

Solidarity Under Siege

El Salvador's long civil war had its origins in the state repression against one of the most militant labor movements in Latin American history. *Solidarity Under Siege* vividly documents the port workers and shrimp fishermen who struggled yet prospered under extremely adverse conditions during the 1970s only to suffer discord, deprivation, and, eventually, the demise of their industry and unions over the following decades. Featuring material uncovered in previously inaccessible union and court archives and extensive interviews conducted with former plant workers and fishermen in Puerto El Triunfo and in Los Angeles, Jeffrey L. Gould presents the history of the labor movement before and during the country's civil war, its key activists, and its victims into sharp relief, shedding new and valuable light on the relationships between rank-and-file labor movements and the organized Left in twentieth-century Latin and Central America.

JEFFREY L. GOULD is the Rudy Professor of History at Indiana University. His books include *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912–1979*, *To Die in This Way: Nicaraguan Indians and the Myth of Mestizaje, 1880–1965*, and with Aldo Santiago, *To Rise in Darkness: Revolution, Repression, and Memory in El Salvador, 1920–1932*. He has also directed and codirected three documentary films, *La Palabra en el Bosque*, *Scars of Memory: El Salvador, 1932*, and *Port Triumph*, which accompanies this book and is available through Indiana University Press: www.iupress.indiana.edu/9780253046017.

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The Salvadoran Labor Movement, 1970–1990

JEFFREY L. GOULD
Indiana University Bloomington



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In memory of two great historians:

Emilia Viotti da Costa

Our mentor

Fritz Stern

My uncle

A mi compañera de siempre

A nuestros hij(a)os

A nuestros niet(a)os

Al pueblo de Puerto El Triunfo en el puerto y en la Diáspora

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My dress code was hard to explain to her, but she inspired me nonetheless.

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People, Terms, and Acronyms

PEOPLE

- Alvarenga, Ana** – Sindicato Tierra leader (head of Pezca Local) 1987–89; exiled 1989
- Benítez, Mauricio** – leader of Sindicato Agua/SGTIPAC and of CGT
- Carbonell, Tomás** – director of BAC, perpetrator of fraud
- Cristiani, Alfredo** – president (1989–94) of ARENA
- Daglio, Roberto** – Owner Atarraya, accused of funding death squads from Miami
- D’Aubuisson, Roberto** – reputed intellectual assassin of Archbishop Romero; founder of ARENA
- Duarte, José Napoleón** – leader of JRG (1980–82); president (1984–89)
- Ellacuría, Ignacio** – Jesuit intellectual and rector of the Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); assassinated by National Guard death squad, November 1989
- Escalón, Rafael** – Atarraya manager and then president of Pezca
- García, Gloria** – SIP activist and leader, late 1970s; exiled 1981
- Granadeño, Ovidio** – SIP activist (1979–89)
- Grande Preza, José Luis** – leader of CGT and advisor to Benitez
- Gutiérrez, Jaime Abdul** – military leader of Junta Revolucionaria de Gobierno
- Jovel, Ricardo** – leader of Sindicato Tierra and FENASTRAS
- Majano, Adolfo** – military member of JRG (1979–80)

- Matthies Regalado, Roberto** – co-owner of Pezca, accused of participation in fraud
- Mena Lagos, Alfredo** – rightist politician; 1982–85 president of Pezca
- Molina Lara, Alejandro** – SIP and FENASTRAS leader (1972–81); exiled 1981
- Romero, Oscar Arnulfo** – Archbishop of El Salvador; assassinated March 24, 1980
- Saravia, Alvaro** – part of plot to assassinate Archbishop Romero; worked as head of security for Aarraya
- Torres, Ruperto** – Sindicato Agua activist
- Wright, Juan** – principal owner of Pezca; owner of expropriated La Carrera – largest cotton plantation in country (very close to Puerto El Triunfo)

FACTORIES

- APEX** – textile
- APLAR** – electronics
- Aarraya** – second-largest processing plant and fishing operation
- Diana** – cookie and cracker
- La Constancia-Tropical** – bottling
- IMES** – textile
- Mariscos de El Salvador** – third-largest shrimp processing plant, owned by Rafael Guirola; closed in 1984
- Pezca S.A.** – largest processing plant – 10 fishing companies under its control
- PRONACSA** – vegetable oil, located near Puerto El Triunfo; owned by Wright

UNIONS, POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS, AND PARTIES

- BPR** – Bloque Popular Revolucionario – Popular Revolutionary Bloc – 80,000 – affiliated with Fuerzas Populares de Liberacion (FPL) – guerrilla group
- CLAT** – Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores – Christian Democratic/democratic socialist/anti-communist

- FAPU** – Frente de Acción Popular Unificada – Unified Popular Action Front – 1974 – 10,000–40,000 members in 1979 – affiliated with guerrilla group Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional (FARN)
- FENASTRAS** – Federación Nacional Sindical de Trabajadores Salvadoreños, Left-leaning labor federation (founded 1972) – linked to FAPU (1979–89)
- JRG** – Junta Revolucionaria de Gobierno – October 15, 1979–January 2, 1980, replaced by another junta led by José Napoleón Duarte
- LP-28** – Ligas Populares 28 de febrero – Popular Leagues, February 28, 1974 – 5,000 members (many were campesinos from Morazán) affiliated with Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP) – Revolutionary Army of the People
- MNS** – Movimiento Nacionalista Salvadoreño – also FAN – Frente Amplio Nacional – precursors to ARENA
- OP** – Organizaciones Populares – refers to BPR, FAPU, and LIGAS POPULARES
- ORDEN** – Organización Democrática Nacional – state-founded peasant organization involved in rightist paramilitary activity in 1970s; more than 100,000 members; abolished by JRG in November 1979 but continued under another name
- PDC** – Christian Democratic Party – Duarte
- Sindicato Agua – SGTIPAC** – Sindicato General de la Industria Pesquera y Anexos – Fishermen’s Union – member of CGT (allied with Christian Democrats)
- SINDICATO TIERRA** – Founded in 1961, more than 1,000 members in Puerto El Triunfo organized in three locals at each of three plants (in order of size: Pezca, Atrarraya, and Mariscos de El Salvador). There was another local in la Unión with several hundred members. Fishermen at Pezca belonged to another union, commonly called Sindicato Agua.

| | |
|---|--|
| SIP Sindicato de la Industria Pesquera | (union of the fishery industry) |
| STECCEL | – electrical power worker’s union; key union in FENASTRAS; outlawed 1980 |
| UNOC | – Union Nacional de Obreros y Campesinos – founded March 1986 by pro-Duarte forces to counter Left and opposition – includes many peasants |
| UNTS | – Unión Nacional de Trabajadores Salvadoreños – Left labor and popular coalition – includes FENASTRAS |
| UPD | – Popular Democratic Unity – coalition of labor and peasant groups that backed Duarte in 1984 elections. Most members from agricultural cooperatives benefited with 1980 Agrarian Reform |

OTHER ACRONYMS AND TERMS

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| AIFLD | – American Institute for Free Labor Development – international arm of AFL-CIO – funded by AID, accused of being part of CIA operations |
| ANDA | – Water and Sewage National Administration (SETA corresponding union) ARENA – right-wing party, founded by D’Aubuisson with Mena Lagos; won Congress in 1988 and the presidency 1989 |
| BAC | – Banco Agrícola Comercial |
| Eventuales | – seasonal, temporary workers (or fishermen) |
| “La Movida” | – practice whereby fishermen would illegally sell shrimp on the high seas; originally a form of resistance to the shrimp companies |
| Marinero | – fisherman |
| Patrón de Barco | – captain (employee of company) |