



Not Just Change, But Justice: Taking on Policy in the Obama Era

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Intro

- Not Just Change, but Justice: Taking On Policy in the Obama Era

NACLA

Our intention in this Report is to take on policy by asking two very difficult questions: first, "What might a progressive U.S. policy agenda look like?" Second, "What can we, progressive U.S. activists, contribute to the debates over the policies and political mobilizations that can bring us closer to such an agenda?"

Taking Note

- The Meltdown: North and South

Fred Rosen

As the U.S. economy continues to tank, Latin America is caught up in the global freefall. As demand contracts, the prices of the region's principal exports—crude oil, natural gas, metals, grains, livestock, and food—are plummeting, converting the region's terms of trade from pretty good (especially over the past five years) to very worrisome. Oil prices, from highs of nearly \$150 a barrel in July, had fallen to under \$70 a barrel by November, distressing oil producers Venezuela, Mexico, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

Updates

- Against the Law of the Jungle: Peru's Amazonian Uprising

Gerardo Rénique

Between August 9 and 20, thousands of Awajun, Wampis, Matsigenka, Shipibo, and other indigenous peoples of the Amazon mounted an unprecedented series of simultaneous, peaceful demonstrations against the Peruvian state. Their primary demand was the withdrawal of Law 840, popularly known as the Law of the Jungle, presented to Congress for approval in late 2006 by President Alan García.

- Bridging the Gap: Philip Agee, 1935–2008

Chris John Agee

As was widely reported in the media, Philip Agee — who resigned from the CIA and

wrote a book about it — died last year, on January 7, 2008. His life served as an example of unparalleled dedication to bridging the gap between what people know and don't know about the hidden policies of U.S. imperialism.

Report

• Progressive Policy for the Americas? A NACLA Roundtable

NACLA

In early September, NACLA invited Lesley Gill, Greg Grandin, Deborah Poole, and Mark Weisbrot to participate in a roundtable discussion on the question of proposing a progressive U.S. foreign policy agenda toward Latin America. What follows is an amended version of that conversation, moderated by NACLA director and publisher Christy Thornton.

• The Minga of Resistance: Policy Making From Below

Deborah Poole

Minga is a Quechua word meaning “collective work” with wide currency among popular and poor sectors, both indigenous and mestizo, of the Andean republics. The Cauca-based minga of 2008 was grounded in the territorial and cultural demands of Colombia's indigenous peoples, yet it is a movement that now extends across the Andes, engaging indigenous and non-indigenous sectors in Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru.

• Beyond the Four Freedoms: Obama and Sovereignty

Greg Grandin

To get a sense of what Barack Obama's foreign policy will be, we should watch Latin America. The region has long lived like the proverbial canary in a coal mine, a reliable indicator of what's in store for the rest of the world when circumstances prompt Washington to shift diplomatic direction.

• Colombia: What's Next?

Lesley Gill

As much of Latin America drifts away from the U.S. orbit, and the financial crisis further discredits neoliberalism, U.S. progressives have an important opportunity to push for a more enlightened Colombia policy.

• Treating Bolivia as a Sovereign Partner

Roger Burbach

A progressive U.S. policy toward bolivia must confront three major thrusts of Washington's current Latin America policy: (1) the war on drugs, which is linked to the global war on terror, (2) the effort to expand U.S. economic and corporate influence through free trade agreements, and (3) a determination to counteract the growing influence of leftist leaders and the social movements that are militating against neoliberalism and the historic U.S. domination of the region.

• Reversing Course: A New Economic Agenda for Latin America

Matías Vernengo

The most important item in a progressive U.S. economic agenda for Latin America would be reversing the corporate bias of the free trade agreements (FTAs) that have been signed over the past decade and a half.

• Solidarity: The Only Effective Labor Policy

Dan La Botz

A progressive labor policy, at least from a Latin American perspective, entails the struggle against imperialism in support of sovereignty and socialism.

• A Grassroots Vision for U.S. Immigration Policy—and Beyond

Jane Guskin and David Wilson

Any policy addressing the right to migrate needs to take into account “the right not to migrate” — already a popular slogan among indigenous people from the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca, as documented by labor journalist David Bacon.

Reviews

- **The Immigrants: Do the Right Thing but Keep Your Head Down**

Fred Rosen

THE WORLD OF MEXICAN MIGRANTS: THE ROCK AND THE HARD PLACE by Judith Adler Hellman, The New Press, 2008, 256 pp., \$25.95, hardcover

- **Cuba's Evolving Civil Society**

Hobart Spalding

THE CHANGING DYNAMIC OF CUBAN CIVIL SOCIETY Alexander J. Gray and Antoni Kapcia, eds., 2008, University Press of Florida, 208 pp., hardcover, \$59.95

- **New & Noteworthy**

NACLA

Walking in the Forest with Chico Mendes; Greening Brazil; and Land, Protest and Politics

Open Forum

- **El Salvador 2009: A 'Change' Year?**

Jason Wallach

In the congressional and presidential elections that will take place in January and March, respectively, an FMLN victory will rely heavily on stronghold neighborhoods like Mejicanos, where most people live in densely packed cinder block apartment buildings. As the bullet-pocked walls attest, the area was home to brutal fighting during El Salvador's civil war that scarred the country from 1980 to 1992, and few residents here have forgotten.

Letters

- **Debating the Raids: A Misstatement and a Disagreement**

David Bacon

In his article in the November/December issue, "Building the Homeland Security State," Roberto Lovato says: "David Bacon posits that the crackdown is purposefully meant to trigger an immigrant-labor shortage, which will eventually enable the government to establish the migration policy it's been pushing for all along: a temporary guest-worker program." After setting up this straw man, he then proceeds to attack it.

MALA

- **Framing Peace as Violence: TV Coverage of L.A.'s May Day 2007**

Otto Santa Ana

On May 1, 2007, thousands of Los Angeles residents took to the streets to reprise the massive immigrant rights march that captured the nation's attention a year earlier. The day began with a peaceful march of about 25,000 people in downtown Los Angeles, followed by a smaller afternoon march to MacArthur Park. Sadly, violent police misconduct abruptly ended this second rally. How did the TV newsrooms represent this important event to the public at a time when the nation's attention was focused on immigration policy?