

# U.S. has supported other bad guys, too

## AIDS testing

With the death toll from AIDS expected to reach 50,000 a year by 1991, officials at the federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta have proposed AIDS tests for all people entering the hospital or seeking a marriage license. But opponents say the tests are unnecessary and could lead to discrimination against AIDS victims. For the Public Forum on Saturday, Feb. 21, the Daily News invites its readers to offer their views on AIDS testing. Letters should be in the editor's hands no later than Wednesday, Feb. 18.

**Writing to Public Forum:** We welcome letters to the editor on all issues of public concern. Letters must be signed and must include the writer's home address and daytime telephone number. All are subject to editing and condensation. They can be published only with the writer's true name. Mail letters to Public Forum, P.O. Box 51400, Los Angeles, Calif. 90051.

Guatemala and El Salvador (where military officers enjoy immunity from prosecution for thousands of atrocities) could lead to Peck's claim that Nicaragua (and Cuba) are "the worst violators of human rights in the region." Regarding his assertion that "AW claims that Nicaragua's Sandinistas practice torture on a widespread basis," I read "As best we can determine, torture . . . is not practiced in Nicaragua as a means of eliciting information or confessions, nor as a form of punishment."

AW also reports on President Reagan's Contra "freedom fighters." It says, "Military attacks by the (Contras) diminished during 1985 but human rights abuses by them did not."

— **BIL Becker**  
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when there was a democracy that we could support instead." Two come immediately to mind: In 1954, the Eisenhower administration destroyed the Guatemalan democracy of popularly elected Jacobo Arbenz and installed the first of a series of brutal dictators, all supported by the U.S. until human rights violations finally forced Congress to cut off military aid.

In 1973, the CIA orchestrated the overthrow of Chile's popularly elected Salvador Allende. Immediately, a rule by terror was established that continues today. Sanford's implication that somehow Allende deserved to be overthrown because he was elected by a narrow margin is a perversion of our democratic principles. By that criterion, we should at this moment be destabilizing half the democracies of Europe. Both Arbenz and Allende simply had committed the unforgivable sin of being socialists in this hemisphere.

I share Peck's respect for the human rights monitoring group Americas Watch, and I went immediately to my copy of AW's March 1986 report "Human Rights in Nicaragua 1985-1986" to check his references. I find that AW says "the Nicaraguan government must be held accountable for about a dozen disappearances and killings out of combat during 1985." AW also reports that a Sandinista army officer who had committed one of these murders had been tried and sentenced to 25 years in prison. Only a profound ignorance of

The responses by Greg Moses, Laurence Peck and Donald S. Sanford to Mike Farrell's Jan. 22 article criticizing U.S. Central America policy themselves deserve a response because they make so many questionable assertions.

Moses issues the challenge: "Name me one time when we supported a dictator