opinion

US policy promotes violence

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cannot give evidence for any more than a trickle of aid. Former Central American CIA analyst David MacMichael has estimated that perhaps three percent of the Salvadoran rebels' supplies come through Nicaragua, hardly enough to be the "lifeblood" of the insurgency that Reagan claims it to be. Such claims lose all credibility when one realizes that the Salvadoran civil war is many years older than the current Sandinista government.

Incidental to Reagan's main re-election strategy — arguing against Nicaragua — but central to maintaining support for his dirty policies — is the attempt to portray the Sandinistas as evil communist villains. George Bush, in the vice presidential debate, said Nicaragua and El Salvador are as different as "night and day." Let's review the record.

Administration officials point to Nicaragua's sporadic censorship of the opposition newspaper La Prensa as evidence of descending totalitarianism. El Salvador no longer even has an opposition press. Opposition journalists there are not censored — they are murdered. The Reagan administration does not consider this totalitarianism, but "struggle towards democracy.

In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas have built schools, hospitals, and export foreign goods. The Reagan administration calls the Sandinistas a "religious persecution." In El Salvador, American Catholic nuns are murdered, and an archbishop is assassinated. Reagan calls human rights evident.

Ferraro not qualified

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And Ferraro doesn't have much experience on the national scene, other than her six years in Congress. Six years as a representative does not really prepare one for the executive responsibilities of the Presidency. At least Reagan and Jimmy Carter were state governors.

MIT students have as much at stake in this election as anybody. If Reagan wins, a lot of students might get drafted, because of his foreign policies. But if Mondale wins, a lot of students might get involved, because of his policies of peace appeasement and weakness. So we'll be experiencing a different kind of tension than we now expect when the results come in tonight and a winner is forecast with only one percent of the votes counted. I think a lot of people are in for a surprise.

No nation's human right behavior is as bad when it is engaged in full-scale war, not even the United States. Yet even under such conditions, Nicaragua has a record far better than El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, or Chile, all nations with extremely cozy relations with the Reagan administration.

Reagan's hypocritical and deceptive policy can only plunge the Sandinistas deeper into war hysteria, perhaps destroying what hopes remain for pluralism and democracy in Nicaragua. It causes US criticism of Soviet intrusion into regions where they are involved to lose credibility.

More, more people will die on all sides in Central America as Reagan's terrorist war escalates, and chances for a lasting peace will diminish as the vicious cycle of violence, repression, and terror spirals on.

A vote for Reagan today is a vote to add another tragic chapter to Central America's history books.

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