



204

## Features

**176 Will Smith Saves the Planet**  
Hollywood's hottest intergalactic hero, Will Smith, pumps up the outer limits with some seriously appealing attitude **BY GERRI HIRSHEY**

**182 Teaching Torture**  
Some of the most notorious human rights abusers in Latin America learned a lot about terrorism, torture and murder at a shadowy Cold War relic called the School of the Americas, in Fort Benning, Georgia. Why does this place still operate? **BY MARY A. FISCHER**

**190 What Kind of President Will Fred Thompson Be?**  
As Senator Fred Thompson takes center stage this month as the head of the hearings on illicit campaign contributions, Washington is beginning to wonder if we are looking at the next Republican presidential nominee **BY JOHN B. JUDIS**

**204 "Yo, Noxzema!"**  
You know she's beautiful. We know she's beautiful. But *Rebecca Gayheart* (remember that fresh-faced Noxzema girl?) thinks she looks like a bug



166

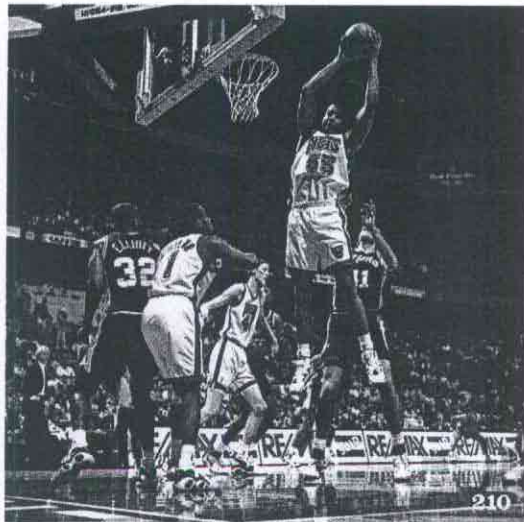
**210 The Basketball Diary**  
A true account of the 1996-97 pro basketball season, courtesy of the funniest man in the NBA  
**BY JAYSON WILLIAMS**

**226 Raised in Captivity**  
At 18 Gary Fannon, a small-time pot peddler, was set up to do a cocaine deal by an undercover cop. Under Michigan's mandatory-minimum sentencing laws, he faced a lifetime in prison. Then his mother took up his cause **BY MIKE SAGER**

## Fashion

**166 All About Summer Suits**  
Delve into detail; submit to surprise. This summer, color and style contrast is keen

**198 Dude Looks Like a Lady**  
...all dressed up and *everywhere* to go: RuPaul as a man, RuPaul as a woman



210

**206 Not Just for German Tourists Anymore**  
Fear not the sandal, but forget the socks. Slip on substantial summertime chic

**218 Men in Tights**  
Ever wearable Lycra helps the active man keep cool and composed

**ON THE COVER**  
Will Smith plays it cool in a cotton crewneck, \$98, and cotton chinos, \$58; both, Polo by Ralph Lauren. Socks by Polo/Ralph Lauren Hosiery. Grooming by Laini Thompson. Hair by Pierce Austin for Dawn 2 Dusk, L.A. Photographed exclusively for GQ by Michael O'Neill.

To find GQ on the Net, visit our home page at <http://www.swoon.com>.



# Teaching Torture

In Building 35 at Fort Benning, the U.S. Army purported to inculcate Latin American soldiers with American notions of democracy and human rights. But someone changed the curriculum—with bloody consequences

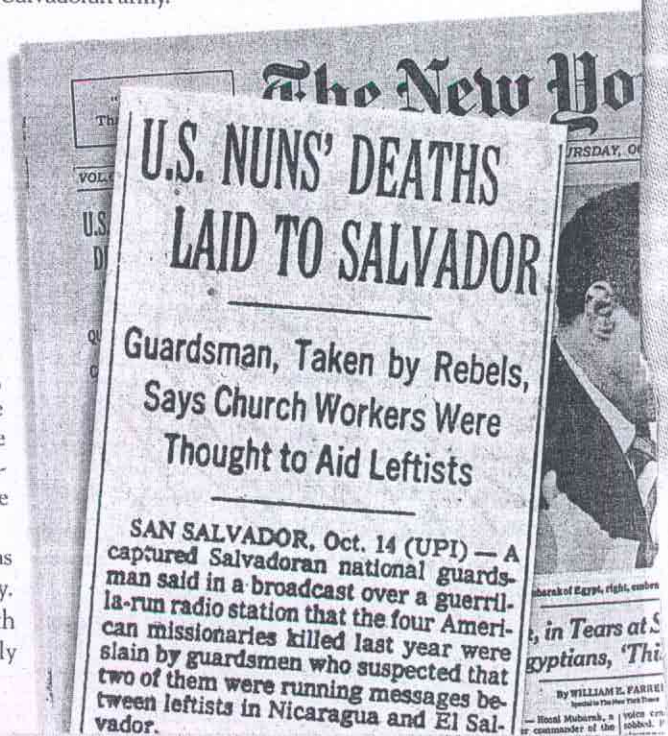
By Mary A. Fischer

**I**n June 1981, William Ford, an American lawyer, made his first trip to El Salvador, a nation then torn by a brutal civil war. He would make six more trips over the years, but none would be as wrenching as this first one. He traveled with another American, Judy Keogh, and together they drove fifty miles from the capital through the rural countryside to the town of Chalatenango. A year earlier, four American churchwomen had been raped and murdered by soldiers in the Salvadoran army.

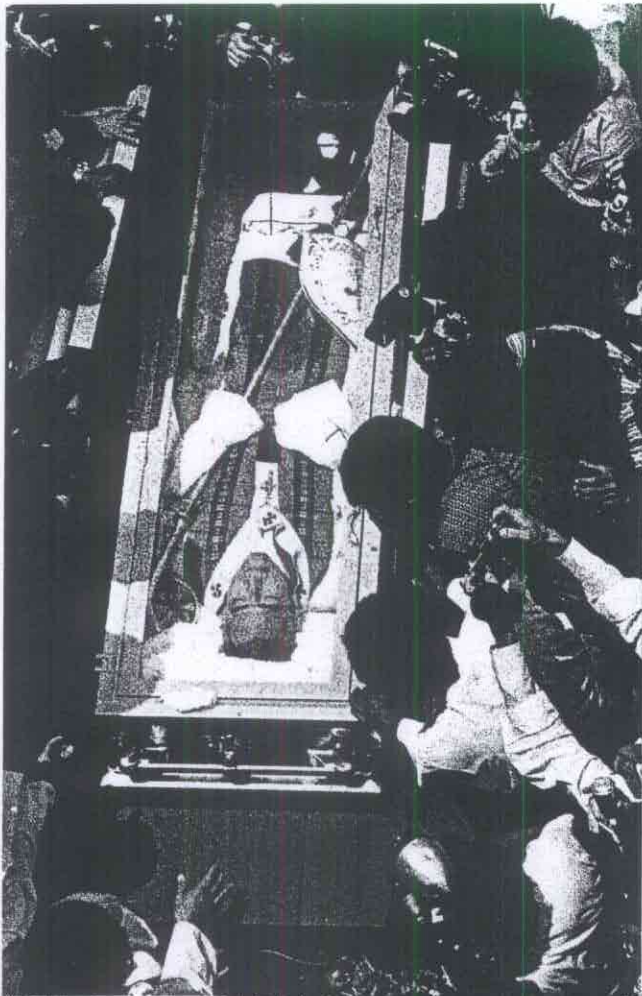
Ford and Keogh had come to Chalatenango to visit the graves of two of the women—Maryknoll nuns Ita Ford and Maura Clarke—who were, respectively, their sisters and who, according to a practice of the Maryknoll Order, had been buried where they died. As the two sojourners made their way to the graves, they were stopped at a military checkpoint. Two of the soldiers, seeing their American passports, cheered and raised their fists in the air. They pointed proudly to the large signet rings on their right hands. Ford and Keogh easily recognized the engraving. It read, "Fort Benning, Georgia."

Fort Benning, situated on 287 square miles in Columbus, Georgia, is the U.S. Army's infantry school. It is also the home of the army's School of the Americas, the place where the Salvadoran soldiers and thousands of other Latin American military officers received training in U.S. Army doctrine and military operations.

For much of its fifty-year history, the School of the Americas (SOA) has been shrouded in mystery and free from scrutiny. Speculation about its curriculum and alumni always met with official evasion. But last September, the Pentagon reluctantly







Although tens of thousands of people died in the Central American civil wars of the 1980s, some deaths were more notorious than others. Among these were the murders of Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador, *top left*; Guatemalan dissident Efraín Bámaca Velásquez, *center*; and three nuns and a Catholic lay worker in El Salvador, *bottom*. A monument, *top right*, commemorates the 900 victims of the El Mozote, El Salvador, massacre. In each incident, the killings had been ordered by officers or carried out in large part by soldiers who had attended the U.S. Army's School of the Americas.





released seven previously classified training manuals that proved what school critics had alleged for years—that for decades, but especially during the 1980s, Latin American military officers were taught to beat, blackmail, kidnap, torture and even murder dissident elements in their own countries.

News of the manuals comes a decade after the Iran-Contra scandal, but it is nonetheless startling for its implications. There is now evidence that, through the operation of the School of the Americas, the U.S. government was involved in Latin America's bloody civil wars of the 1980s on a much deeper and more insidious level than had been realized.

Pentagon officials claim that the School of the Americas is a model institution that fosters democratic values in the emerging governments of Latin America. The agency also contends that the manuals' prescribing of human rights abuses resulted from isolated mistakes made by junior-level officers that went against Defense Department policies. But interviews and research conducted for this article indicate that the School of the Americas has had a long history of advocating inhumane activities, most of which have been unwittingly financed by U.S. taxpayers. Through its operations and alumni, the school has been the instrument of a U.S. foreign policy that since the 1960s has supported, through arms shipments, financial aid and military training, the most repressive regimes in Latin America.

Like the rings worn by the Salvadoran soldiers stationed near where the nuns were raped and murdered, the school is an ongoing symbol of a violent period in Latin America that left tens of thousands of people dead or missing or uprooted. To a growing number of critics, it represents one of America's uglier chapters in the Cold War and therefore deserves to be shut down. None of these critics is more determined than one Vietnam veteran turned Catholic priest who, having chosen to live directly across from the entrance to Fort Benning, never loses sight of his objective. He is set on getting something that all the congressional investigations of the 1980s could not produce—accountability.

**T**he School of the Americas occupies Building 35, a three-story light pink granite structure on the vast wooded grounds of Fort Benning. On a visit last November, I study the framed photographs of school graduates and commanders that line the walls to see if any notorious names can still be discovered. But all the photos of the school's infamous guest speakers and graduates have been removed. Gone, for example, are the photo of General Manuel Noriega (a 1967 student) and the photo of General Hugo Bánzer Suárez (featured in the school's "Hall of Fame" collection), Bolivia's military dictator for most of the '70s, known for devising a plan to silence outspoken members of the clergy and for sheltering Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie.

The photos were removed three years ago when a long-delayed Freedom of Information request produced a twenty-three-page list of 350 SOA graduates who, when matched up

## SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS ALUMNI GALLERY



**GENERAL HUGO BÄNZER SUAREZ**

**Military dictator of Bolivia, 1971-1978**  
**Class of 1956: Motor Officer course.**

**1988: SOA "Hall of Fame."**  
**1989: SOA guest speaker.**  
**Nickname: "El Petiso," which refers to his short stature.**

**Best known for: Torture and repression. Developed the "Bánzer Plan" to silence outspoken members of the church. Sheltered Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie.**

with their war activities, turned out to be some of the worst human rights abusers in Latin American history. Among the school's alumni was Salvadoran death-squad leader Roberto D'Aubuisson, who ordered the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, as well as two of the three officers who carried out the cleric's murder. Three of the five Salvadoran soldiers who raped and murdered the four American churchwomen also attended the school, as did ten of the twelve officers involved in the infamous El Mozote massacre in El Salvador, in which all but one of the 900 men, women and children who lived in that village were murdered.

Other alumni include General Hector Gramajo, Guatemala's former minister of defense, responsible for the deaths and displacement of hundreds of thousands of indigenous Guatemalans and for allowing the rape and torture of American nun Dianna Ortiz. Last year Colonel Julio Alpírez, a CIA informant who had attended the school, was implicated in the torture and deaths of U.S. citizen Michael Devine and Efraín Bámaca Velásquez, the Guatemalan rebel leader who was married to American lawyer Jennifer Harbury.

When I ask about the list of graduates, Captain Kevin McIver, the school's spokesman, replies, "The school cannot be held responsible for what a few bad apples do when they return to their country." The "few bad apples" argument is a pervasive one among army officials, meant to distance the school from





**COLONEL  
JULIO ALPIREZ**

Guatemalan military leader and paid agent of the CIA

Class of 1989: Command and General Staff course. 1970: Combat Arms and Support Services course. Best known for: Torture and assassinations. Involved in the torture and execution of Guatemalan guerrilla leader Efraín Bámaca Velásquez. Ordered the murder of U.S. citizen Michael Devine.



**GENERAL  
HECTOR GRAMAJO**

Defense minister of Guatemala, 1987-1990  
Class of 1967:

Counterinsurgency course. 1991: SOA graduation guest speaker. Best known for: Genocide. Architect of scorched-earth campaigns in Guatemalan villages in which tens of thousands of peasants were killed by the army. Ordered by a Boston judge in April 1995 to pay \$47.5 million in damages for terror against an American nun, Sister Dianna Ortiz, and nine Guatemalan Indians.



**GENERAL  
MANUEL NORIEGA**

Commander of Panamanian Defense Forces, 1983-1989; deposed, 1989

Class of 1967: Courses completed included Infantry Officer, Combat Intelligence Officer, Military Intelligence Phase II (counterintelligence) and Jungle Operations. Nickname: "Pineapple Face." Best known for: Drug trafficking and racketeering. Now serving a forty-year sentence in a U.S. prison for drug trafficking.



**ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON**

El Salvador's death-squad leader, 1978-1992

Class of 1972: Communications Officer course.

Nickname: "Major Blowtorch," because of his zeal as a torturer when he headed the Salvadoran National Guard's intelligence service.

Best known for: Organizing death squads. Ordered the 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero.

any responsibility. Even with the discovery of the manuals, McIver insists there is no link, no causal connection between what the graduates were taught and what they ended up doing when they returned home. "Hey, this is not the Kremlin," McIver says. "This is the army. There is nothing sinister here."

At the time of my visit, there are roughly 500 demonstrators gathered on the grass in front of the entrance to Fort Benning who disagree with that assessment. They have come from various parts of the country to commemorate the anniversary of the deaths of nine people—six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter—who were murdered by the military in El Salvador. According to the Freedom of Information alumni list, nineteen of the twenty-six soldiers responsible for their deaths had attended the School of the Americas.

Since its beginning in 1946, when it was located at Fort Amador in the Panama Canal Zone, the School of the Americas has been the major U.S. training institution for Latin American military and police personnel. Over the years, it has trained 58,000 military soldiers and officers from twenty-one Latin American countries. In any given year, on average, there are 1,000 students, less than 1 percent of whom are civilians. Today the school has a staff of seventy-five military and civilian instructors who prepare and present thirty-three different courses in Spanish.

The courses range from a one-week overview of basic military skills to a forty-seven-week officer-training course. The subjects include military history, battlefield logistics, leadership skills, supply management, reconnaissance and scouting techniques, familiarization with the M16 rifle and helicopter operations and repair. The controversy centers around two courses in particular—military intelligence and counterinsurgency operations, the latter of which is no longer listed in the school catalog.

Most of the soldier-students consider the school to be a huge perk—it is the Latin American West Point. During their stay, enrollees are often entertained with parties, trips to Disney World and Washington, D.C., golf outings and tickets to see the Atlanta Braves. While the cost of some of their expenses is assumed by their native countries, a substantial portion, like the operating budget of the school itself, is paid for by U.S. taxpayers. There is debate over the actual budget: The army says it's \$4 million a year, but the school's detractors claim it's closer to \$18.4 million.

When it was located in Panama, the school was part of a complex of U.S. bases known as the Southern Command. Under the Panama Canal treaty, base operations were limited to protecting the canal. In actuality, though, SOUTHCOM was the nerve center for all U.S. military intelligence operations throughout Latin America. Panama's



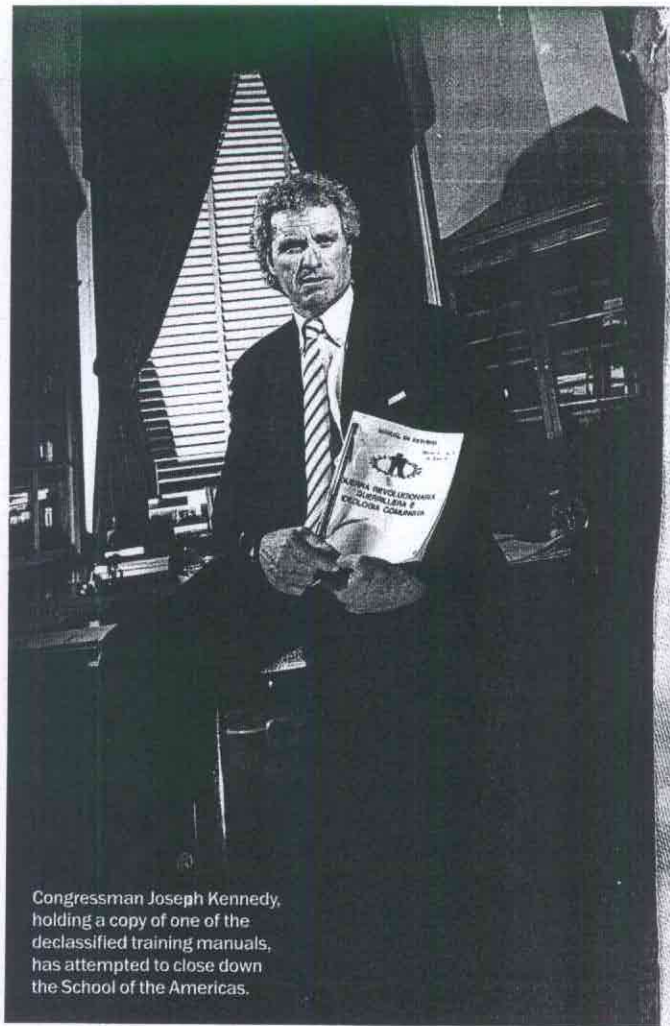
location, south of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, was most strategic for the United States in the early 1980s, when Ronald Reagan stepped up financial and military aid to El Salvador and Nicaragua in the name of fighting Communism. In 1983 there was such a flood of Salvadoran officers enrolled at the school—more than 1,000—that they outnumbered students from all other countries. The substance of what they were taught did not fully surface until recently. Eventually, at the insistence of Manuel Noriega, the school was moved from Panama to Fort Benning.

**T**he man who would become the school's most implacable critic was also in the process of relocating to Fort Benning. Father Roy Bourgeois, a Catholic priest with the Maryknoll Order, had been living and working among the poor in Bolivia and El Salvador for six years when, during a stay in Chicago, he noticed a small news item in *The New York Times*. The clipping said the United States was bringing Salvadoran officers to an American military base for specialized training. Bourgeois says he knew at once what he had to do. A few months later, he rented a tiny \$175-a-month apartment directly across from the entrance to Fort Benning, and from this vantage point he started SOA Watch, an organization of human rights activists dedicated to closing the school down.

Once before, in the '60s, Bourgeois's life had taken a major turn. A U.S. naval officer, Bourgeois volunteered for shore duty in Vietnam. What he saw there changed his life: "I found a lot of suffering and death that never should have been. I lost friends, and I was wounded. I was scared by the violence."

When he left Vietnam, Bourgeois decided to be a missionary and joined the Maryknoll Order. For five years, he lived in a small room in a slum in Bolivia. During his first year there, he came down with typhoid. His political activism took root when he witnessed the actions of the military in Bolivia and El Salvador. "When I lived in Bolivia, I saw the brutality and violence done to the poor and those who worked with the poor under General Bánzer's military dictatorship," Bourgeois says. "I saw his thugs running around picking up university students, journalists and church leaders who were trying to speak out against the oppression. Many of them were tortured. They were labeled Communists. But it wasn't about Communism. These people didn't need Karl Marx to tell them they were hungry."

During Bourgeois's fourth year in Bolivia, "the repression became so bad," he says, that he went to Washington to tell various congressmen about the torture he had witnessed. When he returned to Bolivia, he was in "big trouble. I was kicked out, persona non grata." When he went to El Salvador, he says, he witnessed even worse conditions. He arrived there after the murders of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the U.S. churchwomen, when, he says, the death squads were in full swing. It was shortly after this time that he saw the *Times* article and discovered that the degree of



Congressman Joseph Kennedy, holding a copy of one of the declassified training manuals, has attempted to close down the School of the Americas.

U.S. involvement in the Latin American military was deeper than he had known.

When I meet Father Bourgeois in November, he is a prisoner in Atlanta's federal penitentiary. He is serving a six-month sentence for criminal trespassing on government property and still has one month to go. This is not the first time he has been in prison. In his efforts to close the school down, Bourgeois, 57, has starved himself during monthlong fasts in front of the Capitol in Washington and at the gates of Fort Benning, and he has initiated four acts of civil disobedience, for which he has served a total of three and a half years.

In 1983 Bourgeois and two other supporters sneaked into Fort Benning at night dressed as high-ranking army officers. They had bought their military garb, including their officer's stripes, at a local army-surplus store. They carried with them a powerful tape player that contained a cassette of the sermon Archbishop Romero had given in the cathedral the day before he was assassinated. Though security was very tight on the base, the impostors were saluted and waved on at each guard post they passed.

Near the barracks where the Salvadorans were housed, the group scaled a tall pine and waited for the lights to go out. They turned on the tape recorder and boomed Romero's voice. "It was ideal," Bourgeois recalls, "because he begins his message by saying, 'I want to make a special plea to the men in the barracks, to those in uniform. You are oppressing your people. Stop the killing! Lay down your arms.'" Bourgeois played the



# The Defense Department, in a summary report, conceded it found it "incredible" that the manuals "evaded the established system of doctrinal controls." The report also said that the "objectionable" material was not "consistent with U.S. policy."

taped message several times. Within a few minutes, soldiers began pouring out of the barracks, frightened, looking up into the sky. "They of course all knew Bishop Romero," says Bourgeois. "To some he was a prophet; to others, an insurgent."

Bourgeois and his friends were arrested and tried on charges of impersonating officers and criminal trespassing and sent to prison for eighteen months. Years later, on November 16, 1990, the first anniversary of the killings of the six Jesuit priests in El Salvador, Bourgeois, Charles Liteky, a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor in Vietnam, and Liteky's brother went inside the School of the Americas building. They carried a cross with photos of the four murdered churchwomen and the six Jesuits and the housekeeper and her daughter, and in their pockets they held small vials of their own blood. (A nurse had drawn their blood the night before.) After leaving a letter addressed to the school's commandant that called for the closing of the school, citing the "link between the bloodshed in El Salvador and the training at the school," the men took out the vials and splashed their blood over the Hall of Fame collection. Moments later they were arrested.

Because Bourgeois is still in prison at the time of our interview, he has missed the annual demonstration at Fort Benning, but he says he feels gratified nonetheless by the large turnout of demonstrators. Sixty of them were involved in this civil-disobedience action. They had walked onto base property, past the military police who had been photographing them throughout the day, and planted in the grass small white crosses inscribed with the names of individuals who had been murdered or had disappeared in Latin America. They proceeded to walk toward the School of the Americas building but didn't get far. As soon as they disappeared from the sight of the crowd, they were arrested. They are still awaiting a trial date.

The tip-off about the school's training manuals came in June last year in the form of a single paragraph buried in a fifty-three-page report by the President's Intelligence Oversight Board about CIA operations in Guatemala. The brief reference said the Department of Defense (DOD) had found that the "School of the Americas and Southern Command had used improper instruction material in training Latin American officers, including Guatemalans, from 1982 to 1991." That was all Massachusetts congressman Joseph Kennedy needed. There was now official proof of the manuals' existence, which had been rumored for years. Kennedy had become an advocate of closing the school in 1992, after he met

Father Bourgeois during his fast on the steps of the Capitol.

"Until that reference," Kennedy says, "the trouble was that anytime you contacted the military, they said, 'No, the manuals don't exist. That kind of training was never done at the school.'" Kennedy began pressuring the Pentagon, including Undersecretary of the Army Joe Reeder, to release the manuals. "It was a hellacious struggle," he recalls. Finally, in late September, the Pentagon complied.

GQ has obtained a copy of one of the few manuals still in circulation. *Interrogation, Combat Intelligence and Revolutionary War and Communist Ideology* are among the titles of the declassified manuals used in intelligence courses at the school during the 1980s. The most objectionable passages are contained in the manuals *Handling of Sources* and *Terrorism and the Urban Guerrilla*. In various sections, according to a DOD report, the manuals state that to recruit and control informants, counterintelligence (CI) agents could use "fear, payment of bounties for enemy dead, extortion, beatings, false imprisonment, executions and the use of truth serum, injected intravenously."

One particular passage in *Handling of Sources* reads, "The CI agent could cause the arrest or detention of the employee's parents, imprison the employee or give him a beating as part of the placement plan of said employee in the guerrilla organization." Another passage reads, "Threats should not be made unless they can be carried out and the employee realizes that such threats could be carried out."

Latin American officers were also told to suspect and proactively spy on and "neutralize" possible subversives who disguise themselves as politicians and labor leaders. The word *neutralize*, say a number of military personnel interviewed for this story, is generally considered to be a euphemism for murder.

An internal investigation ordered by then secretary of defense Dick Cheney in 1991 showed that the manuals evolved from lesson plans dating back to the 1960s that were used by the army's Foreign Intelligence Assistance Program, which went by the mysterious-sounding name Project X. ("X" stands for "export"; the program was created in 1965 to provide intelligence training to friendly foreign countries.) The materials were translated into Spanish and used by U.S. mobile training teams. Between 1987 and 1989, the teams circulated more than 1,000 manuals in El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia and Guatemala. The manuals were also used at the School of the Americas from 1989 to 1991, when they were finally detected by a review board of the De-



fense Intelligence Agency, the intelligence-gathering arm of the Pentagon, as they were about to be sent to Colombian military personnel.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Arne Owens, a DOD spokesman, the manuals were never submitted for clearance through the army's regular approval process. The DOD, in a summary report, conceded the department found it "incredible" that the manuals "evaded the established system of doctrinal controls." The report also said that the "objectionable" material was not "consistent with U.S. policy."

At the rally outside Fort Benning in November, I meet Major Joseph A. Blair, a retired instructor who taught at the school from 1986 to 1989. He laughs out loud when I repeat the DOD's findings. "It's bullshit to say those manuals were a violation of U.S. policies," he says. "All this was the source of standard military-intelligence doctrine. They were teach-

According to Blair, some of the first intelligence material advocating methods of torture and murder was used in Vietnam's notorious Phoenix Program, which authorized the assassination of thousands of Vietcong sympathizers. Before coming to the School of the Americas, Blair served in Vietnam as administrative assistant to eventual CIA director William Colby. The Phoenix Program piled up some disturbing statistics. In his book *Presidents' Secret Wars*, author John Prados, a leading historian of national-security and military-intelligence affairs, states that during 1969 alone, Phoenix "neutralized" 19,534 Vietcong suspects, of whom 6,187 were killed.

In 1984 a ninety-page CIA manual called *Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare* was discovered in Nicaragua. It was drawn from army training material that contained language similar to that found in SOA's manuals. Commonly referred to as the "murder manual," it was used to

## One Honduran who had attended the School of the Americas told me, "We were trained through a book how to kidnap people and told that if the kidnapping didn't work, we could kill a person in that moment."

ing this stuff for thirty-five years at the school." Whereas army officials have said the objectionable material is limited to only twenty-four passages, Blair contends, "that's not what's important. Those ideas are the meat and potatoes of what you need to get intelligence out of people."

Blair says he had moral objections to the school while he was an instructor there but couldn't speak out while on active duty. "It would have hurt my career. It went against the old-boy network," he says. Blair began to criticize the school publicly after he retired in 1989 and learned that some of his former students were the soldiers who had murdered the six Jesuit priests. Blair himself did not teach counterintelligence techniques.

A brief look at U.S. military-intelligence history underscores what Blair contends—that many of the ideas and techniques contained in the manuals were not "mistakes" but rather had been a central part of U.S. counterinsurgency efforts since at least the Kennedy administration.

In the 1950s, U.S. military aid stressed the development of conventional military methods and consisted primarily of combat equipment—tanks and bombers. But after 1959, following the Cuban revolution and Russian support for "wars of liberation" throughout the Third World, the tactics of counterinsurgency became the primary focus of military strategists. During the Kennedy administration, there was a rapid expansion of the Special Forces—later called the Green Berets—who were given counterinsurgency courses at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. These courses combined the teaching of army combat skills with CIA covert methods of surveillance, interrogation and sabotage to combat guerrilla insurgents.

train CIA-backed Contra rebels and advised them to kidnap and "neutralize selected government officials," including judges. The author of the manual was a former Green Beret and Vietnam veteran who, to this day, is known only by the pseudonym John Kirkpatrick. In creating the manual, Prados notes in his book, Kirkpatrick reprinted verbatim portions of three lesson plans reportedly used at Fort Bragg to train Special Forces in 1968. A 1984 CIA investigation into the manual discovered that various midlevel officers (who were ultimately disciplined) reviewed it, but no one, apparently, objected to the references to assassination.

The one interruption in the use of such materials was in the late 1970s, when Jimmy Carter was in office. With the promotion of human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy during those years, military-intelligence training in Central America was ordered to be halted.

But in fact the training did not cease at SOA. In 1979, when it was still located in Panama, the school was connected to training right-wing security forces in Paraguay for Operation Condor, an illicit and murderous program against the Paraguayan government's indigenous political foes. In secret police archives discovered in late 1992 was a folder containing a section labeled "Instructions at the School of the Americas" that taught interrogators how to keep electric-shock victims alive and responsive. The manual recommended dousing the victims' heads and bodies with salt water, a technique that would revive a prisoner and also increase the conductivity of the skin for the next round of torture.

Two former students who are willing to talk off the record provide graphic images of the kind of techniques they were instructed to use. One individual I track down in Canada was





Father Roy Bourgeois, a Vietnam veteran, maintains his vigil outside Fort Benning.

once a member of the Honduran military's special investigation unit, which was later absorbed by Battalion 316, the name of that country's secret death squad. This source claims that in 1979, when the school was still located in Panama, and again in 1983 at Fort Bragg, he received training in counter-drug trafficking and counterinsurgency that included methods of physical torture.

Now in exile and afraid of being repatriated to Honduras for his alleged role in the murders of hundreds of civilians, he tells me, "We were taught by Americans at the school and Fort Bragg that we were in a war and that we had to do whatever was needed—to kill or 'disappear' people if we had to. We were trained through a book how to kidnap people and told that if the kidnapping didn't work, we could kill a person in that moment."

The Honduran tells me that instructors at the school and at Fort Bragg "used a lot of videos which showed the type of interrogation and torture they used in Vietnam." One video, he says, showed students how to detect bombs; another demonstrated a method of torture that used a bucket with stones that was tied to a suspected insurgent's testicles. "The video showed how to continue to put more stones and more water in the bucket until the testicles were separated from the body," the Honduran tells me. Another torture method involved placing a plastic bag over a person's head and then gradually filling the bag with cement or alcohol.

"I realize the U.S. government wants to wash their hands of all this, but I know for a fact that the U.S. embassy [in

Honduras] knew about the training we were getting," the Honduran says. "I even went to the United States [under an assumed name] with the approval of the U.S. embassy."

Another former student is a Latin American military officer with high military-intelligence connections in his country and the United States. He talked to Robert Richter, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, on the condition that his identity—and even the name of his country—not be revealed. The man feared that his statements could lead to his death. (The unidentified source was filmed, in disguise, for Richter's most recent documentary about the school, *Inside the School of the Assassins*. Richter sent me a transcript of the film's dialogue.)

"The school was always a front for other special covert operations," the man said on camera. "When you go for conventional training, you learn how to jump out of a plane, how to survive in jungle warfare, that sort of thing. That's just for kids. The difference between the conventional and unconventional training is that we were trained to torture human beings.

"They would use [homeless] people from the streets of Panama, bring them into the base, and the experts would train us on how to obtain information through torture. Some of them were blindfolded, and they were stripped and put in a setting where they were tortured. At the time, they had a U.S. physician, who was dressed in green fatigues, who would teach the students about the nerve endings of the body. He would show them where to torture, where you wouldn't kill the individual." When I ask the Defense Department for a response to the former students' allegations about the video and the use of homeless people in Panama, a spokesman says, "If objectionable materials were used for any length of time, that is unacceptable.... In some areas of our hemisphere, democracy is very fragile, and the School of the Americas has a positive reinforcing effect."

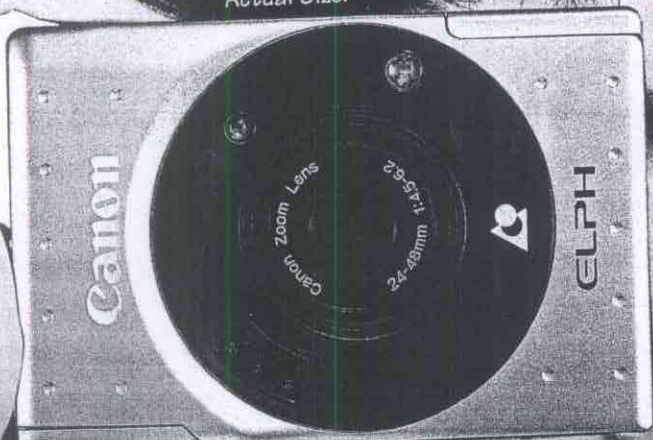
Since 1991, when the objectionable material was discovered by the Defense Intelligence Agency, there have been three government investigations into the school and the origin of the manuals. None of them, however, have held anyone accountable or named the authors of the manuals.

I locate the missing link in Colorado Springs, at the U.S. Air Force Academy. Lieutenant Colonel Victor Tise, a graduate of West Point, put the training manuals together. In 1982, when he was assigned to the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, Tise was given the job of developing 382 hours of intelligence training in a short period of time. He came across the outdated Project X lesson plans, which had been warehoused in the late 1970s.

"I literally blew the dust off them," Tise tells me. By then most of the 1960s Project X material used under the army's Foreign Intelligence Assistance Program had been declassified. Some of the material Tise says he found came word for word from FM-30-18, a classified manual called *Employee Management* that contained draconian counterintelligence tactics that had been learned—and practiced—in Vietnam. This same material was then consolidated into the 1982 SOA manual *Handling of Sources*, (continued on page 237)



Actual Size.



Meet the ELPH!

This sleek little ELPH comes with pop-up flash, 2x zoom -- and all of the advantages of the Advanced Photo System.



©1997 Canon U.S.A., Inc. For more information call 1-800-OK-CANON. Visit us at <http://www.usa.canon.com> on the Web.

**ELPH**  
Canon  
So advanced...it's simple.

## School of the Americas

(continued from page 189) which contains the bulk of the objectionable passages.

At the time, Tise says, he thought "this stuff ought to be classified," which would have limited its availability to people like him. His superiors at Fort Huachuca and in Washington apparently weren't concerned. Contrary to the DOD's official position that the material was "prepared without the required doctrinal approval," it actually went, according to the Pentagon's own report, all the way to Washington, to the assistant chief of staff for intelligence at the Pentagon. Tise says the material "came back approved and unchanged." He speculates that the senior people "didn't read the material page by page."

The material was then translated into Spanish and used for instruction at the school. This was at the height of the civil war in El Salvador, when Salvadoran officers flooded the school's enrollment.

Despite approvals from the top, Tise says, he personally excised some of the "bad stuff," such as "termination of sources," and archived it in a large folder after an instructor had pointed it out. References to "neutralize" remained, because, Tise says, he didn't see anything wrong with the term at the time. "People misinterpret the word. It doesn't necessarily mean that you have to go out and kill peo-

ple," he says. "For example, you can neutralize their ability to collect intelligence from you by taking more stringent security measures so that it's more difficult for a source to collect against you." But he adds, "Was there bad stuff in these manuals? Of course there was. But you have to consider what was going on in Central America at the time."

In 1987 several officers from the U.S. 470th Military Intelligence Unit in Panama came to SOA to obtain intelligence material to give to the mobile training teams in Latin America.

Tise claims the men mistakenly took the original Project X material, which had the bad language, along with the cleaned-up lesson plans, which had been filed in the same folder. "It was simply an oversight," Tise tells me. "They didn't know any better. They figured it was OK because it was in a School of the Americas folder." Tise speculates that the commanding officer of the 470th Unit probably didn't read the material "because he thought it was familiar to him."

Roughly 1,000 copies of the manuals went out uncensored to the intelligence schools in Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia and Peru.

Despite the apparent mismanagement and lack of adequate review at the most se-

nior levels of government, no one is being held responsible for the dissemination—or consequences—of these ideas. "No punitive action is being taken against any of the individuals involved," DOD spokesman Owens tells me. "Their actions were out of ignorance. There was no deliberate intent to circumvent established policy or to violate any law."

And yet a number of U.S. policies (and possibly laws) appear to have been broken. Several international treaties concerning human rights were violated, and, given the passages in the manuals that advocate execution, it seems that a U.S. presidential directive—Executive Order 12333, signed in 1981, which said that "no person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States government shall engage, or conspire to engage, in assassination"—may also have been broken.

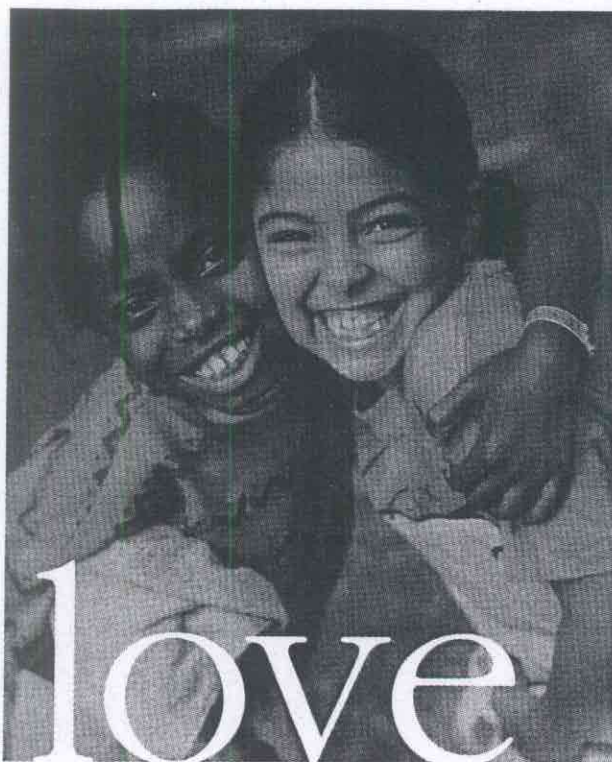
While junior and perhaps even midlevel officers like Victor Tise could conceivably be unaware of things like Executive Order 12333, it seems that ignorance of the policy would not be a valid excuse for top-level officers at the Pentagon and in Panama who approved the manuals. "If I or any member of Congress made statements advocating human rights abuses, we'd be fired," says Carlos Osorio, a research associate at the National Security Archives, a



## The Fresh Air Fund

Serving Children Since 1877

What the world needs now is...



Please give to The Fresh Air Fund. Send an inner-city child to the country.

You can't put a price on love. But for only \$343, you can send an inner-city child to the country for two weeks.

Since 1877, we have provided over 1.6 million disadvantaged children with summer vacations.

We need your help. Please contribute.

Call 1-800-367-0003

E-mail: [info1@freshair.org](mailto:info1@freshair.org) Web page: <http://www.freshair.org>

The Fresh Air Fund, 1040 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10018

A copy of the last financial reports filed with the Department of State may be obtained by writing to: The New York Department of State, Office of Charities Registration, Albany, NY 12231

## School of the Americas

Washington, D.C., organization responsible for declassifying many of the government documents related to the school. But, Osorio adds, "somehow that logic doesn't apply to the Pentagon."

What about the army's contention that these lesson plans were an aberration, an isolated violation of established U.S. policy? I ask Robert White, a former ambassador to El Salvador, about that. "The Pentagon must think we're all stupid when it claims that senior analysts departed from policy," White tells me. "There's a good reason why they can't reprimand the analysts and the authors. These manuals and the ideas in them are totally congruent with Reagan's policies toward Central America." (White was fired in 1982 by Secretary of State Alexander Haig when he wouldn't support a military solution in El Salvador. "I told them this is not a military fight," he says. "This is something that has to be resolved politically. You're aligning yourself with really bad guys.")

Another person in a position to know about U.S. foreign policy in Central America is General Fred Woerner, commander of the Southern Command in the late 1980s. "It's a pretty weak defense," Woerner says. "But [the DOD] can't very well hold a few individuals accountable when the school, for a period of ten years, was basically one U.S. institution among many involved in the brutalization of Central America. It was a terrible thing. The problems in Central America could have been worked out politically very early on so there was no loss of life." (Woerner retired from his post in 1989 when he could not dissuade George Bush from invading Panama, ostensibly to remove Noriega from power on charges of drug trafficking.)

The government's refusal to hold anyone responsible for the training is particularly galling to Father Bourgeois and a number of victims—and their relatives—of the SOA's notorious alumni. "Those who did the raping and the killing, the soldiers who dragged people out of their rooms and shot them, and the thugs in Washington who supported them, they pardoned themselves," Bourgeois says. "They [the key players] have not done one day in prison. But we who try to call attention to this through nonviolence, we go to prison."

Bourgeois believes it's not too late to get justice. Nearly a decade after sweeping amnesty for human rights atrocities in Latin America and the pardons of most of the architects of the Iran-Contra scandal, Bourgeois says, "It's payback time."

"It ain't going to be me who pays," Lieutenant Colonel Tise tells me emphatically, "because I didn't do anything wrong." Tise probably need not worry, since the Pentagon, in its various investigations, has made it clear that it does not intend to hold any-



## School of the Americas

one responsible.

Trying to get justice for crimes committed outside this country, especially by military governments that have been backed by the United States, is not an easy matter, as William Ford and Judy Keogh know. It took three years of intense pressure from the families of the four murdered churchwomen—pressure on both the State Department and the Salvadoran government—before the soldiers responsible for the nuns' deaths were identified and prosecuted. In 1984 one sergeant and four enlisted men were convicted; they are currently serving thirty-year sentences in El Salvador. Three of their commanding officers, who were implicated in the planning and cover-up of the murders by a 1993 United Nations Truth Commission investigation, escaped trial and punishment. They had something else in common: Alumni records show they had attended the School of the Americas.

"There's not a day that goes by when I don't think about Ita," William Ford says of his sister. "Her death was just senseless. This kind of violent death doesn't ever go away. It really hurts. You can't imagine the reaction of families whose relatives were killed by these people who were clothed and armed and supported by the United States. And now we know the school was training them. It is just repulsive."

Another victim, Sister Dianna Ortiz, an Ursuline nun, barely survived her ordeal in Guatemala. In 1989 she received a threatening letter that read, "Eliminate Dianna, assassinate, decapitate, and rape." Another letter said, "It is dangerous for you here, the army knows you are here. Leave the country." Two weeks later, Ortiz was abducted from the Religious Retreat Center in Antigua and taken to a building where she says she was repeatedly raped and tortured. Her interrogators burned her with lighted cigarettes and forced her to participate in the stabbing of another woman prisoner. As she was being transported to another location, Ortiz escaped.

Soon after Ortiz returned to the United States, General Hector Gramajo, Guatemala's minister of defense, began a smear campaign against her. Gramajo accused Ortiz of being involved in a lesbian affair and staging her own disappearance. The government then ordered the investigation into her case closed. (Gramajo had attended the SOA's counterinsurgency course in 1967. In 1991, even after his involvement in human rights abuses was known, he was invited to speak at SOA's commencement ceremonies.)

In June 1991, Ortiz retaliated. While Gramajo was at Harvard University to receive his diploma from the school's prestigious John F. Kennedy School of Government, a process server handed him a thirty-page, multimillion-dollar lawsuit. Nine Guatemalan civilians charged him

with responsibility for "a program of massive human rights abuses which included murders, torture, disappearances." A week later, Ortiz also sued Gramajo, alleging that he was responsible for her kidnapping, rape and torture. In April 1995, a federal court in Boston held Gramajo responsible for "acts of gruesome violence inflicted by personnel who were under his direct command" and ordered him to pay \$47.5 million in damages to the plaintiffs. The U.S. State Department revoked his visa. (Gramajo has refused to pay the damages, and the case is being appealed.)

"The American public has been deceived," Sister Ortiz says in a written statement to me. "For many years, our government has advertised the school as a benign institute of training for democratic leadership. Nothing could be further from the truth. As one survivor of these crimes, it pains me that my government has known, supported and hidden the truth of this wretched institution."

Jennifer Harbury is also trying to get accountability from the people involved in the torture and murder of her husband, Guatemalan resistance leader Efraín Bámaca Velásquez. Harbury, a U.S. attorney, met Bámaca during a trip to Guatemala in 1990 to research a book on combatants. They were married a year later. Bámaca vanished in March 1992, and the Guatemalan army claimed he had died during combat. Harbury didn't believe them and exhumed the body in the grave where the military said he was buried. What she found was the body of a man who was shorter and fifteen years younger than her husband. Suspecting that Bámaca was still alive and being tortured, Harbury began a campaign to save her husband's life. When State Department officials and the ambassador to Guatemala, Marilyn McAfee, did little to help her, Harbury began, in October 1994, the first of three hunger strikes, the longest of which lasted thirty-two days. During her last hunger strike, in front of the White House, Robert Torricelli, a New Jersey Democrat who was then a member of the House of Representatives and is now a senator, came out of the building and disclosed the classified information to Harbury that sometime in 1992 Colonel Julio Roberto Alpírez was involved in the execution of Bámaca after prolonged torture. Alpírez, it turned out, had been on the CIA payroll for a long time. Six months after graduating from the SOA's most prestigious forty-seven-week course, he had also ordered the murder of U.S. citizen Michael Devine, who had been living in Guatemala.

Today Harbury is hopeful. A human rights trial that will take place this year in the Inter-American Court and the civil suit she has filed may hold the Guatemalan government and Alpírez liable for the death of her husband. "The end of his ca-

# Of CONTEST Note

CITIZEN.

## WINNING MOMENTS

Where were you when Cal Ripken broke the consecutive game record?

Chances are, while you may not remember what you had for lunch today, this and other big sports moments are as clear in your mind as the day they occurred.

GQ now offers you the opportunity to make your memory pay off while adding some new sporting experiences and a Citizen timepiece to your life.

Simply match up the questions listed below with the correct answers to win an exciting weekend of golf lessons, a new Ping putter and a new Citizen Promaster watch.

To enter to win, mail your name, address and telephone number along with your responses to the questions below to: GQ's WINNING MOMENTS, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Attn: Susie Rubin.

1. Mexico's German Silva won his second consecutive New York Marathon in 1997 with this time.
2. What was the *Stars & Stripes* margin of victory in the finals for the 1995 Citizen Cup Races in the America's Cup?
3. The Citizen watches on page 238 of this issue are set to what time?
4. What was the longest tennis match in U.S. Open History?
5. Colorado secured its first Stanley Cup Victory in 1997 at this moment during the game's third overtime.

- A. 4 minutes: 31 seconds
- B. 10:10
- C. 5 hours: 26 minutes
- D. :52 seconds
- E. 2 hours: 11 minutes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**RULES: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY.** Entry must be received by 7/1/97. No mechanical reproductions of any nature are permitted. Only one entry per person permitted. Winner will be selected in a random drawing of all entries conducted by GQ on or around 7/7/97 and will be notified by 7/20/97. If winner does not respond within 14 days, an alternate winner may be chosen. All decisions by the judges are final. One Grand Prize will be awarded of the following: One Ping Putter (approximate retail value: \$75.00) and one hour of golf instruction at a location near the winner's home (approximate value: \$100.00), and the Citizen Watch (approximate retail value \$375.00). Transportation not included. Income and other taxes, if any, are the winner's responsibility. Contest open to U.S. residents 18 years or older as of date of entry except employees of Condé Nast and their families, agents and representatives of Citizen Watch Company. Contest void in Puerto Rico and where prohibited and subject to all state, federal and local laws and regulations. Odds of winning depend on total number of entries received. Prize is not transferable and no substitutions are permitted except by sponsor in case of unavailability in which case a prize of equal or greater value will be substituted. All entries become the property of GQ and will not be acknowledged or returned. Acceptance of prize constitutes consent to use winner's name and likeness for editorial, advertising and publicity purposes. Winner may be required to execute an Affidavit of Eligibility and a Liability/Publicity Release which must be returned within thirty days from date of notification or an alternate winner may be chosen. For winner's name, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Susie Rubin, GQ, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017 after 7/7/97. Prizes must be redeemed no later than June 1, 1998.



reer is a possibility," Harbury tells me. "If [SOA] did any kind of check and looked into it all, it's not a pretty picture. Clearly, they're doing something wrong, which is confirmed by those manuals. It's time for them to call it off."

The Defense Department says the problems associated with the school have been rectified. Most of the manuals have been col-

lected and destroyed, the Pentagon says, except for one copy retained by the DOD and an unspecified number that, Lieutenant Colonel Owens acknowledges, "are still floating out there" in Latin America. In addition, several hours of human rights training have been added to the curriculum.

**"For many years, our government has advertised the school as a benign institute of training for democratic leadership," Sister Ortiz says. "Nothing could be further from the truth."**

lected and destroyed, the Pentagon says, except for one copy retained by the DOD and an unspecified number that, Lieutenant Colonel Owens acknowledges, "are still floating out there" in Latin America. In addition, several hours of human rights training have been added to the curriculum.

In February, hoping to put the matter to rest, the Pentagon came out with another report. The results, though startling, were ultimately unsurprising. With unexpected candor, Russell A. Rau, the Pentagon's as-

sistant inspector general who prepared the report, wrote, "Many mistakes were made and repeated by numerous and continually changing personnel in several organizations from Panama to Georgia to Washington, D.C." But, like all previous government reviews into the matter, the inspector general's report concluded that "further investigation to assess individual responsibility is not required."

our responsibility to stand up for a wrong that has been committed."

Reaction at the school is quite different. "To us it's a dead issue," Captain McIver tells me. The matter, however, is still very much alive. In late February, with eighty-five cosponsors, Congressman Kennedy submitted HR 611, his bill to close the school down. "It's clear there's simply been no serious investigation, no serious attempt to assess what goes on at the school," he tells me. "What underlies a lot of this is the fact that the only committee that's seriously able to investigate the military [the National Security Committee] is made up of people who are essentially there to protect the military. So you've got the fox guarding the henhouse."

Critics of the school have called for Congress to terminate the school's funding and pay reparations to the victims of its notorious graduates. Most agree with Major Joseph A. Blair that there is only one satisfactory remedy. "The School of the Americas should be closed," Blair contends. "It discredits the army, and it is a dinosaur of the Cold War that should take its place in history with the Berlin Wall."

Released from prison, Father Bourgeois has returned to his SOA Watch across the street from Fort Benning. He says he will continue to speak out—and to go to prison if he has to—until the school is closed. ●

Mary A. Fischer is a GQ senior writer.

## Fred Thompson

(continued from page 197) Thompson's attitude toward the press and his command of national issues in March, when he spoke at Walt Disney Studios in Burbank, California, at a public conference sponsored by the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, a conservative organization founded by authors David Horowitz and Peter Collier. I was walking toward the studio entrance as Thompson pulled up in a Lincoln Town Car. As he got out, he had a broad grin across his face, but as he looked over the pathway that led toward a bungalow where the conference's hosts were to meet him, his wide mouth twisted into a scowl. On the lawn, facing him, were a television camera and a GQ photographer. Thompson pursed his lips and walked hurriedly down the path. After he entered the bungalow, a publicist from the conference came out to tell the photographer and me that the senator was "freaked out" by the presence of the press. "He doesn't have a problem with shooting when he comes out, but he doesn't want to be spoken to," she said.

Thompson's press aide had explained to me that the senator didn't want to grant interviews with the press because he didn't want to draw attention from the hearings

that were about to take place, but anyone watching him skulk into the bungalow would have seen that there was more going on than that. Other politicians in the same situation would have laughed and waved and then apologized for not answering questions. But Thompson acted as if he were being besieged by a single cameraman and a photographer. His attitude was phobic rather than self-protective. It suggested a politician who fears that events in his political life will get out of hand, one who is seeking to maintain control by barring access to those who seek to describe it.

At lunch Thompson spoke to the several hundred producers, publishers, writers, actors and political operatives who were attending the conference. He was funny in describing his situation as being caught in the "crosshairs" of political combat. "I understand that John McCain was here earlier today, so you have the entire Republican caucus on campaign-finance reform here this weekend," Thompson said. He also displayed his commitment to political reform and good government. As he talked about campaign finance, his hands chopped the air to emphasize his points. But as he talked about the global economy of technology, he

drummed his fingers on the side of the dais, scratched his ear and then put his right hand in his pocket. Afterward Peter Collier said, "The guy is going to have to work on his speaking. He sounded like he was sharpening his tools but is not able to do any real agriculture." It was unclear whether the problem lay in Thompson's speaking or in his command of and interest in the subject matter. I fear it is the latter.

Of course, Thompson could acquire a grasp of world and domestic affairs, could learn to deal with the press and master Washington, but the question is whether he can do so by the year 2000. Those who now push him to run for president don't worry about these things. If they think he can win, they'll settle for a hologram. But for the rest of us, and probably for Thompson himself, it does matter. For us it may be better if Thompson, whatever his success in the hearings, does not allow the sirens of Washington to bedevil his senses—to convince him that, in spite of his inexperience, he is the only man who can rescue the republic. Thompson, who is 54, will still have plenty of time to run for president later. That is, if he really wants to. ●

John B. Judis is a GQ writer-at-large.