



INTERCONNECT

*For Grassroots Movement-Building and Sharing of Resources
Within the US-Latin America Solidarity Community*

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As our Iraq and Afghan wars fail to bring us more oil, will US governments try again to dominate Latin America? In this issue are reports of newly increasing repression - and on efforts of the LASC and our allies to "organize, organize, organize."

We hope you enjoy this new format newsletter which has been changed in line with our email and website. We would appreciate any feedback on the articles, newsletter or website.

In solidarity,

Peter and Gail Mott, Co-Editors www.interconn.org

national port authority workers on the docks and shifting production increasingly to private sub-contractors in order to be "globally competitive".

Beyond the economic crisis, the Preval government has not been able to effectively halt political repression or address the "disappearance" of human Rally for the return of Lovinskyrights leader Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine ten months ago. Additionally, many of the police officers who have carried out killings of civilians and neighborhood activists since the last coup remain on the force, operating with impunity, and including a de facto death squad that is terrorizing residents who may want to stand up for their rights: all tolerated by the police.

Moreover, despite the release of a few high-profile political prisoners, less well known Lavalas (pro-Aristide) community activists remain in prison without charges or legal representation, suffering horrific conditions. Thousands of Haitian men, women, and children were thrown into jail after the 2002 coup. They suffer dehydration, water-borne diseases, malnutrition and starvation. A Beri Beri epidemic is currently sweeping the prison. Cell blocks built to hold five or six people are packed with up to 80 prisoners who take shifts sleeping, sitting and standing. One former prisoner said that his cell block started out with 18 people July 2005, rising to 83 people by April 2006.

Neighborhood activist Gilbert Orivil died in January in the Port-au-Prince National Penitentiary after four years of beatings combined with a terrible diet. His body was held in the morgue for several months because his family did not have enough money to give him a burial. Thousands of others share a similar story.

The Preval government has also not been able to effectively curb abuses by the UN troops occupying Haiti. Haiti remains a country under military occupation without true national sovereignty.

Observing the UN Peacekeepers

On April 11th, a MINUSTAH (UN) soldier was shot and killed in downtown Port-au-Prince. While this killing was widely reported in the international media, what followed



National Haiti Campaign to be launched by LASC and the HAC

- by Diane Bohn, Dave Welch and Ben Terrell

Haiti's crisis worsens; and the UN Peacekeepers are being pushed by the US, Canada and France to crack down on the poor, who still protest the military coup against former President Aristide. The Latin America Solidarity Coalition has asked the Bay Area's Haiti Action Committee to help start a national campaign to plan corrective action.

In April, 2008, a US human rights delegation organized by the Bay Area's Haiti Action Committee (HAC) visited Port-au-Prince and investigated the current human rights situation. The crisis is deepening. The government seems to be pressing ahead with a neo-liberal economic agenda that involves the scheduled lay-offs of 1300 out of 1800

the killing was not. MINUSTAH troops launched a massive assault on Haitian street vendors, smashing property, setting the market on fire with flamethrowers, setting off tear gas, shooting directly at unarmed vendors, and killing at least three people. This follows a series of massive assaults by MINUSTAH troops on the civilian population in Cite Soleil on July 6, 2005, Dec. 22, 2006, February 2007 and numerous other occasions.

The situation in Haiti is virtually unknown to most North Americans and receives little coverage in our media.



The Latin America Solidarity Coalition (LASC) has issued an important statement on the situation in Haiti. (see www.lasolidarity.org/haiti/statementFeb08.html) and is in the process of launching a National Haiti Campaign. It is envisioned that this will be an action campaign focused on the following Seven Demands:

- End US/UN Occupation - Respect Haiti's sovereignty
- Get countries to withdraw troops from MINUSTAH
- Free the political prisoners - No more illegal arrests or prolonged detention without charges
- No more killings and sexual abuse of the poor by UN troops, police and paramilitaries under police control
- President Aristide must be free to return to Haiti - Respect the Haitian Constitution
- No more "disappearances" - Work for the rule of law and the safe return of kidnapped Haitian human rights advocate, Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine
- Launch an independent inquiry into the February 29, 2004, coup and forced removal of President Aristide. Promote the proposed US "Truth Act."
- Perpetrators of the coup and massacres of the poor must be brought to justice; reparations for the victims.

Additional aspects of the action plan will:

1. Support the Haiti Emergency Relief Fund (HERF);
2. Provide an educational packet that includes downloadable fliers, position papers, sample letters, packet for Congressional visits.
3. Provide information on how to order books, pamphlets and films to encourage the organizing of community meetings about Haiti around the country.
4. Get cities and organizations to pass resolutions on Haiti calling for implementation of the Seven Demands, such as the resolution passed in May 2008 by the Berkeley, California, City Council.
5. Support Debt cancellation for Haiti (Jubilee Act includes a section on Haiti and has passed in the House. Now in Senate and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations).
6. Promote a DC Congressional teach-in.

[The authors are members of the HAC. Diana Bohn is on the LASC Coordinating Committee. Information provided from reports by Nia Imara and Seth Donnelly.

www.haitisolidarity.net and www.haitiaction.net.]

Editorial: Four in One

"Iraq has occupied the US so completely the last five years that the Latin American people have been free to express themselves democratically and politically." Thus spoke Curt Cadorette, for 27 years a liberation theology priest in rural Peru, now a professor at the University of Rochester. In six nations the people have elected presidents who oppose neoliberalism/the Washington Consensus/corporate globalization.

Just in time! In Harper's (3/08) Steven Stoll describes the approaching end of economic growth and what will happen as the world reaches a "stationary state" of economies, as more nations take control of their own natural resources, as "progress" will depend on efficiency – not more productivity, and as the US will turn full attention again to all those natural resources in "our own back yard." Will we allow our neighbors to try their own ways to make progress despite being in a stationary state (e.g., as is being tried by Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Cuba)?

Herman Daly (Beyond Growth, For the Common Good) is one of the authors Stoll reviews. INTERCONNECT has referred to economist Daly many times over the past 14 years. We interviewed him in our 4/03 issue where he stated that continuous economic growth is impossible when the world's ecological makeup is finite, and when the people refuse to just starve. He said that corporate globalization already has failed, that we should close down the World Bank, IMF, "free" trade and, instead, organize "federated internationalization" as a basis for trade which respects national sovereignty.

As our Iraq and Afghan wars fail to bring us more oil, will US governments try again to dominate Latin America? In this issue are reports of newly increasing repression – and on efforts of the LASC and our allies to "organize, organize, organize."

Join us! Let's build this movement more rapidly!
(www.interconn.org)

Aristide Letter

Dear Friends,

May the spirit of International Day in Solidarity with the Haitian People continue to spread!

If the more than 10,000 people killed in the past 18 months that followed the February 29, 2004 coup d'Etat could speak, what would they say? Would they join voices with the young women raped and sexually assaulted since the coup? Would they remind us that these women are estimated to constitute half the population of Haiti's shanty towns? Would they unite with the voices of the 3,200 people imprisoned in a National Penitentiary built to hold 1,200 prisoners? And what of the countless others who were inhumanely abused and now clearly betrayed? What would their message be?

They would rise in chorus with Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine to say Mesi, thank you, for the solidarity demonstrated four years later.

Because they cannot, I will: Thank you.

Thank you to each and every participant in the 56 actions organized in 47 cities across four continents as part of the

3rd International Day of Solidarity. Your solidarity strengthens the people's determination to continue to affirm human dignity and struggle for true democracy, justice and peace.

United to all our Haitian sisters and brothers who, on that same day, condemned the kidnapping of February 29, 2004, and called for our return to Haiti, let us continue to drink from this historical stream of solidarity with grateful thanks to our mother Haiti. "Gratitude is the least of the virtues but ingratitude is the worst of the vices."

Ab imo pectore, from the bottom of my heart,

Dr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide

Pretoria, March 11, 2008



From the Literature: Paraguay Moves Left

(From Cubanews "Times on Line," 4/23/08 and GRANMA, 4/22/08, referred by Walter Tillow.)

On April 24 Fernando Lugo, formerly "Bishop of the Poor," led his seven party Patriotic Alliance for Change to the presidency with 41% of the vote, thus ending 60 years of rule by the Colorado Party. His opposition coalition included leftist unions, indigenous people and poor farmers. He has called for land reform and help for the poor. To some he has aroused fears of a return to liberation theology in Latin America. He also opposes a free trade agreement with the US.

He said, "I continue dreaming of a big homeland, of a United Latin America without borders that would be respected internationally...with the true native owners of this land... No more indigenous people dying of hunger, tuberculosis, or a lack of medical attention."

In 2006 he led an opposition rally in Asuncion, resigned from the priesthood (which was at first refused by the Vatican). He then declared for president, protesting President Duarte's human rights abuses. He was suspended by the Vatican, and may now be defrocked.

(From AP 4/19/08). "The word 'leftist' is being used lately in Latin America and possibly with mistaken concepts," Lugo said. "I believe in the self-determination of the people, in recovering one's sovereignty and independence."

(from UpsideDownWorld.org/main/content/view/1218/1)

"Fernando Armindo Lugo Mendez...taught in a rural school...missionary in Ecuador...ten years studying at the Vatican...appointed head of the Divine Order in Paraguay. In 1994 he became Bishop of...San Pedro." Three of his brothers were exiled by the Stroessner dictatorship.

In 2003 Duarte Frutos became president, allying himself with the US. "According to the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, Washington lavished Paraguay with democratization projects (read: military training)...intimidating the armed peasant groups into submission."

"Duarte's Colorado Party had an "alliance with the axis during World War II."

Updates: Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela and UNASUR *-by Tom Loudon*

On May 23 a Constitutive Treaty was signed which unites 12 countries of South America in a new political structure called UNASUR, modeled somewhat after the European Union. This signing had been scheduled for late March at a summit in Cartagena, Colombia, but diplomatic relations were 'strained' after the military incursion by Colombia into Ecuador. The initial plan was to have President Uribe of Colombia assume presidency of UNASUR, but Ecuador and Venezuela rejected that following the military action. The period of stressed relations, which included the recalling of ambassadors, was calmed at the Rio Summit in the Dominican Republic, when the new president of Argentina challenged the respective presidents to reconcile. When the Treaty was finally signed in Brasilia, Michelle Bachelet, president of Chile, assumed the rotating presidency of UNASUR.

Bolivia. Since the beginning of May, there have been four autonomy referenda in the provinces of Santa Cruz, Beni, Pando and Tarija. In these provinces, where much of the wealth and many of the natural resources of the country are concentrated, large sectors of the population do not support President Evo Morales. Between the May 4th and the June 1st referenda, a shocking incident occurred in the city of Sucre. About 50 indigenous people were accosted by a right-wing mob, stripped of their clothes, beaten and forced to repeat racist phrases. This incident highlights the tension in a country that has elected the first indigenous leader in 500 years, with an indigenous population as high as 70%.

The Bolivian government continues to re-nationalize industries, including three oil companies and the largest telephone system. Transredes, a gas pipeline company (formerly owned by Enron and subsequently by Shell and Ashmore Energy) was also nationalized after the company began a process of selling the pipelines to the anti-Morales governor of the Tarija department.

In a surprise move on May 10, the Senate passed and the president signed a law calling for a recall referendum to happen within 90 days. The mandates of the President, Vice- President and the State Governors are all subject to voter approval. To stay in office, each official must get at least as many votes as they received when they were elected. A new election must happen between 90 and 180 days to fill any positions made vacant by this referendum (scheduled for August 10th).

Ecuador. President Correa has entered into an interesting process which may serve as a model for other countries with massive debts. They have launched a Debt Audit Commission, which will audit all public and private debt to determine its legitimacy based on legal, economic, social and environmental impacts. According to the instructions to the Commission, "debts which are found to be illegitimate will not be paid." Ecuador has also decided not to formally join ALBA, the economic and political initiative which currently includes Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Cuba. It is thought that President Correa is upset about the departure of Venezuela from the Andean Community

of Nations and is also looking to develop a special trade relationship with the US, although not a free-trade agreement of the model currently being promoted by the US.

Venezuela. The US recently announced that it would reactivate the 4th Naval Fleet, to patrol Central and South American waters. There have been widespread reactions to what is perceived as a hostile act against democratic governments of the region. The 4th fleet was originally commissioned during the Second World War to prevent Venezuelan oil shipments to Germany.

Most recently, the Venezuelan and Ecuadorian presidents have called for Colombia's FARC rebels to unilaterally disarm. This could undermine the ability of the government associated para-militaries and army to justify violence against non-combatants under the pretext of combating the FARC.

[The author is Director of the QuixoteCenter and Coordinator of the Alliance for Responsible Trade (ART).]

From the Literature

US Political Prisoners: The Cuban Five

Attorney Leonard Weinglass reviews the latest court findings and next steps, including taking the case to the US Supreme Court.

[Ed. Note: Leonard Weinglass is a defense attorney for the five Cubans arrested in Miami for allegedly spying on right-wing Cuban Americans plotting actions against the government of Cuba. Here are excerpts from an interview with him by Arleen Rodriguez Derivet.]

"A three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals of Atlanta upheld Wednesday the guilty verdicts of the Cuban Five, prisoners in the United States since 1998. It also vacated the sentences of three of the men, ordering a new sentencing in Miami. The sentences of Rene Gonzalez (15 years) and Gerardo Hernandez (two life terms plus 15 years) were maintained. In the case of Hernandez, the panel voted 2-1. A 16-page [minority] opinion of Judge Phyllis Kravitch states that the government did not present sufficient evidence to prove Gerardo's guilt in the charge of conspiracy to commit murder...

"The 99-page ruling of the Appeals Court of Atlanta, which explicitly favors the government position, was drafted in politically charged language unusual for legal texts. It states that the defense arguments in their appeal "are meritless..."

LW.— "When the Cuban Five were arrested in 1998, the Pentagon and the Justice Department issued a statement saying that the national security of the United States was not affected. Now, after 10 years in prison, we have a statement from a high level court that there was no espionage and that no top-secret information was obtained or transmitted... "We can immediately, on June 24, ask the three judges to reconsider ...

"Then we have the right to go to the Supreme Court to reconsider ... the venue, the misconduct of the prosecution, the insufficient evidence in the case of Gerardo and ... the use of a secret procedure between the judge and prosecution against the Cuban Five and also having maintained secret evidence that could have been delivered to the defense."

Justice Department Targets El Salvador Activists - by Burke Stansbury

In January 2008, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) received a letter from the Department of Justice (DOJ) that questioned the organization's alleged relationship with the Salvadoran Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN), referencing the Foreign Agents Registration Act — an ambiguous 1932 law that requires groups supposedly acting as "foreign agents" to register with the federal government. The letter cites language from the CISPES website and an article published in the Washington Post on Dec. 17 following the visit of the FMLN's presidential candidate to Washington in December 2007. The DOJ gave no other evidence to back up its claim and the Washington Post article does not even refer to CISPES.

The DOJ letter states, "It has come to our attention ... that the FMLN, and/or possibly its candidate for El Salvador's 2009 presidential election, Mauricio Funes, hired your organization for the purposes of conducting a public relations media campaign to include political fundraising..."

CISPES has never had a contractual agreement with the FMLN or Funes, but rather an ongoing solidarity relationship based on shared political values that go back to the struggle for democracy and economic justice fought for by the people of El Salvador against a brutal US-backed military regime in the 1980s.

And, just as 20 years ago, CISPES is refusing to back down. CISPES chapters around the country held press conferences and public events in early May to denounce attempted intimidation.

"That the Department of Justice would wrongly evoke the Foreign Agents Registration Act to target this organization at this particular moment demonstrates the administration's fear of progressive change sweeping Latin America," said Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, a lawyer from the Partnership for Civil Justice. "It is an effort to intimidate and stifle solidarity groups in the US who oppose the government's efforts to install puppet regimes against the will of the people of Latin America."

The DOJ letter demonstrates the watchful eye of the US government over the Salvadoran electoral process, something that worries many Salvadoran activists. In 2004, the last time the FMLN had a chance to win the presidency, the US government issued statements showing clear support for the right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance party (ARENA) and threatened to cut off money sent from Salvadorans in the United States back to their families should the FMLN win.

In 1981, the FBI investigated CISPES for allegedly acting as a foreign agent of the FMLN. When that claim proved baseless, the DOJ launched a full-scale investigation based on the claim that CISPES was a front group for the U.S.-labeled "terrorist" FMLN. The FBI program of surveillance, harassment and intimidation lasted until 1987 and ultimately became a major embarrassment for the bureau when CISPES and the Center for Constitutional Rights forced the release of FBI files under the Freedom of Information Act.

Congressional hearings in the late 1980s revealed that the FBI conducted numerous illegal operations in its investigation of CISPES. Domestic surveillance activities were expanded again under the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001. But CISPES will continue working to challenge US foreign policy in the region, and has vowed to confront any attempt by the US government to undermine the will of the Salvadoran people in their effort to elect an alternative government in 2009.

[Burke Stansbury is the executive director of CISPES. To read the DOJ letter or learn more about CISPES, see cispes.org.]

"El Agua es un Derecho"

The Work of the Observatorio Ciudadano de Servicios Públicos in Ecuador

- by Emily Joiner.

On June 10, 2008, the Natural Resources Committee of Ecuador's Constituent Assembly approved articles making the right to water a fundamental human right. This decision will now be debated on the floor of the Assembly as the delegates decide whether to officially recognize water as a constitutional right. Throughout the Constituent Assembly process social organizations nationwide have formed coalitions with the intention of helping each other reach policy goals. During this process, the Observatorio Ciudadano de Servicios Públicos, a Guayaquil-based NGO, has established itself as an authority on water rights.

In August of 2001, municipal authorities in Guayaquil, Ecuador, turned water and sanitation services over to Interagua, a subsidiary of Bechtel corporation. The concession contract was written for a 30-year period, and it was the result of the municipal water company's need to comply with the terms of a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. The Observatorio Ciudadano de Servicios Públicos was founded in 2005 at a critical moment for Guayaquil's consumers. That summer a Hepatitis A outbreak affecting at least 85 children led to a multi-party investigation of water quality that produced conflicting results. Interagua was never officially sanctioned. The Observatorio also investigated such contractual violations as repeated temporary shut-offs of residential water services, the 32,000 permanent cut-offs of services to families unable to pay due to age or disease, and a marked failure to extend and rehabilitate services to poor sectors of the city. Meanwhile, the environment is also suffering from a lack of effective disposal of sewage waste. At long last, Interagua was fined \$1.5 million in August of 2007 by regulatory body ECAPAG for failing to complete its minimal contractual goals for the first five years of the contract even after a year-long penalty-free extension.

Interagua's actions have resulted in 103 law suits accepted in Guayaquil's Supreme Court, and approximately 2,000 citizens have formally presented complaints in the Public Defender's Office. What remains to be seen is whether Guayaquil's court system can transfer decisions in favor of citizens' claims into action on the part of the water company. With this concern in mind, the Observatorio has also lodged a complaint with the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman branch of the World Bank Group, which is

charged with mediating a resolution between citizens and the company.

With its multi-dimensional strategy the Observatorio is changing the way in which water services are handled in Guayaquil. Pressure on behalf of individual citizens' cases is creating immediate solutions for families. Work in national politics helps to create a judicial framework for guaranteeing water services to all Ecuadorians, and international actions help hold Interagua accountable. Winds of change are at work in Ecuador, and the Observatorio is taking the lead in making potable water and basic sanitation accessible for everyone.

[The author is Independent Researcher, the Observatorio.]

Seeking Straight Stories - By Malcolm Bell

You may be shocked, shocked to hear that our so-called responsible media rarely print a straight story about Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez. They commonly fault his efforts to abolish term limits on the presidency as though allowing the voters to set the limits were unusual. They fault his friendship with Fidel Castro without mentioning U.S. friendships with a host of tyrants. They fault the recent non-renewal of the Radio Caracas Television license without mentioning that the station was a prime instigator of the 2002 coup attempt in which people were killed or that the U.S., too, frowns on those who incite the violent overthrow of our government. And nary a responsible hint that maybe it's time for a leader who challenges the bullying and exploitation by the Colossus of the North.

So, where to seek a balanced view of Chavez? The May/June 2006 Maryknoll magazine gave one. I trust generally the National Catholic Reporter. "Chavez's Fix" by Daniel Wilkinson gave one in the March 10, 2008, Nation. So did "Fidel's Heir" by Jon Lee Anderson in the June 23, 2008, New Yorker.

More generally, a source I find highly useful for "news and views from around the world" and across the political spectrum is Wordpress.org (www.wordpress.org). Once there, click on "World Newspapers" for a vast array of non-US publications. Click on "Think Tanks and N.G.O.s" for a lesser array of those sources, e.g., it lists The Green Institute but not Global Exchange. Wordpress's forte is articles and editorials listed, handily for Interconnect readers, by regions such as "Americas." A few examples: "Big Stakes in November Elections in Venezuela" by Kiraz Janicke and Federico Fuentes, Green Left Weekly (radical newspaper), New South Wales, Australia, June 10, 2008; "Colombian 'Democracy' and 80 Years of Murdering Workers," by Vinicius Souza and Maria Eugênia Sá, *Idéias em Revista*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, May 25, 2008; and a particularly thought-provoking "Behind Latin America's Food Crisis," by Laura Carlsen, Americas Program, Center for International Policy, May 20, 2008.

But then the Americas Program of the Center for International Policy (www.ciponline.org) is itself a source that's well worth checking. Project Censored (www.projectcensored.org) is a provocative provider of, as its slogan has it, "the news that didn't make the news." Other people will have other favorites.

So many articles, so little time; but we won't see all the

news that's fit to print in the New York Times or hear it on NPR.

(Malcolm Bell is Contributing Editor of INTERCONNECT.)

Organizing the Movement: LASC-COHA Interactions



(Larry Birns, Director, COHA)

Many have said that the rapid growth of the right wing in the US is due to its think tanks. Can we link our organizing to alternative "think tanks," especially as we note an increasing tendency in the US "war on terror" to criminalize civil dissent.

The Latin America Solidarity Coalition asked Larry Birns, Director of the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), whether their research staff could help us analyze the apparently growing trend in Latin America to criminalize civil dissent under new counter-terrorism laws modeled on the USA Patriot Act and pushed by US diplomats.

For example, this spring several Peruvian activists were arrested coming home from a Bolivarian meeting in Venezuela and charged with terrorism. Several anti-privatization leaders in El Salvador were arrested (7/06). In March activists in Paraguay asked for international solidarity letters because they feared repression for a peaceful protest of soy monoculture at a Cargill plantation.

How much does the US harass pro-democracy efforts and in which nations? The LASC Coordinating Committee started a Respect Democracy Working Group, a Close the National Endowment for Democracy Working Group, the new National Haiti Campaign. Good, objective research is essential for this effort.

COHA responded that they have 30 research assistants/interns, and that they would welcome the opportunity to tackle these and other issues – a boon to all our US-based solidarity groups that have little or no research staff. We often hear the comment: The Right Wing started early working with think tanks. Maybe the Left can do the same?

RESOURCES

Major Events

June 19-July 7: 19th IFCO/Pastors for Peace Friendship to Cuba (IFCO, 212-926-5757, www.pastorsforpeace.org).

Oct. 3-6: Radical Women Conference: The Persistent Power of Socialist Feminism. Speakers from Central America, China, Australia and the US, plus interactive workshops. Discussions about building independent grassroots movements for revolutionary change, and more. Women's Building, San Francisco. Register at www.RadicalWomen.org. 206-722-6057.

Oct. 7-12: Third Social Forum of the Americas, Guatemala City (Rights Action, info@rightsaction.org).

Oct. 15: Final day of the UN Peacekeepers' mandate to occupy Haiti. Will this be renewed?

Nov. 21-23: Close the SOA – Convergence on Ft. Benning, Georgia! (SOA Watch, 202-234-3440, www.soaw.org).

Campaigns

* Haiti: LASC/HAC's National Campaign on Haiti – see article, above.

* Respect for Democracy/Close the NED – see article, above (Alliance for Global Justice, 202-544-9355, afgj.org).

Special Studies

The Forgotten Border: Migration and human rights at Mexico's southern border, \$4 (Latin America Working Group [LAWG], www.lawg.org)

Ready, Aim, Foreign Policy, \$4 (LAWG, as above).

Books

Latin American Social Movements in the Twenty-first Century: Resistance, Power, and Democracy. Richard Stahler-Sholk, Harry E. Vanden, and Glen David Kuecker (eds.), Rowman & Littlefield, March 2008, 384 pages. \$34.95, paper.

ISBN 0-7425-5647-6 / 978-0-7425-5647-8

A useful website: Latin American Review of Books ([lwww.latamrob.com](http://www.latamrob.com)).

Videos/Movies

Aristide and the Endless Revolution, a documentary by Nicholas Rossier, including the 2004 coup, Paul Farmer, Ex-President Aristide.

Newsletter

Signs of the Times in the Americas: Perspectives on corporate globalization, the war, torture, immigration, Katrina and news from Latin America and the Caribbean. Contact EPICA, admin@epica.org, or browse an online copy at www.epica.org

Travel (see Codes below)

Border: Organize your own group (BL); 7/7-8/2 (BL, Globalization and migration); 8/13-17 (BL, delegation for people of faith); 8/13-17 (BL, education delegation); 12/18-22 (BL, as above).

Bolivia: 9/12-22 (MITF, social movements, Cochabamba, La Paz, Santa Cruz; 11/11-21 (WP delegation to Bolivia).

Brazil: 8/3-17 (MITF, culture, environment, justice, landless workers' movement).

Colombia: 8/2-16 (FOR, SOAW, Human rights, Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado; 8/3-13 (WP, Plan Colombia, human rights, war as "narco-terror," US policy); 8/24-9/3 (WP, SOAW, 8th Day Center, EPICA, Bilateral Free Trade Agreements, human rights, repression); 9/27-10/7 (CPT, Bogata, Micohumado, conflict, non-violence/humanitarian spaces; 10/18-28 (WP and GX, globalization and coffee, free vs. fair trade, farmers); 10/3-26 (CPT, see 9/27).

Cuba: 10/11-18 (CT, health care professionals); 10/28-11/7 (CT, Ballet National de Cuba 60th anniversary); 11/8-29 (CT, ESL Cuba volunteers, English as a Second Language; 11/22-12/1 (CT, natural and historical Cuba); 11/22-29 (CT, Dance in Cuba); 12/27-1/3 (Teachers, introduction to Cuba); 12/27-1/3 (CT, 50th anniversary of the Revolution); 12/28-1/4 (CT, luxury discovery and adventure).

El Salvador: 11/29-12/9 (GATE, cultural immersion).

Guatemala: 10/7-12 (NISGUA, 3rd Social Forum of the Americas; 10/7-12 (RA, 3rd Social Forum of the Americas); 1/6-18 (CGE, Maya People and Culture).

Honduras: 7/7-12 (RA, education and activists, the indigenous Garifuna, resistance and development, Tecucigalpa and rural).

Mexico: Want to coordinate one? (WP, ken@witnessforpeace.org); 7/12-20 (CGE, globalizing women's studies; pedagogy and praxis; 8/3-13 (CGE, gender, migration, globalization: women's Studies Seminar); 10/31-11/9 (Borderlinks, Chiapas, global economy and migration).

Nicaragua: 7/1-11 (WP, Nicaragua: Casualty of the War Against the Poor; 7/13-23 (NS, coffee cooperativistas and 29th Celebration of El Triunfo 1979, eco-turismo – green work, history, alternative development); 7/14-28 (WP, teen delegation); 11/15-22 (CGS, democracy in the age of globalization).

Venezuela: 8/9-19 (MITF, Bolivarian Revolution, Caracas, Barquismieto, rural, political, economic); 11/11-21 (WP, delegation to Venezuela); 12/3-13 (WP, Venezuela and the global economy).

CODES:

BL: Borderlinks, 520-628-8263, education@borderlinks.org
CGE: Center for Global Education, Augsburg College. 612-330-1159; globaled@augsburg.edu.
CPT: Christian Peacemaker Teams, 773-277-0253, www.cpt.org.
CT: Cuba Tours 2008, Cuba Education Tours, Vancouver, 877-687-3817, www.cubafriends.com.
FOR: Fellowship of Reconciliation, 510-763-1403, liza@igc.org.
GATE: Global Awareness Through Experience. 608-791-5283 or www.gate-travel.org.
MITF: Marin Interfaith Task Force, 415-924-3227, www.mit-famericas.org.
NISGUA: Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, 510-238-8400, www.nisgua.org.
NS: Nicaragua Solidarity, 773-973-6529, nscchicago@igc.org.
RA: Rights Action, 860-352-2448, www.rightsaction.org.
SOAW: School of the Americas Watch,
WP: Witness for Peace. 202-547-6112, www.witnessforpeace.org, erik@witnessforpeace.org.

What you'll see if you go to www.interconn.org - our new website

- The newsletter (in color) and the archive of old issues.
- News alerts/updates. So far we have:
- Representing Moussad: Guantanamo
- Destroying Democracy at home and Abroad
- Nicaragua: What have the Sandinistas accomplished?
- Our blog – discussion of issues such as:
- LASC's Statement on Haiti
- LASC's Militarization Working Group Statement on Plan Colombia
- Five Hours with Hugo (Chavez)
- Close down NAFTA?
- Immigration
- Truth

Join us to strengthen these important thrusts.

THANK YOU!

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QUOTES

"We need a movement. We need a political swell larger than the civil rights movement – as passionate and as willing to sacrifice. Without it, we're not going to best the fossil fuel companies and the automakers and the rest of the vested interests that are keeping us from change."

- *Bill McKibben, author and climate activist. YES magazine, Spring 2008*

Movement News In Brief

Nicaragua:

1. Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, former Sandinista foreign minister, sharp US critic, was elected (6/4/08) to be the next President of the UN General Assembly (CLASP, 6/08).

2. President Daniel Ortega and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez have proposed the formation of a joint military force for Nicaragua, Venezuela, Bolivia, Dominica and Cuba to defend against outside intervention (CLASP, 2/08).

Guantanamo: The US Supreme Court decided (6/12/08) for the third time to uphold the rights of detainees, the right to habeas corpus (Center for Constitutional Rights).

Migrant workers: The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) and Burger King Corp. announced plans to work together to improve wages and working conditions for the farmworkers who harvest tomatoes for Burger King in Florida. (CIW Online Hdqtrs, 5/23/08).

Colombia:

1. The US House of Representatives voted 224-195 to delay voting on the US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, likely killing it for this year (AP 4/11/08).

2. The coca crop has increased 27% over the past year despite the US Plan Colombia.

3. After Colombia's 3/1/08 attack on the rebel FARC camp in Ecuador, Colombia leaked supposed FARC e-mails to the press which linked FARC with Venezuela and Ecuador. Interpol investigated (invited by Colombia) and reports that the eight FARC computers showed 48,055 files had been manipulated (Venezuela Solidarity Network).

Haiti: The Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (ijdh) and its affiliate, the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI) took to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica the case of the Raboteau Massacre victims. The Court awarded \$430,000 to the victims' families who, in turn, donated 10% to the BAI for further work (ijdh.org).

Ecuador: Indigenous groups have sued Chevron for \$16 billion for environmental damages for dumping 18 billion gallons of toxic waste into rivers, according to a court-appointed Ecuadoran geological engineer.

Guatemalan Genocide Case: Spanish and German courts have asserted universal jurisdiction over cases first brought by Nobel Peace Prize winner, Rigoberta Menchu (Human Rights Action Service, 1/08).

Venezuela:

1. A British court has overturned the freeze on \$12 billion in Venezuela assets requested by ExxonMobil and ordered the corporation to pay \$767,000 in Venezuela's legal expenses (Christian Science Monitor [CSM]3/19/08).

2. The Venezuela Solidarity Network (VSN) held a successful symposium in Washington 4/18-20/08 with over 200 participants (VSN@afgj.org).

3. President Chavez ordered the nationalization of the cement industry (CSM 4/16/08).

4. The Washington-based CATO Institute has awarded a \$500,000 prize to a Venezuelan law student who poses a potent challenge to President Chavez.

Mexico:

1. Mexico's Human Rights Commission reports that the military was involved in serious human rights violations including rape, torture and homicide while executing counter-narcotics operations in 2007 (Amnesty International magazine, Spring 08).

2. Mexico may refuse the Merida Initiative, a Bush proposal for \$1.6 billion in US weapons ostensibly to fight the "Drug War" (Mexico Solidarity Network 5/27/08).

3. Under a new amendment signed by President Calderon, Mexico's judicial system now allows public trials and a presumption of innocence. (CSM 6/19/08.)

Bolivia: President Evo Morales has handed over 38 land titles to the Guarani Indians (CSM 1/30/08).

El Salvador: One hundred international organizations have joined a coalition of 40 Salvadoran groups calling for the investigation of escalating political killings, including the 5/2 assassination of activist Hector Antonio Ventura Vasquez and 15 other politically-related deaths (CLASP, Spring 08).

Chile: A Chilean judge has ordered the arrest of 100 former secret police and soldiers over human rights abuses under Pinochet's military rule 1973-1990 (CLASP, Spring 08).

Trade: On 4/21-22 the leaders of Mexico, Canada and the US met for the 4th secret Summit on the North American Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP)/the "NAFTA superhighway" (Campaign for Labor Rights, 202-550-7025, www.clrlabor.org).