

CUSLAR Newsletter

Summer 2001

In this issue...

-- FTAA MASQUERADES AS DEMOCRACY IN QUEBEC

-- SOA GETS A FACELIFT

-- ZAPATISTAS MARCH TO MEXICO CITY

And More!!



"Peace isn't simply signatures [on a document], because while there is hunger, exploitation, and misery there will be no peace."

The Committee on U.S.-Latin American Relations

From Our Editors...

"La libertad no es negociable."

While we at CUSLAR would love to adopt Jose Marti's infamous quote as our motto, unfortunately President Bush has beaten us at the co-option game. Our esteemed leader was heard uttering these words—in piercing gringo Spanish, nonetheless—at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in April. Was he referring to the struggle for Cuban independence which cost the Cuban dissident his life? To other popular movements against tyranny and imperialism? Not exactly.

The freedom that Bush spoke of in Quebec is that of trade and markets guaranteed by the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement. The 34 "freely-elected" heads of state that met at the Summit made much ado about the freedom of capital and its ability to solve the hemisphere's social and economic problems. The usual rhetoric about capitalism equating democracy and freedom

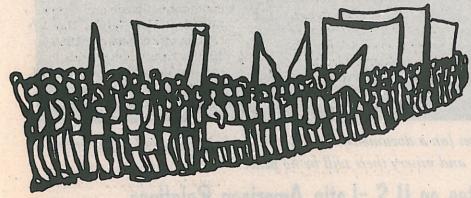
was present.

"We seek freedom not only for people living within our borders, but also for commerce moving across our borders." The 80,000 peaceful protesters who endured three days of constant tear gassing and rubber bullet fire because they attempted to freely express their opposition to the negotiations apparently weren't included in the

aforementioned group.

Bush obviously needs a lesson on the true definition of freedom. Luckily, there are hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of us ready to stand up and show our leaders exactly what democracy and real freedom looks like. Unlucky for those who prefer silence and complicity, we do more than show up in masses to demonstrate. We are also inspiring one another through our art, educating the unaware, quietly building a powerful movement that will not accept anything less than liberty from oppression and justice for all.

And we don't like to negotiate.



The Committee on U.S., Latin American Relations (CUSLAR) is a Cornell University based group. founded in 1965, which seeks 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. support their efforts to free themselves from a legacy of colonialism, exploitation, and oppression. CUSLAR works for peace, justice, and greater mutual understanding in U.S./ Latin Amercan 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, or via email at cuslar@cornell.edu. The CUSLAR Newsletter is published three times a year.

The CUSLAR Newsletter is funded by the SAFC of Cornell University. The content does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the SAFC or Cornell University. CUSLAR is a project of CRESP.

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In Brief...

Workers Win Lawsuit

In its first labor rights ruling, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) has ordered the Panamanian government to reinstate 270 workers fired in December 1990 and pay them damages and court costs.

The workers were dismissed after participating in a protest march against then-President Guillermo Endara (1989-94), who accused them of sedition and violating state security and "democratic constitutional order." According to the IACHR ruling, issued February 13th, the government is liable for damages because the employees were fired without due process.

The court ordered the government of President Mireya Moscosco to reinstate the fired workers, or offer them alternative employment at the wage and benefit level of their previous jobs, and pay their legal expenses and court costs within the next twelve months. Moscoso has agreed to abide by the court ruling. (LatinAmerica Press)

Berenson Granted New Trial in Peru

American citizen and journalist Lori Berenson,

imprisoned in Peru since 1995, was granted a new trial in Peru's civil court system in late August, 2000. She was convicted of aiding leaders of the Revolutionary Movement of Tupac Amaru (MRTA) and master-minding an aborted plan to take members of the Peruvian Congress hostage. The trial, which began in March of this year, followed the government's unexpected dismissal of her initial life sentence. Berenson faces 20 years imprisonment if convicted on new charges of "collaboration" with known rebels. Although she denies any involvement with the MRTA, she continues to refuse opportunities to condemn the group.

Although the Berenson family is certain that the Peruvian government has not and cannot prove Lori guilty, Lori stated in an interview with the New York Times that she expects to be convicted. This, her supporters say, is not surprising due to Peru's courts' horrendous track record. Human Rights Watch: Americas calls this system one of the two worst in all of the Western Hemisphere.

A decision in the trial is expected soon.

For more information, log onto www.freelori.org

Peru's Election

In the second round of elections this year, a run-off version of the presidential contest, Peru's front runner, Stanford-educated Alejandro Toledo, is proposing a pact between all the parties. "I invite everyone, not only the candidates who are competing now [to join]," he said. The pact has only been vaguely described as intended to "cement policy on employment, public investment priorities, state decentralization. corruption and human rights." This is only the latest turn in an election mired in scandal questions of Toledo's possible cocaine use, the resignation of military chiefs who were exposed as having backed the disgraced ex-President Alberto Fujimori — that bolstered feelings of disenchantment among Peruvians.

The race for president has been reduced to two candidates: Toledo and former president Alan Garcia. Garcia's time in office, between 1985-1990 is firmly linked with hyperinflation, corruption, and a battle with terrorist groups. Toledo is a former world bank employee and business professor. A recent poll conducted by the Peruvian press indicates that of voters ready to cast ballots, Toledo

would win the election easily, 61% to 39%. However, the same poll also indicated that 39% of eligible voters would leave their ballots blank or write graffiti on them to voice their displeasure at both candidates. (Reuters, The Economist, New York Times)

Colombian Fighting

Clashes between the Colombian army and left-wing rebels are reported to have left twenty people dead in the north-western province of Antioqua. Army officials say five of the dead were army soldiers, and the remaining fifteen were members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC).

"Recently, the area has seen intense fighting between leftist rebels, outlawed rightwing paramilitary groups and government troops. Meanwhile, the United States announced that one paramilitary group, the Self-Defense Units of Columbia (AUC), is to be listed as a terrorist organization. But, unlike left-wing rebel movements, the right-wing paramilitaries are not perceived as a threat to U.S. national security, and

Washington is not expected to take any measures against them."

The Colombian government has condemned the actions of both the AUC and revolutionary groups.

However, it remains to be seen how evenly they pursue the two. (BBC World Service)

Colombia Abandons Research on Biological Warfare

Now that all research on anti-coca agents is illegal under the Bioweapons Convention (Hamburg and Austin, 25 January), Colombia has abandoned a project to develop biological agents to eradicate coca and opium poppy plants, dealing another major defeat to the US-promoted idea to use biological weapons in the Drug War. Last year, Colombia refused a US-funded United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) proposal to field test fungal pathogens developed by US researchers. But, responding to US pressure, the Colombian government floated a counterproposal to domestically develop biological agents for

> drug eradication. Like its UNDCP predecessor, the counterproposal was intensely opposed as biological weapons research. Now, Colombian Environmental Minister Juan Mayr has abandoned the plan altogether. Mayr's

announcement follows Viennabased UNDCP's decision (The Sunshine Project News Release http://www.sunshineproject.org, en español: http://www.sunshineproject.org/pr250101es.html)

Earthquakes Rock El Salvador

On January 13, 2001, a massive earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Ritcher Scale struck El Salvador killing over 800 people and causing widespread devastation. Since then thousands of aftershocks and additional earthquakes have furthered the destruction in this tiny Central American country. Landslides have destroyed entire towns and one in five Salvadorians is homeless.

The international community responded to the disaster by pledging millions of dollars in emergency aid, yet the distribution of these funds has thus far been politicized. Many communities that do not support the current ARENA government report that little or no disaster relief money has reached them. The Flores administration has also been criticized for taking advantage of the current crises to dispel dissent on other issues such as the dollarization of the Salvadorian economy and the building of a U.S. military base outside of San Salvador.

CUSLAR initiated a fundraising campaign and worked to raise awareness about the devastation by sponsoring several panel discussions and fundraising events. Through our efforts, over \$4500 was raised and sent directly to community organizations working on disaster relief in El Salvador.





CUSLAR also collected material aid including medical supplies, food, and clothing, sent with a Pastors for Peace Caravan to El Salvador.

Ithaca Activist Found Guilty in Vieques Civil Disobedience Trial

US Federal District Court in Puerto Rico found Ithaca resident, Mary Anne Grady Flores, guilty of trespassing on US Navy territory in Vieques, Puerto Rico. Grady Flores committed civil disobedience with fifty-five activists by entering a US Navy bombing range on May 13, 2000 to protest the naval presence on the island of Vieques. Following a lengthy and impassioned statement to the court, she and three co-defendants, including Ismael Guadalupe, Miguel Gonzalez, and Nydia Gonzalez were sentenced to time served and a \$10 fine by Judge

Dominguez.

Accompanying Grady
Flores in Puerto Rico is an
eight-member delegation from
the Ithaca Catholic Worker
Vieques Support Group. The
activists traveled to stand in
solidarity with the people of
Vieques and other Puerto
Ricans, including environmentalist Tito Kayak, Viequense
leader Ismael Guadalupe, and
Ruben Berrios, leader of the
Puerto Rican Independence
Party, who are facing trial for

their actions to oust the US
Navy. On Saturday, the delegation attended hearings held in
Vieques by Amnesty International for those who have
suffered human rights abuses
at the hands of the US Navy
while peacefully demonstrating.
The group will also participate
in several activities and vigils
in Vieques and outside the
federal prison in Guaynabo
where more than fourteen
activists are still being held.



Oppose the FTA Reasons to

This article first appeared on the Global Exchange website, www.globalexchange.org.

1. The FTAA Expands a Proven Disaster

The FTAA is essentially an expansion of NAFTA. But NAFTA has proven a nightmare for working families and the environment. A look at NAFTA's legacy shows why these kinds of "free trade" agreements should be opposed. Working families suffer: In the US, almost 400,000 jobs have been lost since NAFTA, with workers' new jobs paying, on average, only 77 percent of the wages of their earlier employment; in Mexico since NAFTA, one million more

mum wage, and 8 million families have slipped from the middle class into poverty. The environment suffers: In the maquiladora zones along the US-Mexico border, the increased pollution

and the improper disposal of chemical wastes has dramatically increased rates of hepatitis and birth defects. NAFTA should be repealed, not expanded.

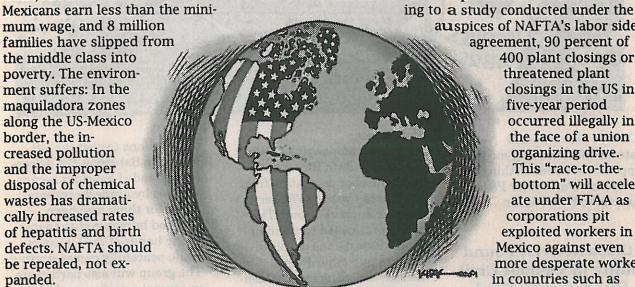
helping to write the rules. At the same time, however, citizens groups, and even the United Nations, have not been able to incorporate their concerns and suggestions into the talks.

3. The Agreement Will Undermine Labor Rights and Cause Further Job Loss

The NAFTA experience demonstrates how basic labor rights and the interests of working families are eroded by "free trade" agreements that lack enforceable labor protections. Corporations move high-paying jobs to countries with lower wages and bust unionization drives with threats to transfer production abroad. Accord-

> auspices of NAFTA's labor side agreement, 90 percent of

> > 400 plant closings or threatened plant closings in the US in a five-year period occurred illegally in the face of a union organizing drive. This "race-to-thebottom" will accelerate under FTAA as corporations pit exploited workers in Mexico against even more desperate workers in countries such as Haiti and Guatemala.



FREE TRADE AREA OF AMERICA™

2. The Agreement Is Being Written in Secret

Despite repeated calls for the open and democratic development of trade policy, the FTAA negotiations have been conducted in secret. Discussions around the FTAA began in 1994 when US trade officials, emboldened by the passage of NAFTA, gathered trade ministers from across the hemisphere in Miami for a summit. Talks heated up in 1998, when trade ministers from the hemisphere met again in Santiago, Chile. Since then, negotiations have been taking place every few months, and the first working draft—with countries' positions already set-will be ready in April 2001 in Ouebec City, Canada, Although Congress hasn't set goals for US participation, hundreds of corporate representatives are involved in the process, advising the US negotiators and

4. The Agreement Will Exacerbate Environmental Destruction

The export-driven growth model promoted by "free trade" agreements and the policies of the World Bank and the IMF have destroyed ecosystems around the world. Under this unsustainable model, many countries in the Global South cut down their forests, overfish their waters and exploit other natural resources to earn hard currency. Since NAFTA, 15 US wood product companies have set up operations in Mexico, and logging there has increased dramatically. In the Mexican State of Guerrero, 40 percent of the forests have been lost in the last eight years, and massive clearcutting has led to soil erosion and habitat destruction.

5. The Agreement Will Put Lives at Risk

The FTAA would expand NAFTA's rules on monopoly patents to the whole hemisphere. This means that companies with a patent in one country will have the exclusive right to market their products throughout the hemisphere. Intellectual property rules are especially important for the pharmaceutical industry, which uses the regulations to stop countries from producing less expensive versions of name brand drugs. Currently Brazil is one of the top manufacturers of the types of generic drugs that are essential for the majority of the world's poor who can't afford drugs

produced by US companies. If expanded intellectual property laws prevent the Brazilian government from making life-saving drugs, the AIDS crisis and tuberculosis epidemics will worsen, and people around the world will suffer.

6. The Agreement Will Lead to Privatization of Essential Services

The FTAA is expected to contain commitments to privatize services such as education, health care, and energy and water utilities. Such deregulation would especially harm working class communities and communities of color. In some countries, these privatizations are already occurring, and those least able to pay for vital services are the ones who suffer the most. When Bolivia privatized its water utility, water rates increased 200 percent, leading to riots that resulted in six deaths.

7. The Agreement Will Provide a Backdoor for the MAI

The FTAA may provide a back door for establishing in the Western Hemisphere provisions of the Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI), a kind of "investors' rights" treaty defeated by citizens in 1998. Already, the US trade representative has said the FTAA will include provisions for "investor-to-state" lawsuits. These allow corporations to sue governments for compensation if they feel that any government action, including the enforcement of public health and safety laws, cuts into their profits. Such lawsuits could be used to dilute US laws that promote local businesses.

8. The Agreement Will Spread the Use of GMOs

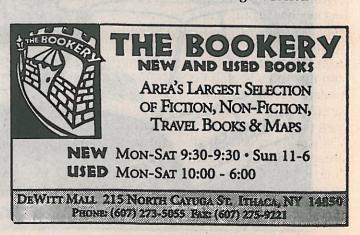
US trade negotiators are trying to force other countries to accept genetically modified organisms (GMOs). But environmental groups warn that these technologies haven't been adequately tested, and food security experts say GMOs could increase hunger in poor nations. Farmers have traditionally saved their seeds from year to year, but as multinational corporations patent GM seeds these farmers will be forced to pay for seeds, pushing them further into dependency.

9. The Agreement Will Increase Poverty and Inequality

"Free trade" is not working for the majority of the world. During the most recent period of rapid growth in global trade and investment—1960 to 1998—inequality worsened internationally and within countries. Without debt cancellation and rules to curtail rampant capital speculation, countries in the Global South will remain dependent on the Global North, inequality will increase, and the hope of achieving sustainable development will be farther off.

10. There Are Proven Alternatives

Policy makers and pundits often try to convince us that corporate globalization is an inevitable phenomenon. In fact, the current economic processes known as "globalization" have been defined and driven by a very small number of corporations. Now people around the world are creating an alternative grassroots globalization. Citizens' groups from across the Western Hemisphere have written an "Alternative Agreement for the Americas" that offers a picture of what socially responsible and environmentally sustainable commerce would look like. You can find the document on the Global Exchange website.



Colombia: The FTAA Gateway Into South America

This article appears courtesy of Action for Community and Ecology in the Regions of Central America (ACERCA.).

To understand the importance of Colombia to the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), you must look at it in terms of location, size and natural resources. Geographically, the country is the crucial gateway into South America. With almost 440,000 square miles of land Colombia is as large in area as all of Central America and almost one third of Mexico combined.

It is rich in natural resources including oil, gold, iron, emeralds and timber. It is one of the largest exporters of coffee globally and is rated second in the world for its biodiversity, with ecosystems ranging from coastal plains to the jutting Andes mountains to Amazonian jungle.

These facts go a long way in explaining why in 2000, Colombia received the third highest amount of U.S. aid (primarily in the form of helicopter gunships, weapons, and military training) only after Israel and Egypt. It also helps explain why there has been a massive military build-up in Colombia's neighbors: Central America, Ecuador, Peru and the Caribbean.

Plan Colombia, the \$7.5 billion regional plan for Colombia and its neighbors, though touted as aid in the War on Drugs, is not really concerned with stopping the flow of drugs north. A study by the Rand Corporation found that money spent on drug treatment and education in the U.S. would be 23 times more cost effective in reducing drug consumption than the present policy of militarization of the region and eradication of coca and poppy crops by herbicide spraying. Furthermore, decades of drug wars have shown that when drug production is rubbed out in one country, it inevitably resurfaces elsewhere.

Plan Colombia is about making South America safe for capitalism and the unimpeded expansion of multinational corporations with "free trade." Colombia is the gateway for the FTAA in South America, which in turn is the gateway for globalization in the Western Hemisphere.

There are a number of elements that make Colombia critically important to all of Latin America at this point in time:

1) The pacification of Colombia is essential for the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Colombia must be "stabilized" for trade to flow



freely through Central and South America. In addition, its oil and other natural resources are highly coveted by multinational corporations.

2) All the elements are present in Colombia for an escalating, protracted and unwinnable war, comparable in scale to the war in Vietnamthis time in our own hemisphere.

3) Indigenous peoples are targeted and removed from their traditional lands to increase the holdings of wealthy landowners. The U'wa people have fought Occidental Petroleum for seven years and have taken a life or death stand by threatening mass suicide if drilling for oil proceeds on the ancestral land. There could be no clearer example of what is wrong with Plan Colombia and the FTAA than this life or death struggle by the U'wa. Many other communities have already been

annihilated or dispersed to cities.

4) Colombia's incredibly rich ecosystem has been the target of massive toxic herbicide spraying since 1995. The herbicide is indiscriminant, killing whatever it comes in contact with. It also causes serious health problems for the people living in the targeted areas. and poisons the water. The assault on the population is matched by an assault on the environment.

5) A proposed site for an inter-oceanic "dry-canal", or "corridor of investment" goes across the NW corner of the country. Such dry canals are critical to the expansion of inter-oceanic trade.

6) Colombia is the focus of a militarybuildup throughout the Caribbean and Central and South America.

There is a long tradition of political violence in Colombia. Along with the Spanish legacy which left a great majority of wealth and land concentrated in a handful of families, there have been rebellions and suppression. In 1949, the assassination of

Jorge Galtan, an indigenous leader about to become president, began what is referred to as La Violencia (the violence). The FARC rebel group was formed in the 50s, with other smaller rebel groups forming later, and the country has been embroiled in a civil war for going on 40 years. At one point, the rebel armies agreed to lay down their arms and form a political party. Consequently, over 1600 members of their party were assassinated, so the rebels abandoned the political process and took up arms again. The rebels currently control about 40% of the country.

As another legacy of Spanish rule, there is widespread corruption in the government and military, which are also widely acknowledged to

be involved in the drug trade. The military has close ties to strong paramilitary groups, which often work for the wealthiest families, and which regularly carry out massacres of peasants who live on desirable

even the smiles are natural. Come see how friendly shopping at a not-for-profit, member-owned natural grocery can be. With our great selection and true sense of community, there's always something to smile about at GreenStar Non-members are always welcome You belong Here GreenStar Cooperative Market Corner of Seneca and Fulton - 273-9392 Open Daily 7-11 - www.greenstarcoop.com

land or are suspected of being rebel sympathizers.

Judges, labor organizers, human rights workers and journalists are also frequent assassination targets of the paramilitaries. In 1999, half of the 120 labor leaders killed worldwide were killed in Colombia. Colombia is a violent, virtually lawless society where the wealthy rule with impunity, and an assassin can be hired for about U.S. \$20.

In order to pass the aid package, Clinton had to waive restrictions on military aid to countries with poor human rights records contained in the Leahy Amendment, because Colombia has the worst human rights record in

> the western hemisphere. Over 35,000 people have died in the violence there in the last ten years. It is called a genocidal democracy. A portion of the weapons being given to the Colombian military will undoubtedly end up in the hands of paramilitaries. The

U.S. is largely alone in its promotion of a military solution to this complex situation. Most European countries oppose Plan Colombia and have held back non-military aid which is part of the \$7.5 billion regional have already been at least two assassinations of indigenous leaders as well a other assassinations and several large massacres. Now that Bush is in office and we have a general for secretary of state, snowballing escalation of the conflict is in the forecast.

Contact ACERCA to get involved. (802) 863-0571; acerca@sover.net

The Next Vietnam?

Plan Colombia

So What Happened in Quebec last April?

The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is a major trade and investment agreement that has been under negotiation since 1994 and is due to take effect in 2005. The stated purpose of the FTAA is to extend the type of "free trade" provisions found in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to the whole of the Western Hemisphere. The document's precise content is not known, since negotiations have been held in secret.

In April, the leaders of 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere gathered for the latest round of trade talks in Quebec City at the Summit of Americas. While the heads of state drafted the FTAA's text, over 60,000 protesters held demonstrations outside the three-mile long fence constructed around the convention area. 6,000 police kept the mostly peaceful protesters from entering the security perimeter and disturbing the negotitions by saturating the air with tear gas, firing plastic bullets and aiming a water canon at the crowd.

Dozens of Ithacans joined the spirited protests in Quebec City and simultanous demonstrations in Buffalo to express their opposition to the FTAA. CUSLAR intern, Liz Carlisle was among the group that traveled to Quebec.





Thoughts on Quebec City by liz carlisle

Before traveling to Quebec City, I never doubted our ability to change our own system from within. When I first marched on Quebec City on Thursday, April 18th, I was embarrassed by my anarchist peers who chanted about smashing the state. But by the time we were driving back to Ithaca, I understood the necessity of such a strong message.

Many people feared that the events (literally) surrounding the Summit of the Americas Conference would lead to heated debate about the denial of freedoms of speech and divert attention away from the fundamental reason why tens of thousands of people gathered in Quebec: to show opposition to the globalization of our planet.

But I must argue that these two issues are one and the same. Who elected Bush? I sure as hell didn't. And neither did the millions of people in the Americas who will be poked at like ants if the FTAA is pushed through. Who is being represented? Whose ideas? Whose agenda? Whose voice? The FTAA will affect us all. I hope for our sake that things don't have to get a lot worse before people start realizing that we should do something to make them better.

When I tried to make my voice heard, I was met by water cannons, rubber bullets, tear gas and a ten foot FENCE, not to mention media coverage that made we want to cry and vomit simultaneously. People actually watched this stuff and believed that we were a group of violent, arrogant, ignorant kids whose attention was momentarily captured by the passing fad of the anti-Globalization Movement. I saw the same clip of a group of people dressed all in black smashing the same car windows four times in the same hour. Not once did I see footage of the peaceful demonstrations and marches we participated in— some of which were a mile long and a boulevard wide.

I am angry. I am frustrated. I want my voice to be heard. And people like me will lead the revolution.

Summit of Shame

by Maurilio de Lima Galdino

The evaluation of many intellectuals and activists who were present this last Sunday in Quebec is that the Second Summit of the People of the Americas ended more as the Summit of Shame. This was observed on Sunday when the People's March organized by trade unions and NGOs marched 5 kilometers outside of the city towards an empty parking lot instead of marching towards the center of political happenings, towards the center of decisions. Their principal argument was that the March of the People was pacific, they did not desire any confrontation with the police, and that they were in fact making a symbolic gesture turning their backs to the America Summit of the Latin American state leaders.

Actually, once again, trade union and NGO leaders abandoned 20 thousand comrades and young people that were being massacred by some 7 thousand soldiers around what was baptized as the Wall of Shame to protect the Latin American state leaders. Even worse, it was revolting to find out that the organizers of the People's March contracted 1,500 security officers to throw out any young people or anarchists that might infiltrate their demonstration. During that weekend, 450 youths were arrested, a 16 year old was seriously wounded when he received a plastic bullet in the head, near the Wall of Shame a gas bomb thrown by the police exploded in the room of a 5 month old baby, and an elderly women of 87 was taken to the hospital after suffering from breathing problems due to the cloud of gas that covered the center of Quebec City.

Different from what the trade unions and NGOs who organized the People's Summit might think, the MST (Landless People's Movement, Brazil) and the Zapatistas have been involved in confrontations with authorities and have been imprisoned, killed and accused of being radicals. But they have also achieved victories



exactly because they have confronted power. In the last 8 years, the Zapatistas have confronted 150 thousand soldiers, and in their region there have been 15 thousand refugees and 1,000 dead. During the last 8 years of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government in Brazil, 1,003 small farmers have been assassinated (only 600 were assassinated dur-

ing the 25 years of military dictatorship in Brazil). Between 1995 and 2000, 933 members of the MST were assassinated and 1,500 leaders were arrested. Without struggle no one would know about the indigenous of Chiapas. Without land and official banking institution occupations the MST would not have won land and dignity for 275 thousand poor families.

It was frustrating to see that the People's March turned its back to the center of Quebec. Jesus did not go to Bethlehem, but to Jerusalem. The Zapatistas did not march to Acapulco, but to Mexico City. The MST did not march to Jundiai, but to Brasilia. The youth of the world understood this and marched to Seattle, Washington and today to Quebec. The People's Summit should have marched to Frontenac Castle and the Congress Center, not far away from struggle.

Today all of the newspapers and TV journals, the state leaders of the Americas, the Quebec minister of security and the police chiefs are commemorating the success of the pacific march and attacking the anarchy provoked by a "radical minority". The trade unions and NGOs thus guaranteed room to negotiate their demands. The Americas Summit organizers also thank the organizers of the People's March for giving the people a real example of civility: vote quietly, demonstrate pacifically and stay far away from the center of decision making.

If the trade unions and NGOs had marched towards the center of Quebec City and the Wall of Shame in solidarity with the young activists, they would have lost the crumbs of the rich, but history would have been different.

Maurilio de Lima Galdino is a graduate Student the University of Montreal.

Defining Democracy by Nicole Diaz

Under the recently unveiled "Democracy Clause" of the FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas), all member countries will be required to uphold minimum democratic practices in order to participate in the common market that will be created under the agreement. Inside the meeting hall in Quebec, where the clause was presented this past weekend, the leaders of almost every country in the Americas (Cuba was not invited) congratulated themselves for securing democracy throughout the hemisphere. Outside the hall, police dressed in riot gear were assaulting tens of thousands of protesters with tear gas, pepper spray, and rubber bullets. One has to wonder what type of democracy are these leaders proposing, if it is to be built upon the repression of ordinary citizens.

Many of the protesters are fighting the FTAA because they believe that neoliberal reforms have led to increased poverty. Neoliberal economics operates by the same "trickle-down" logic" as Reagonomics, which argues that a high concentration of wealth at the top of the economic ladder will eventually "trickle down" to those below. In fact, this

transfer of wealth tends to go
the other way, with the
impoverishment of millions of
people enriching those at the
top. Why then, are the
government leaders present in
Quebec arguing that a system of
political equality is the perfect
counterpart for a system of
economic inequality?

In order to answer these questions, it is extremely useful to understand the forces behind the recent democratic transition

"One has to wonder what type of democracy are these leaders are proposing, if it is to be built upon the repression of ordinary citizens."

> Mexico. Vicente Fox, winner of the 2000 election, is the first president in over seventy years who was not part of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolu-cionario Institucionalizado, PRI). The PRI's rule over Mexico has often been called the "perfect dictatorship". While Mexico was formally considered a democracy, the PRI used corrupt and clientelistic tactics to ensure that no other party had a chance of gaining power. Each president wielded massive

power during his mandated term, yet because presidential elections were still held, it was the party rather than the individual that acted as the dictator.

The legitimacy of the PRI's rule was upheld by a nationalist and populist platform based upon the 1914 Mexican Revolution, a peasant-based revolt that resulted in the creation of the ejido (communal farm) land distribution program. In addition to land-redistribution, the PRI also endorsed a system of nationally based industrializa-

tion (Import Substitution Industrialization, ISI), implementing a wide variety of protectionist measures in order to help Mexican industry become competitive. Large-scale welfare programs complemented ISI, and helped to maintain popular support for the PRI. Thus, the role of the state was to maintain a national system of mass-production and consumption, similar to the Fordist-Keynesian state that existed in the United States for the better part of the past century. In fact, the economic policies of Mexico and the United States, while national, were similar because both countries were following the larger logic of capitalist production at that time.

That logic began to change during the early 1970s. Firmly entrenched labor unions in First World coun-



tries, able to gain leverage because production was organized into large immobile factories, prevented capital from adequately responding to changes in the market. This rigidity led to a sharp recession in 1973, and a rupture of the Fordist-Keynesian compromise. Capital reorganized itself at a global level, and a new era began: what we commonly know as "globalization". This reorganization allowed capital accumulation to resume, because companies could now freely move from country to country whenever organized labor threatened to cut into its profits.

While there are many aspects to globalization, in economic terms it signifies a global (as opposed to national) system of production that relies upon a chain of small production sites (rather than large immobile factories) that

produces small batches of products for niche consumption (rather than mass production for mass consumption). Not only can capital respond more quickly to changing market demand, but its new mobility

Public debate is focused around an elite agenda, rather than an inclusive process of negotiating difference out in the open.

also allows it to escape constrictive national labor and environmental laws. This system depends on the government to enact neoliberal economic policy: dropping trade barriers, privatizing previously state-owned industries, and deregulating industries. The new role of government is to insert the country into the

global marketplace, assuring its citizens that in the long run the efficiency of the private sector will compensate for the immediate "shock" of a shrinking public sector coupled with the rising prices. While

macroeconomic indicators have reached new heights, microeconomic indicators have plummeted, so that growing GDP (Gross Domestic Product) serve to obscure an overall increase in economic inequality.

In Mexico,
neoliberal reforms, sealed
under NAFTA (North
American Free Trade

American Free Trade
Agreement) dramatically
changed the economic and
political landscape. Land
distribution was ended, sweatshops sprang up along the US/
Mexico border, and over a
thousand publicly-owned
companies were privatized.
While GDP grew by 7% in 2000,
even the government's conservative estimate had a third of the
working population earning
under the \$4 minimum wage.

The advent of neoliberal economic policy meant that the legitimacy of the nationalpopulist PRI began to disintegrate. The PRI internally ruptured into two broad factions: the old-party loyalists and the new technocratic elites. The decisive split occurred when President de la Madrid picked as his successor in 1988 (the practice of picking one's successor is now illegal) Carlos Salinas-a man better known for his education at the school of Harvard Economics than any inner circle ties. Technocrats link the modernization of Mexico to the quick and wellexecuted adoption of a neoliberal economic model, and tend to view governance as a

> See Democracy, page 18

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Zapatista!

Their Lives and Their Struggle



By: Shanna Hammons

They fight in black ski masks because legend says that from blackness comes light. The light these indigenous Mexicans seek is poorly translated into English as something like liberty, justice, democracy and dignity for all indigenous peoples. They oppose the FTAA, NAFTA, and all other manifestations of global imperialism that ignore their existence and rights. They call themselves "forgotten people", and have challenged international memories since they first emerged from the jungles of Chiapas.

They are the Zapatistas, and they've been waging a war against the New World Order since New Year,s Eve 1994, when they took over the town of San Cristobal in Chiapas, Mexico, and declared war on President Salinas and the New World Order. Their Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle was borne out of the poor living conditions forced on the people of Chiapas.

The Mexican Government uses the term "acute marginalization" to describe the residents of Chiapas, where 80 percent of the population lives in a State of Neglect. Over 800,000 of the citizens are Chol, Lacandon, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Tojolabal, and Zoque Indians. Nearly 40 percent of the working population receives less than Mexico's minimum wage. Mexico's Constitution used to guarantee land to the country's poor. However, after NAFTA, that stipulation was eliminated, therefore forcing many of the poor peasants into an even greater state of poverty.

In late February, the
Zapatistas marched from Chiapas
to Mexico City to meet with the new
Mexican President, Vincente Fox.
Fox is the first president who has
spoken in favor of seeking compromise with the Zapatistas, though
the movement's leader,
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos,
has expressed some doubt as to the
president's sincerity and motives. If
Fox is bluffing, though, he will have
to face a united front of protesters
and campesinos who are camping
at the government palace.

Marcos summed up the Zapatista's character in this way: "We are of the color brown and of the color black. But we are also of the color yellow, because the first people who walked these lands were made of corn so they would be true. And we are also red because

this is the [color] of blood that has dignity, and we are also blue because we are the sky in which we fly, and green for the mountain which is our house and our strength. And we are white because we are paper so that tomorrow can write its story."

The Zapatistas fight against the New World Order of globalization so that tomorrow,s story might be one of justice, dignity, liberty and democracy for all peoples. And if tomorrow's story is written on paper, then neither the Zapatistas nor the forgotten people they defend, can be ignored.

Shanna Hammons is an Ithaca College Student who researched the Zapatista movement for the spring semester.



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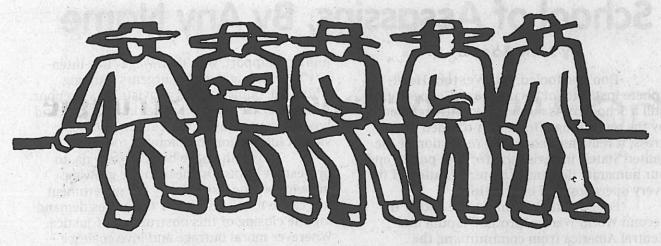
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Farmworker Advocacy Day By: Linda Farthing

On May 2, 2001, after decades of struggle, the Assembly of New York State passed the Farm Workers Fair Practices Act, which grants farmworkers the same rights afforded virtually all other workers in the state. Since the 1930's, a series of laws protecting workers' rights but farmworkers were excluded from all of them. These include the right to organize, to a day off every week, to overtime pay, to disability insurance, to vacation and sick days, making them the most marginal and exploited workers in New York state. "It is like working conditions in the 19th century," says Laurie Konwinski, an Ithacan who went to Albany on May 1st for Farmworkers Advocacy Day to translate for Haitian farmworkers.

How can these exclusions to labor laws possibly exist at the beginning of the 21st century? The power of the agricultural lobby in New York State, representing 30,000 farmers, is the answer. For years, the Farm Bureau and other agribusiness lobbying groups has effectively pressured both Democrats

and Republicans to prevent passage of laws increasing the protections and of the 47,000 farmworkers who work in New York every year. Such was the climate that the recent passage of laws insisting that toilets and drinking water be supplied workers in the fields was heralded as a major victory.

Whereas in the past many of these workers were African-Americans from the South, the fact that poor Mexicans would work for even lower wages has meant that they are increasingly Latinos. Many are in the U.S. illegally and send a significant portion of their earnings home to rural families.

The Advocacy Day, which has been underway every year for eight years, is organized by a coalition of agencies that work with farmworkers throughout the state and by farmworkers themselves. Groups of farmworkers, religious leaders and translators visited Senators and Assembly representatives' offices to educate lawmakers about the plight of farmworkers. With increasing

pressure from the grassroots and the agencies that serve them, increasing visibility to the issue due to increased media exposure, particularly in New York City's Daily News, the state's AFL-CIO joined the campaign as did major religious groups.

But the battle is far from over. The bill which passed in the Assembly still has to make its way through the Senate, controlled by Republicans, and it is likely that it will be watered down on the way and signed by the governor. Please contact your Senator to let him or her know how important it is to support basic rights for all people working in New York State.

For more local information about New York state farmworkers contact:

Herb Engman Cornell Migrant Program 255-2536 hje1@cornell.edu

Linda Farthing is a dedicated writer, activist, and educator who lives in Ithaca.

School of Assassins, By Any Name

Close the SOA!

by Anne Bacon

Don't be fooled, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security andCooperation is still a School of Assassins. Recently renamed by the renovating efforts of a divided Congress, it remains a shameful reflection of the United States' imperialistic foreign policy, and our humanity demands the termination of its every operation and instruction.

Founded in Panama at the end of the Second World War to "protect" South and Central America from communism, the School's intentions were conspicuous and unquestioned while nestled in the heart of Latin America. Even today, our South American comrades are generally familiar with the school and its contribution to the oppression under which they lived, and continue to live. Despite this clear connection between the School and the unjust use of authority, an appointment to attend remains an outstanding honor for a soldier.

When in 1984 the
Panama Canal Treaty required
a partial withdrawal of US
presence in Panama, the school
moved to its present locale and
became suddenly and unfortunately unknown to the masses
responsible for its funding. It was
hidden away on the vast expanse of
Fort Benning in the small military city
of Columbus, Georgia, whose streets are
lined with pawn shops and strip clubs, to
be forgotten by dissension; a silent partner in
the atrocities taking place in South and Central
America.

With the end of the Cold War, the School's central objectives shifted away from protecting against the spread of communism and have been restructured to extend the school,s influence as the "muscle" of trade policy: working alongside the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to maintain the "Free and Fair" rights of multinational corporations to exploit the lands and people of economically vulnerable nations. This, of course, is accomplished by supplying sympathetic governments with strong national

military support, who then wage "low-intensity" warfare against "insurgents," among whom are human rights activists and the poor. It was how we aided Pinochet in his reign, and how we contribute to the continuation of violent interaction in Colombia today.

Those who have been to Georgia, to protest, or to bear witness to the growing movement, understand why the government has cause to take notice of the voices demanding the closing of this obstruction of justice. Wherever moral outrage and love coalesce

there is power beyond the blinded violence of oppression.

Truly the movement's fundamental foundation of nonviolence has been the bane of critics, who anxiously await a violent outburst to delegitimize the movement as another "Anarchistic" "Communist" attempt to disrupt the logical, perfectly functioning order of the government.

What's more, they claim that to protest the school now is counter-productive, considering that it is the premier military facility on human and civil rights. It has become a truly exemplary training center, promoting democratic principles through its every component. Granting that this may be

true, an easily rebutted claim, the fact that it has taken more than a decade of persistent protest, over 30 years of combined prison time served by civilians, (including several local residents), and has become the full-time focus of many human rights observers only proves that the military is incapable of committing to principles of human and civil rights, of true democracy, on its own.

By some accounts, there are 180 similar

Continued...

Anne Bacon is a recent Ithaca College graduate, CUSLAR intern, and proud holder of a Fort Benning "ban and bar" letter.

institutions around the world, of various sizes and notoriety, funded by our tax dollars. Will it be necessary for similar movements to swell at the gates of each of these for them to begin recognizing human dignity? That this school, the School of Assassins, by any name, has converted to some level of transparency after enormous effort on the part of our democratically empowered, voices, is no promise that it will remain as such once those voices have redirected their efforts towards other unjust tributaries of the government.

The only way to ensure that the violations for which it is directly responsible will be permanently ceased is to Close the Doors, not change the name. Our representatives to Congress must be made aware of our conviction, (our voices matter to them; their vote matters to us), and we must not abate until all funding has been revoked. And when it is, we'll take a deep breath, gather our outrage and our love, and move on to the next obstruction.

SOA 26 Sentenced to Prison Civil Resistance Actions continue as Sentences Come Down

Twenty-six people ranging in age from 19 to 88 years were found guilty in Federal District Court of criminal trespassing. Their sentences range from three years on probation to one year in federal prison, with 20 of the defendants receiving six months in federal prison. Jack Gilroy, a high school teacher from Endwell, NY and father of four was among those sentenced to six months and a \$500 fine. Jack is now incarcerated in Muscogee County jail. The latest reports are that he and two co-defendents are being treated with "Southern Hostility" not hospitality. Presently Jack is under 24 hour lockdown for no other reason than he is a "jailed protester".

Even as the 26 were being sentenced, 11 more people engaged in nonviolent civil resistance actions on the base and were arrested. Three people walked onto the base, including Lana Jacobs, wife of Steve Jacobs who was sentenced to a year in prison. They removed the white line at the entrance to Fort Benning, a line which strangles political discourse on the post. Five other protesters delivered a letter to Col. Richard Downie, newly installed director of the SOA / WHISC, "banning and barring" the school for Latin American officers from further counterinsurgency training at odds with a respect for human rights.

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Registration for both SOA Watch trainings - sliding scale \$25 - \$140.

To register or for more information contact Jeff Winder at (202) 234-3440 or info@soaw.org

Democracy, continued from page 13...

matter of efficiency rather than old-school politics. Vincente Fox, the new president of Mexico, is a true technocrat— originally the President of Coca-Cola in Mexico, he gave up a promotion to President of the entire Latin American division to run for the presidency. The "technocratic revolution" in Mexico was not an isolated event, it was part of the global rise of the New Right, spearheaded by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher—the new elite of the neoliberal age.

The democratic revolution in Mexico is best understood as a continuation of the technocratic revolution—an elite victory rather than a triumph of popular will. If fact, all of the legal changes necessary for electoral reform were eagerly put in place by Salinas, and his successor, Ernesto Zedillo. The technocrats favor democracy (a la United States) because it offers a means to consolidate economic reforms by creating a stable political environment for transnational capital, as well as a way to gain internal support for the harsh reforms. However, in technocratic "democracy," a small group of people actually rules and mass participation in decision-making is confined to the choice between the leadership of various elites (sound familiar . . . Gore or Bush?). Public debate is focused around an elite agenda, rather than an inclusive process of negotiating difference out in the open. As long the technocrats have the power to define democracy, it seems natural that the advent of democracy should in no way indicate a greater public role in national economic decision-making.

Technocratic democracy is compatible with neoliberal reform not only because it limits politics to elite-approved leaders and topics, but also because the positive charge of democratic discourse is used to justify economic reforms. While it sounds backwards, democracy actually helps to produce consent for neoliberalism to the degree that people associate the two terms. Neoliberal hegemonic discourse manufactures consent for economic reforms through a series of loosely associated signifiers: political freedom is comparable to the economic freedom of "free" trade, and the freedom of choice is the freedom to consume. Elite rule is not primarily accomplished through coercive force, as it is in authoritarian regimes, but through the appropriation of certain discourses (such as the democratic one) so that people spontaneously consent of their own free will to the system of domination. Consensual domination (domination through the production of consent) ensures that the opening of political space does not threaten neoliberal economic reforms. However, when such a threat does appear, such as the Zapatistas uprising (or Seattle and DC in the case of the U.S.), coercive domination is never far behind.

The Zapatista movement poses such a vital threat to technocratic rule in Mexico, not because they are armed with weapons, but because they are armed with words. As they struggle to introduce an alternative definition of democracy, one that does question the juxtaposition of a system of political equality with a system of economic inequality, they threaten to interrupt the cycle of consent that makes democracy and neoliberalism compatible. While the leaders of the hemisphere gathered in Quebec to celebrate the final marriage of democracy and neoliberalism, movements such as the Zapatistas in Mexico and the anti-globalization coalition in the United States ask if another definition of democracy is possible.



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** OPPORTUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA **

As a part of CUSLAR's commitment to increasing solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Latin America, we have gathered a vast database of volunteer, work, and study abroad opportunities in the Americas, including Spanish and Portuguese language schools. In each newsletter, we will highlight one or two of these opportunities. For complete listings please visit the CUSLAR office on the third floor of Anabel Taylor Hall at Cornell University. The catalogues are available for community members and students alike. Call 255-7293 for hours or to schedule an appointment.

Medical School Scholarship Program in Havana, Cuba

Cuba is now offering 250 full scholarships per year for students from underserved communities in the United States to study medicine at the Latin American Medical School in Cuba. With this offer, tuition, dormitory room and board, and textbooks are free of charge! Currently, there are over 3,000 enrolled students representing over 23 countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa. The school supports a wide variety of extracurricular activities and encourages students to share aspects of their own cultures.

The curriculum includes a six-month pre-medicine program including coursework in chemistry, biology, math and physics, introduction to health sciences, history of the Americas, and a 12-week intensive Spanish language program for those who need it. Following the pre-medicine program is a 6 year medical school program divided into 12 semesters. Students study at LASMS for the first 2 years and then go to another of Cuba's 21 medical schools to complete their studies. The Cuban medical training model combines theory and practice and is oriented towards primary care, community medicine, and hands-on internships.

LASMS is looking for applicants that are U.S. citizens, have a high school diploma or the equivalent and are between the ages of 18 and 25 at the time of registration. For more information or to receive an application please contact:

Ifco 402 W. 145th Street New York, NY 10031 Phone: (212) 926-5757 email: <u>ifco@igc.org</u> web site: www.ifconews.org

Witness for Peace Delegation "Cuba and the US Embargo: Dispelling the Myth"

Four decades after the communist revolution overthrew a brutal dictator the US embargo on Cuba remains in place. The impacts of this embargo have been devastating to the civilian population, and have challenged Cuban society to explore alternative methods of development. In the US, historic propaganda against this neighboring country have made it difficult for North Americans to gain a true perspective on life in Cuba.

This delegation offers an opportunity to learn about the dynamics of US-Cuban relations and to gain a first-hand understanding of Cuba. Participants will meet with a variety of civic organizations, faith groups, and social justice leaders to discuss the impacts of the U.S. embargo on everyday life. The delegation will learn about Cuban national priorities and uncover the realities behind historic U.S. propaganda against Cuba. The aim is for delegates to become empowered to change the punishing sanctions against Cuba.

Opportunities to explore the natural and cultural beauty of Cuba and experience Cuba's dedication to the arts through community dance and music ensembles will also be available. For more information, please contact:

Elizabeth A. Miller
Delegations Coordinator
1229 15th St., NW
Washington, DC 20005
miller@witnessforpeace.org
www.witnessforpeace.org

Witness for Peace is a politically independent, grassroots organization. Our mission is to support peace, justice and sustainable economies in the Americas by changing US policies and corporate practices which contribute to poverty and oppression in Latin America and the Caribbean.

CUSLAR Poetry Page

Dianna Ortiz Update

by Andy Doyle

Dianna Ortiz went to Guatemala to teach Mayan children how to read
After a couple of years she was disappeared and suffered a series of betrayals
She was burned with cigarettes
more than 100 times on her back and chest
She says she was put in a pit full of bodies,
some dead, some alive, all swarming with rats
She says she was forced to stab another woman.
She still cries when she talks about that

Some believe that the things other people do to you cannot harm your spirit
Only the things you do yourself can harm your spirit
The torturers know that
They were well trained
In the US School of the Americas *
As Sartre observes: "The purpose of torture is not only to make a person talk, but to make (her) betray others"
Her betrayal destroys her utterly
But Dianna survived

An American named Alejandro was present at her torture
The other men called him boss
He told Dianna he cared about the people of Guatemala
and was working to liberate them from communism
When Dianna's disappearance caused an outcry
because she was an American nun
Alejandro tried to take her to the US embassy
He warned her not to tell about her torture and rape
because they had a videotape of her stabbing the woman
But Dianna jumped out of his car and managed to escape from Guatemala

She's been trying for more than twelve years

To get the US government to tell what it knows about the men who did this to her
She's been called a liar and a crazed lesbian for trying to find out her rapists' names
A couple of years ago I heard her say
that if she knew how hard it would be to go after this information
when the government wanted her to let it go
she probably never would have tried

"In a 1991 civil suit, a US court found former Guatemaian Defense Minister

I saw her again last week
She said she'd been carrying a razor with her for twelve years
She kept it in a box in her pocket and under her pillow
She said she had to have it with her
to reassure herself that they would never be able to do
those things to her again
She said she would have slit her wrists first
But now she says she is beginning to get back a little hope
She says she is going to try to live without the razor

*In a 1991 civil suit, a US court found former Guatemalan Defense Minister General Hector Gramajo responsible for the kidnap and rape of Sister Ortiz General Gramajo is one of literally hundreds of graduates of the notorious School of the Americas, or SOA (now known as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security and Cooperation) in the USA who have been implicated in human rights violations in various countries in Latin America.

Letter to the Editor

Editor's Note: We'd love to have letters (plural) to the editor as a permanent piece of our newsletter, but you need to write them to us first. Please send them to us, CUSLAR, 316 Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University 14850 or cuslar@cornell.edu

I just read today two articles published in the CUSLAR newsletter (Fall 2000) "The Colombian Aid Package: A Time Bomb in Waiting" by Elvira Sanchez-Blake and "The Latest Weapon in the US War on Drugs in Colombia". It was the latter that motivated me to do a quick search on "experiments" by U.S. groups in other countries.

I found an interesting article in the archives of El Nuevo Día, an online newspaper of Puerto Rico, where I am from. It's dated March 17, 1998 and is about secretive experiments conducted by NASA and other US institutions, all in the name of science, in Puerto Rico in the past [including the very recent past].

There's really nothing new but a few valid, probably well-researched, and very poignant questions that are raised: "In the continental US there are large uninhabited territories that could be used for experimentation. Why didn't they try the Orange Agent in the tropical forests of Florida? Why didn't they consider the Florida Keys instead of Lajas for the proposed radar? Why didn't they place the antennas of the Voice of the Americasin the Rocky Mountains? Why not try the new herbicide that kills coca plants on the vast prairies of Kansas?" [my translation]. The problem is that, unfortunately and to be expected, NASA (or any other group that conducts these experiments) will categorically deny any harm done. If this herbicide, like Helen Franks

questioned in her CUSLAR article, is so "environmentally safe", why is it that they can't/won't provide results of experiments conducted over a reasonable period of time over nearby land (I mean, around the areas they live/work)?

Here on US continental territory, it seems almost always on purpose. For decades, the US has at times allowed and even encouraged and supported experiments of the sort on foreign soil. Let's wait and see 2-5 decades from now what happens to the people, crops, and livestock exposed to these new chemicals to determine THEN their safety for use on US soil. To make things worse, those in charge of conducting these experiments never tell the whole story about them and the true objective of the experiments to their guinea pigs - people who are unwilling, uninformed or misinformed, and sometimes coerced by force or threats.

If a group of nationals in Puerto Rico, Colombia, Mexico, Honduras is actually consulted, when have the US researchers, scientists, or politicians respected the free, uncoerced will of those people? Once it is decided that an experiment is to take place at one place or another, that's that. Maybe the government officials of those countries will allow "things" to happen in exchange of some money to (re)build roads or make newer technology available in schools. Maybe a whole community comes together and they make a

difference by delaying a final decision, by forcing them to look for alternative locations, etc.

The media is very powerful everywhere around the world - it decides when, what and how much of what they've observed and interpreted to "share" with the rest of the world. Conclusions are reached based on half of the information or one-sided stories. Meanwhile, newer resistant bacteria, viruses, fungi keep "cropping" out of nowhere (or somewhere? with unknown capabilities for destruction, propagation, and mutation. Meanwhile, some powerful people with deeprooted fears to change and diversity are suffering from insomnia when reading about the growth of the Hispanic population in this country, and trying to figure out what to do about it.

Nilsa B. Maldonado-Mendez is a full-time Spanish lecturer in the Romance Studies department at Cornell.

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CUSLAR would like to also thank those who donated to the El Salvador Earthquake Relief Fund. The individuals and area businesses who gave generously helped raise over \$4500 for efforts to aid those affected by the quake as well as financing efforts to rebuild the area.

Again, THANK YOU!

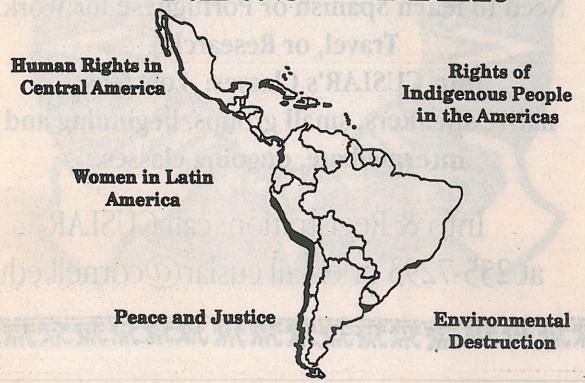
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