

INSHORT

Joel Bleifuss

CIA seed caps

Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY) on a recent tour of contra country in Honduras met a rebel officer wearing an eye-catching baseball cap. Emblazoned above the bill was a pyramid design surrounded by what just must be the Reagan administration's motto—"Admit nothing—Deny everything—Make counteraccusations." The cap-wearing contra told Solarz that his haberdashery was "a special-effects shop in Langley," the CIA's Virginia home.

Wrong founding father

In an address to the American Bar Association earlier this year, Hearst Corp. President Frank Bernack Jr. reported that nearly half of 1,004 Americans surveyed by his organization believed Karl Marx's aphorism "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need" was to be found in the U.S. Constitution. Of course, the assembled lawyers all knew that those words come from *The Critique of the Gotha Program*.

Off on a new foot

A project of the Caribbean Commission, an anti-communist organization, is busy helping 61 wounded contras get back on the battlefield by replacing their missing appendages with prostheses, reports Joan Treadway of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. Last May, "Freedom Feet and Arms" sent Roy Douglas, LSU orthopedic professor and contra supporter, to Honduras where he measured the stumps of 61 wounded contras, some of whom were teenagers. The new limbs are now being assembled, and Douglas will return to Honduras in August for the final fit and adjustment. Freedom Feet and Arms was inspired by an artificial limb project in Seattle, Wash., that similarly outfitted 200 Salvadoran soldiers.

Three Johns in a boat

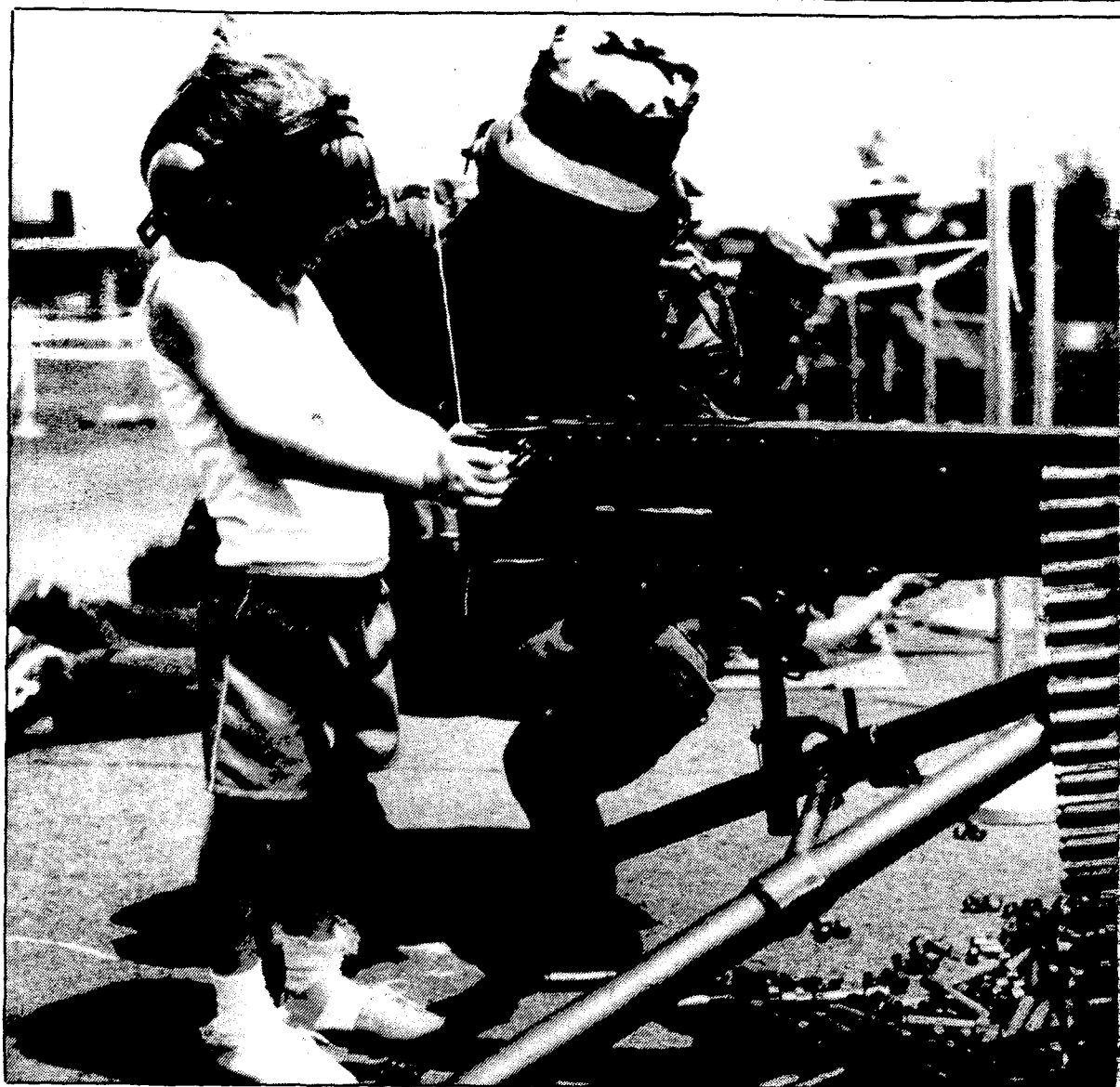
John Mirassou, John Bertsch and John Cameron of Southern California have graduated from college. Their education behind them, the youths are now in a 17-foot boat recharging themselves with a 3,700-mile trip along the nation's intercoastal waterways. "Only in America is this doable," the men explain. "Only in a great nation like this could such a trip be accomplished—a group of 24-year-olds traveling without worry about problems of terrorism and civil unrest."

And where would we be then?

The Department of Defense refused to allow the makers of *Amazing Grace and Chuck* (the movie about a Little League pitcher who hangs up his glove to protest nuclear war) to shoot portions of their movie at a nuclear missile site, reports *Newsweek*. Says producer/writer David Field: "They sent us a letter saying that the story concept was counterproductive for the DOD because the success of Chuck's initiative could encourage people to take individual personal action."

Did the CIA bring Nixon down?

A former CIA counterintelligence expert in the Nixon White House, Richard Ober, was the secret "Deep Throat" source who gave the *Washington Post* information about the Watergate scandal, according to author Deborah Davis. Davis makes this allegation in *Katherine the Great*, her recently released book about *Washington Post* owner Katherine Graham. The gist of Davis' story is this: The CIA was angry at Richard Nixon because he blamed the agency for the failure of his secret war in Cambodia, when in fact the CIA had advised him against it. Nixon's subsequent attempts "to get political control over the CIA" heightened agency fury. Consequently the CIA leaked the Watergate story to the *Post* to bring down the Nixon government and thus protect itself. At the time of the Watergate break-in and subsequent cover-up, Ober was the director of a secret domestic counterintelligence operation known as "Chaos." And Ober was a Harvard classmate of the *Post*'s executive editor Ben Bradlee, according to Davis. *Washington* talk has long had it that it was Bradlee, and not Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, who heard the Watergate story first. If Davis' thesis is true, it lends itself to further speculation. How did the CIA feel about Jimmy Carter's house-cleaning of the agency? What might agency malcontents have done to cripple the Carter presidency?



The greening of Switzerland

Is that bastion of political conservatism and male dominance, Switzerland, succumbing to the forces of change? Crumbling at its very foundation? Not really, but spectacular successes of local Green parties and of women candidates in recent cantonal (state) and local elections point to a greening of Switzerland and could foreshadow impressive gains for the ecological movement in the October 18 national elections.

On April 5, in the canton of Zurich, politically and economically the Swiss confederation's most important state, the Green Party scored what the press has dubbed a "landslide" victory. It more than quintupled its seats in the parliament. The Greens gained their seats at the expense of the conservative "bourgeois" parties, while the Social Democrats maintained their strength. The Green Party, with 22 seats, is now the fourth-largest party in Zurich's parliament. Together with the Social Democratic Party and a number of smaller parties the Greens now effectively balance the strength of the conservative parties, while on ecological issues there may even be a "green" majority.

The Greens also made gains on April 12 in the city of Geneva, doubling their votes and becoming the third-largest party in Geneva's city council. And in the elections to the city's executive council, a woman, the Social Democrats' Jacqueline Burnand, was elected for

the first time. Newspaper commentators in the *Romandie*, French-speaking Switzerland, called it the "green wave" and were unanimous in tracing its causes to the various ecological catastrophes of recent times: Chernobyl, "Chernobâle" (the catastrophic Sandoz fire in Basel that killed off most of the fish in the Rhine), the death of Swiss forests and the constant traffic jams on Swiss highways.

In the canton of Lucerne, statewide elections on May 3 produced a similar pattern: gains for the Greens from a candidate list composed purely of women, and a woman elected for the first time to the seven-person state executive. Likewise, Greens gained in municipal elections in the canton of Thurgau last year. Indeed, in the last two years Green parties have gained 77 seats in Swiss state elections while the governing parties (the conservative parties and in some cases the Social Democratic Party) have lost 124 seats, though they remain the strongest parties.

While the governing conservative bloc has thus lost seats to the Greens, two far-right parties—the *Vigilants* in Geneva and the *Nationale Aktion* (NA) in Allemanic Switzerland—have also made progress, albeit less than the Greens. But interestingly, the NA also criticizes the corporate-industrial culture that has ravaged the Swiss environment and patrimony.

Rolf Wespe, writing in *Tages-Anzeiger*, says "[The Swiss] are in an ecological and orientational crisis. He adds that this crisis is a product of the enormous changes the booming Swiss economy has

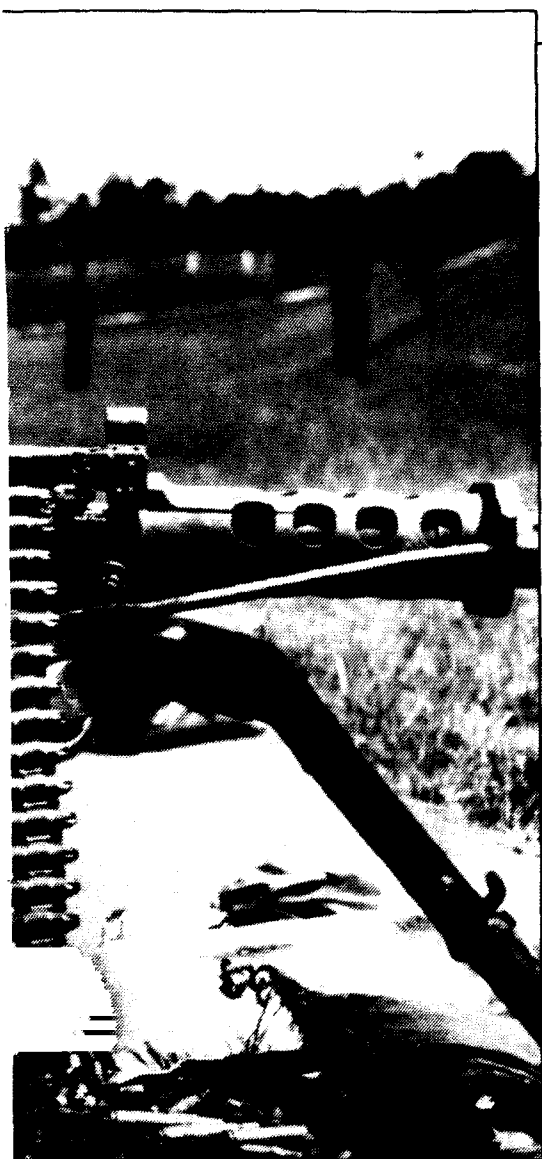
wrought on the once-pastoral landscape and lifestyle in this deeply conservative country. How deep that crisis runs was revealed on April 26 when the voters of the five original cantons of central Switzerland decisively rejected proposed state expenditures for a planned national exhibition in 1991 to commemorate Switzerland's 700th anniversary.

That rejection came as a shock to Switzerland's political elite. These five cantons are the most conservative, patriotic, Catholic and male-dominated states in Switzerland. The governing conservative parties in each of these five cantons had approved expenditures for the septcentennial anniversary exhibition. Moreover, the political establishment and press portrayed the opponents of the exhibition—left and green minority parties—as closet communists, opponents of the hallowed Swiss Army and immoral elements bent on destroying the Swiss way of life.

But this massive propaganda campaign came to naught. The green-left coalition argued that the exhibition would overly tax the environment in the five mountainous cantons, would bring traffic chaos and would, in effect, denigrate rather than celebrate Switzerland. What was needed, the coalition argued, was not a continuation of the public policies that had wreaked havoc on the Swiss environment, but a decisive break with them.

That the conservative burghers of the five cantons obviously agreed with the Green-left coalition is an ominous sign for the Swiss political establishment.

—Reto Pieth



Pat Casey Daley

Our best defense: Heather Harvey, age 3, of Mt. Juliet, Tenn., fires a 50-caliber machine gun under the supervision of a Tennessee National Guardsman at last May's Salute to Armed Forces Day in Nashville. "Just call her a Ramboette," father Phil tells *In These Times*. He says Heather "had a blast." Contrary to some reports (see *In These Times*, June 10), there were no protesters present, according to Phil Harvey. But "there were reporters there from the local news and they were trying to make something of it." Heather had gone to the military exposition with her mother Juanita. Harvey says he thought his wife would "be dead-set against it. But she blew me away on the news that night. She said it was well supervised and thought it was okay. So women are coming around these days—you know, to a different way of thinking." There was, however, a letter of protest from a Baptist minister published in the local paper. Harvey says he was going to respond but decided not to. Had he done so, he says, he would have said: "...a strong defense is the best offense. I work for a government contractor and we make weapons [the B-1 bomber]. If we did not have them we would be standing in the bread line waiting to get a ration of food. Besides, go back to biblical times. Jason wiped out a whole army with the jaw-bone of an ass. The Bible is extremely violent. The Jews fought their way through the wilderness for 40 years. There were wars going on constantly over there, and there still are. So, we need that kind of stuff."

Grenada's governing party comes undone

"The Sinking Ship" is a popular calypso on the airwaves in Grenada. The song reflects the concern of the people of this tiny, three-island nation of less than 100,000 people about the stability of its U.S.-backed government. Three prominent government officials resigned from the cabinet of Prime Minister Herbert Blaize in mid-April following a year of power struggles, refined name-calling and disputes over how to attract local and foreign investment.

Attorney General and Minister of Labor Francis Alexis and Minister of Agriculture and Education George Brizan both resigned, along with a ministerial secretary, Tillman Thomas. In quitting they cited the prime minister's implementation of a plan to lay off 1,800 civil servants, an unresolved salary dispute between the government and unions representing 3,000 teachers and technical workers and the high level of unemployment.

Grenada is currently governed by a 15-member parliament elected in December 1984, a year after the U.S. invaded the country under the pretext of rescuing 800 students following the murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, head of the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG).

Fourteen seats are held by the New National Party (NNP), a merger of three center and right-of-center parties, headed by Blaize,

Brizan and Alexis. The alliance was forged at a Grenadine resort just months prior to the election under pressure from pro-U.S. Caribbean leaders.

Blaize was the leader for 30 years of one of the parties that represented the landed aristocracy. The party had a record of low taxation of the wealthy and repression of strikes. Alexis, a law professor in Barbados, had lived outside the country for 15 years and returned to Grenada after the invasion to head an emigré party organized in Washington while the PRG was still in power. Brizan, an educator and member of the PRG, led the third party, organized after the invasion to appeal to young intellectuals.

The NNP won easily with the financial support and military presence of the U.S., which was eager to ensure that former Prime Minister Eric Gairy, whose corrupt 12-year rule was overthrown by the PRG, did not return to power.

Since 1983, the U.S. has given Grenada more than \$73 million to finish its international airport, repave roads, build factory shells and return the economy to the private sector. While there have been some increases in agricultural production and tourism, there have also been increases in crime, drugs, prostitution and unemployment—now standing at 25-49 percent, depending on whose figures you believe.

Both the prime minister and his opponents blame the situation on the difficulties of attracting investment in light industries, which they emphasize as the solution to

economic and social problems. The political leaders pay less attention to the fact that there are still not enough large hotels to accommodate the tourists that jumbo jets could bring into the new airport.

Blaize insists that Grenada doesn't have the funds to "create the atmosphere" that would attract investors, because he inherited an overstuffed civil service that eats up 60 percent of the national budget. The only way he sees to increase revenue is to lay off half the government work force.

Alexis and Brizan are holding rallies around Grenada charging that the deficit is the result of Blaize's fiscal mismanagement. While not objecting to trimming the bureaucracy per se, the two object to the layoffs because the private sector is unable to absorb the government workers. Alexis and Brizan contend that revenue would be available for development if the government would reform its tax program. Blaize lacked vision, they say, in abolishing income tax for the rich as well as the poor, in revising business levies so they now generate 75 percent less income, and in making a value-added tax on consumer goods and services the mainstay of his program.

The layoffs and the possibility of a major strike on top of the high unemployment, Alexis and Brizan predict, will create an unstable situation in which "Grenadians who can't find work during the day will go about at night looking for ways to feed themselves."

—Peggy Seeger

A wistful dictator

This is for those who forget that behind Reagan's persona of the affable buffoon lurks a nasty authoritarian. After the 1980 election Ronald Reagan met with outgoing President Jimmy Carter for an Oval Office briefing on 20 super-sensitive foreign policy issues. Carter believed the new president should be familiar with. Carter wrote in *Keeping Faith—Memoirs of a President*, that throughout their hour-long meeting Reagan took no notes and spoke nary a word—that is, until talk turned to South Korea. Carter thanked Reagan for urging President Chun Doo Hwan to spare the life of opposition leader Kim Dae Jung. Writes Carter, "At that point, Gov. Reagan made his first real comment. He expressed with some enthusiasm his envy of the authority that Korean President Park Chung Hee had exercised during a time of campus unrest, when he had closed the universities and drafted demonstrators." Park Chung Hee came to power in a 1961 military coup. In the following years he built, with the help of emergency decrees and an acquiescent U.S., what is today one of the world's most efficient police states. Park ruled as dictator until he was assassinated in 1979 by Korean Central Intelligence Agency Director Kim Jae Kyu. Current President Chun Doo Hwan, who at that time was Park's director of military intelligence, then stepped into the dead president's shoes with prescient speed.

Preview of the "Tear-Gas" Olympics

On June 10 South Korean TV viewers got a glimpse of what the 1988 Olympics might look like. During a soccer game between Egypt and Korea, tear gas from a nearby student demonstration wafted onto the playing field. The game was consequently called, and 30,000 riotous spectators stormed out of the stadium into the streets. And before state censors could get the right buttons pushed, armchair fans at home were treated to the sight of soccer players retching on the benches. Yes, the tracks at the '88 Olympics could get a mite slippery.

Rainforests deserve a break today

Each day 75,000 acres of the earth's tropical rainforest are cut down, writes Ellen Hosmer in the June *Multinational Monitor*. In a year that adds up to the disappearance of 27 million acres of forest, an area the size of Pennsylvania. To help preserve the world's remaining tropical rainforests, Earth First!, the California-based environmental group, is asking people to boycott fast-food restaurants. In Central America, beef suppliers for many U.S. fast food franchises have been using slash-and-burn methods to convert tropical rainforests into grazing land (see *In These Times*, June 10). Explains Earth First!er Karen Pickett, "A four-ounce hamburger is the equivalent of a 55-foot square parcel of forest—each of which includes 20 to 30 separate tree species, two pounds of insects and hundreds of different types of fungi and other microorganisms." Many folks will find that fact hard to swallow.

Solzhenitsyn and the Central Committee

Will Nobel prize-winning novelist and Soviet dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn soon return home? Friends of Soviet dissident Alexander Podrobneck told the French-based emigré newspaper *Russkya Mysl* that on March 5 Podrobneck wrote to the Soviet leadership asking that Solzhenitsyn's work now be published. In early May Podrobneck was contacted by a Party official who said he was empowered by the Communist Party's Central Committee to inform him [Podrobneck] that the committee considers Solzhenitsyn's return and the restoration of his citizenship a very important matter that is now being discussed.

Stung

Last fall the Reagan administration chose to bestow its ultra-sophisticated "stinger" anti-aircraft missiles on what French observers consider the "craziest" of the nine anti-Soviet guerrilla groups operating in Afghanistan, the Hezb-i Islami led by Hekmatyar Gulbuddin. Last December *In These Times* noted that this represented a threat to civil aviation. On June 11 the inevitable happened: the Hezb-i Islami shot down a civilian airliner near Shahjot airport in southern Afghanistan, killing 53 passenger, including 10 women and several children. The Hezb-i Islami, Moslem fundamentalists who despise Western modernity, apparently mistook the airliner for a military plane.