

CERLAC

**CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**The ORGANIZATION of AMERICAN STATES
YOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

**REPORT
PRE-INTERNSHIP WORKSHOP
August 24 - September 2, 1998**

**Compiled by
Alejandra Roncallo**

CERLAC Reports

November 1998

CERLAC REPORT

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CERLAC
240 York Lanes
York University
North York, Ontario
Canada M3J 1P3

Phone: (416) 736-5237
Fax: (416) 736-5737
E-mail: cerlac@yorku.ca

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**Compiled by
Alejandra Roncallo
CERLAC
York University
Toronto, Ontario
Tel: (416) 736-5237
Fax: (416) 736-5737
E-mail: cerlac@yorku.ca**

Abstract:

The CERLAC/OAS/DFAIT Youth Internship Program was designed to deepen the understanding of Canadian youth of multilateral issues affecting the Western Hemisphere by offering a five month internship at the Organization of American States, funded by Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada. Targeted at recent university graduates of proven academic merit and personal suitability, the internships were provided on a competitive basis. A pre-internship workshop was held at CERLAC between August 24 and September 2, 1998, with the purposes of: fostering personal and intra-group relations; understanding formal versus cultural protocols; advance logistics preparation and information; and learn about the OAS and Canada's role in the Americas.

Monday, August 24 - Introductions

Welcome - Ricardo Grinspun (Director, CERLAC) and Carlos Torres (Project Coordinator)

The day began with the presentation of CERLAC and the Youth Internship Program (YIP)-Organization of the American States (OAS) program. The organization and main issues of the pre-internship program were addressed. It was explained to the interns that the program was designed in accordance with the main issues related to the OAS; especially to the different sections in which each of them would work for the next five months. Each presentation was to be followed by a discussion session in which the interns could participate and feel free to ask questions and give feedback.

DFAIT internships, roles and responsibilities - Janet Boyer (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade)

Janet Boyer gave a presentation outlining the main objectives of the internship project. Among them, the promotion of worldwide prosperity, the promotion of Canada, the extension of global security through peace, conflict resolution and human rights and, finally, the spread of Canadian culture and values. Boyer argued that the basic intention of these objectives was to improve the representation of Canada in the OAS and mentioned that one of the principal barriers to meeting this end was the poor knowledge of the Spanish language among Canadians.

Boyer referred to the history of the internship project, which she initiated in 1997, and the reasons why DFAIT decided to contract CERLAC, a Canadian executing agency with knowledge and connections to Latin America. Afterwards she delineated the roles and responsibilities of DFAIT, CERLAC, the OAS and the interns. Boyer ended her presentation giving recommendations to the interns on how to get the most out of their experience.

Introduction to the workshop - Ricardo Grinspun (Director, CERLAC) and Carlos Torres (Project Coordinator)

Grinspun and Torres explained the internship program to the interns and introduced an exercise in order to explain the main objectives that CERLAC had in mind when organizing the pre-internship program. After brainstorming the interns came up with five main needs: 1) develop and foster personal and intra-group relations, 2) understand the formal versus cultural protocol, 3) logistical preparation and information, 4) learn about the Americas and the OAS and 5) find out what they were going to be doing in Washington.

The organization of the pre-internship program was clarified for the interns: the first two points were going to be addressed by Chris Cavanagh, an expert on intercultural training, antiracism and international solidarity with Latin America. The third point was going to be addressed by Grinspun and Torres from CERLAC. The fourth was considered in each presentation of the workshop, and references to the OAS were going to be addressed by Liisa North, Yasmine Shamsie and George Eaton. Finally, the duties and responsibilities of the interns were addressed to be by Janet Boyer and Brian Dickson, former Ambassador to the OAS, later in the week. Thus, the consensus between the interns and the YIP/OAS/CERLAC organizers demonstrated the importance of the pre-internship program.

The interns were given about 20 minutes each to introduce themselves and talk about their background and interests. A question and answer session about issues related to the

internship followed.

Tuesday, August 25 - York University; Challenges in Intercultural Work and Communication

Presentation of York University - Maria Cioni (Director, York International)

York University is located in the heart of the Greater Toronto Area and was founded in 1959. The University is recognized nationally and internationally for its innovative and interdisciplinary approach to research and award-winning teaching. York University is comprised of ten faculties: Arts, Education, Fine Arts, Graduate Studies, Pure and Applied Science, Atkinson College, Environmental Studies, Glendon College (bilingual), Osgoode Hall Law School and the Schulich School of Business. Five libraries with more than 2 million books and journals and twenty research centres complete the academic structure of York. Those twenty research centres cover a wide spectrum of interests which include, Applied Sustainability, Work and Society, Earth and Space Science and Refugee Studies. Among the most important centres in social sciences are: the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean, the Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, the Centre for Refugee Studies, the Centre for Feminist Research, the Institute for Social Research, The LaMarsh Research Centre on Violence and Conflict Resolution, the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies and the York Centre for International and Strategic Studies.

Challenges in intercultural work and communication - Chris Cavanagh (Adult Educator and Story Teller)

Chris Cavanagh is a popular educator that has an extensive experience on intercultural training, antiracism work and international solidarity. He has traveled throughout Latin America, especially to Nicaragua, and to South Africa. Cavanagh started his interactive session by asking the interns to brainstorm in order to find a definition for the concept "culture." The objective of the exercise was to make the interns realize that "culture" is one of those key words that, like "development" and "democracy," have different meanings depending from what context we are looking at it. The OAS, argued Cavanagh, has its own "culture."

The second exercise, "Why? Why? Why?," consisted in answering to the question "Why am I on this internship program?" by putting it in a cultural context. After answering this question, the interns were asked to look at their answer and to problematize it in the second "Why?". The exercise continued with other "Why's" in order to make the interns reflect deeply about their personal interests in the internship. The third exercise was to share stories about the intern's previous experiences when travelling, to report it as a newspaper headline and then generate a list of cultural issues from it. The underlying question was "How did race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, culture, etc. shape their growing up?"

The fourth exercise required the interns to draw what they believed would be the ideal picture of their experience in the OAS, in order to anticipate the problems they might have in their new environment. The fifth exercise was to analyze the "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats" (SWOT) of those anticipated problems and share them with the group. Finally, the last exercise consisted of developing and identifying strategies to overcome potential intercultural conflicts.

Wednesday, August 26 - The OAS: History and Challenges

Introduction to the OAS structure - Yasmine Shamsie (Ph.D. candidate, Political Science, York University)

Yasmine Shamsie's presentation provided a brief history of the OAS by considering its development through a particular lens: a "democracy" lens. The principle of democracy has been an underlying principle of the OAS and is today at the center of the Organization's current renewal.

While it is embedded in the OAS Charter that violations of democratic practice and human rights in any country of the Americas should be the concern of all countries, the Cold War had a dampening effect on the Organization's ability to support and implement the principles of democracy. During that period, the OAS became largely irrelevant and was often ignored by most of its members. Between 1960 and 1989 the Organization was stymied by the continual friction and mutual suspicion between the United States and Latin America, the prevalence of military rule in much of the region, and Washington's unilateral impulses and Cold War preoccupations. As a result the OAS stayed on the sidelines as the major issues of the day played themselves out in other forums.

The end of the Cold War provided the right backdrop for the OAS to reemerge as an important actor in the hemisphere's affairs. By the early 1990s the international arena and regional atmosphere were much more conducive to promoting and safeguarding democracy in the Americas and the OAS's actions and resolutions in favour of advancing democratic development bear this out. These include:

- the establishment of a Unit for the Promotion of Democracy within the OAS;
- the approval of "The Santiago Commitment to Democracy and the Renewal of the Inter American System" and its accompanying Resolution 1080, which obliges the governments of the region to meet immediately following a coup in any country of the Americas and to adopt "efficacious, timely, and expeditious procedures to ensure the promotion and defense of democracy"; and
- the approval of a recent reform to the OAS Charter - known as the Washington Protocol - which if ratified, will allow the General Assembly to suspend the membership of a country whose government has assumed power illegally.

The OAS: History and challenges with particular reference to civil-military relations - Liisa North (Political Science, York University)

Liisa North, one of Canada's experts on Latin America and the Organization of American States, divided her presentation into three parts. In her introduction, she described the brutal and repressive military coups in Latin America during the 1970s, giving birth to what Guillermo O'Donnell called 'bureaucratic authoritarian states'. Then she talked about the 1980s when the shift to democratic governments occurred in the region, which has been called 'restoration of democracy' by various authors. According to North, this is an inaccurate label since there has been no history of democracy in the region, with the exception of Chile, Uruguay and Costa Rica.

The second part of her presentation included the video *Chile: Poison Pill Democracy* and an analysis of what democracy means in the Chilean context. The film showed the arguments of both supporters and opponents of the Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, who seized power in 1973. While the supporters argued that Pinochet modernized the country, the

opponents remembered him as a violator of human rights and a criminal. Although people say that there has been a shift to democracy in Chile, the film showed that Pinochet remained influential in politics. He may have left the Presidency but remained head of the army and appointed himself as a senator for life. As North argued, Pinochet's legacy was that of a limited democracy, military autonomy and appointed senators. After the video, North opened the debate among the interns with the question: Is this democracy?

The third part of the presentation consisted of an exercise in which the interns were to pretend that they were advisors to the Secretary General of the OAS and wished to promote democratization and demilitarization in Latin America. Interns were expected to formulate recommendations.

The OAS and democratic development: The case of Haiti

The tasks of consolidating a lasting peace and building democracy in Haiti are enormous. The OAS has contributed to these goals in a number of ways by helping to create an impartial and independent judiciary, assisting in the training of a new national police force, revamping the electoral system, and assisting in the area of penal reform. However, two other areas which require attention if democracy is to take root which have not been addressed by the OAS are: encouraging a more equal distribution of resources and strengthening civil society and its ability to interact with the state. The current obstacles to the consolidation of democracy in Haiti include the following:

- *Weak political institutions:* the Haitian experience with parliamentary democracy and its core institutions has been a dismal one to say the least. Historically, the legislature has been subservient, the judiciary has been corrupt, elections are almost always rigged, and political parties are weak, undemocratic, and lacking in concrete platforms. Despite progress in the areas of judicial reform, police training, and the penal system, Haiti's core democratic institutions remain weak and fragile.
- *A weak civil society:* the ability of civil society to act as a watchdog and to hold the state accountable for its actions is a crucial element in the consolidation of democracy. If civil society remains weak and underdeveloped the broader goal of democratization risks being sabotaged just as it tries to take off.
- *Grave levels of inequality and a deterioration in socioeconomic conditions:* democracy cannot hope to survive, let alone flourish, in a state of misery. The current economic conditions in Haiti, as well as the historical concentration of power in the hands of a tiny elite, will greatly determine if democracy will ever take root. Without change in these fundamental areas, there will likely be social discontent, desperation and lawlessness in the short term, and representative institutions which simply reflect undemocratic power relations in society in the long term.

Thursday, August 27 - Human Rights, International Law, Culture, Education

Human rights in Latin America: The case of Colombia - Bill Fairbairn (ICCHRLA)

Bill Fairbairn is a human rights activist with the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA). ICCHRLA was founded in the 1970s, after the coup d'etat in Chile which overthrew President Salvador Allende. "ICCHRLA is an ecumenical coalition of more than twenty Canadian churches and religious communities whose mission is to promote human rights and social justice throughout Mexico, Central and South America in solidarity with Canadian and Latin American partner churches, human rights groups and grassroots organizations". ICCHRLA allows people to have access to national governments and international organizations such as United Nations and the OAS. During the 1970s and

1980s ICCHRLA was concerned with the armed conflicts and abuses committed by military dictatorships in Latin America. In the 1990s the focus has shifted towards other types of violence, such as the structural adjustment programs, the need of access to food, health care and education. Fairbairn showed the documentary *Peace, What Peace?*, produced by his organization in Central America, to show that "the hardships and injustice that led to war have escalated, not diminished." Though the civil wars in Central America have ended, policies of trade liberalization have deepened social inequalities.

Fairbairn also addressed how paramilitary death squads in Colombia, which are linked to drug traffickers and landowners, have entered communities "torturing to death through mutilation and dismemberment, women, men and children." ICCHRLA is very active in promoting human rights in Colombia.

Gender and development - Lucy Luccisano (Ph.D. candidate, Sociology, York University)

The session on Gender and Development was designed to address women's inclusion in discussions of development and development planning. The presentation was divided into three parts. Part one provided an overview and analysis of the categories of Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD). The objective was to demonstrate how these categories emerged and affected a particular representation of women as victims, needing to be rescued by the development apparatus.

Part two developed an understanding of "third world" women not as subjects that need to be rescued (read victims), but rather, as active agents who resist, challenge and subvert power relations at various political junctures. This part emphasized how women, in their roles as mothers and wives, became politicized during periods of economic hardships though active involvement in various activities to ensure the livelihood of their families. The discussion focused on the importance of "the politics of consumption" and the ways in which popular women participate in various types of survival strategies, such as community kitchens, mothers clubs' and neighbourhood organizations to offset economic hardships. Attention was paid to how popular women actively resist and manage all types of difficult economic and political conditions.

The third part consisted of viewing the documentary *Hell to Pay*. The documentary is narrated by Bolivian indigenous women who spoke about the difficulties of living in Bolivia after IMF austerity measures were imposed. The strength and convictions of these women is well portrayed in the video.

CERLAC-URACCAN linkage project: Internship experience in Nicaragua - Harry Smaller (Deputy Director, CERLAC) and York-URACCAN interns.

The CERLAC-URACCAN linkage project is a Canadian-Nicaraguan effort to strengthen the capacity to educate and train local residents in order to promote the development and the betterment of communities while defending the autonomy of the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua. Harry Smaller showed slides of the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua (URACCAN) and its three campuses: Bluefields, Bilwi and Siuna. The University was founded in 1992 and currently has about 2,700 students from the various ethnic communities of the region. The objective of the University is to generate the knowledge necessary for sustainable development, rational and sustained land use, and the conservation of the Atlantic Coast's tropical humid forests, mines and fisheries. The idea is that that indigenous peoples and ethnic communities can responsibly and effectively exercise their economic, political, social, cultural, and ecological rights in their traditional zones.

With this goal in mind, three academic programs were established:

- *Pre-Grad Courses in:* Engineering in Maritime Resources and Agro-forestry,

Administration of Natural Resources, Sociology Degree with Honors in Autonomy, Nursing Degree with Honors in Epidemiology and Community Health, and Educational Science Degree;

- *Superior Technical Courses in:* Bilingual Education for Teachers, Social Communication for Media Workers and, in Guatemala, a Course on Development from the Maya perspective;
- *Diploma Courses in:* Indigenous Rights, Cooperativism and Local Health Management.

Besides these courses, URACCAN offers other non-credit courses in many communities, which focus on leadership skills, management and accounting for microbusinesses, agro-forestry, gold panners and in human rights. Four research institutes are affiliated with URACCAN: the Institute of Linguistic Research and Promotion of Cultural Recovery, the Institute for Traditional Medicine and Community Development, the Institute for Research on Natural Resources and the Institute for Studies on Autonomy.

Tanya Chung, an intern who was part of a CIDA Youth Internship Program, shared with the CERLAC/OAS/DFAIT interns her experience in Nicaragua teaching basic computer-skills, Canadian ESL courses. She was also involved in a feeding and reading program for school children, coordinating a reading and painting program for children and, in the environmental law project coordinated by the human rights law office in Bluefields.

Friday, August 28 - Human Security, Trade and Democracy

Public roundtable: Canada and the OAS - Promoting human security in the Americas - Brian Dickson (former Ambassador at Canada's Permanent Mission to the OAS), Jorge Nef (Political Science, University of Guelph), Liisa North (Political Science, York University) - Moderator: Ricardo Grinspun (Director, CERLAC)

The roundtable focused on Canada and its relationship with the OAS. Ambassador Dickson focused on four main issues in his presentation: 1) the concepts of 'human security' and 'soft power'; 2) the successful marriage between Canada and the Inter-American system; 3) the origins of Canada's interest in Latin America and the Caribbean; and, 4) the initiatives that Canada has been taking at the OAS.

The concept of "human security" developed in the 1994 UNDP Report stated that the fundamental characteristics of 'human security' are its universality, interdependence, and its focus on people. The two main aspects are, on the one hand, safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression and, on the other hand, protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in basic patterns of life (homes, jobs and communities). Its two broader components are freedom of fear and freedom from want. The UNDP Report argued that it was time to make a transition from the narrow concept of 'national security,' which is centered on territorial security through armaments, to the broader concept of 'human security' which stresses people's security through sustainable human development. The concept of 'human security' is related to the concept of 'soft power,' which opposes military power. This new approach fosters cooperation in dealing with international issues such as land mines, human rights, international and humanitarian law and women and children effected by armed conflicts.

Since Canada joined the OAS, and particularly in the last three years, its relationship with Latin America has improved substantially. In 1994 NAFTA was signed and the Miami Summit established the goal of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) for the year 2005, with Canada hosting the next Summit of the Americas. In 1997 Canada signed a free trade agreement with Chile. In 1998 Canada was appointed chair of the FTAA process. In 1999 Canada will host three major events: the Pan-American games in Winnipeg, the Summit of the First Ladies of the hemisphere and the FTAA-Trade Ministerial Summit in Toronto. In the year

2000, Canada will host the OAS general assembly and, in 2002 the Heads of Government and State Summit.

The origins of Canada's interest in Latin America date from the end of the 1980s, and are partly explained by the end of the Cold War. Before this time, the economic and political situation in Latin America was very discouraging, so Canada looked instead towards Europe and then towards Asia to establish trade relations. When democracies were established in Latin America and the economy became more open, Canada decided to strengthen its relationship with Latin America by joining the OAS in 1990.

Once in the OAS, Canada proposed the creation of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD); compiled a compendium of all the free trade agreements existing in the hemisphere and supported the working groups of the FTAA process; proposed the formation of the 'hemisphere security committee,' which introduced the concept of human security and helped to build confidence between and within countries; and finally, cooperated in sustainable development. The Ambassador concluded that the OAS is in much better shape today than it was ten years ago.

Professors Nef and North discussed the role of the OAS from a more critical perspective. They emphasized the challenges the OAS faces in becoming a less bureaucratized more active organization that is less subservient to the narrow interests of U.S. and other governments. Other challenges facing the OAS include the promotion of participatory democracy, equitable and shared development, and a strong role for civil society across the hemisphere. In particular, Jorge Nef expressed concern about the role that the OAS has fulfilled in the hemisphere, which has been widely seen for many years as an ineffectual institution. It is thus imperative to evaluate its current and future role. As for Canada's role, it is clear that the U.S. is interested in Canada using its influence within the OAS to consolidate U.S. hegemony in the Americas. Liisa North focused on the expansion of military forces in Central America, which are today at a higher level than before the war period. These countries have civilian heads of state, but the military continue to play a fundamental role. Striking power imbalances remain within these societies, particularly in the rural regions, contrary to the view of an expanding 'soft power'. She questioned whether this type of 'democratic' institutionality, supported by the OAS, is the kind of setting that promotes broader human security.

Trade in the Americas - Halina Ostrowski (Canadian Council for the Americas)

Halina Ostrowski is the National President of the Canadian Council for the Americas, a networking and information vehicle whose primary objective is to stimulate the expansion of Canadian commercial interests in Latin American and Caribbean markets. Ostrowski opened her presentation by referring to Canada's trade and investment performance in the region. In 1997, Canada's trade with Latin America and the Caribbean represented \$18 billion or 3 percent of Canada's total trade and investment amounted to \$33 billion or 16 percent of total investment abroad. Although these figures are relatively low, they represent a 20 percent increase from 1996 figures and are expected to continue growing during the coming years. Ostrowski recalled that Canada's trade and investment in the region was initiated in the 1800s, when the Bank of Nova Scotia, the Royal Bank and the CIBC installed in the Caribbean. In the 1920s these banks expanded to other countries in the region, including Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica and Panama. The Bank of Montreal became involved in the region in the 1970s. The financial institutions altered their activity by expanding and contracting their focus and by moving between different markets in the region. However, corporate behaviour was more constant because their involvement was related to long term projects such as mining, energy and infrastructure.

During the last twenty years small and medium size enterprises have increased their participation in the region. Ostrowski pointed out that since 1988, when the FTA was signed

between the US and Canada, Canada has pioneered a new style of hemispheric economic relations. In 1990 Canada joined the OAS, and in 1994 NAFTA was signed and the Miami Summit has proposed an FTAA for the year 2005. In 1997 Canada signed a FTA with Chile and in 1998 Canada was appointed chair of the FTAA negotiations. These chairships will subsequently rotate to Argentina, Ecuador, Brazil and the United States. According to Ostrowski, the four main objectives of the FTAA are: the preservation and strengthening of democracies in the Americas; the promotion of prosperity through economic integration and free trade; the eradication of poverty and discrimination, and; the guaranteeing of sustainable development and conservation of the natural environment for future generations.

Video documentary: *Zoned for Slavery* - Interns with Eduardo Canel (Social Science, York University)

Eduardo Canel showed the film *Zoned for Slavery*, based on women workers in a maquiladora plant in Honduras owned by the GAP retail store. The film focused on the oppressive working conditions of the plant by highlighting child labour, low salaries and the introduction of birth control pills in the plants intended to discourage women from becoming pregnant and taking time off work. Canel explained that there has been a qualitative change in enterprises, which are focusing more on moral investment. He argued that although the GAP was hesitant initially, it agreed to sign an agreement that would allow outsiders to monitor capital-labour relations. The monitoring team includes church groups, labour unions and human rights' groups.

Canel's objectives were to promote the interaction and participation of the interns and to discuss the relationship between trade, investment and human rights in the Latin American region.

Monday, August 31 - Drugs, Canadian Relations with the Regions

Drugs, politics and foreign intervention - Pablo Andrade (Ph.D. candidate, Social and Political Thought, York University)

Pablo Andrade argued that all U.S. policies directed to combating drugs have failed. These policies were initiated about thirty years ago when President Nixon created the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and were followed by President Reagan's 'war on drugs.' The 'war on drugs,' which continues under Bill Clinton's administration, has always been focused on the supply-side of the issue which is precisely the reason for its failure. The two main policies stressing the supply-side, which were followed, are eradication and interdiction. The former took place at the source: Peru, Bolivia, Colombia and Georgia in the United States. The latter focused on the place of transit since drugs had to be stopped at the Caribbean Basin, especially in Florida. The implementation of these policies required both military participation and law enforcement. Almost two-thirds of the total federal spending on drugs in 1997 and 1998 still focuses on the supply-side strategy. This has caused problems in Latin America, where narcotics are at the top of the U.S. diplomatic agenda. Peasant farmers, who relied on drug crops to ensure their survival, have been forced to substitute coca production for less profitable crops such as corn, cacao and soybean. Since the revenue from these products is not sufficient for their survival, political unrest has been the result of crop-substitution policies. As well, there have been innumerable cases of human rights abuses committed by governments in order to suppress drug cultivation. Finally, these policies have increased corruption among the police and military forces and also augmented their power at a moment when democracies are still very fragile in the region. Rather than focusing on the supply-side of drugs, Andrade recommended a serious look at policies focusing on the demand-side and on money laundering.

The Caribbean and the Organization of Caribbean States - George Eaton (Atkinson College)

George Eaton was an advisor to the Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley in the 1970s and also Head of the Civil Service. According to Eaton, the English speaking Caribbean countries started to look towards Latin America after the United Kingdom closed the doors to Caribbean immigration in 1962. From 1967 to 1991 thirteen Caribbean countries entered into the OAS. In 1973 these thirteen countries formed the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM), which helped the OAS establish a tradition of democratic government, an unblemished record on human rights, transparency in government and a great deal of experimentation with development models. The contribution was reciprocal as the OAS has concentrated its efforts in the Caribbean by fighting poverty, promoting respect for human life and improving the quality of life through a series of pilot projects in the areas of basic education, health, culture, science and technology, sustainable development, women's affairs, citizen participation and fellowships for training abroad.

With respect to the Caribbean foreign policy vis-a-vis the OAS, the region has tried to preserve some independence from the United States, resisting U.S. demands regarding the right to pursue drug traffickers without reference to national governments and the relations with Cuba. With respect to the latter, CARICOM has brought Cuba out of the diplomatic cold in this hemisphere. In sum, CARICOM has served as a small bridge between the Americas.

FTAA: Organizing Social Movements in the Hemisphere - Patty Barrera (Common Frontiers)

Patty Barrera is an activist and the only staff member of Common Frontiers. Common Frontiers is a multisectoral coalition, not a funding source, and its members include provincial and national coalitions. Barrera made it clear that Common Frontiers deals with trade issues and integration and are supportive of a more accessible and humanized form of trade. Their objective is networking in the Americas.

The organization originated in the 1980s with an analysis of the impacts of the free trade agreement (FTA) with the United States and, later focused on NAFTA and the FTAA. Barrera noted there have been two agendas since the 1994 Miami Summit: the official one, based on trade, property rights and tariffs; and the people's agenda, focused on solidarity and on building popular opposition. She considered that the 1997 meeting of trade ministers in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, was a historic moment. It was the first time that trade unions and NGOs worked together as a bloc to confront the official agenda. In 1998 in Santiago, Chile, Common Frontiers formed part of an alternative social summit that raised awareness of issues such as respect for human rights, social justice, immigration, and a critical view on the role of the state. Barrera ended her presentation by pointing out that there are going to be good opportunities for Canada in the near future because Canada will be chair of the FTAA for the 18 months following the Santiago Summit and in the year 2002 the Summit will be held in Canada. The goal of Common Frontiers is to make sure that civil society is heard in this process. Two main objectives are to bring more organizations on board, in order to assess how people are being affected by free trade, and to keep developing an hemispheric network across the Americas.

Canadian NGOs in Latin America - Eleanor Douglas (Primate's World Relief and Development Fund of the Anglican Church)

Eleanor Douglas' presentation addressed the history of Canadian NGO involvement in Latin America and the current questions about the role of NGOs in development efforts. Douglas said that Canadian NGOs became involved in the region only in the 1950s, although they had already been active in Africa and Asia. The main motivation in those days was to offer

assistance and to work with people by showing them how to ameliorate their situation. Especially for Quebec NGOs religion was the prime motivator in these early efforts. A significant movement occurred in the 1970s and 1980s shifting the objective to work around resistance to dictatorships while providing support for solidarity movements in Chile, Argentina, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. Canadian NGOs changed their approach by becoming more involved in issues related to social justice, economic inequalities and the emergence of *concientización*. In the 1990s, NGOs focused on eight specific areas, bearing in mind that bottom-up networking is necessary in this era of globalization: fundraising to support partners in Latin America; funding networks such as Common Frontiers and targeting disadvantaged groups such as women; information sharing, lobbying and advocacy; sending volunteers to the region; and finally, looking for fair trade opportunities for Latin America. Douglas added that unfortunately, government funding for Canadian NGOs is declining.

Douglas concluded her presentation with nine questions surrounding Canadian NGOs: To who are NGOs accountable? Do NGOs respond to their counterparts in Latin America or have they become too institutionalized? Should NGOs specialize or represent broad interests? How does the practical experience of NGOs relate to academic theorizing? How to theorize, how to “scale-up” to the Academia with all the many stories we have to tell? Do NGOs work with the private sector in developing programs? How should NGOs approach lobbying activities? When fundraising, how do NGOs move away from charitable status while maintaining ethical social justice strategies? Are NGOs caught in the middle of the neo-liberal agenda of the North and South?

Tuesday, September 1 - Economic Transformation

Refugees and migration in the hemisphere - Alan Simmons (Sociology, York University) and Gabriela Torres (Ph.D. candidate, Anthropology, York University)

Alan Simmons presented a contemporary policy framework for the analysis of international migration, refugee movements and development in the Americas. He argued that the neo-liberal agenda has both contradictory and complementary tendencies that manifest themselves in international migration. One tendency can be described as ‘progressive’ and it is constituted by an expansion of travel and cultural contact, democracy and human rights discourses and practices, emphasis on the rule of law, peace discourse, demilitarization and non-violence, individual entrepreneurship in local community development, and anti-racist discourse.

The second tendency can be defined as ‘regressive’ and it is characterized by the following phenomena: rising ‘emigration’ pressures in the face of increasing resistance to ‘immigration’ in receiving countries, labour rights, corruption and voter alienation leading to ‘empty citizenship’, rising extra-legal migration and related ‘underground’ commerce, increasing police budgets and military expenditures for ‘domestic’ purposes, widespread societal violence, continued refugee-like migration, cuts to social programs like education and health, the linking of entrepreneurship to international migration, and an entrenchment of structural racism.

The country receiving the largest number of Latin American immigrants in the Americas is the United States (CELADE 1980 figures). Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina and Mexico also receive large flows of immigrants from the smaller countries in their regional area of influence.

Gabriela Torres talked about her experience in two locales - Mexico and Canada - both of which have been sites where refugee experiences have developed. Although both countries are very different, some unexpected commonalities exist between the two: (i) in both cases,

refugees experienced language and culture shock; (ii) refugee flows in both cases have resulted from the violence and crime associated with the civil wars that have characterized the recent histories of these nations. Another barrier to integration is language, which youths must learn to fulfill the regular requirements of a high school diploma. Additionally, the level of violence to which youths are exposed to both in the home and at school is also a strong limiting factor to integration. Finally, roles of parents and children change dramatically which may create the potential for family violence.

Racism or the 'perception of racism' also limits the integration of youths. There is a definite feeling by youth that Latin Americans are a group outside of the mainstream and that lack of Latin American public role models is an indication of Canadian society's ingrained racism. This point is strongly linked to the next barrier to integration: poverty. In Vancouver, the Latin American community faces one of the highest rates of unemployment. This has led to low job expectations for parents and children alike that are reinforced by the current conditions of low job opportunities.

The following barriers to integration can be loosely defined under the heading of 'cultural barriers'. As one youth put it, difficulties arise in Canada because there is "different food, different family dynamic, different values, for example, not sharing meals". One of the main changes facing immigrants arriving in Canada is the radical redefinition of family life where traditional spaces of interaction no longer exist. For instance, interaction with family members over lunch no longer occurs because most youths and children eat their lunch at school. Another barrier to integration relates to the composition of the family that changes from extended to nuclear upon arrival in Canada. The cultural barriers become more complex as the youths' perceive the "need to balance our cultural roots, our personal preferences and the Canadian culture". Parent place great emphasis on the importance for youths to maintain a fluency in both worlds.

Patterns of development in Latin America - Viviana Patroni (Political Science, Wilfred Laurier University)

This session offered a general introduction to the process of economic and social transformation that has taken place in the region since late in the last century. The discussion was organized around three major areas. The object of the first segment of the presentation was to place the concept of development itself in a critical perspective, analyzing its significance in the relationship between advanced and underdeveloped countries in the emergence of world order in the post-war era. A key component of this section was the discussion of a definition of development as a tool to evaluate the impact of change on all levels of society.

The second section of the presentation was organized around a periodization of Latin America's development experience. Key areas of discussion included the peculiarities of the region's incorporation into world markets since the mid-19th century and the impact of the crisis during the 1930s on the export-led pattern of development followed until that time. This allowed a discussion of the process of industrialization in the region, considering its evolution and diversity. In the final section, the discussion focused on the transformation in the area since the early 1980s. This included a critical consideration of factors that account for the crisis in the previous model of development as well as concern for the central tenets of the 'market-friendly' policies currently followed by countries in the region.

Employment and unemployment in Latin America - Louis Lefebvre (Economics, York University)

Louis Lefebvre, founding Director of CERLAC, argued that employment and underemployment have a different meaning in Latin America than in Europe and Northern

countries. The reason is both institutional and political: social employment and life insurance do not exist in Latin America. Employment is defined in terms of statistical measures instead of considering the minimum acceptable standard of living at the local level. As an alternative to underemployment, Lefebvre suggested using the term 'joblessness', which differs from the statistical meaning in that joblessness considers a minimum acceptable wage to buy the necessary things required for a decent life, such as housing, food, health care, and the cost of living in general.

Lefebvre pointed out that the origins of unemployment in Latin America date from World War I and then accelerated in the 1930s with the suggestion of Raúl Prebisch to shift production towards import-substitution-industrialization (I.S.I.). This model predominated from the 1940s to 1970s and depended on the import of machinery and technology from foreign sources, provoking a negative balance of payments in Latin American countries. During the OPEC oil shocks of 1973, international aid diminished and Latin America was forced to rely on oil money and foreign exchange. The tremendous irresponsibility of both lenders and borrowers led to the debt crisis of the 1980s. Indebted countries could not pay back their loans and had to turn to the I.M.F. and World Bank in order to borrow more money to pay their debts. The conditions attached to the loans of these institutions led to a tremendous rise in unemployment. Since then, underemployment in urban areas and unemployment in rural areas became a common occurrence.

Globalization, hemispheric integration, and restructuring - Ricardo Grinspun (Director, CERLAC)

The discourse of globalization is familiar these days: we live in an internationalized world, where change is driven by technology, the barriers to the free flow of goods and capital are falling, and we are leaving behind the relics of the past, such as big government and inflationary spending. The "disciplines of the market" promoted through deregulation, privatization, and in general, the unleashing of market forces, announces a new era of growth and prosperity. However, we are warned, there is a price for all this advancement: we must forgo policies in areas such as social welfare, education, and rural development. The principle of TINA, there is no alternative, is applied to those who hesitate, and the bond rating agencies, the "markets", as well as institutions such as the IMF, ensure that the "restructuring" needed to enhance "competitiveness" and to attract foreign capital and investment goes forward mercilessly.

The session focussed on a critical examination of the discourse and the reality of globalization and integration processes in the Americas. The dismal failure of "trickle down" economics, the growing economic and social gaps both within and between countries, the appalling increase in poverty, the downward harmonization of environmental and labour standards, and an export-oriented drive that is ravaging workers and the environment, are critical aspects of a failed economic model. New trade agendas, including NAFTA, plans for an FTAA, the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment, and a new regime for intellectual property rights, all lead to the aggravation of these concerning trends. From the standpoint of civil society in the Americas, we must redesign national, hemispheric and global institutions to promote an economic model that promotes participation and human sustainable development.

Wednesday, September 2 - Conclusion

Evaluation session - Interns with Ricardo Grinspun and Carlos Torres

The last half-day before departing to Washington and Montevideo was spent in an evaluation of the workshop and the project.