

# El Salvador condemned for violations of human rights

By GARY SYMONS  
and LILY CONTENTO

A mock tribunal at the University of Toronto's Moot Court condemned the El Salvadorean government for violations of the Declaration of Human Rights, last weekend.

The eight-member jury heard from six witnesses, all political refugees from El Salvador, who gave testimony of their experiences at the hands of the country's army and police officials.

Witness Oscar Martinez, formerly the General Secretary of the Salvadoran Law Student's Association of the University of El Salvador, testified he and a friend had been arrested by 20 members of the National Guard. Unable to extract a confession labelling Martinez and his friend as subversives, the Guard members tortured the two, slit their throats, and threw them off a cliff assuming them dead, according to Martinez.

Another witness, Carlos Orantes, testified that after being drafted into the army he was ordered by officers to execute and sometimes torture suspected subversives. Orantes said he twice underwent imprisonment and torture for refusing to shoot prisoners. To avoid his own execution Orantes said he deserted with nine other soldiers and eventually fled the country.

In other testimony, witness Jacobo Queteno, North American representative of the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador told the jury of the arbitrary executions perpetrated by the government's "Death Squads" and of various torture techniques used by police and army officials.

Queteno also spoke out strongly against U.S. intervention in Central America. "It means an extension of war and of the violation of human rights," he said, adding "weapons given to the Government of El Salvador by the U.S. are used to repress the population."

Tribunal judge Bradford Morse, a vice-dean of law at the University of Ottawa, said he hoped the tribunal's findings would help shape future Canadian policy concerning Central America.

After about three hours of deliberation the jury condemned the government of El Salvador for:

- Attacks on the Roman Catholic Church, the University of El Salvador and all those concerned with it, and on Human Rights organizations;

- Arrests, disappearances, and executions of individuals by military and para-military groups (Death Squads);
- The policy of indiscriminate bombings;
- The use of systematic torture on the population and military conscripts during training;
- Forced conscription and kidnapping of children under 16.

The jury also drew up four recommendations:

1. That the Canadian government should expand its refugee program. (75 refugees from El Salvador have already been admitted to Canada since last April)
2. That Canada should establish a strong diplomatic presence in El Salvador for the protection of human rights.
3. For Canada to supply aid for reopening the University of El Salvador for the protection of human rights.
4. That the Canadian government should urge El Salvador to abolish Decrees 507 and 903 which directly permit human rights violations.

About U.S. policies pertaining to the region, the jurors wrote in their two-page report, that "human rights violations are facilitated by a continual state of war and militarization of El Salvador. This state of war is aggravated by U.S. intervention."

The tribunal jury was made up of eight Toronto professionals including Michele Landsberg, former Toronto Star columnist, and Russell Legge, president of the Canadian Council of Churches.

In an interview Monday, Pastor Valle-Garay, professor of Languages at York and Consul-General of Nicaragua, agreed that Canada should speak out against the El Salvador government but he disagreed with the second recommendation on the grounds that Canadian lives would be endangered.

"The right-wing death squads are not ordinary people," he said. "I wouldn't put it past them to harm the Canadians."

Valle-Garay did suggest however, that Canada could help the people of El Salvador by collaborating with other world governments to "make all foreign aid dependent on the state of human rights."

The findings of the tribunal's six jurors will go to the Human Rights Commission for a special session on human rights in Geneva next month.



Professor William Lutz on doublespeak

Photo: MARIO SCATTOLONI

## Speaking of doublespeak . . .

By LILY CONTENTO

Doublespeak—it's the language of very intelligent people who know exactly what they want, according to U.S. English professor William Lutz in his talk "Language as a Means of Social Control" he gave Tuesday in Vanier Senior Common Room.

"What is scary is that when you hear these sentences, you think you know that they mean," said Professor Lutz in reference to "doublespeak." According to Lutz, who teaches at Rutgers University, this "extension" of language is used by authorities to justify political, economic, and social misfunctions.

Lutz's speech was the first in a series of lectures on George Orwell's 1984 Vanier College will present. There were about 25 in attendance.

"In the book 1984, Orwell speaks of 'newspeak,' the language that Oceania used to control public thought, and 'doublethink,' which is the ability to hold two thoroughly opposing ideas. I combined them to form doublespeak," said Lutz, who's also editor of *The Quarterly Review of Doublespeak*.

He gave a number of humorous examples of

Doublespeak, such as the expression "selected out" which he said is often used as a synonym for "fired." He said airline companies try to conceal an airline crash by informing the public that they've experienced an "involuntary conversion" of an airline.

U.S. President Ronald Reagan was Lutz's primary target. "He (Ronald Reagan) can say the most outrageous things and get away with it. Lutz considers Doublespeak the "language of non-thought." "With the comprehension of language goes the comprehension of thought," he added.

Quoting Ernest Hemingway, Lutz advised that one "should become a first rate bullshit detector." He said the well-known sign that reads FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, PLEASE LEAVE ALL PARCELS AT THE DOOR is an excellent example of "business managers' abuse" of the English language.

According to Lutz, it's for the store owner's "convenience" that all parcels be left at the door, not the customer's.

The organizer of the series of lectures is Professor Deborah Hobson, master of Vanier College.



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