rabbit.  
See me, I am serious now, gird your sides  
I, whose eyes wink, the one who goes smiling.  
I come from inside the flowered courtyard. See me, I am  
serious,  
Gird your sides. I am going to become flower,  
I, the bloodstained Rabbit.  
- Nahuatl poetry

*From the Closing Speech at the National Encuentro in  
Defense Of the Cultural Heritage; From the mountains of  
the Mexican southeast; By the Clandestine Revolution-  
ary Indigenous Committee - General Command of the  
Zapatista Army of National Liberation Subcomandante  
Insurgente Marcos  
La Realidad, Awake Mexico, August of memory, 1999*





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