

CELEBRATE!

New Tactic to Close the SOA

Congress will vote again on closing the US Army School of the Americas/WHINSEC, perhaps as soon as early May. As of mid-April 190 Congresspersons had co-sponsored the bill to suspend operations at the **SOA: HR 1217, "The Latin America Military Training Review Act of 2005."** SOA Watch held a march and lobby day in DC on April 23-25. While the vigils grow stronger (19,000 participants last November at Ft. Benning) a new and brilliant strategy has been formed - and already is showing success. Father Roy Bourgeois, Lisa Sullivan and Carlos Mauricio of SOA Watch met in 2004 with President Hugo Chavez to ask him to stop his referrals of troops to the SOA. Within two weeks they ceased! In March 2006 they visited President Kirchner in Argentina - same decision! Then they met with the Defense Minister of Uruguay, Azucena Berratti, a former human rights lawyer. During the long dictatorship in Uruguay she defended numerous political prisoners.

Lisa Sullivan writes (in SOA Watch *Breaking News & Update*, 3/28/06):

"From the beginning of the conversation, Minister Berratti told us that there was no need to explain the atrocities of the SOA as she, and the people of Uruguay, were fully aware of this reality, having experienced first-hand the horrors of the tortures, detentions, imprisonments and 'disappearances' caused by its graduates. Over and over here in Latin America we have been humbled and realize that we do not need to explain these things to our public, but rather they have much to tell us, to put faces and emotions on the statistics which we have memorized so efficiently..."



Photo: Orin Langelle/
Global Justice Ecology Project

Thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Mexico City on 16 March to defend the people's right to water. As the 4th World Water Forum (sponsored by World Bank, Coca-Cola, etc.) started, diverse segments of civil society flooded the streets in a lively march over 6 kilometers. An alternative, the International Forum in Defense of Water was held which presented the counter to privatization.

AND PREPARE!

Venezuela Solidarity Grows

- by Chuck Kaufman

Four hundred seventy-one activists and organizers gathered in Washington, DC March 4-6 and, at the end of the weekend, launched a national Venezuela Solidarity Network. The mission of the network is:

1. To respect the inalienable rights of the Venezuelan people to sovereignty and self government, and to oppose and resist those who would violate those rights. It is especially incumbent upon us, as a US-based organization, to take responsibility for the violations of these rights by our own government, and by US-based businesses, organizations and private citizens. Our support will employ multiple tactics including education, petition for redress of grievances, non-violent direct action, influencing policy makers and elected officials, and exposure of international and national law violations through the press and other mediums of communication.

2. To build people-to-people ties between the United States and Venezuela by organizing speaking tours of Venezuelans in the US and by organizing delegations, work, and study trips by US residents to Venezuela.

The founding declaration goes on to declare the following principles:

"We declare that the Venezuela Solidarity Network will operate under the solidarity model in which we respond to the needs and priorities of those on the frontline of struggle in Venezuela rather than to impose our own perceptions of what those needs and priorities are.

"We declare that the Venezuela Solidarity Network will be based on the principles of local autonomy and independence from any government body. The network will be non-sectarian, non-hierarchical, and actively opposed to racism, sexism, classism, and Euro-American cultural domination.

"We declare that the Venezuela Solidarity Network will be broadly and democratically governed with an Interim Steering Committee composed of those organizations which planned this conference augmented by any organizations which share the above mission, goals, and principles that would like to join in building the broadest possible grassroots solidarity net-



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Celebrate *(continued)*

Then Minister Berratti shared with Carlos, Lisa and Roy some very good news: during the year President Tabare Vazquez has been in office, no military personnel from Uruguay have been sent to the SOA, and none will be sent under this administration.

In Argentina the three SOA Watch activists and the head of the Mothers of the Disappeared met with the defense minister, Nilda Garre, whose husband was disappeared during the repression. Minister Garre agreed that, after the one Argentinean soldier currently at the SOA/WHINSEC finishes his classes, no more Argentinean soldiers will be sent.

Their next visit was to Bolivia where they met with President Evo Morales whose decision is expected soon. In August the three will visit three more countries: Chile, Peru and Ecuador. SOA Watch informs us that the father of new Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, arrested by Pinochet's SOA-trained generals for treason, was tortured daily until he died on March 12, 1974. SOA graduates in the Bolivian army have played key roles at every level of the repression of the social movements. Meanwhile, 29 US citizens who crossed the line at Ft. Benning last November reported to prison on 4/11.



Photo: Orin Langelle/
Global Justice Ecology Project

and Prepare *(continued)*

work. We recognize that the Bolivarian Circles and organizations of Venezuelans will play an important role on the Interim Steering Committee.

"And, finally, we pledge to work together across ideologies and methods of work to change US government behavior at home and abroad and to support the aspirations of the Venezuelan people to build their own society free of foreign intervention."

The Interim Steering Committee has met three times and established four committees to guide the work. Fifty-four national and local organizations have joined. They established four committees and invite other organizations that share the mission and the organizing principles to join in building Venezuela solidarity work in the US. The committees are: Public Education/Outreach, Actions/Emergency Response Network, Tour and Delegations, and Fundraising. If your organization is interested please send an email to VSN@afgj.org.

The Steering Committee has also endorsed a national demonstration in Washington on May 20 to call for "Hands Off Venezuela and Cuba." A West Coast demonstration will occur at the same time. Visit www.May20Coalition.org for information and organizing materials. We urge all progressive activists to mobilize and bring people to DC on May 20.

(The author is national Co-Coordinator, Nicaragua Network/Alliance for Global Justice, 202-544-9355, chuck@afgj.org.)

Stop US Intervention in Nicaragua's November Elections!

- by Kathy Hoyt

In November of this year Nicaraguans will go to the polls to vote for president and National Assembly deputies. There has been, and will be, much activity on the part of the US government to assure that the Nicaraguan elections are "fair and democratic." But what does that really mean?

As US Ambassador Paul Trivelli has stated many times, the US "will establish cordial relationships with any administration that is elected democratically,...that has a reasonable economic policy, and is ready to cooperate with us."

The present administration in Washington has made it clear that a government that is cooperating with the US will: (1) support CAFTA, (2) comply with US requests concerning the war on terrorism, (3) ensure that the Nicaraguan national police receive training that blurs the time-honored distinction between civilian policing and military action, and (4) not maintain friendly diplomatic relationships with either Cuba or Venezuela.

Ambassador Trivelli goes on to make it clear that the selection of the candidate for the PLC party cannot be former President Aleman, nor anyone he selects, and that election of the FSLN party candidate, Daniel Ortega, will not be accepted by the present US government. Mr. Ortega was vilified during the 1980's when the Reagan administration supported an overthrow of his democratically-elected government. Thus, for Nicaraguans, the US statements about former president Ortega bring to mind the war and the effects of US military intervention.

Please join and:

- (1) Educate yourself about how the US is interfering in Nicaragua and in the elections of other countries. (Go to the following websites for more information: www.NicaNet.org and www.casabenlinder.org)
- (2) Sign up for a pre-election observation delegation to Nicaragua to document interference. Write nicanet@afgj.org for more information and an application.
- (3) Write a letter to your local paper that questions how US citizens might feel if the situation were reversed and whether this strengthens democracy worldwide or makes the world safer.
- (4) Write your Senators and Representative to express concern about US interference with elections in Nicaragua.

(The author is Co-National Coordinator of Nicanet. For more information contact Nicaragua Network and the Casa Ben Linder.)

Editorial: The Fall of Neoliberalism?

At the Venezuela Solidarity Conference in Washington, DC, in March the atmosphere was as electric as in the 1980's when the Sandinista Army won the US-backed Contra war, never having lost for long a single acre of Nicaragua; and in 1989 when the FMLN rebels controlled over half of El Salvador and strategic parts of the capital city. At the Conference speakers lauded the progress of President Hugo Chavez and other new leftist, anti-neoliberal, anti-imperialist governments of South America, and spoke of neoliberalism/corporate globalization, and empire, as being "dead."

There is reason for cautious optimism, but perhaps we should hold back a little on such celebrations, at least until we see what backlash the US will attempt. Not even Democratic Party victories in 2006 and 2008 will guarantee an end to US repression of anti-neoliberal movements. After all, the Clinton Administration rammed NAFTA through Congress. He also supported the Washington Consensus and the rest of neoliberalism.

Back in April, 2003, INTERCONNECT interviewed Professor Herman Daly, who claimed that corporate globalization was dying and is bound to fail. His books, *For the Common Good* and *Beyond Growth*, predicted neoliberalism's failure. They are well worth a review now to provide back-up arguments and to search for alternatives. In fact, Daly's "federated internationalism" is remarkably similar to **The People's Trade Agreement**, just released by Bolivian President Evo Morales and subtitled: **Another Integration Is Possible**. It is imperative for us to stay informed, share new information and be ready.

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Making The US Safe For Democracy in Haiti

- by Brian Concannon, Jr. Esq.

On February 7, Rene Preval won a landslide victory in Haiti's Presidential election, receiving four times as many votes as his nearest competitor. This was the fourth consecutive landslide victory for a candidate from the progressive Lavalas movement, which should have translated into a long period of political stability and an opportunity to implement the progressive economic and social policies that Haitians keep voting for. Instead, chronic instability - including two US-supported dictatorships - and regressive economic policies imposed from abroad have made life even harder for the poorest people in the Americas.

May 14, Preval's inauguration day, should mark yet another democratic transition in Haiti. This transition will fail like its predecessors unless US progressives make their own transition, and work to make our country safe for Haiti's democracy. As long as US leaders can undermine and remove Haiti's elected Presidents when they want to, Haiti's leaders will have no choice but to implement policies that US voters, not Haitians, vote for.

To support democracy in Haiti over the next few years the two keys words will be "sovereignty" and "solidarity." "Solidarity" means that our purpose is to support the majority of Haitians, their organizations, and their electoral choices. Solidarity also means making connections with Haiti's popular movement, by going to Haiti to meet them, and by hosting Haitian grassroots leaders here.

"Sovereignty" means both political and economic sovereignty. We need to restrain our government from overthrowing Haiti's government, and also from interfering in Haiti's internal politics. We need to make US financing of Haitian

political parties unacceptable. We need to make sure that Haiti has the freedom to allocate resources to healthcare, education, sanitation and national agricultural production. This means relieving Haiti's crushing international debt and cutting the political strings attached to development assistance.

Specific issues for the solidarity movement will evolve; so stay informed through your local organization or through websites like www.haitiaction.net and www.ijdh.org. A good place to start is relief of Haiti's debt, which is both onerous - about a third of GDP - and odious - most of the loans were made to dictators. See www.jubileeusa.org/ for what you can do about it.

(The author is a human rights lawyer. He directs the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti, www.ijdh.org. His weekly "A Half Hour for Haiti" is important e-mail reading.)

International SweatFree Communities Conference

- by Noah Seligman

The Resource Center of the Americas hosted this year's international SweatFree Communities Conference April 7-9, bringing together sweatfree and fair trade organizations, producers, unions, and worker advocacy organizations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Latin America and China. Workshops included movement history, sweatfree government procurement campaign strategy, exchanges with worker organizers and immigrant workers, sweatfree marketing strategies, independent monitoring and policy enforcement, local, fair trade, and organic procurement.

SweatFree Communities was founded in 2002 by anti-sweatshop organizers in Maine, Minnesota, New York, Wisconsin and elsewhere. The original members had been working on separate local campaigns, so SweatFree was formed to create a structure for sharing resources and information. The national movement is dedicated to convincing school districts, cities, states, and other institutional purchasers to adopt "sweat-free" purchasing policies and stop tax dollars from subsidizing sweatshops.

The effort pushed the city of Minneapolis to adopt a resolution stating that the city should purchase products and services that don't have sweatshop conditions. The Minneapolis ordinance states that the city will only contract out apparel from factories that respect workers' rights. The state of Minnesota spearheaded the now nationwide effort against sweatshops. A Minneapolis organization is using high school students to talk to school boards about adopting sweat-free policies. Liana Foxvog, a national organizer for SweatFree Communities, said 70 communities nationwide have sweatshop-free policies, as do over 150 universities. She also

noted that SweatFree Communities is concerned about new anti-immigration measures being debated.

According the US Department of Labor, a sweatshop is defined as any workplace that has multiple labor law violations at one time. This can include workers not being paid minimum wage, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or workers being fired for unionizing. A report from the year 2000 by the Labor Department indicated that there were 22,000 sweatshops in the United States...Maine Governor Democrat John Baldacci sent a letter in late February to every governor urging support for a similar consortium. To join this action and contact your governor go to:

<http://www.sweatfree.org/governorscoalition>.

(The author is at the Resource Center of the Americas in Minneapolis, where Irene Rodriguez is the new Director. irodriguez@americas.org.)

Paraguay and the US Military

- by Alex Sanchez and Larry Birns

Today, hemispheric nations like Ecuador, El Salvador, and Aruba host US Forward Operating Location (FOL) bases. The evolving American military presence in Paraguay is one of the most obscure arrangements yet. The floating pact calls for 13 joint military exercises to be conducted in Paraguay between July 2005 and December 2006, with much of the foreign presence being centered around the *Mariscal Estigarribia* base in the north of the country. The *Estigarribia* airbase, located in the Chaco region, is close to the Bolivian border. It was constructed in the 1980s by the Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner, and can house 16,000 troops. Allegedly US engineers assisted in its construction, although Washington denies this.

From March 13 to 16, Paraguayan and US military forces conducted a civic military exercise called "Medrete-San Pedro 2006." Last November's operation "Medrete Cordiller" included 13 US Air Force doctors, and served over 7,000 patients in 10 days. The US State Department explains that "no US soldiers will be deployed for an extended period of time, and there will never be more than a few dozen US [forces] in Paraguay for longer than 45 days." But according to deputy speaker of the Paraguayan parliament, Alejandro Velazquez Ugarte, only two of the 13 planned exercises are truly of a civilian nature. The research organization *Observatorio Latinoamericano de Geopolítica*, maintains that Medretes operations are designed to prepare for an internal Paraguayan war, not to protect it from an outside threat. These operations include exercises to put down popular insurrections, reoccupying oil platforms taken over by workers, as well as intelligence exercises.

Paraguay's motivation for signing up with Washington seems to be mainly economic. President Duarte's ideology is not consonant with the left-leaning leaders

that are currently winning elections in South America, making the US a natural ally for Asuncion. Uruguay, under mildly left-leaning Tabaré Vazquez, has been considering increasing trade with Washington. It seems likely that similar practical considerations are linked to Duarte's decision to tighten military bonds with Washington.

Additionally, Duarte and his colleagues see Paraguay's increased security as a necessity. Groups, ranging from Colombia's leftist FARC members to local criminal gangs, reportedly operate freely in the country, and the supposed presence of Islamic terrorists in the Tri-Border region is often cited as the reason for a US presence. The US traditionally has provided substantial aid to Asunción, and the new developments suggest that needy Paraguay is again, turning to its historical friend.

(Sanchez is a Research Fellow and Birns is the Director, of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs in DC. For information: coha@coha.org or www.coha.org.)

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"The ideological hard-liner in Cuba wasn't Che but Fidel. Che was the dreamer, a visionary, not a bureaucrat, who moved to Bolivia to help organize the exploited miners and campesinos there, the poor labor force in the Andes exploited for years by US mining companies, a man who said, "Let me say, at the risk of seeming ridiculous, that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love."

-Rev. Phil Wheaton, author, activist

Peru Update: "Free Trade" vs. Democracy in South America

- by David Edeli

After scrambling to pass DR-CAFTA, the 2005 NAFTA expansion to Central America and the Dominican Republic (which Congress did by just one vote), the Bush administration is creating another undemocratic trade policy - this time in the Andean region.

The problem for the administration, however, is that the public in both the US and the Andes aren't interested in a new NAFTA-style trade agreement.

With massive protests in Ecuador, and Colombia's human rights violations, both giving Congress the jitters, the administration appears to think that only a US-Peru Free Trade Agreement will have a chance of passing in Congress before mid-term elections in November.

Resistance in Peru has been widespread. Farm organizations called a national strike in March, concerned that subsidized US agribusinesses will undermine local farmers as they did Mexican farmers after NAFTA, and that the massive social upheaval from such policies could have even more problematic results in the Andes.

As Monsignor Pedro Barreto, a prominent Catholic Archbishop in Peru, told reporters recently, "Without wanting to be alarmist, we're fairly certain that (the deal) will increase the cultivation of coca, which brings along with it a series of negative consequences such as drug trafficking, terrorism and increasing violence."

The concern about agricultural impacts of a trade deal and increasing foreign control over mining and other strategic industries has taken center stage in the Peruvian elections.

While the results are not yet final, after the first round on April 9th, the two presidential candidates who will likely face each other in a run-off, Ollanta Humala and Alan Garcia, have both campaigned against the deal. The party of President Toledo, whose four years in office have been marked by approval ratings consistently below 30%, appears to have missed the 4% necessary to guarantee even one seat in the next Congress.

Despite the landslide, the Bush administration and Toledo went right ahead and signed the deal just three days after the elections and are attempting to ram it through before the new Peruvian president and congress can take office in late July.

The US Congress can and should stop the US -Peru Free Trade Agreement because of this dangerous flaunting of democracy - not to mention the implications for regional security and the environmental destruction in the upper Amazon basin - by voting against the deal when it comes up for ratification, as it could any time now.

(The author is with Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch at dedeli@citizen.org.)

From The Literature

Venezuela

- The White House's latest National Security Strategy report listed Cuba, Venezuela and Colombia among the world's seven top trouble spots that could threaten US interests...It reasserted the need to engage in preventive wars to thwart terrorists and hostile governments, a position initially stated in the 2002 report... "In Venezuela, a demagogue awash in oil money is undermining democracy and seeking to destabilize the region," the report says. *Miami Herald*, 3/17/06
- On March 8th, the US State Department released its annual country-by-country report on human rights problems. The Venezuela section includes some criticisms, particularly in the area of Venezuelan prisons, which have been chronically troubled for generations...On the positive side, the State Department acknowledges Venezuela's commitment to freedom in a number of areas, recognizing: "The Venezuela press and electronic media are independent and free," Freedom of assembly and speech are respected, and "Elections are free, fair, and held on the basis of universal suffrage." *Venezuela News and Action*, 3/9/06.
- A diplomatic row between the United States and Venezuela escalated this past week when President Hugo Chavez expelled a US naval attaché for espionage, prompting Washington to order the Venezuelan ambassador's chief of staff to leave the US. *Christian Science Monitor*, 2/5/06.

Should you actually want to stop Mexicans and OTMs (other than Mexicans) from coming into the United States, here is how to do it: Find an illegal worker at a large corporation. This is not difficult - brooms and mops are big tip-offs. Then put the CEO of that corporation in prison for two or more years for violating the law against hiring illegal workers.
- Molly Ivins 3/30/06 (www.alternet.org/story/34256)

The Zapatista's Other Campaign

- by Tom Hansen

If strategy is at the heart of every successful popular movement, tactics reveal the creativity and energy of the movement. In both the strategic and tactical arenas, the Zapatista movement has few equals. The most recent initiative in their anti-capitalist struggle is the Other Campaign. As outlined in the Sixth Declaration of the Selva Lacandona, the Other Campaign is an alternative, "from the left and from below," to Mexico's presidential campaigns. Subcomandante Marcos, now dubbed Delegado Zero, is traveling the country from January 1 until the week before the July 2 presidential elections, meeting with indigenous and community-based groups in an effort to energize a largely de-politicized public. The Zapatistas are putting their moral authority on the line and risking the lives of their leadership in a public effort to inspire a unified struggle against capitalism. With the Other Campaign about half completed, the popular response has been overwhelming, with large public events and dozens of private meetings in 15 states through the end of March.

The Other Campaign comes without pre-determined formulas. The only preconditions for participation, laid out in the Sixth Declaration, are commitment to the struggle and rejection of political parties as a vehicle for struggle. The Sixth Declaration clearly locates capitalism as the central structural problem and concentrated power as the central political problem. The struggle is unfolding at the community level, where isolated and often de-politicized campesinos and workers face daunting odds.

Some otherwise sympathetic academics have criticized the Zapatistas for mounting a nation-wide campaign without a prefigured political program. The Zapatistas respond in two ways. First, they're trying to build a world in which all worlds have a place - in other words, a world that has room for a diversity of responses to capitalist hegemony. Second, the Other Campaign is the first step in a process that could easily last a decade or more. They spent ten years laying the groundwork for the Other Campaign, establishing autonomous communities in Chiapas with democratic and accountable civilian leadership through the Juntas of Good Government. The Other Campaign is the next step in a series of political experiments to change the world without taking power. The Zapatistas learn by trying (*caminar preguntando*).

Following this campaign there will likely be an "inter-galactica" - an international meeting for adherents to the Sixth Declaration - in Chiapas. Stay tuned for more information at <http://ezln.org.mx/>. The Mexico Solidarity Network provides weekly email updates on the Other Campaign. To sign up, send an email to MSN@MexicoSolidarity.org.

(The author is Director of the Mexico Solidarity Network, tom@mexicosolidarity.org.)

So I think of any movement for peace or justice as something that is about stabilizing our inner spirit so that we can go on and bring into the world a vision that is much more humane than the one that we have dominant today.

- Alice Walker on "Democracy Now" with Amy Goodman

A Nation That Tortures

A book review by Malcolm Bell

Mark Danner wrote in *Torture and Truth* in 2004 that the Bush team's practice of torturing suspects for their "actionable intelligence" (if any) transformed the United States "from a nation that did not torture to one that did." That may accord with what the public knows, but as Jennifer Harbury discusses in her more pointedly titled *Truth, Torture, and the American Way* (Beacon Press, 2005), our government has been furtively using torture for decades, particularly in Latin America through the President's personal instrument, the CIA.

While several useful books about torture have appeared recently, Jennifer brings to hers the perspective of having endured the disappearance, torture, and murder of her husband by Guatemalan soldiers who included at least one CIA "asset." Close friends are survivors of torture. She herself is a survivor, since having a loved one disappeared is an exquisite torture that causes anguish, nightmares, and, often, post traumatic stress disorder. Yet she has written with considerable objectivity.

Her book is a comprehensive introduction to our government's refinement, practice, teaching, and encouragement of torture; the civil, criminal, and international laws and treaties that prohibit and penalize it; and its effects on those involved, on gaining information (far less reliable than FBI methods), on terrorizing a populace (effective), and on world opinion. At the heart of the book are testimonies that she has collected from Latino and U.S. survivors who report that in their torture chambers, a North American was observing, feeding questions, or inflicting pain, and except in one case, never intervening to end the torture. While some witnesses are more persuasive than others, their cumulative effect shows that U.S. involvement in torturing people has long been routine.

Perhaps the most persuasive argu-



ment for allowing some torture is the "ticking bomb" scenario: a time bomb is about to kill thousands; may you torture the suspect who you're sure can lead you to it in time? Others have written that the scenario requires such an extraordinary string of coincidences that it probably never has and never will occur. That's fine, but what if it does? Jennifer confronts the question: she would keep torture the felony that it now is without exception; she also says (and as a one-time prosecutor, I agree) that if a ticking bomb scenario ever did arise, a torturer who saved all those lives would probably not be prosecuted, or if prosecuted, would not likely serve time.

The "responsible" media have reported about U.S. torture far better since the Abu Ghraib scandal broke than they did before, but they have far to go before they catch up with Jennifer.

*(Bell is author of **The Turkey Shoot: the Attica Cover-up**)*



Photo: Orin Langelle/
Global Justice Ecology Project

Brazilian campesinos protest outside of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Curitiba, Brazil. The CBD was held 20-31 March. Although there were many protests on the outside, some important rulings did get accomplished inside. The ban against "terminator technology" was upheld at the CBD, and the rush to commercialize genetically engineered trees suffered a setback as a defacto moratorium using the precautionary approach was recommended.

BOLIVIA, THE PEOPLE'S TRADE AGREEMENT

(excerpts from Quest for Peace website: quest.quixote.org/node/295 - 25k)

Ten Principles of the PTA

1. The Peoples Trade Agreement- proposed by president Evo Morales- is a response to the non-viability of the neo-liberal model, founded on deregulation, privatization and the indiscriminate opening of markets.
2. The PTA understands commerce and investment not merely as ends in themselves, but rather as means of development. For this reason, the principal objective is not the absolute liberalization of markets and a "shrinking" of the State, but rather development for the benefit of the people.
3. The PTA promotes a model for commercial integration among peoples, and reg-

ulates the rights of foreign investors and trans-national corporations, so that they promote national development and production.

4. The PTA does not prohibit the use of mechanisms which foment industrialization, nor does it impede the protection of internal markets necessary to protect the most vulnerable sectors.
5. The PTA recognizes the right of the people to define their own agriculture and food security policies; to protect and regulate national agricultural production, assuring that the internal market is not inundated by surpluses from other countries.
6. The PTA considers that vital services must be owned exclusively by public companies, and regulated by the State. The negotiation of any integration agreement must support the notion that the majority of basic services are public goods and cannot be turned over to the market.
7. The PTA promotes complementary relationships rather than competitive ones; living in harmony with the environment instead of irrational resource exploitation; defending social property against extreme privatization.
8. The PTA guides the participating countries toward a process of integration based on solidarity which gives priority to national companies as exclusive providers to public entities.
9. With this Peoples Trade Agreement (PTA), Bolivia proposes to achieve a true integration which transcends commercial and economic spheres- whose philosophy is 'to achieve a development which is based on communitarian principals and is profoundly just - taking into account national differences.'
10. The PTA proposes a different logic for relationship between human beings, a different model of life together, not based on competition and a zeal for consumption, which does not take advantage of or exploit to the maximum labor and natural resources.

From The Literature

Bolivia

- Evo Morales' 12/18/05 election victory gave him 53.7% of the vote despite the Electoral Council's disenfranchising over one million new voters. 84% of the electorate participated. President Morales announced plans to nationalize the natural gas reserves, rewrite the constitution, redistribute the land, and change the rules in the "drug war." (www.upsidedownworld.org).
- Bolivia will likely become the latest Latin American country to end formal financing ties with the International Monetary Fund...The government of President Evo Morales may want to avoid funding with IMF conditions at least until his own development program is in place. Brazil and Argentina cleared debts to the Fund in December, putting a further squeeze on the IMF's finances. Unlike Brazil and Argentina, Bolivia was freed of its IMF obligations under last year's global agreement to cancel the debts of the world's 19 poorest countries. Bolivia's relative poverty would make this more significant, leading to questions over the IMF's role in low-income countries as well as highlighting a growing desire in the region for development independence.

(from a memo by Mike Dolan, Center for Economic Policy Research in DC, March 2006).

Haiti [Ed. note: These excerpts are from an interview in Canada by Derrick O'Keefe, founder of Seven Oaks Magazine (www.sevenoaksmag.com) with Patrick Elie, former cabinet minister in Haiti. Haiti's situation remains complex; and truth is covered up by propaganda in our press. Many sources, however, report that the US, Canada, and France have been behind the UN Peacekeeping troops' massacres of the pro-Aristide majority.]

O'Keefe: As minister in Haiti's democratic government in the 1990s you played a historic role in dismantling the notoriously repressive Haitian army that was associated with so many dictatorships. What is your main message to the people of Canada?

Elie: Canadians have to be informed about the real situation, about the real Haiti and the real Haitian people, who have been so misrepresented by the mainstream press. And that allows for the kind of misguided policy that Canada has applied in Haiti over the past five years.

O'Keefe: The election of Rene Preval strikes me as yet another amazing victory by the Haitian people. Do you think that the US, France and Canada, who helped engineer the regime change in the first place, could have foreseen this outcome? And how will these countries now try to maintain their control over Haiti?

Elie: Preval had declared rather late in the process. Had he declared as early as the other candidates they would have devised some kind of plan to deal with his candidacy. And when you can't derail or sabotage an election upstream, then what you do is go downstream. After Aristide was first elected in 1990 they went downstream and did the coup. I suppose a coup was not yet in the plans this time, so they went downstream and started tweaking the results.

O'Keefe: What do you foresee in terms of the results of the National Assembly elections?

Elie: If the second round is not rigged, and if Preval is able to find some allies, he will have a majority parliamentary block. And that will mean that he will be able to find a Prime Minister who will be cooperative.

Argentina:

Several of South America's recent "leftist" presidential candidates have promised to eliminate the economic "reforms" of the IMF...Because of them the last 25 years have been an unprecedented failure for Latin America. From 1980 to 2000 the region's income per person - the most basic measure for economic progress - grew by only 9%. For 2000-2005 it has been 1%. But from 1960-1980 [Ed. note: before neoliberalism took hold] it grew by 82%.

President Kirchner of Argentina took office in May 2004...following a terrible recession that had put the majority below the poverty line. He took a hard line against foreign creditors, the IMF, and foreign-owned utility companies. Since then the economy has had three years of the fastest economic growth in the hemisphere, more than 9% annually.

(Mike Weisbrot, Center for Economic and Policy Research, news columns distributed to newspapers on 3/18/06. www.cepr.net).

Peru:

US Meddling in Peruvian Presidential Race? [Ed. note: As we write, the leftist candidate, Humala, has received the most votes, but not enough to avoid a run-off.]

Something smells funny about the recent denunciation of maverick Peruvian presidential candidate Ollanta Humala for alleged human rights violations. Before the accusations, Humala was riding high as the leading candidate in Peru's presidential elections. Investigations have shown that Humala's accusers are subsidized by the US -funded Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

Resources

Major Events

May 18. International Solidarity Day With Haiti (100 co-sponsors, more wanted). Brain Concannon, Haitian Lawyers Leadership Network, Brainhaiti@aol.com.

May 20. Venezuela/Cuba Demo. Join the March. Chuck Kaufman, Alliance for Global Justice, 202-544-9355 or endorsemay20@yahoo.com.

June 17-July 17. IFCO/Pastors for Peace Friendshipment to Cuba and back. (212-926-5757, p4p@igc.org, www.pastorsforpeace.org).

July 28-30. 11th Annual Doctors for Global Health (DGH) General Assembly, Salt Lake City, UT. Many Communities, One World: Promoting Health at Home and Abroad
Info: www.dghonline.org or dghinfo@dghonline.org.

2007

- **Chile:** The Fifth Latin American Conference of Popular Autonomous Organizations will be held in Chile next year. Marie Trigona of Grupo Alavío can be reached at mtrigona@msn.com.
- **Nairobi, Kenya:** World Social Forum.

Campaigns

- **SweatFree Communities:** A national network of local activists persuading public and religious institutions to adopt sweatfree purchasing policies. Bjorn Claeson, 207-262-7277 or bjorn@sweatfree.org. Get your Governor to join the Governors' Coalition for SweatFree Procurement and Worker Rights (proposed by Maine's Gov. Baldacci).
- **Cancel Latin America's Debt:** Jubilee USA Network in DC reports the next step is to pressure the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) to cancel the debts of Haiti, Peru and Ecuador (Debayani Kar, 202-783-0215 or www.democracyinaction.org/organizationsORG/JubileeUSA).
- **Unionization of Levi Straus Workers in Mexico** at Lajat Manufacturing in north central Mexico (www.coalition-forjustice.net).

- **Worldwide Support for the Cuban Five.** Over 210 committees worldwide. (www.freethefive.org).

Jobs

Witness for Peace. Executive Director and Development Manager (www.witnessforpeace.org/work/staffjobs.html or dcsearch@witnessforpeace.org.)

Volunteers Wanted

Accompaniers for rural Guatemala. NISGUA/DC. Next training 7/28-30 in San Francisco (Catherine Norris, 202-265-8713 or www.nisgua.org).

Website

Media Training/Resources Media Guide, by G.W. Associates, Syracuse, NY (<http://www.peterwirth.net>), designed to help activists get their message before the public. Dan McGowan, CEO of a large grassroots organization that has used GWA several times, reports: "Most activists recognize the need for media attention to their projects, but most fail to garner media attention proportionate to their efforts. [They] assume that if you represent a just cause and have a clear message the media will cover your events and explain your quest to the world at large. Nothing could be further from reality. The GW Associates website offers media training resources for those who really want to get their message out. It warns activists that unless they 'work the media' they will not get the coverage they want. The Resources Media Guide should be mandatory reading for all activists BEFORE they ever plan an event. It is FREE."

Newsletter

La Lucha Solidaria: Newsletter of the Portland Central America Solidarity Committee, An excellent source of news about Latin America. info@pcasc.net or <http://pcasc.net/about-us/pcasc-archives/real-newsletter.pdf/download>

Videos

- *No Running Water.* John Amidon has produced this 6 minute 34 seconds music video, "No Running Water,"

designed to help close the SOA and oppose Plan Colombia. Available from Amidon at cost plus shipping. Contact him at 25 Melrose Ave, Albany, NY 12203 or 518-312-6442.

- Flash animation about the SOA: <http://www.soaw.org/flash!> A two-minute animated video clip.
- Chiapas Media Project/Promedios videos:

Radio Nonmdaa: The Word of the Water (Amuzgo and Spanish with English Subtitles, 15 min. 2005. Since opening, the station has received constant harassment from the Mexican military who have threatened to shut down the station. Radio Nonmdaa serves to strengthen the autonomy, identity and culture of the indigenous peoples of the region. Individuals \$20, Institutions \$70).

The Land Belongs to Those who Work It (Spanish and Tzeltal with English subtitles, 15 min. 2005. The federal government sold the land in Bolon aja'aw to a private company to create an eco-tourism center without the permission of the community.

Documentation of a meeting between zapatista authorities and Mexican Government functionaries. Individuals \$25, Institutions \$80).

Note: English language videos can be purchased on-line at www.chiapasmediaproject.org.

Books

God's Economy: Biblical Studies from Latin America edited by Ross & Gloria Kinsler, \$28, Orbis Books, Mayknoll, New York 10545, or via website www.mayknoll.org for \$28.00 plus shipping. A collection of articles by thirteen Biblical scholars who represent in many ways the "second generation" of Latin American liberation theology who "demonstrate so powerfully [that] economic justice lives at the heart of the biblical message, at the center of both the Hebrew and Christians Scriptures." Read J. Gary Campbell's full review at www.presby-peacefellowship.org/NotSobriefly/Reviews.php

Enrique Alvarez Cordova: Life of a Salvadoran Revolutionary and Gentleman, by John W. Lamperti,

\$39.95, McFarland and Co. 2006. www.mcfarlandpub.com. 800-253-2187. To be reviewed in next issue.

Bananas: Women Transforming the Banana Unions of Latin

America, Dana Frank. SouthEnd Press, \$12, www.southendpress.org/2005/items/7557 or call 800-533-8478.

Travel:

Argentina: 8/1-10 (GX. Search for Alternatives); 11/TBA (MADRE. Human Rights. 212-627-0444 or travel@madre.org).

Bolivia: 6/17-27 (GX. The privatization of life? Natural resources and social movements. Santa Cruz, LaPaz).

Border: 5/25-6/5 (CPT. Migrant Trail Walk. Confront unjust immigration policies, meet human rights groups); 5/29-6/4 (Derechos Humanos/Arizona Border Rights Foundation. The Migrant Trail: We Walk for Life. Shuttles to walks at Sasabe, AZ -Tucson. rboren@igc.org or 520-770-1373).

Brazil: 8/5-16 (GX. Race, Dance, Policies. Recife).

Colombia: 5/31-6/2 (CPT. human rights and church leaders. Bogata, Magdalene, Barrouscaboriga); TBA (GX with Fellowship of Reconciliation. Building a culture of peace, human rights, Quito.); 6/30-7/9 (WP. Sowing peace in times of war. Churches); 7/7-16 (WP. Labor/human rights issues); 7/18-31 (CPT. Human rights, as above); 7/20-30 (WP. US workers' delegation. Unions); 8/1-11 (WP. US connections, labor, human rights); 8/6-20 (Fellowship of Reconciliation. Peaceful resistance to the "other war," San Jose de Apartado. 415-493-6224 or Amanda@igc.org); 8/15-25 (WP. US policy: Drugs, military aid, human rights); 10/3-16 (CPT. Human rights, as above); 10-23-30 (WP. Sowing peace in times of war).

Costa Rica: 7/21-31 (GX. Ecotourism, sustainability, Caribbean coast).

Cuba: 7/8-17 (US/Labor Exchange, IFCO. Travel challenge, health care. 313-561-8330 or laborexchange@aol.com).

El Salvador: 7/13-22 (GATE. Spirituality of solidarity); 11/25-12/4 (GATE. As above).

Guatemala: 5/22-6/4 (CGE. Environmental justice, sustainable development, Guatemala City, Atlantic coast, Tikal).

Honduras: 7/3-13 (GX. Resilient Roots: the Maya and Garifuna legacy); 11/6-16 (GX. same).

Mexico: 5/17-27 (GATE. Spirituality of solidarity, Chiapas); 5/22-6/5 (WP.

Roots of migration: walk on the migration trail, S. Mexico to Tucson); 5/TBA (MADRE. Human rights, 212-627-0444 or travel@madre.org); 5/26-7/2 (CGE.

Language, culture, social change, Mexico City, Cuernavaca); 6/26-7/6

(GX. Tierra y Libertad, Chiapas); 6/27-7/8 (WP. Human costs of globalization, free trade, the Indigenous); 6/28-7/5 (CGE. Mexico presidential elections); 7/12-30 (GATE. Women's spiritual

quest); 7/16-25 (GX. Fair trade and culture in Oaxaca); 7/223-31 (WP. Free trade and the roots of migration); 8/1-11 (GX. Chiapas: Anniversary of the Caracoles); 10/30-11/7 (Oaxaca, Day of the Dead).

Nicaragua: 5/20-28 (WP. Impacts of globalization, free trade, labor, health, education); 6/17-24 (Nicaragua

Network. US interference in the election: fact-finding delegation); 6/24-7/2 (CGE. Global citizenship for educators); 6/24-7/5 (WP. Workers' rights in a globalized world); 7/12-22 (GX. Fair trade,

alternative to neoliberalism); 7/15-28 (WP. Intercultural teen delegation); 10/29-11/8 (WP. Election observation

delegation); 11/3-11 (CGE. Democracy, Dialogue and Dissent. Election observa-

tion); 11/11-19 (WP. Jubilee USA delegation: Debt and structural violence). Venezuela: 6/17-26 (Marin Interfaith

Task Force on the Americas: A hopeful revolution, explore Caracas and Afro-Venezuelan coastal communities, geodale1@earthlink.net or mitf@igc.org or

phone 415-924-3227); 6/20-30 (GX. Afro-Venezuelan Cultural Festival); 6/21-30 (WP. Breaking the Code of Media Disinformation); 7/12-23 (GX. People's development, health, education, community media); 8/11-22 (GX. Democracy, development, regional integration); 8/6-16 (WP. Hear the full story); 9/2-13 (GX. Labor, land reform, agriculture); 10/TBA (WP. Venezuela in Transition).

Central America: 7/TBA (Potters for Peace Brigades to Central America. 2 wks. pchartrand@bsn1.net).

Codes:

CGE: Center for Global Education, Augsburg College, 612-330-1159; globaled@augsburg.edu.

CPT: Christian Peacemaker Team, 773-277-0253 or delegations@cpt.org.

GX: Global Exchange, 800-497-1994, x226; Tanya@globalexchange.org.

GATE: La Crosse, WI. www.GATE-travel.org.

WP: Witness for Peace, 202-547-5112, www.witnessforpeace.org.

Thank You!

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Movement News In Brief

Immigration: 1-200,000 marching in Phoenix. One million in Los Angeles (Ariz. Republic, 4/11/06). Spirited rallies in dozens of US cities against a bill criminalizing undocumented workers and supporters. ("An unfolding mass movement").

Caribbean: Apparently the US intends to open a naval base and keep its air base in Curazao - facing Venezuela (Eva Golinger, Prensa Latino, 4/18/06). Caribbean countries are aligning with Venezuela in the OAS and have cheaper oil contracts (Latinamerica Press 1/25/06).

Guyana: Pres. Janet Jagan declared her government not aligned with the US (Latinamerica Press, 1/25/06).

Uruguay: Pres. Vasquez has re-established relations with Cuba (Latinamerica Press, 1/25/06).

Cuba: Economy grew at 11.8% in 2005 (Latinamerica Press 1/25/06). Cuba will install energy- saving light bulbs throughout Guyana to cut fuel costs (Miami Herald, 3/16/06).

Bolivia:

- Bechtal Corp. canceled its suit for \$25 billion against Bolivia's canceling a water privatization contract signed in 2000 (LA Times, 1/20/06)
- On January 21, on a hill outside La Paz, a traditional ceremony marked both a major shift in Bolivian politics and a milestone for the growing New Left in Latin America. At Tiwanaku, a site of pre-Incan ruins significant to the country's indigenous populations, Evo Morales, barefoot and dressed in a red tunic, received a silver and gold staff from leaders of the Aymara people. (UpsideDownWorld.org)

Brazil: According to polls, Pres. Lula da Silva is likely to be re-elected in October, unscathed from the corruption crisis of 2005 (International Relations Center, 3/30/06).

Argentina: After 29 years the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo held their last annual 24-hour protest in resistance to human rights abuses, including children disappeared during the military dictatorship from 1976-1983. (Marie Trigona, via www.revolutionvideo.org/alavio/)

Guatemala: The US is pressuring nations in Latin America to boost Guatemala for a UN Security Council seat to avoid Venezuela getting it (La Nacion, Argentina. Referred by NISGUA's Andrew de Sousa).

Ecuador: In the last four months there were three reports of Colombian military air raids inside Ecuadoran territory near the Colombian border. Ecuador has 14,000 troops along that border (Latinamerica Press, 2/8/06).

El Salvador:

- Over 100,000 attended the funeral for FMLN leader Shafik Handal on 1/24/06.
- ARENA Wins 34 Seats in the Legislative Assembly, FMLN Wins 32. Unofficial results in the legislative races report ARENA finishing on top. The PCN, PDC, and CD won 11, 5 and 2 seats respectively. FMLN Candidate Violeta Menjivar narrowly won San Salvador mayoral race (CRISPAZ, 3/18/06).

Venezuela: 85 Guatemalans arrived for free eye surgery in a new program co-sponsored by Cuba and Venezuela for poor Latin Americans. (Miami Herald, 3/16/06).

Mexico and US: May 1, "A Day Without an Immigrant: The Great American Boycott 2006"--a day of "no work, no school, no sales, no buying." A one-day boycott of all multinational businesses in Mexico and US. Buy local!