

Renewal

"There is no
easy formula for
this renewal."

Lewis Mumford

March 9, 1981

A Bi-Weekly Report • Mark Satin, Editor

Volume 1, No. 4

New Vietnam brewing in Central America; some U.S. activists seek to go beyond "anti-war" movement, pursue new directions

The Reagan administration announced last week that it is sending \$25 million in military aid and 20 military advisors to strife-torn El Salvador.

Reagan's decision virtually ensures that Central America will be America's next Vietnam, and poses the question: how are human growth-oriented, decentralist, and world order activists to respond?

The Vietnam syndrome

In Vietnam, an unpopular and undemocratic regime devoted itself to repressing its "enemies." Eventually, that regime eliminated all moderate and "third force" opposition to its rule and drove most of the population into the camp of the real Communists. That same basic pattern appears to be repeating itself in El Salvador and Guatemala.

If anything, the repression in those two countries is fiercer than it was in Vietnam.

El Salvador

In tiny (pop. two million) El Salvador, 12,000 people were killed due to terrorist attacks in 1980. According to former U.S. Ambassador Robert White, testifying last week before the House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, "the chief killer of Salvadorans is the government security forces" and if Reagan sends new military equipment it would inevitably be used to "assassinate and kill in a totally uncontrolled way." According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, the explicit purpose of the government security forces is to "eradicate" guerrilla strongholds by terrorizing all those who might be housing, feeding, or otherwise helping the guerrillas. In practice, "they (soldiers and paramilitary troops) don't ask questions, they just murder," says a refugee in the San Jose de la Montana refugee camp in San Salvador.

Guatemala

In Guatemala, the situation may be even worse. According to Rarihokwats, founder of *Akwesasne Notes* and consultant to RENEWAL who's just come back from Guatemala, an average of eight to 10 corpses are found by the side of the road each day. Among last year's victims of the death squads were: 90 university professors, 389 university students, 326 elementary school teachers, 311 campesino leaders, 54 politicians, 12 journalists, and "hundreds" of union leaders. Most of the victims are found

bearing what the newspapers euphemistically call "signs of torture," which Rarihokwats feels we should know more about: "Needles through the tongue, in the testicles, stuck in the bottom of the feet; cadavers without eyes or hands; bodies without fingernails or nipples . . ."

The U.S. State Department admits the existence of the death squads, but claims they are connected with the far right — not with the government. The Guatemalan government is supposedly trying to steer a "middle course" between the far left and far right. However, Elias Barahona, chief of public relations of the all powerful Ministry of the Interior before fleeing the country last October, has revealed that the death squads are led by the chief of the presidential household; that death lists are drawn up using information from military and police archives, from trade union files in the Ministry of Labor, and from a businessmen's association which provides the names of peasant leaders; and that the lists are given a final going-over by a committee consisting of the president of Guatemala, two former presidents, and the ministers of finance and defense. According to Barahona, the generals run the death squads from the fourth floor of the National Palace Annex.

Beyond "we're wrong - they're right"

One response to a similar set of horrors in Vietnam was to condemn "our" side out of hand and to assume that if our side was wrong, "the other side" must be right (Tom Hayden's book praising the Vietnamese far left was entitled — with conscious irony — *The Other Side*). There was also an assumption that there could only be two sides (at the time Tom was writing, a "third force" of Buddhist social democrats was actually the largest political configuration in South Vietnam). Today, many activists are convinced that any genuinely life-giving movement must seek to know the pain, and defend the legitimate claims, of all parties to a conflict.

Sympathy for the devil

That's why some activists have been emphasizing that the Guatemalan industrialists and generals are not "bad men" in the sense of being vicious or depraved. They are considerably less wealthy than their American counterparts, and until very recently they thought nothing of putting on blue jeans

and dropping into a neighborhood cantina to drink and chat with the working-men and peasants. Many of them are devotees of a kind of hard-bitten realism and are convinced that the Americans have forgotten how the world "really works," and they are constantly aware that up to 20% of the killings in Guatemala (and El Salvador) are perpetrated by leftist guerrillas against industrialists, generals, etc. They are deeply divided among "progressive," "moderate," and reactionary elements; what unites them most is fear.

The left: a viable alternative?

The Guatemalan left says it is deeply committed to "social justice," but it is so internally divided that it has yet to propose a common, concrete program for social change. It is therefore essentially asking for people to take it on faith. (By contrast, Nicaragua's left was far less divided and far more explicit about its goals.) According to Rarihokwats, the Guatemalan left is made up of about 5% Communists; 50% New Left-Che Guevara types; and 45% Christian Democrats-Social Democrats-labor: a highly combustible mix. Further complicating things is the fact that there are at least four guerrilla groupings, each of them representing tendencies within the tendencies mentioned above.

The Indians: a "third force"?

And then there are the Indians, who represent between 55% and 65% of the Guatemalan population. The Indians trust neither the current government nor the organized left, and the feeling tends to be mutual.

One source of tension has to do with the nature of the current fighting. The guerrillas come into a village, raise their flag, tell the Indians why they should lend their support, and leave — hopefully, with recruits. Later, the Army comes into the village looking for guerrillas and for those who might have helped the guerrillas. It breaks people's doors down, burns their huts, kills some people — and leaves. The Indians are left to endure this.

The irony is that the Indians' belief-system may offer more hope for national reconciliation than that of the government or the left. According to Rarihokwats, some of the key elements in their philosophy are: love of the land and attachment to the land;

Continued on page three, column one . . .

New-style activists confront Soviet threat, suggest responses

A "multilogue" is an exchange of ideas among three or more people. This issue's multilogue is in response to the question, "What is the nature of the Soviet threat, and what should be our response?" All of the respondents share the same basic human growth, decentralist, and global-humanist perspective.

"National security comes from domestic well-being"

By Mel Gurtov, professor of political science, University of California-Riverside

In the long cold war between the U.S. and U.S.S.R., certain patterns common to imperial powers are apparent. Soviet leaders have sought to maintain friendly socialism in their East European sphere of influence, ensure the security of their extensive borders, and achieve rough strategic equivalence with America. They have operated from extreme insecurity, overall military inferiority, and bureaucratic inertia — circumstances that have a long history, are reinforced by ideological rigidity, and often find expression in crude uses of force and pressure against nearby countries.

These actions are invariably interpreted in Washington as evidence of global Soviet expansionism. They become convenient pretexts for new U.S. military buildups (as in the Persian Gulf) and more direct interventions (e.g., El Salvador). Buried in this crisis management is the fact that U.S. ambitions and actions — to preserve and extend global open markets, to contain communism through military and political partnerships, and to maintain strategic superiority — dwarf those of the U.S.S.R. The U.S. is the *only* superpower with global economic reach, worldwide alliances, and the willingness to use atomic threats to back several of its farflung military adventures (e.g., in Korea, the Taiwan Strait, Laos).

"The only way you can make a man trustworthy is to trust him," said Secretary of War William Stimson in 1945. Above all, U.S. leaders need a capacity for empathy to substitute for their overdeveloped capacity for being tough. There is also need to test Soviet intentions by initiating, and calling upon Moscow to match, freezes in the manufacture and deployment of nuclear and new conventional weapons systems. Provocative U.S. behavior, such as military aid to China and Afghanistan via third parties, should be abandoned — without, however, ceasing diplomatic and other multinational means of protesting Soviet interventions. Ultimately, however, national security for both sides comes from domestic well-being and not from international posturing. It is not Soviet policies but the devaluation of human rights at home that makes America insecure — and compels its leaders to find scapegoats abroad.

"We should boycott all violators of human rights"

By "Brian Murphy," Republican congressional aide

Many radicals who call themselves "new age" and who advocate a "new global awareness" seem to be unwilling to condemn the Soviet Union or acknowledge it as a threat to the international community. Yet the blatant reality remains: the Soviet Union is one of the most oppressive totalitarian regimes in the history of the world.

It is a government that has amassed history's largest military arsenal; it is a government which has violated and continues to violate virtually every treaty it has ever signed, most recent examples of which are the SALT I agreements and the 1975 Helsinki accords; it is a government that threatens to export revolution and violence to third world countries.

Does this mean we should respond with an 18% military budget increase or support anti-communist totalitarian regimes or employ a new array of nuclear hardware? Not at all.

What then should be done?

We should first of all reach a national consensus on what constitutes a violation of human rights. We should then be willing to implement a swift and effective economic, technological and agricultural boycott against all violators of that human rights policy; whether they be the Soviet Union or El Salvador.

In the case of the Soviet Union, this type of boycott will not be easy. Since its inception in 1917, the Soviet government has been supported by Western technology and Western financial backing to fuel its war machines and prop up its utterly failed economy. In fact, it is estimated that the Soviet Union presently owes the international banks in New York between \$40 and \$60 billion in loans. A default by the Soviet Union would not only mean a political and economic collapse of the government in Moscow, it could have severe repercussions on the economy of the West.

However, in order for a new global community to emerge, the many power structures of East and West must be challenged and brought down.

"(We should combine) self-respect, real preparedness"

By Wendy Moge, Institute for the New Age (New York); New World Alliance
The United States will be able to respond to the real Soviet threat when we stop using it to justify our own aggression. Of course there are real Soviet threats, alarming facts like that country's presence in Af-

ghanistan, steady conventional and nuclear buildup, active collusion with the more repressive elements in guerrilla struggles, and brinkmanship in Poland. An appropriate and effective United States response to such dangers would include policies like these:

U.S. policy in El Salvador should focus on promoting a negotiated settlement rather than on increasing the unconditional shipment of arms and advisors. We need to distinguish between positive forces for change and destructive left-wing forces. But we will be able to see such distinctions only when we stop justifying our support of destructive right-wing elements with charges of Soviet aggression.

The U.S. should strengthen its conventional forces. We are crippled by our unwillingness to invest in the spare parts, maintenance, ammunition, and training we need, preferring to hide behind an illusion of strength by building more complex and costly weapons systems, including a nuclear "strength" we hope we'll never have to use. Relying less on bluff and more on actual readiness would give us the real strength to deter real threats and to promote major, mutual reductions of nuclear weapons.

The U.S. should begin a nationwide mandatory service program, civilian and military. We are weakened by the material and psychological costs of a volunteer army. We need a more democratic, better educated, and cheaper armed force, one that would require more Americans to bear the consequences of the policies we advocate — or fail to change. Such a program to serve national (and global) needs would generate a sense of self-respect, spark a renewal of a forgotten American virtue (generosity), and affirm the value of personal sacrifice to a greater good.

This combination of self-confrontation, self-respect, and real preparedness would enable us to confront the Soviet Union for the right reasons, in the right way, at the right times.

Renewal

RENEWAL is published every two weeks except in August by Renewal, Inc., P.O. Box 3242, Winchester, Va. 22601, (703) 667-6895, in cooperation with the New World Alliance, a national political organization based in Washington, D.C.

Subscriptions are \$15 a year in the U.S. (\$19 first-class mail, \$19 in Canada, \$12 Asia, Africa and Latin America, \$22 elsewhere). Back issues are \$1 each. Also available from RENEWAL: Mark Satin's *New Age Politics*, \$5; the Alliance's "Transformation Platform," \$5; and the addresses of 1000 "transformation-oriented" periodicals on self-adhesive labels, \$35.

Editor: Mark Satin

Founding sponsors: Ernest Callenbach, Willis Harman, Hazel Henderson, Karl Hess, Patricia Mische, Jeremy Rifkin, James Robertson (Britain), Carl Rogers, John Vasconcellos

Design consultant: Brian Livingston

Printing: Kathy Baker, Tom Cesnik, Jack Robbins, Dale Wright

Legal counsel: Gerald Goldfarb

Correspondents and consultants (A through K next issue): Jessica Lipnack, Valerie Loomer, Joanna Macy, Michael Marien, Mark Lawrence, Wendy Moge, Jack Nichols, Kerstin Nordin, Jay Ogilvy, Bob Olson, Belden Paulson, Richard Perl, Rarihokwats, Hazel Reid, Maxine Rosaler, Nina Rothschild, Kirk Sale, Val and Vesna Scott, Jeff Stamps, Jim Turner, Dana Ullman, Eric Utne, Elaine Weiss, Gail Whitty, Mike Whitty, Steve Woolpert, five Anonymous (Washington D.C.), one Anonymous Ms. (United Nations)

Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Winchester, Va. 22601.

Continued from page one, column three:

self-reliance, simplicity and generosity; support of basic spiritual values; and utilization of natural resources for all people(s).

However, it is unlikely that this belief-system will ever come to predominate. For one thing, the Indians speak 23 languages and 100 distinct dialects and cannot successfully communicate among themselves, let alone with the rest of the Guatemalans.

Where do we go from here?

The 1980's version of the anti-Vietnam War movement is already under way. It involves all-out support for the Central American left and it is taking the form of marches, sit-ins, protests, demonstrations, national conferences, etc. For example, at the national CARD (Committee Against Registration and the Draft) conference, held in Detroit this Feb. 13-15, delegates from 56 peace, church, and left organizations were brought to their feet by a rousing opening-night speech from a Salvadoran left-winger. Other aspects of the conference were marred by the same kind of vindictive behavior that we find in the larger society (and that was found, all too often, in the movement of the 60's): the "discussions" and debates were highly acrimonious, one faction tried to oust all Republicans, another faction tried to oust the libertarians, and the Socialist Workers Party — remember them? — succeeded in gaining control of the organizational structure of CARD after 80% of the delegates had gone home.

Other movement activists are attempting to work out a different set of understandings that might lead to a different kind of peace movement. The second paragraph of Wendy Mogy's article (on page two of this newsletter) reflects one emerging perspective on El Salvador. According to Rarihokwats, our wisest course in Guatemala might be to offer our support to the left on two conditions: first, that it open itself up to the input (ideological as well as material) of the thousands of middle class business-people and others who are sickened by the tactics of the current regime; and, second, that it engage in a genuine dialogue with the Indian majority.

Only time will tell if this is the course that the left will follow. (Recent statements from the left in El Salvador seem to point in exactly the opposite direction: see RENEWAL #2.) An Indian-leftist dialogue may be initiated by a political platform that is currently being written by Indian exiles somewhere in the United States and will be smuggled into Guatemala some time this spring. Readers of RENEWAL who would like to help defray the costs of the printing of this document are invited to make their checks out to Mark Satin (editor of RENEWAL) who will see that an equivalent amount of money is given the exiles.

For more on Guatemala: Rarihokwats, ed, *Guatemala!*, special issue of *Green Revolution* (Box 3233, York, Pa. 17402, \$1.50).

Goodwyn: populists did what we want to do

Some books reach their natural audience in a matter of weeks, others take more time. Lawrence Goodwyn's *The Populist Moment* (Oxford, \$7) was an instant academic success when it was published three years ago, but it's only now finding an audience among the activists who would put its lessons to practical use.

On one level, *The Populist Moment* is a history of the agrarian revolt of the 19th century — the last mainstream mass movement to challenge the political, economic and cultural norms of the established order. On another, deeper level (and this is the level the activists are reading it for), it's a guide to building a mainstream mass movement in America today.

According to Goodwyn, building a real ("democratic," "powerful," "lasting") movement involves four distinct stages: movement forming, movement recruiting, movement educating, and party building. The populist heritage is rife with lessons for us at each stage.

The "movement forming" stage of populism was inaugurated with the founding of the National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union. Goodwyn stresses two things: that it was created by people of considerable self-respect and self-worth, and that it arose in response to a deeply felt need (for new methods of economic self-help).

After nine years of trial and error, the people of the Alliance developed an effective means of "mass recruitment" — the world's first large-scale working-class cooperative. Goodwyn gently shows us that it was not books, pamphlets, brochures, platforms, chautauquas, etc., that brought hundreds of thousands of people into the movement;

it was the fact that the cooperative proved useful to them.

Alliance members were "educated" (about the prevailing forms of economic power and privilege) partly by the 40,000 lecturers of the Alliance lecturing system. Every state Alliance had its full-time lecturer and every "suballiance" had its part-time lecturer who spoke at church meetings, barbeques, town squares. . . . This was by no means a "spontaneous" or leaderless or pleasantly disorganized movement!

Finally, after the effort of the Alliance at economic self-help had been defeated, the people of the Alliance created their own political party — the "People's Party." It was not unsuccessful (in 1892, it received 20-40% of the vote in 20 states), and the reason is that it grew organically out of people's own experiences. It was not the brainchild of liberal fund raisers from the east.

Goodwyn makes one further point. What gave the movement its deep inner strength is that it was able to generate, over time, a "movement culture": "In their struggle to build the cooperative commonwealth, in their earnest suballiance meetings, in their mass encampments, their rallies, their wagon trains, their meals for thousands, the people of the Alliance saw themselves (as actors on the stage of history). . . . As a result, they dared to listen to themselves individually and to each other, rather than passively follow the teachings of the received hierarchical culture." Every transformational activist will finish this book with a burning question: what are the contemporary equivalent of these experiences and how can they be nurtured into being?

Gilder: capitalism is moral, transcendental

The hottest book in Washington right now is George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty* (Basic, \$17), an elegantly-written introduction to all those "new" conservative ideas we've been hearing so much about.

It's a fascinating read. It's at once a turn-on book to "supply-side economics" and a very clever attempt to unify the *Public Interest-Commentary*-Brooks Brothers conservatives with the evangelical New Right (in that it attempts to combine a spiritual defense of supply-side economics with an economic defense of the traditional family). And it is Gilder's personal attempt to reconcile his transcendentalist heritage (his grandfather was Richard Watson Gilder, editor of the old *Century*) with entrepreneurial capitalism.

Of course, it's being viciously attacked in all the "progressive" publications (e.g., in an endless cover story in the Feb. 7 *New Republic*). Among Gilder's heresies are: capitalism is a "moral" philosophy because it's based on giving (investments) without assurance of return; wage hikes don't affect productivity nearly so much as motivation and spirit; "adequate" welfare benefits destroy people's incentive to work; most rich people deserve their wealth; the supply of products creates its own demand; beyond a certain point, higher taxes actually reduce government revenues; and so on, and on.

It's interesting to note that some of this does overlap, somewhat, with some of the insights of the human growth, decentralist, and world order movement. In that movement also, there is an understanding that any healthy economy needs to base itself in a morality; that one must give in order to receive; and that it is ultimately psycho-

logical forces that shape the economy.

But Gilder's book is deeply flawed. His arguments apply more to a society dominated by small enterprise and genuine competition than to the one we live in now. There is no mention of advertising — quite an omission in a book about the "supply side"! He refers to military spending as "the most inflationary of all activities" and then absolutely drops the subject though he goes on for pages — passionately — about welfare mothers and "pot-farming 'foresters' in state parks."

These are the kinds of flaws that are cited and recited in the "progressive" journals, but there's a deeper flaw that they've all missed. There is nothing really different in Gilder's book. All he does is stand the old Keynesian economics on its head. Give money to the rich not the poor, supply is the key not demand, etc. Until very recently, the left-liberal worldview had been so dominant that we tended to forget that it has a flip side. Well, now we have George Gilder — and Ronald Reagan — to remind us.

A genuinely new approach to economics would have to challenge the assumptions of the supply-siders and the Keynesians. It would have to question (as Hazel Henderson does) the very capacity of our fiscal and monetary tools to have a positive effect on our economy. It would have to question (as Robert Theobald does) the very need for us to work at full-time "jobs." It would have to question (as Herman Daly does) the very ethic — and morality — of produce-consume-produce-consume.

Gilder doesn't ask questions that run nearly this deep.

Fourth World Assembly seeks to further decentralist movement

The First Assembly of the Fourth World will be taking place in London this July 29-31, and it promises to have a lasting effect on the decentralist movement.

(The subtitle of the conference is, "For Small Nations, Small Communities and a Human Scale," and "Fourth World" is defined as small nations; neighborhood and regional groups working for their autonomy; all minority groups and native peoples; and all those struggling against the "gigantism of the institutions of today's mass societies" whether in the fields of peace action, energy, economics, etc.)

According to Assembly Administrator Nicholas Albery, the plan is to bring about 1,000 people together in London for three days, but to run the conferences in "small-is-beautiful" style by having 30 or so intimate Forums running in parallel. Forums scheduled so far range from "A non-centralized Nigeria and its lessons for Africa" to "The multinationals" ("Can the multi-

nationals lose their main negative 'gigantist' effects by merely decentralizing and giving increasing autonomy to their branches, or does a Fourth World solution require their complete breakup?").

Some of the Forums will be organized by well-known decentralists, but others will grow out of a process of local organizing and will — hopefully — develop into permanent "working parties." The conference organizers write, "Get together with one or two friends and encourage growth of this Cell of Friends until you are about seven strong. Think freely and imaginatively about (alternatives to gigantism and) action to be taken. If possible, encourage the Cell to become a 'Fourth World Forum' (and) send members to the First Assembly to share their ideas and pool their action-resolves. . . . The aim is for Fourth World Cells and Forums to be in existence worldwide as a continuing and growing network."

Each Forum will select representatives

to a permanent Fourth World General Council. "Between Assemblies," say the organizers, "the function of the General Council will be to co-ordinate carrying out the proposals for action suggested by the Forums, to help raise public consciousness about Fourth World issues, and to throw its possibly prestigious weight around when requested to do so by Fourth World Davids confronting their Goliaths."

Conference convenor is John Papworth, founder of the journal *Resurgence*, who has just returned from a nine-year stint as personal assistant to the president of Zambia. Co-sponsors are *Resurgence* and the E. F. Schumacher Society. "Patrons" include such transformational thinkers and activists as Hazel Henderson, Ronald Higgins, Ivan Illich, Leopold Kohr, Mildred Loomis, Kirkpatrick Sale, and Gary Snyder. For more information: Nicholas Albery, Fourth World, 24 Abercorn Place, London N.W. 8, England.

Global Premises Project seeks to further global unification

The Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS), a San Francisco-based research institute and think tank, is about to initiate a project — the "Global Premises Project" — that might just be a major step toward global healing and unification.

Goal of the project is to promote the vision of a "unifying global order" that would be based on the great spiritual truths of humankind — what Aldous Huxley liked to call "the perennial wisdom."

According to Willis Harman, president of IONS and a leading futurist, any new global order "must be based on a consensual view of the most fundamental human values and motivations," and the most likely source of this consensual view is the perennial wisdom ("the core knowledge of the world's spiritual traditions") — for two reasons. First, unlike any other belief-system or ideology, the perennial wisdom would appear to be compatible with the professed values of all major cultures, East and West, "primitive" and "sophisticated." Second, the perennial wisdom would appear to be compatible with the most up-to-date and sophisticated "scientific views of ultimate reality."

The "unifying global order" growing out of this "consensual view" would necessarily promote: human development; local management of human problems "to the maximum feasible extent"; global management of global concerns (such as care of the oceans and arms control); fairness in distribution of the earth's resources; and celebration of cultural diversity.

The Global Premises Project will attempt to promote the "consensual view" and the new, unifying vision of world order in four

stages: by preparing a "focal document" explaining and defending the "consensual view" and its world order implications; by organizing an "international working conference" around this document involving dozens of people from different cultures and social strata and "testing the hypothesis that a consensus view can be found that is compatible with all of the major existing cultures"; by disseminating a report of the proceedings of the working conference; and by promoting the use of that report in development planning and political debate.

"The ambitiousness, some would say audacity, of this project is apparent," Harman told RENEWAL. "It aims in the long run at a total change in the mindset of the

world — not by imposing a new ideology, but by helping cultures recognize and (utilize their) unchanging core wisdom."

The Project welcomes your reactions. Write: Barbara McNeill, Institute of Noetic Sciences, 600 Stockton St., San Fran. 94108.

ROBERT THEOBALD (Box 2240, Wickenburg, Ariz. 85358), the economist, is circulating a memorandum proposing "a method of enabling people to get more easily and directly involved in the transformational movement."

Theobald is suggesting that transformation-oriented thinkers and activists "volunteer to be contact point(s) for introducing people to transformational ideas and activities within their own geographical area(s)"; if you'd like to volunteer you should get in touch with him.

Renewal

A Bi-Weekly Report
Renewal, Inc.
P.O. Box 3242
Winchester, Va. 22601

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 139
WINCHESTER, VA.