

# Condemn Guatemalan oppressors, not Menchu

Rigoberta Menchu won the Nobel Peace Prize on Oct. 16; why did the Daily News wait until Dec. 13 to launch its specious criticism of her and the Nobel Committee?

Here, the Daily News uses the same shep-worm tactic favored by elites everywhere: Hint at sympathy for the down-trodden so long as they remain powerless and miserable, but when leaders emerge, try to reduce their credibility with personal attacks. Thus, Menchu is dismissed out-of-hand as an "Ideological trend-surfer."

In contrast, I recall few, if any, Daily News condemnations of the Guatemalan military, which has a vicious streak that Hitler's Gestapo would have envied (and which Washington largely has supported since the CIA installed it as Guatemala's de facto government in 1954).

It is disappointing that the Daily News not only could not find some grounds for validating the courage and inspired effort Menchu has shown in trying to end Guatemala's long night of terror, but also could not rise above the level of name-calling. Such does not a great paper make.

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