

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BORDER CARAVAN “CRISIS”

5900 active-duty U.S. military and 2100 National Guard troops are now deployed at the U.S./Mexico border in the service of a crisis manufactured by the current U.S. administration in response to a caravan of refugees from Central America.

Not only are we told lies about the caravan’s purpose, composition and goals, the unpleasant historical truth is that these men, women and children are fleeing their countries largely because of the corruption and violence U.S. intervention helped to create and continues to nurture.

U.S. Intervention in Central America

Most of the people in the current caravan come from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, countries where the U.S. has a long history of supporting brutal dictators to further the interests of big business. Here are some examples.

Guatemala: In 1954, the CIA orchestrated a military coup against the democratically elected president because he tried to institute agrarian reforms that would hand over fallow land mostly belonging to the American-owned United Fruit Company to dispossessed peasants. In the 1960s and 70s, U.S. equipped and trained security forces carried out a genocidal war against the country’s indigenous population. 200,000 people were killed. Today, Guatemala’s economy and government remain unstable, with drug wars claiming the lives of more than a hundred people a week.

Honduras: The U.S. has a 120 year history of bribing officials to take actions that favor American business interests to the expense of the people. During the Reagan administration, the U.S. contra war in Nicaragua falsely propped up the Honduran economy with arms, the presence of U.S. soldiers and buildup of military bases. When the U.S. pulled out, the economy was shattered. The U.S. continues to pour money into its corrupt government.

El Salvador: The U.S. supported and financed a 1979 coup which brought the ousted Napoleon Duarte back to power. The aim was to suppress an insurrection led by the FMLN (Faribundo Marti Liberation Front) which united groups fighting for unionization rights, agrarian reform, better wages, accessible health care and freedom of expression. In the country’s 12 year civil war, the U.S.

trained military carried out several massacres, including the infamous El Mozote, and “disappeared” untold numbers of dissidents. 75,000 people were killed, according to the UN.

The Nature of the Caravans

For over 15 years, hundreds of asylum seekers traveling in caravans from Central America have been aided by non-profit groups in order to make their journey safer. They are ordinary people who are fleeing gangs involved in drug trafficking (which are often helped by government forces), economies which provide no work, and abuse of women and young girls by members of the military. There is no evidence to support the claim that “there are unknown middle easterners” among them. Many are leaving their homes because their lives are endangered and they have no choice.

U.S. law guarantees the right to seek asylum.

For more information, check out these sources:

1. <https://www.vcstar.com/story/opinion/columnists/2018/11/03/u-s-can-blame-itself-caravan/1848617002/>, article by Tim Gallagher, *Ventura County Star*, November 2, 2018: “This is not a red or blue issue. Every administration and Congress since the 1950s shares in the responsibility.”
2. <https://youtube/Yw1FYBmAwV4> (interview with Richard Flamer, who has worked in Central America and Mexico for over 30 years and runs a Catholic Worker House in Chiapas with his indigenous wife.)
3. <http://time.com/5430940/donald-trump-migrant-caravan-false-claims/> article by Katie Reilly, October 22, 2018: Quoting Elizabeth Oglesby, assistant professor of Latin American studies, University of Arizona: “These migrant caravans are not a border crisis. People are doing this openly...and they plan to show up at the U.S. port of entry and petition for political asylum, and that is exactly how are laws are supposed to function.”

RESIST THIS ENDLESS WAR

Sunday, December 9, 2018

<http://newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com>

Since 1999, the New Haven Sunday Vigil has been held here every week from 12-1pm at Broadway, Park and Elm Streets in New Haven, CT, to emphatically say NO to the state of permanent, ongoing war against the world being waged by our government and its allies- a war which is terrorizing the planet and destroying lives to consolidate enormous power and wealth in the hands of a very few people.