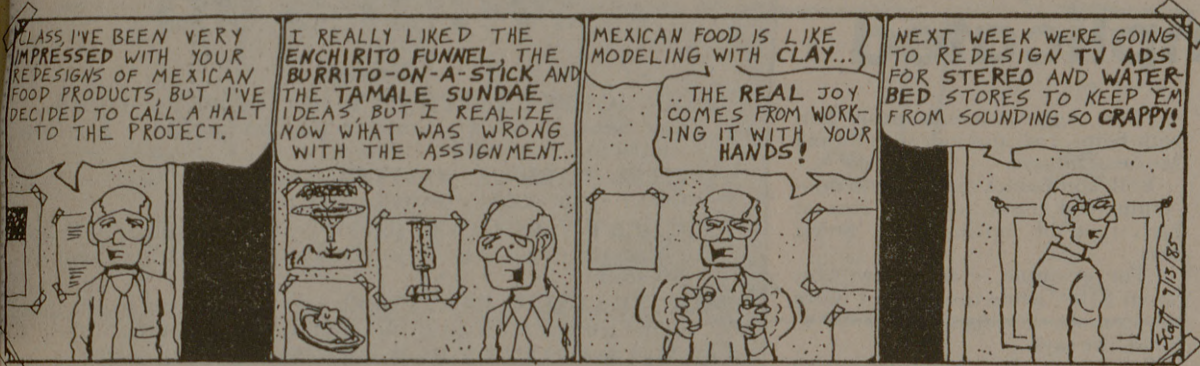


Warped

by Scott McCullar



Alternative side presented

Expert looks at Nicaragua

By CHRIS SIGURDSON
Reporter

Author Philip Russell, an expert on Central America, presented what he termed an alternative look at the current situation in Nicaragua to the Brazos Valley Peace Action Thursday night.

Showing slides that he took during several visits to the Central American country, Russell outlined the history, economic and social conditions of a country that has been a focal point of United States foreign policy since the early 1900s.

According to Russell, the Sandinista government has concentrated on improving the lives of the general population through programs of

land distribution and cooperative farming, raising the literacy rate and using the income of the country for essential goods rather than the luxury goods so prevalent in the past.

"You still see remnants of the old social structure in Nicaragua," he said, referring to a slide. "This Mercedes Benz is very typical of what the wealthy elite had before the revolution and which they can't get now because the government very carefully rations what foreign exchange they have. Now they concentrate on buying medical supplies and educational material rather than luxury imports."

Federico Holmann, a Nicaraguan Aggie who accompanied Russell in a question-and-answer session, said

Nicaragua is still not without problems. Holmann spent the last two years working for the Ministry of Agriculture there before returning to Texas A&M to work toward a doctorate in dairy science.

"Working there can be very frustrating," Holmann said. "Because of the Contras and the lack of money, plans cannot be finished and we must start over."

Holmann and Russell both said that while the United States' economic sanctions have had little effect on the country, the continued attacks by the Contras have made Nicaragua divert money and manpower to the border defense that was much needed elsewhere.

Impact studies planned for Navy

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday accepted an amendment to allocate \$1 million in 1986 for community impact studies in the nine Gulf Coast cities chosen as ports for a Navy battleship and its support fleet.

The additional money will be used for concurrent studies to determine environmental impact and the communities' needs, said Allan Krauter, spokesman for Rep. Tom Loeffler, R-Texas.

Loeffler said after the adoption of his recommendation, "Both environ-

mental impact studies and community impact planning efforts often take longer than expected. I believe studies conducted concurrently will ensure that there are no delays in implementing homeport decisions."

The community planning study, to be done by Navy officials, will consider municipal factors — housing, construction, temporary versus permanent jobs, and school enrollment — that will be altered by the influx of an estimated 5,000-6,000 Navy personnel.

But Galveston Mayor Jan Coggeshall said Wednesday she was skeptical that Galveston would be included in either study.

After the decision was made to split the homeport between nine coastal cities, Coggeshall said, the Navy requested \$8 million in support money from Galveston in addition to the incentives offered in the original request for proposal.

Since then, "it's been like a big poker game" trying to present a counter-offer acceptable to Navy personnel, Coggeshall told the Galveston Daily News.

Unless the Navy can be persuaded to accept the city's original proposal without the additional \$8 million, Coggeshall said, it is "a very real possibility" that Galveston will have to back out as a homeport site.

Bond lowered for two 'thrill killers'

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Two teen-agers accused of killing another because they wanted to "watch a man die" remained in jail Wednesday despite a judge's decision to lower their bonds.

State District Judge George Walker reduced bail Wednesday for John-Michael Alexander Trimmer and Harold Glenn Smith, both 17, from \$500,000 to \$100,000.

The two Houston teen-agers are charged with murder in the slaying

of Dennis Keith Medler, 19, of Houston.

Also charged and jailed in connection with Medler's slaying is Michael Gene Cravey, 19, of Houston.

Cravey, who was arrested Tuesday near New Orleans, was unable to appear with Smith and Trimmer in court for a bond hearing. He was returned to Houston late Wednesday.

Assistant District Attorney John Petruzzi said bail initially was set high because of the nature of the crime.

"We requested high bonds be-

cause these are dangerous people and we don't want them out on the streets," Petruzzi said.

He said the manner in which Medler was killed was "incredibly violent."

Assistant District Attorney Elaine Bratten said Medler's killers put a pipe behind his neck, "wrapped a bandana around his throat and choked him. Then they beat him about the head and face with the pipe, knocking his teeth out."

Medler's badly decomposed body was found Aug. 14.

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