

opinion

Central America feeling pressure

by Helen Thomas
United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan is making several moves on the Central American front when polls show a wariness of his policies. The drive is to break the back of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, which he says is being armed by Cuba and the Soviet Union.

Responding to congressional demands, Reagan established a bipartisan commission to look into long-range U.S. policies toward the region. But the views of most of the panel members are considered hard line.

He named former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to head it and Kissinger, who once participated in the destabilization of Chile, leading to the downfall of leftist President Salvador Allende, is already on record with his view.

And Reagan's own representative on the commission is U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, one of the most vocal foes of leftist-led rebellions south of the border.

"If we cannot manage Central America, it will be impossible to convince threatened nations in the Persian Gulf and other places that we know how to manage the global equilibrium," Kissinger said in an interview in Public Opinion magazine some time ago.

He also said he would oppose going to war with Nicaragua but would do whatever was needed through covert aid to guerrillas or through a strong presence on the Honduras-Nicaragua border.

Reports indicate those moves already have been made — and more with the United States planning to hold a major U.S. Honduran military exercise near the Honduras-Nicaragua border next month.

The administration's first goal was to halt the so-called Nicaraguan arms supply line to the insurgents in El Salvador. But now the picture has changed and it appears that Reagan is not willing to settle for less than the downfall of the Sandinista government.

"There is a vital link between what's happening in Nicaragua and what's happening in El Salvador," Reagan said in a speech to the International Longshoremen's Association convention in Hollywood, Fla. "And the link is very simple: The dictators of Nicaragua are actively trying to destroy the budding democracy in neighboring El Salvador."

Reagan insists he is seeking a political dialogue and has said repeatedly that Cuba's Fidel Castro resisted an overture he made early in his administration. Clearly, Reagan has not been pushing to talk to Castro or the leaders of the Salvadoran insurgency or the Sandinistas.

That is where the so-called Contadora Group, made up of Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia have come into the picture, urging the United States and the opposition groups in the region to talk out their differences.

Some of the U.S. pressure may be taking hold. Nicaragua has offered to negotiate the question of arms supplies to El Salvador and other regional sticking points. It undoubtedly is feeling the hot breath of American-funded Nicaraguan rebels operating from Honduras on its border.

But while the United States struggles to keep Central America in the Western fold, the mistakes of the past are creeping up and need quick solutions. The United States has been aligned with supporting the status quo and the communist countries are pushing for revolutions that are not to the poor people.

But clearly time is running out and if the United States wants to make the Monroe Doctrine work, keeping the other superpower out of the Western Hemisphere, it must add more of an economic and social wallop to its military assistance. And some members of Congress say that should be in the form of a new massive Marshall Plan for Central America.

Letters: Odds favor violators

Editor:

This letter is addressed to Steven Newman:

Thank you for your letter of 7/14/83, (The Battalion, 7/19/83) expressing concern at the incidents of motorcycles, motorbikes and mopeds being illegally operated on sidewalks and malls.

You are quite correct that this conduct is in violation of the Motor Vehicle Regulations and I can assure you such acts are neither ignored or condoned by this department. When violators are detected and are able to be apprehended, they receive the appropriate citation.

The root of this problem concerns the ability to apprehend the particular violator. During a regular day shift we have but 10 officers at the maximum available for patrol duty operating from six patrol vehicles.

Considering their responsibilities throughout the entire campus, including a myriad of other duties, one can readily perceive there can never be a "cop on every corner" and if the operator of the vehicle elects to perform illegally the odds are he can get away with it.

This is not to say our officers do not observe these offenders; they do, but this poses another problem. Unless the operator exits from a sidewalk or mall onto a street near a patrol car where he can be stopped (and these are the circumstances where our citations are mostly issued) the officer has very little option remaining.

He cannot pursue the violator over the sidewalks nor can he engage in "hot pursuit" through the streets in anticipation of "heading off" the violator at another point on campus. He can radio other patrol units to be on the alert for the violator but they are hindered by the same restrictions as he.

In such cases, therefore, all we can do is apprehend the violators when possible and, more importantly, maintain hope eternal that our highly educated operators of these vehicles perceive that their actions are illegal and dangerous and in gross violation of the conduct standards maintained by most "good Aggies."

Robert E. Wiatt
Director of Security and Traffic

Editor:

To the bikers in front of the C.E. building:

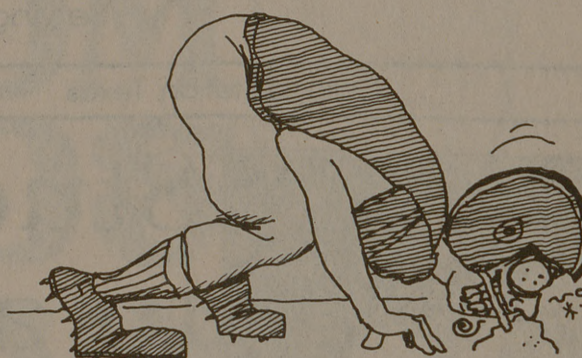
Your definition of "pedestrian" needs a few changes. According to Webster, "pedestrian" means: a) going or performed on foot and b) of, relating to, or designed for walking.

We also hate to knock you off your high horse, but according to state law a bicycle is a vehicle (a piece of mechanized equipment) and therefore must be operated on streets. Nowhere does it mention a bicyclist's legal right to ride on sidewalks.

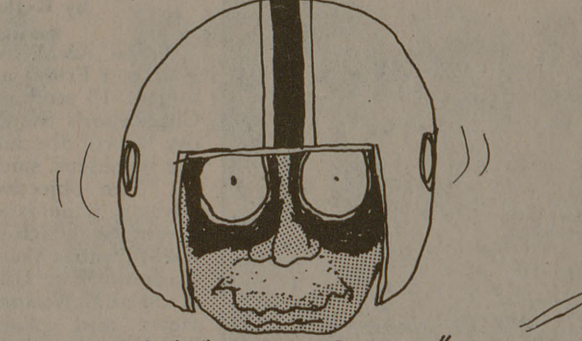
Now whose turn is it to pull their heads out?

Marcy Basile '85
Jan Simon '84

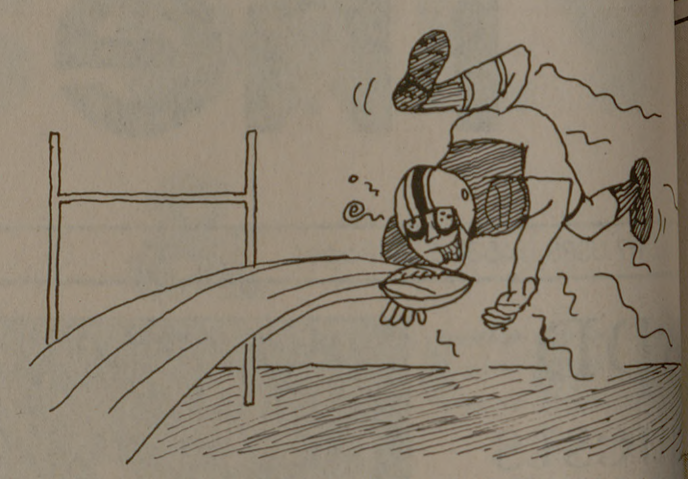
NEW INNOVATIONS IN NFL FOOTBALL



NEW INHALING EXERCISES



NEW "NOSE-GLARE" PROTECTION



NEW PASS INTERCEPTION STRATEGY: (CATCH IT ON THE FLOAT...)



NEW PENALTIES

American dream deferred

by Maxwell Glen
and Cody Shearer

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Sam and Mary Ellen Starr hadn't planned to buy a house this year. First-time parents but still only 24, they'd recently begun to save for a down payment sometime in 1985.

Last month, however, the Starrs discovered a well-situated Dutch Colonial for \$65,000 and their Middle-Western frugality gave way. With \$7,000 from their parents and revenues from the sale of a late-model Volvo, they purchased a 30-year variable-rate mortgage (beginning at 12 percent).

Their first mortgage payment will be more than \$600; if rates hold steady, the Starrs will own the three-bedroom house free and clear in the year 2013. Total cost, including mortgage and interest: \$220,000.

As first-time buyers go, the Starrs are lucky. Sam works for IBM and Mary Ellen has family friends at a local savings and loan. On short notice, they were able to mobilize cash and credit to fulfill the American dream.

Yet for most young couples, home ownership looks more like the Impossible Dream. At an age when their parents probably assumed home mortgages casually, many young adults can't imagine the idea.

Indeed, according to the U.S. League of Savings Associations, interest rates, high home prices and simple demographics are reducing the long-term market for homes.

League president Leonard Shane, usually bullish about homeownership and its many healing powers, said last week that the outlook for homeowners is much darker than current data suggest. While housing sales appear to be leading the economic recovery, he added, they're unlikely to keep up the pace.

Bloated federal deficits through at least 1988 will sponge off much of the

credit dollars normally available to home buyers. Even as the economy becomes healthier, the price of money is unlikely to decrease.

Last week, for example, as economic indicators continued to improve, both the Federal National Mortgage Association ("Fannie Mae") and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) raised their rates closer to 14 percent.

Meanwhile, the prices of new and resale homes continue to hover above a level that the average couple can afford. Since 1979, the median home price has jumped but real incomes have sunk. The resulting "affordability gap" stands today at \$20,000 which, even with a respectable

9.9 percent mortgages to first-time buyers on a first-come, first-served basis.

According to the Ohio State Housing Finance Agency, some 5,000 qualified for the money (raised through tax-exempt bonds) and a second round of \$110 million at 10.65 percent made available next week.

One official told our reporter Duffy that as many as 2,000 first-time buyers were unable to qualify for the program (many others, like the Starrs, understandably unwilling to come front of a downtown bank for a loan to beat the crowds.)

Nearly everyone associated with the housing industry has a pet solution to the first-time buyer lockout. The League wants Congress to take steps, including the creation of individual housing accounts, to allow baby boom's capital crunch. Some proposals involve tax or regulatory breaks for the savings and loan industry.

Banks and other lending institutions already offer a dazzling array of variable-interest-rate schemes to attract young couples. For many lenders guarantee a fixed rate for several years, encouraging at least a term stability.

Another, though not necessarily responsive, approach emphasizes "shared equity" principle, in which broker links cash-poor young couples with cash-rich private investors, turn for a down payment, the might receive a half-ownership in the house. (Unfortunately, private legal responsibility and tax benefits make the arrangement more than it's worth.)

Yet as young Americans add to their knowledge, these options barely add to the prices and tight credit, the familiar obstacles to homeownership.

With price and credit problems solved, the American dream deferred. In time, it may even disappear.

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recovery, will probably go no lower than \$14,000 next year and keep home mortgages out of reach for many.

Compounding these problems is the size of the potential market itself. Nearly one out of six Americans will celebrate their 30th birthday during this decade. The unprecedented number of adults in their prime home-buying years will send home prices higher (through increased demand) and help keep interest rates out of sight (as they pass through their low-saving years).

As Jim Christian, chief economist for the Chicago-based U.S. League says, the generation's preference for living alone only exacerbates the problem: "Baby boomers look like the pig in the python. We may just have to wait until the pig gets digested."

Here in Ohio, some younger home buyers have at least had a fighting chance. The state government recently offered more than \$300 million worth of

What ever happened to . . .

by Art Buchwald

My wife and I were sitting on the porch of the summer house the other evening and started to reminisce about people we had gotten to know from previous summers.

"Whatever happened to that nice man who sold us the television set and said he'd be back the next day to install the aerial on the roof?" I asked. "Was it in 1975 or '76?"

"I think it was 1975, the same year the roofer promised to repair the gutters. I hear he moved to Florida," she replied.

"The TV man?"

"No the roofer. I still see the TV man around town. He says he's coming over any day now to install the aerial for the set," my wife said.

"Did you tell him we bought a new TV since then?"

"I didn't dare. If I did, he might never come back to install the aerial on the set he sold us."

"You know who I think about a lot when I sit in this chair?" I said.

"Who is that?" my wife asked.

"The decorator who talked us into ordering it. Remember, it came from Grand Rapids missing a cushion support. And he said as soon as he got the piece he'd bring it over and install it. Now every time I sit in it and the chair collapses I wonder how the decorator is doing."

"I called him a couple of years back to ask him where the shower curtains were that we had paid for three years ago, and he told me they would be in at any time. He sounded very harassed."

"I'd love to see him again just to talk

about this chair."

My wife said, "Do you know who I ran into in Oak Bluffs the other day?"

"The guy who sold us the refrigerator in 1973, and still owes us an ice-cube making machine?"

"No, it was Mr. Godsend, who came by four years ago and gave us an estimate on painting the house. When we told him to go ahead he painted half the house and then we never saw him again."

"Did he say when he was coming back?"

"That was the funny thing. He thought he completed the job, and gave me his card in case we wanted any more work done," she said.

"Did you tell him his paints and brushes and ladder are still in our garage?"

"Yes, I did, and he was very grateful. He said he's stop by and pick them up if he ever gets a job in the area."

"It will be good to see him again. I wonder what happened to the fellow who dug up our driveway in 1980, and never returned to repave it?"

"Someone at Leslie's Drugstore told me he went bankrupt."

"That's a pity. What was the story?"

"Apparently he was great at digging up driveways, but he never had the time to repave them. People refused to pay him until he got the WHOLE job done."

"That doesn't seem to be fair," I said.

"Guess who is coming to see us this week?"

"I'm too tired to guess."

"The baby-sitter who advertised in the Vineyard Gazette in 1972 and said she'd be right over when we called her."

"Did you tell her the children were grown up?"

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