



INTERCONNECT

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

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Dear Readers...

As we watch cities all over the world occupying the streets we can't do better than to remember and quote Howard Zinn: Revolutionary change does not come as one cataclysmic moment (beware of such moments!) but as an endless succession of surprises, moving zigzag toward a more decent society. We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.

Peter and Gail Mott
Co-editors

Blanco Go Home!

- by Brian Concannon, Jr.



One of Latin America's most important, and desperate, anti-occupation struggles is being waged in Haiti, against an unlikely opponent: a UN force led by soldiers from progressive Latin American countries sent to Haiti to do the Bush Administration's dirty work.

The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) is a force of 12,000 soldiers and police officers -- 10% of worldwide UN peacekeeping forces -- led by Brazil and containing troops from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The Mission was established under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in 2004, to replace the Multinational Interim Force (MIF), an occupying force primarily comprised of U.S. soldiers, who were needed elsewhere. The MIF was deployed by President Bush to consolidate the February 29, 2004 coup d'état in Haiti. That coup was consummated when the country's

elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was forcibly removed from Haiti on a U.S. government plane diverted from the War on Terror's torture rendition program, and replaced by a former UN staffer from Boca Raton Florida.

There was never a legal basis for a Chapter VII mission in Haiti -- Brazilian officials argued as much in conversations recorded in cables recently released by Wikileaks -- but Brazil was enticed to overcome its principled objections by the promise of an enhanced candidacy for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Other Latin American countries followed to support a neighbor and for the generous UN troop reimbursements.

The U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, in a 2008 cable released by Wikileaks, bragged that MINUSTAH "is an indispensable tool in realizing core USG [U.S. government] policy interests in Haiti". These policy interests have included suppressing dissent to U.S.-installed governments in Haiti and attacks on neighborhoods sympathetic to ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his progressive Lavalas movement. In a July 6, 2005 attack, UN troops fired over 21,000 rounds of ammunition from assault rifles on the crowded, thin-walled houses of Cite Soleil, then left with their ambulances empty as unarmed civilians they shot bled to death in their homes and on the streets. MINUSTAH arrested Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste, Haiti's most prominent advocate of non-violent social change, in 2005. More recently, the mission worked with the Haitian government and United States to prevent the Lavalas movement from participating in Haiti's 2010-2011 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. In 2010, UN troops introduced cholera to Haiti through negligent sanitation practices, killing 6,000 and sickening 450,000 civilians so far. A rape of a Haitian boy by four Peacekeepers from Uruguay, caught on a cellphone video released in September, is just the latest in a long line of sexual violence by MINUSTAH soldiers.

Perhaps most galling for Haitians is MINUSTAH's cost- over \$800 million this year, more than the entire national budget

of the Lavalas government that MINUSTAH replaced, and several times the UN expenditure on cholera response.

Latin American countries play this role uneasily- diplomats, Commanders, foot soldiers and especially citizens have complained about Latin American participation in violence against poor Haitians. But the uneasiness has not stopped seven annual renewals of the MINUSTAH mandate, the most recent occurring on October 15.

But a developing mobilization is fighting to make the most recent renewal the last one. In Haiti, grassroots and student groups are organizing demonstrations almost every week. In October, they took their fight to Geneva, submitting a report on MINUSTAH's human rights violations to the UN Human Rights Council (see <http://ijdh.org/projects/universal-periodic-review-upr>). On October 5, a group of prominent Latin American citizens led by Nobel Peace Laureate Adolfo Perez-Esquivel wrote an open letter calling on their governments to withdraw their troops from Haiti. A School of The Americas Watch delegation visited Haiti in October, to learn about MINUSTAH from Haitian groups in order to advocate for withdrawal in the U.S. and Latin America. In the U.S., reports and advocacy from TransAfrica Forum, the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), students at the Harvard School of Public Health, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) and other groups are helping to develop a movement of informed, engaged advocates for MINUSTAH withdrawal.

[The author is director of the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH), based in Boston. For more information about what you can do to support MINUSTAH withdrawal and other human rights advocacy, see www.IJDH.org.]

The People United: New Priorities Network: An Opportunity for Solidarity

- by Chuck Kaufman

The one-year old New Priorities Network (NPN) held a strategy meeting Oct. 1-2 in Washington, DC, facing a dramatically different political environment than it did at its founding. A year ago the discussion was about ways to get ending the wars and cutting the bloated Pentagon budget onto the public agenda. This year, thanks to the crisis over raising the debt ceiling and constant threats of government shut-down, the cost of the wars and the military budget are very much part of the public agenda.

The New Priorities Network was founded to force the issue of war funding and military spending onto the public agenda as a solution to the cuts that cities, counties and states are being forced to make in education, healthcare,

and human services. The founding objective was to build cross-movement local coalitions, and the tactic was to build them around campaigns for local government resolutions calling for ending the war and cutting the bloated Pentagon budget to fund local needs. Alliance for Global Justice (AfGJ) serves on the "continuations" or steering committee of NPN.

The strategy meeting was attended by 48 groups which were a good cross-section of peace and domestic issue groups, national and local. There was some diversity thanks primarily to the labor movement but there were few students or youth. The strategy discussions were thoughtful and high quality. There was a high degree of unity on tactics. New Priorities Network principles boil down to four: 1) Create jobs, 2) Save social services, 3) Tax the rich/corporations and, 4) End the wars/Cut the Pentagon budget.

What was very significant was that several national domestic issue organizations and coalitions which met with us reported that they have the same four priorities as the New Priorities Network. Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, US Action, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Progressive Democrats of America, none of which are "peace" groups, share NPN's agenda. In addition to AfGJ, groups which are involved to one degree or another in the Latin America solidarity movement included SOA Watch, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns, and Sisters of Mercy. Many representatives of local NPN or peace and justice coalitions whetted their organizer's teeth in the Central America solidarity movement of the 1980s.

There were two major take-aways that I had from the strategy meeting. The first is that we are at the beginning of the end of single issue organizing. The 40 year campaign by the right-wing to change the social contract, the distribution of wealth, and the very role of government, is coming to a head. No matter whether our issue is Latin America solidarity, labor rights, education, health care, social services or the care and feeding of retirees or pre-schoolers, we are all facing Armageddon. We cannot afford to pursue our individual paths to a better world but must unite to fight back. The alternative is to lose separately.

The second thing that I took away was that we need to link solutions rather than problems. And we have the solutions. The rich and the corporations must pay their fair share of taxes and we must end the wars, demilitarize our foreign policy, and cut the bloated Pentagon budget. The latter is certainly part of the mission of every Latin America solidarity organization. We need to bring our particular Latin America solidarity perspective to the discussion and the organizing. Abolish the School of the Americas, cut military and police training and aid to Colombia, Honduras, Mexico and the rest of the hemisphere, end the fraudulent war on drugs and the war on immigrants, close US bases in Latin America and the Caribbean, and end the militarization of relations with Latin America.

The Latin America Solidarity Coalition and the solidarity



movement at large must join forces with these other movements in a struggle for our values or, as I call it, to change the very culture of US militarism. If we fail to take up this challenge then we will fail alone. We will be irrelevant to the most important struggle of our era.

The New Priorities Network is a network primarily projecting the campaigns and analysis of its member organizations, rather than a coalition which takes up a single campaign in the name of the coalition. Its foundation is the existence or creation of local coalitions across movements which agree to work together on the four principles listed above. Communities where NPN coalitions have been established are listed on the website www.newprioritiesnetwork.com (along with a lot of good organizing tools). Local solidarity committees should join existing coalitions and start NPN coalitions where there are none. National solidarity groups should promote this to their bases. We can have a greater impact for our goal of changing US policies toward Latin America by being inside this tent than we can from being outside of it. Time is short. The public agenda moves at its own speed and if we are too slow we will miss an historic opportunity.

[The author is national co-coordinator, Alliance for Global Justice.]

Guest Editorial

- by Vicki Ryder

One of the speakers at the opening rally of Occupy 2011 in DC quoted Gandhi's now-famous observation:

"First they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you, then you win."



The corporate-owned media have moved from ignoring to ridicule, especially since they do not see that we have a cohesive message, as the protesters did in Tahrir Square, for example, with their unified demand that "Mubarak must go!"

While it's true that there is a confusing sea of signs in DC's Freedom Plaza, the unifying message is clear: The military-industrial-congressional complex does not exist to serve the people and is depleting the earth of its resources while denying self-fulfillment and justice to anyone who stands in the way of its power and its profits. More simply, Occupy 2011 calls for "Human Needs, Not Corporate Greed."

The visual cacophony of signs calling for health care and jobs and fair elections and an end to war (and even "justice for movie goers" and the salvation of the Tipnis) was a reflection of the frustration felt by "the 99%" who have been trying to figure out how to plug the holes in the dike and finally have come to realize that they have run out of fingers. They see now that the system can't be "fixed" because it isn't "broken." It is working exactly as it was meant to do.

It's becoming increasingly clear that if we ever are to survive and live at peace in a sustainable world, then what's needed is a different system.

That's a very different demand from the single one that rang out in Tahrir Square. The steps to a new system are complex and multidimensional. Systems (remember feudalism?) don't disappear willingly or overnight. We are in the struggle for the long haul and have embraced the message of that other of Gandhi's oft-quoted observations that "we must be the change we wish to see."

It's for that reason that the community establishing itself in Freedom Plaza (like the one now in its second month in NYC's Wall Street) is self-governing and truly democratic. There are no "leaders" making decisions for others. Instead, daily "town hall meetings" facilitated by those who volunteer their skills determine by consensus how the needs of the group will be met and how their political demands can best be accomplished.

Seeing true democracy in action, and seeing folks building -- on their own -- a microcosm of a better society in which no one profits by exploiting others, is simply too threatening to the 1%ers. It's for this reason that they are moving from the "ignore" to the "ridicule" and (as evidenced by their pepper spray and their kettling), to the "fight" stage of response. But we all know what is true: that if we continue nonviolently to resist the machine and to "be the change we wish to see," we will, indeed, win....

[The author is a longtime organizer and peace activist living in Durham, NC.]

Honduras: The Illegal-Post-Coup Government Continues - With US Help

- by Jennifer Atlee

On October 5, President Obama received Porfirio Lobo of Honduras at the White House, celebrating advances in human rights, restoration of democracy and reconciliation under Lobo's leadership and stating that Honduras "gives us great hope." President Obama's glowing depiction of democracy and reconciliation in Honduras stands in shocking contrast with daily reports from Honduras and national and international human rights organizations underscoring grave concerns regarding the direction of U.S. policy.

For the people of Honduras that we accompany every day, the human rights and democratic crisis is far from over; repression continues unabated and policies of state terror are consolidated. A military offensive has been launched against the organized peasants of the Aguan Valley; targeted killings of leaders and evictions of peasant communities from their lands has escalated. Military bases, "model cities" and tourism projects are constructed on communal and indigenous lands. Environmental defenders are criminalized for protecting mountains, forests and watersheds

from logging and mining. Fifteen journalists have been assassinated in 19 months under the Lobo regime. Human rights defenders are deliberately targeted. The practice of forced disappearance is once again being systematically implemented.

As a result of its investigation into those responsible for the violence, the Commission of Truth is a target for surveillance, intimidation, threats, and an assassination attempt. In late June, Fr. Fausto Milla, a member of the Commission of Truth, and his assistant were forced into exile due to death threats.

Despite this grim reality the U.S. government has declared that Honduras is "Open for Business," courting multinational corporations and predatory investors with money linked to neoliberal economic policies, militarization and repression. New military bases are being built and existing ones expanded. Military aid is flowing despite the call of 87 members of Congress to suspend it due to ongoing human rights abuses and impunity on the part of state security forces.

Honduras continues to be the U.S. military and intelligence stronghold in Central America; it is embedding more heavily, insisting that increased militarization is necessary for regional security, the war on crime and drugs. At the same time, a well orchestrated campaign of terror against social movements in Honduras continues with impunity, conducted by a state which the U.S. is equipping, training and funding.

Historically U.S. policies and intervention in Central America have left a tragic legacy of violence and poverty: strengthening brutal, corrupt dictators and economic elites while waging war on the poor and their efforts to bring about social change and justice. Rather than learning from the mistakes of the past, the United States is repeating them, condemning another generation to the terrors of war and trauma from which previous generations throughout the region have not yet had the opportunity to heal.

In April 2009, during the Fifth Summit of the Americas, President Obama promised CHANGE in the way that the U.S. has historically treated Latin America and the Caribbean. His promise was made just months before the military coup and ensuing crisis in Honduras which the U.S. has legitimated and consolidated. There is hope in Honduras, but it is not found in the abusive power structures which the U.S. supports. Hope is found in the bottom up social movements which continue to struggle for deep structural change, social justice and human rights in Honduras.

The Honduras Accompaniment Project (HAP) receives more requests than ever for international human rights accompaniment as Honduras fades from international attention and repression intensifies. Please visit our website www.friendshipamericas.org for more information - contact jennya@friendshipamericas.com if you are interested in accompaniment or training.

[The author is Cp-Director of the new Friendship Office of the Americas in DC and the Honduras Accompaniment Project.]

Rights Action's Grahame Russell responds to NY Times article (Desperate Guatemalans Embrace An 'Iron Fist' by Damien Cave, 9/9/11)

NYT: COBÁN, Guatemala — Now, all across these highlands once ravaged by a 36-year civil war, the region's bloodiest anti-Communist conflict, Guatemalans are demanding the unthinkable — a strong military back in their communities.

RA: : It was not an "anti-communist" conflict in Guatemala. It was a campaign of State repression and genocide against its own, majority Mayan, mainly unarmed population, to keep in place an unjust economic development model.

There is a presumption that Guatemala is a democratic country, as opposed to being a country characterized by historic and on-going racism, exploitation and poverty, violence and repression, impunity for the powerful sectors and a fundamental lack of democracy.

NYT: That is how desperate this country has become as gangs and Mexican drug cartels run fever-wild, capturing territory and corrupting institutions so that Guatemala will remain a safe haven for cocaine, guns, money laundering and new recruits.

RA: While it is true that there has been a serious and devastating growth in gangs and drug cartels - since the 1996 "peace accords", these are not the underlying source or cause of the repression and violence, impunity and a fundamental lack of democracy and rule of law. The wealthy elites (oligarchy, to be more precise) and the military remain the underlying causes and sources - and, indeed, direct beneficiaries - of the repression and violence, impunity and a fundamental lack of democracy and rule of law. Furthermore, sectors of the oligarchy and military initiated, and are directly involved with, drug trafficking and other sectors of organized crime.]

NYT: Guatemala's presidential election on Sunday could represent a turning point. The three top contenders have all called for a stronger, crime-fighting military, borrowing heavily from the Mexican model of attacking the drug cartels head-on, even though that strategy has claimed more than 40,000 lives without yielding peace.

RA: There is really no hope that these elections will represent a turning point. This is a mis-representation of the fundamental lack of real democracy in Guatemala, wherein the powerful sectors - oligarchy, military, police, organized crime - all commit crimes and human rights violations with close to complete impunity, while the majority population live in endemic conditions of exploitation and poverty. Sadly, but predictably, there is no reference - none at all - to the extensive role that numerous US administrations, including

covert US agencies, have played over generations directly funding, arming, and politically supporting the Guatemalan military and oligarchy. It has been widely reported that the "Genocide General" himself, Otto Pérez Molina, was on the CIA payroll.

It is shocking but not surprising that the journalist, Mr Cave, made no reference here to the very serious allegations against General Otto Perez Molina, that he is one of the intellectual and material authors of the genocide, as well as disappearances and torture. Before Mr Cave's trip to Guatemala, he was in communication with Annie Bird and Grahame Russell of Rights Action, and I sent him the Allegation Letter recently submitted formally to the United Nations, alleging Perez Molina's participation in genocide, torture and disappearances, along with other background information. See: http://rightsaction.org/articles/Letter_to_United_Nations_082411.html]

[The author is Co-Director of Rights Action.]

Who Will Stop the River of Death into Mexico?

- by John Lindsay-Poland

When you cross on foot over the bridge that joins El Paso, Texas - safest city of its size in the United States - with Ciudad Juárez - murder capital of the world, you need no money, no identification, and your bag is unlikely to be checked. And you'll see a small sign reminding you that it is illegal to possess guns in Mexico.

Every day, according to a study by Magda Coss, two thousand firearms pass from the United States into Mexico. In Phoenix and Houston, or at most of the 6,600 gun dealers near the Mexican border, if you don't have a criminal record, it is legal to walk in, buy 10 or 20 AK-47s or AR-15s, or Five-sevenN guns designed to penetrate armor and bullet-proof vests, and walk out.

The Pentagon, for its part, is providing equipment and training to the Mexican police and army, in a strategy that tracks back and forth between the two as favored clients. Sometimes Mexican policemen are direct victims of organized crime seeking to control the state's actions; sometimes policemen act in concert with organized crime, as when Federal Police have stopped Central American migrants seeking to reach the United States and turned them over to organizations that systematically take the cash they've saved to pay to cross the border, and in many cases then kill the migrants. Sometimes policemen kill criminals or ordinary people, and attribute the crime to the Zetas or Sinaloa cartel.

Either way, the guns are coming from the United States, some from public taxpayer funds, some from private dealers. And Mexican gunmen - of the state or not - are in an arms race for ever-more powerful weapons.

Sometimes U.S. public and private interests combine to sell

weapons, as in Operation Fast and Furious, run out of the Phoenix office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in 2009 and 2010, by which dealers sold more than 2,000 weapons to "straw buyers," individuals who can legally buy weapons, but who illegally turn them over to others. ATF allowed the weapons to "walk", reportedly in an effort to identify higher-ups in gun trafficking organizations but, once out of the stores, it is practically impossible to control them. Hundreds of the guns have turned up at crime scenes in both the U.S. and Mexico, including at the killing of a Border Patrol agent in January.

The operation obeyed the callous dehumanized logic of police who believe that, as one ATF official said to an officer who objected, "you have to break eggs to make an omelette." But it also responded to the free market religion by which guns are treated like any other object in the marketplace. To prosecute gun traffickers, ATF usually must bust marginal figures on paper violations, and district attorneys are often reluctant to prosecute such low-level crime.

Meanwhile, Lone Wolf Trading in Glendale, AZ made good money on the sales. The National Rifle Association is having a hey-day with Fast and Furious, pummeling ATF to weaken its enforcement capacity even further, while Rep. Darrell Issa employs it to go after Attorney General Eric Holder. Mexicans in Ciudad Juárez I talk with read the scandal as further evidence that the United States government is trying to kill them. The treatment of immigrants detained by U.S. personnel along the border, in what No More Deaths calls "a culture of cruelty," shows that these Mexicans perceive something real, whether it's conscious or unconscious.

So who will stop the river of death into Mexico? Will the Mexican government stop it? Will Washington? Who? and when will they do it?

Media, military and politicians speak of "spillover violence," referring to the fear that the murder taking place in Mexico will visit U.S. communities. In fact, spillover violence is going in the other direction. It is the United States that supplies the guns, the military strategy, the money from drug sales, the trade policy that depopulates rural agriculture through subsidized imports, and runs an immigration policy that uses and then dumps people.

In the last two years, churches in Philadelphia, Harrisonburg, Baltimore and other cities decided to confront gun dealers whose products were a problem in crimes committed in their communities. Calling themselves Heeding God's Call, they asked the dealers to commit to a ten-point code of conduct that can prevent straw purchasing of guns. If the dealer says no, they escalate to vigils, media outreach, talking with local government. Several groups, including Heeding God's Call, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, and the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, are putting together a Borderlands Heeding God's Call to address gun trafficking from border areas. We're seeking a local part-time organizer to jump start this project; if interested, apply by October 31.

To urge President Obama to take action against gun smuggling to Mexico, sign the petition at www.alianzaciciva.org.mx/altoalasarmas

The occupy movement shifts the subject of action for justice from them to us: it is we occupy the plaza. And so it must be we who act to detain the tools designed only to kill and intimidate people.

For more information or to get involved in Borderlands Heeding God's Call, contact John Lindsay-Poland, johnlp@forusa.org.

[The author is Research and Advocacy Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.]

Responding to Chuck Kaufman

- by Malcolm Bell

Since I agree with nearly everything that Chuck Kaufman says in his stimulating essay, "Yes, Virginia, There is Evil in the World" (June 2011 Interconnect), I shall respond by trying to build on it. One point of difference: whereas I think he sees evil as an independent entity or force, I see it as something that people do, that is, as a shorthand term for hurting others unnecessarily. But both versions reach the same conclusion: evil deeds proliferate with the acquiescence of a largely passive public. So I second Chuck's point that we who care need to be both proactive and reactive, to grow the garden and protect it.

He cites the Abolition Movement. For me, it and the Civil War should (but usually don't) remind us of the extent to which a relatively few powerful barbarians have long controlled our society or significant parts of it, exploiting and killing vast numbers of people in order to obtain and expand their privileged lifestyles – so presumptuous a sacrifice of other people for such superficial gains by perhaps 1%. Other nations such as Britain and Brazil managed to end slavery without indulging in mass slaughter, but not the Land of the Free. Our culture is cursed by its addiction to violence, whether war, capital punishment, or the isometric violence of prison.

A modern instance of a powerful person working his will heedless of the cost to others was Bush I's war against Panama, which killed 1,000 to 4,000 or more innocent civilians -- a range comparable to the toll from the 9/11 attack. (Two notes on this war are in the October 2010 Interconnect.) Even more appalling is the fact that most citizens either don't know or don't care that during recent decades our government supported, advised, supplied, and otherwise participated in the slaughter of more than 300 thousand civilians in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama -- 100 times the 9/11 toll. Nor is it simply in Central America that the U.S. has made a habit of violent interventions and support for tyrants who rule by torture and murder. Consider U.S. complicity in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile,

Indonesia, the Philippines, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, and other nations of Latin America and Africa.

Public ignorance and indifference about this history is such that following the 9/11 attack most citizens had to ask, "Why do they hate us?"; and they did not question Bush II's howler that the attackers hated us "for our freedoms." Worse, most citizens acquiesced or even cheered when Bush-Cheney did not deal with the terrorists as the British dealt with IRA terrorists and the Israelis usually deal with Arab terrorists – by sensibly sending the police and military after the surviving perps – but instead launched needless wars against Afghanistan and Iraq.

Consider the brilliance of 9/11. Bin Laden leveraged not only our hi-tech aircraft but also our obtuse bellicosity, as Bush-Cheney's wars and other interventions escalated the very conduct that had motivated the 9/11 attack in the first place, provoking even more hatred of the U.S. and probably recruiting more new terrorists than bin Laden could ever have recruited. The many turns for the worse that the U.S. has taken since 9/11 -- official lawlessness, torture, erosion of the freedoms that Bush claimed they hate us for, and so on -- have made the work of activists for peace and justice both more essential and more challenging than ever.

Now the star of Arab Spring has risen in North Africa and the Middle East, much to the discomfiture of Washington, which has long touted freedom while backing murderous tyrants like Mubarak. The Arab Spring, in turn, along with the 1% ripping off 99% of us and other outrages, has inspired Occupy Wall Street, proving once again that the sleeping giant of public decency is capable of being aroused, and inspiring other protests around the globe. As the front page of the U.K.'s October 16 Independent reported, "Protests against corporate greed, executive excess and public austerity began to gel into the beginnings of a worldwide movement yesterday as tens of thousands marched in scores of cities. The 'Occupy Wall Street' protest ... [and two others] coalesced on a day that saw marches or occupations in 82 countries."

So, yes, there is much evil being done in the world, and, human nature being what it is, there probably always will be; but there is much cause for hope that our efforts and those of countless others may be starting to pay off bigtime. If and as they do, the need for experienced activists will become greater than ever. And if Occupy Wall Street peters out or goes astray, then too we shall be sorely needed.

[The author is a member of the board of directors of the International Mayan League/USA and of VAMOS (Vermont Associated for Mexican Opportunity and Support). He also is a contributing editor of INTERCONNECT.]

RESOURCES

Major Events

November 18-20, Fort Benning, Columbus, GA. "Stand Up For Dignity and Justice, Solidarity and Self-Determination." Shut down the SOA/WHIN-

SEC and resist US militarization. (Hendrik Voss, www.soaw.org, 202-425-5128).

Campaigns

"Joining Hands to Break the Chains of Debt." To convince the G20 to establish an international bankruptcy court that will be fair and transparent in considering unjust debt. Donations matched up to \$15,000. Jubilee USA (Eric LeCompte, coord@jubileeusa.org.)

Haiti: Withdraw all military personnel from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), "an unjustified and immoral military occupation" responsible for "a dense pattern of human rights violations, and the violation of Haitians' political rights." (Hendrick Voss, SOAW, 202-234-3440.)

Help Guatemalans (Mayan Qeqchi communities) to stop Canadian mining companies that clear their land and force their evictions (Rights Action, 860-352-2448, info@rightsaction.org). (Photo @ Grahame Russell, September 2011)

Free the Cuban 5. Online petition campaign to tell President Obama to let René González return to Cuba (www.freethefive.org) and pressure the US government to release the remaining four from prolonged, unjustified imprisonment (www.thecuban5.org).

Books

The Journey of a Tzotzil-Maya Woman of Chiapas, Mexico, co-authored by Christine Eber and "Antonia," a Tzotzil-Maya woman from Chenalho, Chiapas. "Antonia" has been instrumental in founding several weaving cooperatives and in the Zapatista and progressive Catholic movements in highland Chiapas. Royalties will go to "Antonia" to help support her family and continue her work for social justice. \$36.85 if you order directly from the website: <http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/books/ebejou.html>.

Guest Workers and Resistance to U.S. Corporate Despotism, by Immanuel Ness, 2011, 231 pp. \$25, Paperback. Exposes the corporate structures behind exploitative migrant labor programs and shows how worker migration and guest worker programs weaken the power of labor in both sending and receiving countries.

Let Me Speak! A Bolivian Woman Miner's Revolutionary Life, by Domitila Barrios de Chungara. First published in 1978, this is a classic piece of working class oral history. Benjamin Dangl says, "The life experiences of Bolivian mining activist Domitila Barrios de Chungara traverse some of the most important and tumultuous events in 20th century Bolivian history. Her account of this life in this book offers a view from the trenches of militant, leftist organizing within the country labor movements and beyond." Available from: <http://www.akpress.org/2006/items/letmespeak>.

DVD: After I Pick the Fruit, a documentary by Nancy Ghertner. 93 minutes including the credits. Follows the lives of five immigrant farmworker women over a ten-year period as they labor in the apple orchards and fields of rural western New York, migrate seasonally to Florida, raise their families, and try to hide from the Bush-era immigration raids that were conducted in response to 9/11. Filmed in New York, Florida, and Mexico, this intimate, bittersweet, feature-length film illuminates a community that is nearly invisible to most Americans, and will change the way you look at our national 'immigration problem. After I Pick the Fruit will donate the proceeds from DVD sales and speaker awards to support women and their families through projects at FLSNY, WARE, and RMM in upstate NY. <http://www.afterpickthefruit.com/>

Video: The Deadliest Place in the World for a Journalist. Mini-documentary on the Honduran journalists that have watched 15 colleagues assassinated in nineteen months under the Lobo regime. http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=7432

Job Opening: Coordinator of the Honduras Accompaniment Project, based in Honduras, and part of the Friendship Office of the Americas (Jennifer Atlee or Tom Lowden, jennya@friendshipamericas.org.)

Travel

COLOMBIA: 11/11, date tba. (CPT churches delegation: 2/3-13, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, US policy, the conflict zone). (Colombia@presbyterianpeacefellowship.org).

CUBA: 1/14-24 (WP Arts and Culture delegation. 2/4-12 (CGE people and

Politics)

GUATEMALA: 1/7-14 (RA Role of US and Canada in mining, biofuels and militarization.); 1/13-22 (CGE Peace, Justice and the People Who Make It Happen);

HONDURAS and GUATEMALA: 3/10-17 (RA corporate mining and dams vs. the people, 30th anniversary of the Rio Negro massacres).

MEXICO: 6/25-7/3 (CGE 2012 Elections: Democracy and the Fight for Social Justice).

Please visit websites of organizations below to find current list of delegations.

CODES:

AGJ: Alliance for Global Justice, 202-544-9355, afgj@afgj.org, www.afgj.org.

BL: BorderLinks, 520-628-8263, education@borderlinks.org, www.borderlinks.org.

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

CISPES: Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. www.cispes.org; rebecca@cispes.org.

CPT: Christian Peacemaker Teams, PO Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680. 773-277-0291, delegations@cpt.org, www.cpt.org.

FS: Food Sovereignty. Tanya at tkerssen@foodfirst.org; (510) 654-4400, ext. 223

GATE: Global Awareness Through Experience. 608-791-5283 or www.gate-travel.org.

GX: Global Exchange. 415.255.7296. <http://globalexchange.org/countries/americas>.

RA: Rights Action, www.info@rightsaction.org.

SOAW: School of the Americas Watch. 202-234-3440; www.soaw.org/delegations.

WP: Witness for Peace. 202-547-6112. www.witnessforpeace.org.

TFA: Task Force of the Americas. 415-924-3227, www.mitfamericas.org.

Movement News In Brief

El Salvador



Colombia's police are training Salvadorans in law enforcement at the US-funded ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy) in San Salvador. They also will train police and attorneys general from Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala. US instructors are from the FBI and DEA. This tactic is based on the MERIDA Initiative in Mexico (CISPES Update 9/16/11).

Fourteen defendants from the Mexican army were indicted on 5/11 by Spanish Judge Eloy Velasco for their roles in the Jesuit massacre of 1989. El Salvador's Ministry of Defense has accepted this as an internal arrest (Center for Justice and Accountability. San Francisco, 8/15/11).

President Funes has proposed a tax on the wealthy and on corporations to fund national security programs.

Chile: On 8/9/11 over 100,000 students struck and demonstrated in the streets of Santiago, demanding free education for all. 273 were arrested. (Censa – New America Media, 8/13/11).

Nicaragua: On 7/20/11, the 32nd anniversary of the Sandinista revolution, President Ortega proposed a referendum on whether to demand \$1.7 billion from the US for its role in the civil war. In 1986 the International Court of Justice ruled that the US had violated the law and should pay (but no fixed amount). The presidential election is to be held on November 6.

Bolivia: The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, welcomed an historic decision by the top court in Bolivia to convict two former ministers and five senior military officers...in the deaths of 69 people during demonstrations against a government plan to build a gas pipeline through El Alto, near La Paz.

Bolivia's then president Sanchez and two of their ministers fled to the US and are the subject of extradition requests. Navi Pillay said, "I hope this trend continues," and she cited recent developments in Argentina, Uruguay, Guatemala and Colombia as examples:

In Argentina, by the end of 2010, 110 people – mostly military and police – had been convicted for their roles in human rights violations during the 1976-83 military dictatorship.

In Uruguay, on June 27, President Jose Mujica passed a decree which allows for the reopening of some 80 cases involving the violation of human rights during the 1973-85 dictatorship.

In Guatemala, on August 2, four former military officers were given lengthy prison sentences for 201 cases of murder during the Dos Erres massacre in December 1982.

In Colombia, in June 2010, a senior army officer was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the disappearance of 11 people in November 1985, after military forces stormed the Supreme court Building where guerrillas were holding hundreds of hostages. Over 100 people died as a result.

Cuba:

At 4:30 am on October 14 René González, one of the Cuban 5, was freed from the Marianna, Florida, prison, although he is required to remain in the United States under the control of supervised release for three years.

IFCO in NYC reported success of the 22nd Friendshipment to break the US embargo/blockade of Cuba. Of the 100 tons of aid (seven school buses, a car, solar panels and medicines) the US confiscated only seven computers (IFCO 7/21/11). IFCO has replaced the late Rev. Lucius Walker with Co-Directors Ms Gail Walker and the Rev. Luis Barrios.

US:

69 members of Congress have asked President Obama to shut down the School of the Americas/Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. (SOA Watch 8/11/11).

The US government has dropped its case against the "White House 15" who conducted a "die-in" on the White House sidewalk during the April Days of Action, demanding closure of the SOA.

Roberta E. Jacobson is President Obama's nominee for Asst. Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, replacing Arturo Valenzuela. She previously served as Deputy Asst. Sec. Of State for Canada, Mexico and NAFTA.

On 10/6/11 Chuck Kaufman, Co-Director of the Alliance for Global Justice (AfGJ), announced that, "on the eve of a major anti-war protest [the Anti-War Occupation of Liberty Plaza] and in the midst of its support for the Occupy Wall Street protests, the AfGJ has endured sabotage on its internet and phone connections, as well as its system to receive donations." The repairman said that the wire providing service to the office had been physically disconnected at the junction box (the external control box that serves various homes and businesses in the neighborhood). AfGJ has since secured release of the money donated to organizations housed there for Occupy DC.

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