U.S. military which is organizing the day to day government operations against the Salvadorian guerrillas and their supporters in the general population such as certain sectors of the Catholic Church. In Honduras, it is the C.I.A. which is organizing and supporting the barbaric "contra" and Honduran military raids into Nicaraguan territory. It is the U.S. military and not the Soviet Union that is engaging in extended war games off the Honduran coastline. In short, a rather widespread counter-insurgency war has already begun. It is no longer a question of whether the U.S. will get involved, but how much further it will become involved. FEDEFAM, an organization of some 20 human rights groups meeting (a meeting which was given minimal coverage by the U.S. media) in Mexico City, has recently (May) pointed its finger at this involvement by accusing the U.S. government of being "morally responsible" for the fate of many of the estimated 90,000 people who have dissappeared as a result of organized state terrorism in Latin America. Father Patrick Rice, a priest and director of the organization, said: "The United States is morally and practically responsible because many Latin American militaries are backed by the Pentagon."

In the Middle East, the U.S. has already built an imperial network consisting of several client states (the most powerful one being Israel) and has once again allied itself with the most aggressive and reactionary forces in the Lebanon conflict—Herut Israel and the rightwing Christian Falangists. At issue in Lebanon is the legitimacy of the Gemayel Christian Falange government that was hastily set up after the ruthless Israeli invasion and occupation. Both the United States and Israel have collaborated in an attempt to build up the Lebanese military and the Gemayel government hoping to create another U.S. client-state in the region which would be subservient ("friendly") to both Israeli and U.S. interests. The U.S. military "peacekeeping" force is now fighting (with the help of American gunboats and bombers) directly on the side of this illegitimate Gemayel government while still insisting that it is neutral in the conflict. The U.S. is also using its intelligence gathering reconnaissance flights to aid the Israeli' air strikes against Gemayel's opponents. The recent meetings in Washington between Reagan and Gemayel, and between Reagan and the Israeli's Shamir and Arens, suggest a more coordinated effort is underway among the three parties. Can one really blame the Druses, the Palestinians, the Shia Muslims, the Lebanese leftists, or for that matter, Syria (which was once united with Lebanon under Greater Syria) for responding to American claims of neutrality with disbelief? And what is poor little Israel doing in southern Lebanon, in the Golan Heights, on the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

The Drift Towards War

In both the Middle East and Central America, the U.S. government is taking an overt imperialist stance. In neither case has it remained neutral in the conflict. If anything, it has pursued a foreign policy which has fuelled passions and tensions in both areas with machismo muscle-flexing displays of U.S. military might. Daily the war drums are beating louder. Daily more and more liberals are jumping on the dizzying militarist merry-go-round. Large sectors of American society seem to have a deep-rooted need to close their eyes to the domestic causes of aggression and to project their hostility outwards towards Foreign Others. Evidence for this can be seen in the unprecedented military buildup and the recent passing of the $253 billion defense budget which approved almost every major weapons system requested by the Pentagonians—21 MX "peace-keeper" missiles, 360 Cruise missiles, 10 B-1 bombers, 3 nuclear attack submarines, 840 M-1 battle tanks, 96 Pershing 2 medium range missiles, and an array of tactical fighters, navy warships, and several other weapons systems. The military madness seems to be getting out of control.

Towards 1984

If the current trends continue into 1984 and the international peace movement is unsuccessful in its efforts to stop the drift towards war, the real 1984 may well make the 1984 envisioned by Orwell appear to be a utopian wonderland in comparison. The horrible stream of Orwellian apologetics and militarist bravado which followed in the wake of the invasion of Grenada, the continued deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe against the will of the majority of the people who live there, and the most recent U.S. bombing raids on Syrian positions in Lebanon, suggest that the current American government is no longer capable of providing for the security of its own people—it can only guarantee that if there is a war the Enemy will also be destroyed. And the installation of the Pershing and Cruise missiles is a serious threat to all life on this planet since it lessens the time in which either side can discover mistakes or accidents that can be traced to computer malfunction or human error.

The Doomsday Clock is ticking and the zero hour is approaching nearer. Presently, it appears that it is Uncle Sam and not the Soviet Bear that is getting trigger happy. And as the Pentagonians, weapons firms, and state-hired physicists and engineers are busily preparing for the world's destruction, the mass media and the official statesmen have joyfully taken it upon themselves to engineer the world's consent. If they are successful, it will truly be the war to end all wars, the end of the human species, and possibly the death of planet earth. And there will be no "day after" to discuss what went wrong.

Answers on Nicaragua

by Robin Greyson **Part Two**

This second in a two-part series on Nicaragua is based on the author's experience while visiting the Central American country this past summer. It is somewhat out of date vis-a-vis the status of Cubans, etc., but offers background to the events unfolding rapidly there.

What about charges of Soviet and Cuban penetration of Nicaraguan society?

Since the presence of Cuban advisors seems to have become a license to kill for the U.S. military in the last few months, this issue has taken on added significance. When I asked Nicaraguans about U.S. criticisms of Cuban involvement in Nicaragua, what I mostly received was a long string of profanities. To understand why this is an appropriate response, a little background is necessary.

Nicaragua had been a client state of the U.S. from the middle of the 19th century up to the time of the revolution in 1979. The Marine Corps—that's U.S. not Soviet—virtually occupied the country from 1910 until the mid 1930's. The single most important institution in Nicaraguan society up to the time of the Revolution, the National Guard, was set up by the U.S. during this period of occupation. The National Guard was virtually an internal occupation force, giving the Samoza family which controlled it, total domination of Nicaraguan society. Power in Nicaragua came out of the barrel of a gun, and that gun was stamped "Made in America."

Even today the remnants of U.S. domination are everywhere in Nicaragua. You can't walk down a street without seeing billboards with ads for Mastercard or Pepsi. U.S. films are everywhere. At the school which I attended in Managua the names of my teachers were Douglas or Daisy. These are not common Latin American names; they are, however, com-

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Options in Central America

by David Helvarg

Despite the Lebanon bombing and invasion of Grenada, the prospects for a commitment of U.S. ground forces to combat in Central America remains small, at least before the November, 1984 elections.

The popular appeal of the Grenada invasion and expected retaliation strikes following the marine compound bombing in Beirut are in large part based on the Reagan administration's ability to project power over a relatively short period of time. Central America historically holds the promise of an extended guerrilla war no matter what level of force is brought into play, a prospect that the administration is not likely to risk, for fear of public disaffection at home, until Ronald Reagan has had his chance for re-election.

Still a certain level of escalation is inevitable following the pattern that has emerged in the region since the first major commitment of U.S. resources in 1980.

This escalation is most likely to occur in three areas; On the ground in El Salvador with the U.S. Milgroup (Military Group), in U.S. air-support functions based out of Honduras and with the CIA/Pentagon regional programs related to CONDECA (the Central American Defense Council) and the Contra war against Nicaragua.

The death of Al Schaufelberger, the first U.S. military trainer killed in El Salvador six months ago, raised national concern about the risks of U.S. involvement. However, one of the effects of the Beirut tragedy that left over 220 young marines dead, along with the more than 20 U.S. dead from Grenada, is a kind of public numbing like that felt at the time of the weekly Vietnam body count.

Now the U.S. can afford to suffer two or three military fatalities per month in El Salvador without fear of public anxiety. U.S. war casualties have once again become a familiar part of the news for most Americans. In practical terms this will almost certainly mean permission for U.S. trainers to go out into the field with the "Salvos" they advise. The training group has been seeking this opportunity for over a year. At the same time the "in country" number of service people which now stands at around 90 (trainers, medics and embassy based "logistics officers") might also be expected to expand with the addition of 50 to 60 new 'slots' that the Pentagon has requested.

The U.S. program of winning hearts and minds in San Vicente province is also beginning to come apart. The army's annual summer offensive which the U.S. misread as a qualitative improvement by the security forces related to their training mission has shown itself to be just the usual war cycle (the army advances in the summer, the guerrillas come back stronger the following fall and winter). Despite over a billion dollars of U.S. aid, several U.S. trained battalions including, "light, hunter-killer units" and talk of "taking back the night from the G's (guerrillas)," the Salvadorean army is in worse shape, relative to the rebel forces, then it's ever been.

There is a good chance that the FMLN guerrillas could, in the next six months, take and hold major towns in one of the four eastern provinces (Morazan, San Miguel, Usulatan and La Union) or in San Vicente province. An attack on the city of San Miguel, San Vicente city or the U.S. navy training base at La Union, in which the army was kept at bay for over a week despite the use of the Salvadorean air force could result in U.S. aircraft being brought into action. You would then have a widely recognized escalation of the war with U.S. pilots being directed from the ground by U.S. field advisors against rebel held positions in El Salvador.

These planes could come either from U.S. carriers on station of the Pacific coast or from Comeyagua, the main Honduran airbase which the U.S. has put twenty five million dollars into upgrading to U.S. standards. The price for this improvement has been a 'joint-use' agreement between the U.S. and Honduran military.

Honduran-Nicaraguan Border Scenarios

With over 4,000 U.S. marines in Honduras on 'extended exercises' along with a U.S. - Salvadorean training base, U.S. manned radar installations, 35 advanced Blackhawk troop transport helicopters and marine Harrier jump-jets stationed off the caribbean coast (along with carrier based A-7 and F-14 aircraft) Honduran army commander Gustavo Alverez, a fanatic anti-communist, has reason to act confidently. He has openly threatened border war with Nicaragua should Nicaragua step-up its low key policy of pursuing Nicaraguan Contra rebels back to their bases inside Honduras. The U.S. was a big advocate of the doctrine of "hot pursuit" during the war in Indochina but now loudly protests alleged violations of Honduran "sovereignty" by the Nicaraguan army.

In any border conflict between Honduras and Nicaragua, Honduras would have to use its airforce (the best in Central America) to compensate for lack of motivation and morale among its own troops vis-a-vis the Nicaraguan EPS—Sandanista Popular Army. The Nicaraguans would then bring in MIG aircraft from Cuba in order to expand their

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