

Two professors discuss Nicaragua

by Bill Powell
Staff Writer

Dr. Thomas Sheehan, professor of philosophy

Q: Do you believe that the United States should help overthrow the government of Nicaragua?

A: I think the United States should have nothing to do with overthrowing the government of Nicaragua, a legitimately elected government, a government with which we have diplomatic relations. The United States has yet to show that the Sandinista government is not a popularly supported government; it has yet to show that in any way it has violated international law.

It's the U.S. on the contrary that has violated international law in its efforts to overthrow that government. It's illegal, it's immoral, and it's counter-productive.

Q: Do you believe that Nicaragua is a threat to other Central American countries as well as the United States?

A: The story is that Nicaragua has managed this immense military build-up for no reasonable defensive purposes. In 1982, at the same time as the United States was illegally training Contras and the Sandinistas were building up with knowledge of that, we declared already that their build-up had no reasonable defensive purposes.

The International Institute for Strategies Studies in London has pointed out that the Nicaraguan army, in comparison with the armies that surround it, is in no way superior in anything except perhaps in second-hand tanks. The air space over Nicaragua would be easily dominated by the Honduran Air Force which has eight bombers and Huey's (helicopters).

Nicaragua has nothing by the way of an air force. It has attack helicopters which it has used and used effectively against the Contras. This myth of Nicaragua poised to attack Honduras is precisely that. It's a myth that only Americans believe.

Q: Recently, representatives of eight Latin American countries voiced their support for a political solution to the conflict in Nicaragua based on negotiations. Should the U.S. support the Contadora plan for peace in Central America or should it continue to support the Contras?

A: We've said that the only way to bring Nicaragua around is with pressure. I'd like to translate that word. That means murder. That means that you send mercenaries and counter-revolutionaries into the country and you destroy the economy, you kidnap and kill teachers, you murder civilians. That's what we call pressure, which is our alternative solution to sitting down like diplomats instead of international bandits to deal with this country.



Symbols of revolution in Nicaragua: the Sandinista Front for National Liberation and the cowboy hat of the Nicaraguan hero, Augusto Sandino.

photo by Bill Powell

Dr. Sam Sarkesian, professor of political science

Q: Do you believe that the United States should help overthrow the government of Nicaragua?

A: I'd have to first start by trying to assess what you mean by overthrow. If you're talking about the actual overthrow of an existing system without any kind of political backing of the people within the country (directing the overthrow) and the direct involvement of the United States, no.

Secondly, I think one has to look at how we assess the present Nicaraguan government. Is the Nicaraguan government a threat to American interests and to the rest of the Central American states? I think that's the crucial question.

If we perceive that the Nicaraguan government is a serious challenge to Central America, to other open systems, and our security interests, then we should do everything in our power to assist those in revolution against Nicaragua.

Q: Do you believe that Nicaragua is a threat to other Central American countries as well as the United States?

A: Based on my own reading, I find it difficult to presume that Nicaragua should have an army of 120,000 people and the modern implements of war including MIGS, airports, and tanks. I often wonder, 'what do they need this for?'

Now certainly you could make an excuse that it's against the threat of the U.S., but this build up started before the U.S. got involved, at least verbally. And after all, the U.S. did offer over 150 million dollars to the anti-Somoza revolutionaries when they got into power. And it was the Carter Administration that froze this and Reagan stopped it.

So the question is: do they pose a threat to their neighbors? With a 120,000 man army including militia and regular army and modern weapons and MIG airfields, I'd be a little bit worried if I was in Costa Rica, Honduras, or El Salvador.

Q: But, certainly they aren't the most formidable military power?

A: They are in Central America. Maybe not in all of Latin America, but certainly in Central America they are. I mean here you have a country that's less than the population of El Salvador and has an army three times the size of El Salvador's army. And you often wonder why?

Now you can argue well, they're afraid of the United States. Well, they may be. I'm not denying that that's a possibility. But this build-up started before that kind of confrontation started. I'm not suggesting, therefore, that they're going to march on Washington.

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Career day offers options for biology majors

by Leslie Morse
Staff Writer

Tri-Beta, the Biological Honor Society, will sponsor Career Day, Wednesday Feb. 26 to inform majors of alternative careers in medicine and dentistry. Speakers from various fields will have presentations from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 a.m. in the ballroom of Centennial Forum.

Students will have the opportunity to hear and ask questions of the seven speakers, all of whom have degrees in biology.

The 20-minute speeches will inform the students of different job opportunities open to biology majors and the degree requirements for each position.

The scheduled speakers include Dr. Rosemary Grady, a Loyola professor, who will talk about being a professor of biology, and Loyola professor Dr. Donna Bishop who will discuss the difference between doing laboratory research as a professor and doing research for a company.

Also on the agenda are

Ann Hornickel, a senior science writer for the Museum of Science and Industry, Joseph Barron from the Chicago Academy of Sciences and Christian Kelley from Loyola Medical Center who will discuss the medical technology program.

Abbott Laboratories' toxicologist Dr. Robert Dudley will address the option of research work for a company, and a talk will also be given by a Brookfield Zoo zookeeper.

Of the 1985 Loyola graduating class, 31 per-

cent of the biology majors who applied to medical school were not accepted. Demetra Lagen, president of Tri-Beta, hopes that the Career Day will educate biology majors about other beneficial careers.

"(Biology majors) often don't know what to do with their degree and they don't bother to find out because they think they are guaranteed entrance into the health profession," Lagen stated.

Lagen said she is "sad-

dened" to see a student work four years to get a biology degree and then to have to work in a field that has nothing to do with biology.

"We (Tri-Beta) are offering to show biology majors that medicine and dentistry are not the only occupations in the world." She strongly encouraged all students considering a biology degree to attend.

The Tri-Beta Career Day is open to all biology majors.

professors

Dr. Thomas Sheehan

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Yes, the United States should commit itself seriously to the Contadora process and negotiate. If it doesn't like what's on the table it should talk about what's on the table and negotiate it.

Q: *The International Court of Justice has consistently ruled against the U.S. in its efforts to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. In light of our adherence to the Court's jurisdiction during the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979, shouldn't we be abiding by its decisions today?*

A: I would like to cite something that Secretary of State (George) Schultz said: America has a moral responsibility. A lesson of the post-war era is that America must be the leader of the free world; there is no one else to take our place.

Listen, the record that we have in Central America and Nicaragua is so bad, that to claim that we, in the name of a higher morality, can choose to tell the World Court that we will not abide by any of its decisions is almost a self-confession of banditry.

What the Central Americans say is: "The North Americans never remember and we never forget." The only reason why Reagan can get away with the policy he has is that we never remember where we've been and what we've done down there for the last century. The Central Americans, who have borne that policy on their backs, never, never forget.

Q: *Are the Contras the moral equivalent of our founding fathers as President Reagan claims them to be?*

A: Ask George Washington if he'd like to be associated with Col. Enrique Bermudez, formerly of the National Guard under Somoza, and now a Contra leader. Ask him if he'd like to be associated with Col. Ricardo Lau, also a Contra, who received \$120,000 for arranging the assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero. Ask Thomas Jefferson, ask the men who pledge their lives and sacred honor to bring about freedom in the world if they'd like to be a part of the dirtiest war that's been fought on this hemisphere. I think the question answers itself.

Closing Comment:

I think it would be an excellent idea that there be a debate between Professor Sarkesian and me on these very sensitive issues. I believe that it would be for the good of the students that we do have an open debate on this, perhaps the most burning foreign policy issue of this year.

Dr. Sam Sarkesian

On the other hand I think it is critical to understand that Central America is not our backyard. These are sovereign countries and ought to go with their national inspirations. But, on the other hand, I wonder if we should stand by if other open systems or those that are trying to be open, like Costa Rica, which has no army, are going to be threatened.

Q: *Recently, representatives of eight Latin American countries voiced their support for a political solution to the conflict in Nicaragua based on negotiations. Should the U.S. support the Contadora plan for peace in Central America or should it continue to support the Contras?*

A: I don't think these are contradictory. I think that you have to pursue every possible avenue, and I think politically and diplomatically that's crucial. And you've got to do it through regional concerns.

On the other hand you've got to understand who you're dealing with. Now this is a system that's already shut down the Catholic radio. Cardinal Obando y Bravo has presented an indictment against the Ortega regime directly to the U.N. secretary general Cuellar. The Catholic church is being shut down in Nicaragua. That doesn't mean human rights to me.

When you say a political solution, what is a political solution in Nicaragua? A political solution seems to me the Sandinistas originally said that we supported—both Carter and Reagan. Free elections, free opposition, free newspapers. I don't see that.

Q: *Regarding the Contras and human rights, groups such as America's Watch have documented severe abuses of human rights by the Contras—should the U.S. be supporting a group such as this?*

A: I think the U.S. should make it a point, if it's going to support these people, that there must be strict rules and regulations of their behavior. And I think we must also keep in mind that human rights are also on the other side. The human rights commission has already come out very recently criticizing both the Ortega regime and the Contras.

I don't think we should be in the business of supporting someone who makes a deliberate decision to violate human rights. Now there's always going to be violations, but it cannot be a policy and a deliberately followed policy. And if we're going to support the Contras, we've got to be sure that some controls are put on to minimize this kind of thing. Otherwise, you become like them. You become the very people you're fighting against.

Closing comment

You really have to weigh the information you get very carefully, and right now I don't know what policy the United States should follow. And I'm not advocating one policy or another.

But it would surprise me greatly to think that the (Reagan) administration is developing a military plan to invade Nicaragua. I think that would destroy the very purposes of what it is trying to achieve. And I would think if Ortega is as smart as he claims he is, he'd know that too.

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