In the northern Andes of Peru, lie the region and major city, called Cajamarca—the site of the last Inca emperor Atahualpa’s murder by the Spanish conquistador, Francisco Pizzaro, in 1532. Atahualpa would not submit to the joint demands of the Spanish crown and Catholic Church. In a last attempt to save his life and the Inca Empire, Atahualpa offered the Spaniards a coveted ransom: “a room full of gold, and twice that in silver.” Nevertheless, after months of imprisonment and dutiful collection of the gold at his orders, Atahualpa was deceitfully tortured and killed. Thus ended the Inca Empire.

Today, the thirst for gold is perpetuated at the largest gold mine in Latin America and the second largest in the world: Minera Yanacocha, covering over 22,000 acres. Opened in 1993, Yanacocha is primarily owned and operated by Newmont Mining Corporation, based in Denver. Shares are held by Newmont (U.S., 51.35%); Compañía de Minas Buenaventura (Peru, 43.65%); and the International Financial Corporation (World Bank Group, 5%).

Some Cajamarcaans liked the idea of a mine in this Department of over one million inhabitants, of whom 217,000 live in the capital of the same name at an elevation of 9,000 feet. They consider it good for business and employment.

The beautiful area, an international tourist attraction, boasts Inca aqueducts, striking red rock formations, Spanish architecture and a refreshing climate. The quaint city was declared an Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Americas site by the Organization of American States in 1986. Cajamarca has been called the “Emerald of the Andes.” Should that be “emerald” or “gold?”

Others from Cajamarca were not so enthused by Newmont’s open pit gold mine. Like Atahualpa, farmers, dairy cattlemen, and indigenous peoples resisted, questioning the mountain top removal of the lush Andes; the disappearance and contamination of the abundant water; and the destruction of spiritual sites and a traditional way of life.

Their concerns proved true for the surrounding communities. Farms began to disappear or were surrounded by the Yanacocha mine, where 30 tons of earth produce only one ounce of gold. Newmont boasts of extracting more than 26 million ounces of gold so far—that means 780 million tons of earth!
MISSION STATEMENT
Denver Justice and Peace Committee is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting human rights, economic justice and lasting peace in Latin America through education, solidarity projects, and nonviolent activism.

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Thanks to all our supportive members and the volunteers who continue to work on program development, fundraising, newsletter publication, and office assistance!

Message from the DJPC Board
Like most of us, I was jarred awake by the sight of an oil well blowout in deep waters in the Gulf of Mexico. I should not have been surprised. I have worked on offshore drilling rigs exploring for valuable oil. Fiery blowouts have been part of the industry for over 100 years, but usually relegated to the back pages of industry magazines. Never has one been so exposed to the public as this one, with its images of oil-covered pelicans, sea turtles, beaches and marshes. I have been overwhelmed by the thought of our planet’s oceans being forever polluted by oil and toxic chemicals. Oil does not go away—its “half-life” in nature is much longer than our lifetimes.

We use oil in all aspects of our lives. We are covered with oil—not only in transportation, but also in plastics, candles, PVC material, synthetic fabrics in everything from clothing to curtains to carpet, synthetic rubber in tires, synthetic vitamins and medicines and, oddly enough, soapless detergents. You get the picture.

We have long been hooked on the materials that we extract from the earth. Various minerals are used in watches, eyeglasses, jewelry and, let us not stop there, solar panels, windmills and bicycle chains. We cannot live without them as I recently heard a prominent industry professor announce.

By definition, extractive industries draw from non-renewable resources. We want those resources now, regardless of the damage that the extractive process leaves on the environment, on the health of a community, on the way of life of a people or its source of food.

Newmont Mining operates two gold mines in Peru. The Yanacocha mine near Cajamarca has four open pits where they have been mining gold since 1993. The nearby Conga mine has gold and copper deposits. The Yanacocha mine is massive. It is the second largest gold mine in the world and represents a large portion of Newmont’s profits. Yanacocha is the “crown jewel” of Newmont’s mines. Its operation is responsible for mercury contamination and the disappearance of the indigenous way of life.

After much research, DJPC has determined that our efforts for economic justice would best be spent on a Latin American issue that is linked to us very directly here in Denver. At issue are Denver-based Newmont Mining Corporation’s gold-mining practices in Cajamarca, Peru. The concerns are multiple: from environmental contamination to human rights violations; from public health hazards to the destruction of indigenous sacred sites. Help us stop global corporations, including Newmont, from killing and harming indigenous communities across Latin America. We need your donations of time and treasure to allow us to be involved in this important advocacy campaign. Please participate to the fullest extent possible. Thank you.

Steve Piper
Board Treasurer
In May, I went on a delegation with the Christian Peacemaker Teams to San Pedro Frio in Colombia. San Pedro Frio is a small gold mining community located in the Andes Mountains in Colombia, home to one of the largest concentrations of gold in the hemisphere. The people of San Pedro are currently engaged in a struggle for their land that reflects the mining struggle throughout the region and Colombia.

Although Colombia is a resource rich country, some estimate that 65% of the population lives in poverty. As to inequality, the UN places Colombia 119th out of 126 countries. In 2003, the richest 20% of the population had a 62.7% share of income/consumption while the poorest 20% had just 2.5%, with 17.8% living on less than $2 a day. Much of the resource wealth is currently going to multi-national corporations who receive the rights to the land, and who see an opportunity to exploit the land for profit. AngloGold Ashanti, based in South Africa and the U.S., is one multinational corporation that is attempting to gain possession of land in Southern Bolivar department, where San Pedro Frio is located.

Colombia has the third largest internally displaced population in the world. In order to gain access to the lands, these corporations are participating in a systematic strategy of displacement. In recent years, corporations have admitted to funding paramilitaries groups to intimidate and/or murder those who are currently occupying the land in order to displace the communities and gain access to the land. Not only does this type of violence threaten the farmers and miners but, in the case of mining, there are other threats. For example, if the process of extraction, such as open-pit mining, is begun while community members are present, the community will need to displace itself (or be displaced) because the destructive impact on the environment will poison the water and food supply.

Multinational corporations are not the only actors in this process, as the government’s role is apparent in the case of San Pedro Frio where miners struggle to gain land titles. Despite having occupied the land for generations, it is very difficult for the miners to obtain titles. The process is complex and requires documentation that rarely exists, and many citizens are denied titles even after completing the process. In addition, the government has consistently ignored San Pedro Frio—the community lacks paved roads, government
funded schools, and any medical resources. This lack of infrastructure beckons the process of displacement which will make way for multinationals. Many times the military is the only type of state presence in the communities.

In the case of San Pedro Frio, according to community members, the military moved into the area to provide an impression of security to foreign interests and to facilitate the displacement of the current residents. While the military claims that the community welcomes them, the community told us that the proximity of the base actually creates greater insecurity for the community. For example, in event of a guerrilla attack, the community would be caught in the cross fire. Operations on the military base are contaminating the community’s drinkable water source and soldiers are entering homes of community members, all of which are clear violations of International Humanitarian Law.

The struggle for land rights is a complex one that communities like San Pedro Frio are facing. Colombian resources benefit multinational corporations and foreign interests, while miners who have occupied the land for generations are pushed off their land into lives of extreme poverty. San Pedro Frio and other miners will continue to struggle against these oppressive forces to maintain their homes and their lives. Will we join them?

To learn more about Christian Peacemaker Teams visit www.cpt.org.

Meanwhile, the quality and flow of water continue to be major problems, despite Newmont’s construction of San José Reservoir recently inaugurated by Peruvian President Alan Garcia.

Local communities have raised concerns, not only about the extraction of precious ore, but also about the toxic, chemical processes used to purify gold via “heap leaching by cyanide solution.” Even if Newmont would “reclaim” the surrounding land after mining it, they have no solution for the leftover sludge, by-products or poisonous cyanide held in waste-ponds without guarantees for future safety. Gold is a dirty business.

In 2000, university students and professors in Cajamarca founded GRUFIDES (Grupo de Formación e Intervención para el Desarrollo Sostenible—Education and Action Group for Sustainable Development) to resolve social concerns and problems resulting from the gold extraction. Since inception, GRUFIDES has struggled to protect the environment and the rights of the people of Cajamarca. A nonviolent, grassroots nonprofit, GRUFIDES includes engineers and geologists, clergy and lawyers, along with thousands of citizens in promoting sustainable development and environmental conservation of natural resources.

In September 2004, over 10,000 people demonstrated in Cajamarca and blocked the entrance to the mine for two weeks, after learning that Yanacocha would be expanded to include Cerro Quilish, a nearby sacred mountain. They won...for now. In June of the following year, Yanacocha spilled mercury along 43 kilometers of roads—an accident resulting in over 1,000 cases of mercury poisoning. Currently, a lawsuit demanding compensation is pending in U.S. courts by those thousand Peruvian claimants.

By 2007, Newmont’s own shareholders were requesting that the company provide “free, prior and informed consent” to local residents, whenever the mine expanded, as demanded by international law. That same year, DJPC joined other Denver organizations in the “Stop Newmont Mining Alliance,” which led to the public protest at Newmont’s annual shareholders’ meeting held in downtown Denver.

During this time, the mine's private security force, FORZA, turned on the people and popular organizations who objected to their mining practices. GRUFIDES, recognized for its leadership role in attempting to resolve problems with Yanacocha, became the target of a secret police operation. This operation, which FORZA named “The Devil Operation,” was recently
Over the last few months, the Advocacy Committee has engaged in a number of initiatives to further the causes of human rights and economic justice in Latin America.

- Researched and wrote the DJPC position paper on "Economic Justice" (available at http://denjustpeace.org/51/djpc-position-papers/).
- Organized a phone bank in April, in which five volunteers contacted all DJPC members in Districts 3, 4, and 7 asking them to urge their representatives (Salazar, Markey, Perlmutter, respectively) to co-sponsor H.R. 2567, the Latin American Military Training Review Act which would suspend operations at The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly known as the School of the Americas.
- Sponsored the May salon on Fair Trade which explored ways to develop just trade policies and fair trade opportunities as the means to counter the effects of globalization and neoliberal economic policies. In a related action alert for all members, prepared letters to Colorado Representatives and Senators asking them to co-sponsor H.R. 3012 and S.B. 2821, the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development, and Employment Act of 2009, known as the TRADE Act.
- Contacted the State Department and the Colorado delegation urging them to pressure Honduran authorities to withdraw all army and police personnel from Northern Honduras, where economic elites were employing approximately 1,000 military, police and paramilitaries to evict poor campesino communities with force.
- Subsequently, wrote the State Department requesting a reassessment of U.S. policy on Honduras in light of the post-election escalation of violence and human rights violations.

(Continued on page 10)

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**Awards Night Volunteers Needed**

DJPC is calling all volunteers to help on various committees for its annual Awards Night.

Volunteers are needed for the following committees:

- **Publicity** (posting & distribution of flyers)
- **Tickets** (advance sales & at the door)
- **Refreshments** (soliciting, bringing & serving)
- **Program** (folding & stapling programs)
- **Logistics** (setting up & cleaning up)
- **Awardees** (translators & drivers)
- **Fundraising** (soliciting ads & donors)

Anyone interested in volunteering, please contact Anna Milner, Special Events Coordinator at specialevents@denjustpeace.org or call the office at 303-623-1463 for more information.
Denver Justice & Peace
Mining Delegation to Guatemala

February 12—22, 2011

In Guatemala, hundreds of mining concessions have been granted to transnational gold, silver, nickel, and zinc companies, threatening the social and environmental health of rural populations. Delegation participants will visit Huehuetenango, San Marcos, and El Estor to experience firsthand the impact of mining on these indigenous communities.

“Traveling teaches us to commit. To take on the problems of others as if they were our own, because they are our own.”—Luis Sepulveda

“The crops were much better before,” says Crisanta holding up some of the corn her family harvested this year in San Miguel Ixtahuacan, Guatemala, “but since the mine came, they don’t come out the same anymore. They do not grow properly now. We haven’t had a good harvest for about three years. Even the crops that we do harvest, we cannot sell. As soon as people find out that we are from San Miguel, they don’t want to buy from us because they say it’s all contaminated.”

DJPC’s Annual Awards Night

Saturday October 23, 2010

Honoring GRUFIDES with the Global Justice & Peace Award and Margie Thompson with the John Proctor Member of the Year Award.

Featuring keynote speaker Dr. Mirtha Vásquez, former executive director of GRUFIDES.

First Mennonite Church
430 W. 9th Ave.
Denver, CO 80204

7:00 p.m.

$10.00 for students (with ID) and seniors
$15.00 for general admission

R.S.V.P. 303-623-1463
or
email djpc@denjustpeace.org
The Exhumation: A Process of Healing and Justice

An exhumation, simply put, is a process—one that begins years before the first shovel is placed into the ground. For those in a small community outside of Panzos, in the department of Alta Verapaz, this psychological, spiritual and political process of healing and search for justice has been in motion for more than eight years. Assisted by ECAP, a non-profit, psychosocial organization, community members found the emotional strength and courage to ask for the search and exhumation of their deceased family members buried in the Sierra de Las Minas range, where the community fled to escape the military and lived from 1982-87.

An exhumation allows family members to begin to repair psychological wounds that have never fully healed. After 28 years, people in the Panzos area are finally closing the holes of doubt as to the whereabouts of their loved ones. During the exhumation process, the Foundation of Forensic Anthropology in Guatemala (FAFG), along with ECAP, conduct an ante-mortem interview with the family members of the person being searched for in order to complement the archeological findings and confirm identification. Furthermore, the interview provides a space for the family members to share stories and memories of their loved one. It is a difficult but necessary moment of remembering and recounting their loss, healing to them and informative to the anthropologists.

Once remains have been processed and identified, they are returned to family members for burial. The act of laying their loved ones to rest in a sacred space provides spiritual peace to the family by allowing them the opportunity of graveside visits to maintain connections through spiritual rituals.

An exhumation also offers family members the chance to honor the lives of their loved ones by demanding justice for their senseless deaths in the genocide. Once the exhumation and lab work have been completed,
The copy I have of Tariq Ali’s *Pirates of the Caribbean: Axis of Hope* came out in 2008, and much of its material has been gleaned over decades, but this little tome is remarkable in that all in one book is a lively and cogent look at the grassroots Bolivarian movement that has been taking place south of the border. Oliver Stone’s new film, “South of the Border” is largely based on the book, whose cover sports what looks like a spoof on the posters for the Disney film, “Pirates of the Caribbean.”

Perhaps judging the book by its cover, I did not take it that seriously until I recently noticed that it is on Ralph Nader’s must-read list for summer of 2010. Sure, it is a polemic by a veteran polemicist and the editor of the *New Left Review*, but its content is valuable reading for anyone interested in exploring alternatives to the Washington Consensus—the one claiming with unabashed hubris to understand the current neoliberal economic system to be “the end of history”—case closed. This claim is made despite ample evidence of its ethical pitfalls and the great harm done to the environment and the world’s poor, while richly rewarding the self-serving few. It is refreshing to read about the grassroots populism underway in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and the much-demonized Cuba in a climate of mainstream denial that astronomical bank-bailouts, foreclosures and layoffs might call for, at the very least, consideration of alternatives to capitalism-as-we-know-it.

At times reading like a Gabriel Garcia Marquez novel, with frequent references to relevant events in Haiti, Argentina, Chile and elsewhere, the book looks at what makes these charismatic leaders and their constituents tick. It lays bare the fact that the “non-negotiable” American Way of Life that both Bush presidents held up as sacrosanct is being presently negotiated and challenged with a healthy, open, widespread debate through participatory democracy that is sadly anemic in el Norte. My hope is that this sleeper of a book will breathe new life into the North American isolationist tendency to ignore or reject out of hand whatever rocks the boat of the status quo. I could not help but check out the DVD of the third Johnny Depp pirate film halfway through the book—just to enjoy the ironies of the high-budget Hollywood cinematography juxtaposed with the multi-layered coyote wisdom of Jack Sparrow’s character as he led his crew to rock their ship and turn it upside down, breaking through into another world. Book group, anyone?
Appropriate Technology and Sustainable Development

with the following organizations in attendance:

El Porvenir assists people in rural communities in Nicaragua to improve their standard of living through sustainable development in clean water, sanitation, reforestation, and health education. To date, EP has assisted rural communities with 705 projects that now supply 105,000 people with clean water and hygienic sanitation.

Potters for Peace is a network of potters, educators, technicians, supporters, and volunteers. They work with clay artisans in Central America and worldwide on ceramic water purification projects.

Water for People is an international non-governmental development organization. They work with people and partners to develop innovative and long-lasting solutions to the water, sanitation, and hygiene problems in the developing world.

Friendship Bridge is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization whose mission is to provide microcredit and education to women so that they can create their own solutions to poverty. Currently, Friendship Bridge serves 12,000 women in predominantly rural Guatemala in areas characterized by extreme poverty and high levels of illiteracy.

Thursday September 16th
7:00-9:00 p.m.

Denver Justice & Peace Committee
Denver Inner City Parish | Community Room
1212 Mariposa Street, Denver 80204

Free parking available along the street as well as in the lots beside the building.
Enter through the door off of 12th Avenue.

Website: www.denjustpeace.org | Phone: 303-623-1463 | E-mail: djpc@denjustpeace.org

Denver Justice and Peace Committee (DJPC) is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting human rights, economic justice, and lasting peace in Latin America through education, solidarity projects, and nonviolent activism.
FAFG turns in individual reports to the Attorney General’s office reporting their findings, which include identification and cause of death. Yet the 96 percent rate of impunity that exists in Guatemala, compounded by the lack of importance and priority placed on these individual cases, usually means that they never see the inside of a court room. A psychologist from ECAP informed us that of the 5,000 exhumations that have been completed in Guatemala thus far, only two have been used in judicial cases.

Though there is an immense lack of political and judicial success in the exhumations, the entire process is one of great importance for the people in their journey of healing and quest for justice. My fellow companion Sam and I found it quite an honor to be invited to share in the adventure and experience.

**The Responsibility to Share Testimony**

While we went out in search of 13 people, we came back with only two. The experience gave me a glimpse into the lives of these people. I experienced how difficult it is to: cross the river more than 40 times in one day with 30 lbs of cargo on my back; keep everything dry; and perform even the simplest of daily tasks like bathing, washing clothes, finding drinking water, making tortillas or using the bathroom. I saw the hurt on the faces of family as they recounted the lives of their loved ones, and shared their excitement as we encountered remains. While this accompaniment gave us just a glimpse of the process, the stories and testimonies of the family members have given me my own. They have transformed me into a witness.

What does it mean to be a witness? In some ways, I am still figuring that out. However, I do know that as a witness to the suffering and death of the genocide, I cannot be silent. I have to share the testimonies I have heard, along with my own. Having shared a small part of my experience with you, I hope you will share this responsibility so that such injustices never happen again.

> “*Any community seriously concerned with its own freedom has to be concerned about other peoples’ freedom as well.*”
> — Assata Shakur

*Please note that all names have been changed.*
made into a remarkable documentary by Stephanie Boyd. The film documents the police operation against GRUFIDES, particularly the targeting of its founders, Fr. Marco Arana and Dr. Mirtha Vásquez.

As DJPC researched economic justice issues earlier this year, Cajamarca continually surfaced as a priority, both here and in Peru. As the situation worsened, and the options for redress were exhausted, GRUFIDES filed a petition to the Organization of American States’ Inter-American Commission on Human Rights against the Republic of Peru. The case is still pending.

The DJPC Board decided to create the “Cajamarca Project” as an opportunity to work in solidarity with this community. We will attempt to foster dialogue between the people of Cajamarca and Newmont in order to find a more just, safe and peaceful solution to the problems resulting from the gold mine.

(Continued from page 4)

To educate our own community, DJPC’s Salon Committee will sponsor the documentary, “The Devil Operation,” at the Starz Theatre on Thursday, October 21 at 7 p.m. Dr. Mirtha Vásquez, a protagonist in the film, will attend. On Saturday, October 23, DJPC will present the “2010 Global Justice and Peace Award” to Dr. Vásquez on behalf of GRUFIDES for its enduring efforts to preserve Cajamarca. We invite you to participate in these events and in the up-coming activities of the Cajamarca Project, because we maintain that the people of Cajamarca are worth more than their weight in gold!

For more information, please visit www.grufides.org, www.newmont.com, the link to a PBS Frontline story on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=front+line+Newmont+Peru&aq=f and DJPC’s Delicious page at http://delicious.com/DJPC

Help bring GRUFIDES to DJPC

DJPC needs to raise $1000 for Dr. Mirtha Vásquez’s airfare from Cajamarca, Peru to Denver. She will receive the “2010 Global Justice & Peace Award” on behalf of GRUFIDES and speak about their non-violent struggle for justice with Newmont Mining Corporation.

Can you please help?

Send your tax deductible donation to:
DJPC Education Fund
1212 Mariposa St. Denver, CO 80204

or

Join DJPC’s Facebook Cause to make a secure online donation at http://www.causes.com/cause/515143

¡Muchisimas Gracias!
Events Listings

DJPC has begun to produce a Weekly Colorado Events Listing. It includes events sponsored and co-sponsored by DJPC as well as other community events.

To submit an event contact weeklyevents@denjustpeace.org. To receive the events listing contact djpc@denjustpeace.org.

“Working in Solidarity with the people of Latin America”

DJPC relies on the generosity of its members to achieve its mission. Your donations go a long way!

Name:
Address:

Phone:

I would like to become a member or to renew my membership, which includes a one year subscription to The Mustard Seed. (Basic membership is $30/year).

I would like to include a special donation of $_______ to help support the work of DJPC and its programs.

I would like to receive the e-mail Events Announcements & Action Alerts.

*** For tax deductible contributions, please make your check payable to “DJPC Education Fund.” ***

SUPPORT DJPC, DONATE ONLINE!

Stand up for what you believe in. Join DJPC and make a donation for peace and justice in Latin America.

Just visit our website: www.denjustpeace.org and click on the DONATE button to make a secure credit card donation.

Get Social with DJPC!

Join DJPC’s Facebook group to get the latest updates on DJPC related events, campaigns, projects, and issues.