In another historic victory for the anti-sweatshop movement, not too long after the victory at UPENN the University Michigan President Lee Bollinger joined the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), a non-profit organization that will investigate the conditions in factories of companies producing collegiate apparel. In response to student occupations of administrative buildings in Ann Arbor and Madison that started on Wednesday, Bollinger released a joint statement today with the University of Wisconsin at Madison and Indiana University Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) will join the university students today as they describe their successful 60-hour occupation of the Deans office where they constructed a mock sweatshop this week. Students vowed not to leave the office until the president agreed to join the WRC.

"Sweatshops and abuse of child labor must end and the students here are playing a crucial role in making that happen by raising public awareness and demanding change," said Senator Harkin.

After more than 5 months of meetings, protests, teach-ins and resolutions by the student government, Bollinger finally conceded to the students demand that the University of Michigan work with other universities in pressuring firms to improve their apparel factory conditions, both at and abroad. "We are thrilled that the University of Michigan has decided to take the high road as an ally of workers who produce U-M apparel," said Lee Palmer, a junior at the University.

**We are thrilled too. COLUMBIA MUST BE NEXT!**
PASS THE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY:  
BE AT FRIDAY'S VOTE

As a result of intense lobbying, miles of red tape and massive student pressure, the University Senate will vote on a completely student-driven policy this FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, that includes:

- A new full-time hire in Student Life to coordinate the policy, collect and maintain statistics, and ensure compliance with all federal and state law (and students on the hiring committee).
- An oversight body with at least 1/3 student members to govern the policy.
- A student on the hearing panel.

The proposed policy has garnered unprecedented, widespread student support at Columbia. If passed, this policy will be a national model for pro-active campus response to sexual misconduct and assault. But non-student members of the Senate—most of whom haven’t even read the text of the policy—are still voicing opposition to its passage. Some even oppose Columbia having a policy at all!

We need your physical presence in the Senate meeting on Feb. 25. The single most powerful thing you can do to get this policy passed is to fill up a seat in 301ix. Meet behind Low Library at 1 pm on Friday, and we will march into the meeting as the student body.  

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by Jennie Pasquarella

day outside his store, while he anxiously waited for his wife and children to return from his field, and he explained to me that in a normal year, a family can grow enough corn on the typical hectare of and to feed themselves for three months. The rest of the year their food supply is mostly purchased, during which time they are reliant on the little income they can make from coffee. Actually, coffee is more like the sole source of subsistence for Acteal.

Today, coffee is a central target of the government’s low intensity war strategy. Last month the Fray Bartolome de las Casas Human Rights Center in San Cristobal, Chiapas reported that in the region of Las Margaritas, boxes containing rats, snakes, insects, or mere chemicals, had been found falling out of the sky into the coffee fields of peasants, killing the crops and eventually the animals. This is exemplary of a tactic whose aim is to slowly deplete a population by attacking their sole source of income instead of their immediate food supply. I saw the implications of this coffee-centered strategy on the face of a young man in Acteal. He spent an entire afternoon and evening sitting motionless on a rock in a tranquilized, somber state, outside the room where I was staying. I was told that he had just discovered that morning, upon returning to his coffee field, that paramilitaries from the neighboring village had cut down the trees that provided shade for his coffee crops. Without this shade, he would lose his crops as they burn from the penetration of the sun.

Increasingly his story is the repetition of others. Like many families in Acteal, he has recently been displaced from his original town, due to the growing organization of pro-government paramilitary troops in their communities. For these families in particular, coffee harbors the story of being forced from their homes and estranged from their land simply because they refuse to support the government and take up arms. Today, displaced people in Acteal cannot return to their abandoned homes and coffee fields without the accompaniment of human rights observers for fear of confrontation, terrorization and kidnapping by the paramilitaries. Many people that have returned have found their homes and/or crops burned, their land poisoned, or the trees that gave shade to their coffee plants cut down. In fact, peasants often find that, in their absence, their coffee has been harvested and sold by the paramilitaries—one of many strategies to acquire the funds to buy their weapons.

Do to limited Resources, the remainder of this article can be found at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn/
Coffee Talks

The other day, over our ritual lunch of beans, tortillas and coffee, in the highland town of Acteal, Chiape, Don Mariano spontaneously asked: “So, isn’t there are two kinds of money? One that we call dinero and the other economy? What is the economy” he asked. What a question, I thought. My friend hastily attempted an answer. If money is the coins and bills we use, the economy is like invisible money. The larger it is, the more invisible money it has acquired. It’s like the coffee market. For example, you harvest and sell coffee beans to the "coyotes" (their name for middlemen) for approximately $1 per kilo, and they in turn sell them for three times that to a distributor abroad, until they end up in foreign supermarkets or restaurants where people pay $1 per cup. Don Mariano nodded knowingly, making me wonder whether this was a rhetorical question. Of anyone, he knows best the meaning of the economy. He understands it from the ground up. It lives through him. Literally.

In this southernmost Mexican state, Mariano’s relationship to coffee is not simply described by market relations and monetary value. But there is another aspect of invisibility prescribed by the economy: the lives, like Mariano’s, that are narrated by the same coffee we abundantly drink.

In Chiapas, this has a very particular meaning. Today, 70,000 troops or one-third of the Mexican army occupies the state of Chiapas. Low-intensity war has been the government’s response to an indigenous rebellion led by the Zapatistas—which came to the fore in 1994—and the increasing organization of peasant communities in opposition to the government and their neoliberal economic interests. In Chiapas is the evidence of the coercive nature of the PRI (the ruling party that has been in power for over 70 years) and its desperation to maintain their political and economic reign-forcefully. As part of its strategy to annihilate the opposition, covert organized armies or pro-government paramilitaries proliferate—recruited, trained and funded by the Mexican military.

Coffee is the second largest import of the United States, next to oil; it is also the sole source of income for Acteal. Mariano and I were chatting one
Looking For Something To Do?
we proudly present the
CSSN Calendar of Events

February
Wednesday, February 21st:
Brecht Forum Living Wage Campaign: Help re-organize the beginning of a New York City living wage campaign. Also, begin organizing a living wage campaign on the Columbia Campus. Wanna go? Ms99@columbia.edu

Friday, February 25th, 1pm, Uris Hall:
Join SAFER to ensure the passage of the best possible Sexual Misconduct Policy at the University Senate meeting's FINAL vote on the Sexual Misconduct Policy!

Monday, February 28, 7-8:30 pm:
Welfare Reform and Human Rights Documentation Project. The project coordinator from the Urban Justice Center is coming to Columbia School of Social Work to talk about the project and train students to be monitors. 105C McVicker Hall (113th b/w M and Riverside).

Tuesday, February 29th, 6:00 - 8:00 pm:
Julius S. Held Lecture Hall, 304 Barnard Hall. In honor of black women's heritage week & celebration of women's history month, Susan Brownmiller, feminist, civil rights activist, journalist, author of "Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape" and "In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution" will be speaking. A reception sponsored by the Rape Crisis & Anti-Violence Support Center to follow.

MARCH

Wed March 1st, Noon, Low Steps:
CSAS Rally: Join CSAS in telling the Columbia Administration that we will have no more of the FLA. This is the date that the university promised to review our involvement in the FLA. Let's tell them what we want!

Friday, March 10th, Time TBA:
United Nations Building: Students for a Free Tibet will be joining a massive protest in front of the United Nations building. Stay tuned for more info or contact SFT, 853-4178.

For a constantly updated action calendar visit www.columbia.edu/cu/cssn

Okinawan Women Act Against the Military: Okinawan women activists call on an end of violence perpetrated against civilians by US soldiers. 525 W. 120th St. Teachers College Grace Dodge Hall Room 217.

APRIL

Saturday & Sunday, April 8th & 9th:
International Affairs Building. ORGANIZE!: An Activist-Academic conference on social movements and organizing. Deadline for participation in workshops and papers is February 14th. For more information and registration forms, go to the Organize Website: http://www.sociology.columbia.edu/home/lesley/or

Wednesday, April 12th:
Hunger Initiative, sponsored by Jews for Social Justice. Contact Karen Austrian (853-5838) for more information or if your group would like to sponsor the Hunger Initiative with a contribution of $25 to allow for left over food from the University Dining Halls to go to homeless shelters.