

This week in history

13 October 2009

25 Years Ago | 50 Years Ago | 75 Years Ago | 100 Years Ago

25 Years Ago: CIA execution manual published

On October 13 1984, a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) manual, "Psychological Operations in Guerilla War," was leaked to the press, instructing Contra forces on how best to carry out executions of public officials and civilians in Nicaragua. Nicaragua's government was dominated by the Sandinista movement of Daniel Ortega, which, because it had adopted certain nationalist land and business reforms, was targeted by US imperialism in a war that lasted a decade and cost thousands of lives.

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50 Years Ago: Eisenhower invokes Taft-Hartley against steelworkers

Between October 7 and October 20, 1959, President Eisenhower invoked the anti-working class Taft-Hartley Act, sending a half million steelworkers who had been on strike since July, back to work. Taft-Hartley allows the US president to end strikes if he declares that they threaten a national emergency.

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75 years ago: Chinese Stalinists begin Long March

On October 16 1934, an army of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) led by Mao Zedong, facing annihilation at the hands of the Kuomintang forces of Chang Kai-shek, made a desperate retreat to the deep interior of China. The army reputedly traveled about 8,000 miles in just over a year, much of it on foot, ultimately linking up with the remnants of two other Red armies in late October, 1935. Less than a tenth of Mao's army remained after the march.

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100 years ago: Spanish anarchist Ferrer executed

On October 13, 1909, the Spanish anarchist, educator, and free-thinker Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia was executed in Barcelona by firing squad in the wake of the Catalan working class uprising known as the Tragic Week. The execution provoked enormous protests across Europe.

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