



Fall 2005

CUSLAR newsletter

Deliberate plot to harm poor people

Ridiculously false free trade with more **BARRIERS**

Catastrophic results for the hungry

Attempt against fundamental rights

Fraud to benefit only a handful of

Transnational corrupt corporations

Annihilators of national agriculture and industry

EDITORIAL

Querid@s Amig@s de CUSLAR,

At this weekend's CUSLAR Reunion and 40th Anniversary I had to admit that CUSLAR has been around for significantly longer than I have. At 25 I can only begin to imagine the scope of CUSLAR's work over the last 40 years. Though I have spent countless hours pouring over newspaper clippings, documents, newsletters, and meeting notes in the office filing cabinets, I know it is only the tip of the iceberg. Words and pictures can never tell the full story of the significance of this amazing organization. Talking with some of you who were able to come to the reunion and getting the chance to share memories and ideas with you gave me a glimpse into the legacy of CUSLAR's work.

I have been and continue to be inspired by the brave, progressive and creative work that CUSLAR volunteers have always done. That's why I'm so happy to have been able to return as the CUSLAR Coordinator after a year away. The number of people and organizations affected by CUSLAR's work is impressive. Some community members find themselves in Ithaca because of the generosity and ingenuity of CUSLAR volunteers who helped them seek refuge from a country in [political turmoil]. Others have been affected by the eye-opening experience of going on a delegation with CUSLAR to Nicaragua, Cuba, Colombia or one of many other places. Some have been joined us in protests and actions. Others have joined us for speaking tours, discussions, meetings, street theatre, cultural events or fundraisers. Yet others have found a comfortable place to practice their Spanish, English, or Portuguese aiding them to build bridges between the various communities of Ithaca and the world.

You have joined us in the office, the streets, and even in jail. You have sustained us with your courage, your hope, your love, and your joy. You have shared our vision for a justice for all peoples of the Americas (o mejor, de Abya Yala). You have shared your dreams, and made some of them come true. You are the lifeblood of this very special organization and I am so proud to be part of your family.

Looking forward to working with you again.

¡P'alante!
Dana Brown

PS I wanted to print the Zapatista's Sixth Declaration of the Lacondón Jungle in this newsletter because it asks for a response from the civil society of the world and I'd like to see CUSLARistas discuss and respond to it. But it's 20 pages long, so I couldn't quite squeeze it in. Help me save paper and go read it online in English or Spanish at: www.ezln.org.

PPS the Zapatistas may be more charismatic, but Bolivia is where the action is... Keep your eyes peeled for further developments.



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 by our concern about the role of the U.S. in the social, political, 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 colonial exploitation, and oppressions. CUSLAR works for peace, justice and greater mutual 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, letters to the editor should be sent to: CUSLAR, 316 Anson Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, or via email at cuslar@cornell.edu. CUSLAR Newsletter is published three times a year.

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"I love my country
by which I mean
I am indebted joyfully
to all the people
throughout its history
who have fought the
government to make right
where so many cunning sons and
daughters
our foremothers
and forefathers
came singing through slaughter
came through hell
and high water
so that we could stand here
and behold
breathlessly the sight
how a raging river of tears
is cutting a grand canyon of light."
—ari dfranco

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NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Dana Brown



VENEZUELA

PETROCARIBE

Adapted from LatinAmericanPress, July 2005

Heads of state from 14 of the 16 Caribbean nations signed an agreement with Venezuela June 29 for the creation of Petrocaribe a pact that will supply these countries with Venezuelan oil with preferential terms.

The agreement's objective is to "contribute to energy security, socioeconomic development and integration of the Caribbean countries, through the sovereign use of the energy resources, all of which is based on the integration proposal named Bolivarian Alternative for America (ALBA)." ALBA is an initiative of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez in response to the US-sponsored Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

In addition to the trade and production aspects, the agreement includes the coordination of energy policies, technological cooperation, training, infrastructure development, and the use of renewable resources such as solar and wind power. The agreement also does away with intermediaries in oil trade, which will save Caribbean countries US\$49 million annually. Only Trinidad

& Tobago and Barbados refused to sign the agreement because of fears that it could damage their own oil industries.

VENEZUELAN STATE TO SEIZE 'IDLE' FIRMS

Adapted from the BBC report July 19, 2005

BBC News in Caracas: Hugo Chavez broadcast his plan from a re-opened cocoa factory. The Venezuelan government has warned it will confiscate hundreds of private companies that are lying idle if they fail to re-open. President Hugo Chavez said the firms' workers would be given help to set up co-operatives and re-start production for the benefit of the community. He said the move was needed to fight poverty and end Venezuela's dependence on "the perverse model of capitalism". Some business leaders fear it may lead to a wider attack on private property.

"It's against our constitution," Chavez said. "Just as we cannot permit good land to lie uncultivated, so we cannot allow perfectly productive factories to stay closed." The Venezuelan leader said that more than 700 companies in the country were idle. Of these, 136 were being examined for possible expropriation and a small number were already in the process of being taken over, he said.

But Mr Chavez did hold out an olive branch to employers. He said more than 1,000 firms in Venezuela had partially closed down simply because of economic difficulties. "We want to work with you to help restore your production," he told company owners. Venezuelan business leaders have expressed concern that government policies on land reform and co-management in industry could signal the beginning of a wider attack on private property. But in his broadcast, Mr Chavez again insisted that Venezuelans have a clear choice. "Either capitalism, which is the road to hell, or socialism, for those who

want to build the kingdom of God here on Earth," he said.

CUBA

US CREATES POSITION TO HELP ACCELERATE THE DEMISE OF CASTRO

Adapted from BBC newswire, July 28

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has announced the creation of a new post to help "accelerate the demise" of the Castro regime in Cuba.

Caleb McCarry, a veteran Republican Party activist, was appointed as the Cuba transition coordinator. Ms Rice said for 50 years Fidel Castro had condemned Cubans to a "tragic fate of repression and poverty". Mr Castro accuses the US of funding unrest and vowed that dissidents would never bring down his government.

The post was recommended in a 2004 report on Cuba by a commission headed by Ms Rice's predecessor Colin Powell. The report outlines the steps the US is prepared to take to bring about regime change in Cuba, such as subverting Mr Castro's plans to hand over power to his younger brother.

Ms Rice says the US was working with advocates of democratic change on the island. "We are working to deny resources to the Castro regime to break its blockade on information and to broadcast the truth about its deplorable treatment of the Cuban people".

"We are working to deny resources to the Castro regime to break its blockade on information and to broadcast the truth about its deplorable treatment of the Cuban people."

**Condoleezza Rice
US Secretary of State**

NICARAGUA

SOCIAL ACTION GROUPS PLAN SIT IN, MARCHES FOR WATER RIGHTS

Adapted from the Nicaragua Network Hotline

On July 7, the Civil Coordinator, the Nicaraguan Social Movement, and the Committee for Global Action staged a sit-in in front of the National Assembly calling for a stop to the process of approval for the pending Water Law.

While the Bolaños government states that the proposed law is not meant to be a direct or explicit move toward water privatization, some opponents fear that it will be used as such, threatening the human right to water and damaging communities throughout Nicaragua. Violeta Delgado, spokesperson for Civil Coordinator, told La Prensa that her organization is staunchly against the law because of the fact that it provides businesses with the opportunity for various concessions that make room for greater commercial domination.

The protesting groups see water as a natural resource which should be accessible to the population at large, and not subject to the "laws" of the market. Delgado notes that the Free Trade Agreement, DR-CAFTA also has the affect of facilitating this feared privatization.

Other groups, while sharing the fear of the outcome if CAFTA is approved, feel that the law addresses concerns of citizen groups about privatization of water for human consumption. The Consumers' Defense Network continues to worry, however, about the possible privatization of water to generate electric power.

Deputy Jaime Morales Carazo, President of the Environment and Natural Resources Commission reiterated however that the law actually prohibits the privatization of water. "Their arguments have no basis. I get the impression that

they are seeing things that aren't there just to justify their work and their funding"

Nevertheless, Delgado announced that the sit-in would take place between July 11 and July 21, in front of the National Assembly. They intend to set up a farmers market in front of the Assembly and have a parade through the streets of the capital involving cultural presentations. A number of protests will also be held in front of the US Embassy in Managua.

"The government is not
concerned that our people
are starving to death. We
Chortis practice agriculture,
the cultivation of corn
and beans, but without land,
we cannot plant."
Isidoro Vásquez,
Chorti community member

HONDURAS

CHORTIS REIGNITE BATTLE WITH GOVERNMENT TO RECOVER THEIR LANDS

Adapted from LatinAmericanPress, July 2005

The Chorti indigenous group of western Honduras took over the Copan Ruins Archeological Park on June 6 as a new round of contention with the government materialized. Shouting, "We want land, not nonsense" some 3,000 Chorti campesinos blocked visitors from entering the famed Copan ruins, an ancient Maya city. The takeover stemmed from a pact the government signed with the Chorti community in 1997 that promised to purchase the indigenous group land in the departments of Copan and Ocotepeque.

But they have received little more than promises. An arrangement was made with the previous landowners where by the Chorti communities would be

granted use of the areas for three years while the government purchased it in a two-part payment. Yet the owners never received any money, and they are now demanding the Chorti's eviction.

"The government is not concerned that our people are starving to death," said Isidoro Vásquez, a member of the Chorti community "We Chortis practice agriculture, the cultivation of corn and beans, but without land we cannot plant."

June's takeover, was by no means the Chorti's first demonstration in favor of land reform. They last occupied the Copan ruins in September 2000, when 900 demonstrated in support of eight community members who had gone on a hunger strike. In 1998, the Chorti occupied the site demanding land and to force an investigation into the deaths of 43 indigenous leaders killed during a six-year period.

Some see the land reform issue as one that reaches back to the 1950s, when powerful landowners purchased thousands of acres in the Copan Valley, on either side of the Guatemalan border. The Chorti communities were forced to work as farm laborers, and not until the 1970s did the INA provide them their own land, yet even that deal benefited only three of the 17 Chorti communities, and the land was largely unsuited to agriculture.

EL SALVADOR

Adapted from COHA Press Briefing, July 19

As U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice astonishes the world by repeatedly describing El Salvador as a "democracy," she announced at this year's Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly in Ft. Lauderdale (June 5-7) that plans are underway to develop an International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in El Salvador. The school would yearly

enroll as many as 1,500 students from various hemispheric countries.

Negotiations for the ILEA come during a period when cooperation among Central American nations on matters of national and international security is already at an all time high.

The Salvadoran Ombudsperson for Human Rights, Dr. Beatrice de Carrillo, and the Popular Social Block (BPS), a group led by a Lutheran pastor in El Salvador, are at the head of protests against the launching of the controversial U.S. facility as well as the overall expansion of U.S. influence in the country.

PARAGUAY

US MILITARY BASE IN THE CHACO
Adapted from COHA analysis, July 20

On June 1, 2005 the Paraguayan National Congress entered into an agreement with Washington that allows U.S. troops to enter into Paraguay for an 18-month period. The troops will help train Paraguayan officials to deal with narcotrafficking, terrorism, government corruption and domestic health issues.

The agreement grants the U.S. troops legal immunity from possible offenses committed during their stay. Washington has long sought similar immunity for its troops in the Southern Cone, but Argentina and Brazil have firmly restricted granting such judicial liberty to U.S. troops.

Bolivian officials and its press are also speaking out against the agreement, fearing the U.S. presence as a means to control the petroleum and natural gas sources in their country. Though Asunción and Washington claim that the U.S. has no intentions of establishing a permanent base in Paraguay, history shows a strange resemblance between the current situation in Paraguay and the development of the Manta base in Ecuador from a "temporary" facility

into a major base.

CALIFORNIA

STATE WINS MTBE RULING;
BOOKSTORE THE CASE AGAINST
THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND FOR
A TURN TOWARD THE LOCAL
*Adapted from americas.org,
August 5*

Environmentalists and state officials scored a major victory Tuesday when Methanex Corp. of Canada announced it had lost its \$970-million trade case challenging California's 1999 ban of the controversial gasoline additive MTBE.

The case was viewed as a crucial test of state governments' ability to enforce health and environmental regulations that might conflict with international trade pacts.

It was the first time a foreign firm had used the North American Free Trade Agreement to challenge a U.S. environmental law.

The Methanex ruling represented a "resounding victory for the rights of Californians to keep their drinking water safe and clean," California Atty. Gen. Bill Lockyer said.

California is one of more than a dozen states that have banned MTBE, or methyl tertiary-butyl ether, from fuel

supplies. The additive, made from methanol, helps engines produce less pollution but has been blamed for contaminating groundwater supplies.

Vancouver-based Methanex, the world's largest producer of methanol, argued that California's ban was discriminatory. Under the Chapter 11 provision of NAFTA, countries are prohibited from discriminating against foreign investors.

After five years of legal wrangling, the three-person NAFTA tribunal dismissed Methanex's claim on the grounds that it lacked jurisdiction. Methanex also was ordered to pay the U.S. government \$5 million to cover legal costs. If the U.S. had lost the case, it would have been required to change the offending statute or pay a fine.

Diana Barkley, a Methanex spokeswoman, said Tuesday that the company was disappointed but couldn't comment further until it reviewed the complex ruling.

Globalization critics have criticized the Chapter 11 process, saying it has been abused by foreign investors trying to undermine tough U.S. laws. But the U.S. government and corporations have pushed for such measures in trade pacts, arguing that they are necessary to protect investors in countries with weak laws. ☐

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Getting Away With Murder:

US Certifies Colombia Despite Killing of Peace Activists



by Marcie Ley

On February 21, I received the devastating news: Luis Eduardo Guerra, the beloved leader and founder of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Colombia had just been killed in a massacre near his home in Colombia. For days I wept, mourning the loss of this extraordinarily compassionate individual. Given the impressive international attention and support showered upon his small community since its founding 8 years ago and the great number of lives Luis Eduardo had touched, I was certainly not alone in my grief and outrage.

For a community that has suffered countless atrocities caught as San José is in the middle of the Colombian civil war, to lose a charismatic and irreplaceable leader such as Luis Eduardo was an unimaginable blow. As the horrifying details of the massacre became public the nightmare only worsened. Including Luis Eduardo, eight civilians had been tortured and then hacked to death by machete blows. Four of the victims were minors, including Luis

Eduardo's 11-year-old crippled son and an 18-month-old baby girl.

All eyewitness testimony pointed to the Colombian Army as being directly involved in the killings. Meanwhile the Colombian government very quickly placed blame on FARC guerrillas, despite a lack of any credible evidence. In the weeks and months following the massacre, Colombian and international human rights groups pressured the Colombian government to conduct a thorough investigation especially of the soldiers allegedly involved. Across the US, religious leaders, solidarity organizations, grassroots activists, and even a handful of senators pressured Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to withhold certification citing the San José massacre, among other cases as evidence of the precarious human rights situation in Colombia.

Yet, on August 1 the State Department took injustice to the next level: it certified Colombia as meeting human rights conditions, thus releasing over \$70 million of aid that had been held up for months partly due to pressure generated by the San José case. The re-

sulting message sent by the US to its closest ally in the hemisphere is that Colombia could count on US support, regardless of whether it made any effort to improve its abominable human rights record.

"[The] decision [to certify] is a major blow to the promotion of human rights in Colombia and is based on only the narrowest reading of the law and the thinnest of evidence," said Dr. William F. Schulz, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA. "Further, it undermines the Bush Administration's contention that the promotion of human rights worldwide is a top priority for the U.S. government."

US Aid to Colombia

Since 2000, the US has sent over \$4 billion dollars of assistance to the Colombian government making it the largest recipient of US funding outside of the Middle East.

Called Plan Colombia, this aid package was first passed during the Clinton era under the guise of fighting the drug war. After September 11, 2001 and the start of the war on terror, Congress lifted restrictions that US funding could only be used for anti-narcotic activities. Helping the Colombian government defeat leftist guerrillas rebels became a central focus of US support.

Since Plan Colombia began, neither objective of stamping out insurgency nor stemming the flow of drugs out of Colombia has been achieved. The largest guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the FARC, is as strong as it has ever been. Meanwhile the US street price of cocaine has

dropped, purity has increased and the drug is more popular and available than it has been since the 1980's. Yet despite this lack of results, earlier this summer as Plan Colombia was set to expire, the US Congress approved an aid package that will allocate \$742 billion in assistance to Colombia.

To date, over 80% of US aid to Colombia has gone directly to the Colombian armed forces despite a horrendous human rights record and proven ties to paramilitary groups who are responsible for the majority of political killings. Interestingly, much of US aid "sent" to Colombia is used to purchase weapons, ammunition and helicopters made from US manufacturers and some of Plan Colombia's biggest supporters in Congress represent districts where defense contractors are located.

Regardless of how much money actually leaves this country as foreign aid, US law clearly prohibits funding governments that fail to respect human rights. In the case of Colombia, 25% of military aid can be withheld if the Secretary of State determines that Colombia is not adequately addressing human rights concerns. In order to pass twice-yearly certifications the Colombian government must demonstrate that it is severing ties between its military



and illegal paramilitary death squads and investigating reported abuses of civilians by military personnel, such as those that took place in San José. Neither of these conditions have been sufficiently met which is why the passage of certification is a slap in the face to anyone that believes the US should use its considerable influence to improve human rights conditions abroad.

"The State Department should use the leverage it has—not give away the store," said Lisa Haugaard, of the Latin American Working Group. "The price of U.S. assistance should be respect for human rights."

Human rights groups report that violations are on the rise and that 2005 has been one of worst years to date. According to the United Nations, abuses by military personnel are on the rise as is forced displacement. Colombia already has one of the highest rates of displacement in the world with over 2.5 million internal refugees. While the armed groups wrestle for political and geographical control of the country, it is the civilians that bear the brunt of the conflict. For every one armed combatant killed in Colombia's 50-year-old civil war, six civilians are disappeared or killed.

Peaceful Resistance

"The State Department should use the leverage it has--not give away the store. The price of US assistance should be respect for human rights."

In many communities across Colombia, the civilians are doing what they can to resist the continued violence around them by asserting their neutrality. The community of San José de Apartadó declared themselves a Peace Community in 1997. Arms of all kind are forbidden, as is collaboration with any side of the conflict, including the passing of information to armed actors. Yet, despite their principled stance of neutrality and non-violence the community has continued to suffer the devastating effects of the civil war.

To date, the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó has lost over 15 members to acts of violence, the vast majority of them alleged to have been perpetrated by paramilitary or military soldiers. In eight years, over 300 testimonies have been given by community members to Colombian authorities yet not once have charges been filed as the result of an investigation. In fact, man



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of the accusers and witnesses have been threatened or harmed as a result of providing testimony, evidence of the high level of corruption in the Colombian legal system.

The San José massacre is just one example of the hundreds of human rights atrocities allegedly committed by the Colombian armed forces that have thus far gone uninvestigated and unpunished. It is neither the most horrendous case, nor the most politically significant. Yet in many ways it exemplifies the vulnerability of the civilian population as well as the total impunity that exists in Colombia.

Immediately after the massacre human rights groups around the world rallied to the side of San José and demanded that an investigation be carried out. In the US, a grassroots campaign helped alert Congressional representatives to the fact that the Colombia government

was not adequately protecting its citizens from violence, especially from its own armed forces. The massive outcry was enough to put certification on hold for several months and inspire a hearty debate in the House of Representatives as it considered passing the renewal of aid to Colombia.

However, as Colombian President Alberto Uribe prepared for an historical visit to President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, it appeared that US policy toward Colombia resumed to business-as-usual. Clearly, the State Department's certification announcement on August 1 was timed to smooth Uribe's landing three days later by assuring him that billions of dollars of US aid will continue to flow, despite Colombia's lack of compliance with human rights conditions.

Clearly the current administration has shown little concern for human rights

abuses across the globe and Colombia is no exception. Yet for the people of San José, the targeting of innocent civilians by armed forces is not something that can be easily swept aside for the sake of amiable political friendships. For those that suffer the most in the conflict, creating a climate in which human rights abuses are investigated and punished is the only way to prevent further tragedy. Luis Eduardo committed his life to the cause of justice and respect for civilian rights. He is but one of many martyrs to this cause. Until the US commits to using its leverage and wealth to pressure countries like Colombia to respect the rights of its own people, he will remain one of many to come.

Native Ithacan and former CUSLAR Coordinator, Marcie Ley spent seven months living in the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó as a human rights observer. View photos and read her stories at www.pazlog.org.

Surviving the Chilean Economic Miracle

By Jason Tockman

When pressed for evidence that free market globalization can work to create a better world, most advocates point to Chile as the Latin American model of neoliberalism and its economic prescriptions—privatization, free markets, export-led growth and deregulation.

Since the days of the military dictator Augusto Pinochet, Chile has been implementing these policies, applying the strategies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and more recently the World Trade Organization (WTO). Though most of Latin America and developing countries around the world have been forced to accept what pop economist Thomas Friedman terms a "golden straightjacket," there are few that have been as committed to this course as Chile.

A closer examination of the Chilean experience, however, reveals that Chile is the scene of profound social and environmental problems that should come as a warning to countries in the South analyzing the range of strategies for economic development. If Chile is to serve as an example, its wholesale elimination of native forests and unjust persecution of indigenous leaders and activists indicate a critical need to revisit the free trade model.

"Their imprisonment is a message to others inclined to speak out against the encircling plantations: there is limited room and tolerance for dissent against Chile's economic system."



Llaima Volcano with araucaria trees in the foreground, Conguillio National Park

Exporting Chile's Ecosystems

One of the leading industries in Chile's export-led growth strategy is the forestry sector, which accounts for upwards of 15 percent of Chilean exports. Over the past few decades, the government has sought to export its way to prosperity by subsidizing the conversion of native forests to plantations. Together with poorly enforced environmental standards, the government subsidization of plantations has resulted in staggering levels of forest loss. The acreage in arrow-straight plantation rows has exploded five-fold since 1974 and now covers more than five million acres. The forest products export market is valued at over \$2.5 billion annually.

What has been lost is much of Chile's globally significant temperate rainforests, a unique ecosystem pressed between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Many of the species found there exist nowhere else on Earth—the world's smallest deer called the pudu, ancient alerce trees that compete for the

status of the oldest trees on the planet and the otherworldly araucarias, known also as monkey-puzzle trees.

Up to half a million acres of Chilean forest have been destroyed annually since the 1970s, according to the University of Washington's Center for International Trade in Forest Products. The forests have been replaced by quick growth Monterey pine and eucalyptus largely planted by the firms Arauco and CMPC, to make wood products such as pulp, lumber, and house molding destined for Japan, Europe, and the United States. Though the plantation may bear some resemblance to forests as there are trees involved, they have little value in terms of biodiversity, involve heavy applications of toxic pesticides, and have dried up precious underground water sources as they are harvested more or less every 20 years.

The plantations have also caused habitat loss and the decline of populations of numerous bird and mammal species. Many mammals are now endangered, including the huemul (a large deer species).

cies of which only about 1,000 exist), several species of large cats and foxes, the southern river otter, and the long-snout rat-opossum. Others, like the pudu deer, southern sea otter, and puma are vulnerable to extinction. In 1995, the Central Bank of Chile estimated that outside of national parks, the rate of conversion would virtually eliminate the nation's original forests by 2015.

Mapuche Resistance and the State's Response

The disappearance of native forests has both impacted and ignited local indigenous Mapuche communities, who still lay claim to much of the land in question. In addition to the destruction of their resource base and sacred sites, the Mapuche suffer from depleted and contaminated water supplies. Health problems among Mapuche communities are likely linked to the pesticides used in Chilean monoculture forestry. Spurred by this incursion into their territory, Mapuche leaders and communities have struggled to recover their land. Often their efforts are met with swift and violent responses by Chilean authorities.

In 2002, 17-year-old Mapuche Alex Lemun was shot and killed while protesting the seizure of indigenous lands to be used for a CMPC tree farm bordering his community. His killer, Major Marco Aurelio Treuer, was acquitted despite an internal investigation in which a military prosecutor found that when "Major Treuer fired the shot there was no real and imminent danger" and that "the force used at the time of events was completely unnecessary and had no rational motive that could justify it," according to an October 2004 report by Human Rights Watch and the Chile-based Indigenous Peoples' Rights Watch.

During a 2003 raid of a Mapuche community, police attacked Luis Lican, an elderly Mapuche man. According to a Human Rights Watch report and Jose

"As Chile shows, the price of free trade can be terrifically expensive, while its bold promises of prosperity often go unfulfilled."

Aylwin's book *Los Derechos de los Pueblos Indigenas en Chile*, Adriana Loncomilla, who witnessed the assault, said the carabineros (police) "shot him down and left him there full of pellets. After they shot him, they kicked him, stepped on him, and kept hitting him. The carabineros were saying, 'Go on run away now, asshole,' and laughing." The carabineros said the raid was meant to be a "search." Lican was not arrested, and reports say he was merely a startled bystander.

Two of Chile's most high-profile political prisoners are Pascual Pichún and Aniceto Norín, jailed since April 2004 in the southern town of Traiguén. The traditional Mapuche leaders, lonkos as they are called in the Mapudungun language, are serving five years and a day, having been prosecuted under the anti-terrorist laws that date back to the Pinochet dictatorship for "terrorist and arson threats" including charges that they burned forests and manor houses.

Despite their acquittal by a trial court on charges of arson, the lonkos were convicted as "terrorist threats" in a subsequent politicized case involving hidden witnesses and lack of due process. On top of those charges, Pichún and Norín, along with 14 other Mapuche activists, were also charged with "illicit terrorist association." If found guilty, they could receive an additional sentence of 10 years or more. Though these charges had been absolved by the Criminal Court of Temuco for lack of evidence, that decision was overruled on April 8, 2005, by the Chilean Supreme Court. As this goes to print, those charged are awaiting the trial verdict.

The wrongful labeling of the lonkos as terrorists was employed to achieve



Anita Millaquén of the Mapuche group Konapewman speaks out against corporate globalization



Traditional women leaders, "machis", at a protest against the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Villarica

"justice" through procedures that are unavailable to prosecutors through the conventional criminal code, says Human Rights Watch. Their imprisonment is a message to others inclined to speak out against the encircling plantations; there is limited room and tolerance for dissent against Chile's economic system.

In a July 2004 prison interview, Pichún, 52, explained that he has been targeted "for being the lonko and community president," and his five years in jail are Chile's way of exercising "the maximum rigor of the law." Speaking of the two men's families, including his two sons who are currently being sought by the authorities, he said, "They feel totally abandoned, insecure and trau-

matized. Our wives and children are alone."

Norin, father of five, and five years younger than his cellmate, explained why he risked speaking out against the politically powerful forestry companies: "The plantations have greatly impacted the community. We have lost our medicinal herbs, our native forests and water. The fumigation of the tree plantations has polluted the water, and contaminated the lands and animals."

Both a United Nations investigation by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, and the October 2004 Human Rights Watch report titled "Undue Process: Terrorism Trails, Military Courts, and the Mapuche in Southern Chile," have criticized the Chilean government for criminalizing legitimate social protest.

Indigenous Critique of Neoliberalism
Konapewman is a leading Mapuche group. Its name translates roughly as "the dreams of Mapuche youth." Konapewman has committed itself to not only fighting for the rights of Mapuche people, but also to understanding the role that international forces and institutions play in affecting their future.

The group played a lead role in organizing a series of forums and protests that ran concurrent with last year's meetings in Chile of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation—neoliberal forum for 21 countries of the Pacific Rim.

In 2003, one member of Konapewman, Alfredo Seguel, traveled to Cancun, Mexico, to take part in events organized around the ministerial meeting of the WTO, and to discuss with other indigenous leaders the impacts of free market globalization on their communities. As did the other indigenous voices present in Cancun, Seguel spurned neoliberalism, holding it partly responsible for the problems facing his people.

"We do not want this model of development which signifies depredation, exploitation, and destruction of our natural resources," said Seguel, who fears that things will only get worse with new trade agreements. The proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas, a trade pact for the entire Western Hemisphere except Cuba, would "mean the continued extermination of life in rural indigenous communities," Seguel said.

As opposed to "lifting all boats" — a term proponents of neoliberalism often use in their argument that free trade agreements will benefit all socioeco-

"Pichún and Norín, along with 14 other Mapuche activists, were also charged with 'illicit terrorist association.' If found guilty, they could receive an additional sentence of 10 years or more."

nomie sectors of society — Chile's export-led growth appears instead to have widened the gulf between the Chilean majority and the Mapuche population. Indigenous people in Chile suffer from a higher rate of poverty, lower wages and poorer education and health care, according to Temuco's Universidad de la Frontera's Indigenous Studies Institute. It is not as if the impacts of globalization are unknown. In *The Lexicon and the Olive Tree*, Friedman admits "because globalization as a cultural homogenizing and environment-devouring force is coming so fast, there is a real danger that in just a few decades it could wipe out the ecological and cultural diversity that took millions of years of human and biological evolution to produce."

Market forces must be kept in check by safeguards (standards regulated by local, state, and federal government) if we want to avert disasters known to economists as "market failures" and to the rest of us as deforestation, pollution, loss of culture, and civil unrest. But the opportunity to strike a balance between development on the one hand and social and environmental objectives on the other is rarely paid more than lip service in deliberations by institutions like the IMF and the WTO.

continued on page 1

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ANOTHER FREE TRADE TRAGEDY: NAFTA, Chiapas & CAFTA

by Claire Stoscheck

I recently returned from Chiapas, Mexico where I was able to talk to many Chiapanecos, especial indigenous people, who told me about how NAFTA has affected their personal lives and Mexico as a whole. I went there on an all-women's delegation with United Students for Fair Trade and the Mexico Solidarity Network to learn about women and neo-liberal globalization, and I stayed on for a month in order to learn all that I could. I returned with a newly fueled passion to do what I can in my own country to stop this rampant spread of neo-liberal free trade and corporatism. Despite the recent passage of CAFTA, I still have hope that those of us struggling against neo-liberalism all over the Americas—and the world—can create an alternative economy and a more sustainable way of living.

NAFTA and MEXICO- A Tragic Story

Chiapas is the southern-most state in Mexico and contains the most natural resources of any state in the country—though its people are the poorest. Chiapas is geographically strategic because it is the gateway to Central America, which is becoming increasingly interesting to the USA and its corporations because of its water, oil and biodiversity. Chiapas contains some of the largest unexploited fresh water reserves in all of North and Central America and has a large population of indigenous folks who have lived and worked on the land for centuries.

As most readers know, NAFTA has had many, many adverse effects on the people of Mexico. One indigenous man

told my delegation that "Life changed as we knew it when NAFTA came about." NAFTA destroyed much of the Mexican agricultural sector, especially the maize sector, and 1.5 million campesinos have lost their livelihoods and have been forced to migrate or seek other forms of work—such as selling their cheap labor in maquiladoras. In addition, under Chapter 11 of NAFTA, transnational corporations are granted the right to claim reimbursement with taxpayer money for future lost profits when domestic laws (often environmental and labor) stand in the way of profitability. NAFTA undermines democratic freedoms by putting the rights of corporations above the rights of people.

This is evident in the fact that article 27 of the Mexican constitution was changed in preparation for NAFTA, privatizing the ejido land system—one of the true triumphs of the Mexican revolution. In ejidos, campesinos can collectively own land and pass the land down to their descendents but cannot sell the land off individually unless the entire ejido agrees to the sale. In this way, land has stayed in the hands of marginalized indigenous people for a very long time. However, in order to attract foreign investment and attempt to pay off loans to global financial institutions, the Mexican Government had to meet the challenge of getting rid of the population in the most resource rich places in

Mexico to make way for corporations. The new article 27 states that ejidos parcels may now be bought and sold on an individual basis. Now desperate campesinos, whose agricultural livelihoods have been crushed by the coffee crisis as well as by the dumping of corn on the Mexican market by the U.S., are at times coerced into selling their piece of the ejido land to resource-hungry corporations. In addition, Chiapas has had 41 ejido parcels illegally appropriated by the Mexican Department of Defense, which is more than in any other Mexican state. The Military does this with the pretext of "public interest" or "national security" when in reality it is done to clear the land of indigenous people so corporations have more free reign. The Military presence in Chiapas is astounding. There are over 70,000 soldiers, 681 military camps and billions of dollars in high caliber weapons in Chiapas. "This military presence has turned elementary schools into army barracks, young women into prostitutes and young men into paramilitary recruits. [The Military has] deforested the land, polluted the rivers and—through illegal evictions and terror tactics—displaced entire villages.

"This military presence has turned elementary schools into army barracks, young women into prostitutes and young men into paramilitary recruits."

free trade tragedy

[As a result] there are presently 21,000 internal refugees in Chiapas" and the number keeps on growing. The military presence destroys the social fabric of indigenous communities by taking serious psychological and physical tolls on people.

Not only is the U.S. implicated in the peoples of Mexico because of NAFTA, it also provides Mexico with an astonishing amount of military aid to promote the low-intensity warfare on the indigenous of Chiapas and the rest of Mexico. Training is also provided—"The infamous School of the Americas trained almost as many Mexican officers in the first two years after the Zapatista uprising as it had in the previous 48 years."² There is a low-intensity war happening in Chiapas, with a lot of violence caused by paramilitary groups aided and advised by the Military. There are continual disappearances and full-blown massacres. In addition, the Military attempts to divide and conquer by giving Government hand-outs to some groups and communities and

not others, as well as by encouraging prostitution, alcoholism as well as other activities detrimental to communities. The Government uses the tactic of an omnipresent military in order to displace and subdue indigenous people in Chiapas. In addition to NAFTA, Plan Puebla Panamá (PPP) has been, and will continue to be, detrimental to the marginalized in Mexico. The PPP is a plan to provide the infrastructure and atmosphere required for corporations to invest in Mexico and Central America. Essentially the PPP will build the highways, dams and pipelines required for CAFTA and the FTAA, and Mexicans and Central Americans are footing the bill for something that virtually only corporations will benefit from.

The combination of plummeting corn prices, the coffee crisis, and low-intensity warfare, has caused the forced displacement of millions of Mexicans, many of whom go to the U.S. in search of jobs—where they are faced with intense racism and oppression. Women are especially hurt as they are often left

by migrating husbands to take care of the family and to defend their land and make a living. Overall, we in the U.S. have helped to create a tragic conflict zone in Chiapas and all of Mexico, and this was fueled by our commitment to neo-liberalism and free trade policies.

CAFTA: Why we should fear, loath and fight it

A few days after I return from seeing this tragic situation in southern Mexico, CAFTA-DR (The Central American/Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement) was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and therefore cleared all the hurdles it had to in order to come into effect. CAFTA-DR is going to expand the policies of NAFTA to all of Central America and the Dominican Republic. To me, this was heart-breaking. How could we allow CAFTA to pass, when the negative results of NAFTA are so tremendous and obvious? No one (except for a small number of elites) in Central America wanted CAFTA. There were massive

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protests in nearly all the member-countries protesting it. Suppression of these protests was severe; in fact, one anti-CAFTA activist was recently assassinated in Guatemala.

Somehow the Bush administration has accomplished this double-speak—encouraging Republicans to tow the line and be 'faithful' to the Republican party by ratifying CAFTA because if they did not—I read in one article the day after the vote—"we would be undermining the fledgling democracies of Central America". CAFTA only passed by one vote, and its passage hinged on typically unethical and coercive techniques. CAFTA was not necessarily a partisan issue for Congress people—everyone knew that it would hurt manufacturing and agricultural jobs in their districts, but the Bush administration wanted it so badly that they did everything (threatened future punishment of Congress people through the new Farm bill, offered money for infrastructure projects, etc.) they could to 'win' votes. They had to work very hard, but they got what they wanted.

Why did they want it so badly? The economies of Central America are so small that CAFTA will not offer even the most powerful corporations in the U.S. much profit. The underlying issue is that CAFTA helps pave the way for the FTAA—the Free Trade Area of the Americas, an agreement which will include all the countries in the Western Hemisphere (except Cuba, of course). CAFTA is seen as a stepping stone for bigger and better things for the U.S. Government and its corporate buddies. But to millions and millions of citizens of the Central American countries and the DR-CAFTA means so much more—it will mean a change in their lives, job-loss, displacement, more expensive prescription drugs, less social services and ultimately, more suffering. One Salvadoran legislator estimated that his country alone would lose upwards of 54,000 agricultural jobs during the first year of CAFTA's implementation.

Not only will CAFTA harm Central Americans, but it will also be harmful to us. CAFTA will contribute to more job loss in the US (as corporations move their factories south to exploit cheaper labor), and environmental and labor laws will be under

attack from foreign corporations seeking profit (due to provisions similar to those in NAFTA's Chapter 11). Industries such as the sugar beet industry will suffer terribly. Currently, 111,000 metric tons is the limit on the amount of Central American sugar entering the US market duty-free. Under the first year of CAFTA an additional 90,000 metric tons will be allowed to enter the US market, essentially wiping out U.S. sugar beet farmers. Finally, the ability to under-sell Central American farmers (largely due to U.S. governmental agricultural subsidies) typically does not even help U.S. farmers. Usually the only ones who profit from underselling are giant agribusinesses, whose profits have sky-rocketed since the implementation of NAFTA.

What to do next?

I want to make it very clear that I did not witness only tragedy in Chiapas. I also saw some of the most hard-working, hopeful, diligent and visionary activists I have ever been exposed to in my life. In particular, I find, the Zapatista struggle both inspiring and humbling. The Zapatistas recognize the connection between free trade pacts and the abuses of both indigenous people and all of civil society—between their land and the entire earth.

Currently the Zapatistas are working

"The infamous School of the Americas trained almost as many Mexican officials in the first two years after the Zapatista uprising as it had in the previous 48 years."

on "The Other Campaign" which is a grassroots democratic alternative to the mainstream political elections coming up next year in Mexico. It is an amazing initiative and I encourage you to learn more about it by checking out <http://chiapas.indymedia.org/>. In this campaign, the Zapatistas have invited Mexican civil society to their communities to discuss how they can work together to improve Mexico. These meetings are happening right now in Chiapas.

There are also many, many others struggling to make trade and the economic system fair and just. There are many anti-corporate globalization activists who work everyday to take power from the WTO, IMF and the World Bank. There are many who struggle against free trade agreements like CAFTA and the FTAA. There are still others who promote alternatives like Fair Trade and yet others who work in their own communities to promote alternative economies such as farmers markets and Ithaca HOURS as well as bartering or trading with their neighbors or doing ride-shares or dumpster diving. There are so many ways to get involved in this struggle, and the key is to do what interests you and what you feel inspired and driven to do. For me, the source of my inspiration is my vision of another world and I am greatly influenced by

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CAMPUS UPDATE

CORNELL'S NEW FAIR TRADE CAFÉ : A HUGE VICTORY FOR TRADE JUSTICE

by Aly Reaves

Starting this month Sprinkles Café, which has been completely renovated is now called Trillium Express, will be serving 100% Fair Trade coffee at no additional cost to the consumer. The café will also offer a variety of Fair Trade teas from Pura Vita, as well brownies made with Fairly Traded cocoa. We are also looking into the possibility of selling Fair Trade bananas. This year will serve as a trial period, and *if the Fair Trade café proves to be successful, all campus cafés will become 100% Fair Trade.* Also starting this month, all espresso drinks in all of the cafés will be 100% Fair Trade.

As of now, Seattle's Best only offers two blends of Fair Trade coffee. To make up for this, the café will offer a

variety of flavored syrups, as well as flavored cream. Over the summer Cornell Dining representatives have been conducting air pot taste tests so that this fall we will be able to serve pre-made flavored pots of the Fair Trade coffee. This should eliminate any inconvenience caused by getting used to measuring out amounts of syrup in order to emulate a certain flavor.

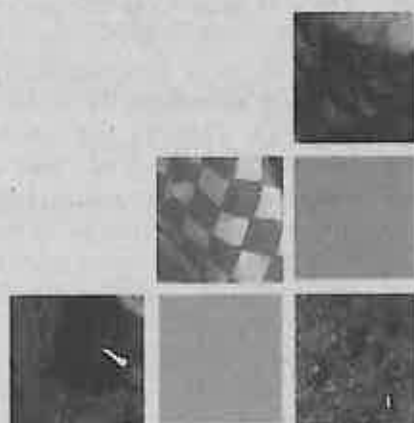
This Fair Trade Victory has been primarily a result of relentless student pressure and *we need your help to ensure the success of these new initiatives. Choose the socially responsible option and whenever possible, buy your coffee from Trillium Express.* The student pressure for fairly traded coffee has been in response to a growing international coffee crisis that has caused prices to drop well below the

cost of production. Fair Trade certifications ensure the small scale coffee cooperatives have more direct access to international markets. They also promote fairness for farmers in ensuring that they receive just wages and labor under suitable conditions, in addition to contributing to environmental sustainability.

Please support our endeavors and help Cornell to be a proponent in the fight against trade injustice. Visit the new café and look out for a large event including a ribbon cutting ceremony, free coffee samples etc. in mid-September. To get involved with Cornell Coalition for Trade Justice and the Fair Trade Campaign contact Aly Reaves at aar32@cornell.edu.

Aly Reaves is a third year Human Biology, Health and Society student. She is this year's co-president of CUSL and is an undergraduate representative of the ONE campaign, and Bridges Community. She hopes to spend time both Central and South America throughout her school year. ☺

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Chiapas, cont'd from page 15

the dignity, humility and ability to listen that the Zapatistas have.

The struggle for trade and economic justice is on-going. There are many tactics taken. The Zapatista uprising highlighted their opposition to NAFTA. Maybe we should create an uprising to protest CAFTA ... and perhaps the FTAA? CAFTA may have passed, but we still have time to organize against the FTAA, and we always have time to work everyday to promote alternative economies that are fair, just and full of dignity and respect.

Claire Stoscheck grew up in Ithaca and learns and activates at Macalester College in St. Paul, MN where she studies Community Organizing for Sustainable Living, and Latin American Studies.

Endnotes

¹ Kaufman, Mara. *Whose Side are We on? A Look at the US Role in Chiapas*. December 2000. Available in "Never Again A World Without Us: Voices of Mayan Women in Chiapas, Mexico" by Teresa Ortiz. EPICA, 2001.

² Kaufman, Mara. " "

³ (see NYTimes July 29th article "How CAFTA Passed House")

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Chile, cont'd from page 12

Environmental and social deterioration aside, many have challenged whether the Chilean "economic miracle" is in fact an outcome of economic globalization. Chile's relative prosperity must be placed against a backdrop of economic stagnation and decline during the modern era of neoliberalism -- the period from 1980 to 2000 in which Latin America's per capita gross domestic product growth lagged at six percent, precipitously down from 75 percent between 1960 and 1980, according to the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

The IMF's March 2003 admission that globalization may actually increase the risk of crisis in the developing world underlines this uncertainty. Sounding remarkably like its detractors, the IMF found: "Globalization has heightened these risks since cross-country financial linkages amplify the effects of various shocks and transmit them more quickly across national borders." The IMF's solution of "good institutions" -- startling in its simplistic insufficiency -- makes haste in shrugging off recent collapses of neoliberalism's disciples,

from Argentina to Russia to eastern Asia, whose astounding economic plunges were each precipitated by IMF prescriptions. Should we wonder when it will be Chile's turn to plummet from exemplar of market fundamentalism to economic pariah?

Much deeper changes than better institutions will be needed, including a departure from the neoliberal blueprint and a fundamental restructuring of a global economic architecture in which the world's wealthiest countries leverage debt as a weapon to dictate the South's economic policies. As Chile shows, the price of free trade can be terrifically expensive, while its bold promises of prosperity often go unfulfilled. With the neoliberal highway littered by social and environmental crises, the task is now to find a new path for global integration.

Jason Tockman, a globalization activist/consultant to environmental and social justice organizations, is beginning a Masters Program in Latin American Studies at Simon Fraser University; he can be reached at jtockman@sfu.ca.

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