CONSIDER

A land and culture poorly understood by U.S. analysts, politicians, and voters.

A regime permeated with corruption.

A brutal police force and army trained in America, armed with American guns, and fighting a bloody proxy war against anyone who might conceivably be an American foe.

This was Central America in the 1980s, when El Salvador was the centerpiece of a misguided and ultimately disastrous foreign policy. It resulted in atrocities that took the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and destabilized a region that has not recovered to this day. At a time when the Reagan Administration’s obsession with communism overwhelmed objections to its policies, Ray Bonner took a courageous, unflinching look at just who we were supporting and what the consequences were.

Now supplemented with an epilogue drawing on newly available, once-secret documents that detail the extent of America’s involvement in assassinations, including the infamous murder of three American nuns and a lay missionary in 1980, Weakness and Deceit is a classic, riveting and ultimately tragic account of foreign policy gone terribly wrong.

—MICHAEL POSNER, PROFESSOR OF ETHICS AND FINANCE AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, FORMER U.S. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

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