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Uribe's new offensive Colombian election



A Colombian soldier oversees a group of civillian 'eradicators' as part of Operation Colombia Verde

Airforce bombs La Macarena national park

Irene Dedo

he Colombian air force started bombing the Natural Reserve of Sierra de La Macarena, in the Meta department on 16 February, despite the presence of 11,000 civilians in the park. President Alvaro Uribe Vélez personally gave the order to bomb the park in response to two attacks by the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) that killed twelve policemen protecting contractors employed to manually eradicate coca fields in the zone.

The armed forces targeting of La Macarena is part of the Patriot Plan, a military effort designed to annihilate the guerrilla movement disregarding all

humanitarian considerations. On 27 December the FARC guerrillas had killed 29 soldiers. With mounting losses jeopardising a key operation, the government has reacted ruthlessly.

Launched in 2003 as an extension of Plan Colombia, the Patriot Plan is the military strategy, aimed at crushing any left wing opposition, of the 'democratic security' doctrine, implemented by Uribe with the support of the United States. The other two hinges on which the doctrine is based are the political one, that translates into the centralisation of power and the institutional reforms necessary to retain it; and the economic one, the Free Trade Agreement, recently ratified in Washington.

The US has provided training, high-tech equipment and thousands of staff for the Patriot Plan, investing about \$ 2 billion in the last three years. Although it is officially said that it supplies logistic assistance, it is the first time that the US is so

involved in the Colombian counterinsurgency war. Central to the Plan's aim to regain military control over target areas, is the physical dismantling of rural communities and villages, eliminating the social bases that could provide support to the insurgents, although this is not publicly acknowledge. The plan also provides for fumigation of coca fields, which destroys the entire ecosystem, without proposing an economic alternative to the local campesinos.

As in any military operation, armed forces and political leaders heading the project assured that the bombing would be on specific targets; however the inhabitants have not been evacuated and will suffer enormously from the intensification of the conflict and militarisation of the area that is taking place, risking joining the 4 million internally displaced people.

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results

Arturo García

t the close of this edition of FLA, with 95% of the total votes in the 12 March legislative elections scrutinised, the results show the consolidation of the right with an absolute majority in Congress, composed of the Chamber of Representantives and the Senate of the Republic.

The uribista coalition consists of the Partido de la 'U' and five other parties that are unconditional allies of president Álvaro Uribe, amongst them the traditional Conservative Party. A party called Colombia Viva had recycled some of the candidates previously rejected by other uribista and liberal movements for their presumed links with ultra-right paramilitary groups, managed to anyway win two Senate seats. In all, uribismo took 5.814.000 ballots, 70% of the total vote. With that, should the president be re-elected on 28 May, Congress will approve without problem government initiatives such as signing the Free Trade Agreement with the US and keeping the recently passed 'Justice and Peace' Law. Moreover the uribista majority threatens to block moves to decriminalise abortion and grant homosexuals equality of economic rights that are two proposals currently before Congress.

On the other side, the left wing Polo Democrático Alternativo (PDA) elected Carlos Gaviria Díaz as its official candidate for the presidency. In an internal consultative process Gaviria obtained 53% of the vote, against the 47% for Antonio Navarro Wolf. Navarro Wolf, the ex-chief continued on page 20



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Editorial

Uribe's electoral farce

n the course of many years and many governments in Colombia, the manipulation of the issue of peace to win the elections and to justify the war has been constant. It is a decoy, veiling the eyes of the Colombians and the international community in order to obscure the reality.

Although the FARC and the ELN and guerilla movements are undeniable factors of violence involved in the armed conflict, they are not the only ones, nor the most important. However, this perception has been exploited to the fullest, in an effort to minimise and/or ignore the real causes of the war and to remove the leading players from the theatre of infamy.

Peace is not a decree of good will, nor the quick-fix

reace is not a decree of good will, not the quick-in

negotiation for the temporary surrender or demobilisation of insurgent groups. Peace is above all the result of the full exercise of civil and democratic rights and liberties of a society that actively participates in building the country it desires. Peace is men and women's moral and material dignity, reflected in the fulfilment of their basic needs and access to comprehensive development opportunities. Peace is education, health, employment, shelter. Peace is respect for life and human rights; it is respect for political, cultural and religious diversity and plurality. A truly democratic state guarantees a peaceful society for its citizens, provided it applies the principles of equity and social justice for all.

resident Uribe has manipulated the issue

of peace to get into power, presenting the problem as a simplistic picture, according to which, peace in Colombia is reliant solely on the defeat of the guerrillas. Thus Uribe promised to finish with it within the first six months of government. A few months before the end of his mandate, and many months after the beginning of the Patriot Plan, a fundamental part of Plan Colombia, 17,000 soldiers are still in the south of the country trying to eradicate the FARC. However, the latter is not only still alive, but has struck a serious blow to the government's democratic security policy, increasing its operations throughout the whole of the country.

In an attempt to win the re-election, Mr Uribe wants to show tangible evidence of peace. 15,000 currently demobilised paramilitaries became 26,000 from one day to the next, half of them are supposed to have been disarmed. That is without taking into account other fronts that continue their orgy of death. All this in the name of the Justice and Peace Law, a legal monster, tailor-made for the impunity of the narco-paramilitarism and an implausible affront to the victims, for whom there is no justice nor reparation. This is not only a failure of the government's peace policy, but a crime against humanity that by action or omission, the state is committing against the civil population, an ingredient that deepens and perpetuates the factors of violence.

During his first presidential campaign, the then-candidate Uribe Vélez said that re-election was a "danger to Colombia's democracy"; yet, in the middle of his term, he modified the 1991 Constitution, a change that allowed his immediate re-election. And in that process he showed what he really is: an authoritarian figure who places himself above the law, to further his personal interests. During his campaign he said "the corrupt shall tremble"; yet, in order to obtain the approval for his re-election project, he became the champion of the corrupt and the

most cynical clientelist. He has allocated privileges and jobs in the public administration, embassies and consulates all over the world to the families of the congressmen who supported him.

ith his messianic discourse, aided by the terror sown by the paramilitaries and by the biased information of the official media, he has polarised the country, where political sectarianism and ideological intolerance are reaching unforeseen extremes. One of the main tactics he has used to annihilate his political opponents has been to demonise the opposition, stigmatising the opponents as sympathisers of terrorism. In fact, the right to protest and the social movement have been criminalised. Mass detentions after

which the detainees are released due to lack of evidence, or because the latter was fabricated by the state security bodies or by reward-hunters, have become commonplace. Trade unionists, human rights and leftwing political activists are, in the eyes of the regime, auxiliaries of the guerrilla, a signal that the paramilitaries execute very efficiently, slaughtering and threatening the dissidents or making them disappear. The community of San José de Apartadó is being exterminated because they declared themselves to be neutral in the conflict, refusing to become informants of This is the grim

outlook that the
Government of Álvaro
Uribe Vélez presents
on the eve of an election where there are
no full guarantees

for the opposition candidates and where the government, attempting to perpetuate itself in power, resorts to the most blatant manoeuvres that demolish the rule of law and the democratic process. The possible re-election of Uribe as Colombian president, far from guaranteeing peace to the country, would mean a prolongation and intensification of the internal war. The farce surrounding the "demobilisations" of the paramilitaries confirms this; in fact, according to the last OAS report, the paramilitary structure is intact and continues to show no mercy with the civil population and opponents to the regime.

The popular movements and the political opposition forces continue to resist in front of the official terrorism and Uribe's antidemocratic policies. This is demonstrated by the indigenous struggle for the land and the great mobilisations held last year throughout the country; by the resistance of the Afro-Colombian communities; by the women's movement in defence of life and against the war that robs them of their children and their companions; by the trade union movement which, despite the criminalisation of their struggle and the new labour law that prevents the rights of association and strike through the modality of concentration, keeps on challenging the fast-moving privatisation process and the Free Trade Agreement, through which President Uribe gives up the national sovereignty.

oday, more than ever, Colombian social movements need the international solidarity of the peoples that recognise its just struggles and its indispensable resistance in the face of the United States' interventionist policies, the multinationals' abuses and the undignified submission of a government such as Uribe's. He resembles more a viceroy defending foreign powers' colonial interests, than a leader genuinely concerned for the political, socio-economic development and true democracy in his country.



Jackie Rojas of the OFP speaking in Barrancabermeja

Frontline Latin America Mar-May 2006

Ecuador in border dispute

The bullets and shell casings were falling like hail" was the description of a terrified Ecuadorian, following yet another recent excursion by Colombian warplanes into Ecuadorian airspace.

Ecuadorian television showed the most recent attack on 28 January. Scenes were of Colombian helicopters and warplanes strafing Ecuadorian territory with heavy machine gun fire and people fleeing in panic. The Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Francisco Carrión said the shooting occurred just over the San Miguel River, which marks the border between Colombia and Ecuador and is around 80 metres wide. "That leads us to assume that the aerial attack was intentional and



Map showing Colombia/Ecuador border

knowledge," Carrión said. About a week after the attack, the Colombian Defence Ministry apologised, acknowledging that its aircraft may apologised, have "accidentally" entered Ecuador's airspace in an operation against FARC

 ${f H}$ owever, despite the apology, tempers have not cooled, as Colombian President Uribe added fuel to the fire with his first comments on the incident. Uribe said that "[Ecuador must] stop accommodating these bandits, stop accommodating these terrorists. These terrorists cross into Ecuador, they hide there, against the will of the Ecuadorian government."

In response to Uribe's comments, Ecuador recalled its ambassador from Colombia for consultations.

Colombian government and its armed forces should do something about, and not 'accommodate,' its own citizens who carry out illegal activities in its own territory, in zones where, unfortunately, the Colombian security forces do not exercise effective control.

The incident was the latest and perhaps the most critical of this kind since last April's uprising, which forced former President of Ecuador, Lucio Gutiérrez, to resign and flee the

The interim Government has taken a much more critical stance regarding near-the-border Colombian military operations, which are financed by the US and are essential to Washington's policy toward the Andes.

"Plan Colombia, which is coming

achieved its desired results, and the situation remains as it was before," said Interior Minister Mauricio Gándara last June. Palacio's government has taken a stronger line on aerial herbicide spraying on Colombian cocagrowing areas near the Ecuadorian border, alleging that the fumigations with glyphosate, the poisonous acid used by the Colombian government, is harmful to the health of the local population, animals and crops Ecuador achieved at least a temporary halt to this when, on 16 January , Uribe announced the suspension of coca spraying within 10km of the Ecuadorian border.

The US's most loval ally, President Uribe, is finding himself more and more isolated from his neighbours.

US base in Paraguay could signal covert war on Bolivia

Max Fuller

n July 1 last year, 500 soldiers arrived at the Mariscal Estigarribia base in the north-west of Paraguay, just 200km from the Bolivian border. Although the US government insists that the soldiers are participating in strictly limited joint exercises with the Paraguayan Army, their presence has provoked alarm at the thought that the US intends to establish a long-term presence in the region.

Whilst the base, which includes a runway potentially suitable for B52 bombers and heavy transport planes, is undoubtedly well situated to apply pressure to the Mercosur countries of the Southern Cone (especially Argentina and Brazil), most commentators have focused on the fact that Bolivia's abundant supplies of natural gas are located close to its Paraguayan border.

Significantly, the gas deposits lie in Bolivia's lowland Media Luna region, now home to a vocal and racist separatist movement (Movimiento Nación Camba de Liberación) focused on Santa Cruz. The political movement is closely allied with the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CAINCO), which counts a number of big international energy companies (including until recently Enron) among its members. Even more worryingly, CAINCO receives funding from the US National Endowment for Democracy (NED), essentially a CIA front that has been instrumental in orchestrating the reactionary opposition to the government of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela.

The US has made no secret of its hostility to newly elected Bolivian



B-52 Stratofortress

president Evo Morales and regards Bolivia as a vital battleground for control over South America. While millions of dollars have recently been poured into the Bolivian armed forces, US military bases have themselves served in the past as the hubs of covert action campaigns targeting foreign governments. With NED support for Nación Camba and US troops operating in Paraguay, we could be witnessing the opening gambit in a strategy to break up Bolivia, at the same time securing unfettered US access to its gas reserves.

Colombian police violence claims the life of another student

CSC Delegate in Bogotá

esterday, Thursday 9 March, 20 year old Oscar Salas was hit in the eye during a student protest at the National University Bogotá against the recently-signed free trade agreement between Colombia and the United States. An as yet unidentified object, suspected to have been either a bullet or shrapnel from a dispersal grenade fired directly at students by members of the police's mobile antidisturbance squadron (ESMAD), penetrated his skull and, lunchtime the following day, he had been declared brain dead.

I had arrived in Colombia a week previously and the events following Oscar's murder were depressingly reminiscent of my last few days here in September when, as part of a delegation to Colombian universities, I was present in the University of Valle during a student protest after which ESMAD entered the university and

killed the chemistry student Jhonny Silva. After hearing the news, I went with human rights defenders to show support to Oscar's family at the clinic where he was still clinically alive but on a life support machine so that his organs can be donated, which his family believe would have been his

We spent some time with Oscar's brother and with a friend with whom Oscar had worked at an independent radio station. Later in the afternoon, there was an assembly at the university, where Oscar's father and brother spoke powerfully about the need to campaign against impunity for Oscar's killers, and to follow Oscar's example by keeping up the struggle for peace against state terrorism and

The students then marched to the clinic, carrying flowers and covering their heads Zapatista style to say "we are all Oscar's, that Oscar's murder is not an isolated case but part of a broader policy of state terror not only against students but against peas-



Demonstrators march in solidarity

ants, indigenous people, workers, human rights defenders and anyone protesting against the violent imposition of a neoliberal model of development in Colombia: the privatisation and commodification of public services, the forced displacement of rural communities in favour of agroindustrial megaprojects and the denial of basic rights to the population.

Meanwhile, the students at the University of Valle were on strike in protest at the police's murder of yet another student less then six months after Jhonny Silva was killed. Jhonny's murderers still haven't been brought to justice and the Attorney General's Office has already changed the investigating officer three times. Both students' families have said that they are keen to have solidarity from university communities and activists internationally and have asked us keep up the pressure on the Colombian state.

biasolidarity.org.uk

For more information or get involved, email: universities@colom

Erasing the lines

The extent of US military involve-The extent of US minimum, ment in Colombia is revealed in a recent report.*. The report states that the US trained 1,107 Latin American military personnel in counter-terrorism in 2004, of which nearly half (542) were from Colombia. That year alone 8,756 Colombian military and police received US training in various military subjects (second only to Afghanistan with 12,362 personnel trained). In the past five years the US has trained 37,001 Colombians.

The Leahy Law states that army units involved in human rights violations cannot receive US aid, and yet. "the 18th Brigade in oil-rich Arauca. in the north east of Colombia, the focus of numerous allegations, continues to receive major US assistance."

* Erasing the Lines: Trends in U.S military programmes with Latin

FULL REPORT DOWNLOAD:

http://www.wola.org/publications/ erasing_the_lines_05.pdf News Frontline Latin America Mar-May 2005/06

News Feature Peace laboratories

Europe's Plan Colombia

Gearóid Ó Loingsigh in Colombia

hat is the European Union's game in Colombia? When the Clinton government announced its anti-narcotics strategy, Plan Colombia, many human rights and social organisations spoke out against it, correctly describing it as a military plan that sought to take advantage of an anti-drugs discourse in order to reposition the USA militarily and economically in the continent. Time has proved those critics right.

The European Union (EU) as a whole did not support Plan Colombia due to its high military content. They said that they would carry out social investment in order to strenthen civil society and to support peace building and in line with that, these investments would not form part of the misnamed social component of Plan Colombia. It is presumed that the peace laboratories are that contribution.

But are they really that different to the social component of Plan Colombia? If Plan Colombia through its social projects sought to pacify its critics and at the same time implant production models that prepared the ground for the free trade agreements, what then does the European Union seek with its Peace Laboratories? And what is their role in the Colombian conflict?

It is not easy to unravel the European proposal given that the EU is not that transparent with information beyond generalities about peace, development and welfare etc. The USA was and continues to be more explicit about its plans for the country.

Chris Patten announced the first peace laboratory as a plan to build peace from below; to strengthen the judicial system in Colombia and to help the victims of the conflict, particularly the displaced. However, in the same communiqué Patten points out that the EU has an economic interest in Colombia, with its direct investment amounting to 880 million euros in 1999 alone. But at the same time he announced that large amounts of capital would only enter the country if there was stability.

By May 2003 Patten was much more explicit about the EU's intentions:

"The EU institutions are not the only ones to believe in Colombia. European companies also do. The EU is the leading source of foreign investment in this country, which serves both to demonstrate and to magnify our stake in the search for a negotiated solution to the conflict. We want to do all we can to foster these economic ties."

This pronouncement looks like a communiqué before a round of the WTO or the signing of some commercial agreement and has little to do with its peace proposals. The EU has its own interests in Colombia and its plans are not just the mere benevolence that it tries to feign. It is significant that the EU has a good image in Colombia as a disinterested and benevolent actor (unlike the USA). In some cases the imperialist role of Europe in Africa and Asia is forgotten, in other cases it is ignored. It is a role just as bloody if not more so than that which the USA played and continues to play in Latin America, and it is not history but current.

However, recently the EU has published an evaluation of the first peace laboratory that shines some light on what are the real thoughts of the "benevolent" Europeans. According to sociologist Bettina Reis

"The study of the relevant documents of the Colombian government and the multilateral organisms show us that the design, development and implementation of the so called Peace Laboratories are not that 'originally' European but form part of the integral policy of 'peace and development' shared by the Colombian government, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank (WB) and the EU amongst others."1

The continuity between Plan Colombia and the Peace Laboratories is that they promote the same agricultural development model. In Magdalena Medio the EU promotes the monocultures of African palm, rubber



Gold mining in Colombia

The second secon

The World Bank and the EU are backing the same 'peace laboratory' project in Magdalena Medio with the aim of entrenching export production

and cocoa just as Plan Colombia did and what is more in the exact same areas. The Programme for Development and Peace in Magdalena Medio (PDPMM) is the largest manager of international funds in the region which gives it huge political and economic power.

Perhaps the most complete public document about the peace laboratories is the evaluation report about the first peace laboratory. There are three topics of interest, African palm, mining and the so called peace process with the paramilitaries.

African palm

The EU evaluation report promotes African palm in the same way as Plan Colombia and USAID:

"It is difficult for the peasant economy to provide a sufficient economic base to meet the needs of the majority of the rural population. Especially in as far as market prices are concerned the problems that the Programme [PDPMM] has had in supporting traditional peasant food crops (manioc, corn, etc.) show that the development of the peasant economy is difficult to base on efforts aimed at just the traditional peasant crops. From that flows that the production of leader crops with a relatively high valued added (for example, African palm, cocoa, rubber) in association is considered by the Programme as an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and marginalisation of many farmers in the region." 2

The EU completely ignores an important factor in the crisis of the peasant sector which is the free-trade policy. The EU is not worried much by the threat to the food sovereignty of Colombia as they are also a destination for exotic products such as palm oil. In fact Great Britain consumes half of the Colombian exports of this product. When a peasant tries to satisfy his/her needs s/he does not do so in the same conditions as the large landowner or the multinational company. S/he receives less credit and fewer subsidies from the state. Small scale producers received barely 6% of state aid to agriculture in 2004. The Colombian peasant is not inefficient, s/he simply does not receive the same credits, tax breaks etc. as the large landowners. Also when s/he tries to compete with the foreign imports

s/he is not able to do so; s/he has to compete with huge subsidies received from the USA and EU by the large companies such as Cargill.

The other part of the peace laboratories is related to what is termed associative work. This model has expanded throughout Colombia where workers associate in small cooperatives and work as a small company but they are the ones who take charge of all of the costs, social security, uniforms, tools etc. and not the boss who limits himself to contract them for hours or piece work. With the peasants, they produce for the companies under contracts where they assume all costs of production but with contractual obligations that turn them into a poorly paid employee on their own land.3 In effect the companies become the real owners of the land or at least its permanent beneficiaries.

his model is backed by the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank which praises the model and particularly the company INDUPALMA in San Alberto where the trade union was broken in the 1990s, a process which ended with the murder of trade union leaders in the midst of negotiations.

Associated work is now the policy of the Colombian state and also of the paramilitaries. In Chocó where the paramilitaries have expelled the black communities from their collectively owned lands, they proposed a strategic alliance between the paramilitary "businessmen" and the displaced. Faced with the negative response of the communities the state opted to legalise the theft of lands by the paramilitaries. In the context of the Magdalena Medio, Álvaro Uribe said in 2001 "If we are going to set up in Barrancabermeja an associated peasant company, we should demand of those beneficiaries that they must integrate into an efficient company in San Alberto in order that associated peasants and businessmen with a tradition of efficiency vouch for the good fortune of those projects." 4 The reference to San Alberto is not fortuitous, it is an area of African palm and is dominated by the paramilitaries where various trade union leaders of palm oil companies such as INDUPALMA have been murdered.

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3.7m Displaced Colombians

Millions forced to leave homes due to conflict

Alfredo Molano Bravo in Colombia

olombian cities have long been facing invasion from people who kill, mutilate and shoot to infuse terror into the community. This is the harsh reality that millions of displaced Colombians face. But despite their awareness, the Colombian authorities choose to remain silent.

The people that have invaded the old cities enjoy protection, basic services and impunity for all their crimes. The government have distributed a leaflet declaring the situation harmless, and people should not worry about it as it has been much worse in Africa.

The Episcopal Conference of Colombia and the Human Rights and Displacement Bureau recently published a report on forced displacement between 1995 and 2005. It stated: "The number of persons, families, communities and social sectors that have been forced to abandon their regular place of residence or work has increased exponentially." During the last decade, 9.1% of Colombians have been displaced, equating to 3,662,642 people and a humanitarian crisis.

Armed conflict is a huge factor in displacement. Paramilitary and guerrilla groups are the main driving force expelling the population, as 87% of the municipalities in Colombia are affected by displacement. Antioquia, Caqueta and Bolivar are the departments most hit. Between 60-80% of inhabitants in towns such as Pewue, Coloso or Bojaya have been displaced.



A young Colombian girl, displaced by the conflict in Arauca

Andy Dockett

The displaced are the poorest people of each region. They earn less than 50,000 pesos per month, have attended school for less than three years. Once displaced, more than 50% of these people are not covered for health services and education, and their diet is insufficient and inadequate. A survey conducted by CODHES (Human Rights Bureau) shows 32% of the displaced are unemployed and without accommodation.

Forced displacement is classified as a crime against humanity and a crime of war. However, it is humanity that has the power to rectify the situation. The National Government, by law, must keep a register of the displaced people, and in order to retain the body Sistema Unico de Registro (SUR).

Unsurprisingly, the data from SUR and the independent study differ. According to SUR only 1,716,662 people have been displaced in the last

decade. The official figure would be enough to withdraw powers from the State that justifies its existence.

The Colombian government will overcome this situation unravelling a methodological controversy about statistical models, instead of abiding by the famous sentence from the Constitutional Court (T-25 of 2004), which declared the situation unconstitutional and the government ignorant of their rights regarding the displaced.

Human Rights

USO unionist assassinated

On 2 March in Barrancabermeja, 43-year-old Hector Diaz Serrano, member of the oil workers union USO, was shot dead while waiting at a bus stop. He had been working for Ecopetrol, the national oil company, for 11 years in the Casabe oil field. The murder took place just hours after the publication in the *Vanguardia* Liberal newspaper of death threats directed towards trade unionists and candidates in the upcoming elections who are members of the CUT, ASTDEMP, USITRAS, USO and the Metropolitan coordination of Displaced People.

United Nations condemn Antioquia massacre

Despite the "demobilisation" of the North Eastern Block, the UN condemned the massacre carried out by paramilitaries on 11 February, where the victims were 6 *campesino* members of the Bedoya family. Another member of the family had been assassinated on 16 July 2005.

Assassination of a teacher in Cauca

Guillermo Zamanate Bermeo, who worked in the teaching establishment "El Tunel", Cajibio municipality, has been killed. He disappeared inexplicably on 14 February 2006 and was found dead on 23 February, in the municipality of Popayán. This teacher had fought hard to defend state sector education.

Community leader murdered in Saravena

On 4 February 2006, community leader Alirio Sepúlveda Jaimes was assassinated in the municipality of Saravena-Arauca by a hitman who accompanies army battallion Gabriel Pizarro de Saravena on a permanent

The situation of Human Rights Defenders in Colombia

From November 2005 to January 2006, seven human rights defenders were assassinated in the regions of Meta, Putumayo, Santander and Valle. Three human rights activists disappeared, nine other people, among them union leaders, peasants, teachers, indigenous people and women's associations members and community leaders were detained and 22 received death threats, intimidations and other aggressions.

Colombian Army kills member of the San José de Apartadó peace community

On 12 January 2006, the national army murdered 53-year-old Edilberto Vasquez Cardona, member of the humanitarian zone of Arenas Altas. Edilberto was the first leader of the humanitarian zone, preceding Arlen, who was also killed by the army. At the same time, the army then shot at another house about 150 metres from where they killed Edilberto. Two members of the community were in the house, but managed to escape the gunfire and grenades thrown by the soldiers.

Death threats against SINALTRAINAL leader

On 4 February, Plutarco
Vargas Roldán, leader of
SINALTRAINAL Bogotá branch and
a worker at the Coca-Cola bottling
factory, received a message threatening him and his family pushed under
the door of his house.

Soldiers given a hard lesson in torture

Olaya García

On 19 February, the Colombian magazine Semana published the photographs and testimonies of 21 soldiers from a military centre in the department of Tolima -Southwest Bogotá-, who had been tortured by their own colleagues and superiors. The outrageous events took place on 25 January, during 'simulation games' in which the soldiers learn how to escape from guerrilla groups and what to do if they fall hostage to them. The losers - all soldiers from poor families - suffered all sorts of vexations such as being burnt, brutal beatings, sexual abuse and forced drowning tests by the 'enemy'.

The scandal provoked repudiation among Colombians, while officials in Tolima claimed that "all our generals have gone through this, that is the way we get trained".

Questions have been raised as to what military training, exactly, -undoubtedly in contravention of International Human Rights Law-soldiers are receiving in Colombia, and for what purposes.

The polemic is served for President Uribe, who tried to quick-fix the situation by sacking the head of the Army, General Reynaldo Castellanos. Some offficials accused Uribe of taking action only for electoral purposes.

While several subofficials are under investigation in Tolima, President Uribe has placed a good friend of his, General Mario Montoya Uribe, as the new Army Chief, in command of 226 thousand men. His known close links with the US derive from his two years administering the resources

of Plan Colombia - sponsored by the USA -, now replaced with Plan Patriota. Montoya was appointed as Commander of the Fourth Brigade in Antioquia. 'Interestingly', his time in that province coincided, with a strong paramilitary expansion in the area. In 2005, Montova commanded a division of the army responsible for the massacre of six people -including three children- in the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó. Yet perhaps, the most polemic case was that of Bojayá in 2002. Human rights organisations such as Human Rights Watch, the UN Office for the High Commisioner on Human Rights, the Diocese of Quibdó and the Office of the Ombudsman denounced then to the Attorney's Office that the Army, under command of General Montoya, had not paid attention to the alerts sent some days

earlier, by the people of Bojayá about a possible confrontation between the guerrillas and the paramilitaries. The combats killed 119 people who had sought refuge in a church.

Following the current case of tortures to soldiers, it is worrying to think what victims might face in Colombia at the hands of an army whose superiors are trained at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation -formerly known as School of the Americas-, a combat training school located at Fort Benning, Georgia, US. Horrendous techniques learnt at that institution were used across Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s. It appears that perhaps, we have not yet seen the end of Guantanamos and Abu Grahibs and equally concerning is that torture practices are now turning to the poor ranks of the army.

Sixteen Kankuamos released for lack of evidence

Ivana Dada

After being detained for more than a year on the charge of rebellion, on 16 December 2005 in Valledupar, Sierra Nevada, sixteen Kankuamo indigenous people were released, as the Attorney's General Office failed to provide solid evidence. The men and women released, who included Hermes Basilio Aria Rodríguez, the Kankuamo Indigenous Organisation council coordinator, had been accused of rebellion and stigmatised as "guerrilla militants", for simply

taking part in organising their communities. Many of the groups have been displaced by the paramilitaries who, with the tacit consent of the authorities, seek to gain strategic control over the access to the whole of the Sierra Nevada area.

In spite of the provisional measures recommended by the Interamerican Human Rights Court to the Colombian Government for the protection of the Kankuamo people, more than 250 members of the group were killed in the last four years. The Indigenous National Organisation of Colombia

(ONIC), has denounced the responsibility of the Uribe government accommodating attitude towards the paramilitary groups, and the increased impunity of their crimes, is leading to the annihilation of the Kankuamo people and its culture.

This native group has been fighting over the past 20 years in order to see its rights over the land, political autonomy and culture recognised. Eighteen members of the community are still detained in conditions described as "subhuman" by an international observer commission. One

of the detainees, Gabriel Alvarado "Turbay", 64 years old, died while in detention, as the prison authorities failed to provide adequate medical assistance.

With acknowledgment to RedHermandad (Sisterhood and Solidarity Network) and FCSPP

LINKS:

e-mail: redher@redcolombia.org http://www.redher.org fcspp@colnodo.apc.org



EZLN

Debbie Jack

n 5 February, 1000 people marched in Tuxtepec, Mexico as part of the Zapatistas 'Otra Campaña'. The Zapatistas are currently touring

towns and cities in Mexico as part of their new campaign to build an anti capitalist Mexico. So far They have had huge audiences in the states of Chiapas, The Yucatan and Veracruz, and lots of

Other Campaign

Subcomandante Marcos (pictured asbove), newly re-baptised "Delegate Zero", started his motorbike trip throughout Mexico to promote the Other Campaign.

[The EZLN will] "...not to try to resolve from above the problems of our Nation, but to build FROM BELOW AND FOR BELOW an alternative to neoliberal destruction, an alternative of the left for Mexico." (Taken from the VI declaration of the Selva Lacandona, proclaimed by the EZLN in June 2005.)

publicity around the country.

In Tuxtepec Marcos spoke about the extreme poverty in Mexico and the increasing gap between rich and poor. He spoke of the wealth that Mexico has especially in states like Chiapas, where poverty is also at its worst and of the corruption of the political parties who are now gearing up for this years general election in July. Marcos firmly stated that the Zapatistas would not stand in the election or show any support for the main politicians or parties who have done nothing for Indigenous people, or any other sections in Mexico, apart of course from the rich and powerful.

Before the speech in the town centre, Marcos met with local people in the Indigenous centre and afterwards spoke to members of the Electricians union.

Local people spoke of the lack of opportunities in the town. For young people there are no colleges or universities nearby, their is little work for the majority and the work there is in packing factories for multinational companies where the pay and conditions are terrible

The Zapatistas are currently in the state of Oaxaca where the majority of people are Indigenous, but will then take to the north where traditionally they haven't had much support, then will finish their tour in Mexico city.

Bachelet victorious in Chile

Victor Figueroa and Marcela Navarette

in Santiago de Chile

he election of Michelle Bachelet as President of Chile on January 15th has seen the continuation of the leftward shift in Latin American politics begun with the election of Chavez in 1998.

Bachelet's election is notable on several levels. She is Chile's first female president, no mean achievement in a country still dogged by machismo. She is also a socialist perceived as coming from the old left of that party, whereas the previous presidents, since the return to democracy, have if anything represented the centre-right. Bachelet is the daughter of a general assassinated during the early years of Pinochet's dictatorship and was imprisoned together with her mother in the notorious Villa Grimaldi torture centre, before being exiled to East Germany. Bachelet comes across as a sincere and committed politician who will bring a new style of leadership to a country obsessed with image.

Her election marks a fourth consecutive victory for the Concertación coalition, an alliance between the centrist Christian Democratic Party and the Socialist party together with other minor parties. However, despite being seen abroad as a left wing coalition their policies have not reflected this. The Concertación has been constrained by the constitutional legacy and the neoliberal economic system of the Pinochet regime. Together these factors have created long term economic growth whilst fomenting increasing levels of income



Newly elected president of Chile Michelle Bachelet on a recent visit to the US

inequality.

Due to the efforts of the extraparliamentary left in highlighting this fact, the electoral campaign was dominated by the issue of social justice and inequality, and there is widespread expectation that Bachelet's government will be different to the previous Concertación governments. However, her Christian Democrat allies may not be enthusiastic in supporting any radical change. The overall orientation of the economy will likely remain the same (Chile has free trade agreements with some 20 countries) although there may be greater investment in some public services. In international terms, although it does not seem likely that Chile will abandon its strategic alliance with the United States, her government may well be one with markedly improved relations with the rest of the continent due to her political sympathy towards neighbouring left leaning leaders and the reality of Chile's energy dependence on them.

Bachelet's election comes at a time of change in Chile, after sixteen years people are becoming impatient for substantial reforms and Bachelet has promised to carry out many, starting with the electoral system which keeps a substantial portion of the left out of Congress. However, it is highly unlikely that she will obtain sufficient votes from her allies to push through reforms. Thus, it is most likely that her reforms will not tackle the sources of Chile's social and political problems.

"Fighting for work and dignity for all"

Irene Dedo

n 15 January 2006 members of the Sugar Workers Union of Artigas (UTAA), Worker Syndicate of Calnu (SOCA), Small Farmers of Bella Unión (APAARBU) and workers associations UNATRA-PIT-CNT, occupied an area of 36 hectares in Bella Unión, in the northern region of Artigas, Uruguay.

Having exhausted all instances of dialogue and having received only empty promises by governmental institutions, the "Peludos", as the sugar cane field workers in the area began to call themselves during the protests in the 1960s and 70s, resorted to land occupation in order to put an end to the condition of extreme poverty they find themselves in.



ccupying the land

Indvmedia Uruguav

In the area of Bella Unión the working opportunities and conditions of the small farmers/peasants have recently deteriorated: of the 9.000 hectares that were once cultivated with sugar cane, only 3.000 are left: of the 450 producers operating in the area, only 124 are still doing so. The land has been bought by a small group of land owners and speculators who are now trying to resell it at a price twelve times higher, that the majority of the peasants cannot afford. The working months for seasonal agricultural and agro-industrial workers have been reduced from seven to two and the average salary has fallen by 50 %. The level of unemployment reaches 80%.

Poverty and hunger are spreading over the small communities populating the area. The families of "Las Láminas", "El farolito", "Las Malvinas", "La aguja" had to sell everything they had in order to buy food. "In such desperate situation, only the land can save us", they say.

The Peludos' legitimate demand is to be able to work every day in order to provide health and food to their families, build their houses and educate their children. The land occupation in Bella Unión represents the beginning of a struggle to defend their rights to work the land. They call upon the people of Uruguay to fight for "work and dignity for all".

WWW

LINKS:

http://www.caxtierra.blogia.com/ http://www.redher.org Please send your messages of support for the occupying farmers to caxtierra@adinet.com.uy

Ecuador: The Kichwa demand what is theirs

Irene Dedo

The Kichwa people of Ecuador demanded the nationalisation of oil and threatened interim president Alfredo Palacio, saying that there would be "deplorable consequences," should he not expel US oil company Oxy, which is currently under trial for having violated the Ecuadorean Hydrocarbons Law.

The indigenous movement claims the recuperation and the political control of the oil industry by the state. Their proposal aims to compensate communities that have been affected by the oil exploitation in the Amazon.

"All the transnational companies have abused our Amazon; they have entered illegitimately and changed many things that are significant for the indigenous peoples."

The Kichwas claim that Occidental Company's (Oxy) contract has expired, due to the alleged illegal sale of shares to a Canadian firm.

Iván Rodriguez, Energy and Mining Minister, is expected to issue a ruling on the continuity of Oxy's contract within the pert few days

contract within the next few days.

Last week in the province of Napo.

a general strike was organised to demand drinkable water and oil resources. Some people boycotted the oil pipelines and facilities, causing an export suspension for 24 hours and an "increase in the barrel price," as reported by international press agencies. Petrol is the main export from Ecuador. For every day of stoppage, Ecuador loses about \$13 million.

The government responded by declaring a state of emergency and with the militarization of the region. As a result of the violent police repression, a 19 years-old-boy died, 34 people were injured and 12 people

disappeared. Many people were detained. Pedro Arévalo, a journalist, was tortured. The armed forces conducted massive raids in the town of Tena, seizing the population's food provisions. The inhabitants asked the Red Cross and the "Civil Defence" to negotiate with the military for the return of the food.

Human Rights defenders of the APDH (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights), were not allowed to enter the town of Baeza, next to the oil fields, which is under control of the army.

ction tim

MEHICO

Election: President Current President: Vicente Fox (PAN)

The main candidates are: former Mexico City mayor Manuel Andrés Lopez Obrador, of centre-left Democratic Revolution Party (PRD), representing the coalition "Por el bien de todos", with strong support amongst by the country's urban poor. Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, of the conservative National Action Party (PAN), who is likely to follow Mr. Fox's economic policies and servile relationship with the U.S; Roberto Madrazo Pintado of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), a right wing party in power for 7 decades before Mr. Fox's victory in 2000.Mr Obrador campaigning on the promotion of social policies

and recognition of indigenous rights, is slightly ahead in the opinion polls.

HONDURAS

Elected: President and Congress New President: 🔾 losé Manuel Zelaya (Liberal Party) from the centre-right José Manuel Zelaya Liberal Party took office on 27 January 2006.a strong supporter of the CAFTA and pro-free market policies

NICARAGUA

5 November 2006 Elections: President and congress

Current president: Enrique Bolanos (Constitutional Liberal Party-PLC)

President Bolaños, of US-backed Liberal Party has lost much of his power base in the national assembly. Disillusionment with the current president's policies was evident in 2004 when 80% of the municipalities elected a Sandinista mayor.

W HRILI

7 February 2006 Elected: President and Parliament New President:

René Préval, (Lepswa Movement) Elections took place under the auspices of the United Nations mission (MINUSTAH), Lepswa movement candidate, René Préval was elected with 51.15% after a recount of the ballots due electoral fraud. President between 1996 and 2001 and ex prime minister in the government of ousted Jean Bertrand Aristide (Lavalas Party).

COLOMBIA

Elections: President and Congress

Current President: Álvaro Uribe Vélez 👩 (See page 2)

VENEZUELA

ovember/December 2006 Elections: President **Current President:** Hugo Chavez The President Chavez popularity has been confirmed by a referendum in 2005. Under Chavez's "Socialism of the

21st century", Venezuela's influence on Latin America has broadened significantly, through the promotion of continent-wide initiatives such as ALBA (Bolivarian Alternative

for Latin America), Petrocaribe and Telesur.

GUYANA

between March and August 2006 Elections President Current President: Bharrat Jagdeo (PPP)

BRAZIL

1 October 2006 **Elections:** President and Congress

Current President: Luis Ignacio Lula da Silva (Workers Party-PT)

Following a fall in his popularity, due to corruption scandals involving the PT and disillusionment among the working classes and the landless movement, President Lula is now again leading the race. The opposition candidates are Brasilian Socialdemocracy Party (PSDB) José Serra

and Geraldo Alkim, São Paulo mayor and São Paulo State governor respectively, both of whom express the interests of powerful São Paulo industrial and financial bourgeoisie.

Elected: President and Congress

New President:

Michelle Bachelet (Concertación coalition) Michelle Bachelet, a socialist from centre-left coalition "Concertación", won in the run-off ballot with a 53% share of the vote, Her campaign was based on education reform, rights of working mothers and labour laws reforms. (See page 6)

COSLA RICA

5 February 2006 Elections: President Current President:

Abel Pacheco, Social Christian Unity Party after three weeks of recounting the ballots a new president has still been not declared, as hundreds of legal complains about irregularities have been filed. Oscar Arias from the National Liberation Party (President 1986-1990)seems to be ahead of his rival Ottón Solís, from the Citizen's Action Party,..

ECUADOR

October 2006

Elections: President and Congress

Current President:

Alfredo Palacio (interim) The two candidates leading the race in the presidential election are: Socialist Party candidate León Roldos Aguilera, who is slightly ahead in the polls, and Christian Social Party leader Jaime Nebot. Alfredo Palacio took office as interim president after left leaning Lucio Gutierrez, was ousted in April 2005.

PERU

9 April 2006 Elections: President Current President:

Alejandro Toldeo (Peru Posible)

The most popular candidate is Ollanta Humala, a former military rebel and leader of the Nationalist Peruvian Party, His campaign has been dented by allegations of human rights abuses during his military career. The other main candidates are: Lourdes Flores, leader of right wing conservative National Unity party; former left wing president Alan García (APRA), Valentín Paniagua (acting president after Fujimori); Rafael Belaúnde (Perú Posible).

BOLIVIA

15 December 2005

Elections: President and Congress

New President: @ Evo Morale (MAS)

Ex leader of coca leaf farmers, Aymara Indian Evo Morales won a 54% of vote, leading the Movement to Socialism(MAS) to government. During his first weeks in power he launched campaign against corruption, halved the his salary and Cancelled Government private expenses...

(See pages 12-13)

Coke Boycott Frontline Latin America Mar-May 2006

BOYCO TICOCA-COLAL



Coca-Cola can't hold a torch to the Italian boycott

Irene Dedo

nder the slogan "Coca Cola sponsor of the Winter Olympics and the Colombian death squads", 61 demonstrations were organised by Reboc (Rete Boicotaggio Coca Cola), the local network of groups supporting the boycott, as the Olympic torch journeyed through Italy.

The peaceful and colourful protests against Coke drew the attention of the national and international media. raising awareness of the abuses this multinational is responsible for. Along the route, thousands of people booed the torch, a symbol of peace manipulated by multinational companies. Banners reading "The torch runs on blood", "Peace Olympics or War Games?" and "Coca Cola murderer" accompanied the flame on its way to Turin. In many towns the Olympic convoy was delayed or was forced to change itinerary due to demonstrators blocking the streets. In the town of Trento a group of four "disobbedienti" (disobedients) managed to snatch the torch from the hand of the torch bearer for few a minutes. The protests were watched by a heavy police presence, who, on some occasions, as happened in Milan, repressed the demonstrations violently, by beating the protesters with clubs. In Bologna the torch-bearer ran between two lines of policemen.

n the Val di Susa area, the Coke demonstration was joined by a protest against the construction of a High Speed Train (TAV) railway that would be harmful to the environment and detrimental to both the economy and the health of the local population.

The Olympic Organising Committee's efforts to hide any form of criticism towards their sponsors did not have much success.

"It has been the greatest mobilisation against a multinational ever organised in our country", the committee of Reboc said. "We have made the reluctant national newspapers talk about what is happening in Colombia, and the international press has registered without difficulties the advertising mega-operation failure and the success of the protests."

But Reboc had already registerer successes in November, when Rome

X and XI councils presidents Sandro Medici and Massimiliano Smeriglio opposed the passage of the Olympic torch through the streets of their councils unless Coca Cola would allow an independent delegation to investigate the condition of the Colombian workers as well as the abuses denounced by SINANTRAINAL in their plants.

Through negotiations, mediated by Rome mayor Walter Veltroni, the Atlanta-based company agreed to the inspection of their plants by an Italian delegation. Massimiliano Smeriglio defined the achievement as "a global success". The investigation will be carried out in March by a commission formed of representatives of the Lazio region, Rome XI council, trade unions activists from FIM CISL FION and COBAS Confederation, Reboc delegates, Europarliamentarians, Jurists Democratic association members, Rome council's ethical commission, representatives of organisations supporting ethical trade and other groups.

n 10 February various antineoliberal groups – university students protesting against the education reform launched by the right wing government, no-TAV supporters, Coke boycotters, trade unionists and a group of FIAT workers made redundant – participated in the conclusive demonstration held in Turin city centre. Meanwhile from home, people could take part in the netstrike, launched by the boycott network.

Reboc said to be satisfied with the progresses of the campaign. "Civil society in Italy too", they said, "has understood that it is everyone's task to stem the multinationals' excessive power, whose activity cannot be checked and regulated by state laws, nor by trade unions' traditional action."

But the work is not over yet. The next objective is to collect 25,000 signatures which will be presented to Coca Cola by the delegation. Reboc invites the public to sign online and show their support for the boycott.

LINKS:

www.nococacola.info www.killercola.org

Classic Coke

Another move by Coke to deny and delay accountability for human rights violations in Colombia

Terry Collingsworth In the US

oca-Cola and its ally, the International Union of Food Workers (IUF), have announced that they will jointly "request" the International

Labor Organization (ILO) to conduct an

investigation of Coca-Cola's operations in Colombia. To the uninformed, this might appear to be progress towards an independent investigation of Coca-Cola's complicity in violence against trade union leaders at its bottling plants in Colombia. Since 1996, eight leaders of SINALTRAINAL, the independent union of food and beverage plant workers in Colombia, have been murdered in connection with their union activities at Coca-Cola bottling plants, and countless others have been threatened with death and otherwise tortured.

A recent independent investigation into the alleged human rights abuses at Coke's bottling plants in Colombia, led by New York City Councilman Hiram Monserrate, verified 179 separate human rights abuses at Coke bottling plants in Colombia. This same investigation found that there were credible allegations that paramilitaries carrying out violence against unionists at Coke bottling plants did so "with the knowledge of and likely under the direction of company managers."

SINALTRAINAL and 6 individual victims of violence initiated a lawsuit against Coca-Cola and its Colombian bottlers based on the Alien Tort Statute and the Torture VictimsProtection Act. The case is pending in federal court in Miami.

The story about Coke's latest ploy to obtain a favorable investigation is not complicated; these are the objective, verifiable facts:

- ◆ Coca-Cola is reeling from its legacy of violence in Colombia. Over 23 U.S. universities, including the University of Michigan, New York University and Rutgers University have cancelled or suspended Coca-Cola's supply contracts, costing the company millions of dollars in previously guaranteed revenues from the exclusive supplier contracts, but also, and more important, countless students say they will not drink Coke beverages, there by breaking the cycle of consumption of this optional product that is tainted with the blood f Colombian workers.
- Coca-Cola, following the corporate playbook, first denied any responsibility for its own bottlers in Colombia, asserting that these offshore companies are independent. But that did not pass the straight face test with the public as everyone knows these companiesexist exclusively to bottle and distribute Coca-Cola products, and Coca-Cola has complete control over its bottling plants.
- Coca-Cola then selected and paid for an "audit" of its Colombian facilities by Cal Safety, a company of dubious origins that even Wal-Mart conceded was not up to the task of performing an independent audit. Cal Safety issued a report exonerating Coca-Cola, but did not even attempt to visit the Coca-Cola facilities in Colombia where the greatest problems were, including the Carepa plant where Isidro Gil was murdered by paramilitaries invited into the Coca-Cola bottling plant by the manager of the facility.
 Coca-Cola, through its newly-hired Director of Global
- Labor Relations, Ed Potter, then created a "Commission" consisting of representatives of major universities and prominent worker rights advocacy organizations, including the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), the Solidarity Center, and United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS). The Commission was tasked with developing a methodology for conducting an independent investigation of Coca-Cola's complicity with the paramilitaries in Colombia that have targeted for violence the leaders of SINALTRAINAL who were organizing Coca-Cola bottling plants. When the Commission actually asserted its independence by kicking Mr. Potter out of the group so that it could indeed be independent from the company, Coca-Cola backed away from the Commission and began creating reasons to delay and obstruct the commission's work. Ultimately, Mr. Potter's clever idea was to insist that the attorneys for SINALTRAINAL and the individual victims of violence agree that any findings of the Commission, as well as any evidence uncovered by the Commission, could not be used in the court case. Because this demand would require them

to violate the rules of legal ethics, something Mr. Potter knew, the lawyers refused this demand.

- Now, Mr. Potter and his colleagues have a new, clever plan they announce that they will "request" that the ILO do the "independent" investigation. Well, we should immediately suspect that something is up because Mr. Potter has not asked SINALTRAINAL's lawyers to agree that the ILO's findings be excluded from court, when he insisted that Coca-Cola could not participate in the Commission's study unlessits findings were buried. What does Coca-Cola and Ed Potter know that you don't?
- Ed Potter has been the U.S. employer representative to the ILO for atleast 15 years and holds that position today.

The U.S. employer representative is a very powerful and influential position within the ILO.

Further, Coca-Cola recently hired Stan Gacek, who used to work for the AFL-CIO, and was himself for years one of the U.S. labor representatives to the ILO, to help grease the wheels with the ILO and international labor unions. Gacek's large Coca-Cola paycheck permanently disqualifies him from claiming to be independent or to speak for the interests of labor.

- The ILO has refused for years to create a Commission of Inquiry to examine the unprecedented situation of violence against trade union leaders in Colombia, generally due to blocking efforts by Mr. Potter, other employer representatives, and the government of Colombia. Mr. Potter's sudden willingness to "request" the ILO to conduct a company specific study, something the ILO has never done, means that Mr. Potter and Coca-Cola are pretty confident of the results of the study before it has even begun.
- ◆ As SINALTRAINAL has informed us, even before this investigation has gotten off the ground, officials from Coca-Cola FEMSA, which owns almost all of the Coke bottlers in Colombia, have visited the Coke bottling plants in Colombia and told employees that Coca-Cola FEMSA management will hand-select the employees it will allow to give testimony in any upcoming investigation.
- Finally, the IUF, the "union" that joined Coca-Cola in making the "request" to the ILO, benefited from the violence against SINALTRAINAL in Colombia and has been defending Coca-Cola's record of human rights violations ever since. When Isidro Gil, the leader of SINALTRAINAL's union in the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Carepa, was murdered inside the plant by paramilitaries brought in by Coca-Cola management, the company then, in a classic move, found a "company union", and recognized IUF's affiliate, SINTRAINAGRO, without an election by the workers. This was the official end of SINALTRAINAL at the plant, and IUF has never raised its voice t inquire about the murder of Isidro Gil that paved the way to Coke's recognition of IUF's affiliate.

In short, Coca-Cola won't agree to any process it can't control. To this latest ploy, we must say, three strikes and you're out. Coke bought the Cal Safety report, abandoned the Commission when it asserted its intent to act independent of the company, and now has used its extraordinary power and resources to "request" the ILO to issue a report. Coke did so without disclosing Coke's direct relationships to the ILO. Everything that happens next, you can be sure, has already been scripted by Coca-Cola, like a television jingle.

We must also not lose sight of the real issue. Regardless of any findings regarding Coca-Cola's current activities in Colombia, the murder and torture of SINALTRAINAL's leaders at Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia is not in dispute. Those things happened, and the union's demand that Coca-Cola extend its human rights policy to employees of bottling plants must be met before we can even begin to discuss a process for Coca-Cola to return to the campuses that have done the right thing by booting Killer Coke.

Terry Collingsworth is Executive Director, of the US based International Labor Rights Fund and Counsel for SINALTRAINAL

LINKS:

http://www.laborrights.org http://www.sinaltrainal.org Dec-Feb 2005/06 Frontline Latin America Coke Boycott

Students



Coke boycott update

Claire Hal

ne year ago, after the AGM of the National Union of Students' buying consortium (NUSSL), 20 or so students held a spontaneous meeting The feelings of in a nearby pub. frustration at NUSSL's chosen route for dealing with the Coke issues, of "Constructive Engagement", quickly dissipated as we recognised our successes at that point in time. We had got Coke on to the agenda, with just one speaker tour and a group of dedicated students. What then could be achieved in another year was an exciting prospect and we were all definitely up for the challenge of mobilizing students to take up the campaign.

One year later, after lots of workshops and a fantastic speaker tour with the much loved Euripides Yance (SINALTRAINAL), the UKSAC (UK Students Against Coke) network has grown, strengthened & learnt a lot. There are now strong inter-university relationships built on trust, solidarity and mutual respect and out of all this have emerged autonomous university groups around the country, each taking the campaign forward in their own way.

The campaign and victory is hugely important in its own right as it will set a new tone in Colombia, where SINALTRAINAL is one of the few remaining private sector trade unions. However it also serves as a tremendous case study, both for starting to explore the conflict in Colombia and for encouraging people to look at capitalist globalisation in a more critical light.

On the back of the success of the campaign, new branches of CSC are starting up in Glasgow and Nottingham, as well as the first specifically student group in Bristol. The Boycott campaign has also been taken up by groups such as People and Planet, Students Against Sweatshops and there is the potential for it forming part of a new nationwide student economic justice campaign!

It is also part of a broader process of getting politics that matter back into our student unions. Having interesting and challenging issues, such as Boycott Coke & ethical investment, is bringing life, debate and more people into student politics.

A brief tour of some of the active universities:

Birmingham University – Students organised a high-attention-grabbing action by staging a serious mock-paramilitary attack in their student Union bar. Onlookers were confused and surprised, not what normally happens when you order a Coke from the bar but all was explained by a leaflet

followed by a talk by Euripides Yance, of SINALTRAINAL.

Liverpool University – With just an information stall and a passionate group of students, 500 signatures in support of the Boycott were collected in just 3 lunch breaks. Since then they managed to convince a pessimistic sabbatical that the boycott is a more effective strategy than NUSSL's method and have just passed a motion in support of the Boycott and a vote against Coke at the NUS.

Bristol students reaffirmed their support for the Boycott with an overwhelming majority voting at the University of Bristol Union AGM to take an Amendment to the national NUS conference in March. Whilst critical of NUSSL's constructive engagement, the Amendment recognises the need for some sort of dialogue in conjunction with the Boycott, to show how serious students are. The University of the West of England also sent a motion to boycott to the Conference.

Cardiff University – After a year of awareness raising and vocal opposition, students took a motion to their AGM where after much debate, the vote went to supporting the boycott, and seeking dispensation (applying to NUSSL to sell alternatives) if NUS choose not to boycott.

Nottingham University – Many students have been genuinely concerned by Coke's behaviour & lack of resolution of the issues after hearing speakers from India and Colombia. The debate has focused on which is the right method to resolve the issue. Unfortunately, student council opted for a more rigorous and transparent version of NUSSL's fence sitting tactic of Constructive Engagement .

While this argument can sound convincing, critically examining the concept of Constructive Engagement it shows it in a very different light. If we take a look at what happened in the US, where students tried to 'constructively' engage with Coke for two years we see that when deadlines started looming for Coke, they came out with excuses on a par with' the dog ate my homework'.

Clearly, Coke will not be interested in resolving the issues until public opinion turns against them and threatens their image. Rather than go through the same processes as in the US where the Coke PR machine is on home turf, lets save time, save lives and kick them out now. Coke have had their chance to make reparations, it's time to hit them where it hurts them most: their profits.

Students against coke

Speech by Dan Glass, president-elect of Sussex University Students Union

fter taking so much inspiration from individual Boycott Coke campaigns at my University and around the country, I joined with others in forming UK Students against coke just two years ago, its agenda: to ban coca-cola, lift wages, empower workers and curb corporate power, raising awareness and acting on a local level.

Tackling corporate power in the ivory tower is the issue at hand- we all know that a lot of our universities have terrible ethical investment track records. As students, we also have a great deal of leverage to pressure Coca-Cola to stop its abuses. This is true for many reasons. As anyone who has seen Coke's TV commercials and advertisements or read their latest company report, Coca-Cola views young people, and particularly students, as its highest priority demographic target. To the company, young people are potential "customers for life."

Over the past two years the campaign against Coca-Cola in our Students Unions has been steadily growing and during the next few months we want it to explode! There are now boycott operations in multiple UK educational establishments. UKSAC main focus is NUS Conference 26-28 March where over 200 universities will decide whether to continue having a commercial relationship with Coca-Cola. Only strong economic action will put critical pressure on Coca-Cola to make REAL operational change. And as there are 5.2 million students within NUS this may really hit them in the language of money- the only talk they know.

The potential of our campaign is enormous with many far reaching implications. In the short term, aside from the possible non-renewal of the contracts, Coca Cola's unaccountable practices will be in the spotlight, giving a degree of protection to SINALTRAINAL as well as putting intense pressure on the company to respond appropriately to the demands of the communities in India and Colombia and its other targets of exploitation. In the long term the campaign will serve as an example of what can be achieved by students, empowering them to take action.

Our actions here can make a difference.

Many students like us, learn about the power struggles between multinational corporations and, well, the rest of society. Standard economics would explain that to grow to such strengths it must be off the back of others; sweatshop labour, underhanded farmer's subsidises and more undesirable conditions.

For these farmers in India, for these workers in Colombia, as corporate globalization grows, and whilst the disparity between the rich and the poor grows, the fight to corner resources across the globe intensifies. To ram through their sweetheart deals; to corporatize crops we grow, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the dreams we dream. It makes student boycott-coke activists think that it is ever more vital for these local resistance movements to make international alliances. Essentially, the significance and magnitude of globalizing resistance.

And as students here at SOAS showed two years ago with their boycott and students all over the world show right now; our fight, our goal, our vision of another world, to abolish that distance between the powerful and everyone else, may just be coming.

aybe we can't flick a switch and conjure up a revolution. But there are several actions we can do now. We could get out there in connecting our society to this shocking, disparate situation, to uncover all the lies and injustices that Coca-Cola has in Colombia, to India, to our health- both ours and British schoolchildren s teeth and sanity. We can educate the campus community.

Here are a few steps:

Primarily, get yourself to NUS conference. If students choose to hold the company to account by choosing to end contracts with Coca-Cola then Coke will no longer be sold or able to advertise in our student union.

Mandate your other NUS Conference delegates to vote in favor of any pro-boycott motions

On an individual university level, there are two possible options, especially important if the vote at NUS conference falls:

Your union can vote or hold a referendum to decide if they want to stop selling all Coke products and hence stop membership of NUSSL. You cannot have one without the

More than anything, campaigning is not just about passing motions, it would be very dull if so, it is about raising awareness of the issues, educating students, showing solidarity with other people around the world. On the UKSAC website please feel free to download a whole range of materials, stickers, literature, you can order t-shirts too.

As for stunts across the country, previous direct Actions include:

- 'Die in' at Bristol's Student Union
- Blockade at Bristol Coke depot
- Handing out toxic sludge at NUSSL Agm flour, water and green food colouring worked a treat
- Hokey Cokey Party fundraiser with food, live music including a specially written 'Don't drink coke, it rots your teeth' song you can hear from up North and down South.

Remember these are just a few suggestions. Colombia Solidarity Campaign, Ray Rogers and Killer Coke, the India Resource Centre and UKSAC has continuously lobbied and named and shamed coke no one wants to be associated with them. There remains the obvious fact that until killer coke undergoes fundamental reforms, anyone which supports this institution will in effect be helping to destroy the environment, to undermine Indian and Colombian laws and to unleash misery upon the poor. Institutions, particularly educational, who do continue should therefore continue to expect increased public scrutiny and reputational risks.

As for Coca-Cola; corporate globalizations glittering ambassadors, we ask, where were they last year and where are they now? As these victories show, they may not be standing so proud.

o look at it another way, we, all of us, everyone who has boycotted Coke and everyone who is here this evening, have each in our own way, laid siege to this empire.

We may not have stopped it in its tracks-yet- but we have stripped it down. We have made it drop its mask. It now stands before us on the world's stage on the stark defence.

What do we do now? We can hone our memory, we can learn from these successes and we can continue to build public opinion until they become a deafening roar at NUS Conference. Most importantly, the world may be being slyly parcelled off and held by an insentient minority but Coca-Cola and the wider corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy the sickly products they are selling- their ideas, their oil products, their chemical infested foods and drink, their sweatshop garments, their designs of inevitability. And we can appreciate our talent to tell our own tales - narratives that are different from the ones that Coke try to brainwash us to believe.

There are many people in this room, probably twice as many at an average successful demonstration at one of India's cancerous bottling plants. Once mobilized, students can be a powerful force. The 1960s taught us that student political activism is difficult to predict and that it rises from unanticipated causes. A long period of campus quiet has lulled policymakers into discounting students as a potential political and social force. Up until now Students have so far accepted their fate. Now, in the second half of the decade of the 'noughties', their patience seems to be running out.

We must continue to name and shame Coca-Cola and these corporations who are founded upon third world exploitation. We must re-invent civil disobedience in a million different ways. If it can happen successfully at Sussex, at SOAS, at Middlesex, with killer cola, the list goes on, it can damn well happen again at the NUS conference. Why not?

We can and we will win if we continue to organise ourselves.

Get in contact: ukstudentsagainstcoke@gmail.com Website: www.uksac.revolt.org

* Speech given to public meeting organized by SOAS Student Union and Colombia SC on 15 February, with special guest Ray Rogers Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, plus Tracey Moberly artist and co-curator with Mark Thomas of the Coke's Nazi Adverts, and Andy Higginbottom Secretary of the Colombia Solidarity Campaign.



Mar-May 2006 Frontline Latin America **Environment**

Environment

Smoke plumes from amazonian forest clearances visible from space

rainforests.net

What is African Palm?

The fruit and seeds of this species of palm can be used to make many things including vegetable oil, soap, margarine and even animal feed.

It is a growing favourite for large scale plantations in tropical climates worldwide. The land is cleared using forest fires and decimates biodiversity.

An important cash crop for export, successive governments are clearing the way for new plantations which force indigenous communities from their land.







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Forest law

Ley Forestal: The expansion of palm oil plantations

words Dave Younger

n 13 December 2005, the "Ley Forestal" or "forestry law" was passed by the Colombian Congress at the 11th attempt.

Previous legislation, passed in 1959, provided protection from economic exploitation for native forests and areas of hydrological importance. The "forestry law" has however reversed this protection, opening up huge swathes of pristine forest for either massive tree felling and logging or mining in areas previously considered "out of bounds" for commercial timber and other interests. The Amazon regions and the rain forests of Colombia's Pacific coast will be most severely impacted.

The Ley Forestal was passed in the face of a united opposition from environmental, *campesino*, black and indigenous groups. The national press reported that the majority of representatives to the Congress were unable to explain what they had just voted for, suspicions of foul play extended much further than mere ignorance.

Commercial interests

Opposition politicians exposed the activities of a US company called Chemonics International, a major contractor in Plan Colombia, active in Afghanistan and awarded contracts with the US military in Iraq to the tune of \$60 million. Chemonics International has been accused of offering bribes of up to \$3,500 to Congress representatives who voted for the law. According to former environment minister Manuel Rodriguez, abusing their close relationship with both the Colombian government and the US Agency for International Development, to be able to use their own "experts" to draw up and edit sections of the law itself.

Unsurprisingly, allegations have also surfaced that the powerful mining lobby and paper manufacturers were involved in funding campaigns within Congress to support the acceptance of the new legislation. One sector more than any other has been envisaged as the major beneficiary of the Ley Forestal; the African palm oil plantations which are likely to move into areas that have been freshly deforested.

What is palm oil?

Palm oil is a vegetable fat extracted from the fruit of the African palm tree, a tropical palm that grows best on flat, open ground next to rivers. The oil has almost as many uses as petroleum itself. It is found in 1 in 10 supermarket food products in this country- including chocolate, bread, crisps, soap, detergents and lipsticks. It is used as animal feed and 9 biodiesel plants that will use palm oil for fuel, are currently being built around the world. The Netherlands already has a power plant, using palm oil for domestic electricity.

has a power plant, using palm oil for domestic electricity.

Both the US and EU have high hopes for palm oil, and are encouraging governments around the world to by it com virging thou cultive cultive contact the contact of the con

increase production. It is not all good

news however. Friends of the Earth, in a series of studies released in 2004 and 2005, state that palm oil production is the driving force behind more than 80% of deforestation in Malaysia and Indonesia. This threatens the extinction of several animal and plant species, causes sterilisation of soil and water, and is responsible for the forced displacement of indigenous tribes. It was not for nothing that George Monbiot has called African palm "the most destructive crop on earth." Yet despite the widespread use, and the controversies surrounding palm oil, 84% of UK companies surveyed by FoE did not know where the palm oil that they use comes from.

Palm oil in Colombia

Much of this oil would come from Colombia, the world's fourth largest producer. In 2002, the UK was the single largest importer of Colombian palm oil. In 2004, 157,000 hectares were under palm cultivation. President Álvaro Uribe has stated



frican Palm

that he wants to see this increased to 6 million hectares. According to Fedepalma, the national palm cultivators' federation, the current annual expansion rate in palm cultivation in Colombia is 19.6%.

The well documented land ownership crisis in Colombia leaves very little suitable land available for this massive expansion in palm oil cultivation. Thus the possibility that the "Ley Forestal" will free-up previously protected land and forest is enormously attractive to the palm corporations, and as with so many macroeconomic projects in Colombia, the interested parties have been implicated in the commissioning of violence to facilitate their plans.

Chocó

The jungle department of Chocó, which borders Panama and runs down Colombia's Pacific coast, has aroused the interests of the palm corporations in just this way. Traditionally neglected, Chocó is inhabited mainly by indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. It is a department of virgin rainforest, bathed by literally thousands of rivers- ideal for palm cultivation.

Collective ownership by Afro-

Colombians of their ancestral lands is guaranteed by Law 70 of 1993. This land cannot be sold, except to other Afro-Colombian communities, a mechanism that should prevent palm oil and other companies from operating in the region. However, subsequent legislation allows an individual or company to economically exploit the land, and to apply for ownership, if the land in question has been abandoned for 4 years. Starting in 1997 hundreds of Afro-Colombians have been killed, villages have been burnt and thousands forced from their land

by military and paramilitary violence.

11

When the communities have gone, the palm oil companies move in, protected according to witnesses by the same soldiers and paramilitaries who displaced the original inhabitants. It is in this way that INCODER, the rural development agency, estimates that 95% of the current 6,000 hectares of palm plantation in Chocó came into existence. 22,121 hectares of illegally occupied land is currently being prepared for cultivation. The owners of the 8 palm companies involved in the expropriation of this land are alleged to have close ties to paramilitary organisations, and have even offered to participate in government schemes to provide employment en masse for paramilitaries engaged in the current demobilisations

The Magdalena del Medio

The Magdalena del management of the Magdalena del management o The Magdalena del Medio is indices of internal violence, human rights violations and palm oil cultivation. Paramilitary influence in the palm oil plantations and in the area remains strong, as evidenced by the 30 December 2005 murder of trade unionist Carlos Arciniega Niño. Carlos was a member of the Sintrainagro agricultural union and negotiating team at the Palmas Bucarella plantation in Puerto Wilches. Much of the local palm industry, however, was set up, financed and supported by an EU backed project known as the Magdalena del Medio Programme for Peace and Development (PDPMM in Spanish).

Bypassing all existing social and leadership structures, the PDPMM, backed by funds from both the EU and Plan Colombia, developed a regional macroeconomic plan that relied on the cultivation of huge palm oil plantations. Social and campesino organisations in the Magdalena del Medio warned that the plan would effectively end small scale independent farming, replacing it with a model based on sharecropping and day labouring on privately owned estates. Despite ostensibly being a strategy to relieve poverty in the region, the reliance on hefty agricultural loans to farmers, coupled with a collapse in palm oil prices (between Jan '99 and Dec 2000, the price fell from \$635 per tonne to just \$265), the PDPMM has ensured the dominance of a system dedicated to the cultivation of export monoculture on plantations once owned by small farmers, now forced to labour for big-agribusiness.

"Our Land"

The Mapuche struggle for equality

Pilar Parra in Chile

he Mapuche people, indigenous to Chile, are one of the longest surviving ethnic groups of Latin America.

Enclaved in the Araucania, near to the end of the world, in the south west corner of South America, the Mapuche men and women still maintain the characteristics that have always identified them as valiant, haughty, indomitable, and above all holders of an immense and immeasurable love for their land and traditions

In contemporary Chilean society the Mapuche face constant racial discrimination. Juana Rosa Calfunao Paillalef, Lonko (highest Mapuche authority) of the Juan Paillalef community, Laureles Commune, ninth region, Chile, is living testimony to this.

On 22 February 2006, on her exit from the Court of Temuco, ninth region, Chile, she was notified by Judge Luz Monica Madariaga of a one year suspended sentence of 61 days imprisonment for the crime of "public disorder," and 61 days of imprison-ment for the crime of "threatening the police.

Outside the courtroom Juana Calfunao expressed frustration and dismay at the sentence dictated by representatives of the Chilean state: "Here, evidence of racism in the Chilean judicial system has been clearly marked. They conspire against those who defend their rights and use oppressive measures to deny us everything we truly own. We won't allow them to continue, they can imprison me, but not even my death will bring them victory. I will defend my lands until the end, because these lands are my lands, and here the Mapuches govern. We won't permit them to impose their laws and we strongly disagree with the way they treat our people.

he sentence was given to Lonko Calfunao after incidents that took place on the 21 and 23 December 2005 within the confines of her community where the Lonko and her sister Luisa were the victims of a brutal attack by the state authortities. Both women received multiple injuries and were

subsequently detained by the police.

Ms Calfunao explained: "On 21 December 2005, we were protesting against a road widening scheme being carried out by the Ministry of Public Works (a scheme that was being carried out illegally) when a large contingent of police, made up of special forces from Temuco and Los Laureles, turned up to unblock the road that goes through my property. Without any attempt to negotiate, the police launched a full attack, firing tear gas against a group of about 20 people, mostly women and children, and then started shooting at point blank range, injuring my sister, me, and several other members of the community, even the horse that I was riding, which is my only form of trans-

In Chile, Law 19253 of 1993 states that lands that are owned by indigenous communities cannot be leased,

rented, administered or ceded in any way to third parties. For this reason, until they show us evidence to the contrary, we will continue to demand our right to this land.

"Two days later, on 23 December, we were once again faced by a large contingent of police. This time about 200 police, under the command of Captain Cristian Alarcon, entered our territory even though they did not have a search warrant. Once again they fired tear gas, they destroyed my house and all my possessions. They threw all my food around the house, they smashed the electricity generator and water pumps, obviously fundamental to life within our community, and started to search all the agricultural tools and supplies that our community depends on for existence. They also destroyed the workshop that we were building, a project that provides alternative work

∠ L will defend these lands until the end because they are my lands and here the Mapuche govern. 🤊 🤊

for our community (our first workshop was burned down in July 2005, a crime that is still unsolved by Chilean justice)" added Juana.

"In this second incident we were once again maltreated both physically and psychologically, we were taken away and detained at the police station in Padre de las Casas in IX region, Chile.

The Attorney General then started detention proceedings and pressed charges against me and my sister Luisa. We were finally released on 24 December, after Judge Madariaga saw the wounds that we had suffered on our faces and bodies, caused by the police brutality.

"On 6 January 2006 I was arrested again, and only let out on the 16th after I went on hunger strike. I was found guilty, but my lawyer, Freddy Barriga and I will use every legal route available to us to have this conviction overturned on the grounds that it is illegal. I am ready to carry on the struggle, not only in the Chilean courts, but also on an international level with human rights organisations and indigenous movements," Juana claimed.

What motivates this tireless defender of human rights and the Mapuche people?

Juana is a 49 year old woman, mother of six, and the great niece of Juan Paillalef, the founder of the indigenous community that still carries his name

Her mother, the Lonko Mercedes Paillalef, was detained during the events of 1973, a victim of merely

being a Mapuche leader. She was arrested, maltreated, abused and severely tortured. When she was eventually released, she was greatly debilitated due to the torture and she named her daughter as the new Lonko. At this moment, Juana swore to her mother to fight tirelessly for her

So Ms Calfunao started out on a new path, transformed at a very early age into a brave, strong and tenacious woman. She is a member of the Ethical Commission against Torture and has been instrumental in the organisation and empowerment of urban Mapuche communities in Santiago.

Along with her mother, she has visited and campaigned at all the seats of power in Chile, including the Palacio de la Moneda, ministries and governor's offices.

The national authorities have however been deaf to her denunciations, leading to campaigns throughout Latin America and Europe, looking for a space that will allow for information and denunciation of the inequality, discrimination and violation of the fundamental human rights

of the Mapuche people.

s Calfunao refuses to give up the struggle in the face of official indifference, and recognises that the issues of Indigenous people of Chile and the Americas must be forced on to the public agenda.

Juana Calfunao will continue in her search for the means to fulfil the following goals:

- The reconstruction of Mapuche communities, and the redemption of their roots.
- The undertaking of an independent judicial study of indigenous
- The consolidation of a historical legacy, through self-determination for the Mapuche, and promotion of their identity, language, freedom and
- Strengthen the communication network for indigenous communities.

Juana's dreams would become a reality if the Chilean government would only respect the United Nations agreements on indigenous rights.

On 9 december 1998 the UN general assembly drafted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, calling for:

- the right to self-determination, participation in the life of the State, nationality and freedom from discrimination
- freedom from threats to the survival of indigenous peoples as distinct peoples.

And ensured:

- the spiritual, linguistic and cultural identity of indigenous peoples
- education, information and labour
- participatory rights
- development and other economic and social rights
- land and resource rightsthe exercise of self-determination.



The Mapuche

The Mapuche people make up 87% of Chile's indigenous population. Their name literally means 'of the land'. They successfully defended this land from the Inca Empire and then the Spanish for almost 400 years.

Organised along extended families, they are united by common linguistic, religious and agricultural practices. Today most Mapuche have moved to the city where they suffer discrimination. Of Chile's non-aboriginal population, 90% contain some native ancestry.





Links

To find out more about the Mapuche struggle for autonmy go to: http://www.mapuche-nation.org

Download the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples: http://www.ohchr.org/english/about/

publications/docs/indileaflet5.doc

More Info:

http://www.santiago.indymedia.org



Protest in Temuco on the day of the hearing

Gold Gunning for gold

Colombia's riches have ensured poverty for its workers

Geroid O'Loinghsigh in Colombia

edahda is an unusual word, but it is not difficult to find out its meaning. Any good encyclopedia should tell you that this is a geological term, a term that no one has reason to hide.

Kedahda S.A. is another matter. It is not a geological term but the name of a Colombian registered mining company. The internet, hosts little information about the company as most of the items express their concern about Kedahda S.A's intentions in Southern Bolívar and other regions of Colombia. It is a secret and they have much to hide.

The company is the Colombian subsidiary of Anglogold Ashanti (AA), one of the largest gold mining companies in the world. AA is the fusion of two African mining companies, one Anglogold of Apartheid fame, and the other being the Ghanan company Ashanti, which was founded as part of Britain's imperial adventures in Africa. One would expect a company like AA to be proud and forthright about its operations in Colombia, but this is not so. The annual reports refer simply to exploration in Colombia without mentioning the name or composition of the company unlike their operations in other parts of the world. Kedahda S.A. has become their big secret.

Kedahda S.A.'s board of directors is made up of key functionaries of AA at an international level. Eric Roth is the Head Geologist at AA who has responsibility for exploration in all of Latin America. Marquez Tiberio is the Financial Director for all of Latin America and also the Head of Operations in Brazil where they have their largest operation. Christopher Van Tienhoven is the Business Director for Latin America and Alejandro Eguren is head of AA in Peru. However AA is in the process of closing its Peruvian operations) and José Margalith is the Corporate Secretary.

The Manager of the company, Chris Lodder a foreign national, is also the Director of Exploration in all of Latin America. In many countries he has subordinates, but in Colombia he has direct responsibility and is also a representative of Anglo American, the largest shareholder in AA.

However, it is not just the foreign functionaries that make Kedahda S.A. interesting. The Colombian nationals, of whom there are only two, are also interesting. One is Luisa Fernanda Aramburo, a member of the Board of Directors and Rafael Antonio Alfonso Roa, the Substitute Manager

the Substitute Manager. Aramburo is well known to the small craft miners of Colombia. It was Aramburo who drew up the mining code of the Samper government. She included articles in that mining code that sought to favor the companies she represented. At that time Aramburo represented CoronaGold Fields and the Illera Palacio family who were busy trying to get their hands on the largest gold mine in the world. They had failed in their attempts to coax and con the craft miners. The legal manoeuvres of Aramburo also failed as the Constitutional Court declared the mining code to be unconstitutional. There then followed a wave of killings by paramilitaries who openly declared that they had come for the mines, to hand them over to those who would make better use of them. That was 10 years ago. Aramburo has returned to haunt the small miners of Southern Bolívar.

Her abortive mining code was followed up by the Pastrana government with another code drawn up by lawyers of the mining corporations present in Colombia. The small miners lost their rights over the mines. They were told that they had to "legalise" them, a euphemism for reapplying and competing with large corporations. Enter Anglogold Ashanti through its subsidiary Kedahda S.A.

AA began with scare tactics claiming to have sought permission to begin exploration on a massive claim of 1,200,000 hectares in Southern Bolívar. It further claimed that it had been granted permission to begin immediately on an area of 37,000 hectares. The claims were designed to frighten craft miners into thinking that



"Mining companies that **invest \$100** million US dollars in a mine have no problems spending two or three million on building a military base in order for the government to send the required number of soldiers to protect the zone.."

they had already lost their mines and that there was no point in applying for a permit to exploit the mines that had being working for the best part of two decades.

There was no truth to the claims. Nowhere, is there any public document that shows that AA sought permission for over a million hectares. Neither were they granted the 37,000 hectares that they claim.

The total number of hectares in the entire department of Bolívar under exploration or exploitation is just 32,000. That includes all the small miners and the multinationals. In fact Kedahda received its first permit to carry out gold prospecting in September 2005 long after it had made its outlandish claims.

They were granted a mere 2000 hectares. However, that is not the full story: enter Sr Roa, the Substitute Manager. There are a further 10,000 hectares in Southern Bolívar which were granted to Sr Roa. It is doubtful that these licenses are for him, though they were granted to him the individual. There are other gold mining companies in Colombia which have used this mechanism of asking for prospecting licenses in the name of members of the Board of Directors or Managers. However, it has recently come to light that AA has applied for a total of 500,000 hectares in Southern Bolivar and neighboring Antioquia. It applied for licenses to exploit gold resources without having previously applied for licenses to explore.

It is clear that the mining code, which paves the way for the handover of the mineral resources to the multinationals, will be implemented in full and will lead to an increase in the murders of craft miners, small farmers and human rights leaders through increased militarisation. The regional government of Antioquia hosted a mining fair in the city of Medellín with the aim of attracting more mining companies to the country. It is state policy that mines be exploited by large multinationals and not craft miners. The craft miners are an impediment that has to be dealt with.

In the context of the International Mining Fair the Colombian newspaper El Espectador quoted a represent-

ative of an international gold trading company Glaxco as saying: "The word has spread and the big mining companies have begun to think about what was previously unthinkable: investing in Colombia... Capital is always temerous, they look for security above profits.

"Mining companies that invest \$100 million US dollars in a mine have no problems spending two or three million on building a military base in order for the government to send the required number of soldiers to protect the zone...The profit margin in some mines could be in the region of 40%, but if there is no security, then it is useless. Investors prefer mines with a profit margin of 10% that are secure."

n the mid 1990s when Corona Gold Fields and Anglogold tried to get their hands on the mines in Southern Bolívar there was a dramatic increase in the number of murders. Now under the regime of Álvaro Uribe the mining companies are talking openly of sponsoring the military. In the case of Kedahda S.A. this should not surprise us, not only due to the presence of Aramburo, a key person in the mid 1990s, but also the company's reputation in other parts of the world. Human Rights Watch published a report in July 2005 entitled The Curse of Gold, which accused AA of sponsoring paramilitary organisations in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In Ghana, the home of Ashanti, the local press has accused the company of murdering and covering up the deaths of a number of small craft miners. They have further accused the company of having openly stated that it would "deal" with craft miners that enter their land.

The situation for the miners of Southern Bolívar is ominous. They are faced with a government that wants rid of them, mining legislation that facilitates it, and an increase in the militarisation of their communities. Lastly companies such as AA who have shown in the past that they will go to any length to protect their investments: not to mention Aramburo.

The Colombian newspaper summed it up in a recent headline "Gold Fever is Back". So too is the repression that is required for the fever to continue.

14 Special Report Mar-May 2006 Frontline Latin America

BOIVIALA NEW ETA SPECIAL REPORT

All change! **Bolivia and the election of Evo Morales** Olivia Blanchard In Bolivia fter days of being at the centre of attention of the international media and amidst speculations over a possible US led coup against him, Evo Morales officially became president of Bolivia on 22 January. Evo Morales, leader of the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) party won the 18 December national elections with a landslide victory in an unprecedented way: he obtained 54% of the votes and the voter turnout was the

These links led to Morales being removed from his seat in Congress in January 2002 The U.S is widely believed to have been behind the expulsion.





FRONTLINE LATIN AMERICA

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THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF COLOMBIA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The mood in La Paz at the moment is one of optimism

highest in the last 23 years of Bolivian democracy.

and hope. Hope for much needed political stability and hope for a real change. For historian José Luis Roca, the election results show the beginning of a new left wing movement removed from the Marxist school of thought. He says it is a left wing movement of "ponchos and flipflops, with its feet on the ground in the search of concrete things: to solve poverty and indigenous exclu-For others, the election result represents a new page, a new period in Bolivia's history. The victory of MAS is perceived as the closure of the political crisis that the country has gone through since 2003, when social pressure pushed the president Gonzalo Sáánchez Losada out of government and then a year and a half later made Carlos Mesa resign. Indeed, a central idea of Morales' political campaign was that of change. Now is the time when, in Morales words, the 500 long years of colonisation and

suffering come to an end, and the people that have up until now been most excluded, the campesinos and the indigenous (who represent over 60% of Bolivia's population), get their say in the running of their own country. It is now the time to redress the injustices committed in 1825 when these groups were excluded from taking part in the designing of the new country.

¶urthermore, Evo Morales' indigenous identity, the trade union origins of MAS and the pre-electoral links with the strongest social sectors (campesinos, miners, the retired, and the people from the Movimiento sin Tierra) mean that he and his party have wide support and legitimacy. This legitimacy is important for Evo's plans to push for two major structural reforms in the coming months. One of them is the 'Asamblea Constituyente' (Constituent Assembly) which, if approved by Parliament, will take place in the city of Sucre in August and will draw together all the different groups of society in a context of debate and consensus to reform the current constitution. It is in the frame of the Asamblea Constituyente that Morales wants to pursue the social inclusion of marginalized groups and the eradication of poverty. The other major structural reform will be the 'Referendum Autonómico' (Autonomous Referendum) which will further define the transition from a centralised state to a decentralised one.

ut the road ahead is not an easy one. The expectations are now very high, many questions are being asked and only time will give us the answers. For example, the indigenous origins of Evo Morales have been given great importance, but as writers Fernando Molina and Abdel Padilla ask, can someone govern better or worse according to their physical traits or their social background? And what does it mean to "govern better"? Will the indigenous and the poor be any less poor because one of their leaders has made it to the top? Will Evo Morales be

able to deliver what he promised? And what exactly has been promised?. A criticism made by writer James Petras is that throughout the electoral campaign Morales and vice-president García-Linera have used a different speech depending on the audience. The preelectoral positions were not clear, says the journalist Alberto Bonadona Cossio. Before winning the elections, Morales was threatening transnational companies with nationalisation. Now his speech has been watered down and the idea is no longer that of nationalisation but to intervene or "expel the oil companies which have cheated the state in the payment of taxes". As Petras says, the antineoliberal rhetoric makes no sense when in the same breath he invites more foreign investors to exploit the natural resources. Similarly, from talking of joining the "anti-imperialist and antineoliberalist" block formed by Chávez

and Castro, Morales position has softened somewhat and now talks of being friends with all countries and using a different approach (but not as radical as that proposed by Chávez and Castro) when dealing with the US government. The expectations have been raised very high and "the new government" Bonadona says "must be careful not to fall into contradictions between what it offered, what it is offering,

and what it will do in reality".

hus we will have to wait and see, as Bolivians say, before we can make any judgements or be able to tell whether this is truly a new beginning or a continuation of the previous political social and economic structures. As Mery, an old Bolivian lady told me earlier on today "there are people in the rural areas who live without water or light, and they have been forgotten and excluded by all the previous governments... People are tired of bad corrupt governments. Will this new one act any differently? I hope so, but we will have to wait and see...". And as Mery's daughter then added, what is certain is that if the past is anything to go by, "if this new government of MAS doesn't deliver what they promised, the people will revolt and chuck them out of government, as has happened every time before...'

> www.pulsobolivia.com www.la-razon.com



66 if this new

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before. 99

30 VI a

SPECIAL REPORT

A country divided



Lake Titicaca lies between Bolivia and Peru and is 3,810 m above sea level

Water wars

Bolivia defeats multinational water company

from Econoticiasbolivia.com

66 They managed

to send off Bechtel

and confiscate their

property without

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sation. Why don't we

do the same with oil

companies? "?"

They managed to send off Bechtel and confiscate their property without paying any compensation. Why don't we do the same with oil companies?"

The poorest, however rebellious country in Latin America has achieved an emphatic triumph on the multinational Bechtel. First by expelling it from the country

because of its lucrative privatized water contract, then to compel the company to abandon its compensation demands.

ast Thursday the Bolivian

government bought 80% of shares, of the Company Aguas del Tunari, Betchel's subsidiary operating in Cochabamba, in the centre of Bolivia at 0.25 USD each. This action wipes out the request of 50 million USD, against Bolivia previously made by the multinational, when it's property had been confiscated and management expelled in 2000, during the so called "gas war" when people revolted and refused the increased fares on drinking water and drainages,

s Oscar Olivera, leader of the popular uprising in 2000 has said, this is an all-round

victory for the Bolivian people, having sent off a multinational without paying any compensation and setting a precedent for peoples struggles against water privatization around the world.

According to Olivera, the peoples victory against the water multinational company demonstrates that Bolivia is capable of winning the struggle to nationalize

its natural resources, oil and gas, currently owned by Repsol, Total, Enron, Shell, BP, Vintage, Petrobras and others, and controlling the second largest reserves in Latin America.

According to Olivera, the victory over Bechtel should inspire the newly elected President Evo Morales to nation-

> alize the coal industry and expel the oil companies without paying them a

The major argument, of those opposing natural resource nationalization, is that the expelled multinationals would then initiate judicial cases worth up to nearly 8 billion USD, a sum that the Bolivian state does not have.

"Bolivia can and must win the struggle for a full recovery of its natural resources", added Olivera, pressing Morales "not to be fearful" of the oil companies and imperialist

reaction.
Morales' intention is, up to now, to revise oil companies contracts, tailoring them to comply with the current hydrocarbons law, devised and approved by parliament under

the former President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, overthrown in October 2003. This law increases taxation for the oil companie by up to 50%, even though in practice it does not go beyond 35%. The tax rise is not good news for the multinationals, however they would obtain full legal approval of their operations eliminating the legal basis for nationalizing without compensation.

n 2 July of the current year, the same day on which the members of the Constitutional Assembly will be elected, the Bolivians will also choose between two state models (centralised or decentralised) in a referendum.

The aspirations for regional autonomy are particularly strong in the eastern province of Santa Cruz, the richest area of the country, where the autonomist movement has always been very active engineering distrust towards the central government.

The region of Santa Cruz is rich in natural gas and accounts for the 40% of the Bolivian GDP, 43,8% of foreign investment and the 54% of the total goods exported abroad. It has the highest Human Development Index in Bolivia, with a literacy rate above 93%.

We would like an autonomous, but asymmetrical state. Those provinces who want to adopt this system, should do so, those who don't, should stick to the centralist model", argues Telmar Méndex, a long-time member of the autonomist Pro-Santa Cruz Civic Committee, the movement that unites the autonomist aspirations of

The plebiscite on 2 July is binding and every one of the nine departments will chose separately.

We expect an autonomist victory in Santa Cruz, Tarija, Pando and Beny, the so called 'Media Luna' area [where the most fertile land is]", says local analyst Julio César Caballero.

Reported on a map, what Caballero said, would mean that Bolivia would have independent provinces in the fertile flat lands, where the population is mainly of European and Mestizo descent, and would be centralist in the Altiplano (high plateau), where the majority of the population is indigenous (Aymara, Quechua and Guarani) and has lower income levels.

Land and wealth in this landlocked country is overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of a European elite, while two thirds of the population lives in poverty.

The Pro-Santa Cruz Committee has always been a headache for La Paz governments, but now it has emerged as the main opponent to the socialist model proposed by Evo Morales. On the same day that the latter was elected at the first round, as the first indigenous president, in Santa Cruz, the autonomist leader Rubén Costas. Civic Committee ex-president, was elected as prefect, winning the first elections of this kind in the country's history. Of the three candidates, two were autonomists and between the two, won more than 80% of the ballots. Earlier in 2005, Costas had challenged the central Government proclaiming, as the independent movements from the Spanish Crown used to do in the XIX century, the "Cabildo de Santa Cruz", the independent town council of Santa Cruz.

The fight between Evo Morales' Movimiento Al Socialismo (MAS) and the autonomist Cruzeños, is not only occurring over the land and the control of the natural resources. The head office of the Bolivian television in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, town capital of the province, has been occupied for two days by MAS militants that demand the appointment of a director "elected by the people" The local sections of the party held a selection among possible candidates for the position, and said to have elected the most suitable person, a MAS militant.

Moreover, on a different front, Félix Patzi, Minister of Education, accused the prefect, Rubén Costas, of "abuse of power" as he nominated a delegate for the Education Department. According to Patzi, this is a function that should be carried out by the central Government in La Paz.

The challenge for the new government of Evo Morales is then, not only to restore the national sovereignty and eliminate 500 years of colonialism, but also unite a divided country by a chronic racism an the euro-descendent elite established in the wealthiest region of Bolivia, that prefers autonomy to the national integration of the economy.

Want More Info onBolivia?

Articles by Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson in Counterpunch at:

Articles by Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson in Counterpunch at:
http://www.counterpunch.org/
and 'The Chequered Rainbow' New Left Review 35, Sept-Oct 2005 at:
http://www.newleftreview.net/NLR26903.shtml
Jeffery R. Webber 'Left-Indigenous Struggles in Bolivia: Searching for Revolutionary Democracy' Monthly Review September 2005 at:
http://www.monthlyreview.org/0905webber.htm
'The Persecution of Pacho Cortés Backfires on Washington' Narconews at:
http://www.narconews.com/Issue32/article892.html
DVD 'Bolivia is Not for Sale' and other materials from:
Bolivia Solidarity Campaign http://www.boliviasc.org.uk/
Econoticias http://www.econoticiasbolivia.com/
Centro de Documentacion e Informacion Bolivia-CEDIB:
http://www.cedib.org/pcedib/index.php

Books (see reviews in FLA 1) Oscar Olivera Cochabamba: Water War in Bolivia South End Press #10.99 John Crabtree Patterns of Protest Latin America Bureau #8.99

Bolva

SPECIAL REPORT



Ernesto"Che" Guevara at a memorial service in Havana

Alberto Korda

Che's dream

Dignity is restored to Bolivia

t is classic poetic justice. Social justice has arrived in Bolivia. A little late but it's here to stay. In the order of revolutionary heroes no-one will be as pleased at the presidential triumph of Evo Morales as Ernesto Che diveyara.

El Che did not die in vain that 9th October 1967. In the region of the village of La Higuera, the Rangers of the Special Forces squad of the Bolivian army, trained by the Central Intelligence Agency, captured him when he fell injured in combat. The Bolivian president, René Barrientos, ordered his assassination.

Félix Rodríguez, the infamous Cuban-American, CIA agent, brought the death sentence to the school where he lay. Whilst doing so the bird of prey Rodriguez relieved el Che of the watch given to him by Fidel Castro. Seargent Jaime Terán, selected to execute him, looked nervous. El Che predicted his arrival. Turning to the executioner he said "I know you come to kill me. Shoot, coward, you are only going to kill a man." A burst of carabina M-2 rifle fire finished him off. Up until the last moment he was the phophetic Guevara. They killed the man. They did not kill the ideal.

The American press does not know what to think. They discuss the indigenism of Morales as though he were a rare insect. They remain open-mouthed because he constitutes the hemisphere's first indigenous president. How ignorant! Only a society submerged in the dung of its prejudices could generate racist comments about the ethnic roots of President Morales as they did with the Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Imbeciles! A population which is 70% indigenous is perfectly within its rights to democratically elect one of its own to determine the destiny of the nation.

Scandalously the press discusses Morales' leadership of coca growers associations as though we were dealing with another drug trafficker. Imbeciles! The coca grown in Bolivia for thousands of years has traditionally been used in religious rituals, medicinal concoctions and even satisfying

the hunger suffered by generations of indigenous people. Moreover, in the last century the American corporations extracting tin distributed portions of coca to the miners so that by chewing it, they could prolong the long hours of work in the hellish mines.

What Morales is demanding is just fair: the production of coca leaf to be respected for the indigenous population's and eradicated from the drugs traffic.

There are those who, with insolence, speculate about whether to worry about President Morales cordial links with President Castro and President Chávez, as if Morales did not have the intellingence to lead the destinies of the people without foreign interference. Swine questioning that is! What a lack of respect for the solidarity between the peoples of our America! And this comes from those who do not question the links of Bush's ancesters with Nazi Germany or currently, Bush –father and son- with Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein.

hey should not mention either, that the election of Morales – challenging the stratagems of the White House against him – it is like a democratic slap to the hegemony of Washington in this hemisphere. Simultaneously, his convincing victory symbolises a new push back to Washington's strategy of free trade agreements aimed at perpetuating the exploitation of Latin America. What turns this victory even sweeter is that as a leader of the Movement to Socialism, his victory gives imperialism a beating.

There will be radical changes. Even if there are internal pressures to nationalise the wealthy deposits of hydrocarbons now owned by foreign corporations and national oligarchs, Morales is willing to discuss their administration with the corporations. It is high time. These natural resources are able to radically change the living standards of a people submerged in misery during 180 years of independence and currently with more than 60% of unemployment. Morales is the ideal leader to readjust this shameful situation.

Bolivia hit by floods

On 1 February, President Evo Morales defined the situation, caused by the heavy rain in different departments of the country, as dramatic, and ordered the immediate provision of assistance to the victims.

After flying over various areas affected by the flooding and after having met with the people, the Head of State arranged the humanitarian support and equipment to be deployed to assist the thousands stranded by the water.

Evo Morales released a statement describing the scenes from the affected areas: "The stables look like swimming pools, the grazing lands, as well as the soy and cane crops, have become lakes, the village of Fortín Libertad has become a river."

Together with Santa Cruz prefect, Rubén Costas, Evo Morales flew in a helicopter over the majority of the flooded areas, which came as a result of the Río Grande river and its tributaries overflowing. He indicated that the evacuation of the affected families has become one of the highest priority tasks, as many communities have been cut off from land and communication due to the advance of the water.

As the rescue operation is becoming more complex Evo has recommended the use of boats, as it is becoming impossible to clear any pathway with heavy machinery.

According to the Bolivian media, refugee camps were established in villages such as Los Troncos, Cuatro Cañadas, Okinawa and San Julián. There, the civil guard, together with the armed forces, set up tents to provide shelter, food and medical assistance for anyone arriving at these sites.

Meanwhile the EFE agency reported that the United States President, George W. Bush, had called his Bolivian counterpart. An official spokesman in La Paz stated that the conversation was "very formal" and did not touch upon "specific topics."



A medic from the Henry Reeve Brigade gets ready to leave Cuba

Cuba sends medical support

On 1 February, the national television news service made the following statement:

"At 10 am, an IL-62 plane left from La Havana to Bolivia carrying 15.7 tons of medicines, 299 backpacks and 40 tents. A Cuban medical brigade of the Henry Reeve International Medical Contingent will employ these resources, comprising of 140 medicine specialists, who will leave for Bolivia in the next few hours in prompt response to the international appeal for help, which was launched by President Morales. The brigade's aim is to assist the Bolivian people in the areas affected

by the natural disaster provoked by the heavy rains in the last few days. Both the material damage and the number of victims are mounting. Further cooperation measures are being evaluated by our country."

As reported in that statement, at 3 am of 2 February a Cubana de Aviación plane left for Bolivia, with 140 doctors of the Henry Reeve Contingent on board.

The doctors are specifically trained to work in emergency situations such as these, and are equipped with medicines and the necessary resources in their backpacks.

Linking alternatives in Europe

Andy Higginbottom

ienna, Austria is perhaps an unlikely place for a critical meeting on Latin America, but the cycles of the political calendar have made it so. The LA-EU summit promises to be a highly political contest. The EU is impatiently pressing Latin American governments to open up their markets even more to European capital. The pressure is directed especially at MERCOSUR - the economic zone grouping Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. EU trade commissioner and former Blairite minister Peter Mandelson is pushing the MERCOSUR governments to accept his version of 'free trade'. While many incumbent Latin American presidents may not come in this election year, both Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales are expected to attend Vienna with a very different agenda.

he EU's project is the same as it has been pushing at the WTO, to open opportunities in the south on public services and intellectual property rights without making serious concessions to open its own markets, in particular to scrap the system of agricultural subsidies. The EU wants its own version of ALCA (the Spanish and Portuguese acronym for the Free Trade Area of the Americas, FTAA), the US grand project for the Americas. Yet ALCA stalled due to a combination of mobilisation from the mass movement and opposition from Brazil and Venezuela, and was finally buried at the summit of American governments in Mar del Plata, Argentina last November (see report in FLA 2). The EU hopes to use it's economic weight and diplomatic wiles to succeed where Bush so patently failed.

he EA 2 counter summit has been convened by social movements from both continents working together for the past two years in an organic and democratic consultation. The event carries forward the debate that Hugo Chávez raised at the World Social Forum in Caracas, is it enough to have a forum for social movements to exchange experiences and ideas, or has the time come to go on the offensive and find a common programme of struggle against imperialism? The movements of Latin America will be meeting in Havana 12 - 15 April to carry forward the idea of an anti-imperialist united front in their continent. In this context, EA 2 has a dual role: to create a space for political dialogue between the movements from the two regions; and to begin to concretise a common programme against Europe's scheming to plunder Latin America.

t is possible that the progressive governments of Latin America may secure some tactical advantage from European governments to face of US aggression, but the strategy must be to strengthen an alliance with social forces in Europe that oppose the EU's corporate-led agenda. Conversely, we on the left and in progressive movements in the EU need to mobilise solidarity with the Latin Americans and unite in determined opposition to our own multinationals' blatant economic imperialism.

Yes to friendship of the peoples! No to Europe's ALCA!



Christopher Columbus takes "possesion" of America

he fourth Summit between the political and economical leaders of Latin America, the Caribbean countries (LAC) and the European Union (EU) will take place in Vienna from May 10th to 13th. This summit which was initiated in 1999 represents the main political inter-governmental platform between both continents. Parallel to the official summit social movements and non-governmental organisations from both regions will organise a summit which is named "Linking Alternatives 2" (Enlazando

Europe's historical debt to Latin America and the Caribbean countries because of three centuries of colonial exploitation includes not only the genocide of various indigenous peoples, but also the appropriation of the wealth of the subcontinent. In spite of the countless struggles and resistance movements that have marked the history of Latin America, the sovereignty of the peoples and countries is weaker than ever. Besides, the processes of relative democratisation that are taking place in the "New Continent" are extremely fragile and need strengthening and support. Across Latin America and the Caribbean countries the majority of people live in extreme poverty and furthermore Latin American countries continue to experience marginalisation, dispossession and repression. While the crimes of the elite are treated with impunity, mobilization of the poor and social protest are criminalized...

During the past decade, the EU and the majority of the LAC governments have pursued far-reaching bi-regional and bi-lateral agreements giving legitimacy to the activities of transnational corporations (TNCs). Even though these agreements include sections on co-operation and development, they have been principally shaped to match the priorities of the European corporations and are subordinated to economic and commercial interests. This is particularly the case in the EU-Mexico Association Agreements, the EU-Chile Association Agreements and in the agreement currently being negotiated between the EU and Mercosur. These agreements reflect the priorities of the European TNCs and their trade and investment liberalisation agenda by incorporating rules on trade, investment, intellectual property, and services. The incorporation of these rules subordinates national legislation and promotes intense rivalry among workers in the interests of higher competitiveness

Meanwhile, 'Trade, not aid', 'political dialogue', and 'co-operation' are the catchphrases which the EU uses to portray capitalism with a "human face". However, hiding behind the rhetoric of sustainable development, the defense of human rights and international co-operation, the EU is promoting the interests of the European business corporations and the big LAC exporting companies. These corporations pursue their interests at the negotiating table, particularly in the field of agriculture, services and investments.

Responding to this situation, social movements and organisations of civil society in Latin America,

66 Europe's historical debt to Latin America and the Caribbean countries because of three centuries of colonial exploitation includes not only the genocide of various indigenous peoples, but also the appropriation of the wealth of the subcontinent. ??

the Caribbean and Europe have been resisting the advances of this neoliberal model, both at a regional level and within the framework of bi-regional and bi-lateral agreements. These initiatives that respond to the policies of exclusion, have been developing over the past several years within Europe and Latin America. Since May 2004, when the first Social Encounter "Enlazando Alternativas" was held in Guadalajara, organisations from both sides of the Atlantic launched a "bi-regional" network to address the many problems of the exclusion model and the neoliberal agenda.

Taking these realities into account we are convinced, just as we were two years ago, that it is necessary to look for new solidarity convergences between the people of LAC and Europe, in order to:

- create a bi-regional political dia- and polylog and, even more important, movement that brings together and mobilizes social networks, nongovernmental and human rights organizations...
- Resist and expose the neoliberal policies pursued in both continents, in particthe policies of the European corporations and governments that affect LAC.
- Develop agenda common projects alternatives and
- Grant a broad participation and mobilise social movements from both regions to take part in this event to work and debate the topics that will be discussed during the official summit together and generate a critical voice with alternative proposals to the current EU-LAC policies.
- Encourage joint spaces of analysis on EU-LAC relations, particularly on the activities of the multi-

We will question and analyse the agreements and treaties between the EU and the Latin American countries. Development and militarisation policies in both continents will also be addressed, discussed and not only criticized, but according to the idea of Linking Alternatives other possibilities should be shown.

The final event will take place on May 13th, 2006 in the form of a public gathering and declaration in Vienna to show the world the unity and common will within the diversity of social, political, feminist, environmentalist and anti-racist struggles in LAC and Europe.

Another World is possible! Let us build it

Interested in Participating? The Colombia Solidarity Campaign and several British NGOs are sending delegations to EA2. We encourage participation by individuals, and local as well as national groups. For more information and registration details: http://www.alternativas.at/ English/indexenglish.htm

Session of the Permanent Peoples Tribunal Políticas Neoliberal Policies and European Transnationals in Latin America and the Caribbean



E.U.nderdevelopment

How Europe too underdevelops Latin America by Andy Higginbottom

here is a widespread misconception that it is only the United States that acts as an imperial power towards Latin America and the Caribbean. The countries of the European Union (EU) are instead generally depicted as respectful partners in development. Yet the truth is that European multinational corporations (MNCs) make enormous profits from Latin America, and it is fundamentally their interests that shape EU policy towards the region.

Karl Marx showed how workers are exploited under capitalism: the workers are not paid the equivalent of the value that they really add in production, rather the workers' wages pay for the commodities purchased to bring them back to work the next day (and the next generation), which is a far lesser amount. The payment of a wage hides the exploitation. The rate of exploitation increases to the degree that the workers efforts create more value than they are paid for.

If workers in the Northern countries are exploited, what can be said of the workers in the global South? In the 1960s writers in the radical 'dependency' school in Latin America and elsewhere argued that the poor countries of the South are exploited by the rich countries of the North, that there is a transfer of resources from the 'developing' South to the 'developed' North. The South is poor precisely because it continues to be underdeveloped by exploitative relationships within the world system. According to the 'dependists', the Southern periphery nations are dependent, they do not control their destiny in a world division of labour that serves the rich metropolitan nations.

Both these insights run counter to conventional wisdom, as disseminated in the mainstream media and education, which propaganda repeatedly tells us that capitalists provide jobs for workers, and that the North is helping the South by teaching it how to modernise. Both dimensions come together with the situation of the exploited classes in the South, and in particular with the issue of foreign investment.

Again, while conventional wisdom welcomes foreign investment as the key to development, the exploited classes have learnt to be far more sceptical about its benefits. For they are not only exploited, they are super-exploited, in that their wages are significantly lower than socially accepted norms established by their sisters and brothers in the North, and they are paid proportionately less of the value that they produce. There is here the systemic combination of national oppression with class exploitation.

How do we move forward from these general assertions to a specific analysis of the relationship between Latin America and Europe? Do these economic arguments hold true in the post 9/11 world of international relations dominated by US military power?

Mexican scholar Raúl Ornelas poses a key question, is there an economic basis for US hegemony today? By 'hegemony' is meant a combination of coercion and consensus by which the leading power succeeds in converting its concerns and projects to be those of the entire planet.

The defeat of the Soviet Union and the ending of the Cold War had by 1990 left the US in the position of world leadership - politically, culturally and militarily. But what about US economic leadership? The story of the 1990s is how the US used its powerful advantages in the other spheres to reconstruct its economic leadership

Power politics are related to economic factors, in particular the dominating presence of

multinational corporations in the world market. Ornelas argues that US post-9/11 project was not only a decision of George Bush, but reinforces a deep seated drive for expansion coming from US corporations. He analyses MNCs by country of origin and industrial sector, finding that US corporations now lead all the most dynamic and profitable sectors.

US corporations achieve higher profitability than their competitors, especially Japanese corporations. In 2000, US corporations held 39% of sales, but nearly 51% of worldwide profits. This is because US corporations are concentrated in the higher profit sectors, such as IT and electronics, which they dominate taking 61% of all profits; and oil, where US MNCs take 39% of all profits. (British MNCs are also well placed in the oil sector, where they draw 21.7% of all profits worldwide.) Ornelas concludes that US industrial corporations control key portions of the world economy, and this contributes an essential component to continuing US begemony.

By contrast, European corporations lead taking over 60% of world profits in the banking sector. Between 1990 and 2000 US banks increased their share of worldwide profits dramatically (from 8% to 22%), while Japanese big banks share collapsed (from 36% to 2%). The profit share of EU banks showed an increase as well (from 41% to 52% for banks from the top six EU countries), but far more importantly it was a share of a banking profits cake that grew nearly three times bigger in just ten years. For example, the rise in Spanish banks profits from 3% to nearly 5% of the sector does not appear too dramatic, whereas in fact it was four-fold increase in profits from \$1bn in 1990 to \$4.2bn in 2000. Britain's leading banks were an even bigger beneficiary of the 1990s

profits boom, their profits rose six-fold, reaching a massive \$12.3bn in 2000.

Ornelas argues that whereas President Clinton's policies were designed to rapidly strengthen US corporations in areas of the 'new economy' (Microsoft, Intel, AOL etc), Bush's presidency coincides with a new period in which raw US state power comes again to the fore. The post 9/11 'war on terror' is driven by the need to offset recession on the one hand, and on the other to prevent emerging economic rivals, especially China, from challenging the dominant position the US has acquired in Central

However we assess the dynamics of US policy, what does this scenario of US and European MNCs competing for world economic leadership mean for Latin America? And that in turn leads on to the really obvious yet unanswered question, the 'elephant in the room': where did the surge in industrial and banking profits come from?

he temporal pattern is one of a foreign investment boom in the late 1990s, reaching a peak in 1999 when it plummeted, and from 2003 onwards has since increased again. There was a 44% upsurge in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in 2004.

During the 6 year period 1996-2001 was triple the FDI in the preceding 6 years, 1990-1995 (see Table 4).

Now we come to the vital twist in the relative position of Europe and the US. Corporations from both the US and Europe participated in late 1990s boom, but their role as dominant source of investment reversed. While the US was the source of 71% of all FDI to the LAC region between 1990-1995, its relative share fell to little more than 36% 1996-2001. Conversely,

Chart 1: Distribution of the most important industrial corporations in the world by sector (weighted average 1980-2000)

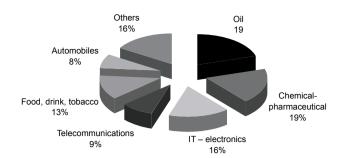


Chart 2: Distribution of the most important industrial corporations in the world by country (weighted average 1980-2000)

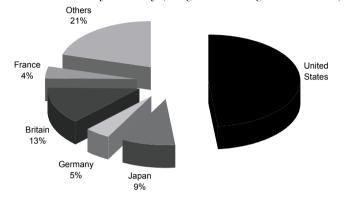
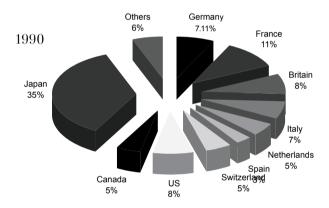


Chart 3: Principal Banks Share of Profits, by Country



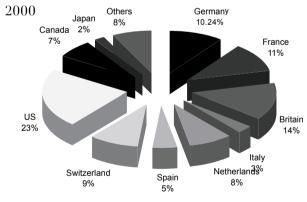


Table 4. FDI in Latin America by Country of Origin Comparison of 1996-2001 with 1990-1995

Country (Region) of Origin	1990 - 1995		1996-2001		FDI Increase: 1996-2001 compared to 1990-1995	
	FDI US \$ million	% of FDI in period	FDI US \$ million	% of FDI in period	FDI US \$ million	% of original FDI by country
Germany	3,936	5.5	3,941.5	3.6	5,010	127%
Spain	3,780	5.3	3,785.3	29.7	70,028	1,852%
France	906	1.3	907.3	8.0	18,914	2,088%
Italy	228	0.3	228.3	456.6	3,944	1,730%
Netherlands	3,630	5.0	3,635	5.4	9,859	272%
Portugal	48	0.0	48	4.4	10,851	22,606%
UK	4,338	6.0	4,344	4.9	7,831	181%
Sweden	138	0.2	138.2	0.9	2,226	1,613%
Other EU*	498	0.7	498.7	1.0	2,040	410%
EU subtotal	17,502	24.3	148,155	59.6	130,653	747%
Switzerland	966	1.3	4,605	1.9	3,639	377%
Japan	2,418	3.4	2,421.4	2.3	3,212	133%
US	51,048	71.0	51,119	36.3	39,290	77%
Total **	89,436	100.0	89,536	100.1	176,794	248%

European capital (MNCs originating in EU countries plus Switzerland) investments catapulted from 25% to over 61% of all FDI in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In terms of FDI patterns there are two broad geographic sub-regions: US corporate investments still predominate in Mexico and the Caribbean, where they seek to gain profits from low-cost maquiladora production. European corporations have a presence, they have set up production inside Mexico so that they take advantage of NAFTA non-tariff agreement to gain access into the US market, a process that was accelerated by the signing of the EU-Mexico Free Trade Agreement in 2000. Another crucial factor in Mexico's dependency is the takeover of its finance sector by the giant Spanish bank BBVA.

European corporations are relatively stronger in South America, with a drive to increase market share by buying out domestic corporations and snatching privatised services (in Brazil and Argentina especially), as well as the targeting of natural resources (in the Andean region especially) and natural resource based manufactures. Here too EU policy has sought to open up markets for its MNCs, and to reinforce the pressure from the US through the World Bank to entrench the neo-liberal competitive regime, to shift LAC countries towards export production, and to impose financial discipline no matter the social consequences. The EU is also heavily involved with the World Bank and other related institutions in a common long term strategy to restructure the very infrastructures of Latin America to be more efficient in their transfer of resources out of the region

This indicates a good reason why the ever present commercial competition between European and US corporations has not yet led to sharper rivalries between them as contending imperial powers: they are still all enjoying an investment boom - and while the profits cake keeps expanding it is more important to get in there and grab a share of the bonanza than it is to turn and fight your competitors. The easing of tension between the capital exporting powers of the North is of course at the expense of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, and will last only so long as the investments return high profit rates.

ithin the EU, by the second half of the decade Spanish corporations accounted for nearly half of all investments in LA and the Caribbean. European investment is concentrated in certain sectors opened up by aggressive neoliberal policies.

The enormous expansion of Spanish investment covered the finance, oil, telecommunications and electricity sectors, taking the opportunity of service privatizations especially. Similarly, Portuguese companies emerged from providing almost no FDI to become major investors in privatised sectors of the Brazilian economy. Between 1991 and 2002 Brazilian governments sold off over \$100 bn state owned assets, the biggest sell off in history.

French water utility companies have been another major beneficiary of the privatization bonanza across Latin America, and French corporations are major investors in the automobile sector. German corporate investments centre on automobiles and other manufacturing sectors, Italian companies focus on telecommunications, cars and food processing. The UK's investment areas are diversified across services and general manufacturing, with a strong presence in hydrocarbons (oil and gas), and mining.

isms, the combined corporate takeover of Latin America is summarised by comparing a snapshot of ownership of the region's top 500 corporations in 1990, 1999 and in 2003 (the last year for which figures are available). Incoming investment flows accumulate as 'capital stock', ownership of the enterprises of a country which is reflected in the share of profits and sales.

ECLAC, the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, states that "in 1999, after several years of sustained expansion, TNCs [transnational corporations] accounted for 43% of the sales of the region's 500 leading firms", an increase from 26% in 1990. The share of foreign corporations in sales had by 2003 declined again to 34%, but with renewed investments this should be expected to recover the upward trend.

It is important to understand that the story is not just one of foreign takeover. Although increasingly a junior partner in its alliance with the MNCs, domestic private capital too takes advantage of the imposition of the neo-liberal regime. Thus domestic capital's profit rates may increase even while its share of sales dimin-

Another factor is that, despite the wave of utility privatizations which reduced the participation of state owned corporations from 32% of sales in 1990 to 20% of sales in 1999, state corporations recovered their share to 25% by 2003. ECLAC explains this by the sharp rise in oil and gas prices that has benefited state corporations in Brazil and Venezuela, they comprise the principal area in the continent that is not appropriated by private capital.

The other significant area in which investment flows have accumulated in the banking sector, and here European and especially Spanish banks predominate.

n 1999/2000 flows of FDI fell sharply from the record levels of the late 1990s, and increased again from 2004 onwards. The UN economic commission regards this as 'a very positive sign', but the worth of more investment for the people has to be challenged.

Foreign investment continues to suck enormous profits out of Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2003 the region received US \$13.3 bn in investment income, but it paid out the far greater sum of \$71.0bn to foreign investors (made up of \$21.2bn of returns on direct investment, \$13.7bn for portfolio investment, and \$36.1bn for 'other' investments, most notably repaid loans in which European private banks feature heavily). That is, in 2003 the LAC countries experienced a net profits outflow of \$57.5 bn, about \$100 for every man woman and child in the region that year alone.

This figure corresponds to the detailed study carried out at the Autonomous University of Mexico that found that there was a net outward transfer of \$4,143 per capita between 1976 and 1997.

Colombia presents a typical example: in 2003, Uribe's first full year in office, the country's net 'investment income' (i.e. profit) was an outflow of \$3.5 billion. The profits payments to the multinationals were covered in the short term by immediate new loans, but these will have to be repaid and as such are a claim on future profits. With results like these, no wonder Uribe is the darling of international

The effect of declining terms of trade, a reduction in the relative price for exports against imports, is also to transfer wealth from the South to the North. ECLAC, the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, estimates that in 2003 the region lost the equivalent \$10.3 bn to its balance of payments (at constant 1995 prices) due to declining terms of trade. The EU countries are a major trading partner, and hence a major beneficiary of unequal exchange.

There are many other economic aspects to the transfer of resources that have not been touched on here, e.g. internal pricing mechanisms, the extraction of rents from technological advantages and so on, so if anything the sum of the above figures is an underestimate, which in any case does not address the many qualitative environmental and social consequences. It amounts to nearly \$70bn transferred yearly out of Latin American and the Caribbean. Certainly a substantial proportion of this comes directly to European corporations and contributes indirectly to the continent's more benign social climate.

he figures laid out here are somewhat sketchy and already out of date, they provide no more than a starting point for serious investigation. It is a challenge to improve the figures and bring them up to date with an analysis from the perspective of social movements. Nonetheless, they are sufficient to indicate that there is a fundamentally exploitative relationship between the regions led by the profit interests of multinational corporations and banks, through which European imperialism as well as US imperialism participates in the continuing underdevelopment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Neo-liberal globalisation as a phase of imperialism is a joint enterprise, at least for the time being. Bring on the opposition.

Continued Peace laboratories

Europe's Plan Colombia from page 4

Geroid O'Loinghsigh in Colombia

he EU recognises that there are problems with the palm crops, that the peasants are vulnerable in the face of the market, particularly in the case of African palm because it is a monoculture, and because "they lack any control over other key stages which create a higher value added such as the chain of processing (extraction, refining) and the commercialisation of the final product, oil." 5 However, whilst they recognise this reality, the report's authors do not propose to do anything about it, as the problems stem in part from the free-trade policies that Chris Patten eulogises so much.

The director of the PDPMM, Francisco de Roux stated that they had plans for a a refinery. In a best case scenario it is naive to think of peasant control over the chain of production; there is absolutely no possibility of this. One only has to look at the production of coffee. Colombia is one of the three largest producers in the world in terms of volume and also in terms of value. However, Germany produces more roasted coffee (final product) than Colombia. This situation is due to the very nature of the Colombian economy as a producer of primary material. If after more than 100 years of coffee growing in Colombia neither the peasants nor the large landowners have managed a significant control over the production and exporting of roasted coffee, what possibility is there that they do so now with other products in the midst of an economic

There is another serious problem raised by the EU report which

"At the moment an accelerated process of concentration of the best lands of the region in a few hands is being developed. The drug trafficking groups and the paramilitaries launder or formalise their capital through the purchasing of estates for pasture or for large scale economic projects (African palm, cattle ranching)".6

And furthermore

'It is worth taking note that in the large productive projects, such as African palm, apart from the peasant participants there are other opposing interests amongst different actors such as the guerrillas, paramilitaries, agroindustrial producers and coca manufactures and traffickers." 7

They could hardly deny it as the paramilitaries themselves have publicly stated that they support the palm crops. Although the EU does not wish to acknowledge it, their support for the palm crops forms part of a debate on the future of Colombian agriculture and they and their intermediaries give ideological cover to the process of expansion of palm and the monoculture system.

In the case of mining, although the authors of the EU report do not recognise it, there are other interests at stake. Companies such as the Anglogold Ashanti multinational operating under the name Kedahda S.A. The report says that they EU wants to promote mining in Southern Bolívar where the largest gold deposits in the world are to be found, worked by thousands of craft miners. The report recognises that there are fears about the reinsertion of paramilitaries in the area. Their wish is that this shouldn't happen however, their policies contradict this. On the one hand the EU says that it supports the "peace process" with the paramilitaries and the EU has stated this on various occasions. For peace process they understand Santa Fe de Ralito where the paramilitary chiefs rest but from where they continue to coordinate their

his dialogue could take place in the mining zone as there is a so called Humanitarian Space there and according to the report the EU aims to strengthen
"...its organisations [of the communities] and generate spaces of dialogue and negotiation; the principal parties implicated in the conflict will be called together and establish fundamental agreements to deal with the principal causes of the conflict and generate a space to protect the life, work and education of the

communities."9 The aim according to the document is to turn Southern Bolívar into the first area without coca and without conflict which requires a regional dialogue that includes the paramilitaries. What is most worrying is that 10 years ago the paramilitaries tried to take the zone in order to hand over the mining resources to the multinational mining companies. The social organisations managed to stop the entry of the companies. However, nowadays in the context of a peace laboratory and a humanitarian space in the mining zone a new multinational is taking over the mines (see 'Gunning for Gold', this issue).

Nowadays the mobilising power of the communities is getting weaker and that of the PDPMM greater. The zone has lived through a food and medicine blockade by the paramilitaries and the state forces (now somewhat reduced). The leaders of the zone that signed the agreements with the Pastrana government in 1998 were murdered, disappeared and charged with crimes.

The offensive against the leaders hasn't ceased. The most recent arrests were carried out in October 2005 when three leaders and participants in the humanitarian space of Micoahumado, municipality of Morales, were arrested and accused of rebellion. The EU has not made any declaration on the arrests but it has done about the agreements with the paramilitaries which it supports. Money is power and the EU is clearly in favour of a dialogue with the paramilitaries and free trade.

cess with the Paramilitaries

If one wanted to set up a peace laboratory in an area hit hard by violence and where the community was organised in their own peace initiative one wouldn't choose the Magdalena Medio as first choice, but rather the Urabá region of Chocó and Antioquia. There are a number of communities there that have been resisting the paramilitaries and they are well organised. We refer to the communities of resistance in Jiguamiandó, Cacarica etc. and also San José de Apartadó. They declared themselves against the presence of any armed actor including the armed forces of the State and the police in their territories. They rejected the attempt by Uribe, when he was governor of Antioquia, to militarise their communities and involve them in the conflict on the side of the police and the army. Today, these are the same communities, particularly those of Chocó, who oppose the large paramilitary African palm projects.

And what of the EU and its peace proposals? Well it seems that inthe search for peace they are not interested in those stubborn communities that are not willing to be used for the expansion of agro- industrial capital. What the EU is interested in is not exactly peace but capitalist "development".

What will the future look like?

If Colombia and the Magdalena Medio continue along the path outlined for them by the EU, the World Bank and the USA the future will be desolate. There are already various examples of what happens when a region gambles on a monoculture and agroindustry in detriment to the peasant farming communities. It is sufficient to look at Valle de Cauca where less then 60 years ago it had a panorama of forests, rivers, animals and high level of biodiversity now replaced by the monotony of the monoculture of sugar cane.10 That change was also promoted by foreign capital.

What is at stake is not just the future of the peasant farmers, but of Colombia itself. Food sovereignty and security is at stake. The aim is for Colombia to import its food and export exotic crops such as cocoa, palm oil etc. What is stopping the EU or the USA in the future from forcing Colombia to change its policies through the threat to cut off the food supply (not produced in Colombia but imported from the USA or the EU)?

or the USA the question of feeding its population is a question of national security. "The expansion of international trade is vital for the security of the United States[...] The trade agreements serve the same purpose as the security pacts during the Cold War." 11 Although the EU isn't as forthright in what it says its support for the attempt to defeat the despotic regime of Saddam Hussein through a food blockade shows that it understands the power of control over food. The Colombian peasant farmer, self sufficient in food crops or at least not totally dependent on imported products, upsets that relationship.

But if one wants to believe in the bonafides of the EU's productive proposals, one has to ask why does the EU link its proposals for helping the farmer to accepting a process of negotiation with the paras? If they really wanted to help the poor there would be no need to link it to the process with the paras and neither would there be any need to tie it to Colombian support for the EU positions in the WTO negotiation rounds. However, these links are made because what the EU is doing is disputing terrain with the USA for the future of the Colombian market and the political domination of such a strategic country. In the sense that Plan Colombia was a disguised strategy to dominate the country, the peace laboratories are Europe's Plan Colombia.

Notes

1 Reis, Bettina (2004) La Estrategia de cooperación de la UE en Colombia con énfasis en los laboratorios de paz: objetivos, resultados, resultados, viabilidad y perspectivas.

2 Rudgvist, A. and Van Sluys, F. (2005) Informe Final de Evaluación de Medio Término Laboratorio de Paz del Magdalena Medio at web page 3 See Ó Loingsigh, G. (2004) La Estrategia Integral del Paramilitarismo en el Magdalena Medio de Colombia en página www.redcolombia.org/libro or www.delcol.cec.eu.int/

4 Uribe cited by Mondragón, H. (2005) Efectos del modelo autoritario de Álvaro Uribe Vélez en los derechos de los campesinos in El Campo: Una Carta Por Jugar 5 Rudqvist, A. and Van Sluys, F. (2005), p 26

6 Op cit, p 21 7 Op cit, p 43 8 Op cit, p 24

9 Op cit, p 19 emphasis added

10 Giraldo, R. (2005) Reconstrucción del paisaje vallecaucano en la percepción que de él tuvieron los autores vernáculos del siglo xix y principios del xx

11 Trade Promotion Authority cited in Suárez, A. op cit p 47.

Patriot Plan bombs La Macarena Natural Park

displaced people.

La Sierra de la Macarena is considered a natural lung for the country for it is rich in biodiversity and water. In January the government launched the "Green Colombia" operation, which involves the manual eradication of 4,598 hectares of coca fields. However, two thirds of the 930 contract eradicators have deserted due to the dangerous situation. Some suggested that these auxiliaries are 'demobilised' paramilitaries taken into the area in order to fight the guerrillas.

"These are aggressive military actions that violate the Biologic Diversity Treaty ratified by Colombia in the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and International Agreements and Protocols that protect the civil population", say the representatives of Colombian environmentalist group Iniciativa Ambiental. Such a disproportionate and indiscriminate measure, they say, "[...] responds to the United States hegemonic interests [...] that put in danger the life, the biodiversity, the sovereignty and in general, the natural patrimony."

Colombia elections

from cover amnestied guerrilla movement M-19, saw his chances disappear after he withdrew his candidature and then revoked the decision, and after a dispute occurred between the tendencies following the Mayor of Bogotá Lucho Garzón and Congress representantive Gustavo Petro over candidate lists for the Senate.

At the close of this edition the PDA had obtained 915,000 votes, the largest number that the Colombian left has ever managed in legislative elections. The PDA has so far obtained 11 Senators, two more than in the previous assembly, and 8 Representantives

Nevertheless, the point to highlight is the massive abstention, with only 10,800,000 votes from an electoral register of 26,593,000 people, that is to say an official abstention rate of around 60% (closer to 70% if the approximately five million unregistered are taken into account). This means that the Colombian government continues to be a government of the minority, elected by just 23% of registered voters, a little less than 20% of the adult population.

The irony of this categoric victory for the uribista parties is that after the call to purge candidates with links with the paramilitaries and financing their campaigns with money from narcotraficking, they simply moved from one uribista formation to another and were elected without problems, such that the estimate of 35% of parliamentarians aligned with the paramilitaries may actually increase in the next legislature, as confirmed by paramilitary chief Vicente Castaño.

Preview A 11 - 1

All the voices

The refreshing southerly winds that have been blowing through Latin America, seem to be arriving in the jealously guarded electromagnetic airwaves of London. And now you can hear a whole choir of voices, accents from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina every Sunday between 9 and 11 in the morning on 1503AM or at www. soundradio.info (click on Sound Radio Stream). Under the direction of Nelly Mosquera, Juan Carlos Piedra and Teresa Perez, "Todas las Voces Todas" has become a genuine reference for the Latin American community which until now has been forced to rely on existing programs, predominantly Colombian, of the government line, religious or run for personal interests, which obviously is far from what the growing and hard working Latin community needs.

"Inform through entertainment or entertain through information" is



according to Teresa Perez, "the principle objective that we have been aiming for in the six months of our existence. We have aired programs

with artists and musicians, trade unionists, professional politicians, community workers and everyday people- not only a friendly voice, but a way in which someone's voice can be heard by all their friends too."

With little publicity, and financed through the efforts of the promoters and a network of supporters, the program has something of the miners radio in Bolivia (size aside) about it, using megaphones, Bolivian miners were able to create a network for organization and constructing spaces that has now, for the first time in 500 years, allowed them to take their destiny into their own hands.

Communication, just like unity, is a powerful force, and we hope that our readers will listen to "Todas las Voces Todas", will support it, critique it, promote it and although it might be from your warm bed on a cold and lazy Sunday morning, you can find out how Latin America has woken up, and how we here can help.



International Film Festival

LATIN AMERICAN FILMS AT HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH 10TH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL March 15 25 2006, London www.hrw.org



STATE OF FEAR Pamela Yates, Paco de Onís and Peter Kinoy—USA/Perú—2005 Reveals how fear of terror can undermine democracy, exploring the escalating violence in the Andean nation of Perú which culminated in a virtual dictatorship where official corruption replaced the rule of law.



Nomads find a home in the arts

Andrea Cabrera Luna

ew Generation, a group of artists who have created an open forum where people can exchange artistic skills, gathers daily in Vauxhall Community Center, in London. They consider themselves nomads: they do not have a fixed performance space and they wander from place to place, as if looking for a promised land.

It all started when Laura Villegas, from Colombia, decided there should be more than TV for young refugees who do not have the money to pay for an artistic education. 'They find it difficult to know where their place is in a new culture; that makes them feel alienated and depressed,' says Villegas.

The project has been running since 1997, but things were not easy at the beginning. After the first workshop that she organized, the young boys and girls realized they were not able to

achieve the strong sense of cooperation and responsibility required and so they abandoned the project.

Only a 13-year-old girl, Marta Callejas believed in Villegas. The two women worked together inspiring others to join them.

Today, New Generation's workshops are given by volunteers and they include art, drama, guitar and drumming class as well as 'capoeira' (a Brazilian martial art). They believe in giving room to creativity and personal initiative. 'The objective is to teach students how to design a project, how to get the budget and then produce a result,' says Villegas.

Refugees from Rwanda, Somalia, Palestine, Mexico and Venezuela have been part of the group, and though many of them have moved to other things they have been given inspiration to follow their own path.

Identity is a theme they handle with care: they know where they come from

but they also know they have to adapt to a new society, without ceasing to be who they are. They use an aphorism to illustrate their philosophy: 'To respect differences and the right to disagree'.

The group does not have a leader and anyone can make a proposal. They see their pieces as works in progress in which things can change according to the needs of the present moment. The last play they staged, 'The Surprising Death of Joselito', was collectively created. It portrays the life of a man who goes through different situations, starting in the Baranquilla carnival in Colombia and ending up in Iraq, where Joselito is tortured by soldiers.

Working together strengthens the voice of New Generation and gives them a sense of community that is essential to their lives.

The NG are based at Vauxhall Community Gardens, 100 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5EL. Percussion workshops every Monday 7pm.



KILLER'S PARADISE Giselle Portenier—U.K./Canada—2006
The award winning team of Olenka Frenkiel and Giselle Portenier (Murder in Purdah) return with this shocking story of the brutal killings of women in Guatemala.



COMPADREMikael Wiström - Perú/Sweden - 2004 In 1974, the Swedish photographer and journalist Mikael Wiström traveled across Perú chronicling the lives of people who literally had nothing and were forced to live off what they could find in rubbish dumps.

Reviews

Books



Afro-Latin Americans Today: No Longer Visible Minority Rights Group £12.95

Afro-Latin Americans have challenged their oppression and seen some of their culture absorbed into mainstream Latin American life. However most still struggle with political and socioeconomic marginalization. No longer invisible, they have examined their history and experiences from slavery to modern times.

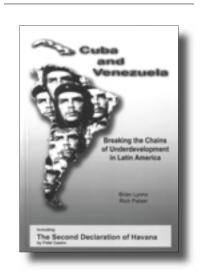
Written by various scholars from North America, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe, this book charts the Afro-Latin experience from the earliest years of slavery to contemporary social and political struggles and achievements, focusing on the African descent minority groups and their influences in the region. The reader is introduced to the sociological difficulties of analysing and categorising race in a region that uses race mixing or "mestizaje" as a testament to social and political equality. A historical background of the slave trade, the impact this population had on the colonial societies of Central and South America as well as the Spanish ruled islands in the Caribbean is provided, in addition, the growing political awareness and organising strategy of Afro-Latin Americans from each country to combat the state sponsored invisibility where they make up a large and significant minority.

On Colombia, the authors Jaime Arocha and Nina de Friedemann have presented a well researched and documented analysis of the position of Afro-Colombians from the colonial period to the contemporary situation. It acknowledges their cultural and physical contributions to Colombian society and traces Afro-Colombian forms of organised resistance in the slave era, and their current attempts to gain political and economic representation and recognition. Parallels are made between black and indigenous land claims and the reaction of local, regional and national power structures to these claims. They highlight black Colombians strong ties to the lands where they settled 400 years before and after the formal abolition of slavery, their talent as cultivators and keepers of the biodiversity structure in El Choco and Cauca in the Pacific region. The creation of Law 70 in 1991, which finally, in theory, recognized their legal rights to the land was the culmination of the immense struggle to be legally recognized as a people with equal rights in the Colombian

constitution.

Unfortunately, as the chapter ends in the mid nineties, further research is necessary to show how the US sponsored war on "drugs" and now terrorism", is currently devastating all rural and smaller urban communities, especially the Afro-Colombian and indigenous in these resource rich regions, and to examine what method is used to fight the powerful national and international interests. The latest strategy has been the joining of Black and indigenous communities claims. to defend Law 70 and protect the hard won gains. The history of Black people in Colombia, as elsewhere in Central and South America, is the history of a struggle for freedom and land and against discrimination and invisibility. This is a timely and necessary study of a neglected and significant regional minority and should serve as a great source of reference.

Lillian C Ofole



Cuba and Venezuela: **Breaking the Chains of Underdevelopment in Latin America** Brian Lyons and Rich Palser North London Cuba Solidarity Campaign £5.50

ow has a small and impoverished country like Ĉuba succeeded in giving its population the best health care and education in Latin America, indeed in some respects better than those obtaining in the US or the UK? How has Venezuela, previously a glaring example of corruption and inequality, succeeded in eradicating illiteracy and bringing health care to the poor in the past six years? And why are these two countries the focus of so much hostile media attention?

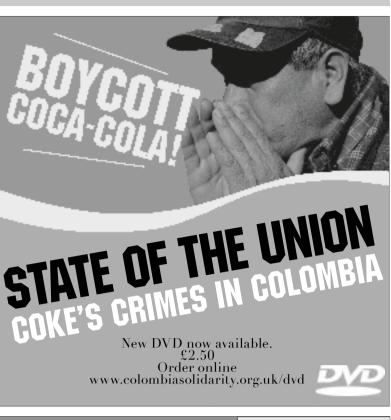
A new book by Brian Lyons and Rich Palser, Cuba and Venezuela: Breaking the Chains of Underdevelopment in Latin America, suggests answers to these questions and makes it clear why Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez are the object of so much venom in Washington. US hostility to these two leaders and the revolutions they represent has nothing to do with democracy (as the media would have you believe) and everything to do with the subversive example of an alternative model of development which serves the interests of ordinary people rather than transnational corporations.

In Part 1 Lyons and Palser provide good brief introduction to "problems of underdevelopment in Latin America", summarising the history of colonialism, exploitation and dependency which explains the paradox of mass poverty in this wealthy continent. They analyse the origins of the debt crisis and the perverse effects of the neo-liberal policies favoured by the IMF and the dominant powers, which led directly to the collapse of the "model democracy" which Venezuela supposedly enjoyed from 1958 to the 1980s. This collapse and the imposition of IMF cutbacks in social services produced the Caracazo riots of 1989 followed by Chávez' abortive 1992 uprising and then his election in 1998.

Part 2 provides a vivid account of the intense class conflict affecting Venezuela since 1998, including the short-lived anti-Chávez coup of April 2002 and the bosses' lockout of late 2002-2003. It also gives a fascinating vision of workers' struggles for control of industry and peasants' struggles for land, and the contradictions within the chavista movement as it strives to further the "Bolivarian revolution" despite capitalist hostility and sometimes sabotage from within its own ranks. The authors then go on to provide a brief account of the Barrio Adentro health mission and the Robinson, Rivas and Sucre educational missions introduced by the Chávez government since 2003, under the sub-heading "Venezuela Calls, Cuba Answers". Finally Part 3 gives a brief summary of the extraordinary achievements of Cuban socialism, followed by the text of the 1962 "Second Declaration of Havana", a call for popular self-determination and socialism which has lost none of its relevance more than 40 years later.

This book is an excellent and timely response to the barrage of hostile propaganda against Cuba and Venezuela in the media. It should be required reading for anyone who is just beginning to learn about these inspiring revolutionary processes or who believes the lies about repression and dictatorship under Castro and Chávez. If it has one defect, it is - for this reviewer at least its underestimation of the radical leadership of Hugo Chávez and the remarkable achievements of the Bolivarian revolution, which has certainly received magnificent assistance from Cuba but has its own dynamic and is transforming Venezuela both from above and from below. To say that Chávez and his Movement conceived 'a revolution from the top down, one that was to be made for the people but not by the people" (p. 36) is simply wrong: one of Chávez' main inspirations was La Causa Radical, the Radical Cause movement which before it betrayed its principles in the 1990s led the way in promoting the ideas of workers' autonomy and direct participatory democracy now so much in vogue in the anti-globalisation movement. Chávez himself never tires of insisting that the revolution belongs to the people, that while he and his movement have taken the lead it is the people themselves who must take control. This is why Venezuela is so inspiring, and together with Cuba, has inspired the continent-wide movement for liberation which is now shaking the whole of Latin America.

Diane Raby



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Concerts

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festival of art, music, Major film, theatre and dance celebrating Tropicália – the cultural revolution that redefined Brazilian art, politics, music and fashion in the 1960s and beyond. More info: www.barbican.org.uk/tropicalia/home

23 March (Thurs) London

Bulb Magazine and Amnesty International present an urban Latin Music night featuring live music from the best Latin Hip Hop crews and Urban Acts plus DJs offering a mix of Reggeaton, Latin Hip Hop, R&B, old skool salsa and Latinbeats.

April La Línea

A festival presenting new trends and moves in music of Latin origin. It takes place in a variety of central London venues

More info: www.rfh.org.uk

May

Tour of Colombian hip-hop and ska groups (tbc). Zona Marginal, from Cali, on their second tour in two years and first chance to see Skartel, from Bogotá, in the UK.

If you are interested in hosting a concert or helping out with the organisation of the tour, please contact: london_colom biasolidarityc@yahoo.co.uk

Conferences

21 March (Tue)

"Exporting the World

Social Forum Process: Brazilian Struggles and Ideals Reinterpreted University of Manchester

23 March (Thurs)

Football World Cup Trophy sponsored by Coca-Cola visits London. Join us at 3pm in Billingsgate (near Liverpool Street) to protest against Coca-Cola.

28-30 March

Say No to Coca-Cola!

NUS Conference in Blackpool.

12 April (Wed)

LAB author John Crabtree will speak at a discussion on the Peruvian elections at Chatham House, London.

International

1-2 April

Peoples Tribunal on Food Sector Multinationals and Human Rights. Bogotá, Colombia

We look forward to our delegates' reports from the Tribunal! Next Popular Tribunal will be on gold and coal mining in November 2006, biodiversity on 10 December 2006, public services in March 2007, indigenous peoples in May 2007, a National Tribunal on 22 July 2007 and on oil in June 2007. These are a series of public tribunals on the theme Multinationals and Crimes Against Humanity. Anyone interested in working on one of these themes and accompanying the relevant tribunal in Colombia should contact the Colombia Solidarity Campaign: info@colombiasolidarity.org.uk

10-13 May

Linking Alternatives 2

Popular counter-summit to EU and Latin American heads of government in Vienna, Austria. **April 2006**

European Social Forum, Athens 10-13 May 2006

European Latin America Social Movement Network Contact: ceciliaolivet@tni.org



The exhibition 'Impunity' shown at the Oxo Tower gallery in March, by Carlos Reyes-Manzo, presented 40 black and white photographs putting a spotlight on the murders of women in Mexico and Guatemala.

Oxford branches out

New CSC group launched in Oxford

Peter Bearder

he inspiration for the new CSC group came from a Coca-Cola workshop at a People and Planet conference in Oxford. Eurípedes Yance from the SINALTRAINAL union spoke about conditions of his workmates, assassinations and the corporate enslavement of his country. This provided the subject of the first public meeting in February; Coca-Cola on Trail, appropriately held in The Old Courtroom of the Town Hall. A young audience of both town and gown came to hear Campaign Secretary, Andy Higginbottom and Ray Rogers from the Killer Coke Campaign, in the USA. They talked about the boycott and what it meant to U.S students that Oxford colleges were kicking out Coke.

Richard Solly (CSC's expert on extractive industries) was also active in setting up the group. A week later he spoke at another Colombia Oxford meeting in conjunction with Peace Brigades International and Fellowship of Reconciliation. This was to mark the anniversary of the massacre in the San José Peace Community. It was great to see CSC members come up from Bristol and London to show their support for the new branch and learn about the ongoing struggle of this fragile yet brave community.

Aside from the large pool of students, Oxford holds a large activist base and many Latin America solidarity groups. Networking with these groups provided useful contacts and generated a lot of interest in future cooperation. The challenge will be to bring in students, something which we had some success with in the run up to the NUS conference and the Coca-Cola vote. A recent meeting saw a lot of ideas for the new group and we look forward to capitalising on the interest generated from these initial meetings.

Watch this space. ox_colombiasolidarity

@hotmail.com

Education not for sale in Bristol

Oliver Edwards

he newly formed student branch of the Campaign made their presence known in the University of Bristol earlier in February, standing in the centre of the University at lunchtimes from 6th-10th February. The students intend to do the same in the University of the West of England soon. In the UK, in less than 10 years, we have moved from a situation where students got paid, through grants, to go to university, to one now where they face fees of £3000 per year. Who knows where the privatisation

of education will end in the UK, as we watch it creeping into the primary sector today

In Colombia, the issues are the same. but in a radically different context. Public universities are being replaced by private ones at an alarming rate, from over 90% of universities being public 10 years ago, to under 25% today. Those universities that remain face increasing pressure directly from central government through huge budget cuts, that have forced many to close. In the Colombian context, students also face repression from the para-state that kills and threatens

the lives of anyone that is critical of

cies. Surely, the university should be a space for autonomous critical thought, without fear of intimidation and assassination?

The Higher Education Delegation of 13 students and academics, that visited public universities across Colombia in September 2005, corroborated this picture first-hand, from the staff, students and university workers affected directly. This was highlighted by the death of Jhony Silva in Universidad del Valle in Cali, shot by ESMAD (riot police) inside the grounds of the university, half an hour after delegates left the university.



London Branch

Public Meetings:

Held at 7pm at the Union Tavern, 52 Lloyd Baker Street, London EC1. Thurs 23 March

Future Dates

Please see our website for more Info on upcoming events in London: colombiasolidarityc@ vahoo.co.uk

Bristol Branch

Public Meetings:

Wednesday evenings, alternating admin meetings with reading groups and discussion on

Colombia and related issues. **Upcoming Bristol events:**

Please contact the Bristol branch for future events and meetings. They can be contacted on the following email

bristolcolombiasolidarity@gmail.

Other Branches

Oxford

Peter Bearder ox_colombia@hotmail.com

South Wales

Max Fuller max.fuller@btopenworld.com

Liverpool

Paul Grunnill Paul.grunnill@btopenworld.com

Barbara Scott Barbara@barbarascott.co.uk

Nottingham

Gail nottscsc@yahoo.co.uk

Plymooth

tstaunton@aol.com

Delegations

June-July 2006 **Delegation to Colombia**

On 23, 24 and 25 June the Third National Encounter of Victims of Crimes Against Humanity, Genocide and Serious Human Rights Violations takes place in Bogotá, organised by the Movement of Victims of State-Sponsored Crimes

Colombia Solidarity Campaign is organising a delegation to attend this event and visit the projects of other social organisations in the country.

If you would like to participate please contact:

london_colombiasolidarityc@yahoo.



Delegation to Colombia August 2005

Farsa Electoral de Uribe



informantes de los organismos del armado y no asumir la función de por declararse neutral al conflicto Apartadó, está siendo exterminada comnuique qe bus qe zun jose qe y amenazando a los disidentes; la tares, masacrando, desapareciendo elecntan muy bien los paramiliauxiliares de la guerrilla, señal que humanos son a ojos del régimen, izquierda y defensores de derechos calistas, activistas políticos de

a retirarse sin que caiga el telón, parece que ha comprendido los trucos sucios del Ilusionista.

gata" le dio una platica para sos-tener el circo. El público empieza

sabía desde el comienzo de su rei-nado, pero solo ahora que ha sido detenida, el ha admitido que "La c....

que quiera con solo un pase... d magia. El Mesías-candidato lo sabía dosdo el errri

la policía y arresta a Enilce Muñoz, la equilibrista que baila en la cuerda floja. Es "La gata", la gata golosa, la más consentida del mago porque tiene el poder envidiable de hacer los billetes

cosas se complican, en plena fun-ción del circo electoral, aparece

el principito con gesto mimoso. Esto es solo un truquito, Pero las

perder los 25 millones que diste para comprar tu candidatura, dice

encontramos un cupito, no vas a mientras pasa el chaparrón y te

No te preocupes Rocío, no soy un filibustero, será por unos diítas

mente porque ha sido expulsada por Uribe Primo, un mago menor

Arias, una de las mejores acróba-tas del mago, llora desconsolada-

público que al parecer empieza a despertar del letargo. Rocío A inser una del letargo. Rocío

uribista para confusión del gran

que prefiere perder la acróbata estrella que perder la visa USA

que ahonda y perpetúa los factores la población civil, un ingrediente seis meses de gobierno. A pocos u omisión el Estado comete contra de lesa humanidad que por acción solo un fracaso de la política de víctimas, para quienes no hay rismo y afrenta inverosímil a las manipulado el tema de la impunidad del narcoparamilita-I presidente Uribe ha jurídico hecho a la medida de la Ley de Justicia y Paz, un engendro nca de sus ciudadanos si aplica el frentes que siguen con su orgía

de violencia.

ntante su campaña

Uribe Vélez dijo que el entonces candidato para la presidencia,

eron de la noche a la mañana en de los paramilitares y la inforque han sembrado las acciones mesiánico, ayudado por el terror ganar la reelección, el señor Uribe que lo apoyaron. Con su discurso del territorio nacional. Buscando los familiares de los congresistas y consulados en todo el mundo a administración pública, embajadas tiendo prebendas y puestos en la clientelista más avieso, reparcsmpeón de los corruptos y el de reelección, se convirtió en el lograr la aprodación del proyecto del Plan Colombia, con 17 mil los corruptos", sin embargo, para su campaña dijo "que tiemblen sus intereses personales. Durante por encima de la ley de acuerdo a una figura autoritaria que se ubica broceso se na mostrado como es, reelección inmediata. Y en ese un cambio que le permitía la modificó la Constitución del 91, embargo a mitad de su periodo, la democracia en Colombia", sin la reelección era un "peligro para

prometió acabarla en sus primeros derrota de la guerrilla. Por eso Uribe paz del gobierno, sino un crimen la paz de Colombia se reduce a la visión simplista del problema, que justicia ni reparación. Esto no es haciendo creer con esa paz para llegar al poder, social para todos. principio de la equidad y la justicia de muerte. Todo por cuenta de la

mucho después de haber iniciado

meses de terminar su mandato y

ำองอากษ อกษ sing əb noisurtenos ับ ูนอุ๋ อุเนอนุซกเุราช ndเวเเมทd ənb pppəisos vun əp sрэцрлэошәр *Қ* ripektades čivijes gos dekęcyos X jas อp ดาวาวมอใจ ดันอาสี un əp oppijnsəx jə opoj əjun sə zvd v7

han 'desmovilizado', la mitad de oficiales de prensa ha polarizado 26 mil que hasta el momento se mación sesgada de los medios de paz. 15 mil 'paras' se convirtiquiere mostrar resultados tangibles aciones a todo lo largo y ancho gobierno, incrementando sus oper-"seguridad democrática" del propinado duros golpes a la política solo siguen vivas, sino que le ha de acabar con las FARC, estas no soldados en el sur del país tratando

> negociación coyuntural de una rendición o una sacar del teatro de la infamia a sus esa percepción ha sido elevada a el Plan Patriota, parte fundamental

"Olla podrida", llama el columni-sta Alberto Aguirre en la revista Cromos de Colombia a la actual Mo da crédito a las sabias proezas de este prestidigitador maqui-avélico. Un gran ilusionista, no Poy duda concluye el múblico que estupetacto aplaude con hilaridad. rsbartaco 0)51) WU O(10T, A) (MO) WE JASIO) ELE ELE (O) CID (M) garantiza la convivencia pacídemocrático verdaderamente

saltimbanquis malabaristas, los 'paras' congresistas y chivos expiatorios que deben ser expul-sados, entiéndase trasladados, de una tolda uribista a otra tolda de las armas. con la derecha la mano del Comi-sionado de Paz, con la izquierda, solo se les vio entregar la mitad de las armas Caballero, mientras estrechaban

los organismos de seguridad del

porque estas fueron fabricadas por

absueltas por falta de pruebas o

personas que después deben ser

țica de las capturas masivas de

social; se ha vuelto normal la prâc-

nalizado la protesta y el movimiento

terrorismo. De hecho, se ha crimi-

señalándola como simpatizante del

sido la de satanizar la oposición,

anular sus adversarios políticos, ha

Una de sus principales formas de

que la guerrilla le mata los soldanombrado veedor de garantías de que la ley electoral se cumpla. Que esperpento! Mientras tanto, el Mago Mayor arranca matas de coca en La Macarena, al tiempo que la guerrilla le mata los soldaimiento, de aliarse con las FARC en contra de la reelección del Jefe. [Que pifial Y el otro, el Vice, es mombrado veedor de marcartes nombrado veedor de marcartes. príncipe, uno calumnia a Rafael Pardo, niño mimado del establec bistas de El Tiempo se emplean a fondo. Bufones principales del que reparte migajas y prebendas sin mezquindad. Los Santos uri-Democrática, Alas y hasta los conservadores dan la voltereta y quedan a la sombra del Redentor la maquinaria y juegan sucio con los oponentes del Jefe. Crean partidos uribistas aquí y allá, la "U", Cambio Radical, Colombia Democrética Alas y hasta los Democrética Alas y hasta los agilidad pasmosa. Las carpas del palacio de agitan con el juego ver-náculo de los títeres que manio-bran, ponen zancadillas, aceitan la magumaria y inegan sucio con Y así, el mago se mueve con una

Ahora empieza la sección de que han ido desertando porque el Estado ni los protege ni les paga. Qué tristeza! dos que protegen los 900 y tantos erradicadores manuales de coca

tregado, pero que según el mismo Antonio Caballero a los 28 mil "paras" que hasta ahora se han armadas uribistas, asi llama y extraños legitima las 'fuerzas que se tenga noticia en la historia reciente del país y en un alarde de magia inconcebible, mediante un proyecto llamado de justicia y paz y ante la incredulidad de propios y ante la incredulidad de propios

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 $_{
m S}$ olos , $_{
m c}$ buierda, solo se

un mago de los buenos y por eso hay que volver a reelegirlo como director del circo. oppuoisimo del Comisionado de ομορού του μα σεκετρά μα de recuperación económica en un país donde la mitad de la pob-lación vive por debajo de la línea de la pobresa, es definitivamente Caballevo, mientras estreomsim 19 nugas sup or9q miles de muertos, desparecidos y exiliados y que muestre indices оровалиа иру аѕ рлочр donde hay una guerra sangrienta con millones de desplazados y 20 nii, "sparad ane hasta que hace ver un oasis de paz todos los días, pues un mago que convierte los buitres en palomas, denuncia que lo van matar y seratas a sus futuros asesinos. El alcalde es asesinado y los matones nombrados en altos cargos. El muerto al hoyo y el vivo al baile. Luego se sienta a dialogar con los narco-paras, responsables de los más horrendos crímenes de due de eso tan bueno no dan hay duda, concluye el público que en medio del arrobamiento decide

gobierno de la "seguridad democ-rática". Al otro día está en un conde la transparencia y eficacia del toda laya que se atreven a difamar guntas, para regañar a los con-gresistas rebeldes y opositores de si, sin cuestionamientos ni prever al principito trabajar, trabajar y trabajar. A las 6: AM llama a luan Gosaín para que le ceda una horita del noticiero de RCN, eso percepción, ¿ilusión óptica?, de la audiencia hipnotizada con la carta marcada, el histrionismo mediante el cual se mantiene Es esa la fórmula mágica del Mesías-candidato, el truco, la

sejo comunitario donde un alcalde

llorando, gritando, saltando, mancillando, enjuiciando, seña-lando, condenando. El público su frac pretoriano, van riendo, ases que saque de la manga de oirco parata de cocceso y los circo pobre. Los payasos y los equilibristas rodean al Gran Jefe, al Mago Ubérrimo y según los as mangas de sino plata. Grotesco espectáculo, queja de que para ser candidato uribista no se necesitan ideas, te columnista, quien s tahûres. ¿Quién da más? Grita el garitero". Una gallera, una pelea de gallos. Así es el escenario de la campaña electoral en Colombia La política en manos de los

puede hacer un mago autoritario.

famación, el principito resultó ser todo un mago. Y ya se sabe lo que

manipulación, la coacción y la di-

para convertirse en el presidente candidato. En las artes de la

y abusando del poder y de una virtual, que no real popularidad,

hizo aprobar el actual gobierno de Alvaro Uribe Vélez, usando

de la reelección inmediata, que

mayo. Y no es para menos, con el estreno de la nueva figura

y presidente de la república en

campaña electoral que se ad-

elanta, par elegir representantes a los cuerpos colegiados en marzo y presidente de legiados en

cultural y religiosa. Un estado

diversidad y pluralidad política,

chos humanos; es el respeto a la

es el respeto a la vida y los dere-

salud, empleo, vivienda. La paz integral. La paz es educación,

las oportunidades de desarrollo necesidades básicas y el acceso a

reflejada en la satisfacción de sus

material de hombres y mujeres,

La paz es la dignidad moral y

construcción del país que quiere.

que participa activamente en la

democráticas de una sociedad

chos y las libertades civiles y

qe nu bjeuo elercicio de los dere-

La paz es ante todo el resultado

alzado en armas contra el Estado.

desmovilización de los grupos

verdaderas causas de la guerra y

erzo por minimizar y/o ignorar las

su máxima expresión en un esfu-

los más importantes. Sin embargo,

de violencia, no son los únicos ni

armado son factores indiscutibles

ELN como actores del conflicto

realidad. Si bien las FARC y el

internacional para ocultar la

colombianos y de la comunidad como un velo en los ojos de los

guerra. Es un señuelo tendido ganar elecciones y justificar la

lación del tema de la paz para

constante la manipu-

Colombia, ha sido una muchos gobiernos

protagonistas principales.

de buena voluntad, ni la

a paz no es un decreto

COMO LO SOÑARA EL CHE

de Bolivia Un Nuevo capitulo en la historia

OLIVIA BLANCHARD

centrista a uno más descentralizado. concretará la transición de un estado del "Referendum Autonómico", que La otra gran reforma estructural es la nados y también erradicar la pobreza. a aquellos sectores hasta ahora margi-Asamblea, incluir de una vez por todas Morales quiere, a través de esta consenso para reformar la constitución. sociales en un contexto de debate y agosto y juntará a todos los grupos tendrá lugar en la ciudad de Sucre en Constituyente" que si es aprobada meses. Una de ellas es la "Asamblea quiere llevar a cabo en los próximos reformas estructurales que Morales gran importancia para las dos grandes legitimdad. Y esta legitimidad será de MAS no sólo tiene apoyo sino también y el Movimiento Sin Tierra) que el (campesinos, mineros, los jubilados

eron establecidas con claridad, dice el posiciones pre-electorales no estuvidependiendo de quién escuchaba. Las presidente), dieron un discurso diferente datura Morales-García-Linera (viceque en la campaña electoral, la candihecha por el escritor James Petras es prometido exactamente? Una crítica cnublir sus promesas? ¿Y qué se ha cumplir lo prometido? ¿Podrá Morales unos cuantos de sus dirigentes vayan a sectores populares bolivianos porque Serán menos pobres los indígenas y los clasista? ¿Y qué es 'gobernar mejor"? ticas psicosomáticas o su extracción o peor en función de sus caracterís-Padilla, ¿puede alguien gobernar mejor cuestionan los escritores Molina y indígenas de Evo Morales, pero como ha dado gran importancia a los orígenes tiene las respuestas. Por ejemplo, se le formulando para las que sólo el tiempo tudes y muchas preguntas se están

creado expectativas de grandes magni-

Pero el camino no va a ser fácil. Se han



Ceremonia de inaguración del nuevo presidente de Bolivia- enero 2006

se sentirá tan complacido del triunfo de los héroes revolucionarios nadie segura. En el firmamento social. Tardadita pero En Bolivia llegó la justicia población 70% indígena está en Es clásica justicia poética. Senior Scholar, Universidad de York

infernales minas. No fue hasta que largas horas de rendimiento en las masticándolas prolongasen las de coca a los mineros para que estaño repartían sendas porciones raciones gringas explotadoras del más. En el siglo pasado las corpopadeció la población indígena. Es el hambre que por generaciones medicinales y hasta para matar zado en ritos religiosos, pociones suos fisdicionalmente se ha utilicultivada en Bolivia por miles de ficante más. ¡Imbéciles! La coca como si se tratase de un narcotra-Morales en los gremios cocaleros medios discuten la dirigencia de de la nación. Escandalosamente los suyos para conducir los destinos democráticamente a uno de los su absoluto derecho de elegir

amiento! ¡Qué falta de respeto a encia externa. ¡Canalla cuestionlos destinos del pueblo sin injertuviese la inteligencia de conducir Chávez, como si Morales no el Presidente Castro y el Presidente lazos entre el Presidente Morales, debe preocuparse por los cordiales hasta la insolencia si Washington carla del narcotráfico. Especulan de la población indígena y erradide la hoja de la coca para consumo însto: dne se tesbete ja broducción que demandará Morales es apenas para los traficantes del vicio. Lo productiva fuente de ingresos en la hoja que la convirtieron en descubrieron cualidades exóticas

miseria durante 180 años de indevida de un pueblo sumergido en la los rubios consumidores del norte cambiar radicalmente el nivel de Amèrica! recursos naturales son capaces de dè nuestra corporaciones. Ya es hora. Estos a discutir su administración con las entre los breblos nacionales, Morales está dispuesto raciones extranjeras y de oligarcas hidrocarburos en manos de corporèspeto a la hermandad ción los yacimientos de riquísimos bresiones internas por nacionalizacambios radicales. A pesar de 9b, stlat 9u9; paliza al imperialismo. Habrá triunfo le proporciona soberana Movimiento al Socialismo, el su condición de dirigente del más dulce la victoria es que, por de Latinoamérica. Lo que torna

y ha echado a andar".

gran humanidad ha dicho BASTA

ante las Naciones Unidas: "Esta

sus proféticas e inmortales palabras

Che. Quizás por ello valga recordar

tan gloriosa como la que soñó el

revolución. Pacífica esta vez pero

genas de América. Es una auténtica

y en particular a las naciones indí-

regocijo y de orgullo a los pueblos

de habitantes. La victoria llena de

soplo de vida a sus 8,8 millones

Morales representa un fresco

mente boliviano del Presidente

la semilla del Che. El triunfo neta-

esta oprobiosa situación. Germinó

es el dirigente idóneo para reajustar

más de 60% de desempleo, Morales

bendencia y en la actualidad con

aras de eternizar la explotación

tratados de libre comercio en

de Washington de valerse de

un rechazo más a la estrategia

su contundente victoria simboliza

este hemisferio. Simultáneamente

nə notgnirləs de Washington en

propina democrática bofetada a

de la Casa Blanca en su contra,

Bin Laden y Saddam Hussein.

idad Bush, padre e hijo, con Osama

Alemania de Hitler y en la actual-

pasados de la familia Bush con la

no cuestionan los lazos de los ante-

fiando las estratagemas

ción de Morales, desa-

mencionar que la elec-

ampoco les conviene

la hermandad entre los pueblos de

nuestra América! Y esto de los que

Hugo Chávez. ¡Imbéciles! Una

eran con el Presidente venezolano

Presidente Morales como lo hici-

sobre las raíces étnicas del podría generar comentarios racistas

en el estiércol de sus prejuicios

Solamente una sociedad sumergida dente indígena. ¡Qué ignorancia!

Hemisferio con su primer presi-

boquiabiertas porque cuenta el

fuese un bicho raro. Permanecen

el indigenismo de Morales como si

gringa no sabe qué pensar. Discuten

ciones presidenciales. La prensa

Socialismo, triunfaría en las elec-

líder del partido Movimiento al

nueve días más tarde Evo Morales,

hombre. No mataron el ideal.

profético Guevara. Mataron al

Hasta el último instante fue

ráfaga de carabina M-2 le ultimó.

vas a matar a un hombre." Una Dispara, cobarde, que solamente

peló: "Sé que vienes a matarme.

Dirigiéndose al verdugo le inter-

nerviosismo. Lo presintió el Che.

cionado para ejecutarlo, mostró

El sargento Jaime Terán, selec-

al Che el Presidente Fidel Castro.

le despojó del reloj que le regalara

paso el ave de rapiña Rodríguez,

a la escuelita en donde yacía. De

CIA, acarreó la condena de muerte

cubano-americano agente de la

inato. Félix Rodríguez, el infame

René Barrientos, ordenó su ases-

combate. El presidente boliviano

le capturó al caer herido en

Agencia Central de Inteligencia,

cito boliviano, entrenado por la

de las Fuerzas Especiales del ejér-

La Higuera, el pelotón Rangers

1967. En las cercanías de la aldea

en vano el Che ese 9 de octubre de

Ernesto Che Guevara. No murió

presidencial de Evo Morales como

Pastor Valle-Garay

snagibni

Se recupera Se recupera

 λ ocyo suos' qos meses λ

pueblo boliviano. Treinta

ansias libertarias del

u sangre fertilizaría las

Denuncia a la opinion Ibnoibernacional

calle y los sacarán del gobierno".

anteriores, que el pueblo se echará a la

"pasará lo que pasó todas las veces

erno del MAS no cumpla sus promesas

luego su hija, en el caso de que el gobi-

que esperar y ver..." Y como añadió

diferente? Y espero que sí, pero habrá

gobiernos malos y corruptos. ¿Será éste

anteriores...El pueblo está cansado de

y excluidos por todos los gobiernos

agua potable ni luz, y han sido olvidados

gente en las zonas rurales que viven sin

Mery, una ancianita Boliviana, 'hay

sociales anteriores. Como lo manifestó

las estructuras económicas, políticas y

nuevo comienzo o una continuidad de

bara poder Juzgar si es realmente un

esperar, como dicen los bolivianos,

Y ante esta situación tendremos que

que ofrece, y lo que realmente hará".

contradicciones entre lo que ofreció, lo

"debe cuidarse de no incurrir en

y el nuevo gobierno, dice Bonadona,

tativas que se han creado son enormes

que la de Venezuela y Cuba. Las expec-

con los Estados Unidos, menos radical

de usar una estrategia para relacionarse

de de ser amigos de todos los países y

Chavez y Castro, ahora Morales habla

rialista y anti-neoliberal formado por

de hablar de unirse al bloque anti-impe-

naturales del país. De la misma manera, sores extranjeros a explotar los recursos

a la vez se están invitando a más inver-

oliberal no tiene sentido alguno cuando

Como dice Petras, la retórica antineal estado en el pago de impuestos.

empresas petroleras que han engañado

sino intervenir o expulsar a aquellas

el planteamiento ya no es nacionalizar

beligerante se ha vuelto más suave y

con la nacionalización. Ahora el tono

amenazaba a las empresas extranjeras Antes de ganar las elecciones Morales

periodista Alberto Bonadona Cossio.

8 de Marzo del 2006 UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL EL MARCO DE UNA PROTESTA EN LA LA MUERTE DEL ESTUDIANTE OSCAR SALAS EN

diantil que se desarrollaba en la Universidad acional. Muere en las horas de la tarde en un proprio Adyacente al Campus ntro hospitalario Adyacente al Campus e la Policía Nacional durante una protesta esle Bogotá quien fuera herido hoy por miembros universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas al eb salas ascar Salas de la Lingüística Oscar Salas de la

GIENDO EL PLENO RESPETO DE LOS GIENDO EL PLENO RESPETO DE LOS

eventos

Teb-Meyo. Tropicália:

a revolutión in Brazilian
culture. Un festival de arte,
música, películas, teatro y
baile, en Londres, para celbaile, en Londres, para celción Tropicália - la revolución cultural que redefinio el
arte, la política, la música y la
arte, la política, la música y la
arte, la política, la música y la
actor produción después, para más información:

www.barbican.org.uk/tropi-calia/home

Roches, con musica en con con musica en condres, con musica en vivo de los mejores grupos de Latin Hip Hop y actua-ciones Urban, además los DJs ofrecerán una mezcla de Regoeaton, Latin Hip Hop, R&B, old skool salsa y Latinbeats.

Abril. La Línea. Esperadísimo festival que preadísimo festival que presenta nuevas tendencias y
movimientos en la música de
origen latino. Tendrá lugar en
varios locales del centro de
varios locales del centro de
Londres. Para más información: www.rfh.org.uk

A & yo. Tour de dos grupos de hip-hop y ska colombianos (aún por confirmar). Zona Marginal, de Cali, ahora en Segundo tour por Europa, y Skartel, de Bogotá, oportunidad de ver por primera vez a este grupo en UK. Si interesados en celebrar un concierto en su local o en ayconcierto en su la colombiación del tour, por favour colombiacolidari con la organización del tour, por favour colombiacolidari con la organización del tour, por favour colombiacolidari

Martes 21 Marzo. La Universidad de Manches-ter celebra el seminario Ter celebra el seminario

"Exportación del proceso del Foro Social Mundial: Luchas en Brazil e Ideales Reinter-pretedos".

Jueves 23 Merzo. El trofeo de la Copa Mundial de Fútbol, patrocinada por Coca-Cola, visita Londres. Uneste a nosotros en Bill-ingegate (cerca de Liverpool Street) a las 3pm para prot-estar contra Coca-Cola... Futbolistas contra Coca-

28-30 Merzo Conferencia de la Unión Nacional de Estudiantes (UUS) en Blackpool. "Di No a la Coca-Cola!"

Miércoles 12 Abril. El autor de LAB, John Crabtree, participará en un debate sobre las elecciones debate sobre las elecciones peruanas en Chatham House, partenes

los Pueblos sobre Mul-los Pueblos sobre Mul-tinacionales en el Sector Agropecuario y Derechos Humanos. Bogota. Cualquier Persona interesada, por favor contactar con Colom-tivor contactar con Colom-bia Solidarity Campaign: bia Solidarity Campaign: uk

13 Meyo. Ligando
Alternativas 2, contra-cumAlternativas 2, contra-cumbre al encuentro de jefes de
estado de la UE y América
Latina en Viena.

ABSUELTOS POR FALTA DE PRUEBAS. 19 INDICENS KYNKUMOS

sionales y cautelares de la gobierno nacional y sus autori-dades velar por su integridad fisica, dentro de las recomen-daciones de las medidas provi-sionales y cautalanes de la rillo Cáceres, Edwin Enriques Maestres Cáceres, Mercedes Francisco Arias Gutiérrez, Mary Luz Árias. Mientras la gran mayoria retorna a su territorio, varios de ellos se verán obligados a sumarse a la lista de Líderes Kankuamos desplato pobligados a sumarse a la lista de Líderes Kankuamos desplato de Líderes Kankuamos desplatos prodos. 18 más siguen presos as pobligados a sumarse a la mación a la espera que se aguirán a la espera que se agouirán a la espera que se agouirán a la espera dus formas probar su inocencia. Por tanto, esta probar su inocencia la comunidad de libertad y termina estigmante de la justicia viola la libertad y termina estigmante de la justicia viola fo libertad y termina estigmante al mombre de la justicia viola nacional e internacional para sus ternitorios a de la comunidad norta y alerta de la comunidad norta y alerta de la internacional para estar alerta de las implicatorios que confleva haber sido ser parte del proceso organisem a como guerrillero, por ser parte del proceso organismo de su pueblo. Se pide al gades velar por su integridad dades velar por su integridad dades velar por su integridad que era por estable. Se yendo que era para resolver algun problema le fueron a buscar a la casa de su abuelita, ya que ese día se comprometio a cui-darla, "cual fuera mi sorpresa cuando me notificaron que encipardo me notificado, con tinua: "el impacto fue mayor etra devolver la película, continuacido por el dolor que encipardo en la plaza principal de erra devolver la película, continuacido en la plaza principal de mi pueblo, estaban en fila otros mi pueblo, estaban en fila otros mi pueblo, estaban en fila otros que era un trampa, que era na trampa de la fificado, sino que eran de la fificado.". En la misma operación detuvieron a Hermes Basilio detuvieron a Hermes Basilio del Consejo de Mayores de la OIK, en Valledupar, cuando se no basilan a sus hermanos desplavisitar a sus hermanos desplavisitar a sus hermanos desplavisitar a sus hermanos desplavisitar a sus hermanos desplavistados en Boaotá, mientas que la sus hermanos desplavistados en Boaotá, mientas que la sus hermanos desplavistados en Boaotá, mientas que en sus hermanos desplavistados en Boaotá, mientas que en sus hermanos desplavistados en Boaotá, mientas que en sus hermanos desplavistados en Boaotá, mientas en sus hermanos en quez, recuerda que a las 2 de la madrugada de ese 5 de de la madrugada de ese 5 de diciembre de 2005, efectivos del DAS llegaron a la casa de su suegra, preguntando por el Cabildo, su familia creyendo que era para resolver algun problema le fueron a buscar a problema le fueron a buscar a

después de visitar a su esposo. después de visitar a su esposo. Con ellos recobrarons vu liber-tad, Misael Antonio Rodríguez, Victor José Oñate Carrillo, Feliciano de Jesús Rodríguez Ratinez, Emilse de Jesús Rodríguez Días, Nemoroso Corzo Montaño, Guillermo Eloy Corzo Montaño, Guillermo Eloy Oñate Arias, Seth Enoc Arias Martinez, Crispin Alfonso Carvisitar a sus hermanos despla-zados en Bogota, mientras que Gabelis Alvarado Maestre fue detenida al salir de la cárcel,

de felicidad, por la libertad de 16 de sus miembros, proferida por el Juzgado Cuarto Penal del Circuito de Valledupar al no encontrar méritos probatorios para dictarle sentencia condenatoria por el delito de rebelión, las pruebas aportadas por la Fiscalía no tuvieron das por la Fiscalía no tuvieron la contundencia. Así fue notrificada la libertad a quienes tificada la libertad a quienes dinaron recluidos un año y 10 dias por ser Kankuamos. ei cordzon grande se cerroi. Lo único que logró fue morir en su irerra, Atánquez, el mismo día que fue entregado a sus famil-iares, por la gravedad de la en-fermedad. Este es el sinsabor de impotencia de todo Kankua-mo y amigos de la lucha de un pueblo que, mantiene sus ojos pueblo que, mantienes. Esta vez, la felicidad, por la libertad de ciega. iLa mano dura se impuso, el corazon grande se cerrol. Lo su libertaa, ni mucno menos salir el viernes 16 de diciembre junto con sus 15 hermanos Kankuamos; los angelitos que proclamaban cada 1º campanas reclamaron su presencia, El viejo Turba como se le conocia murio de cancer a sus conocia murio de cancer a sus conocia murio de cancer a sus a la justicia para que pagara a la justicia fue casa por carcel, la justicia fue casa por carcel, la justicia fue ciega. Ila mano dura se impuso, pudo firmar la notificación de su libertad, ni mucho menos Gabriel Turbay Alyarado no

Colombia- ONIC

eulaces

www.eltiempo.terra.com. La escritora colombiana Laura Restrepo se despacha contra el candidato-presi-dente Alvaro Uribe Vélez. Entrevista con Antonio Morales Riveira, Morales Riveira,

www.elespectador.com/ html/i_portals/index.php El proyecto bolivariano Victor Paz Otero

La Gata sobre el tejado

Por Reinaldo Spitaletta Por Reinaldo Spitaletta www.elespectador.com/ html/i_portals/index.php

www.pagina12.com.

www.redcolombia.org

www.colombia.indymedia.

org/ Informes y Documentos http://www.derechos.org/ nizkor/colombia/informes.

www.monografias.com/Estu-dio_Social/more31.shtml

Premier de Película La guerrillera (Guerillera Girl) es/gno.loonna.www

El terrorismo en el espejo. Por Noam Chomsky http://www.voltairenet. org/es

Bolivia: Los impactos del

*supisy deredo Leigue Tifra (profice org/arti-lmt4.995351315

McDonalds, Coca-cola y la obesidad infantil Pilar Galindo Ecoportal net www.rebelion.org/noticia. php?id=26889

La ONU pide a EEUU el cierre "inmediato" de la base de Guantánamo www.rebelion.org/noticia. ISE05=bi5qAq

www.revistanumero.com/47/ mtd.sabiv VIDAS AL CARBÓN Por Jairo Ruiz Sanabria Jairo Ruiz Sanabria Maw revistanimeno com

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sindicalistas, políticos, profesionales,

meses de existencia han desfilado artistas,

nuestros micrófonos en escasos seis

principales que nos hemos trazado γ por dice Teresa Pérez,"es uno de los objetivos entretener informando a la comunidad"

latina. "Informar entreteniendo o

de la creciente γ trabajadora comunidad

 γ por lo tanto distantes de las necesidades

religioso apegados a intereses personales

de programas predominantemente colombianos de corte gobiernista o

estado supeditada a la existencia

latinoamericana que hasta ahora había verdadero referente de la comunidad

voces todas" se esta convirtiendo en un

Carlos Piedra y Teresa Pérez "Todas las

Bajo la dirección de Nelly Mosquera, Juan

sounradio.info/ clic en sound radio stream.

.www por el Internet en la pagina www.

las 9 y 11 de la mañana en el 1503 de la

puede escuchar todos los domingos entre

brasileros γ argentinos entre otros, se

colombianos, ecuatorianos, bolivianos,

centroamericanosydelcaribe,venezolanos,

concierto de voces con acentos mexicanos,

espacio electromagnético de Londres y un

parecen estar llegando al hasta ahora celosamente guardado

que recorren América Latina

os vientos frescos del sur

BYDIO

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ม_ิ เวอเว

mundo y como se construye el tiempo

ellos para saber como amaneció nuestro

domingo nos podamos despertar con

cama en una fría y perezosa mañana de

promovamos y aunque sea desde la tibia

voces todas" los apoyemos, critiquemos,

sumáramos nuestras voces a "Todas las hace la fuerza γ ojala todos los lectores

comunicación así como la unión también manos el manejo de sus propios destinos. La

años les están permitiendo tomar en sus

ahora y por primera vez después de 500

organizarse γ construir los espacios que

construyeron los mineros bolivianos para

que en los socavones y con megátonos

las experiencias de las radios mineras

nos recuerda, guardadas las proporciones,

 γ de un grupo de amigos este programa

esfuerzos económicos de sus promotores

Sin mayor publicidad y financiado por los

voz sea escuchada por todos sus amigos"

amiga sino también un medio para que su nuestro programa no solamente una voz

común γ corriente que han encontrado en

trabajadores comunitarios y gente

CIDH.COMITÉ EJECUTIVO ONIC.

y por eso pueden dar más barato, los gringos subsidian los cultivos las vamos a comprar? Además, cosas muy baratas. ¿Pero, con qué ser muy bueno porque van a llegar país. "El Gobierno dice que va a γ otros sectores de la economía del vienen padeciendo los campesinos que desde comienzos de los 90s, de la apertura del libre mercado,

campesino que vive en respecto hace este la ilustración que al

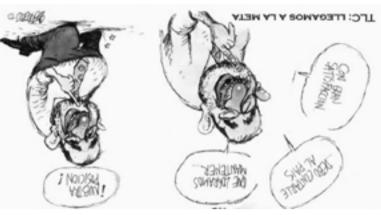
carne propia los nocivos efectos

colombianos por cuenta del TLC a la hora de tratar sus enfermedades pagar cada año los más tendrán que millones de dolares "Cerca, de, 900

es el más ilustrativo.

o podría se mas clara Bogotá, Febrero 27 de 2006). Sin competir". (Diario El Tiempo de y nosotros no vamos a poder

Espartaco



gobierno colombiano siempre alegó, todo a cambio de nada, ante lo cual el que los Estados Unidos obtengan tratados son una pantomima para otros, no dejaban duda de que dichos naciones como México y Chile entre de las amargas experiencias de otras en diferentes universidades, además estudios realizados por los expertos del Tratado, porque las evidencias de

que el tratado había que firmarlo por

cambio de nada obtengan todo a los Estados Unidos una pantomima que Dichos tratos son

eron por todos los medios a la firma tratado se firmara rápido, por encima iaban lo peor para el país, se opusiproducción colombiana que presagtodos los sectores de la aron las negociaciones, 2004 cuando se iniciesde el 18 de Mayo de jadores, y en general, el país. ganan ellos pero pierden los traba-

a salud es otro de los nacionales, en un negocio en el que

encima del que se opusé firmaría el tratado por llegó a manifestar que , adi TU orsvlÀ ətnəbisərq l traeria para el pais.

pedirle permiso a Estados Unidos".

pechos demuestren que sea, sin

en el TLC, por pernicioso que los

arse nada de lo que quede pactado

suceder. Repito, no podrá modific-

de los saqueadores. Eso es lo que va

o de su fábrica, dejándolas a merced

las llaves de su finca, o de su casa,

pierde todo, como el que extravía

bien de una nación. Si se pierde se

la guerra a bordo del nefasto Plan

qolares que necesita para continuar

Bush siga girando los millones de

una vez reelegido, el gobiernote

de la soberanía nacional, para que

Washington, a asegurarse de que el

buen súbdito del imperio, viajó a

iera, y ahí está, a solo un paso. Como

nacional, el principal

berdemos la soberanía

Robledo, 'En una palabra,

omo dijo el senador

todas las bondades y beneficios que

Imperialismo contra ataca

han ido a la escuela menos de tres

nenos de 50.000 pesos al mes,

el numero de personas, familias, En esta década, dice el informe, Humanos y el Desplazamiento. y la Consultoría para los Derechos Conferencia Episcopal de Colombia 2005 publicarán esta semana la zamiento forzado entre 1995 y al leer el informe que sobre desplaes el que se me viene a la cabeza terrible y, sin duda, apocalíptico, sido peor. Pues bien, este cuadro suele suceder. Que en África ha Cúcuta, que tranquilos, que eso Barranquilla, o sólo Cartagena y fue Cali y Barranquilla, sino sólo que la cosa no es tan grave, que no gobierno publica un folleto diciendo han cometido, quedan borrados. El básicos, y todos los crímenes que legalización de títulos, servicios guas ciudades goza de protección, población que ha invadido las antiy voltea la cara. La

callan. El país mira nada dicen, aceptan, as autoridades que ven, almacenes, talleres, fábricas.

edificios, lotes; se apropian de menos, pero entran a ocupar casas, como los que se van, son muchos terror. No son tantos los que llegan mutilan, fusilan para sembrar el venidas de otro lado que masacran, ciudades invadidas por gentes poblaciones son expulsadas y las Pereira, Santa Marta, Ibagué. Sus Cartagena, Cúcuta, Bucaramanga, rece la población que hoy vive en gráfico: en una década desapa-Barranquilla. O más

desaparecen Cali y imaginario: en 10 años agamos un cuadro

población más pobre -consiguen decir que los desplazados son la 60 y un 80% de su gente. Sobraría Bojayá ha sido desterrado entre un pueblos como Peque, Colosó o mentos mas golpeados. De algunos Caquetá y Bolívar, los departapor el desplazamiento; Antioquia, municipios del país son afectados de la población". El 87% de los paramilitares como expulsores indica la prevalencia de los grupos tendencia de la década analizada desplazadores; sin embargo, la fueron los principales agentes los purpurados—, las guerrillas "En algunos períodos —agregan pales expulsores de la población". y las guerrillas son los princidécada, "los grupos paramilitares y la negociación. En la última

la guerra es el diálogo bosipje,, para superar en que la "única opción oreso, desde 1994 insisten

rador del desplazamiento". armado es el principal factor geneopisbos coucjndeu: "El coutjicto vienen? ¿A dónde llegan? Los son los desplazados? ¿De dónde la causa del fenómeno? ¿Quiénes taria crónica y sostenida". ¿Cuál es llama legalmente "crisis humanicolombiana. Una catástrofe que se equivalen a un 9,1% de la población cifra de 3'662.642 personas", que mente". "El acumulado alcanza la de trabajo ha crecido exponencialsu lugar habitual de residencia o que han sido forzados a abandonar comunidades y sectores sociales

de guerra. A la humanidad, claro de lesa humanidad y un crimen forzado es tipificado como un delito los desplazados. El desplazamiento mundo en materia de protección a lación más avanzada del y trámites, posee la legis-Colombia, país de leyes opo sucede mientras

busca empleo, y otro tanto no tiene el 32%, según encuesta de Codhes, cuadro, es desempleo y desarraigo: El desplazamiento, para cerrar el dieta "es inadecuada e insuficiente". selvicios de salud y educación y su 20% no están cubiertos por los edad—. Ya desplazados, más del años y la mayoría son menores de

lados por los grandes empresarios

ruina y esos sectores son contro-

Salvo dos o tres sectores de los que

de un cordero rumbo al matadero.

bles, se entregaron con la docilidad

país, invaluables y no transferi-

el senador Jorge Enrique Robledo

Comercio con Estados Unidos", dijo

por cuenta del Tratado Libre

O sea que aquí va a haber muertos

la hora de tratar sus enfermedades.

colombianos por cuenta del TLC a

más tendrán que pagar cada año los

"Cerca de 900 millones de dólares

tales durante el mandato de Uribe. casi generalizado de los hospi-

stancia agravada con el cierre

privilegio de unos pocos, circun-

un país donde la salud es de por sí

ecer aun más los medicamentos en

llevar un registro de los desplazados,

el Gobierno Nacional, por ley, debe

poder de representarla. Por ejemplo:

"humanidad" son los que tienen el

está, le importa un pito, porque la

colombianos verán encar-

de acuerdo al Tratado, los

temas más sensibles, pues

en una audiencia pública.

fundamentales para la soberanía de cualquier

y ia cultura, aspectos

a propiedad intelectual

es solo el sector agrícola, aunque sí y social del país se salvaron de la

embargo, el problema del TLC no conforma la estructura económica

los desterrados ha sido restituida a tierra de la que han sido despojados 4,8 millones de hectáreas. ¿Cuánta 2003, los desplazados abandonaron sus derechos. Un botón: entre 1995 y desconocimiento gubernamental de de atención a los desplazados y el onal el estado de cosas en materia 2004) que declaró inconstitucila Corte Constitucional (T-025 de opeqecei, la famosa sentencia de modelos estadísticos, en vez de polémica metodológica sobre pasará de agache desatando una títulos que lo justifican.

Como se verá, el Gobierno para quitarle al Estado los a cifra oficial bastaría

década son sólo 1'716.662. que comento: los desplazados en la oficina es distinto al del estudio (SUR). Pues bien, el dato de esta llamado Sistema Unico de Registro y al efecto tiene un órgano estatal

Hay que estar vigilantes. para no repararlos? Puede suceder. negará la condición de víctimas fondo: A los desplazados se les Episcopal, hace una pregunta de Castro, presidente de la Conferencia Codhes. Monseñor Luis Augusto Plan Colombia, como advierte el complementarias programas de reinserción o a las estar dirigiendo más bien a los

la moneda se podría parece indicar рау, у тисћа.

o es falta de plata. Plata

perdidos. y menos a la restitución de bienes

reparación de los daños causados los desplazados ni contribuye a la ismo: no restablece los derechos de Uribe? Puro y barato asistencialpanorama, ¿qué hace el gobierno de



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suplir las demandas de Estados cultivo de moda en Colombia para sembrar palma africana, que es el a unos señores que la necesitan para sin futuro, Antonio vende su tierra lo último que le queda. Sin dinero y que regalarlos, al fin de cuentas es comerse los pollos con su familia precio de ganga. Antonio prefiere americanos que se venden

zados en las goteras de un barrio de desplaterminan viviendo en ntonia y su familia

Cnidos

sin agua potable, sin luz eléctrica, la ciudad, en una casa de cartón, que no son del gusto de los norte es, muslos de pollo made inUSA, "cuartos traseros de pollo", esto que el mercado está inundado de vender los pollos, pero encuentra de privaciones económicas, sale a Después de padecer toda suerte invirtiéndolos en engordar pollos. decide arriesgar sus últimos ahorros tener que salir de la finca, Antonio por sobrevivir con su familia, sin precio de huevo. En un intento se venden en el mercado nacionala o con cuotas arancelarias irrisorias, entran al país sin pagar impuestos, estos productos extranjeros que el mercado porque la invasión de tienen ninguna competitividad en

como el trigo y la cebada, tampoco anudne en muchos casos esto

colas como el arroz y los cereales la ruina, pues otras opciones agrifueron excluidos de las decisiones y el 1.825, cuando estos sectores sociales revocar las injusticias cometidas desde de su país. Y este es el momento para

sociales más fuertes vínculos establecidos con los sectores al pasado sindicalista del partido y a los orígenes indígenas del nuevo presidente, fuerte base de apoyo y es gracias a los

una voz en las decisiones sobre el futuro

de la población boliviana) tienen por fin

genas (quienes representan más del 60%

sido excluida, los campesinos y los indí-

su fin. Ahora es cuando la gente que ha

de colonialismo y sufrimiento llegan a

Morales, ahora es cuando los 500 años

electoral del MAS y según el propio

ha sido un punto principal en la campaña

donase su puesto. La idea de "cambio"

el presidente Carlos Mesa también aban-

que un año y medio más tarde hizo que

presidente, Gonzalo Sánchez Losada, y

presión social obligó a dimitir al entonces

pasado el país desde el 2003, cuando la

cierre de la crisis política por la que ha

La victoria del MAS es vista como el

nuevo capítulo en la historia de Bolivia.

otros, estas elecciones representan un

pobreza y la exclusión indígena." Para

busca cosas concretas: solucionar la

izdnierda con los pies en la tierra que

una izquierda de ponchos y ojotas, una

está alejado de la escuela marxista. 'Es un nuevo movimiento de izquierda que

ciones forman parte del comienzo de

Luis Roca, los resultados de estas elec-

cambio real. Para el historiador José tan necesitada y esperanza por un

Esperanza por la estabilidad política un aire de optimismo y esperanza. Por estos días en La Paz se respira **BOLIVIA** HIZLOBIV DE CYЫLATO EN TY **IN NIEAO** Marzo- Mayo 2006

a soberanía es al país

mado. El TLC será un hecho y el congreso y todo estará consuuribistas obtengan la mayoría en los cuerpos colegiados, las listas de marzo, día de elecciones para paso. Basta conque el próximo 12 Y de aquí a allá, no hay sino un anía y los colombianos su dignidad. Colombia habrá perdido su sober-Congreso colombiano, significa que Estados Unidos, es aprobado por el que acaban de cerrar Colombia y Tratado de Libre Comercio (TLC) Carlos Gaviria. Pues bien, si el el Polo Democrático Alternativo, didato presidencial por hombre", dice el precanlo que la dignidad es al

vivido de cosechar maíz enfrentará ción. Antonio que toda la vida ha menos del costo de su producvenderlo a pérdida, es decir, por su producto a la finca, tiene que que Antonio para no regresar con Unidos, a precios tan baratos, de maíz importado de Estados con que el mercado está inundado vender su cosecha y se encuentra pequeño productor de maíz sale a ción colombiana, que Antonio, un algunos sectores de la produchace rato viene sucediendo en

maginemos por un momento,

es lo que se conoce como el famoso

gringos no quieren consumir. Esto

vertedero de desperdicios que los

Colombia se habrá convertido en el

Evo Morales y su partido tienen una diseño de la nueva nación.

"gaiqmub"

soberanía nacionales.

grotesca feria de la economía y la

denses al termino de lo que fue una

ciadores colombianos y estadouni-

celebraron en Washington los nego-

TLC, que con bombos y platillos

Colombia, si el congreso ratifica el

que antes eran pobres, ahora son

para sus hijos. Antonio y su familia

sin acceso a la salud y la educación

millones de familias en

familia colombiana, será

se cuadro de una sola

el caso real y trágico de