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evident, the Political Science Department was able to place one of its members in an administrative position as director of international programs, and by 1970 he was urging the abolition of the Center. In August 1971, the Board of Regents voted to close it down. A brilliant idea and courageous social experiment came and went in a matter of fifteen years, a victim of a nation committed to a primitive foreign policy and the Center's own political incompetence. Left standing was the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, which soon moved to Yale under the excellent guidance of Bruce Russett, and the "Correlates of War" research project, still functioning as a collaborative enterprise with key activities at the University of Illinois, Pennsylvania State University, and, remarkably enough, the University of Michigan. Furthermore, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is a modestly thriving international association called the Peace Science Society (based at Pennsylvania State University), with a membership of around four hundred.

[*See also* Boulding, Kenneth; Cold War; Conflict Resolution; Correlates of War; Rapoport, Anatol; *and* Richardson, Lewis Fry.]

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CENTRAL AMERICA IN THE 1980s. During the 1980s, Central America, the narrow isthmus connecting North and South America, became a key battleground in U.S. President Ronald Reagan's geopolitical battle against communism. Central America comprises a tiny part of the world's population and land mass, but it had a global significance that proved to be largely detrimental to its inhabitants. After the 1980s, civil wars that had swept through the region had largely come to a halt, but underlying structures of oppression and exclusion that initially led to the conflicts persisted.

Traditional definitions of Central America include five republics: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Spanish colonial authority ruled them together as the Captaincy General of Guatemala, part of the viceroyalty of New Spain. When Mexico gained its independence in 1821, the five joined together into the United Central Provinces of America. Civil wars between liberals and conservatives led to the breakup of this union into separate republics in 1838. Subsequent tendencies have been toward separation rather than unity, but the historic destinies of the five republics have been closely intertwined.

In addition to these traditional provinces, political analysts in the 1980s often included both Belize and Panama in their definition of Central America. British colonization in the Caribbean led to the formation of British Honduras (also known as Belize). It gained its independence in 1981. Guatemala, however, considered Belize part of its territory and did not extend diplomatic recognition to it until 1991. At the southern end of the isthmus, Panama was initially a province of Colombia until the United States helped it gain independence in 1903 so that it could build a canal through its territory. Some observers since the 1980s have spoken of seven Central American republics, including Belize and Panama.

Since 1880, Central America and the Caribbean have suffered under a heavy hand of U.S. domination and exploitation. Repeated interventions shaped the political landscape in Central America. The region was increasingly divided between wealthy elites (who benefited from close relations with the United States) and marginalized, often indigenous, peasants who did not

Nicaragua

The overthrow of the American ally, the Somoza dynasty, set the stage for the Central America political conflicts in the 1980s. In 1972, an earthquake unveiled the extent of governmental corruption, after which Anastasio Somoza increasingly lost popular support. On 19 July 1979, a leftist Sandinista guerrilla movement marched into the capital city of Managua. They pledged a pragmatic flexibility; it emphasized a mixed economy, pluralistic political system, and nonalignment in foreign affairs. Among their social programs were agrarian reform, literacy campaigns, and housing policies that benefitted the most marginalized members of society.

President Jimmy Carter had sought to prevent the Sandinistas from coming to power, but when Ronald

Reagan became president in 1981, he made their overthrow a key goal for his administration. To this end, he had the CIA fund, arm, and train Somoza's hated former National Guard troops. Beginning in 1983, these counter revolutionaries or "contras" launched attacks on rural communities from across the Honduran border. This "secret war" was run in Honduras by Ambassador John Negroponte. Without U.S. financial support and guidance, the contras would have disappeared quickly. A 1985 trade embargo underscored the goal of producing an internal collapse rather than direct overthrow of the government. The contra war killed about thirty thousand people.

In the face of these constant attacks, in June 1986 Nicaragua took the United States to the International Court of Justice. The Court held the United States in violation of international law and demanded that the United States immediately cease the attacks and make reparations for the damage that it had caused. Furthermore, it urged both countries to seek a solution to their disputes by peaceful means in accord with international law. Rather than recognizing the Court's judgment, Reagan declared that he would not be bound by the decision and instead escalated attacks on Nicaragua. In response, Nicaragua took a resolution to the U.N. Security Council that called on governments to observe international law, but the United States vetoed it. Nicaragua then took a similar resolution to the United Nations General Assembly, with only the United States and Israel opposing it.

During the 1980s, numerous international solidarity groups, including the Nicaragua Network, came to help the Nicaraguan people. Some people came as aid workers with Tecnica (that is, bringing their educational or technical skills). Modeled on the Venceremos Brigades that helped the Cuban Revolution in the 1960s, numerous activists traveled to assist with coffee harvests, for example. Many such solidarity groups were religiously based. Witness for Peace was built on a concept that unarmed U.S. citizens on the Honduran border would deter "contra" attacks. This strategy evolved almost by accident when, in 1983, a religious fact-finding delegation to the border town of Jalapa discovered that contra attacks ceased when foreign observers were present. The goals of Witness for Peace were to document human rights abuses, to stand in solidarity with the Nicaraguan people, and to mobilize public opinion in the United States to change that government's policy to one that fostered justice, peace, and friendship.

The influential Pledge of Resistance vowed that if the United States invaded Nicaragua they would engage in massive public resistance. On the front page of its August 1984 issue, the religious magazine *Sojourners* declared that Ronald Reagan was lying about Nicaragua and pledged resistance if he invaded the country. Those who had returned had a very different image of the country. These campaigns were largely successful, despite repeated threats. The United States never militarily intervened in the country.

Despite Reagan's opposition, the foreign ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela met in an attempt to broker a peace agreement to end the conflicts in Nicaragua, as well as in El Salvador and Guatemala, that threatened to destabilize the entire Central American region. The Contadora Peace Accords laid the groundwork for an eventual peaceful resolution of the conflicts. In 1987, Costa Rican President Óscar Arias proposed a Peace Plan for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Reagan's U.S. war on Nicaragua then began to unravel with the Iran-Contra scandal. In 1983, Congress passed the Boland Amendment that limited funding for the contras to humanitarian aid; a subsequent amendment cut all aid. To bypass this restriction, in 1985 National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane assigned Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North to sell weapons to Iran, despite a worldwide arms embargo against that country, in order to divert funds to the contras. This scheme began to unravel when the Sandinistas shot down a U.S. supply aircraft on 5 October 1986. They arrested Eugene Hasenfus, who declared that he was employed by the United States. These revelations led to North being indicted and convicted on felony charges, although an appellate court later overturned the conviction as a result of immunity that he received during Congressional hearings.

The United States' interest in Nicaragua quickly came to an end after the Sandinistas lost a 1990 election to U.S.-supported opposition candidate, Violeta Chamorro. In 1984, the Sandinistas had overwhelmingly won what observers largely accepted as the first open, free, and fair democratic elections in that country's history. Nevertheless, the U.S. government repeatedly depicted the Sandinistas as a dictatorial government and claimed that its efforts were to return the country to democracy—a status that never had previously existed in Nicaragua. In the 1990 elections, the United States offered Nicaraguans two options: (1) continue with the Sandinistas and the continued economic warfare on the country, or (2) vote for Chamorro and receive extensive aid packages. The United States provided

more funding for Chamorro's campaign than Somoza had paid in bribes during his fraudulent elections to justify maintaining himself in power. After the election, the U.S. government ignored Nicaragua; the aid never materialized.

El Salvador

During the 1980s, El Salvador seemed to be following Nicaragua on a path toward the victory of an armed guerrilla uprising. After a decade-long struggle, however, the guerrillas were unable to take power through armed means. Instead, a very strong and highly politicized civil society emerged through the process of struggle. As a result, by the end of the 1980s, El Salvador's social movements were arguably in a better position then those in neighboring Nicaragua.

Revolutionary movements in both Nicaragua and El Salvador had a strong base in liberation theology and grassroots Christian-based communities. Embracing poor people in rural areas and urban barrios, these religious communities combined bible study with an analysis of economic and social problems. Catholic priests emphasized social justice and the rights of the poor and oppressed. Elite repression of these communities led to further politicization and radicalization. Rutilio Grande, a Jesuit who worked in the community of Aguilares, was one of the first killed as the repressive violence began to increase dramatically in the late 1970s. He was murdered along with a teenager and 72-year-old peasant in March 1977 by a death squad while on his way to say Mass. Much more notable was the execution of Monsignor Oscar Romero on 24 March 1980 while he was celebrating Mass. Before his death, he had become increasingly vocal in denouncing human rights violations and calling for social justice. He slowly moved toward support of armed struggle as the only option, given the increased repression. When asked if he feared for his life, Romero declared, "If I am killed, I shall rise again in the struggle of the Salvadoran people." His death provided a powerful catalyst for popular struggles, and activists subsequently celebrated that anniversary as a day of international solidarity with Central America. The murder of four U.S. nuns in December 1980 brought the conflict to the front pages of newspapers in the United States.

In 1980, five guerrilla groups came together into one unified Farbundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). In January 1981, the FMLN launched a general offensive that tried but failed to overthrow the government. In response, the military increased its ferocious attacks on civilian communities. They pursued a policy of cleansing or evicting civilians, often with great violence, in order to isolate and kill guerrillas. In one attack, the U.S.-trained insurgency unit, the Atlacatl Battalion, killed almost one thousand civilians in the village of El Mozote. Many rural communities were forced into exile in refugee camps in neighboring Honduras. Despite this, the guerrillas controlled broad swaths of territory in El Salvador.

In order to give the Salvadorian government a veneer of legitimacy, the Reagan administration urged military leaders to hold elections. A broad coalition of leftist political parties and labor unions united into the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), but refused to participate, justifiably arguing that, under current repressive conditions, they could not safely campaign for office. This assured conservative victory, and the appearance of an elected civilian government made it more difficult for the guerrillas to gain support. At the same time, the Reagan administration supported the Salvadorian government with one million dollars per day (the second-largest U.S. aid package after aid to Israel). The result was a deadlock between a well-funded military and a guerrilla movement with broad popular support.

In November 1989, the FMLN launched a massive "final offensive" in an attempt to take power. The uprising failed, and the military took advantage of the battles to launch a new wave of repression. Most notably, soldiers shot six Jesuit priests at the Central American University whom they considered the intellectual mentors of the FMLN, together with their housekeeper and her daughter. The soldiers implicated in the killings had trained at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (SOA). Subsequently, peace activists commemorated the anniversary of these deaths with protests at the SOA at Fort Benning, Georgia.

As in Nicaragua, international solidarity organizations emerged in support of the popular struggles in El Salvador. The largest and most well-known was the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) that became a target of domestic surveillance by the FBI in the United States. The SHARE Foundation was a faith-based organization that worked actively to accompany those displaced by the war. These solidarity organizations sought to change government policies, and in the process they radicalized those with whom they came into contact.

By 1992, after twelve years of war and seventy-five thousand casualties, it had become clear that militarily, the FMLN could not win and that, even with endless U.S.

aid, the government could not defeat the insurgents. Out of this stalemate emerged a peace accord that brought the fighting to an end. The FMLN transitioned from a guerrilla army to a political party and continued its struggle for social justice in the electoral realm. Although the FMLN realized some success as a political party, perhaps its most significant legacy was creating a highly politicized and aware civil society that continued to struggle against neoliberalism and exclusion through peaceful means. In 2009, the FMLN finally took political power through the victory of Mauricio Funes in the presidential elections.

Guatemala

A common revolutionary slogan in the 1980s was "Nicaragua won, El Salvador is winning, and Guatemala will win." Popular movements in Guatemala, however, faced a much more genocidal war than those in other Central American republics. Guatemala has the largest indigenous population in Latin America, and Maya communities were particularly targeted in military attacks that killed as many as 200,000 civilians.

Similar to Nicaragua and El Salvador, rural mobilizations increased in Guatemala in response to exclusionary political and economic conditions and with the encouragement of religious workers, progressive political parties, and worker unions. The Committee of Peasant Unity (Comite de Unidad Campesina, or CUC) formed in 1978 to press issues important to indigenous peoples and peasants. In 1980, several of their leaders were killed when the military bombed the Spanish embassy where they had taken refuge. Rigoberta Menchú Tum's consciousness was born out of this repression, and she became Latin America's best-known advocate for rights of indigenous peoples. In 1992 she won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her struggles.

In 1982, a coalition of four guerrilla forces came together in the National Revolutionary Guatemalan Unity (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca or URNG) group in an attempt to replicate the success of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the war the FMLN appeared to be winning in El Salvador. The URNG never gained the strength of those other two groups. The military launched a counterinsurgency campaign that militarized entire villages and devastated the guerrilla armies. In 1985, the military junta held elections to turn power over to a civilian government, although the army still clearly held control over the country.

International solidarity organizations had a much lower profile in Guatemala than in Nicaragua or El Salvador. Activists, both local and international, were much more systematically targeted. One of the most effective organizations was the Mutual Support Group (Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo or GAM) which worked with victims of human rights violations. Peace Brigades International provided accompaniment for GAM leaders in an attempt to prevent their assassinations.

With their backs against a wall, in 1996 the guerrillas were forced to accept a peace agreement. The accords brought an end to Central America's deadliest and longest running civil war, although it left exclusionary structures more entrenched than anywhere else in the region.

[*See also* Central America, Multilateral Negotiations and Regional Mediation in; Colombia, Peace Movements in; Peace Brigades International; *and* Witness for Peace.]

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