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**MARCH ON  
WASHINGTON  
NOVEMBER 12**

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**STOP U.S.  
INTERVENTION  
IN CENTRAL  
AMERICA  
AND THE  
CARIBBEAN**

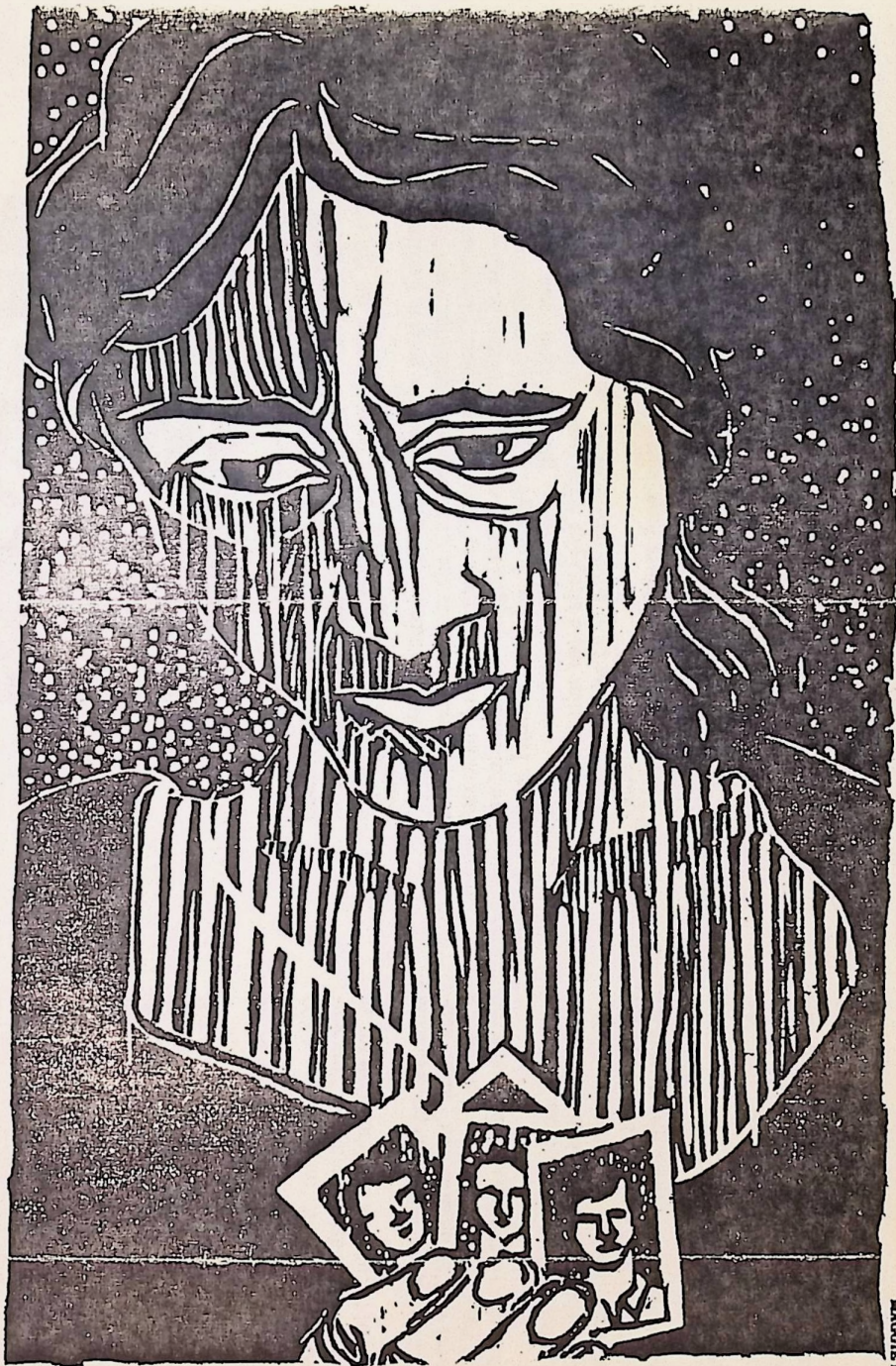
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**NO MORE  
VIETNAM WARS**

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**JOBS, PEACE,  
JUSTICE: STOP THE  
CONVENTIONAL  
AND NUCLEAR  
ARMS BUILD-UP**

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**STATEN ISLAND  
COUNCIL for  
PEACE AND JUSTICE**

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CONTINUING the Original S.I. Peace Coalition, Founded 1968



For most of the last fifty years, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras have been dominated by U.S.-backed military dictatorships at the service of a handful of wealthy families. That hold was challenged in 1979, when the Nicaraguan people rose up and overthrew the hated dictator, Anastasio Somoza.

Since then, hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans have participated in campaigns that have reduced illiteracy and vaccinated the entire population for the first time. In addition to insuring that basic necessities are met in a war-ravaged country, the Sandinista government has introduced progressive reforms such as the abolition of the death penalty and of sexually exploitative advertising. In spite of these accomplishments—or perhaps because of them—the Nicaraguan revolution is under attack by counterrevolutionaries, armed and trained by the United States.

#### El Salvador and Guatemala

In El Salvador and Guatemala, mass popular movements against tyrannical governments have grown into full-scale civil wars. Since 1979, the Salvadoran government, propped up by U.S. advisers and weapons, has been responsible for the deaths of over 40,000 civilians. Nevertheless, the Salvadoran opposition, united in the FMLN/FDR, has gained the political and military initiative. They have established “zones of control” throughout the country, clearly demonstrating that they have the support of the Salvadoran people.

Guatemala has been ruled by a succession of military dictatorships since the 1954 CIA-sponsored coup against the democratically elected government of Jacobo Arbenz. The hallmark of the most recent regimes has been a genocidal campaign against Guatemalans of Indian descent, about half the population. The opposition has joined together to form the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) in an effort to end the rule of generals.

The policy of the United States government has been aimed, not at peace or justice, but at wiping out the popular movements in Central America which seek to determine their own destinies. At this moment, the U.S. has 4,500 troops in Honduras and a naval task force off the coast carrying out “maneuvers” in order to intimidate the government of Nicaragua and liberation forces in El Salvador and Guatemala.

In the Caribbean, the United States continues to harass the governments of Cuba and Grenada while accusing them of “totalitarianism” and “subversion.” Both governments insist on the right to steer their own course, to strive to overcome the legacy of colonialism and to express solidarity with the movements of Central America.

The fighting in Central America has cost the lives of thousands of men, women and children. Many are choosing to risk death in the battle for a new society rather than allow the old order to remain. That order is characterized by malnutrition, inadequate health care, sub-standard housing and desperate poverty. One child out of four dies before the age of five; those who survive are faced with intolerable conditions.

#### Here in the United States

For most Americans, the realities of everyday life are not so harsh. Yet, here too, many suffer. One out of ten is unemployed and many fear the loss of jobs. For people of color, these conditions are worse. According to official



figures, one out of five Black people is unemployed and the actual number is no doubt higher. Despite the economic difficulties working people are experiencing, the U.S. government continues its massive buildup of the military budget, including millions of dollars spent to make war on the people of Central America.

The Reagan administration portrays the wars in Central America and the popular movements in the Caribbean as battles between “Communist totalitarianism” and “democracy” in our “backyard.” Over and over, Americans are told that the struggles in the region result from Soviet and Cuban interference. Hidden behind such charges is the racist assumption that the people of those countries are incapable of deciding their own futures. Rather than recognize that these struggles arise from decades of exploitation and brutal conditions, the U.S. government views the region in terms of its “strategic value.”

We in the United States have every reason to welcome and support the courageous people of Central America in their struggles. We are in a position to stop our government’s policies now, before they lead to a regional or even a world-wide conflict. The hopes and visions of Central Americans are, after all, very like our own. Their victory will be ours as well.

Join us in Washington on November 12th.