

Money talks, death squads walk

Last November, a former Salvadoran intelligence officer claimed that his hit squad was financed by the U.S. military. Cesar Vielman Joya Martinez, who defected to the U.S. last September, was employed to kill prisoners, mask the army's involvement in the murders and then dispose of the bodies, reported David Bates (see *In These Times*, Nov. 15, 1989). While the U.S. officers, who wrote checks for his unit's rent and operating expenses, "did not want to hear" of the killings, they must have known about them, says Martinez. But as Congress debates over foreign aid for fiscal 1991, it is ignoring Martinez' claims, while the Bush administration aims to discredit him and return him to El Salvador, reports Gregory Grandin. The Immigration and Naturalization Service also has sought to block Martinez' appeal for asylum, and the Justice Department has indicted him on the grounds that he illegally entered the U.S.

Good to the last empty shelf

The Salvadoran coffee revenue-war funding connection got a boost last month when Red Apple, New York's largest grocery chain, announced it would stop buying Folgers coffee for 60 days. Red Apple is the first major food store chain to honor the international boycott of Salvadoran coffee, launched last November following the Salvadoran government's murder of six Jesuit priests and their female co-workers. Coffee revenues of \$300 million to \$400 million a year follow U.S. tax aid as the major source of Salvadoran death-squad funding, says Neighbor to Neighbor, the organization at the helm of the boycott, and more than 50 percent of Salvadoran coffee is sold in the U.S. in major coffee blends such as Folgers. As part of its boycott agreement, Red Apple will cease advertising Folgers and display literature linking the coffee to death squads.

Thinking globally, acting corporately

Corporate entities who have advertised that, for them, "Every Day is Earth Day," reports Greenpeace: Phelps Dodge, copper and uranium mining company; America Forest Council, trade association for major logging and paper companies; Chevron Corporation, major oil company; U.S. Council on Energy Awareness, pro-nuclear lobbying group; Webster Corporation, manufacturer of GoodSense "biodegradable" trash bags; and American Cattlemen's Association, beef promoters.

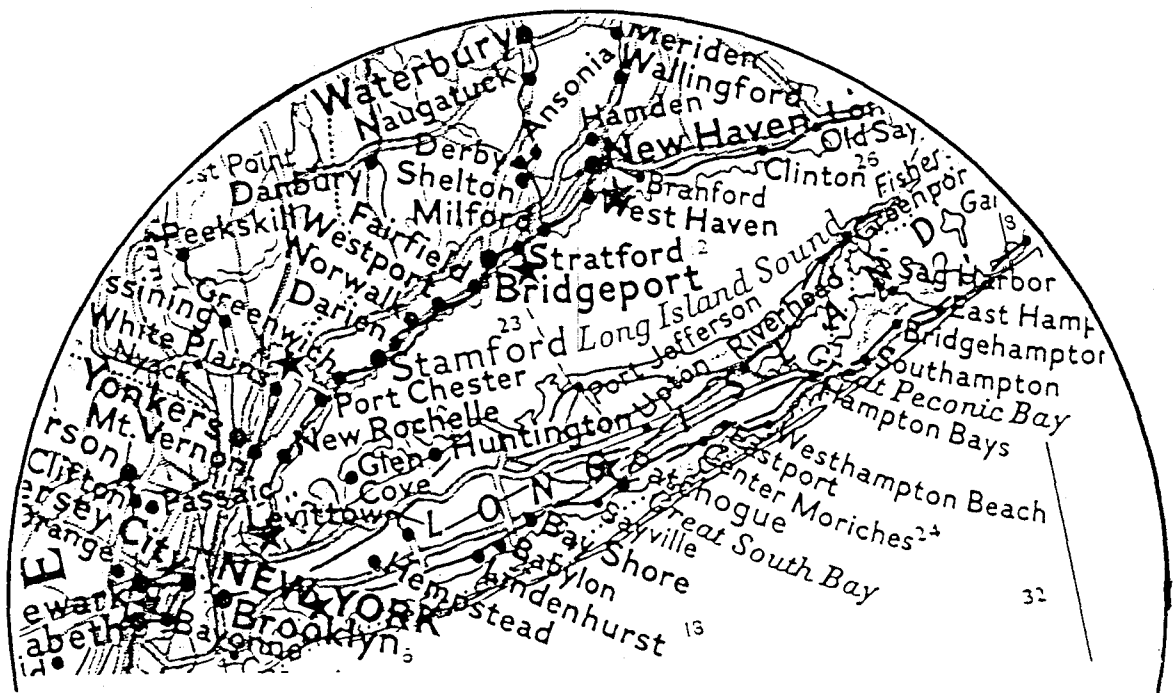
Broadcast coups

While no one knows how many Cubans are able to receive the U.S. government-sponsored TV Marti (see *In These Times*, May 23), the House overwhelmingly rejected an attempt on June 20 to slash funding of the broadcast of democratic enlightenment that currently carries a \$16 million annual price tag. Fidel Castro claims he has effectively jammed TV Marti's signal, which beams to Havana two daily newscasts and programming such as *Kate and Allie* and *Que Pasa USA*, the saga of a Cuban-American family adapting to life in Miami. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) opposes TV Marti because it fears Castro's threat of retaliation by interfering with U.S. AM radio stations, two of which have already reported transmission problems. Speaking at the NAB's annual convention earlier this year, President Bush asked the group to change its position. "I ask you once again to stand for TV Marti," said Bush, "to stand for freedom."

ITT stumps Trump

While presses all across the U.S. had their eyes on Ivana Trump's divorce prize, *In These Times* was predicting deep trouble for Donald. "Although the news hasn't yet reached the tabloids, the man with the Midas touch is running into financial turbulence over and above the millions being demanded by his wife," wrote Daniel Lazare (see *In These Times*, February 28). "Financial leverage—i.e., using other people's money—is what propelled Trump into the economic ionosphere back when he was just a mildly rich kid from the boroughs. In the early '90s, leverage—this time in the form of excessive debt—could be what yanks him down to Earth faster than you can say 'Drexel Burnham.'" *People* magazine, eat your heart out.

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A progressive coalition that survived the '80s

The decade of the '80s was difficult. Progressives struggled just to hold ground; victories meant maintaining the status quo. The Long Island Progressive Coalition (LIPC), however, managed to grow in size and influence—a local success story in the midst of this reactionary period.

The LIPC, made up of more than 60 sponsoring organizations, has recently formally affiliated with Citizen Action. Its mission is "to provide the organized vehicle by means of which progressive projects can effectively intervene to determine the direction of public policy" and "to transform progressive issues into effective movements for systemic social change," says LIPC Chairman David Sprintzen, also a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

The coalition was given its send-off in 1979 by former International Machinist President William Winpisinger and DSA founder Michael Harrington. The LIPC is still guided by the pro-labor, democratic-socialist and coalitional emphasis shared by these two activists.

The LIPC owes its success in part to its implementation of the slogan too often glibly promoted: "Think Globally, Act Locally." By making explicit the connection between local areas and entire regions, the LIPC has flourished. "[Long] Island is deeply divided, and few see themselves as having a stake in the island as a whole," says LIPC Director Warren Goldstein, adding that "the goal of the coalition is to try to strengthen and focus the many progressive sentiments on the island that are currently fragmented along geographic and issue lines."

By grounding their projects locally, the LIPC has been able to in-

volve large numbers of people and influence policies and programs throughout Long Island. Marge Harrison, one of the founders of the coalition and current vice chair of the New York State Democratic Party, credits the LIPC's success to its focus on organizing around local issues.

The coalition makes geographic connections by explicitly noting the links between such issues as the economy and the environment; labor and religion; energy and the economy. They have succeeded in building what Sprintzen calls a "non-electoral, multi-issue political party." Although they are well-respected for their electoral work, electoral activities make up only a small part of the LIPC's broad agenda. The Center for Workers' Rights, the Environmental Network, the Labor-Religion coalition, the Long Island Network for Peace in Central America, the Long Island Fuel Energy Group and the Long Island Public Power Project are among the coalition's other projects.

The Long Island Public Power Project began as a struggle against rate increases at Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) and the economic and environmental dangers posed by the Shoreham nuclear power plant. Although the public power legislation that developed as a result of the project was defeated, Shoreham has since been forced to close. The project raised awareness of environmental issues and the economic impact of energy production and distribution through programs of public education, community organizing and lobbying, as well as through its role as "watchdog." The labor movement was involved with the coalition in formulating its position on these public power issues, ensuring labor's support.

The two goals of the Environmental Leaders Network are to

broaden environmental concerns from specific areas or communities to islandwide issues and to provide a network for those working on environmental problems through an electronic bulletin board. The emphasis of the network is to promote islandwide recycling that is less toxic and less expensive than other available alternatives. As Goldstein claims, "In order to solve the environmental crisis of Long Island, a left perspective that links the environment with such issues as the transportation structure or with economic development is needed. The coalition provides those links." (Many LIPC members see the environment as one of its major focuses for the future.)

The Center for Workers Rights is a multifaceted project that provides legal counseling, advocacy referral and worker and community education. The center's involvement in discrimination cases is of particular importance in the current climate of heightened anti-worker and anti-immigrant sentiments.

While a locally based strategy cannot be substituted for a national one—since local efforts are limited by fiscal and political constraints and shifting local circumstances—there is a lot to be learned from the successful efforts of the LIPC. At a time when the ability to advance a progressive program nationally has been stalled, local efforts can help promote values of solidarity and justice, counter conservative and unjust policies and supplement—or influence—national programs. The coalition's strategy—linking constituencies, regions and issues, inside and outside the electoral arena—could be employed in building a broad-based national progressive movement.

The U.S. has had enough of the trickle-down theory; let's see what can percolate up. —Sherri Levine

By Lois Fuller

U.S. Forest Service pays lip service to conservation

IN RECENT YEARS, CONSERVATIONISTS, RECREATIONISTS, ranchers, environmental groups and others have increasingly opposed U.S. Forest Service policies. Although "dispersed clearcutting"—a timber harvesting method in which trees are removed in 20- to 40-acre tracts—is the primary complaint, others include destruction of cultural resources, the mining of old-growth and ancient forests and a lack of concern for biodiversity.

According to Mary Kelly, director of the Western North Carolina Alliance, the Forest Service's own data for North Carolina's Nantahala and Pisgah national forests show that recreation and wildlife provide a much greater benefit to the public than timber cutting and all other resource production. Why then, she wonders, does the current 10-year forest management plan (under appeal since 1986) call for 500 miles of new, gated logging roads and not one new campground facility?

The Forest Service's decisionmakers claim to be caught between environmental interests and those of the timber industry. But, according to Kelly, it is the Forest Service's "commodity resource extraction mentality that overrides everything else the forests are supposed to provide. The public's forests should be more than tree farms, and the public is demanding that they be managed for habitat, for wildlife, for rare and endangered species—for distinctive values that aren't available on private lands."

Current logging practices so consistently conflict with the maintainance of other resources that the Forest Service, which continues to operate at an annual deficit of at least \$1 billion, must constantly battle (and often lose) a barrage of legal suits mainly stemming from erosion and habitat destruction. "There are many documented cases of [the Forest Service] losing legal cases for destroying trout streams and some of the last of the grizzly [bear] habitats, for desecration of scenery, for destroying the ancient forests of the Northwest and for endangering the black bear habitat," says Kelly.

The number of legal appeals and lawsuits has increased drastically since the early '80s, according to the Wilderness Society's Peter Kirby. He estimates that there are now about 1,000 administrative appeals of local and regional decisions concerning road plans and timber sales each year.

Additional legal action against the Forest Service stems from the appeals of forest plans that describe how national lands will be managed for timber, grazing, recreation and resources such as soil, water, fish and wildlife. "When the Forest Service completes them all, there will be about 125 plans for the various forests," says Kirby. "As of now 115 are complete, although they were all to have been completed by about 1985. Of these 115, 110 have been appealed. That gives you a flavor of how dissatisfied citizen's groups are with the Forest Service."

The number of conventional lawsuits—now averaging about 30 per year—also has increased considerably. In the past such courtroom battles were quietly waged by large environmental groups such as the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society. But now smaller local organizations are stepping up their legal attacks. They are also taking their demands into the streets, the logging headquarters and the offices of Forest Service

superintendents.

The June 22 Fish and Wildlife Service decision to give threatened-species status to the spotted owl has considerably heated the debate between environmentalists and timber-extraction proponents in the Northwest. Loggers and their families have staged several protests alleging that the decision discounts their need to protect jobs and communities, some of which resemble ghost towns already.

The owl—one of 200 species threatened by the demise of the ancient forests—requires large areas of old-growth forest habitat, and the Wildlife Service's decision will theoretically preserve up to half the public and private acreage available in the Northwest for timber extraction. In the wake of the decision, pro-timber activists claimed that as many as 20,000 jobs could be cut during the next 10 years. But environmentalists are standing firm on preserving the forests and don't foresee an actual reduction in logging, since enforcement of such decisions is weak.

While Forest Service administrators claim their logging practices are justified, they also claim to set policies according to public desire. They argue that timber stands in the forests of North Carolina were weakened early in the century by poor forestry practices and that timber grown after the current harvests will be more productive and profitable. They add that today's high costs of logging (which cause timber sales to fall below cost) mainly result from road building to enhance recreational use of the forests.

The goal of clearcutting is twofold: to quickly sell off a large quantity of timber and to replace the mixed forest with even-aged stands of commercially preferred species of trees. Environmentalists say clearcutting increases erosion, degrades water quality, reduces wildlife habitat and leaves an ugly landscape of stumps and ruffled underbrush. They particularly question the wisdom of planting even-aged trees in place of an ecologically diverse range of species and ages.

"The Forest Service has in almost no cases shown that clearcutting is the optimum [logging] method," says Leon Minckler, a 33-year veteran of the Forest Service. "It might be optimum for the logger—it's not optimum for the forest."

Minckler, an environmental forestry consultant, has conducted research that helped citizens in Illinois create a management plan for the Shawnee National Forest based on group selection—cutting only selected trees in a 20- to 40-acre area. This is the only forest in the country where clearcutting has been extensively limited.

Reforming the forests: At the recent fifth annual Forest Reform Network conference in North Carolina, 200 participants with matching litany of complaints determined it was time to attack the U.S. Forest Service in an organized nationwide effort.

Arthur Cooper, head of the Department of Forest Resources at North Carolina State University, reminded the group, representing 18 states, of the great changes already made in the forestry profession in the last

four or five years. He pointed out the profession's increased emphasis on environmental ethics, public education and public concern and maintains that professionals in and outside the Forest Service are learning to consider the forest more as an ecological entity, valuing its amenities outside of the timber industry. "The profession views the challenge from the environmentalists as a very serious challenge and is attempting to respond to it," said Cooper.

But Kelly disagrees. She says the Forest Service tries to pit users and industry against each other, claiming to want to satisfy both. "The Forest Service folks really have been in bed with the industry for at least 20 years," she adds.

Jeff DeBonis, founder of the Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, wants to reform the value system of the Forest Service—to change the agency's goals from the promotion of commodity output to ecologically and economically sustainable methods. In DeBonis' terms, this means shifting the ecological burden of proof from the environmentalists to the Forest Service. (Currently the Forest Service can effectively block proposed restrictions by insisting that environmentalists prove the service's practices to be harmful.)

"If we are to continue developing, harvesting, building roads, mining and grazing on our public lands, this is the bottom line for us: zero tolerance for additional decreases in biodiversity; zero tolerance for additional increases in non-sustainable practices; zero tolerance for additional sedimentation into our watersheds; zero tolerance for additional loss of wildlife and fish habitat. Zero tolerance for additional degradation, period."

Greenbacks for green matter: Randall O'Toole, an economist with Cascade Holistic Economic Consultants in Portland, Ore., says efforts to stop clearcutting and to alter legislation and value systems are treating the symptoms of environmental degradation of public land rather than the cause. "It's like treating a patient suffering from pneumonia with sore-throat medication," says O'Toole. "The cause is a poorly designed budgetary process that rewards managers for losing money on timber sales rather than for emphasizing recreation, wildlife and watersheds." O'Toole likens the economics of the U.S. Forest Service to the "way the Soviet Union runs its whole economy."

O'Toole, who has reviewed and analyzed more than 70 Forest Service plans, estimates his proposals to market the resources of the national forests could save taxpayers \$2.5 billion per year and more than double the Forest Service's budgets for recreation and wildlife. O'Toole would like to see the nation's public lands run like a successful business, whereby managers would be rewarded for a positive income rather than for selling timber at below cost. "By changing the incentives, you change the cause of the problems," he says.

"Tax dollars go to projects of the highest political value," argues O'Toole in his book, *Reforming the Forest Service*. "Since politi-

cians get kudos for saving jobs and since more jobs are currently obtained through low-cost timber sales than through recreation, the timber sales have more political value."

A pro-timber mindset, an obstinate national bureaucracy and a congressional appropriations process well attended by timber-industry lobbyists would all become extinct under O'Toole's plan, as would the cutting of pristine and ancient forests and other degrading practices such as clearcutting—a costly method not affordable without tax subsidies through below-cost timber sales. Following is a summation of O'Toole's proposal:

- End all government subsidies to the timber industry.

- Begin a system of user fees to support forest lands in place of public land tax appropriations. Under such a system, most forests would get more money from recreation than from logging, and users wanting

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to swim, camp, hike, fish and bird would "outbid" timber demand for forest resources. "This way, you get what you pay for, whereas with taxes, someone else gets what you pay for," says O'Toole.

- Since the demands for recreational use would not eliminate the possibility of biodiversity loss, conservation and other groups could purchase conservation easements. These easements, along with a biodiversity tax of up to 10 percent of all fees, would pay scientists and train field personnel in the protection of public lands.

O'Toole estimates his economic solution could cost the nation 40,000 jobs at most—a "drop in the bucket" when measured against the national economy. "If we took some of that \$2.5 billion [saved by ending timber subsidies] and spent it on training, relocating and other compensation, we could spend as much as \$100,000 per job and pay that off in two years." O'Toole prefers this method over increasing tax expenditures for job compensation, a solution suggested by other forest reformers.

One big problem forest reformers face is the jobs-at-any-cost posture of mill owners. Either the timber industrialists are allowed to continue completely unrestricted, say the owners, or they must shut down their operations in whatever national forest they are cutting and great numbers of local people will be out of work.

Brock Evans of the National Audubon Society likens the destruction of the nation's last few acres of ancient forest to blowing up medieval cathedrals. "There are lots of jobs in blowing up cathedrals, and real high-paying jobs, too. Blowing them up takes lots of skilled labor: carting off the stones, selling the lead window panes, the furniture, the statues, the paintings on the wall. Lots of money in all that. And you could blow up Chartres this week, Canterbury next week and Rouen next week and York, and so on. And then you could start on Monticello and Mount Vernon. Blow them up too. Lots of good paying jobs.

"But in the end, guess what folks? We ain't got no more cathedrals, and we ain't got no more jobs."

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