

port of AGEUS.

Carole Kinitzki Umana, of Canadian University Students in Solidarity with AGEUS (CUSS-AGEUS), will later describe the collective efforts to keep the university running: "Like a 'university in exile,' [the UES community]

paid with money collected by the parents of the students. The students have no paper, no chairs to sit on, no reasonable washroom facilities.

The military, Anna continues, views anyone inside the university as a subversive, with guerilla connections.



rented basements, storefronts, and conducted classes in private homes, making use of only rudimentary equipment and supplies." However, despite its capacity for 60,000 students, the UES can now only accommodate 10,000.

1984

The Christian-Democrat government of Napoleon Duarte is elected. Duarte is backed by the American Reagan administration.

In May, The University of El Salvador re-opens. In four years, constant and systematic governmental cut-backs have sliced the UES operating budget by over 50 per cent. The university community begins rebuilding the campus without governmental aid.

The AGEUS adopts the International Scholarship Campaign for UES students from the university's rector office, which can no longer afford to provide grants. The AGEUS receives overseas contributions from Finland for the scholarship fund. Later, contributions come in from student unions in Canada and the United States.

1985

Anna, a Salvadorean elementary school teacher (also studying, by night, at the UES), speaks of the edu-

One day, studying in the library, she watches as three plainclothed military officials yank a young man out of his seat, take him outside, and kill him. "He wasn't a student," Anna muses. "He had hard, calloused skin — maybe he was a farmer."

Anna's perilous connection to the university is only magnified by the fact that she lives close to a military camp in San Salvador.

"Every time they come to my house, trying to find something," she complains. "I don't know what kind of thing they are expecting me to have!"

1986

In March, AGEUS president Rufino Antonio Quezada is captured in his home by a special battalion of the national police. He is detained for six days, during which he is beaten and interrogated. His release is secured only through the international protest of letters and telegrams.

Eleven years after the murder of 30 students at the massive 1975 demonstration at the UES Santa Anna campus, AGEUS stages the first International Event of Solidarity at the main campus in the capital city of San Salvador. Delegates from Finland, Denmark, the United States and Canada arrive to swell the ranks. Organizers

picking out individuals as kidnapping targets. Students wear hats to the rallies, she continues, but not just to protect them from the sun — the hats shield their faces, making identification difficult.

In another interview with Umana, a journalist notes that the presence of international observers and cameras does actually stave off a show of military might at the demonstration. Not a single shot is fired.

Umana refers to a photo of student spray painting a message on a wall in front of the U.S. embassy in San Salvador. "The reason that man wasn't shot was that we were there," she remarks.

Philip Klint, another Canadian student taking part in the solidarity march, recalls the mood of the rally four years later: "No one at the university would talk about the FMLN," he remembers. "Obviously, there were a lot of [governmental agents] there."

While visiting the guerilla zone in the summer of 1986, Klint and other members of the CUSS-AGEUS support group are stopped by military officials. All the men in the car are forced out at gunpoint.

"He lined us up and stood behind us with a gun — just for a minute —

school. He has been active in student activities. Most of the student body and teachers occupy the school and refuse to attend classes until he is released. Seven days later, the news of his release is widespread but unconfirmed.

On July 17, military forces attack 500 students, faculty members and administrators who are taking part in a rally protesting the increasing abductions and military harassment at the UES San Salvador campus. Two students are wounded by gunfire, nine students are wounded altogether.

On July 23, the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) condemns the July 17 attack.

"We cannot tolerate the constant repression of students and others at the University of El Salvador," says Edith Garneau, OFS chairperson. "The unprovoked attack on student demonstrators was a despicable, barbarous act, no different than the savagery that has recently occurred in China . . . Whenever there are students being suppressed and being denied their fundamental human rights, we must speak out and offer whatever support we can . . . It is our responsibility as Canadian students to do so."



just to scare us . . . The minute seemed like an hour — I thought it was the end."

1989

On June 1, the ultra right wing ARENA government of Alfredo Cristiani is elected by only 16 per cent of El Salvador's eligible voters. 64 per cent of voters abstain from casting ballots. The United States administration is now allied with a Salvadorean regime that will push the country's numbers of human rights violations higher than ever.

On June 23, the new ARENA government proposes reforms to the El Salvadorian penal code. Under the new proposal, marches, organizations, journalists and publications could be banned for opposing government policy or criticizing government officials. The reforms would empower the president to ban any organization deemed to have committed any offense, as Cristiani states, "against the sovereignty of the country." Publication of the views of such groups through any medium — including radio, television or newspapers — would be prohibited.

On July 10, Marcos Maroquin, a 17-year-old high school student, is captured by Treasury Police on his way to

Chronologically, this update has now reached the present, unsteady state of El Salvador's national university. Earlier this week, I sat in The Ainger coffee shop in Calumet for two-and-a-half hours with Philip Klint, absorbing as much I could from the retelling of his experiences. As we sorted through photographs from Klint's 1986 trip to El Salvador, I was suddenly slapped with the realization of how much I took my education for granted.

Klint handed me a snapshot of four AGEUS leaders addressing a crowd. "Sometimes I wonder if these guys are still alive," Klint muttered.

Later on, the two of us agreed that any of the clubs that set up tables in Central Square would have been blown up by now, if we were living in El Salvador. "Or in Guatemala or the old [pre-Sandanista] Nicaragua," Klint added.

I needed to know something. If the Salvadorean students were too terrified to speak of political solutions — of the FMLN, of Marxism — what were they talking about? What did they want from the future?

"Most of the students I talked to just wanted an education," Klint told me. "A decent education, without repression."



cational system in her homeland on a Canadian college radio station. "In some schools," she says, "the government only pays the principal — it doesn't pay the teachers. Some of the schools have only one or two teachers that the government pays."

Most of the teachers, she adds, are

hope that the presence of international solidarity will make the military hesitant to open fire on the students.

In November, the issue of the news journal *The Ontario*, CUSS-AGEUS member Carole Umana explains that government photographers routinely attend student gatherings and rallies,