



## **2007: The Year Haiti's Debt Is Cancelled**

- by Brian Concannon

Pieces of the Haiti Debt Cancellation puzzle have been falling into place throughout 2006, from activists in the US, the Haitian government, the US Congress and even the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). A good push from US activists in 2007 may be all we need to make debt cancellation a reality for the most impoverished people in the Americas.

These pieces are:

-in Haiti, the people overcame a determined voter suppression program to hand a landslide victory to progressive presidential candidate Rene Preval;

-in the US Congress, Rep. Maxine Waters filed the Haiti Debt Relief Resolution, which quickly attracted 65 co-sponsors. Almost all of the co-sponsors will be back in January. Faithful supporters of debt relief will occupy key leadership posts, espe-

cially in the House of Representatives;  
-in the US, the Jubilee USA Network, joined by several other groups, including TransAfrica Forum, the Quixote Center and the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti, launched a grassroots campaign to support debt relief for Haiti (materials available at [www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org) and [www.HaitiJustice.org](http://www.HaitiJustice.org));  
-the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced in September that Haiti qualifies for its Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) debt relief program; and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has proposed adding Haiti to its debt relief program; and

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## **National Conference in Chicago April 14-15**

Build the movement! All grassroots groups working with the people of Latin America and everyone in the US-based Latin America Solidarity Coalition are invited to LASC4. You are encouraged to:

- Distribute The Call: LASC4 will bring together US grassroots solidarity activists with activists and organizers from Latin America and the Caribbean to plan, evaluate and celebrate the growing US Latin America solidarity movement.

The theme is ALTERNATIVES TO EMPIRE. The Americas have a strong legacy of resistance. From the Mapuche struggle for land and autonomy against the conquistadors to the successful fight to force U.S.-owned Occidental Petroleum out of Ecuador earlier this year; from Simon Bolivar's struggle for freedom from Spain and slavery to the Cuban, Sandinista, and modern day Bolivarian Revolutions - no decade has passed without seeing people coming together to fight subjugation. Millions of Latin Americans, dispossessed by neoliberal capitalism, imperialist looting, militarization and repression are defying the racist system of violence and domination with increasing frequency and effectiveness. Popular movements are gaining influence throughout the hemisphere.

For the initial call for the conference and endorsers, go to:

[http://www.lasolidarity.org/lasc4/lasc4\\_all.html](http://www.lasolidarity.org/lasc4/lasc4_all.html)

- Endorse the LASC conference. Send an e-mail to [info@lasolidarity.org](mailto:info@lasolidarity.org).
- Join the LASC4 Planning Committee at [lasc4-subscribe@lists.mutualaid.org](mailto:lasc4-subscribe@lists.mutualaid.org).
- Check out the archive at <http://lists.mutualaid.org/mailman/listinfo/lasc4>.
- Join any of the LASC4 Working Groups:
  - Logistics: [peggy@mexicosolidarity.org](mailto:peggy@mexicosolidarity.org)
  - Fund-raising: [tomr@quixote.org](mailto:tomr@quixote.org)
  - Program: [jon@afgj.org](mailto:jon@afgj.org)
  - Outreach: [carlos@globalexchange.org](mailto:carlos@globalexchange.org)
- Propose a Workshop: Application due by 1/10 with your name, organization, full contact info, one reference, short bio of you and/or your organization, and up to 150 words on the Workshop.

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**INTERCONNECT**

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**This editorial is biased...**

But now that my prejudice has been declared I think one fringe benefit of being co-editor of this newsletter is being able to plug my book - and to share with readers what it's like to finally write one.

*Cancer in the Body Politic: Diagnosis and Prescription for an America in Decline*, although it is only 110 pages long, took 20 years of data collection and three of hard writing. The project started with the sense that our nation's struggles - particularly since WWII - both foreign and domestically, have definite parallels with many seriously ill patients I had worked with for 40 years: complex and puzzling, but with the chance of being restored to full health if they would agree to a rigorous medical work-up, diagnosis, and treatment regimen. As I began to save piles of documentation about what I call the nation's symptoms and signs of illness, standards, diagnoses, and treatment they began to look like chapters in a book.

EPICA published it (for particulars see the Resource section below) in time to have the first book-signing on November 17 at the SOA Vigil at Ft. Benning, a place where the illness of our country - in training foreign military to return home to fight and kill their own people - is most vivid and where it is also most clear that such illness must be identified, diagnosed and treated vigorously to avoid a future downhill course for the patient.

One of the most satisfying aspects of this long process is to know what three people whom I admire have to say about it:

"I've met too many idealistic young people without the skills to organize or the know-how to actually effect social change (I fear most days that I am one of them!). In this book, Dr. Mott does something vital, which is to not just develop a well-researched prognosis of "patient USA's" socio-political disease, but provide a useful personal account of activist technique, as well as a comprehensive vision for a cure."

Ani DiFranco, progressive feminist singer, guitarist, and songwriter

This book is at once a diagnosis of the oncoming American tragedy by an experienced physician, and a call to -- and prescription for -- action from a long-time, highly knowledgeable activist. His first-hand experiences, notably in the United States and Latin America, deserve attention and, one hopes, will fuel discussions that help produce policies radically different from those of the recent past.

Walter LaFeber Author of *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*

Peter Mott has brought together his life as a physician and his activism on behalf of human rights to give us what he calls a "diagnosis and prescription" for our nation, which badly needs both. This is a work of both fact and imagination, with a spiritual thread, a moral center, and it comes at a time in our history when we can use both common sense about the present and hope for the future.

Howard Zinn, Professor Emeritus, History, Boston University.

## CUBA VIVE!

- by Ellen Bernstein

The shift in power in the US Congress comes just at the time when our government has escalated its provocations against Cuba. The latest report of the so-called "Presidential Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba" spells out 93 pages of plans to use 'economic hit-men' and USAID-funded subversion to take control of Cuba's economy and infrastructure, and privatize its world-renowned healthcare and educational systems (if, after Fidel, there is a "transitional government").

The case of the Cuban Five also requires our full attention. The five Cubans are beginning their ninth year in maximum security US prisons, all because they uncovered a plot by Luis Posada Carriles, an acknowledged terrorist, to place bombs on passenger airplanes traveling to Cuba. Posada, in the meanwhile, is being held on minor charges, and could be exonerated at any moment. Taken together, these cases are a perfect example of the hypocrisy of the US's so-called 'war on terrorism' and the cruelty of its Cuba policy.

When President Castro's illness was announced, we were treated to the unbecoming spectacle of Miami extremists dancing in the streets. But Cuba is as stable as ever - leading the Movement of Non-Aligned Nations, and going about its business as usual. And, in response to US aggressions, Cuba keeps turning the other cheek: exporting medical care and literacy programs around the world, training doctors for under-served communities in the Americas and Africa, and offering free eye surgery through Operation Miracle. (More than 200,000 blind and visually impaired patients from 27 countries have already benefitted from this program, which will also be made available to patients from the US.)

In 2007, many friends of Cuba will be in leadership positions in Congress. We must insist that the new Democratic majority act decisively to end the immoral, illegal, archaic, and counterproductive sanctions on Cuba trade and travel.

Our 17th Friendshipment Caravan was a resounding success - and as soon as we returned, most of the participants received threatening letters from the US Treasury Department. How are we responding? We keep on organizing! We're planning outreach to the new Congress, to press them to put an end to this onerous blockade of our neighbors. If we get called to hearings in Washington, we plan to make a



Rev. Luis Barrios, Rev. Thomas Smith, Ellen Bernstein the author, Rev. Lucius Walker



Ellen Bernstein with Irma Gonzalez, daughter of Rene Gonzalez, one of the Cuban Five...

big noise to protest the travel restrictions. We'll soon be announcing Friendshipment XVIII; join us!

We also continue recruiting students for the scholarship program at the Latin American School of Medicine, where more than 100 US students currently are enrolled.

For more information, check out [www.pastorsforpeace.org](http://www.pastorsforpeace.org) or call 212/926-5757.

(The author is Associate Director of IFCO/Pastors for Peace in New York.)

**"The problem with American power is not that it is American but that, both at home and abroad, it backs the powerful against the weak and supports democracy only when democracy supports America."**

**Gary Younge,  
NY correspondent for  
the Guardian, in The  
Nation, 6/20/05**



## Brazil's Landless Workers' Movement and Recent Presidential Elections

By Juan Reardon

Brazil and nine other Latin American countries have held elections in 2006. As many commentators have noted election results across the region continue to frustrate the ruling elite, not only in the respective countries, but on Wall Street as well.

What must be thought about critically, however (and Brazil might very well serve as the best example available) is how a presidential election can possibly save a country that lacks a National Project to resolve the main problems of the people (i.e., the Right to Land, Work, Food, Culture, etc.).

When asked how the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) would approach the coming period, spokesperson João Pedro Stedile affirmed what has been proven by social forces throughout the continent, that "the government will only change if the pressure comes from the streets".

The MST, the region's largest social movement, arose from the disparate land distribution in Brazil, where less than 3 percent of the population owns two-thirds of the country's arable land. Having realized many successes through non-violent occupations of unproductive lands (i.e., land titles for over 350,000 families on over 2,000 agrarian reform settlements), the MST has broadened its primary goal of land distribution to include food security, food sovereignty, environmental conservation and the promotion of an agricultural system based on agro-ecological production.

The MST has also played a significant role in organizing La Via Campesina, an umbrella organization for peasant movements around the world.

The MST's struggle has never been easy. It has faced violent repression from the state and hired guns, persecution by authorities allied with landholding elites, and

severe demonization by the mainstream media. Undeterred by these challenges, the MST remains committed to making its demands through direct mass action.

In a 2002 interview the movement's Stedile said, "The only force that can bring social change is the organized mass of the people, and that people organize themselves through struggle, not through the vote. A vote is an expression of citizenship, [and] not a form of struggle...[We need] a great mass movement with the consistent, revolutionary aim of an alternative project for our society."

### Join in Solidarity with the MST

Friends of the MST (FMST) was formed as a network of individuals and organizations that supports struggle for social and economic justice. Activists throughout the United States and elsewhere have organized FMST chapters in their communities.

House parties, church, union, neighborhood and university meetings have been organized. MST leaders have toured cities throughout the US and spoken on issues ranging from agrarian reform and women's rights to corporate globalization.

The FMST maintains an email listserv to distribute translated news and analysis from Brazil, including occasional Urgent Action Alerts when the MST requests international pressure. Volunteer translators are always welcome (Portuguese to English, English to Portuguese)!

To support the MST's economic, social and political development projects, tax-deductible donations can be made online or by mail.

If you are only now becoming familiar with the MST, the first step to take is

■■■■► *cont. to pg. 5*



*Aymaran woman at the entrance to Huanuni mines. Desperate for work, the unequal access to the mines has pitted brother against brother and neighbor against neighbor in bloody conflict as Bolivia struggles to regain control of her natural resources. Photo by Joanne Ranney*

## Bolivia Solidarity Network Marks its First Year with Reflection

- by Juliette Beck

*Since 1985, the Bolivian government has fully gone against what people want and feel is right for the country. They've privatized natural resources, airports, airlines, mines, and telecommunications. ... We are trying to derail a legacy of privilege from the right-wing political caste and domination by transnational corporations. We are trying to make the impossible possible and, to do that, we have to remain mobilized.*

This was the message that Oscar Olivera, water warrior and key member of the Coordinadora del Agua y por la Vida, expressed November 2005 to forty people gathered in Cochabamba, Bolivia to weave together a network of international solidarity with Bolivians.

We were a varied group of long-time residents of Bolivia, newcomers, writers, lay missionaries and global justice activists who wanted to explore different alternatives to support the social movements in their struggles

Those present decided to focus on two key issues: Publicly pressuring the US government to comply with the Bolivian government's request to notify (with an official summons) ex-president Gonzalo (Goni) Sanchez de Lozada that he return to Bolivia to stand trial on numerous charges including the murder of 67 people during the October 2003 popular protests. Additionally, a signature-gathering effort was launched directed at newly elected president Evo Morales asking him to join other Latin American countries to stop sending Bolivian military personnel to the US Army School of the Americas (WHINSEC).

On October 17, the third anniversary of the date that Goni fled Bolivia for the U.S., an international day of solidarity against impunity in the Goni case was held worldwide in twenty cities. While people rallied in front of Goni's house in Chevy

Chase, Maryland, and in front of the US Embassy in La Paz, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution supporting justice for the Bolivian people in the Goni legal case.

For many of us transplants from individualistic Western society, Bolivia offers an opportunity to engage in a process of mental decolonization and transformation that we hope will help to cultivate a deeper sense of our collective interdependence. As we accompany Bolivians in their daily lives and struggles and expand the web of relationships to other countries, we hope to learn from history and be part of a solidarity movement that embodies an Andean worldview. We invite you to add your experiences and participate in our continuing exploration of solidarity.

The Bolivia Solidarity Network (BSN) meets regularly in La Paz and Cochabamba and connects a loose network of activists around the world. We maintain a website ([www.boliviasolidarity.org](http://www.boliviasolidarity.org)) and an email list which disseminates news and analysis. You can join the list by sending an email to [Bolivia\\_solidarity-subscribe@lists.rise-up.net](mailto:Bolivia_solidarity-subscribe@lists.rise-up.net).

(The author is with BSN in La Paz.)

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*cont. 2007: Brazil's Landless Workers*

to get informed. Take a moment and join the FMST BiWeekly Listserv  
<http://www.mstbrazil.org/?q=email>  
and make regular visits to the website [www.mstbrazil.org](http://www.mstbrazil.org)

*Globalize Struggle!  
Globalize Hope!*

(The author is National Coordinator of Friends of the MST.)

*cont. 2007: The Year Haiti's Debt Is Cancelled*

-2007 is a Sabbath Year, and faith-based organizations around the country and the world are organizing around the biblical requirement to forgive debts during the year.

Haiti's foreign debt should be cancelled because it is both onerous and odious. Onerous debt is one that a poor country simply cannot afford to repay, without making life unacceptably difficult for its citizens. Odious debt is from loans given to a corrupt or brutal government that did not help the average citizen. Haiti's foreign debt is now \$1.4 billion, most of it odious, all of it onerous.

Almost half of Haiti's current debt is for loans granted to the dictatorships of "Papa Doc" and "Baby Doc" Duvalier (1957-1986). The Duvaliers diverted hundreds of millions of dollars to finance their extravagant lifestyles and to pay for the infamous tonton macoutes, who terrorized Haiti's population. The IFIs and the U.S. government knew what the Duvaliers were doing with the loans, but looked the other way as long as Haiti provided a reliable vote against Cuba in international organizations.

Even worse, Haiti's debt is literally killing people. Most Haitians scrape by on \$1 a day or less, and have no room to tighten their belts. Life expectancy for men is below 50, one half of Haitian children are malnourished. Less than half have access to clean water. But the government is forced to spend \$60 million paying debt service to the IFIs, rather than paying for schools, hospitals or clean water projects.

2007 provides us a unique opportunity to reverse this historical injustice. Rep. Waters will re-introduce the Haiti Debt Relief resolution early in the year, and will need us to tell our representatives to co-sponsor and vote for it. The IFI debt relief

programs are a step in the right direction, but will likely include painful conditionalities that will actually cut government programs serving Haiti's poorest. We need to stay involved and informed to ensure that Haiti's debts are cancelled, without conditions, so that the Haitian government can use its resources to save lives, not reimburse wealthy banks.

(The author is an American lawyer who, in Haiti, is Director, Institute for Justice and Peace in Haiti. To help, contact Jubilee USA at Debt@jubileeusa.org, 202-546-4468, Brian@IJDH.org, or 541-432-0597).

## **Thank You!**

For your generous contributions!

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## **INTERCONNECT BY E-MAIL?**

Many readers are requesting that INTERCONNECT be sent by e-mail for the sake of Environment, Economy, Efficiency, and Easy Reading. If you would like to receive it this way please send your e-address to us at [interconnect\\_mott@frontiernet.net](mailto:interconnect_mott@frontiernet.net). Others of you prefer the mailed hardcopy version and have sent donations to help cover the cost of printing and postage.

**THANK YOU!**

## Venezuela's Chávez: Advances at Home, International Setbacks

- by Dan Hellinger



Two weeks before Venezuela's elections on December 3, President Hugo Chávez seems assured of another landslide victory. Independent polls show him leading his main opponent, Manuel Rosales, former governor of oil-rich Zulia, by over 30 points. The main question remains whether Rosales will pull out just before election day, as the opposition did last December.

A third option for Rosales would be to stay in the race and then complain that the election was unfair afterwards. This would allow him on the one hand to please Washington and those sectors of the Venezuelan opposition dedicated to delegitimizing Chávez, and on the other to avoid losing face with voters looking for an opposition but unwilling to endorse obstructionist and anti-patriotic actions.

The most serious criticism of the Chávez campaign is that he and his backers are abusing incumbency. For example, the president of the state oil company recently gave a speech to managers stressing that only a vote for Chávez could be considered patriotic. The state television channel is heavily slanted in favor of the government, despite a legal obligation to stay neutral. The government moved up a big Christmas bonus to public employees.

However, the state TV station covers opposition campaign events, and its bias toward Chávez should be put in the context of a continued vituperative campaign by the four big private TV networks against the president.

Chávez leads because of his many government programs in health care, education, nutrition, urban improvements, land reform, etc. For this he is often accused of "populism," as though there were something wrong in such policies.

In some ways the Rosales campaign has been more populist. His most important campaign promise is to issue all Venezuelans a black debit card. Some campaign ads feature a black woman from the barrios promoting the idea, referring to "Mi Negra." The phrase deliberately conflates the card itself, oil, and race.

Long considered an innocent term of endearment, Latin Americans of African descent (at least 30 percent of Venezuela's population) increasingly see the term quite differently.

"Chávez also has his faults, but Mi Negra comes across as opportunist from someone out of the old political guard," Jesús García, director of the Afroamérica Foundation, a nongovernmental organization, told the New York Times. "The proposal from Rosales is one of vulgarity, of condescension toward Afrodescendants."

Venezuela's campaign for a seat on the United Nation's Security Council was less successful. Until the president made a widely publicized speech comparing

President Bush to the devil at the UN, Venezuelan diplomats were claiming they had the votes to prevail. When the vote finally came, Venezuela had to be satisfied with blocking the US choice, Guatemala, and settling for Panama to assume the seat.

Having seen his preferred candidate denied the presidency in Mexico and Peru, President Chávez saw Lula victorious in Brazil and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua. Both electoral victories certainly improved Venezuela's position in hemispheric diplomacy, especially in the OAS, but in both cases the left clearly was settling for "the lesser of two evils." If social movements in both countries step up the pressure on these presidents, Chávez may have to choose between his loyalty to political allies and aspirations to be seen as the leading world statesman opposed to neoliberalism.

(The author is Professor of Political Science at Webster University, St. Louis.)

**"The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic State itself. That, in its essence, is Fascism - ownership of government by an individual, by a group, or any controlling private power."**

**Franklin Delano Roosevelt**

## Resource of the Quarter



*Melinda St. Louis, Executive Director, Witness for Peace.*

**I**NTERCONNECT recognizes the quarterly Witness for Peace Newsletter for its

- Eye-catching appearance on newsprint (good for environment; inexpensive);
- Readability;
- Critical importance of content, linking country-specific issues with hemisphere-wide and global affairs.

The Fall 2006 focus, for example, is “Exposing the Roots of Migration”. The WFP Mexico Team reports that NAFTA has lost Mexico 1,750,000 rural jobs. Their Andean Director predicts massive refugee migration if US military threats grow. Their Nicaragua Team reports rural community losses of 15-20%, including community and youth leaders. The Colombia Team states that

millions of Colombian migrants (political, not economic, refugees) are seeking refuge from the war.

Melinda St. Louis, Executive Director, says, “WFP will continue to expose the cycles of military and economic violence perpetuated by US policy...to promote non-violent alternatives to oppressive models. Having moved our Mexico office to Oaxaca we call for non-violent solutions to the growing conflicts in southern Mexico...and will create faith community exchanges between 100 US and Colombian churches. (For more information contact her at 202-547-6112 or [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org).)

## From the Literature

**Venezuela Groups Get U.S. Aid Amid Meddling Charges** (NY Times, 11/9/06, by Simon Romero: Excerpts)

Since President Hugo Chávez returned to power after a brief coup in 2002, the US has channeled millions of dollars to Venezuelan organizations, many of them critical of his government...

American diplomats here have remained largely quiet in commenting on the election, which is scheduled for Dec. 3, in contrast to the active role American officials played in Nicaragua before the election of Daniel Ortega earlier this week...

[E.g.]The United States Agency for International Development has distributed about \$25 million to various Venezuelan organizations over the last five years... The funds have been channeled to the Venezuelan groups

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*(from an article about the causes of migration)*  
**“It can't be just making small changes in legislation in the US Congress. This is not going to solve one single thing. People are going to continue to die - die needlessly [trying to cross the desert]. Everywhere in Mexico people are being expelled; there are no jobs. And not only that, millions of jobs are being destroyed, and that's another part of the story that's not being told. NAFTA is destroying jobs. NAFTA has failed. It's not part of what politicians will tell you. They talk about increased investment in Mexico, more exports from Mexico, but if there is one thing I want to leave with you today, it is that NAFTA has failed the Mexican people.”**

*Miguel Pickard,  
 Center for Economic and Political Research for Community Action in Mexico (from Witness for Peace Newsletter, Fall 2006).*

# Banana Women Open Doors and Minds

A Book Review by Malcolm Bell

Imagine being a single mother working eight hours a day, five days a week, plus trying to promote women's lib in your job, labor union, and personal life in the macho U.S.A. of several decades ago.

Now imagine these struggles if your job makes you stand 10-12 hours a day, six days a week, wearing rubber gloves in a humid room where the temperature ranges from 95 to 105, where union activity can get you fired or worse, the union is oppressively male-dominated, and the man in your life, if any, is so macho that he commonly makes you seek his permission to go anywhere and he may very well hit you.

Dana Frank's *Bananas: Women Transforming the Banana Unions of Latin America* (South End Press, 2005, paper) reports the encouraging progress that a doughty band of banana packers has made in recent years -- the most progress in Honduras, the next in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Colombia, the least in Ecuador. The transnationals that employ them are Chiquita, which has flirted with social responsibility, and Del Monaco and Dole. Most of the women who prepare and pack bananas for shipment are age 20 to 40 because twenty years of this work usually burns them out.

Ms. Frank, who spent considerable time with the leaders of these women and plainly admires them, traces four struggles: for better pay and working conditions; for power-sharing with men in running their unions; for equality with the men in

their private lives; and, underlying these three, for the sense of their own worth, dignity, and value to others that their culture has always denied them.

Though the text is only 109 pages, it is not a swift read.

Beyond the women's lib struggle, we see the brutal exploitation and virtual enslavement of many powerless humans by a few powerful humans, with the lid kept on by the usual blind worship of free market capitalism and demonization of those who seek reform, backed by SOA graduates and their colleagues.

Almost every morning, my wife and I eat a banana on our cereal. It doesn't cost much. Except the sweat, blood, and prime years of the Latin American banana workers. Happily though, the *mujeres bananeras* - banana women - have been making progress in their own lives and, ultimately, in ours.

[Ed. Note: for information about where to buy fair-trade bananas, go to [www.fairtrade.org.uk/products\\_bananas.htm](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/products_bananas.htm)]

*cont. From The Literature*

through private and public entities from the United States that have opened offices in Caracas:

- Development Alternatives Inc., a Bethesda, Md., company,
- The International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs...have carried out training for emerging political leaders in Venezuela
- The Office of Transition Initiatives, a little-known branch of the international development agency that started operating in Venezuela after the April 2002 coup.
- One \$15,728 grant for a nutrition program went to the municipal government of Baruta, an area of Caracas whose mayor, Henrique Capriles Radonski, is an outspoken critic of Mr. Chávez.
- American officials here and in Washington say the aim of the assistance is to bring opponents and supporters of Mr. Chávez together to discuss ways to prevent the erosion of democratic freedoms.

Some grants were directed at organizations whose stated objectives seemed to look for potential weaknesses in Mr. Chávez's administration. One \$33,304 grant in

March 2005 was called "Land Redistribution Dos and Don'ts," and required its unidentified recipient to investigate agricultural policies in areas where the federal government had been carrying out land expropriations.

A \$47,459 grant was made in July 2005 to an organization whose goal was to meet with organizations to build a "democratic leadership campaign."

Prosecutors filed conspiracy charges against leaders of Sumate, a voter education group, after it received \$31,000 from the National Endowment for Democracy, another entity backed by the US government that distributes money to groups in Venezuela.

# RESOURCES

## Major Events

- Dec. 3. Venezuela presidential election.
- Dec. 5-7. Conference on Introduction of Renewable Energy Systems in Rural Communities ([www.uoedu.cu/fac/fim/CEEFE.html](http://www.uoedu.cu/fac/fim/CEEFE.html)). Santiago de Cuba.
- Jan. 24, 2007. World Social Forum, 5th Local Authorities Forum. Nairobi, Kenya.
- Mar. 5-9. International Conference to Abolish Foreign Military Bases. Ecuador. (Andres Thomas Conteris, Non-Violence International)
  - April 14-15. Latin America Solidarity Conference (LASC4). Chicago.
  - May 20-21. National Day of Prayer and action for Colombia ([www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org)).

## Campaigns

- **Haiti.** Cancel Haiti's Debt (see article above).
- **Venezuela.** Build the Venezuela Solidarity Network: Recently formed coalition of US solidarity groups needs help financially and with its working groups (Chuck Kaufman, Alliance for Global Justice, 202-544-9355; [vsn@afgj.org](mailto:vsn@afgj.org)).
- **Mexico.** Stop Violence Against the People of Oaxaca. Join the Witness for Peace Mexico Team as a member there or educating, letter-writing and raising funds in the US ([mexico@witnessforpeace.org](mailto:mexico@witnessforpeace.org)). See article above.
- **Colombia.**
  1. Banana Worker Justice Campaign to reverse anti-union behavior of Dole, the world's largest fruit company (see Book

- Review above and contact U.S.LEAP, [www.usleap.org](http://www.usleap.org)).
- 2. Trade and Worker Rights Initiative - and Ending Impunity in Colombia Initiative. To defeat the US push for a free trade agreement with Colombia (U.S.LEAP, above).
- **Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala.** Maquila Worker Justice Campaign (U.S.LEAP, above).
- **Belize:**
  - Stop Oil Development in National Park.
  - Stop the Threat to Environment and the Maya and Garifuna People (Global Response, 303-444-0306; [www.globalresponse.org](http://www.globalresponse.org)).
- **Chiapas.** Campaign for Corn and the Pastors for Peace Chiapas Caravan (IFCO/Pastors for Peace, 212-926-5757; [www.pastorsforpeace.org](http://www.pastorsforpeace.org)).

## Special Reports

**Colombia** *“Longing for Home: Return of Land to Colombia's Internally Displaced Population.”* (Latin America Working Group [LAWG]. To order or download a copy: [www.lawg.org/misc/publications.htm](http://www.lawg.org/misc/publications.htm)).

**Nicaragua.** Nicaragua Network's report of a delegation to observe US interference in the 2006 presidential election ([chuck@afgj.org](mailto:chuck@afgj.org)).

## Books

*Cancer in the Body Politic: Diagnosis and Prescription for an America in Decline*, by Peter D. Mott, M.D. 2006, EPICA. (\$10 plus postage. [admin@epica.org](mailto:admin@epica.org) or [www.epica.org](http://www.epica.org)).

*Bush vs. Chavez* by Eva Golinger. 2006 (no more information available).

*The Scorpion's Tail: Rebellion in Chiapas*, by Sylvia Torti. Curbstone Press. ISBN 1-

93-1896-17-18. (\$15. paperback, [info@curbstone.org](mailto:info@curbstone.org); [www.curbstone.org](http://www.curbstone.org)).

## Websites

Center for Fair and Alternative Trade Studies.  
[www.colostate.edu/Depts/Sociology/FairTradeResearchGroup/](http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/Sociology/FairTradeResearchGroup/)

## Movies

*The Accidental Revolution*, by David Suzuki. Shown on Canadian - but not US - television. A documentary of Cuba's agricultural revolution (free, contributions requested. Thomas Warner, Seattle/Cuba Friendship Committee, 8923 2nd Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115; [warner@scn.org](mailto:warner@scn.org)).

## Travel (see Codes below)

**Argentina:** 3/24-4/2 (GX, The Search for Alternatives); 8/1-20 (GX, The Search for Alternatives).

**Bolivia:** 2/4-14 (GX, Natural resources, social movements); 6/17-27 (GX, Natural resources, social movements).

**Border:** 1/8-24 (CPT Border control policies, issues facing migrants); 2/18-23 (NYS Labor Religion Coalition, [www.labor-religion.org](http://www.labor-religion.org); 518-213-6000, x6294); 2/17-20 (GX “free trade”); 3/1-8 (CPT Tucson. Immigration, militarization); 4/29-5/2 (GX “free trade”); 5/24-6/4 (CPT Tucson. Immigration, militarization).

**Brazil:** 4/14-25 (GX land and sustainability); 8/5-15 (GX race, dance, politics).

**Colombia:** 1/17-30 (CPT human rights, church leaders, accompaniment, Bogota, Barrancabermeja, countryside); 5/23-6/5 (CPT, as above); 7/18-31 (CPT, as above)

**Costa Rica:** 12/20-30 (GX: ecotourism, sustainability, Pacific Coast).

**Cuba:** 12/27-1/3 (GX: protected areas/birds).

**Ecuador:** 3/10-20 (GX environmental rights); 7/14-24 (GX environmental rights).

**El Salvador:** 2/2-11 (GATE cultural immersion); 6/13-22 (GATE cultural immersion); 8/4-15 (CGE El Salvador and Guatemala - Journey of Love and Understanding).

**Guatemala:** 1/6-14 (GX Fair Trade in Action); 3/9-17 (GATE cultural immersion); 3/28-4/7 (GATE cultural immersion); 6/23-7/1 (CGE Education for Decolonization: A Professional Development Seminar); 9/15-23 (GX fair trade in action).

**Honduras:** 8/9-19 (GX resilient roots).

**Mexico:** 1/4-14 (GATE: Mexico quest, Central Basin, the feminine divine, culture, women, history); 1/17-27 (GATE: Mexico City, Chiapas, human rights, indigenous); 2/17-25 (GATE Oaxaca, cultural immersion); 3/14-24 (GATE Women's Spiritual Quest); 3/28-4/5 (GX Chiapas); 5/16-26 (GATE Chiapas, cultural); 6/4-24 (GATE Quest); 6/6-15 (GX Chiapas); 6/16-25 (CGE LGBT Lives: Mexican Perspectives); 6/16-26 (CGE Border Crossings: Globalization, Migration, Social Work. A Professional Development Seminar for Social Workers & Social Work Professors); 6/21-30 (GATE Women's Spiritual Quest, Rosemary Reuther).

**Nicaragua:** 12/13-21 (GX fair trade, Fair Harvest Exchange Program); 1/5-14 (CGE: coffee with a conscience, justice, poverty); 3/17-24 (CGE coffee, CAFTA and a Caldera); 5/13-26 (CGE Legacy of Conflict: Sustainable Development); 5/21-6/3 (CGE Environmental Justice and Sustainable Development: Views from Latin America); 6/22-27/1 (GX fair trade, Fair Harvest Exchange Program).

**Venezuela:** 1/11-21 (WP Another Way); 1/27-2/6 (GX a new vision for the Americas); 3/3-14 (GX as above); 4/9-

*cont. Movement News*

SOA graduate, convicted for the 1989 murder of the Jesuit priests, was arrested in Los Angeles 10/18 by US federal agents.

**Paraguay:** On 9/28 decided not to sign a free trade agreement with the US, and on 10/2 informed the US they would not renew diplomatic immunity for US troops (UpsideDown World 11/06).

**Chile:** Several members of the Chilean Congress are introducing a bill demanding new President Bachelet withdraw Chilean troops from the SOA (SOAW Update 10/17/06).

**Colombia:** has the second highest number of landmine victims in the world after Afghanistan.

**Venezuela:** (1) SOA Watch has a new office in Barquismeto to help connect grass-roots movements in the US and Latin America. (2) CITCO, the US subsidiary of Venezuela's oil company, has donated \$400,000 to a school clinic in South Chicago (11/9 People's Weekly World Newspaper).

**World Rainforest Movement and Global Justice Ecology Project** have presented a demand to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Nairobi, Kenya to ban the use of genetically engineered trees under the Kyoto Protocol. GE trees have been proposed for use in plantations developed as climate sinks or for biofuels.

**Peace Brigades International** has been providing nonviolent protective accompaniment for 25 years.

**"Transnational corporations have escaped the national obligations of community by becoming international and, since there is as yet no international community, they have escaped from community obligations altogether. Globalism does not serve world community - it is just individualism writ large."**

**Herman Daly, Beyond Growth, Beacon, 1998, \$15. P. 148.**

19 (GX, as above); 6/1-16 (GX learn Spanish, Caracas-Merida); 8/4-19 (GX, as above); 8/4-19 (GX, as above); 9/1 (GX, as above).

### **CODES**

**CGE:** Center for Global Education, Augsburg College. 612-330-1159; [globaled@augsburg.edu](mailto:globaled@augsburg.edu).

**CPT:** Christian Peacemaker Team. 773-

277-0253, [delegations@cpt.org](mailto:delegations@cpt.org).

**GX:** Global Exchange. 800-497-1994, x242, [latinamerica@globalexchange.org](mailto:latinamerica@globalexchange.org); [www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org).

**GATE:** La Crosse, WI. [www.GATE-travel.org](http://www.GATE-travel.org); 608-791-5283.

**WP:** Witness for Peace. 202-547-6112, [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org), [ken@witnessforpeace.org](mailto:ken@witnessforpeace.org).

## Movement News In Brief

**Latin America:** (1) Immigrants in the US will send home \$60 billion this year, 12% more than in 2005 (from an AP article on the Inter-America Development Bank, Washington Post, 10/19/06). (2) IMF Chief Economist warns the increase in "populist" governments and their unilateral rewriting of contracts could scare off investment.

**Border:** 4000 people have died since 1994 trying to cross the Mexico-US border (Witness for Peace Newsletter, Fall '06).

**Brazil:** President Lula of the Workers Party won a second term.

**Nicaragua:** (1) Former President Daniel Ortega and the FSLN (Sandinista Front for National Liberation) win with 39% of the vote, despite the US Embassy's (Managua) threat to cut off all remittances from the US. (2) Nicaragua's dream of an \$18 billion canal, 173 miles long: would be wider and deeper than Panama's; would save ships from California to New York a day, and Chinese tankers up to 36 days.

**Argentina:** (1) President Kirchner signed to import \$17 billion in Bolivian natural gas over 20 years and vowed to step in and help if private investors back away from Bolivia's now nationalized gas industry (AP 10/20/06). (2) Over 130,000 immigrants in Argentina from other MERCOSUR nations are being legalized.

**Ecuador:** (1) The 10/15 election resulted in an 11/26 run-off between leftist economist Rafael Correa and banana mogul Alvaro Noboa. Correa won and will be Ecuador's 8th president in 10 years. (2) The government has sued Chevron Texaco for fraud in falsely claiming not to have spilled toxic water into the Amazon.

**Haiti:** (1) Former CIA agent and leader of the FRAPH death squads. Toto Constant, is in a NYC jail on mortgage fraud charges. Also, a US federal judge has ordered him to pay \$19 million to three women raped by the FRAPH (Half Hour for Haiti, 10/25/06). (2) The prestigious British medical journal LANCET has published a study by Athena Kolbe, a Haitian graduate student in the US, claiming that 8000 Haitians were killed and 35,000 women and girls raped since the ouster of President Aristide in 2004, some by Canadian-led UN Peacekeeping troops, others by Haitian National Police and by the previous illegal post-coup Haitian government. An investigation is underway. (Toronto Globe and Mail, 10/14/06).

**Mexico, Oaxaca:** By 11/2/06 there had been 172 days of resistance by thousands of residents and students - the Popular People's Assembly of Oaxaca (APPO) - stormed by Federal Preventative Police but not dislodged from the Benito Juarez Autonomous University of Oaxaca, with 400 arrested, 17 deaths, 61 disappeared, 400 injured, 53 political prisoners still in jail, and the spread of teachers strikes across Mexico in solidarity. On Nov. 20 the Zapatistas may call a general strike; and Obrador may assume his role as shadow president (Mexico Solidarity Network's Weekly News and Analysis, 10/30-11/12/06).

**Cuba:** The Bush Administration has set up a Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba to plan regime change "after the death of President Fidel Castro." (CLASP Notes, Caribbean and Latin America Support Project, Oct. '06).

**El Salvador:** Gonzalo Guevara Cerritos, officer in the Atlacatl Battalion and