

## LATIN AMERICAN PROBLEMS

Our president realizes that our national security may very directly hinge on the fate of Central America, but asserts that we will not send combat troops even though Nicaragua is a very convenient base for the military actions of Russia, Cuba and East Germany. The president feels that it is enough just to leave the police state government of Nicaragua to fall by the anger of its own people.

At least one modern columnist argues that we must send troops into Nicaragua because the unarmed anger of the people has no chance against the present police state bolstered by foreign powers.

This humble(?) writer takes a slightly different view from either that of our president or the columnist under discussion. The masses of people may be worse off than they were before the police state took over, but they probably don't know it yet. If we would hint at overthrowing their Communist-dominated government, they would automatically assume that we want to restore the misery they had before. What other logic should we expect of them? They have never been told of a third alternative. If they had looked at the government and economic system of the United States in search of a pattern, they would not have found it basically different from what they had—too many people left out of a share in the goodies.

The present Latin American problems are only the fruit of a couple hundred years of oppression by their own aristocratic families. The Communists have had no big problem persuading enough of the chronically dispossessed people and their sympathizers to overthrow and take charge. Suddenly, jarred awake, we expect to counteract the whole process with a few months of military activity. It won't work. We can't kill off enough of the rebels to leave a majority who want to restore the former aristocrats to power.

We may as well count all of Central America as already lost. The cause has gone on for too many years while we slept or just poked fun at political antics of the "banana republics." We believed those "social philosophers" who assured us that real justice is somehow outside the reach of practical governmental processes. Now if our chickens come home to roost, we have ourselves to blame.