

**New Orleans-Southeast Regional Office of the
Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador
(CISPES) Papers**

30 boxes, 15 linear feet

**Special Collections & Archives
J. Edgar & Louise S. Monroe Library
Loyola University New Orleans**

Collection 47

New Orleans-Southeast Regional Office of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) Papers

Reference Code

Collection 47

Name and Location of Repository

Special Collections and Archives, J. Edgar & Louise S. Monroe Library, Loyola University New Orleans

Title

New Orleans-Southeast Regional Office of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) Papers

Date

1964-1996, bulk, 1980-1987

Extent

30 boxes, 15 linear feet

Name of Creator

LaVaun Ishee, CISPES members

Administrative/Biographical History

LaVaun Ishee was born in Glendive, Montana. In 1980 she and her husband Carroll Ishee moved from Western Canada to New Orleans. LaVaun Ishee was a member of the Liberation Support Movement, the New Orleans Rainbow Coalition, and secretary for the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. She was a registered nurse at Mercy Hospital in New Orleans from 1980-1994, and served as Coordinator of the New Orleans-Southeast Regional chapter of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador from 1982-1983 and 1984-1986.

In 1981, LaVaun's husband Carroll left New Orleans and his studies at the Tulane School of Architecture to join the opposition to the U.S. backed Salvador government and its military in the El Salvador Civil War. In 1983, Carroll Ishee died in a helicopter attack on his camp. A decade later, LaVaun Ishee served on a medical-aid mission to El Salvador she coordinated with the assistance of Mercy Hospital. Ms. Ishee died in 1996.

Scope and Content

The papers of the New Orleans-Southeast Regional CISPES chapter include correspondence, periodicals, reports, journals, newsletters, press clippings, publications, writings, and other printed material. The collection provides considerable information about CISPES in New Orleans and the U.S. from 1980-1996, with the bulk of materials from 1980-1987.

The Committee in Solidarity with the People of EL Salvador was founded in 1980 in response to the Civil War in EL Salvador (1980-1992). The U.S. government during the Reagan Administration supported the Salvadoran government and its military. CISPES was founded in support of oppositional guerrilla groups, particularly the Farabundi Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), and its political representation, the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR).

The 1985 Directory of Central American Organizations describes the CISPES SE Regional New Orleans office's purpose: "to educate the American people about the U.S. government's intervention in the Central American region and to work in solidarity with Central Americans for their right to self-determination." SE Regional CISPES listed refugee support, political organizing and lobbying, community education, solidarity, church liaison, direct assistance, research, speakers, and travel as its activities. The New Orleans chapter worked on many regional and national campaigns until its eventual dissolution about a year after LaVaun Ishee's resignation as coordinator in 1986.

Over the years, CISPES formed coalitions in solidarity with other Central American groups, both secular and religious. Many publications of solidarity organizations are found in this collection, particularly as relates to US policy in El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras.

Also of note are numerous FBI documents on both the New Orleans and the National CISPES office in Washington D.C., obtained by Ms. Ishee via the Freedom of Information Act.

System of Arrangement

This collection has been organized into three series, the first of which has been divided into three subseries. The majority of the original folder titles and contents have been preserved. Some folders have been given titles based on their contents or location within

a larger file. The arrangement scheme for the collection was imposed during processing in the absence of a usable original order.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Physical rights are retained by the J. Edgar and Louis S. Monroe Library, Loyola University New Orleans. Copyright is retained in accordance with U.S. Copyright Laws.

Language and Scripts of the Material

Collection is in English and Spanish.

Related Archival Materials

For more on Central America and local activism, see New Orleans Social Justice and Activism, 1980s-1990s (Collection #43)

Processing Information

Finding aid written by Christine P. Horn, 2013.

Series Description

Series I CISPES Material

Subseries I-A Southeast Regional Office (New Orleans)

Subseries I-B National Office (Washington, D.C.)

Subseries I-C Campaigns

Series I:

Series 1 consists of material and information produced by the SE regional New Orleans group and the home office National CISPES in Washington, DC. The monthly mailings served as a sort of clearinghouse on U.S. Policy and Central American activism issues, and consisted of articles from national and international publications, calls for assistance and solidarity with other organizations, fundraising and campaign materials, and legislative recommendations and policy critiques.

Subseries A- Southeast Regional Office, New Orleans.

Contains reports, minutes, meeting agendas, grant proposals, financial information, and correspondence including a series of letters written to state and federal legislative bodies.

Correspondents include Lindy Boggs, J. Bennett Johnson, John Breaux, Robert Livingston and longtime human rights activist and historian Leon Waters.

There are 4 folders of legal papers, correspondence and photocopies of contemporary clippings surrounding CISPES v. City of New Orleans. In 1982, CISPES members protested outside of the Honduran consulate against that government's policies towards El Salvador. SE Regional CISPES and other protestors present were informed by the New Orleans Police Department and the FBI that they were not permitted to protest outside a foreign consulate. Hoping to secure future demonstration rights, CISPES sued the City of New Orleans, and later the FBI, but the case was dismissed by the District Court. Loyola Law professor Bill Quigley worked on the appeal.

Also included in Subseries I are organization materials and internal notebooks of the New Orleans Nicaragua Solidarity Organization (NONSO). From January 1981-July 1982 NONSO co-produced with the New Orleans CISPES office the local publication *Central American News* "a monthly progressive newsletter on Central America and the Caribbean, written from a southern perspective." Other NONSO materials include papers regarding the 1982 Louisiana Conference Against Militarism, and an inter-dialogue between local activist communities confronting racism and patriarchy within solidarity movements.

Subseries A also contains numerous flyers highlighting New Orleans social justice and activism events from 1981-1986, and photocopies of news clippings related to local people and their efforts in Central America, both secular and religious. There are many clippings on the work of two prominent Louisiana Maryknoll religious order activists, Sister Gay Redmond and Father Roy Bourgeois.

Sister Redmond was the director of the Center of the Americas, located in the 9th ward, at the former St. Vincent's parish, now Blessed Seelos. Sister Redmond organized many peace and service missions to Central America. On a 1983 mission to Honduras, Sister Redmond and other religious were detained by the Honduran police, but later released after the intervention of the local diocese.

A Maryknoll priest from Litcher, La., Roy Bourgeois was a documentarian and founder of the activist group School of the Americas Watch. In 1983 Bourgeois was arrested in Fort Benning GA, for impersonating a military officer while passing anti-war pamphlets to Salvadoran military trainees. In 2008, Fr. Bourgeois supported the ordination of female priests. Asked to recant his opinion, Bourgeois refused and in 2012 was laicized by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Both Sr. Redmond and Fr. Bourgeois embraced the tenets of liberation theology.

There are also clippings on the death of Carrol Ishee, an interview with LaVaun Ishee, and her obituary.

Subseries B – National Office

Contains mailings from the CISPES National Administrative Committee (NAC), including evaluations, budget reports, strategic planning and analysis, program proposals and meeting agendas and minutes. Also included is *Alert!*, the National CISPES monthly newspaper.

Subseries C - Campaigns

Contains information and flyers for numerous campaigns conducted by both regional and national CISPES offices, including the Demonstration at Ft. Benning, Peace Sunday, April Actions, Coffee Protest, Pledge of Resistance, and the National Neighborhood Protest.

Series II FBI FOIA files

In 1985 the national CISPES office requested all regional chapters to file via the Freedom of Information Act copies of FBI collected materials on regional offices, local coordinators and members. The documents in Series II are from LaVaun Ishee's requests from 1985-1987. In 1989, the Select Committee on Intelligence found:

“The CISPES case was a serious failure in FBI management, resulting in the investigation of domestic political activities that should not have come under governmental scrutiny. It raised issues that go to the heart of this country's commitment to the protection of constitutional rights. Unjustified investigations of political expression and dissent can have a debilitating effect upon our political system. When people see that this can happen, they become wary of associating with groups that disagree with the government and more wary of what they say or write.”¹

Series III Central American Resources and Support Materials for Solidarity Groups

Organizing materials, information, resources, newsletters, print media, mailings, policy reports, publications, directories, publishers, film guides, refugee sanctuary resources, religious coalitions, and publications in Spanish, including the Archdiocese of New Orleans *Boletín Apostolado Latino Americano*. Other materials include information regarding the FMLN, FDR, Radio Venceremos, and newsletters from The Religious Task Force on Central America, the Guatemalan News and Information Bureau, and The Center of the Americas.

¹ U.S. Senate. 101st Congress, 1st Session. *The FBI and CISPES: Report of the Select Committee of Intelligence, United States Senate, Together with Additional Views*. (S. Pet. 101-46). Washington: Government Printing Office, 1989. Accessed July, 2013 at: <http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/pdfs101st/10146.pdf>

Salvadoran Medical Relief Fund materials and numerous photocopied news clippings on Dr. Charles Clements, a former US Air Force pilot during the Vietnam War, who chronicled his personal 1982-1983 medical aid mission to EL Salvador in the 1984 book, "Witness to War."

Container List

Box	Folder	Description
1	1	Southeast Regional Office, Mailings, 1981-1983
	2	Southeast Regional Office, Mailings, 1984
	3	Southeast Regional Office, Mailings, 1985
	4	Southeast Regional Office, Reports, Minutes and Agendas, 1981-1983
	5	Southeast Regional Office, Reports, Minutes and Agendas, 1984-1985
	6	Southeast Regional Office, grant proposals, 1983-1985
	7	Southeast Regional Office, Bank Statements, 1982-1983
	8	Southeast Regional Office, Bank Statements, 1984
2	1	Southeast Regional Office, Bank Statements, 1985
	2	Southeast Regional Office, Bank Statements, 1986
	3	Southeast Regional Office, Cancelled Checks, 1984-1986
	4	Southeast Regional Office, Income Report Form, 1984
	5	Southeast Regional Office, Income Report Form, 1985-1986
	6	Southeast Regional Office, Receipts, 1982-1983
	7	Southeast Regional Office, Receipts, 1984
	8	Southeast Regional Office, Receipts, 1984
3	1	Southeast Regional Office, Receipts, 1985
	2	Southeast Regional Office, Receipts, 1985
	3	Southeast Regional Office, Receipts, 1986-1987; undated
	4	Southeast Regional Office, Financial Report, 1982-1983
	5	Southeast Regional Office, Finances, 1984-1985
	6	Southeast Regional Conference, Little Five Points, Atlanta, February 1985
	7	Articles of Incorporation, 1985; Bylaws of Good Neighbors: Central America Relief and Education
	8	Central American News, Receipts, 1982-1983
	9	Correspondence, 1981-1984; undated
	10	Legislative Correspondence, 1981-1984

	11	Legislative Correspondence, 1985-1988
	13	Legislative Correspondence Resources, 1983-1987
4	1	Legal Correspondence, re: "Protest in New Orleans is Illegal," 1981
	2	Legal Correspondence, re: Honduran Consulate Demonstration, 1982-1983
	3	Legal Papers, re: Honduran Consulate Demonstration, Brief
	4	Legal Papers, re: Honduran Consulate Demonstration, Appeal Brief, 1984
	5	Legal Papers, re: Honduran Consulate Demonstration, 1984-1985
	6	NONSO, Correspondence, News Releases, Writings, Flyers, 1980-1985
	7	NONSO-CISPES and Louisiana Conference Against Militarism, 1981-1982
	8	NONSO-CISPES Notebook, Fall 1982
	9	NONSO-CISPES Notebook, Winter 1982
	10	Miscellaneous, Reading Lists, Resources and Organizational Materials
5	1	Notebook, LaVaun Ishee, 1982
	2	Notebook, LaVaun Ishee, 1983
	3	Notebook, LaVaun Ishee, 1984
	4	Notebooks, LaVaun Ishee, 1985
6	1	Clippings, 1982
	2	Clippings, January-April, 1983
	3	Clippings, May-December, 1983
	4	Clippings, January-February, 1984
	5	Clippings, March-April, 1984
	6	Clippings, May-December, 1984
	7	Clippings, 1985-1993
	8	Clippings, undated
	9	Flyers and copies of Flyers, 1981-1982
	10	Flyers and copies of Flyers, 1983-1986
	11	Flyers and copies of Flyers, undated
	12	National Flyers, 1984
7	1	NAC, 1980, 1982
	2	NAC, 1982
	3	NAC, May-September, 1983
	4	NAC, November 1983; undated
	5	NAC, Strategy Proposals, 1984
	6	NAC, National Coordinator's Conference, 1984
	7	NAC, February-March 1984
	8	NAC, April, 1984
	9	NAC, May-July 1984

8	1	NAC, August-September, 1984
	2	NAC, October 1984
	3	NAC, November 1984
	4	NAC, December 1984
	5	NAC 1984, undated
	6	NAC, February-March 1985
	7	NAC, April-June, 1985
	8	NAC, July-August, 1985
	9	NAC, September-October, 1985
9	1	NAC, November-December, 1985
	2	NAC, miscellaneous, undated
	3	NAC, National Convention Proposals, 1985
	4	NAC, National Convention Notes and Materials, 1985
	5	NAC, National Convention, Programs, Flyers, Leaflets, 1985
	6	NAC, National Convention, Updates, 1985
10	1	National Mailings, 1980-1981
	2	National Mailings, January-August, 1982
	3	National Mailings, September-December, 1982
	4	National Mailings, January, 1983
	5	National Mailings, February-March, 1983
	6	National Mailings, April-July, 1983
11	1	National Mailings, August-December, 1983
	2	National Mailings, 1983, undated
	3	National Mailings, January, 1984
	4	National Mailings, February, 1984
	5	National Mailings, March, 1984
	6	National Mailings, April-September, 1984
	7	National Mailings, November-December, 1984
12	1	National Mailings, January, 1985
	2	National Mailings, February-March, 1985
	3	National Mailings, April-June, 1985
	4	National Mailings, July-August, 1985
	5	National Mailings, September-December, 1985
	6	Membership Packet: Starting a Regional Chapter, 1984-1985
13	1	Oakdale Immigrant Detention Center, 1984
	2	Coffee Protest, 1982-1990
	3	Peace Sunday, 1983-1984
	4	Fort Benning Demonstration, 1983
	5	March on Washington 20 th Anniversary March, 1983
	6	Salvadoran Trade Unionists in Exile, 1983-1985
	7	April Actions, 1985
	8	Caravan for Peace and Justice in Central America, 1985

	9	National Neighborhood Protest Campaign, 1983
14	1	Central American Peace Campaign, 1984
	2	Peace with Justice in Central America, 1983
	3	November 12 Coalition, 1983
	4	Dallas Rally for Peace and Freedom, 1984
	5	El Salvador Film and Video Project, 1981-1985
	6	Pledge of Resistance, 1984
	7	Pledge of Resistance, 1985
	8	Witness for Peace, Nicaragua, 1984-1986
15	1	Central American Newsletter, January-July, 1982
	2	Central American News, August 1982-December 1982
	3	Central American News, January 1983-December 1983
	4	Central American News, January-June/July 1984
	5	Central American News, August-December 1984
	6	Central American News, January-November 1985
	7	Central American News, January-June, 1986; March 1987
16	1	Viewpoints, Newsletter and Organizer's Bulletin April, May, August 1984-Fall 1985
	2	El Salvador Alert! 1981
	3	El Salvador Alert! 1982
	4	El Salvador Alert! 1983
	5	El Salvador Alert! 1985
	6	El Salvador Alert! 1986-1987
	7	El Salvador Alert! 1988-1989
	8	El Salvador Alert! undated
Series II		
17	1-8	FBI Files (FOIA) 1981-1989
18	1-9	FBI Files (FOIA) 1981-1989
19	1-5	FBI Files (FOIA) 1981-1989
20	1-5	FBI Files (FOIA) 1981-1989
21	1-3	FBI Files (FOIA) 1981-1989
	4	FBI Files (FOIA) Correspondence between Ishee and State Department
	5	FBI Surveillance and Harassment
	6	Center for Constitutional Rights, Newsletters and Reports, 1985-1991
Series III		
22	1	Directory of Central American Organizations, 1985
	2	Salvadoran Medical Relief Fund/Dr. Charles Clements, 1981-1985
	3	Salvadoran Medical Relief Fund/Dr. Charles Clements, 1981-1985
	4	Medical Aid for El Salvador, 1982-1983

	5	Medical Aid for El Salvador, 1984-1985
	6	Salvadoran Humanitarian Aid Research and Education Foundation (SHARE), Bulletins and Correspondence
	7	Solidarity Publications, New Releases and Order Forms, undated
23	1	New El Salvador Today (NEST), Informational and Organizational Packet, (2), 1984
	2	New El Salvador Today (NEST), Mailings, 1984
	3	New El Salvador Today (NEST), Mailings, 1985
	4	Comision de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CDHES), 1982-1985
	5	Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, 1982-1985
	6	Atlanta Committee on Latin America, Newsletter, April 1984-November 1985
	7	Atlanta Committee on Latin America, Newsletter, May 1987-October 1989
	8	Jubilee Partners Report, 1983-1988
	9	Jubilee Partners Report, 1989-1991, undated
	10	Guatemala News and Information Bureau, 1978-1984
24	1	Farabundo Marti para Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) and Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), Pamphlets, Newsletters, and Reports, 1982-1989, undated
	2	FDR Solidarity Information Office, News and Reports, 1983
	3	FDR Solidarity Information Office, News and Reports, 1984-1985
	4	Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA), Guatemala Network News, 1981-1985
	5	Washington Office on Latin America, Update and Washington in Focus, 1982-1984
	6	Washington Office on Latin America, Update and Washington in Focus, 1985
	7	Radio Venceremos, 1982-1989
25	1	Religious Task Force on Central America, Newsletters, 1981-1983
	2	Religious Task Force on Central America, Basta! Newsletter, 1985
	3	Apostolado Latino Americano Boletin, Arquidiocesis de Nueva Orleans, 1982-1985
	4	Casa El Salvador
	5	Casa El Salvador
	6	Center of the Americas, Newsletters, 1982-1983
	7	Center of the Americas, 1984-1985, undated
	8	Tour Informationals, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Soviet

		Union, 1984-1985
26	1	Central American Literature/Publications, Order Forms, Announcements, Bibliographies, 1980-1986
	2	Central American Literature/Publications, Order Forms, Announcements, Bibliographies, 1980-1986
	3	Central American Literature/Publications, Order Forms, Announcements, Bibliographies, 1980-1986
	4	Central American Literature/Publications, Order Forms, Announcements, Bibliographies, 1980-1986
	5	Films on Central America, Order Forms and Announcements, 1978-1989
	6	Films on Central America, Order Forms and Announcements, 1978-1989
	7	Films on Central America, Order Forms and Announcements, 1978-1989
27	1	Refugee and Sanctuary Resources, 1978-1983
	2	Refugee and Sanctuary Resources, 1984
	3	Refugee and Sanctuary Resources, 1984
	4	Refugee and Sanctuary Resources, 1985-1989, undated
	5	U.S. Government Policy Publications, 1977-1982
	6	U.S. Government Policy Publications, 1984-1985, undated
	7	Fuerza Democratica Nicaraguense (FDN) and Friends of the Americas, 1984-1985
28	1	El Salvador, Articles, Essays and Resources, 1979-1981
	2	El Salvador, Articles, Essays and Resources, 1982
	3	El Salvador, Articles, Essays and Resources, 1983
	4	El Salvador, Articles, Essays and Resources, 1984
	5	El Salvador, Articles, Essays and Resources, 1985
	6	El Salvador, Articles, Essays and Resources, 1986
29	1	Nicaragua, Articles, Brochures and Resources, 1964-1982
	2	Nicaragua, Articles, Brochures and Resources, 1983-1984
	3	Nicaragua, Articles, Brochures and Resources, 1985
	4	Nicaragua, Articles, Brochures and Resources, undated
	5	Central American Peace Plan, 1987
30	1	Barricada Internacional: International Weekly of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, 1982-1983
	2	Central America Report, Catholic Relief Services, 1981
	3*sp	Retaguardia Combativa, 1983
	4	Miscellaneous, The Militant, 1982, Quixote Center: Nicaragua, 1983

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<http://www.cispes.org/about-cispes/history/history-of-cispes/>

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