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TRIUMVIRATES TOUR DC, BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY!

The American University welcomed 78 students from different Universities of Canada, The United States and Mexico who will participate in a parliamentary simulation model for North American Inte-

gration. In the first day of activities took place a tour to the most representative goverment city buildings. After spending the afternoon near the capitol complex students were required to assist a cocktail in



Triumvirates at the National Mall

order to formally get started in the Triumvirate activities. Christine Fréchette gave a speech welcoming the students as well as Robert Pastor who said that societies played an important part in the North American integration. Therefore these kind of exercises allow the university students to have a wider view of the dependence of one country on another. Robert Pastor specifically underlined that there needs to be a conscience of the relationships Northamericans share through economic, political and social interactions. This conference focused on the issues of Water management, human trafficking, telecommunications and customs union. This simulation hopes to provide a model for the possibility of trilateral discussion. The task is clear: the participants must raise awareness of North American issues and learn to effectively govern in an increasingly integrated continent. Each participant presented himself/herself to the others so every person could know the part played by every participant. At the end, people representing the same comission got together so they could have a better idea with who they were assigned to work with. After a cocktail, without a drop of wine, legislators went out to have dinner outside the University while journalists worked so you can be well informed today with the first edition of the TrilatHerald.

PS. Readers: BEWARE! We all be watching you.... At any time...



First stop: the ticket vending machines.



Group outside the Smithsonian station.



Marlon Brown guided us in our trip.



EL PAPEL DE LAS TELECOMUNICACIONES EN AMÉRICA DEL NORTE: ESCISIONES CON LA IDEOLOGÍA TÉCNICA Y LA NECESIDAD DE VISUALIZAR INTERPRETACIONES SOCIO-POLÍTICAS Y CULTURALES EN EL DISCURSO TECNOLÓGICO.

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“La evolución cultural es una estrategia inventada por el hombre para adaptarse mejor al medio ambiente que le ha tocado vivir”

—Roman Gubern

Más que una valoración estadística que aluda a la disparidad tecnológica entre México y sus vecinos norteros (Estados Unidos y Canadá) o en donde se reafirme una vez más la diferencia de acceso a la información y tecnología que tienen los habitantes de cada uno de estos países, la presente reflexión hará referencia a cómo el papel de las telecomunicaciones en esta región del planeta debe desembocar en un cuestionamiento que se adosa a las condiciones sociales y políticas que han permitido la construcción de una brecha digital entre México y los otros dos países que forman parte de la zona de América del Norte.

En un primer término hay que atender a las reflexiones de Dominique Wolton, las cuales se concentran en descentralizar los contenidos de comunicación del debate de la técnica y acercarlos más a la discusión de los contenidos en sí mismos, pues las transformaciones tecnológicas que se han suscitado en las últimas décadas no son sinónimo de las mutaciones sociales y humanas que tam-

“algunas intenciones asistencialistas y paliativas como poner centros de cómputo comunitarios en zonas remotas indígenas mexicanas, no soluciona en nada el problema de la brecha digital existente entre México y sus compañeros del norte, pues de lo que se trata es de que los usuarios potenciales tengan los conocimientos necesarios para poder sumergirse y dominar con familiaridad el uso de las telecomunicaciones”

bién han ocurrido, aunque ambas se vinculen en una relación intrínseca y de afectación mutua.

La problemática del desarrollo de las telecomunicaciones en América del Norte, además de la brecha digital que existe con relación a México, se acentúa esencialmente en las características de la globalización actual, pues existe una mayor amplitud, profundidad y velocidad en los procesos globales de interconexión político, económico, social y cultural (se han acelerado los procesos comunicativos), sin embargo ese creciente flujo informativo no garantiza que el discernimiento de toda esa vorágine de datos sea proporcional al entendimiento que hay por parte de las poblaciones que se sirven de los servicios de telecomunicaciones o de los datos que pueden obtener en Internet, provocando la desinformación que convierte a esta sociedad contemporánea en la más “opaca” en cuanto a manejo y sentido de la información, como lo menciona Vattimo en su libro “La sociedad transparente”.

La brecha digital se vincula a una diferenciación de pertenencia y acceso, es decir que algunas personas disponen de tecnologías o de servicios de telecomunicaciones más eficaces que otras; sin embargo como se mencionó en la entrada del presente texto no se trata de cuantificar cuántos tienen posibilidad de acceder a Internet, cuántos cuentan con teléfono, etc.

y cuántos no, lo que se tiene que puntualizar, y en donde radica la verdadera problemática, es en la valoración de si las poblaciones de estos países tienen los conocimientos necesarios para poder manejar una computadora, un teléfono celular, etc. La prefiguración de sociedades desiguales no se ratifica solamente en la carencia material sino en los estilos de vida y en la forma en que se incorporan al “mundo moderno”.

A partir del supuesto anterior es que se hace menester ubicar el avance e integración tecnológica de América del Norte en los marcos sociales, políticos y económicos de cada uno de los países que conforman la región. Las telecomunicaciones que permean la zona norte del continente Americano se han quedado rezagadas en la “especulación técnica”, centrándose en la revolución de los fierros, de las máquinas y de la fibra óptica, cuando lo que debería de esperarse de la implementación de las telecomunicaciones en la vida cotidiana de los individuos es que esa revolución técnica desemboque en un proyecto social y cultural que posibilite la integración de México, Estados Unidos y Canadá en esa materia, pues la actual situación se reduce a lo que el mismo Wolton ha denominado “ideología técnica”, en donde se espera que la técnica (que por supuesto en este caso tiene que ver con comunicación, transformaciones de mensajes, manejo de la información, etc) sea la solución de las incertidumbres sociales, políticas y humanas que afectan al mundo de forma global.

La aparición de las primeras computadoras en Es-

tados Unidos originó que no solo hubiera una transmutación en la forma en que fluía y se intercambiaba la información, sino que hizo factible que comenzaran a cristalizarse y acentuarse aún más las diferencias en el desarrollo económico y social con respecto a los países de América Latina. Por otro lado hay que valorar la relación que permanece como una constante entre poder y el uso de las telecomunicaciones, pues el discurso habitual norteamericano (y en general occidental), se ha emancipado a favor de la libertad, igualdad y cualquier otra garantía individual que emule y simpatice con el espíritu libertario democratizador estadounidense; sin embargo lo anterior no es más que un mal entendimiento del uso actual de las técnicas de comunicación, pues su uso bélico injustificado, el espionaje que se hace a través de ellas, la intromisión en la vida privada de los individuos y la desinformación que extiende en espacios noticiosos, no hace más que elaborar una radiografía mediática en donde las telecomunicaciones son mero instrumento de intereses específicos gubernamentales, fundamentalistas, etc.

La demanda de los usos de las telecomunicaciones en México, Estados Unidos y Canadá debe de depender de las condiciones sociales y culturales de los medios ambientes específicos, y no circunscribirse en la numeralia del análisis cuantitativo, cuya preocupación esencial es la cantidad de personas que se ven afectadas por el desarrollo y uso de las TICs (Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación).

Sin duda existe una diferencia palpable en el desarrollo económico mexicano y el canadiense o el norteamericano, lo cual influirá de manera directa en el impacto de las telecomunicaciones en cada territorio, sin embargo algunas intenciones asistencialistas y paliativas como poner centros de cómputo comunitarios en zonas remotas indígenas mexicanas, no soluciona en nada el problema de la brecha digital existente entre México y sus compañeros del norte, pues de lo que se trata es de que los usuarios potenciales tengan los

conocimientos necesarios para poder sumergirse y dominar con familiaridad el uso de las telecomunicaciones y sobre todo que la información que el usuario obtiene a través de éstas tecnologías sea discernida y transformada en conocimiento.

El desarrollo del mundo tecnológico en América del Norte y en general en el planeta, necesita de un complemento que se de en paralelo mucho más importante y que se ha dejado de lado, que es la identificación del humano dentro de un ámbito sociocultural.

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**HUMAN TRAFFICKING: FEARFULLY
DISCUSSING THE FACTS OR FEAR-
LESSLY DISCUSSING THE CORE OF
THE ISSUE?**

A friend of mine advertised in Nepal that there was a “girl for sale.” I was that girl. I was 16 years old when I was sold to a man who used me as a prostitute, along with a 12-year-old girl. For nine months, I was forced to work as a prostitute under the threat of beatings. I was fined, arrested, and interrogated many times by the police; however, my “protector” bribed the police to release me, thus forcing me to prostitute myself again.

—My name is...does it matter?

Testimonials like the previous one, along with brutal looking pictures, are often cited in many publications to inform the public about the dimensions of human trafficking. Individuals affected by human trafficking are the result of governments' failure to prevent the issue from happening. For now, let's get informed on the issue.

Over the last decade, human trafficking has become an increasingly global phenomenon that deprives people of their human rights and fuels growth of organized crime worldwide. One of the three United Nations' Palermo Protocols¹ to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons defines human trafficking as the interaction of three main elements:

- The actual act of trafficking, including the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons;
- Associated acts such as the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, to exploit him/her;
- Exploitation , including at a minimum the exploitation of the prostitution of others, or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

It is important to highlight that human trafficking is not the same as migrant smuggling. Smuggled migrants are usually free once they arrive at their destination; however, trafficking victims are not.

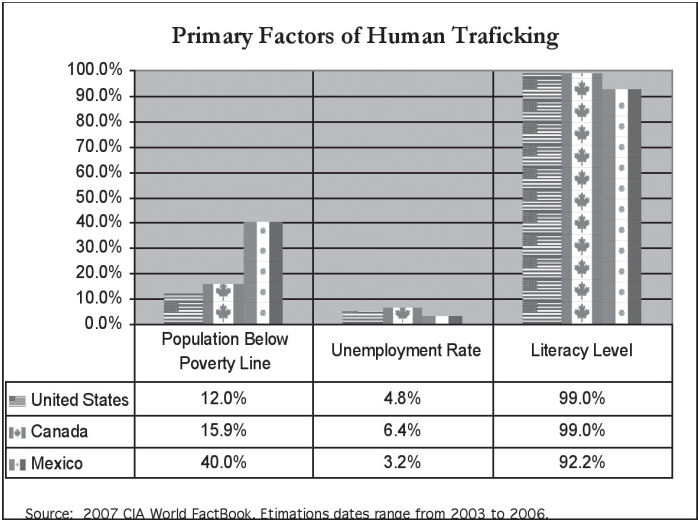
Factors of Human Trafficking

The principal factors of human trafficking are poverty, unemployment, and level of literacy. At the same time, secondary factors which will be discussed in further publications are globalization, migration, and corruption.

Definitions of poverty vary considerably among nations; however, the World Bank Group defines extreme poverty as living on less than US\$1 per day,

and moderate poverty as less than \$2 a day. Even though Canada does not have an official poverty line, the 2003 CIA World Factbook states that 15.9% live in poverty. Unemployment is defined as the percent of the labor force that do not have a job. The level of literacy consists of individuals of 15 years of age and over that can read and write.

The following graph discloses major factors of human trafficking in the US, Canada, and Mexico.



As illustrated in the graph, the US had the lowest levels of population below poverty line and unemployment rate in 2004 and 2006 respectively. Canada followed the US leaving Mexico at last. Also, in 2003 literacy levels were estimated to be the same for the US and Canada, 99.00%, while Mexico had the lowest, 92.2%, during the same year.

Current Trafficking Situation in:

I. The world

Facts

The current total world population as of April of 2007 was 6,587,723,121² out of which approximately 700,000 victims, or .01%, are being trafficked across international borders each year. Also, approximately 80% are females, 75% of the victims are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation, and 50% are minors according to the 2005 Traffick-

ing in Persons (TIP) report³. Human Trafficking generates annual revenues approaching US\$10 billion.

Partner organizations, NGOs, and governments such as the United Nations, Interpol, Unicef, the World Bank Group and Inter-American Development Bank, among many others, provide a wide range of support such as shelter, clothes, food, psychological services, and immigration services to victims.

In 2005, the International Labor Organization (ILO), an UN agency, reported that there were 12.3 million people in forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor, and sexual servitude. More in depth, roughly two-thirds or 66% of the total 700,000 victims are trafficked within sub-regions. For example, in East Asia and the Pacific, an average of 270,000 victims is trafficked while in Europe and Eurasia an average of 190,000 victims are trafficked⁴.

II. The United States

The United States has the largest and most powerful economy in the world, with a per capita GDP of \$43,500 and a GDP real growth rate of 3.4% in 2006⁵. As a country with a solid and stable capitalist economic system, the US has become an attractive target for human trafficking.

Facts

As of July of 2006, the US population was 298,444,215, of which an estimated average of 16,000 persons, primarily women and children, were being trafficked to the U.S. annually⁶.

Actions taken

From 2001 to 2006, the Bush Administration provided more than \$295 million to support anti-trafficking programs to more than 120 countries. More recently, on January 31 of 2007 U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced the creation of a new Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit. This unit is designed to develop new strategies to combat trafficking by expanding enforcement efforts and increasing prosecutions.

In addition, in January of 2006, President Bush signed into law the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2005. This new law provided \$10 million to local governments and NGOs through the Department of Health and Human Services to help survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

III. Canada

As a wealthy, high-tech industrial country at the trillion-dollar level, with a per capita GDP of \$35,200 and a GDP real growth rate of 2.8% in 2006,⁷ Canada and the US have a capitalist economic system and similar living standards.

Facts

As of July of 2006, the population of Canada was an estimated 33,098,932, of which an estimated average of 700 individuals is trafficked into Canada annually. An additional 1,500 to 2,200 persons are trafficked through Canada into the United States according to the 2004 report issued by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). In the 2006 TIP report, Canada was classified in the first tier when it comes to prosecuting, protecting, and preventing human trafficking.

Actions taken

In 2005, Irwin Cotler, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, announced that the Bill C-49, an Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons), has passed through Parliament to strengthen anti-trafficking and sexual exploitation legislation⁸. The Criminal Code amendments create three new indictable offences that specifically address human trafficking. For detail specifications, consult the Canadian Parliament website⁹.

IV. Mexico

Mexico, like the US and Canada, has a capitalist economy that recently entered the trillion dollar class, with a per capita GDP of \$10,600 and a GDP real growth rate of 4.5% in 2006¹⁰. Mexico's economy consists of a mixture of modern and old-fashioned

industry and agriculture that is increasingly dominated by the private sector and limited by monopolies.

Facts

Along Mexico's southern border, Central Americans are being trafficked each day, although other victims also come from South America, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia. In October of 2004 John Miller, the State Department's director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, indicated that "[Mexico]'s internal problem with trafficking, with estimates pointing from 16,000 to 20,000 Mexican and Central American child sex victims in Mexico, [are] found largely in border, urban, and tourist areas¹¹."

In the 2006 TIP report, Mexico was classified in the second tier when it comes to prosecuting, protecting, and preventing human trafficking.

Actions taken

Early in 2006, Mexico's Senate passed an anti-trafficking legislation, which is still waiting a vote in the Congress. Two states, Michoacán and Chihuahua, passed an anti-trafficking legislation in June and November, respectively. At the same time, the Inter-institutional Working Group on Trafficking is now under the control of the Preventive Federal Police (PFP) which will dedicate 140 agents to investigating trafficking cases. Also, it will create a database to track future cases.

Objective Review

Since 2001 to the present, the TIP report has estimated an average of 700,000 individuals and victims of human trafficking. This fact suggests that there should be greater attention to the prevention of the human trafficking issue rather than the management of its consequences, which has not been well-conducted. With their respective resources, cultural, and political restrictions, the US, Canada, and Mexico are working together to decrease human trafficking within their borders. Nevertheless, it seems that governments are allocating their financial resources, efforts, and time to decrease the consequences of human trafficking. Common

sense dictates that in order to decrease the impact of a problem, one has to first allocate more resources to prevent it instead of dealing with the variety of consequences that the problem may bring.

Wealthy countries like the US donate millions of dollars to assist countries in need. However, giving away so much financial help does not address the core of the problem when demand for human trafficking keeps increasing in those wealthy countries. For this reason, governments must fearlessly accept that people manipulating human trafficking networks offer their "services" in a determine country because its citizens are actually allowing and/or demanding these "services" facilitated by "holes" in their laws and weak law enforcement.

It will be interesting to see if legislators' and lobbyists' final proposals fearfully discuss the facts or fearlessly discuss the core of human trafficking. As participants of the 2007 simulation, it is our responsibility to discuss and most importantly, take actions to lay the foundations for preventing undesirable outcomes in the future.

1. <http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2003/Texts/treaty2E.pdf>

2. <http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>

3. Since 2001 the US State Department is required to develop the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, which informs the public about the efforts undertaken by partner organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and host government to address the issue. Countries are classified in the <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/fs/2005/60840.htm>

4. 2007 CIA's World Factbook

5. 2007 CIA's World Factbook which was last updated on 15 March, 2007.

6. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/traffic/index.html>

7. according to according the 2007 CIA's World Factbook.

8. http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/news/nr/2005/doc_31486.html

9. http://www.parl.gc.ca/common/Bills_ls.asp?Parl=38&Ses=1&ls=C49#atinternational

10. according to the 2007 CIA's World Factbook.

11. <http://usinfo.state.gov>

MEET THE JOURNALISTS

My name is Lorena Figueroa. I am a student of Communication at Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. I hope that Triumvirate will give me the opportunity to know a different perspective of the three countries participating in it. I am expecting to built strong friendships with people from Canada and the United States. I think that this experience will give me more preparation in my work field since I have to get to know how media, in this case, press, works in a more real sense. Since I am the Editor-in-Chief of this newspaper, any of you can feel free to come close to me and ask me about any issues concerning this newspaper.

Bonne Chance a Tous!
Buena suerte a todos!
Good Luck to everyone!

Greetings Forum!

My name is Nicholas LePan. I have recently completed a B.A. from McGill University majoring in North American Studies. The NAFI conference presents a unique opportunity for me to combine my two interests; journalism and politics which Washington D.C. provides the ideal setting for. As a journalist for the Trilat Herald, I will cover the committee on Human Trafficking and the details of life in Anderson Hall. I look forward to working with everyone and making this an interesting experience.

Cheers!

La información dicta posturas, influye en las decisiones, marca supuestos a seguir, es indispensable en el desarrollo del lenguaje. Esa es la premisa que como periodista intentaré seguir en el desarrollo de esta simulación parlamentaria. Porvengo de la Universidad Iberoamericana en donde estudio la carrera de Comunicación, y en ella se me ha enseñado que no basta tener un gran compendio de información sino que hay que saber manejarla y discernirla para los fines que se convenga y poder comunicarnos mejor.

Ricardo Gutiérrez Vargas

Bonjour à tous, Hi everyone, Holà todos! My name is Éléonore Bernier-Hamel, I am from the Université de Montréal. As you have already guessed, je serai journaliste lors de la simulation du FINA. I would be pleased to hear about your perspectives of the debates you will have in your commissions, in particular the Customs Union. You are welcome to use the newspaper to achieve your goals, faites circuler vos idées!

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