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# Video: The Troublemaker – Behind the Scenes of the United Nations. The Legacy of Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann

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Theme: United Nations

The Troublemaker

*What happens when a Latin American priest suspended by the Pope for his involvement in revolutionary politics becomes President of the General Assembly of the United Nations?*

A year in the life of our only global parliament – an institution in deep crisis – through the eyes of [the late] Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, a man whose directness and plain speaking clashes with the protocols and polished diplomatic language of this venerable, dying 66 year old institution. A man determined to wake up the "G192"- a term he coined for the UN General Assembly and its 192 nations, two-thirds developing countries – and give them a real say in a new world order.

With unique access inside the UN the film takes the viewer behind the scenes, shedding light on its opaque mechanisms and power dynamics. D'Escoto was President of the General Assembly in 2008/2009 but his story is timeless and allows us to take stock of the UN today.

By no means a newcomer to UN diplomacy, D'Escoto was for over a decade the international face of Nicaragua's Sandinista government, in which he served as foreign minister after the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship. A liberation theologian, Marxist and promoter of non-violence, D'Escoto took charge in the last few months of the Bush Administration, when the reputation of the UN was at an all time low.

On D'Escoto's arrival in New York the UN building itself was falling apart, a powerful metaphor for its crumbling moral authority. Just days into his mandate the US financial markets collapsed, setting off a global economic recession that is still with us, and that seriously diminished the status of the United States as the world's only superpower. The whole system of global governance created by the winners of the Second World War was under fire. For father Miguel it was a window of opportunity: "The future will be better," he said, "this idolatry of the market was a false god."

D'Escoto had no illusions about who pulls the strings at the UN, but believed fervently in the General Assembly's potential as a parliament of humanity, able to give voice to the powerless, the dispossessed, the majority of the earth's people. In his 70s, with a hearing problem, a kind of grandfather figure and unlikely prophet, he was still an idealist, a utopian, convinced that he could turn things around and set the course for the G192 to reclaim their place in determining the future of our world, our planet.

At the UN no one quite knew what was coming. On paper the President of the General

Assembly is the UN's highest official, but in practice this office had in recent years come to reflect the increasing irrelevance of the General Assembly. No one imagined this retired revolutionary would actually take the job seriously.

This is the story of his one-year battle inside the Glass House.

The film is written and directed by Roberto Salinas, and produced by GA&A productions.

Watch the trailer below.

the Troublemaker – behind the scenes of the United Nations from Roberto Salinas on Vimeo.

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