



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

(617) 498-9017

JOSEPH E. CONNARTON
CITY CLERK

JOHN E. FLYNN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

October 28, 1987

Mr. David Grossner
Chairperson
Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project
1151 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Grossner:

Pursuant to the request of Jane Claire Hastie on behalf of the Cambridge Sister City Committee, requesting permission to set up a table in order to distribute literature regarding your Committee, enclosed you will find a copy of the order adopted by the Cambridge City Council at its meeting of Monday, October 19, 1987, granting this request.

Your kind attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated by the City Council.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joseph E. Connarton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "C".

Joseph E. Connarton
City Clerk.

JEC/mh

Enclosure: Comm. #10 of 10/19/87



City of Cambridge

Comm. # 10

IN CITY COUNCIL

October 19, 1987

COUNCILLOR WOLF
COUNCILLOR GRAHAM

ORDERED:

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Commissioner of Public Works to grant a permit to David Grossner, Chairperson of the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project, pursuant to the provisions of Section 17-10 of the General Ordinances to place a table on the sidewalk near the Harvard Square T. stop by Store 24 in front of the Harvard BayBank or the Coop or near Au Bon Pain at Holyoke Center on October 10, 17, 24 and 31st, 1987 to hand out literature on the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Committee; and be it further

ORDERED:

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Commissioner of Public Works to require the petitioner to post a bond in an amount sufficient to cover any claims against the city arising out of the use of this table and to specify any conditions or restrictions which he may deem necessary to protect the safe passage and safety of the public in this area and further, ensure that the license shall conform to all statutes and ordinances of the City of Cambridge now in effect and shall have the right to revoke said permit if he deems that any violation of this order exists.

In City Council October 19, 1987.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton



City of Cambridge

Comm. # 10

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A true copy;

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton

CIUDAD HERMANA



Vol. I, No. 1

Summer 1987

CIUDAD HERMANA (Sister City) is the newsletter of the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project. Issues will be published quarterly with information about what is happening in our sister city, San Jose Las Flores, events taking place in Cambridge to support our effort, and ways you can become involved.

This first issue is largely devoted to a report by David Grosser, Coordinator of the Project, and a member of the delegation that went to San Jose Las Flores in June.

The following is a brief description of the experiences of the Cambridge Sister City delegation to the June 1987 anniversary celebration of the repopulation of San Jose Las Flores. Ten residents represented the city as members of the delegation: Cathy Hoffman and Nancy Ryan, in official capacities as Directors of the Peace and Women's Commissions, Ken Barney, Mary Driscoll, Jim and Julia Wallace, Van Hardy, Lauren Berly, Carol Yourman and David Grosser.

We set two goals for our delegation:

1. To visit the village for 5 days, participate in the first anniversary celebration of the repopulation of the village (June 20) and collect information about life there to bring back to Cambridge.
2. To make a large, visible delivery of humanitarian aid in order to both meet some of the pressing material needs of the people and to legitimize their right to receive aid from, and to participate in commerce with the world outside El Salvador.

Taking the goals in reverse order, we accomplished the aid delivery. We managed to get the aid to the end of the passable road by truck and the people of the village got it the rest of the way to San Jose Las Flores on their and their horses' backs. We had raised a total of \$7,000 and took approximately \$4,000 worth of food, medicines, household goods, educational supplies and toys to

the village. The remaining cash was turned over to the Directiva (village council) for the purchase of farm animals. We know that all the aid got to the village eventually. In the past aid deliveries from the International Red Cross and the Archdiocese of San Salvador have been blocked.

While we were able to visit the village, the military limited our stay to one day instead of the five day period we had requested. Since they required us to hike in and out in one day, we spent a total of about six hours in Las Flores. Thus, we were not able to attend the anniversary celebration on June 20.

Despite the difficulties, our time in the village was wonderful. People started coming down the trail to meet us when we were still 45 minutes away. "Cambridge?" the first ones asked tentatively and then broke into broad smiles or tears of joy at our response. Those of us who possessed a comparable command of Spanish as they did of English, had to settle for "buenos dias" and "mucho gusto", but we passed the remainder of our hike in a long receiving line, as it seemed that the whole population of the village had come to shake hands. We felt truly welcomed for the first time in El Salvador.

We passed the next half hour or so in a big crowd on the plaza, drinking water and chatting (as best we could). Las Flores is laid out with a large square, cobblestoned plaza surrounded on three sides by adobe houses with tile roofs. On the fourth side are the church and convent. There is a basketball court with columns, but no backboards, on the plaza and the children quickly found the pelotes (balls) we brought and started twenty different games. Then the formal ceremonies of sister cityhood began.

First we had a meeting with the Directiva so that they might tell us about how the village is progressing. Four of the six members attended including the Mayor, Vice-Mayor (also in charge of education), Director of Production (agriculture) and Director of Health (the only woman). The meeting was short because the Salvadoran army sent soldiers into the village. Fearing that the leaders would be identified and later arrested, we

ended the meeting after about a half hour. The leaders faded away into the crowd.

Much of what they were able to tell us showed real progress in the village. They were very proud of their school which has about 120 students. About 400 of the 860 people in the village are age 14 or under. Despite the lack of formally trained teachers, they currently have three grades and are beginning a night class for adults shortly. In the area of health, they reported significant progress in curbing infant diarrhea. In the first six months of repopulation (June 1986 - January 1987) 13 children had died of dehydration brought on by diarrhea. Since then they have not lost one child. They cited the availability of rehydration medicine from international aid, better nutrition and improvements in the water supply for this change. Finally, the increase in population, from 120 to 860 in the first year, testifies to the vitality of their project.

They spoke of continuing problems, however, and much of the cause stems from harassment by the Salvadoran military. They worry about lags in agricultural production, partly resulting from lack of available male labor. There are very few men of prime working age in the village. The women told us that their men have been killed or "disappeared" over the past eight years. In addition, the military refuses to let the villagers acquire fertilizers, claiming they will fall into the hands of the guerrillas. Finally, the garrison in Chalatenango city mortars the surrounding countryside (we heard them in the evening we were there) and has hit some of the fields, destroying crops.

We had a curious confirmation of their agricultural shortage. After the meeting broke up, they served us lunch, which consisted of rice, French fries, spaghetti and tortillas, but no beans. I feel sure that if there were any beans they would have been served, since we were honored guests. Frijoles are a staple food.

The Directiva also told us that the army had "captured" 34 people during the year. We had previously known of only 18. All of them had been released after being held for periods of time ranging up to 25 days. No one was ever charged with a crime and virtually all were tortured, albeit rather mildly by Salvadoran army standards. The most common methods were sleep and food deprivation, forcing prisoners to wear hoods for several days at a time, threats and beatings.

The whole atmosphere changed when the soldiers arrived. People left the plaza and stood warily in doorways. The soldiers seemed mainly

unconcerned with the villagers and more interested in lounging in the shade. However, they did surveil the sister city commemoration ceremony we held. We learned that after our delegation left the village they kept everyone up all night by lobbing mortar shells into the countryside from the plaza and firing their weapons. At one point they spooked a horse and when it broke free of its tether, they shot it.

Despite the military presence, about 400 villagers turned out for the ceremony on the plaza and then we all filed into the church so that the priest in our delegation could bless the aid we brought. They put one of our gifts, a set of strings for a stand-up bass, to use immediately. As we prepared to leave the local string band, bass, two guitars and fiddle, serenaded us with a tune they had written about the village.

At first glance, it seems curious that the Salvadoran military and American government find these people such a threat. "Everyone up there is a subversive," the Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy told us while we were wrangling with the High Command of the Salvadoran military for permission to go to Las Flores. Such hostility seems hard to reconcile with the Las Flores we found. What has this poor village populated mostly by children, widows and old people done to provoke not only their vilification, but also the continual harassment, the arrests, the blockade designed to cut off their contact with international observers and Salvadoran society as a whole?

The Salvadoran army has pursued a policy of civilian "depopulation" with gusto since 1981. Their two preferred methods are military sweeps and aerial bombardment, both designed not only to drive people out, but to destroy everything in their wake, houses, crops, farm animals and even household implements. This means that the people have nothing to come home to.

The strategy has been quite effective. Since 1980, close to 600,000 civilians have died and about 1.5 million have become refugees. This has happened to a total population of 5 to 6 million, approximating the population of Massachusetts living in an area about the same size as Massachusetts. The population of Las Flores received a relatively benign version of this treatment. In 1983 the army gave them three hours to pack up their belongings and leave before the shelling started.

In 1986 when the people moved back to Las Flores, in the government's view, they were moving "the sea" back to aid the guerilla "fish" in swimming. The military would not be satisfied

unless the Las Flores repopulation was carried out as part of their pacification program called "United to Reconstruct" complete with government functionaries and a civilian militia to combat the guerrillas. The people in Las Flores wanted no part of that program.

Their repopulation effort is taking place in a disputed zone, and they are doing it without government permission. They have called on both armies to respect their right to live in peace, free from military demands from either side. According to the villagers, the guerrillas respect their neutrality, but the Salvadoran army does not.

In the meantime, many in El Salvador watch, since the people in Las Flores are doing what many of the displaced peasantry would like to do. The stakes on Las Flores' survival are high because the village serves as a symbol and an example of action by the displaced themselves to bring an end to the suffering of war.

However, military harassment is a continuing threat to the health and survival of San Jose Las Flores as a community and to its citizens as individuals. Each member of the delegation experienced this first hand in our efforts to obtain military permission for our visit and aid delivery. Our conclusion is that the vigilance of the people in Cambridge is still a powerful restraint on the hostile actions of the Salvadoran military toward our sister city.

WALK FOR PEACE IN LAS FLORES

The 1987 Walk for Peace has been scheduled this year for Sunday, October 25th. The Walk has become a major event for an increasing number of "peacemakers", and helps raise thousands of dollars to support local peace organizations. Young and old alike enjoy the crisp, leafy, 10-kilometer walk with friends through the Back Bay and Fenway.

This year you can help the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project by joining the Peace Walk, and requesting that your "earnings" go to the Project. Ask your friends to sponsor you with their financial contributions. If you can get 10 friends to pledge \$1.00 for each of the 10 kilometers you pledge to walk, you will raise \$100 for peace, and at least \$50 will come to the Project.

Let's meet at the Walk for Peace! For a registration form and any other information, call the office of the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project at 876-4545.

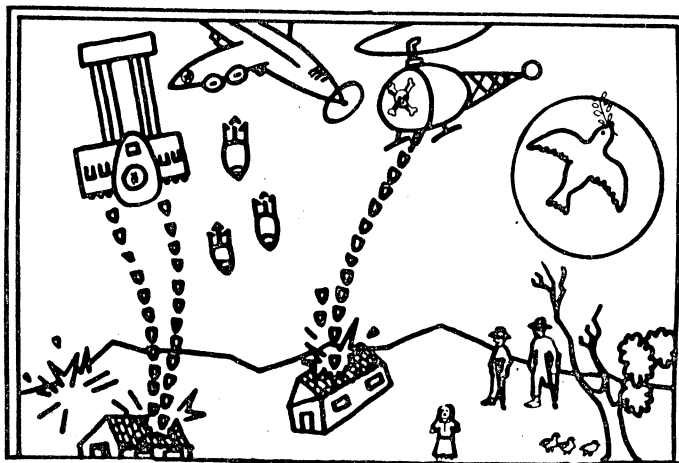
FROM THE EDITOR

NEWS FLASH! As we go to print, Rachel Wyon, a member of the Sister City Committee has reported a new incident of harassment in Las Flores. Rachel visited the village on July 31, and interviewed one of two men who had been beaten by soldiers the previous day. Residents also reported that soldiers have been destroying crops and blocking aid deliveries by the Red Cross. In response we have activated the telegram network and are considering additional measures.

Members of the June delegation have met with the Staff Aides of Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Joseph Kennedy to report on their trip to Las Flores. A meeting is also planned with Senator John Kerry. Their response has been interested and positive with meetings lasting 1-2 hours. They have expressed willingness to listen to our suggestions and help us when possible, so they will be informed about these latest arrests.

The harassment of the village will continue, however, until U.S. policy in El Salvador changes to non-support of such actions. As the time for appropriations to the various governments in Central America comes up for Congress this fall, we will be asking our Congressional delegates to vote against military aid to the Duarte government. The \$1.5 million/day that we currently send has not benefited our sister city in any way.

You can help the Sister City Project a great deal by contacting our Congressional delegates either by phone or mail and adding your voice to the protest against continuing military aid. The recent Iran-Contra hearings have left the country so confused on the subject of aid to Central America that we will need more clear voices than ever to make our point and offer some protection for the repopulation effort of our sister city. Our elected officials *do* count the voices raised!



COUNT ON ME!

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my contribution to the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project of:

\$50 _____ \$25 _____ \$15 _____ \$ _____ (other)

I want to help, too!

☐ Hosting a slide show	☐ On special events	☐ Distributing literature
☐ Telephoning	☐ Serving on a committee	☐ Other (Please specify)
☐ With mailings	☐ Joining a delegation	_____

Make checks payable to: CAEF-Cambridge Sister City.

Your contributions are tax deductible.



CAMBRIDGE-EL SALVADOR SISTER CITY PROJECT

(617)876-4545

Steering Committee Members:

Kathy Brown, Outreach Committee
Susan Freireich, Delegations
Mario Davila, Legislative Committee
David Grosser, Fundraising/Finance
Wendell Weisinger, Resources

Newsletter Editor:

Helen Hall

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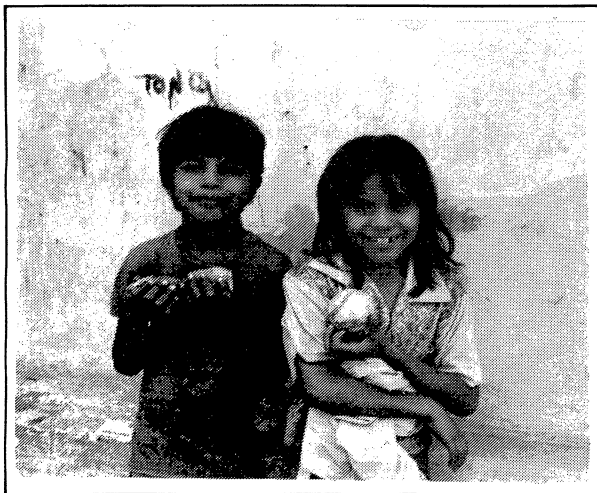
Victims of "Depopulation."

The people of San Jose Las Flores were forced to evacuate their village in 1982.

They were the victims of a Salvadoran military policy of "depopulation." Depopulation involves the destruction of vast areas of the countryside through brutal military attacks on civilian communities. It has torn peasants from their lands and their families, forcing many to migrate to the cities and refugee camps.

The government justifies depopulation, claiming civilians provide potential support to the rebel army and are thus, subversive.

For the past fifty years, attempts at even minor reforms in economic and social justice have been met with government repression. In the past seven years alone, over 50,000 civilians have been killed by government forces.



What Are The Villagers Doing?

The people of San Jose Las Flores have returned to the lands their families have farmed for generations. They are part of a growing movement of peasants returning to their lands, responding to the government's policy of "depopulation" with their own initiative—"repopulation."

In June 1986, 26 families returned to San Jose Las Flores. Since then, more families have returned, bringing the population of the village to 600. They are rebuilding and reinhabiting 60 partially destroyed houses, one four room health clinic, a church and a school.

Why Should Cambridge Care?

Because we carry much of the responsibility for the destruction of San Jose Las Flores.

The United States gives \$1.5 million A DAY in aid to the government of El Salvador. 85% of this aid is military assistance, much of which buys the weapons used in the depopulation campaign.

Since 1979, over 1 million civilians have been displaced, most of them victims of deliberate government policies. Some of these displaced persons have become refugees and are now living in Cambridge.

Why A Sister City?

Repopulated areas like San Jose Las Flores are subject to continued military bombardments as well as government blockades of medical supplies and food. The people of San Jose Las Flores believe that international attention is their only assurance of protection from the Salvadoran army.

Becoming a sister city with San Jose Las Flores will help focus international attention by establishing a direct relationship with the people of the U.S. Presently there are four U.S.-El Salvador Sister City projects among the many sister city relationships established throughout the world.

Through the Sister City project residents of Cambridge can demonstrate to Salvadorans that they do not support U.S. funding of this war against civilians. We can provide moral support to the peasants who are reclaiming their land. Economic assistance can help them reconstruct their community.

Through the Sister City project we can learn more about the people of San Jose Las Flores. Reports in the news are confusing and contradictory. This way we can find out for ourselves.

What Can You Do?

Help us inform the community of Cambridge about the situation in San Jose Las Flores. We can spread the word through house parties, leafletting, slide shows, petitioning, cultural events and lobbying City Council.

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to CAEF-Cambridge Sister City

You can help. Please send a contribution and fill out the form below or call 876-4545.

You can make a difference!

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

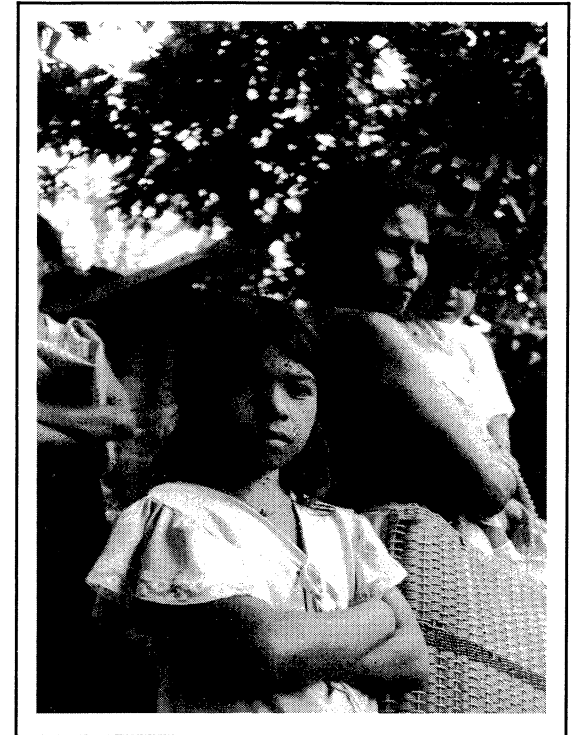
Enclosed is my contribution of:

☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ other

I will help by:

- ☐ Hosting a house party
- ☐ Leafletting in my neighborhood
- ☐ Sponsoring an educational event
- ☐ Joining the organizing committee
- ☐ Fundraising
- ☐ Other

Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project
1151 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138



The people of Cambridge have been asked to help defend a village in El Salvador.

RECEIVED BY
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK

1987 OCT -6 PM 12: 02

CAMBRIDGE MA.

September 30, 1987

City Clerk
City Hall Cambridge
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Sir/Madam:

As a member of the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Committee, I am asking permission from you to set up a table and give out literature on our committee in Harvard Square, Cambridge on October 10, 17, 24, and 31; we would like to set up a table near the Harvard Square T Stop by Store 24, in front of the Harvard Baybank or the Coop, or near Au Bon Pain, a restaurant at Holyoke Center. I have enclosed a brochure which gives a background on the town that the Cambridge City Council adopted last spring for you to review.

On March 23, 1987, the Cambridge City Council passed unanimously The Cambridge/San Jose Las Flores Sister City Resolution to adopt San Jose Las Flores, a town in El Salvador, as a way to bring international attention and aid to the plight of these people. Since then, the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Committee has sponsored several delegations to visit the residents of San Jose Las Flores in order to provide the residents with protection from the harassment of the army and to bring medical and educational supplies. Just recently, the June delegation, comprising of 10 residents from Cambridge, MA and other people from the West Coast and Cambridge, arrived in San Salvador, El Salvador. Several days later, the delegation brought food, medicines, household goods, educational supplies and toys to the village.

Please mail the permit to David Grossner, chairperson of the Cambridge-El Salvador Sister City Project, 1151 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Jane Claire Hastie

Enclosures

Petition of Jane Claire Hastie, Cambridge-
El Salvador Sister City Committee, requesting
permission to set up a table for the distri-
bution of literature on the Committee in
Harvard Sq. on October 10, 17, 24 & 31, 1987.

In City Council,

October 19, 1987

C. Wolf

C. Graham

Order Adopted
v/v

David Grossner Cambridge-El Salvador
Sister Cities Project sent copy of order
adopted by letter 10/24/87 with copy within }