

Q: The efficiency of Pemex, the company that controls Mexican oil, has been challenged. Have you ever thought of exchanging Mexican oil for American experience and technology in the form of a joint enterprise?

A: We are in constant communication with all possible sources of technology. We are forging our own technology through the Mexican Petroleum Institute, a very good instrument which is researching, planning and designing for us. Therefore I think we have the capability to achieve in this area what I have called the national Grand Design in questions of research and technology.

We can be technologically self-determined. Already at this very moment we are in condition to discern and to decide for ourselves which technologies we should import, which ones we can develop inside our own country, and which ones we can export. Thus we are able to take advantage of world progress and to make our own contribution to world progress.

Q: Do you believe that heroin traffic can be eradicated between Mexico and the U.S.?

A: This is something upon which we must seriously reflect, for while there is such a vast demand for this kind of drug, it will enter the U.S. or the place where it is consumed through any of the borders, because this is an illicit but formidable transaction; our country is doing all it can to the best of its abilities to limit this

possibility. What must be done is being done; but most important is what is done inside the U.S. itself to avoid the growing consumption of the drug: this is the key problem.

Q: Mr. President, Central America is facing a difficult situation: there is civil war in Nicaragua, problems in El Salvador, and Cuba is near the coast of Mexico. With all these problems, Mexico could be an obvious gold-mine for subversion, particularly from the extreme left.

A: Mexico and the entire world, and I believe the U.S. also, is one of the most coveted "gold mines." In Europe the same. I think to regionalize or localize the problem is to impoverish the discussion, and to the extent that we do this, the solutions become more difficult. A political system of universal aspiration — which are the movements of the left — aspire to this: to universalize, and in situations where they are permitted to advance, they do so... We believe that our Revolution is in itself a satisfactory program for the proposals and solutions to the questions you are raising. We lament that Central America is in the kind of situation which you describe... We believe that the U.S. should not interfere in Latin America or in any other country, because we believe in the principle of non-intervention. We think that it is through other means that we can achieve these ends. If we order the world better economically, the conclusions in the social realm can be simple.

Nicaraguan war threatens continent

Somoza charged with genocide and scorched earth policy

The ongoing civil war in Nicaragua is fast becoming another foreign policy disaster for the United States, as serious as that created by the Kissinger-directed 1973 coup in Chile by General Pinochet. If not reversed rapidly, present U.S. policy in Central America will in fact lead into a second Vietnam debacle for the United States.

As in the recent Camp David summit, the U.S. is blindly following the Israelis into war and genocide in Central America. Mexican, Cuban, and Nicaraguan anti-Somoza forces have all denounced the Israeli role as military supplier and advisor to the outlaw Somozan government in its present bloodbath against the Nicaraguan population.

The implications of the Nicaraguan crisis, however, go far beyond its immediate borders, as Nicaraguan incursions into Costa Rica's territory last week have already demonstrated. With the entire region poised in a precarious balance of shaky alliances and long-

standing border disputes, worsened by the generalized political instability caused economic collapse, any regional conflict begun in Central America could spread like brush-fire across the continent. The result would be a violent "Thirty Years War" phenomenon, reproducing the present genocide in Nicaragua across the whole of Latin America.

Lebanon-modeled genocide

The spreading opposition to the Nicaraguan government of General Somoza during the past year exploded into full-scale civil war in the last two months, as virtually every sector of the population, including professionals, businessmen, the Church, and popular forces, revolted against the Somozan dynasty. Starting 10 days ago, General Somoza's National Guard launched a scorched-earth policy counter-offensive under the personal direction of Somoza's Sandhurst-trained son, against the popular rebellion.

Without support from any national sector, Somoza is relying on a combination of Israeli weaponry and hundreds of foreign mercenaries — Vietnamese and Cuban exiles, U.S. Vietnam veterans, and soldiers of fortune from neighboring countries — to back up the 7,500-man U.S.-trained National Guard in its attempts to reimpose his rule.

The atrocities committed by Somoza's mercenaries and National Guard in their offensive are reaching the levels of bestiality associated with Israel and her Falangist allies in Lebanon during the civil war. Cities under "rebel" control are being indiscriminately bombed and strafed from the air, killing everything that moves. Troops then moving into those cities have used woman and children as hostages to enter opposition-controlled areas. In Leon, the National Guard executed *all* men between the ages of 18 and 25 found in the city during the house-by-house search. 2,000 were reported killed in Leon alone last week. Homes, churches and schools are being systematically decimated, and those cities reported "retaken" by national Guardsmen are described as razed to the ground.

Israeli-supplied anti-personnel cluster bombs developed for Vietnam, called "Pach-Pach," are now reported in use, including in one instance to maim and kill scores of people herded into a racetrack by air-strafting. Those who tried to escape the racetrack bombing were mowed down by Guardsmen.

Refugee camps are being set up within Nicaragua, and in neighboring Costa Rica and Honduras for the tens of thousands who are fleeing the massacre. The Costa Rican government has been forced to take preventive measures against the outbreak of epidemics among the refugees, while famine and complete economic collapse is threatening Nicaragua as the fighting continues.

U.S. policy debacle

The official Carter Administration policy is for an immediate ceasefire in Nicaragua, and mediated settlement to the civil war, setups which some U.S. press have reported as the closest the U.S. will come to calling for General Somoza to step down. But all

competent regional observers know that the U.S. could force Somoza to retire in short order if that were policy. The U.S. refusal to give more than a diplomatic slap of the wrist to Somoza — the U.S. ambassador has not even been recalled — has been understood by General Somoza as the go-ahead to continue his massacre.

National Security Council head Brzezinski and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in fact, are deliberately letting Somoza rampage, and assuring a steady supply of Israeli weaponry as their demonstration of support. Their strategy is two-fold: to let Somoza and the National Guard finish the job of burying any national resistance to continued International Monetary Fund rule in the area, while using the Nicaraguan crisis as the touchstone for the triggering of every brewing border conflict fostered by the Rand-Corporation across the continent.

Saner policy-makers within and around the Carter Administration are suicidally letting the National Security Council's actual policy stand, despite the demonstrated dangers, out of fear of "another Cuba," on the rationale that there is no alternative between Somoza and the communists in Nicaragua. Such stupidity, however, has blindly ignored the actual policy of growth and development being fostered in the area by the Mexican Republic during the past year.

The stakes in Latin America now, however, are higher than fear of "another Cuba." The threat of regional war spinning off the present bloodbath has already made headlines in both U.S. and Latin American papers. Nicaragua's flagrant violation of Costa Rican borders under the pretext of "hot pursuit of guerrillas," a policy the Nicaraguan regime is publicly committed to continuing, forced the Venezuelans and Panamanians to offer military aid to Costa Rica, which has no military of its own. Venezuelan planes and Panamanian helicopters are already deployed into Costa Rica, backed by the signing of a formal mutual defense pact between Venezuela and Costa Rica.

—Gretchen Small