



our developing world's voices

Spring 2007 --Volume 12, No. 3

All Over the World: Effects of U.S. Policies El Salvador, Iran, Iraq, Mexico How are they related?

We don't think it takes a rocket scientist to realize that this world is getting smaller which means that interdependence should be increasing. But interdependence doesn't mean every country has to be just like us nor merely U.S. economic colonies for cheap labor and resources and forced trade through WTO.

When we were in India we had the privilege of being with the Dalai Lama twice during a very unstable period between Muslims and Hindus. Invited to speak at the University of Trivandurum he insisted that on the stage with him should be representatives of every religious and political group in the area. He stressed the similarities among them. He said: "There are too many people in the world for one religion to be right one for everyone."

El Salvador still haunted 15 years after civil war in which the U.S. funded the barbarous military.

GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS, REBELS NOW AGREE: SACRIFICE WAS COSTLY

By Manuel Roig-Franzia, Washington Post/San Jose Mercury, January 30, 2007 SAN MIGUEL, El Salvador -

José Wilfredo Salgado says he collected baby skulls as trophies in the 1980s, when he fought as a government soldier in El Salvador's civil war. They worked well as candleholders, he recalls, and better as good-luck charms.

In the most barbaric chapters of a conflict that cost more than 75,000 lives, he enthusiastically embraced the scorched-earth tactics of his army bosses, even massacres of children, the elderly, the sick -- entire villages. It was all in the name of beating back communism, Salgado, now the mayor of San Miguel, said he remembers being told.

But as El Salvador commemorates the 15th anniversary of the war's end this month, Salgado is haunted by doubts about what he saw, what he did and even why he fought.

"We soldiers were tricked -- they told us the threat was communism," Salgado said. "But I look back and realize those weren't communists out there that we were fighting -- we were just poor country people killing poor country people."

Salgado said he once thought that the guerrillas dreamed of communism, but now that those same men are his colleagues in business and politics, he is learning that they wanted what he wanted: prosperity, a chance to move up in the world, freedom from repression. All of which makes what they see around them today even more heartbreaking and frustrating. For all their sacrifices, El Salvador is still among the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, more than 40 percent of Salvadorans live on less than \$2 a day, according to the United Nations. The country is still racked by violence, still scarred by corruption. For some the question remains: Was it all worth it?

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COME HOME ENERGIZED!





"We gave our blood, we killed our friends and, in the end, things are still bad," said Salgado, who has served three terms as mayor of El Salvador's second-largest city.

North of Salgado's home, the guerrillas he once fought live with the same doubts.

Speeding along the curvy mountain roads near the one-time rebel stronghold of Perquin one recent afternoon, former guerrilla Benito Chica Argueta lamented that the future didn't turn out as he'd hoped.

Today, he scrapes together a living any way he can: Sometimes he sings at parties, sometimes he sells firewood.

Even though some factions of the coalition of guerrilla armies that fought in El Salvador's civil war were Marxist, said Chica Argueta, ideology had nothing to do with his decision to take up arms and leave the farm where his father earned only a few colones for backbreaking work. He remembers fighting "for a piece of land, for the chance that my children might someday get to go to the university."

The Reagan administration, fearing a communist uprising, built up El Salvador's military with weapons, training and hundreds of advisers to serve as a surrogate force against what it described as encroaching Soviet and Cuban influence in Central America. The war's degeneration into senseless malice was seared into Chica Argueta's mind in a tiny mountain town called El Mozote. In December 1981, a U.S.-trained battalion of government troops tortured and executed about 500 villagers there; the names of dozens of victims -- many under the age of 2 -- are now etched on the wall of the rebuilt church. Chica Argueta and his fellow guerrillas arrived in El Mozote several days after the massacre and, fearing a return of the soldiers, hurriedly buried the dead beneath a thin layer of adobe bricks. Salgado arrived months later, after rains had unearthed the corpses, and piled skulls into sacks as souvenirs. He had "lost his love of humanity," he recalled, but a kernel of doubt was forming. He was conflicted, as he is today. Salgado and Chica Argueta now share a point of view, a common phenomenon in El Salvador today, where former soldiers and guerril-

las often work together and intermarry. Chica Argueta said he believes the intermingling of former enemies was made possible by peace accords signed in 1992 without declaring a loser, thus leaving the guerrillas and the government soldiers on an even plane.

As the nation noted the anniversary, a group of former guerrillas sat on the patio of a small hotel in Perquin and talked about their disappointments about postwar El Salvador: the continued mass migration to the United States by Salvadorans who cannot find work at home, their fears about violence in a country with one of the highest murder rates in the world, their worries that the government isn't doing enough to address it all.

"We have no historical memory here in El Salvador -- has everyone forgotten what we fought for?" asked Adolfo Sánchez, a 47-year-old former guerrilla.

"You know," he said, "before the war we never could have sat here, right out in the open, and said such things."

Maybe, they all agreed, it had been worth it after all.

Parallels?

Some of our soldiers in Iraq are asking the same questions. Is it worth it? Lt Wataba is standing up saying it is not a moral war. He'd rather be imprisoned than go to Iraq. Over 1,000 active military signed a petition to Congress. Many military families have joined in the Troops Out Now coalition.

Do we here in the U.S. have an historical memory? Can we remember when everyone sacrificed when we were at war: rationing, taxes, a draft, excess profits war taxes for corporations profiting mightily from war. What a different story: Haliburton gets no-bid contracts in Iraq, New Orleans, etc. were found to have greatly overcharged the military for services but said it won't pay it back, and is moving to Dubai where they won't have to pay U.S. taxes! And they aren't alone. This war is highly privatized.

Didn't Israel bomb Iran's nuclear reactor?

Helen Caldicott recently spoke of what a disaster that would be for the whole region if nuclear plants or bombs are involved. Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration. He was Associate Editor of the Wall Street Journal editorial page and Contributing Editor of National Review. He is coauthor of The



Tyranny of Good Intentions. "The solution is nonmilitary challenge." he says. PaulCraigRoberts@yahoo.com
 And does our collective historical memory include that the U.S. is the only country to have used nuclear bombs? People are still dying of radiation sickness in Japan.

Another Aspect of the Struggle in El Salvador

Santa Marta is a repopulated community. The Salvadoran army ran the population out of the country across the Limpa River into Honduras where they became refugees for up to 12 years. The army scorched the community. Nothing was left when they returned. go Those who've gone on Salvadoran tours with us remember they formed a co-operative community and rebuilt. Below is Esperanza, the leading Digna and Baker. Now former owners claim a large piece of land was theirs before and want to get it back:

December 11, 2007

Dear friends of Santa Marta,



Today I spoke with Antonio Pacheco, Director of the Asociación de Desarrollo Económico Social, Santa Marta (ADES). He informed us that attorneys representing the Santa Marta Cooperative (Cooperativa Nueva Heroica Santa Marta) have succeeded in getting the case of the land dispute with the former owners

transferred to the Supreme Court of El Salvador. This means the present lower court judgement calling for eviction is on stand-by until the case has been tried and a verdict delivered by the Supreme Court.

The legal process in the Supreme Court may take 1 to 2 years. Attorneys representing the Cooperative, from a public service legal association FESPAD, are committed to representing causes for sectors typically

dispossessed and denied due process. The initial contract for FESPAD's services is US\$8,000. CoCoDA and an Irish agency, Pro-Caire, have contributed towards these and other costs incurred thus far. We hope you will stick with us and our friends in Santa Marta.
 Contact cocodaindy@igc.org www.cocoda.org to keep informed and to find how tax deductible donations can be given.

Sincerely,

Tim Crouse, Coordinator CoCoDACompanion Community Development Alternatives 609 E. 29th St. Indianapolis, IN 26205
 Tel: 317/920-8643 Fax: 317/920-8649

Quagmire of the Vanities

By [PAUL KRUGMAN](#)

The only real question about the planned "surge" in Iraq — which is better described as a Vietnam-style escalation — is whether its proponents are cynical or delusional.

Senator Joseph Biden, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thinks they're cynical. He recently told The Washington Post that administration officials are simply running out the clock, so that the next president will be "the guy landing helicopters inside the Green Zone, taking people off the roof."

Daniel Kahneman, who won the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Science for his research on irrationality in decision-making, thinks they're delusional. Mr. Kahneman and Jonathan Renshon recently argued in Foreign Policy magazine that the administration's unwillingness to face reality in Iraq reflects a basic human aversion to cutting one's losses — the same instinct that makes gamblers stay at the table, hoping to break even.



American Respect
 February 5, 2007

American@mail.democracyinaction.org>

Terrorism: A Brief for Americans

It's finally here! Richard Vague, a businessman and founder of AmericanRespect.com, has released his comprehensive brief on reducing world terrorism. Titled *Terrorism: A Brief for Americans*, it answers such difficult questions as:

- How can we effectively combat terrorism without further antagonizing the Muslim world?
- How can we withdraw troops from Iraq without destabilizing the Middle East?
- How can we use economic development as a powerful tool for reducing terrorism?

Released on February 1, this brief has already been featured on the Washington Post Radio, in Arian Huffington's widely-read blog huffingtonpost.com, and a number of other media sources.

American Respect is a not-for-profit organization that believes invading Iraq has increased global terrorism, is costing thousands of lives, (and literally trillions of tax dollars) and is increasing energy costs. Our principles for reducing terrorism are:

- Pursue true terrorists such as al Qaeda by eliminating training camps, preventing arms smuggling, freezing financial assets and apprehending terrorist leaders.
- Find balanced solutions in sensitive areas which foment terrorism by rebuilding international

coalitions. Violence in regions like Chechnya, Kashmir and especially Palestine directly and adversely affects the entire Muslim world.

- Decrease our profile in Iraq and use international coalitions to lead a march toward guaranteed rights, limited government and democratic representation. Further recognize that Iraq was arbitrarily assembled in 1919 from three ethnically and religiously different Ottoman provinces, and that a peaceful solution may require a return, either partly or fully, to this pre-1919 arrangement.
 - Build up the economies of Muslim countries with the goal of creating a larger middle class in each. If abject poverty is a breeding ground for terrorism, then creating broad prosperity is a key part of the solution--especially in the areas of trade and land reform. And success in the economies of any Muslim country--from Morocco to Indonesia--is positive for stability and peace throughout the region.(ED Note: Anywhere in the world.)
 - Establish a tone of goodwill in policies and actions toward these nations and their growing and increasingly global populations.
- Send comments to AmericanRespect [click here](http://americanrespect.com)

<http://www.mydd.com/story/2007/3/21/05816/7785>

Fox News Audience: Stunningly Republican by 88-7 by [Matt Stoller](#), Wed Mar 21, 2007

This whole Op-Ed on Fox News by pollster Mark Mellman is worth a read, but this nugget was [downright amazing](#), and fits with the joke next page.

Instead of providing "fair and balanced" reporting, Fox has created an audience ignorant of the facts, but fully supportive of management's ideology.

An audience that decides for itself, based on "fair and balanced" coverage, ought not to reach monolithic conclusions. Yet, in our 2004 polling with Media Vote, using Nielsen diaries, we found that Fox News viewers supported George Bush over John Kerry by 88 percent to 7 percent. No demographic segment, other than Republicans, was as united in supporting Bush. Conservatives, white evangelical



Christians, gun owners, and supporters of the Iraq war all gave Bush fewer votes than did regular Fox News viewers.

Mellman's argument is the same one we've been making this whole campaign - Fox News is a partisan GOP outlet. Mellman is an important and respected figure within the Democratic establishment. This is good news, as it suggests that progressive activists have largely won the argument within the party about the media landscape.

That statistic, 88-7, suggests that Fox News functions basically as an arm of the GOP field and messaging campaign.

FOX NEWS

After the November election

On Countdown they replayed a skit from Colin O'Brien Late Night Show. He was interviewing a Bush impersonator, and Colin said he thought Bush would want to talk about the elections. So Bush said, "Oh yeah, what happened there?" Colin said, "Well, Sir, you lost control of the House and you lost control of the Senate." Bush then inquired "Did we lose control of Fox News?"

From Phil Gates from Prison for Trespassing at School of The Americas

928-541-9458 145 N. Rocky Dells Dr. Prescott, AZ 86303

HYPERLINK "<mailto:drmsg@aol.com>"
drmsg@aol.com

Friends:

I want to update you on the status of my impending prison sentence since having been found guilty of trespassing onto the campus of Ft. Benning, GA last November 19. As you will recall, 16 of us who crossed did so in order to continue to help keep Congress' attention on the need to shut down the School of the Americas (now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, or WHINSEC).

It is our hope that when a bill to close the school is presented by Rep. James McGovern (D- MA) this month or next, the House will finally pass it. Last

year, it failed by only 15 votes. Since that time, 34 of those "nay" votes have not been re-elected. Thus, our hopes are high for its successful passage this time around.

If there is any one thing you could do for me, it would be to write a letter to your House Representative urging him/her to seriously consider supporting this legislation (which has not yet been assigned a number but soon will). I am including a sample copy of a letter you could use or modify to prepare your own letter. Simply enter the name and address of your U.S. Representative, sign the letter (include your address below your name), and mail it. Please do not delay as this bill is coming up very soon.

Other ways you may want to participate in support of this venture:

Pray for the 16 defendants and their loved ones, 14 of whom including myself will be entering prison March 21 to serve sentences from one to six months. As a first time offender I will be serving 60 days at MDC Los Angeles.

Contribute financially to help offset my expenses involved in this ministry, which includes court related costs, travel expenses, loss of social security while incarcerated, etc. Costs incurred by me will finally be between \$8,000 to \$10,000. You can make a tax-deductible contribution payable to Synod of the Southwest, 401 E. 4th St., #A. Tucson, AZ 85705. Enter "Phil Gates" on memo line. The Synod's an administrative arm of the Presbyterian Church.

Write to me, addressing the letter exactly as follows:

Philip E. Gates,
92947-020, MDC Los Angeles, Metropolitan
Detention Center, P.O. Box 1500, Los Angeles, CA
90053. Send letters only. No gifts, news clippings,
etc. All mail is opened and inspected. Deviations result in non-delivery.

Between 3/21-5/19 call my wife Lorie if you have any questions about this.

Blessings, peace and love, Phil



SAMPLE DRAFT

date, 2007

The Honorable _____
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0301

Dear Rep. _____

Please co-sponsor Rep. James McGovern's bill in the 110th Congress that calls for both the suspension and investigation of the operations of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), formerly called School of the Americas. I understand a similar bill, H.B. 1217, "The Latin America Military Training Review Act of 2005," introduced in the House by Rep. McGovern and Rep. Sam Farr in the 109th Session this past year fell only 15 votes short of the 203 "ayes" required for its passage.

Your support of the McGovern sponsored bill to be introduced this session of Congress will be a very concrete step to support human rights and to promote peace and justice for the people of Latin America.

As my elected representative in the House, I hope you will choose to become one of the co-sponsors of this legislation calling for the closure of WHINSEC/ SOA.

I look forward to hearing from you as to your response to this request.

Thank you.

Respectfully,
your name
address.

OAXACA UPDATE

by Anne Rosenzweig

Since June of 2006 the people of Oaxaca, Mexico have demonstrated remarkable solidarity in opposing the repressive regime of Oaxacan Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz. After police repression against Oaxacan citizens and APPO (the Spanish acronym for the People's Popular Assembly of Oaxaca) on November 25, more than 200 people were unjustly and illegally taken to various jails, suffering beatings and rape. "The Blue Nightmare" is a moving 19 minute video containing testimony of some of the people who were detained. This is the English subtitled version of "La Pesadilla Azul". You may view it from the website of the filmmaker: <http://www.maldeojotv.net/> Scroll down and click on The Blue Nightmare. The Blue Nightmare can also be accessed from [HYPERLINK http://www.narconews.com](http://www.narconews.com). The Narco News site is a great source of news for stories about the drug trade south of the border.



My friend Tonee Mello, who's lived in Oaxaca for the last six years, has been involved in an exciting project to train Oaxacans to build and use radio transmitters for communication. Learn more about this project at: [HYPERLINK http://www.radiotupa.org/](http://www.radiotupa.org/) <http://www.radiotupa.org/> Click on "Documents" to see photos of the training sessions which Stephen



Dunifer of Radio Free Berkeley conducted for Radio Tupa earlier this year.

Oaxaca is a sister city to Palo Alto, California, so Palo Altans have been meeting to learn more about the situation in Oaxaca.

Contact Peggy Law for updates: mediaproject@igc.org or 650-851-7256 She would be happy to send a free CD or cassette tape of the Making Contact show (in English)

"Oaxaca Libre, La Lucha Sigue! -- Free Oaxaca. The Struggle Continues!" to anyone who identifies themselves as a *odw* reader/member/supporters

For great graphics and for Spanish speakers, more information: APPO's own website:

<http://www.asambleapopulardeoaxaca.com>

Books and Pictures Needed for Tamil Nadu, India and Lahore, Pakistan. Susan Sylvan

Having just returned from teaching students and teachers with absolutely no resources when lives depend on learning English, I want to collect as many Atlases, Encyclopedias, and calendars with pictures as possible to send on where they will be extremely appreciated. Tax deductible receipts will be sent to all by *odw*. Questions: Susan Sylvan 408-susansylvan10@yahoo.com or 408-353-2141

THANK YOU to everyone who has helped us in a myriad of ways, and to those who have invited us to do programs and will in the future.

For this issue of voices as with the last many thanks to Mike Cook. The publication would have been impossible without those many hours of help.

Thanks to Susan Vieira, our RN consultant for her help in being able to continue to offer Contact Hours to RNs who go on our tours.

And to our mailing volunteers!

You all are appreciated more than we can say!



Tamil Nadu, India School children

On-going Projects:

Used, washed tennis shoes tied together (not large sizes) to be given to the rehab center in Phnom Penh for using as the soles of prostheses to make for longer wear.

Used flip-flops from pre-schoolers and Kindergarteners for rural children in south Cambodia (Kompot province).

Atlases, Encyclopedias, and picture calendars from schools in Tamil Nadu, India and Lahore, Pakistan.

Pencils and crayons for children in many places.

Join Us

Sunday, April 15 at 5:30 pm.

Robeson potluck birthday party with a 30 minute video tribute by Sidney Poitier and odw 11 minute Ballad for Americans. Good food, good company and a raf-fle. 13004 Paseo Presada, Saratoga corner

Look for the lavender door behind the shrubs.
google *our developing world* for map and directions

Paul Robeson, whose father was a slave, grew up in very segregated New Jersey. He won a scholarship to Rutgers where he was Phi Beta Kappa, after suffering beatings by his football team mates was in the Hall of Fame, became world renown as an actor, singer and activist. He worked in civil rights before it was a movement, asking President Truman to end lynching.

The Robeson stamp was a result of many Centennial Committees working together as the South Bay Committee did..

Moving? Don't miss an issue of voices. Please notify us of your new address. Or let us know if you'd like to be notified when an issue of voices has been put on our website.



New Dates

June 18-28, 2007

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Come home energized with hope! **Join us: Friday, May 11 6:30 pm potluck.**

Join us for a Book Reading and signing by Charlie Hardy: "Cowboy in Caracas"

He and a Venezuelan will be co-facilitators for our Reality Tour June 18-28. Make sure your passport is up to date. You may want to join us after hearing Charlie!

We are now asking \$10 per year from our readers to support the publishing and broader circulation of this newsletter. Thank you.

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Midwest Representative: Marilyn Perotti Editor: Wyrne Hegarty



TIME VALUE MATERIAL

