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MICHIGAN'S ALTERNATIVE NEWSPAPER

FREE

NICARAGUA

A Photo-Essay by Michael Moore



MICHAEL MOORE

Not many countries sing about another country in their national anthem. Nicaragua does. It sings about us. "United States — Enemy of Humanity" goes the line, and it always seems to be sung with a little more gusto than the rest of the song. Fifty thousand dead Nicaraguans during 130 years of U.S. intervention and domination aren't soon forgotten.

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LIFE IN THE SLOW LANE

*Surviving in the
Unemployment Capitol*

by Alex Kotlowicz

It's the first thing you notice in Flint. The car is all. As you approach the city from any direction, you pass one of General Motors' seven factories. It's an industrial island in a sea of small farms and bedroom communities, and the bridges are all named appropriately. There's the UAW Freeway, the Chevrolet Freeway and the Buick Freeway. And the industry's offspring — auto junkyards, auto parts plants and fastfood restaurants — crowd the industrial island like an oversized family in an undersized house.

Downtown, there's a plaque proclaiming Flint "the Vehicle City" and a new amusement park under construction called AutoWorld. A mural painted on the Flint Journal building depicts a parking lot filled with cars. The car is omnipresent. After all, this city of 160,000 is the birthplace of General Motors, once the world's wealthiest corporation, and the United Auto Workers, once this country's most powerful labor union.

Even in such an unsuspecting place as a chinese restaurant, the Pagoda Cuisine, you're reminded that Flint has lived and may die by the automobile. One of the two dining areas in the restaurant is called the Buick room, and appropriately the evening I was there, it was closed.

I've visited Flint regularly for the past five years, both as a teacher of union classes and as a reporter. I've seen it alive, filled with the fiestiness and esprit de corps of the past. I still have a leaflet which was distributed by UAW Local 326 in 1980; it warned: "WAGE FREEZE? WAGE CUT? NO WAY!!!" A year later those same officials, faced with over 20 percent unemployment, urged their members to accept wage cuts from GM. And just this past summer, a full-page ad in The Flint Journal paid for by another UAW local begged GM president Roger Smith for their jobs back. "Welcome to Flint, Roger Smith — Bring us Back to Work. We Can Do It!," it pleaded.

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