

Through Dina's eyes: a look at El Salvador

by Kirsten Nichols

Dina Tobar Mejia, very far away from her village in El Salvador tersely answered questions through an interpreter on a snowy, Canadian afternoon. As a Salvadoran, she hopes that the *Witness to Courage Tour* sponsored by the Jesuit Centre and Oxfam will inform Canadians of a situation Ottawa could help ease.

There is a civil war on-going in El Salvador, where the army often seems to be in control.

Mejia's husband was killed by soldiers in 1980, as were 19 other members of her family since 1979.

With her daughter and much of the rest of her village, Mejia fled to neighbouring Honduras.

There after eight years of living in a refugee camp encircled by the Honduran military they were given three choices by the Honduran government; repatriate individually; go to a third host country; or become nationalized.

Becoming nationalized would have left them as eleven thousand poor peasants in a land where there were already too many starving.

There was no third host country ready to accept 11,000 refugees.

Going back to El Salvador,

individually, was not a choice. The refugees had heard of families that had gone back only to end up in jail. Or, "they ended up being corpses on the side of the road", as Mejia commented.

The community decided on a mass repatriation of 4,500 people. They planned it for nine months. The community informed both the international community, for protection, and the Salvadoran government, for permission.

They did not get a reply from their government until two weeks before their departure date.

A Salvador minister appeared at the refugees' camp, for a meeting with the refugees. "She said to us that she didn't realize we (the refugees) were there and that President Duarte had sent word that we couldn't come back," said Mejia.

"We realized that we are Salvadoran, we should have the right to go back, so how could they tell us that we didn't have the right to go back to our country?"

The official then told the community that if they returned they would be in violation of the Central American Peace Accord. In actuality the Government by not assisting the refugees with their repatriation was in violation.

"That's how they twist things in Central America. It's another world down there," commented the worker for the Jesuit Centre.

The 4,500 left Honduras. As they got across the border they were interrogated one by one by the authorities.

The Salvadoran had finally returned home to rebuild their

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Feds slash \$8 million from summer job program

OTTAWA (CUP) — With 24 hours notice to student lobby groups and opposition critics, the federal government slashed funds for a post-secondary summer employment program and channelled it to high school job creation.

The Tories announced an overall increase in the Challenge '89 program January 27, but redirected it, and then some, to high school students. The result is a loss of \$8 million worth of summer jobs for university and college students.

Youth Minister Jean Charest's announcement included \$31.3 million allotted to New Brunswick and Newfoundland for special five-year employment programs for youths making the

transition from school to work — negotiated last fall. Taking this into account, spending is actually down by \$12.3 million from last year's \$180 million.

"He's trading off one group of youth for another. . . showing a flagrant disregard. . . a real lack of integrity," said James Tate, deputy chair of the Canadian Federation of Students.

Budget constraints forced a decision over who would benefit from the job money, said youth ministry communications director Micheline Cette.

"Our data indicates that the unemployment level was highest amongst high school students going back to school," said Cette.

Tate said the cutbacks will force students further into debt.

Senate plagiarism

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situation 'discouraging'. The professor says that although Senate feels that it is dealing effectively with the problem of plagiarism, the issue deserves more attention because students are not being penalized properly.

"I have talked to at least a half dozen professors who don't take cases to the Senate (Discipline) Committee, because they feel that nothing happens", she says.

Belzer agrees that stricter regulations are needed. "If a student is found not guilty of intent, then no 'academic offence' has occurred and a student can request a mark for an assignment which they have plagiarized, intentionally or not," says Belzer.

The Senate Discipline Committee has dealt with 15 cases of alleged plagiarism in the past four years. Plagiarism was confirmed 11 of those times.

SUBspace

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loped campus community radio station."

DeMont foresees an acceptance of the reallocation plan. He believes "the main concerns of the Student Council will be how to fund the project out of an already tight budget plus the actual (logistics of) space distribution."

Lewis

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not to pay its assessed contributions. Needless to say, this hurt the U.N. enormously.

On the other hand, said Lewis, Canada's position in the U.N. is to be admired. "We have so much international credibility" said Lewis, "and it is up to us to use this credibility to our utmost." Having just been voted into the new Security Council, Canada now has the potential to use its authority and take stands on principle.

Lewis also addressed Canada's domestic policies and said Canada is being "irrational" and submitting to a cold war mentality if it does continue in its plans to purchase nuclear submarines and to allow advanced cruise missile testing within its borders.

Lewis also believes Canada should wholeheartedly support sanctions against South Africa.

Lewis also praised the U.S.S.R. whose delegates he feels are absolutely liberated in the U.N., thanks to *glasnost*. Formerly the "most monosyllabic bunch" at the U.N., they now positively "walze" down the halls, said Lewis.

Lewis said he was confident that the U.N. will continue on its present wave of success into the next decade. On diplomacy in general, he finds it a "silly and self-infatuated profession", yet one that, on balance he loves.

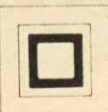
Some Stephen Lewis advice? "Remember when all else fails go into politics." For although it may be an exercise in cosmic futility, "if you wait long enough, there is always some Tory to rescue you."



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