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*Central
America*

THE SANDINISTA LOBBY
"HUMAN RIGHTS" GROUPS WITH A DOUBLE STANDARD

by Fred Barnes

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'Human rights' groups with a double standard.

THE SANDINISTA LOBBY

BY FRED BARNES

LAST JULY 1 a man named Alvaro Jose Baldizon Aviles slipped across the border from Nicaragua into Honduras. He was no ordinary refugee. Baldizon was chief of the special investigations commission of Nicaragua's Ministry of Interior. He worked for Tomas Borge, the interior minister and a powerful figure in the Sandinista government. Baldizon had an eye-popping story to tell of massive human rights abuses by the Sandinistas. In September and October, under the guidance of the U.S. State Department, he told it all over Washington.

Citing specific names, dates, and locations, Baldizon disclosed hundreds of murders of peasants, prisoners, Indians, businessmen, and opponents of the Sandinista regime, all of them carried out by Nicaraguan government soldiers or police. Borge personally ordered some killings and whitewashed others, Baldizon said. In 1981 Borge allegedly standardized the practice of murdering political foes by issuing a secret order allowing "special measures," the euphemism for assassinations. He institutionalized the deception of visiting foreigners, appearing before Christian groups in an office with a crucifix, a statue of Jesus Christ, and a Bible. His real office is adorned with pictures of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and copies of *The Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital*. Moreover, Borge was involved in cocaine trafficking, put former criminals in police jobs, and installed Cuban advisers in operational posts. Baldizon also said the Sandinistas were training Costa Rican guerrillas and using mobs of young Sandinistas to break up gatherings of political opponents.

Even by Latin American standards, this was quite an indictment, exactly the kind of firsthand account likely to trigger outrage by groups monitoring human rights in Central America. And maybe even spark an aggressive investigation or two. But not by the Washington Office on Latin America, which says it "monitors human rights practices and political developments in Central and South

America . . . [and promotes] a foreign policy that advances human rights, peace, and democracy in the hemisphere." Joseph T. Eldridge, the Methodist minister and former missionary in Chile who is WOLA's director, was invited along with other human rights activists to a session with Baldizon at the State Department on October 3. Eldridge didn't show. He did call to ask about a private session with Baldizon, and State Department officials agreed so long as one of their staff aides was present. Later, Eldridge canceled the meeting because of a schedule conflict. He insists he's still trying to meet with Baldizon. But Janice Barbieri of the State Department's office of public diplomacy says Eldridge isn't trying very hard; he hasn't even called back to set up a new time. Whatever the case, it's been months, and Eldridge has yet to meet with Baldizon.

This indifference to Baldizon and his evidence of systematic abuses of human rights was not a lapse. On the contrary, it reflects the selective moral indignation of a phalanx of organizations in Washington that regularly criticizes the Reagan administration's policy toward Central America and, in particular, Nicaragua. The ostensible aims of these groups are high-minded: peace, protection of human rights, free elections, an end to domination of politics by oligarchies, etc. And they tirelessly point out how Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama—all allies of the United States—come up short. But Nicaragua, with its increasingly repressive Sandinista regime, is another story. What criticism these organizations have of Nicaragua is soft-hitting in the extreme. Mostly they explain away or ignore abuses by the Sandinistas.

These organizations and their leaders refer to themselves as "the community." But they've been accused of being something quite different. A Heritage Foundation paper labeled them "The Left's Latin American Lobby." A book by the Council for Inter-American Security attacks them as "The Revolution Lobby." Bruce Cameron, a for-

mer lobbyist for Americans for Democratic Action, says WOLA at least is a "shill for the Sandinistas." Naturally, WOLA and other groups disagree. "There is an attitude in [Washington] that equates opposition to the administration's Central American policy with support for the Sandinista government," says Eldridge. "This is an unfortunate and lamentable conclusion."

MAYBE SO, but WOLA and other organizations haven't exactly gone out of their way to show that they don't apply a double standard—tough on right-wing governments and U.S. allies, soft on left-wing regimes. A good place to start would have been with Baldizon. Juan Mendez of America's Watch, a human rights monitoring group, went to the trouble of taking Baldizon to lunch, where they could confer without State Department interference. But America's Watch seems more interested in countering Reagan's attacks on Nicaragua than checking out Baldizon's evidence. Last July it put out a report evaluating Nicaragua's human rights record. The logical yardstick was the Sandinista promise of political pluralism and a mixed economy. Had the Sandinistas delivered on these? But that wasn't the question asked. Rather, America's Watch found the one human rights standard that the Sandinistas can meet: Is their human rights record as bad as Reagan says? Nope, America's Watch concluded.

WOLA doesn't pretend to be anything but an advocacy organization. It advocates friendly, tolerant relations with Nicaragua. But similar questions arise in the case of legal groups, whose nominal concern is not policy but the rule of law. Susan Benda of the American Civil Liberties Union says her only concern is blocking U.S. involvement in the covert war waged by the *contras*. "We're opposed to this covert war regardless of what the Sandinistas do," she says. "We don't care if they close down the press. What the Sandinistas do doesn't affect our opinion on the war."

But at least one legal group is now taking care to avoid the appearance of a double standard. Amy Young, the director of the International Human Rights Law Group, now admits that her organization's study of *contra* abuses last year should also have looked at Sandinista conduct. In a new investigation early in 1986—another vote on *contra* aid comes in March—both sides will be examined, she says. Larry Garber, IHRLG's project director, characterizes the soft-on-the-Sandinistas approach of some groups as "avoidance tactics." Although they recognize there are human rights problems in Nicaragua, "they won't go down and investigate," he says. Why not? "It's no secret some organizations in town were excited about what happened in Nicaragua and are still hopeful it will be a revolution that brings lasting peace and stability. They've been willing to forgive things that have gone on during a time of transition. That time is over."

Practically no one is more forgiving than the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, the umbrella group of "the community." Its 50-odd members include WOLA, the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, the Washington office of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the American

Friends Service Committee, and the YWCA. The coalition, along with the Commission on U.S.-Central American Relations, published what it called a "basic information" book on Central America. According to the book, the Sandinistas have done little wrong, and when they have, it was only because the United States forced them to.

Take the massive Sandinista arms buildup. It began in 1979, at a time when the U.S. government was reasonably friendly, and has gone on unabated. Nicaragua now has by far the largest military force in Central America. Yet the "basic information" book attributes the Sandinista buildup to fear of a U.S. invasion. "In short, the Nicaraguans want to raise the military, and thereby the political, cost of a U.S.-sponsored invasion," it says. Nor do the Nicaraguans threaten their neighbors. "Despite the difficulty in distinguishing between offensive and defensive weapons, it is clear that the military strengthening that Nicaragua has undergone in the last few years is primarily defensive, not offensive." Even MIGs from the Soviets, the book says, wouldn't give Nicaragua "a credible offensive force capable of invading any country in the region."

The book is vague about the political leanings of the Sandinista directorate, vague in a way that misleads. Borge, the interior minister, is described as "a poet and a writer [who] has studied law at the National University." This is the fellow who confided to *Playboy* magazine in 1983: "I told [my mother] that I would not be blackmailed by her gentleness and her naivete and that I was a Communist." Humberto Ortega, the defense minister and brother of Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega, is described simply as an author. Yet Ortega doesn't mince words about his ideology. "Marxism-Leninism is the scientific doctrine that guides our revolution," he said in 1981. "Our moral strength is Sandinismo and our doctrine is that of Marxism-Leninism."

As the Sandinistas are legitimized by "the community," the *contras* are demonized. Dissenting opinions are not tolerated on this point. When Bruce Cameron decided that support for the *contras* would promote human rights in Nicaragua, he was no longer welcome in "the community."

THE acceptable line on the *contras* is that they are old Somoza hands who have generated no popular support for their insurgency. "Nicaraguans," wrote Reggie Norton of WOLA in the coalition's book, "are justifiably concerned that far from representing a promise to improve their lives, the *contras* represent a return to the type of repression that characterized the Somoza regime." This may have been true five years ago, but since then the *contras* have been transformed from a small band of ex-National Guardsmen to a 15,000-man force that has won the support of such anti-Somoza leaders as Alfonso Robelo and Arturo Cruz. Mass defections to the *contras*, plus their ability to operate in large areas of Nicaragua, are palpable signs of a surge in popularity, and evidence of growing disenchantment with the Sandinistas.

On the subject of elections, Eldridge of WOLA talks

scornfully about the recent election in Guatemala, which saw a once-exiled dissident win the presidency. After all, Eldridge says, "elections are one note in the symphony of democracy. . . . The gist is it [the Guatemalan election] was technically flawless. Hats off. The question is whether this will wean the military away from its monopoly of power. A lot of people are skeptical." But the Nicaraguan election in 1984 was "a political opening," concluded a report by WOLA and IHRLG. Serious impediments to free choice by the voters were minimized in the report. There was censorship, but the parties were permitted "to communicate to the Nicaraguan people" their "vision for the future" and "to criticize freely the performance of the government." Repeated "incidents of harassment and intimidation" occurred—Sandinista mobs broke up opposition rallies—but they didn't affect much. The chief opposition party, the Coordinator, which dropped out charging that the election wasn't free or fair, acted for "political reasons."

ELDRIDGE SAYS that half the leaders of the Coordinator would rather have an invasion by U.S. Marines than participate in an election. If so, then why did the Coordinator accept the Sandinista condition that the *contras* be asked to lay down their arms for the election? In fact, the Coordinator's candidate, Arturo Cruz, negotiated feverishly for a postponed election in which the opposition would take part. At the key moment, though, the Sandinistas backed out.

The Sandinista sympathizers continue to insist that political pluralism is the general rule in Nicaragua. America's Watch proclaimed in July 1985 that "while prior censorship has been imposed by emergency legislation, debate on major social and political questions is robust, outspoken, even often strident" in Nicaragua. In fact, just as under Somoza's regime, debate is allowed only so long as it doesn't threaten the authorities.

The America's Watch report claims that the group does "not take a position on the U.S. geopolitical strategy in Central America," then goes on to do exactly that. There have been abuses of human rights by the Sandinistas, it says, but "some notable reductions in abuses have occurred in Nicaragua since 1982, despite the pressure caused by escalating external attacks." This is exactly what the Sandinistas say. Baldizon, who was in a position to know, tells a strikingly different story. So do Protestant preachers who have been arrested recently in Nicaragua. And last October the Sandinistas suspended what few civil liberties had been allowed.

One organization that has gone to great lengths to explain away this new state of emergency is the Central American Historical Institute at Georgetown University. Tossing out civil liberties "does not violate the U.N. International Civil and Political Rights Amendment," the institute said in 1984. And the state of emergency doesn't take away the right to life or justify torture or slavery, or block "freedom of thought, conscience, or religion," the institute said. "Nor is it applied in a discriminatory fashion," it added, suggesting that political

repression is less troubling if it is evenhanded.

The institute points out the impressive turnout of 75 percent for the election, despite efforts by the Coordinator to discourage voting. "This, and the fact that opposition parties won one-third of the valid votes, contradicts the accusation that the election was merely a rubber stamp for the [Sandinistas]." Last May, in its publication *Update*, the institute went to great lengths to knock down an article in *La Prensa*, the frequently censored opposition paper in Nicaragua. Jaime Chamorro, the paper's codirector, charged that the Sandinistas added 400,000 votes to their tally. The same month the institute said in another *Update* that opposition parties are alive and "kicking" in Nicaragua's National Assembly. The Sandinistas like "a give and take dynamic to prevail so as to not alienate what amounts to a 'loyal' opposition."

The institute frequently attacks the *contras*, but is squeamish about Sandinista abuses. In a rundown of *contra* leaders, it lists Lucia Cardenal de Salazar as "widow of Jorge Salazar, wealthy coffee grower killed in a November 1980 dispute with Nicaraguan police." Shirley Christian of the *New York Times* reports in her book *Nicaragua* that Jorge Salazar was assassinated by Sandinista security forces. Baldizon confirmed that Sandinista leaders were involved in plotting and carrying out Salazar's death.

THE BIGGEST splash made by "the community" has been with its well-timed reports of *contra* abuses. The most famous of these was written by Reed Brody, a New York lawyer. He charged that the *contras* attack purely civilian targets, and he cited instances of killings of unarmed women and children, rapes, beatings, kidnappings, forced recruitment of new troops, disruption of harvests, and intimidation of people joining government programs. With a congressional vote on aid to the *contras* a few weeks away last spring, the Brody report got big play in the press. But it was, at best, open to question. A Reagan administration examination of the report found that six incidents cited by Brody had been carried out by a *contra* officer later executed for murdering civilians and that four incidents occurred before the *contras* were constituted as an organized force. Brody blames the *contras* for killing a French doctor with mortar fire, but the *contras* say they had no mortars in that incident and that Sandinista fire killed him. Moreover, the administration says 48 rifles and 11,500 rounds of ammunition were seized from what Brody describes as merely a farm, and that a "deeply religious" couple killed by *contras* were actually agents of Sandinista state security. Brody was candid enough to disclose that the idea for the report came from Reichler & Applebaum, the Washington law firm that represents the Nicaraguan government. And he also revealed that in Nicaragua he was housed and given office space by the Sandinistas. The government even directed him to witnesses. Still, Brody said, his investigation was "independent." He made no attempt to probe Sandinista abuses.

A recent Sandinista defector has described Brody's close relationship with the Nicaraguan government. Mario Jose

Guerrero was director of the National Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. The commission, Guerrero said, was ordered to give full support to Brody. Besides office and lodging, it paid all his bills and arranged interviews. Another defector, Bayardo de Jesus Payan, was the chief budget officer of the commission. He described Brody in action to a House subcommittee:

I . . . noticed that many times he showed a photograph in which he was hugging Commander Daniel Ortega and also that he was constantly calling on the telephone to the foreign ministry and visiting it. He also made propaganda for the [Sandinistas] and urged the employees of the institution to vote for Daniel Ortega, since he was a great supporter of the Sandinistas. Also, he always spoke badly about the policy of the government of the United States and of President Ronald Reagan.

WOLA and the International Human Rights Law Group found Brody's evidence compelling, but they were worried that his connection with the Sandinistas would deprive the report of credibility. They dispatched two lawyers, one an outspoken critic of administration policy, to Nicaragua to check on *contra* abuses. These representatives also neglected to examine abuses by the Nicaraguan government. But they managed to corroborate some of the

Brody report, and they declared their support for it. America's Watch supplied a report of its own, which dealt with both sides. It concluded that Sandinista abuses were mainly in 1981 and 1982, and directed against the Miskito Indians. Since then, there had been a "sharp decline" in Sandinista abuses, America's Watch said. Baldizon, for one, would quarrel with that.

"The community" does make some efforts to demonstrate evenhandedness. WOLA, Eldridge says, has been "steadfastly encouraging dialogue in Nicaragua, as in El Salvador." Indeed, WOLA sponsored a visit to the United States by leaders of El Salvador's guerrilla forces. But the *contra* leaders in Nicaragua are out of bounds. Eldridge is for a dialogue between Duarte and his Communist opposition, but not for one between the Sandinistas and the *contras*. The dialogue he wants would pit only the erratic Eden Pastora, once a Sandinista commander, and perhaps Arturo Cruz against the Sandinistas. Cruz could be there only as an individual, not as a leader of the *contras*, says Eldridge. Which means that the main political and military opposition to the Sandinistas would be excluded, and the Sandinistas be under little pressure in the talks to make concessions to democracy. Some dialogue.

ADDENDUM

In the foregoing article Fred Barnes exposes quite ably the pro-Sandinista slant that characterizes a whole "community" of organizations. Yet, as Barnes observes, these organizations have often gained a sympathetic hearing in press and legislative circles -- circles which generally no longer trust direct statements from the Nicaraguan regime.

What, then, gives this "Sandinista lobby" such undue influence? Barnes supplies part of the explanation when he notes that WOLA, America's Watch, and others in the "community" bill themselves as monitors of human rights. In this posture they project an appearance of disinterested objectivity, which lends credence to the information they disseminate.

An even more important factor underlying the perceived prestige of "the community" was not stressed by Barnes, i.e. its strong church ties. Because many of these left-leaning, pro-Sandinista groups draw much of their leadership and financial support from mainline Protestant denominations and Catholic religious orders, their pronouncements are invested with an authority of religious conviction. Moreover, the groups may implicitly claim to represent the views of tens of millions of U.S. Christians -- few of whom even know of the existence of this "Sandinista lobby" in their name.

Two of the main organizations Barnes discusses, WOLA and the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, rely heavily on church backing. The Executive Director of WOLA, Joseph Eldridge, is not precisely a "former missionary," as Barnes describes him. In fact, Eldridge remains a paid missionary of the United Methodist Church even as he coordinates WOLA's work of political advocacy. Furthermore, eleven of the sixteen members of WOLA's Board of Directors work in churches or church-related groups. The list reads like a roll call of prominent left-leaning church activists on Latin America, including: Oscar Bolioli and William Wipfler of the National Council of Churches, Joyce Hill of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, Patricia Rumer of the United Church of Christ Board for World Ministries, Thomas Quigley of the U.S. Catholic Conference, Theresa Kane of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union, and Edward Killackey of the Maryknoll Fathers.

WOLA also receives almost one-quarter of its income -- approximately \$100,000 out of \$420,000 in 1984 -- from churches and other religious groups. Among the major donors, giving over \$1,000 each in 1984, were: the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church, the American Lutheran Church, the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Jesuit Missions, the St. Columban Foreign Mission Society, and the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

There is a similar predominance of ecclesiastical influences within the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy. Over half of its 54 constituent organizations are religious. Of the eleven members of its Executive Committee, eight hold positions in churches or church-related groups. These include Gretchen Eick of the United Church of Christ, Joyce Hamlin of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, Edward Snyder of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, Joseph Hacala of Jesuit Social Ministries, and Sally Timmel of Church Women United. The Coalition received \$7,100 in 1984 from the United Methodist Church, as well as significant sums from other denominations.

ANNEXURE

The following table lists the names of the persons who were members of the Council of the Government of Madhya Pradesh during the period from 1956 to 1962.

At the time of the formation of the Government of Madhya Pradesh in 1956, the Council consisted of 15 members, including 10 members of the Legislative Assembly and 5 members of the Legislative Council.

The Council of the Government of Madhya Pradesh was reconstituted in 1962, and its members were as follows: 10 members of the Legislative Assembly and 5 members of the Legislative Council.

The following table lists the names of the persons who were members of the Council of the Government of Madhya Pradesh during the period from 1962 to 1967.

The Council of the Government of Madhya Pradesh was reconstituted in 1967, and its members were as follows: 10 members of the Legislative Assembly and 5 members of the Legislative Council.

The following table lists the names of the persons who were members of the Council of the Government of Madhya Pradesh during the period from 1967 to 1972.

The church-supported "Sandinista lobby" extends far beyond the few groups mentioned in The New Republic article. For instance, in 1984 the United Methodist Church made 11 grants totaling \$167,000 for activities directly related to Nicaragua. Most of the recipient organizations had among their goals the creation of a more positive image of the Sandinistas. Examples:

\$20,000 to Witness for Peace to send volunteers to live in border regions of Nicaragua. According to a Witness for Peace brochure, it stations these people there in order to "maintain a permanent presence of U.S. citizens in areas where U.S.-backed contras employ tactics of terror, torture, and murder against the civilian population." The volunteers are supposed to "document contra attacks" (nothing is said about Sandinista abuses) and then return to the United States to "engage in local media work and public education."

\$6,000 to the Antonio Valdivieso Ecumenical Center, a nucleus of the pro-Sandinista "Popular Church" in Nicaragua. The Valdivieso Center magazine declares its purpose to be the promotion of "Christian reflection in the New Nicaragua."

\$2,938 to AMNLAE, a Nicaraguan women's organization established by and affiliated with the Sandinista Front.

A total of \$27,250 for travel by various groups to Nicaragua. In addition, the Board of Global Ministries pays the salaries of four missionaries in Managua who are mainly involved in hosting such trips. These missionaries, attached to the pro-Sandinista Evangelical Committee for Development Assistance (CEPAD), are hardly disinterested tour guides. Instead they set up the trips with pro-Sandinista background briefings and meetings with carefully selected "typical" Nicaraguans.

United Methodist agencies also underwrite many other organizations with a major, although not an exclusive, interest in Nicaragua. Among grants in this category are:

\$15,000 to the Ecumenical Program of Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA). The UM budget targets the money for an "education project" that is "aimed to challenge U.S. policy in the region." EPICA's major publication to date on Nicaragua is a book entitled Nicaragua: A People's Revolution.

\$7,150 to the Inter-Religious Task Force on El Salvador and Central America, which coordinates annual "Central America Week" observances designed to protest U.S. backing of El Salvador's democratic government and reverse U.S. opposition to the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

\$5,000 to Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA). The UM budget says that PACCA was founded to "help provide alternatives" to the recommendations of the bipartisan Kissinger Commission.

\$1,000 to the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), a radical Left research group in sympathy with Castro in Cuba, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and Marxist revolutionary movements throughout Latin America.

\$1,000 to the Women's Coalition against U.S. Intervention in Central America.

The United Methodist Church is by no means the sole, or even the principal, church sponsor of these groups. The National Council of Churches gave \$8,500 in 1983 to the Valdivieso Center, to which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) now supplies two staff members. In 1981 the NCC allocated \$15,000 to the Latin America Evangelical Committee for Christian Education (CELADEC), which praises Nicaragua as a model of liberation theology. Last year the Mennonite Central Committee donated \$7,000 to Witness for Peace, and the Episcopal Church contributed \$1,500 to the Inter-Religious Task Force. The World Council of Churches, which receives almost one-third of its income from U.S. churches, has sent at least \$65,000 to the Valdivieso Center (1985) and \$20,000 to CELADEC (1983).

These few cases merely hint at the wide reach of the pro-Sandinista network within our churches. Unfortunately, we have been unable to make a thorough assessment of its financial dimension since we have been denied access to most of the church financial records. Among the major Protestant denominations, only the United Methodist Church practices full financial disclosure. United Methodists deserve credit for this demonstration of openness, which we hope will set a precedent for wider application.

When the IRD asked nineteen religious groups for information on their financial support for Nicaragua-related activities, they all -- with the forthright exceptions of the Episcopal Church and the Mennonite Central Committee -- refused to divulge the requested details. A few sent the most general figures on their spending, without specifying the organizations funded. Clearly church agencies owe a fuller account of their stewardship.

The Institute on Religion and Democracy

The Board of Directors of the National Council on Education for the Handicapped (NCEH) is pleased to announce that the National Council on Education for the Handicapped (NCEH) has received a grant from the Department of Education for the fiscal year 1977-1978. The grant is for the purpose of conducting research and development in the area of special education. The grant is for the purpose of conducting research and development in the area of special education. The grant is for the purpose of conducting research and development in the area of special education.

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Central America and U.S. Security



United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Following is President Reagan's address to the nation, Washington, D.C., March 16, 1986.

My fellow Americans, I must speak to you tonight about a mounting danger in Central America that threatens the security of the United States. This danger will not go away; it will grow worse, much worse, if we fail to take action now. I am speaking of Nicaragua, a Soviet ally on the American mainland only 2 hours flying time from our own borders. With over a billion dollars in Soviet-bloc aid, the communist Government of Nicaragua has launched a campaign to subvert and topple its democratic neighbors.

Using Nicaragua as a base, the Soviets and Cubans can become the dominant power in the crucial corridor between North and South America. Established there, they will be in a position to threaten the Panama Canal, interdict our vital Caribbean seaways, and, ultimately, move against Mexico. Should that happen, desperate Latin peoples by the millions would begin fleeing north into the cities of the southern United States or to wherever some hope of freedom remained.

The U.S. Congress has before it a proposal to help stop this threat. The legislation is an aid package of \$100 million for the more than 20,000 freedom fighters struggling to bring democracy to their country and eliminate this communist menace at its source. But this \$100 million is not an additional \$100 million. We are not asking for a single

dime in new money. We are asking only to be permitted to switch a small part of our present defense budget—to the defense of our own southern frontier.

Gathered in Nicaragua already are thousands of Cuban military advisers, contingents of Soviets and East Germans, and all the elements of international terror—from the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] to Italy's Red Brigades. Why are they there? Because, as Colonel Qadhafi has publicly exulted: "Nicaragua means a great thing, it means fighting America near its borders—fighting America at its doorstep."

For our own security, the United States must deny the Soviet Union a beachhead in North America. But let me make one thing plain. I am not talking about American troops. They are not needed; they have not been requested. The democratic resistance fighting in Nicaragua is only asking America for the supplies and support to save their own country from communism.

The question the Congress of the United States will now answer is a simple one: will we give the Nicaraguan democratic resistance the means to recapture their betrayed revolution, or will we turn our backs and ignore the malignancy in Managua until it spreads and becomes a mortal threat to the entire New World? Will we permit the Soviet Union to put a second Cuba, a second Libya, right on the doorstep of the United States?

The Nicaraguan Threat

How can such a small country pose such a great threat? Well, it is not Nicaragua alone that threatens us, but those using Nicaragua as a privileged sanctuary for their struggle against the United States.

Their first target is Nicaragua's neighbors. With an army and militia of 120,000 men, backed by more than 3,000 Cuban military advisers, Nicaragua's Armed Forces are the largest Central America has ever seen. The Nicaraguan military machine is more powerful than all its neighbors combined.

This map [see p. 2] represents much of the Western Hemisphere. Now let me show you the countries in Central America where weapons supplied by Nicaraguan communists have been found: Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala. Radicals from Panama to the south have been trained in Nicaragua. But the Sandinista revolutionary reach extends well beyond their immediate neighbors. In South America and the Caribbean, the Nicaraguan communists have provided support in the form of military training, safe haven, communications, false documents, safe transit, and sometimes weapons to radicals from the following countries: Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and the Dominican Republic. Even that is not all, for there was an old communist slogan that the Sandinistas have made clear they honor: the road to victory goes through Mexico.

If maps, statistics, and facts aren't persuasive enough, we have the words of the Sandinistas and Soviets them-



selves. One of the highest level Sandinista leaders was asked by an American magazine whether their communist revolution will—and I quote—“be exported to El Salvador, then Guatemala, then Honduras, and then Mexico?” He responded, “That is one historical prophecy of Ronald Reagan that is absolutely true.”

Well, the Soviets have been no less candid. A few years ago, then Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko noted that Central America was “boiling like a cauldron” and ripe for revolution. In a Moscow meeting in 1983, Soviet Chief of Staff Marshal Ogarkov declared: “Over two decades there was only Cuba in Latin America. Today there are Nicaragua, Grenada, and a serious battle is going on in El Salvador.”

But we don't need their quotes; the American forces who liberated Grenada captured thousands of documents that

demonstrated Soviet intent to bring communist revolution home to the Western Hemisphere.

The Nature of the Sandinista Regime

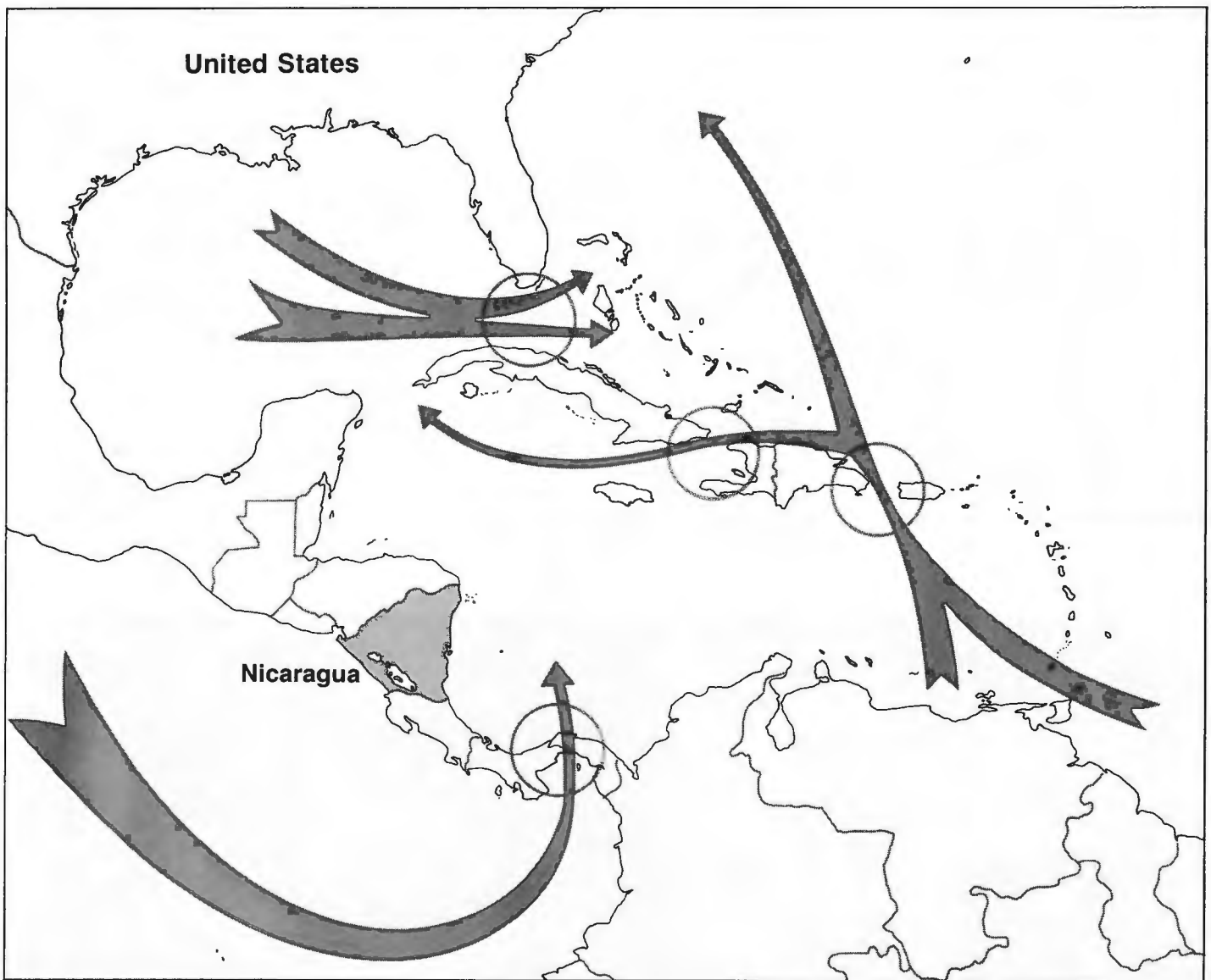
So, we're clear on the intentions of the Sandinistas and those who back them. Let us be equally clear about the nature of their regime. To begin with, the Sandinistas have revoked the civil liberties of the Nicaraguan people, depriving them of any legal right to speak, to publish, to assemble, or to worship freely. Independent newspapers have been shut down. There is no longer any independent labor movement in Nicaragua or any right to strike. As AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations] leader Lane Kirkland has said, “Nicaragua's headlong rush into the totalitarian camp cannot be denied—by anyone who has eyes to see.”

Well, like communist governments everywhere, the Sandinistas have launched assaults against ethnic and religious groups. The capital's only synagogue was desecrated and firebombed—the entire Jewish community forced to flee Nicaragua. Protestant Bible meetings have been broken up by raids, by mob violence, by machineguns. The Catholic Church has been singled out—priests have been expelled from the country, Catholics beaten in the streets after attending Mass. The Catholic primate of Nicaragua, Cardinal Obando y Bravo, has put the matter forthrightly. “We want to state clearly,” he says, “that this government is totalitarian. We are dealing with an enemy of the Church.”

Evangelical pastor Prudencio Baltodano found out he was on a Sandinista hit list when an army patrol asked his name. “You don't know what we do to the evangelical pastors. We



Frederico Vaughn, top aide to one of Nicaragua's nine ruling commandantes, assists in loading illegal narcotics bound for the United States.



don't believe in God," they told him. Pastor Baltodano was tied to a tree, struck in the forehead with a rifle butt, stabbed in the neck with a bayonet—finally, his ears were cut off, and he was left for dead. "See if your God will save you," they mocked. Well, God did have other plans for Pastor Baltodano. He lived to tell the world his story—to tell it, among other places, right here in the White House.

I could go on about this nightmare—the blacklists, the secret prisons, the Sandinista-directed mob violence. But, as if all this brutality at home were not enough, the Sandinistas are transforming their nation into a safe house, a command post for international terror.

The Sandinistas not only sponsor terror in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras—terror that led last summer to the murder of four

U.S. marines in a cafe in San Salvador—they provide a sanctuary for terror. Italy has charged Nicaragua with harboring their worst terrorists, the Red Brigades.

The Sandinistas have even involved themselves in the international drug trade. I know every American parent concerned about the drug problem will be outraged to learn that top Nicaraguan Government officials are deeply involved in drug trafficking. This picture [see p. 3], secretly taken at a military airfield outside Managua, shows Frederico Vaughn, a top aide to one of the nine commandantes who rule Nicaragua, loading an aircraft with illegal narcotics bound for the United States. No, there seems to be no crime to which the Sandinistas will not stoop—this is an outlaw regime.

U.S. Security Interests and the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance

If we return for a moment to our map [see above], it becomes clear why having this regime in Central America imperils our vital security interests.

Through this crucial part of the Western Hemisphere passes almost half our foreign trade, more than half our imports of crude oil, and a significant portion of the military supplies we would have to send to the NATO alliance in the event of a crisis. These are the chokepoints where the sealanes could be closed.

Central America is strategic to our Western alliance, a fact always understood by foreign enemies. In World War II, only a few German U-boats, operating from bases 4,000 miles away in Germany and occupied Europe, inflicted crippling losses on U.S. shipping right off our southern coast.

Today, Warsaw Pact engineers are building a deep water port on Nicaragua's Caribbean coast, similar to the naval base in Cuba for Soviet-built submarines. They are also constructing, outside Managua, the largest military airfield in Central America—similar to those in Cuba, from which Russian Bear bombers patrol the U.S. east coast from Maine to Florida.

How did this menace to the peace and security of our Latin neighbors and, ultimately, ourselves suddenly emerge? Let me give you a brief history.

In 1979, the people of Nicaragua rose up and overthrew a corrupt dictatorship. At first, the revolutionary leaders promised free elections and respect for human rights. But among them was an organization called the Sandinistas. Theirs was a communist organization, and their support of the revolutionary goals was sheer deceit. Quickly and ruthlessly, they took complete control.

Two months after the revolution, the Sandinista leadership met in secret and, in what came to be known as the "72-Hour Document," described themselves as the "vanguard" of a revolution that would sweep Central America, Latin America, and, finally, the world. Their true enemy, they declared: the United States.

Rather than make this document public, they followed the advice of Fidel Castro, who told them to put on a facade of democracy. While Castro viewed the democratic elements in Nicaragua with contempt, he urged his Nicaraguan friends to keep some of them in their coalition, in minor posts, as window dressing to deceive the West. And that way, Castro said, you can have your revolution, and the Americans will pay for it.

And we did pay for it. More aid flowed to Nicaragua from the United States in the first 18 months under the Sandinistas than from any other country. Only when the mask fell, and the face of totalitarianism became visible to the world, did the aid stop.

Confronted with this emerging threat, early in our Administration I went to Congress and, with bipartisan support, managed to get help for the nations surrounding Nicaragua. Some of you may remember the inspiring scene when the people of El Salvador braved the threats and gunfire of the communist guerrillas—guerrillas directed and supplied from Nicaragua—and went to the polls to vote decisively for democracy. For the communists in El Salvador it was a humiliating defeat.

But there was another factor the communists never counted on, a factor that now promises to give freedom a second chance—the freedom fighters of Nicaragua.

You see, when the Sandinistas betrayed the revolution, many who had fought the old Somoza dictatorship literally took to the hills and, like the French Resistance that fought the Nazis, began fighting the Soviet-bloc communists and their Nicaraguan collaborators. These few have now been joined by thousands.

With their blood and courage, the freedom fighters of Nicaragua have pinned down the Sandinista army and bought the people of Central America precious time. We Americans owe them a debt of gratitude. In helping to thwart the Sandinistas and their Soviet mentors, the resistance has contributed directly to the security of the United States.

Since its inception in 1982, the democratic resistance has grown dramatically in strength. Today, it numbers more than 20,000 volunteers, and more come every day. But now the freedom fighters' supplies are running short, and they are virtually defenseless against the helicopter gunships Moscow has sent to Managua.

A Crucial Test

Now comes the crucial test for the Congress of the United States. Will they provide the assistance the freedom fighters need to deal with Russian tanks and gunships, or will they abandon the democratic resistance to its communist enemy?

In answering that question, I hope Congress will reflect deeply upon what it is the resistance is fighting against in Nicaragua. Ask yourselves, what in the world are Soviets, East Germans, Bulgarians, North Koreans, Cubans, and terrorists from the PLO and the Red Brigades doing in our hemisphere, camped on our own doorstep? Is that for peace?

Why have the Soviets invested \$600 million to build Nicaragua into an armed force almost the size of Mexico's—a country 15 times as large and 25 times as populous. Is that for peace?

Why did Nicaragua's dictator, Daniel Ortega, go to the Communist Party Congress in Havana and endorse Castro's call for the worldwide triumph of communism? Was that for peace?

Some Members of Congress ask me, why not negotiate? That's a good question, and let me answer it directly. We have sought, and still seek, a negotiated

peace and a democratic future in a free Nicaragua. Ten times we have met and tried to reason with the Sandinistas. Ten times we were rebuffed. Last year, we endorsed church-mediated negotiations between the regime and the resistance. The Soviets and the Sandinistas responded with a rapid arms buildup of mortars, tanks, artillery, and helicopter gunships.

Clearly, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact have grasped the great stakes involved, the strategic importance of Nicaragua. The Soviets have made their decision—to support the communists. Fidel Castro has made his decision—to support the communists. Arafat, Qadhafi, and the Ayatollah Khomeini have made their decision—to support the communists. Now, we must make our decision. With Congress' help, we can prevent an outcome deeply injurious to the national security of the United States. If we fail, there will be no evading responsibility—history will hold us accountable. This is not some narrow partisan issue; it's a national security issue, an issue on which we must act not as Republicans, not as Democrats, but as Americans.

Forty years ago, Republicans and Democrats joined together behind the Truman Doctrine. It must be our policy, Harry Truman declared, to support peoples struggling to preserve their freedom. Under that doctrine, Congress sent aid to Greece just in time to save that country from the closing grip of a communist tyranny. We saved freedom in Greece then—and with that same bipartisan spirit, we can save freedom in Nicaragua today.

Over the coming days, I will continue the dialogue with Members of Congress, talking to them, listening to them, hearing out their concerns. Senator Scoop Jackson, who led the fight on Capitol Hill for an awareness of the danger in Central America, said it best: on matters of national security, the best politics is no politics.

You know, recently one of our most distinguished Americans, Clare Boothe Luce, had this to say about the coming vote. "In considering this crisis," Mrs. Luce said, "my mind goes back to a similar moment in our history—back to the first years after Cuba had fallen to Fidel. One day during those years, I had lunch at the White House with a man I had known since he was a boy—John F. Kennedy. 'Mr. President,' I said, 'no matter how exalted or great a man may be, history will have time to give him no more than one sentence. George Washington—he founded our

country. Abraham Lincoln—he freed the slaves and preserved the Union. Winston Churchill—he saved Europe.’ ‘And what, Clare,’ John Kennedy said, ‘did you believe—or do you believe my sentence will be?’ ‘Mr. President,’ she answered, ‘your sentence will be that you stopped the communists—or that you did not.’ ”

Well, tragically, John Kennedy never had the chance to decide which that would be. Now, leaders of our own time must do so. My fellow Americans, you know where I stand. The Soviets and Sandinistas must not be permitted to crush freedom in Central America and threaten our own security on our own doorstep.

Now the Congress must decide where it stands. Mrs. Luce ended by saying: “Only this is certain. Through all time to come, this, the 99th Congress

of the United States, will be remembered as that body of men and women that either stopped the communists before it was too late—or did not.”

So tonight I ask you to do what you’ve done so often in the past. Get in touch with your Representative and Senators and urge them to vote yes; tell them to help the freedom fighters—help us prevent a communist takeover of Central America.

I have only 3 years left to serve my country, 3 years to carry out the responsibilities you entrusted to me, 3 years to work for peace. Could there be any greater tragedy than for us to sit back and permit this cancer to spread, leaving my successor to face far more agonizing decisions in the years ahead? The freedom fighters seek a political solution. They are willing to lay down their arms and negotiate to restore the original goals of the revolution, a democracy in which the people of Nicaragua choose their own govern-

ment. That is our goal also, but it can only come about if the democratic resistance is able to bring pressure to bear on those who have seized power.

We still have time to do what must be done so history will say of us, we had the vision, the courage, and good sense to come together and act—Republicans and Democrats—when the price was not high and the risks were not great. We left America safe, we left America secure, we left America free—still a beacon of hope to mankind, still a light unto the nations. ■

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El Salvador: Revolution or Reform?

Current
Policy
No. 546

February 1984

United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.



This publication is based on oral and written testimony delivered by Langhorne A. Motley, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, before a joint hearing of the Subcommittees on Human Rights and International Organizations and on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on January 26, 1984.

The situation in El Salvador is frequently portrayed as a clash between extremes of left and right—the forces of oppression versus the forces of revolution. Examples in the country's history of social injustice, governmental irresponsibility, political repression, militarism, and brutal fanaticism in the name of "order," "revolution," and sometimes plain criminality, might even seem to support such analysis.

Yet this view omits a vital new element: the reformist coup of October 1979 and subsequent coalition governments have created an alternative which, if allowed to continue, offers the prospect of genuinely democratic and progressive reform.

The emergence of this new democratic alternative did not eliminate the power of extremist factions of either left or right. But El Salvador's history since 1979 is fundamentally the story of efforts of change and reform. U.S. economic and military assistance to El Salvador has been directed at bolstering these reformist forces so that a just and democratic society might emerge.

With our help, the Government of El Salvador is implementing important economic, political, and judicial reforms, including a far-reaching land reform. It is increasing the professionalism of its armed forces and is reducing all forms of human rights abuse. The March 1982 Constituent Assembly elections were acclaimed for their fairness and large voter turnout. Direct presidential elections are scheduled for March 25, 1984. These advances have occurred and continue to progress in the face of sustained and violent opposition mounted by those on the right who stand to lose power and those on the left who would be denied the opportunity to seize power.

El Salvador's democratic, reformist alternative has made a steady advance since the coup in 1979, in spite of formidable obstacles: a sharply declining economy, opposition from the recalcitrant and often violent far right, and a



menacing and destructive guerrilla war waged by anti-democratic forces of the far left, supported by Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviet Union.

This report clearly shows the profound changes underway in this troubled country. By contrasting the starting point of these reforms in 1979 with the present situation, it becomes evident that demonstrable change is taking place in El Salvador and that those seeking reform deserve our continued support. This is not the story of a completed effort but of a dynamic movement toward a more democratic society. The charts demonstrate that trend.

Background

In 1979, El Salvador was a country on the eve of a social, economic, and political explosion. The only question was whether that explosion would impel El Salvador toward a more democratic society or toward renewed minority rule, perhaps even a communist dictatorship.

El Salvador's population in 1979 was roughly 4.5 million, almost double the 2.5 million of 1960. El Salvador also is one of the world's most densely populated countries. (See Chart 1.)

El Salvador's economy is based largely on agriculture. There is a critical shortage of farmland to provide for the employment, production, and income needs of so dense a population. Moreover, before the reforms, the distribution of land had been highly skewed. Over 40% of the nation's farmland was controlled by less than 1% of the population. Eleven percent of the land was owned by absentee landlords and worked by sharecroppers or tenant farmers. Fifteen percent was organized into large plantations, worked by hired laborers and, during peak seasons, migrant workers. This inequitable distribution caused rural poverty and sparked social unrest.

At the same time, two decades of high economic growth had contributed to the economic modernization of the country. In fact, between 1960 and 1979, economic growth was so high that, despite rapid population growth, real per capita income rose by roughly 50%.

The manufacturing and service sectors both expanded and were beginning to relieve some of the pressure on the land. Agriculture and mining actually fell from more than 30% of national production in 1960 to some 25% in 1979. (See Chart 2.)

A generation of economic expansion and growth profoundly changed popular expectations, accelerated the erosion of traditional relationships, and set the stage for major social and political transformations.

- The traditional relationship between the economic elite and the military hierarchy, weakening under the pressure of increasing social unrest, was finally shattered by the reformist military coup of October 15, 1979.

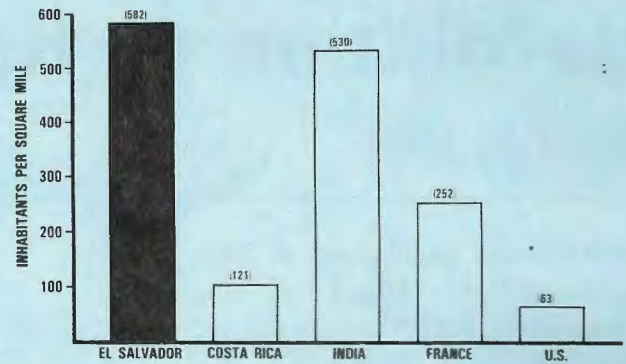
- Leftist extremists with strongly Marxist-Leninist leadership, emboldened by the Sandinista takeover in Nicaragua and encouraged by Cuba, turned increasingly to violence as the road to total power.

- Rightist extremists, faced with the prospect of losing their privileged position, also began to reorganize for sometimes violent political action.

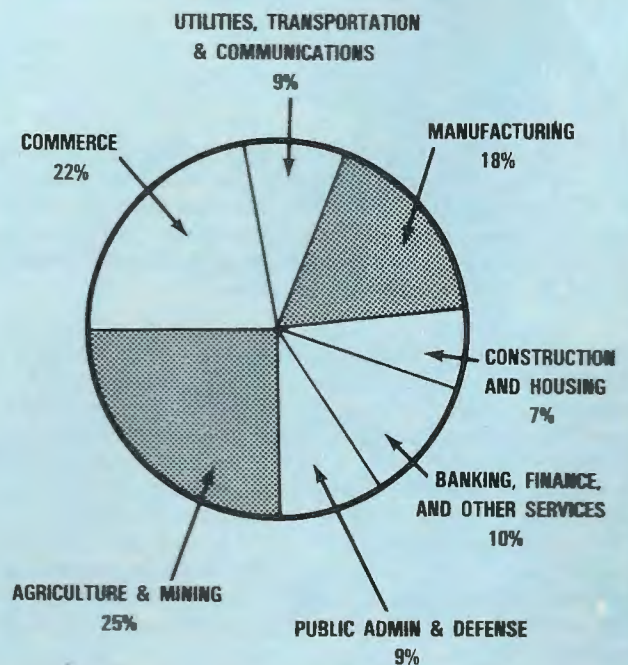
- And the reformist junta—including representatives of the military, political parties, the private sector, and the left—was formed but broke apart within 6 weeks when the extreme left withdrew to join forces with those who had taken up arms.

In response, in January 1980 the Christian Democratic Party—widely believed to have won the elections of 1972 and 1977 but blocked from taking office—joined with the military leaders who staged the October coup to form a Revolutionary Governing Junta. This coalition—opposed by the far right as well as the far left—embarked upon a program of major reform and restructuring. It decreed land, banking, and foreign trade reforms and carried out political changes leading to Constituent Assembly elections, while reducing violence against civilians and countering the military threat posed by the guerrillas.

1-Population Density, 1982



2-Components of Gross Domestic Product, 1979



Political Developments

Supported by a continuing flow of arms, training, and assistance in command and control from Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviet Union, the guerrillas shifted from political to military action during 1980. The far right also stepped up terrorist activities against both the left and the government's reforms. Consequently, politically motivated violent deaths peaked at over 800 a month in 1980.

The violence, however, did not prevent the reform of the political system or the restoration of elections for a Constituent Assembly in March 1982. Six parties, from the political right to the center-left, fielded candidates for the assembly's 60 seats. In these elections, administered by an independent Central Elections Council, some 1.5 million Salvadorans voted (about 80% of the eligible electorate); only the extreme

left refused to participate. According to eyewitness accounts by invited observers and international journalists, the elections were fair, open, and representative.

The elections produced an assembly in which no party held an absolute majority. A multiparty Government of National Unity, headed by President Alvaro Magana, was named by the Constituent Assembly. It has functioned slowly but successfully by consensus.

In the summer of 1982, President Magana, a civilian independent, brought together the parties in the government in a common program known as the Pact of Apaneca. This program established a framework for progress on land reform, human rights, and social and political dialogue. Within this framework, more than 1,000 political prisoners, guerrillas, and guerrilla supporters were granted amnesty in 1983. And the Salvadoran Peace Commission has met with representatives of the guerrillas to try to arrive at conditions for their participation in democratic elections.

The new constitution, which entered into force on December 20, 1983, establishes a republican, pluralistic form of government; strengthens the legislative and judicial branches; improves safeguards for individual rights; protects the legal bases of the land reform; and provides for presidential elections in March 1984 and legislative and municipal elections in 1985.

The Salvadoran military has had a major role in protecting and defending the reforms of the last 4 years. The land reform would not have been physically or politically possible without armed services support. Similarly, the military's firm commitment to protect free elections this March will be a key factor in ensuring that voters are able to cast their ballots without coercion from either left or right.

Economic Developments

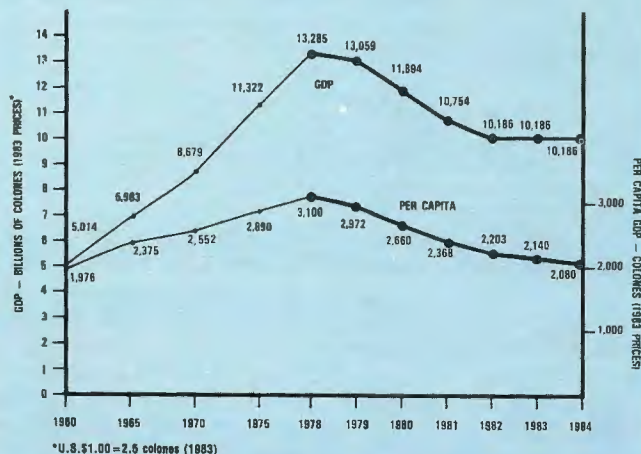
El Salvador's economy faces critical difficulties. The guerrillas have sought to topple the government by targeting the economic infrastructure. In addition, the worldwide recession has had a disastrous impact on the Salvadoran economy.

As a result, since 1978 gross domestic product (GDP) has fallen by 23% in real terms and exports have dropped by 40%. Unemployment, which had been relatively low during the 1960s and 1970s, suddenly began to shoot up in 1979 and now reaches more than 30%. Real gross domestic product per capita, one measure of a nation's economic well-being because it measures the average earnings of each citizen, has declined by about 30%. According to this measure, El Salvador has lost 15 years of economic development in the last four. (See Charts 3 and 4.)

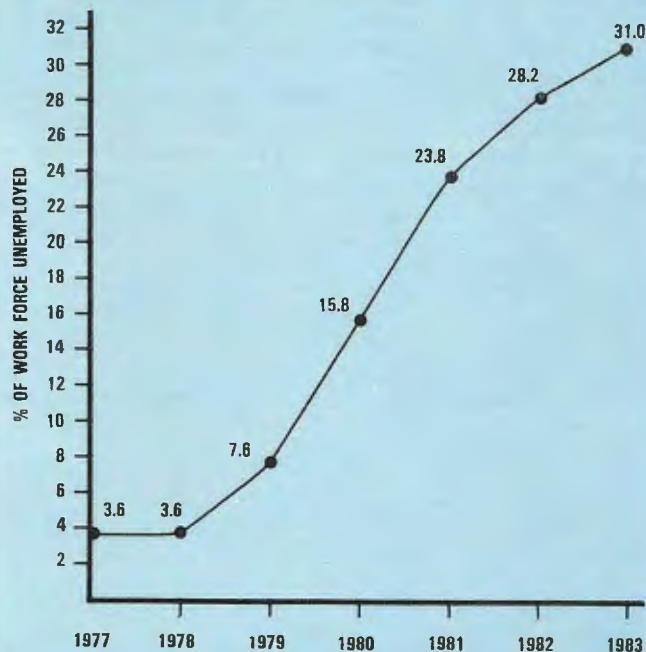
One key element of this precipitous economic decline has been El Salvador's shortage of hard currency to pay for imports. Because of falling prices for its major export commodities—coffee, cotton, sugar, and some manufactured goods—combined with the higher price of borrowed capital, El Salvador was no longer capable of financing needed imports. Even the drop in the price of oil after 1981—a potentially helpful development—did not fully benefit El Salvador because its major exports also were declining in value. It still takes too many bags of coffee to buy one barrel of oil.

The effect of this economic decline is both social and political. Lower incomes and reduced employment mean that many Salvadorans are having to make do with less than before, in spite of the major economic reforms put in place in the last 4 years. Reduced resources also inhibit the develop-

3-Real Gross Domestic Product, 1960-84



4-Estimated Unemployment, 1977-83



ment of a national political consensus by forcing factions and sectors to fight harder for a share of a shrinking economic pie.

By aggravating this situation, the guerrillas hope to set citizen against government; laborer against manager; farmer against manufacturer. In their effort to undermine the national economy, the guerrillas have destroyed buses, bridges, electrical pylons, and places of work and production. The cumulative economic cost of guerrilla destruction from 1979

through 1983 has been estimated at more than \$800 million, an amount greater than the total of U.S. economic assistance during the same period. It is impossible to estimate the human cost. (See Chart 5.)

Human Rights

Continued abuse of human rights remains a central problem, despite efforts to end violence from the terrorist right as well as the guerrilla left.

The Department of State and U.S. human rights organizations are in agreement that there are no fully reliable statistics on the number of civilian deaths attributable to political violence in El Salvador. However, since the State Department began providing reports to the Congress in 1981, it has been using statistics drawn from the Salvadoran press in an effort to determine trends on political violence. The press reports rely on such sources as the Justices of the Peace located in municipalities throughout the country. One of the primary tasks of the Justices of the Peace is the identification and registration of bodies.

The Department's statistics exclude guerrillas killed in battle and civilians killed either because they were with the guerrillas during the fighting or were innocent victims caught between two opposing forces in an ongoing military conflict. When one reads figures such as 30,000 civilians killed over the last few years, it is important to make a distinction between civilian deaths at the hands of left- or right-wing extremists and those casualties resulting from battle; some estimates calculate the battle casualties to be as high as 75% of all civilian victims of political violence.

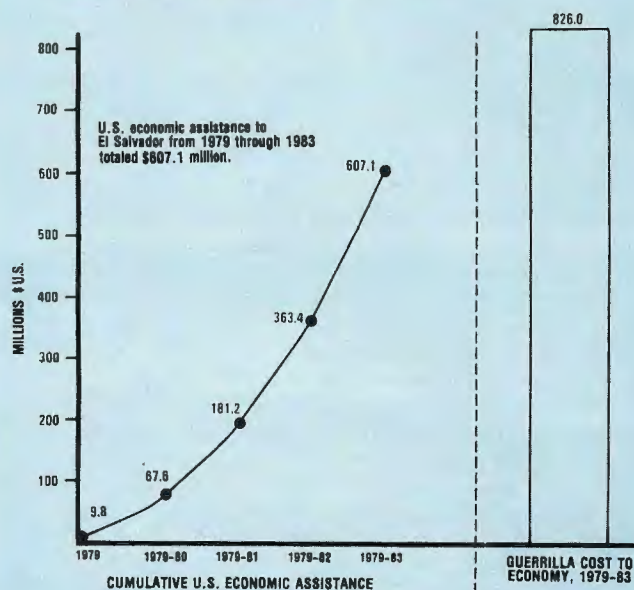
All of the groups compiling such figures agree that there has been a steady and measurable, if still insufficient, reduction in the levels of political violence. (See Chart 6.)

Major efforts are underway to ensure more effective functioning of the criminal justice system. The United States is assisting the Government of El Salvador in developing programs to improve judicial protection and investigative capacities; to increase the proficiency of jurists, lawyers, and others involved in the legal process; and to modernize penal and evidentiary codes.

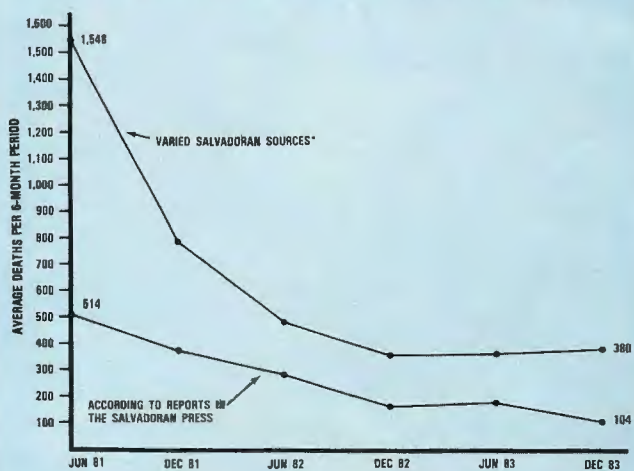
There also has been movement in a number of cases involving U.S. citizen victims. Judicial proceedings are underway as a result of investigations into the murders of Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel, Jean Donovan, Michael Hammer, Mark Pearlman, and Michael Kline. The cases of the churchwomen and Michael Kline are now in the final stage of trial proceedings. Investigations continue without result into the death of John Sullivan, the disappearance of Patricia Cuellar, and the murder of Lt. Cdr. Albert Schaufelberger. Chart 7 shows, in simplified form, how these cases have developed.

The Government of El Salvador continues its efforts to curb the violence of the far right and its sympathizers. The armed forces high command has publicly broadcast its opposition to violence by far-right death squads and has issued strict new orders requiring, among other things, that uniforms be worn when arrests are made, that relatives and the Red Cross be notified, and that prisoners be turned over to a judge expeditiously. Civilian and military officials suspected of violent far-right activity have been removed from their positions and, in several cases, stationed abroad.

5-Cumulative U.S. Economic Assistance and Guerrilla Cost to Economy, 1979-83



6-Indicators of Civilian Deaths Attributable to Political Violence, June 1981-December 1983



*Secorro Jurídico (Legal Aid), nongovernmental Human Rights Commission of El Salvador, Central American University, and Tutela Legal (Legal Aid—affiliated with the Catholic Archbishopric of El Salvador).

7—U.S. Citizen Deaths and Disappearances, 1979-January 1984

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
	<p>Four churchwomen killed: Maura Clarke Ita Ford Jean Donovan Dorothy Kazel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation begins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five suspects arrested and charged. Case elevated to trial. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case returned to investigative stage. Retired U.S. Judge Tyler reviews case. Case re-elevated to trial, defense appeals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial expected.
	<p>John Sullivan disappears.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation begins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body found. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body positively identified. 	
		<p>Labor advisers killed: Michael Hammer Mark Pearlman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ricardo Sol Meza arrested. El Salvador seeks extradition of Hans Christ from United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charges against Lt. Lopez Sibrian, Sol Meza and Christ dismissed. Prosecution appeals. FBI assists investigation. Two National Guardsmen arrested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guardsmen ordered to trial. Lopez Sibrian appeal denied, Christ and Sol Meza pending. Capt. Avila arrested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prosecution seeks additional evidence against Lopez Sibrian.
			<p>Michael Kline killed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three soldiers arrested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial expected.
			<p>Patricia Cuellar disappears.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation with FBI assistance. 	
				<p>Lt. Cdr. Albert Schaufelberger killed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FPL guerrillas claim credit. Investigation begins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation continues.

The Land Reform

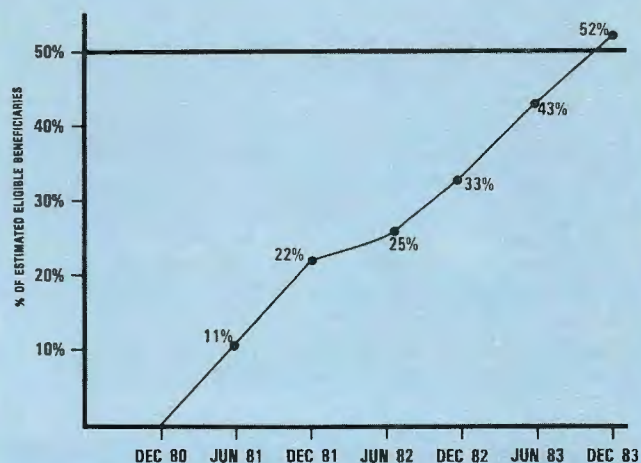
Overall, the land reform now has benefited more than 550,000 persons or almost 25% of the rural population. Where 1% of the population once owned 40% of the land, over one-third of the farmland is now in the hands of the *campesinos* or farm workers, who worked as tenants and sharecroppers on land they could not hope to own before the reforms. These gains were achieved while the nation was under attack by guerrillas supported by Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviet Union.

Phase I was accomplished by decree of the Revolutionary Junta in March 1980 and implemented immediately. The armed forces removed former owners of large farms. Possession was transferred to cooperatives made up of persons working the land. The creation of cooperatives from the larger estates under Phase I has been completed. However, some cooperatives have been abandoned because of guerrilla violence.

Phase II, affecting medium-sized farms, was conceived in March 1980 but was suspended for want of administrative and financial resources. This phase has now been resurrected with the adoption of the new national constitution in December 1983.

Phase III, applicable to smaller farms tilled by tenants, was started in April 1980. Unlike Phase I, beneficiaries must file for title to the land, based on proof that they were working it. Thus, beneficiaries may be at the stage of initial application, provisional title, or—after all surveys have been made and compensation paid to the original owner—final title. Although the period for filing applications was to have ended in 1982, Phase III has been extended three times, most recently by legislation in December 1983 which sets a final filing deadline of June 30, 1984. (See Charts 8, 9, and 10.)

8—“Land-to-the-Tiller” Applications, December 1980–December 1983



Where the government is able to work peacefully to advance the reform, most eligible beneficiaries apply for title under Phase III; where the guerrillas are active, filings are sharply reduced. In some places, where guerrilla violence is limited, almost everyone has filed who is believed to be eligible. But, where guerrilla activity has intimidated potential beneficiaries and blocked government promotion efforts—as in the departments of Chalatenango, San Vicente, Usulután, San Miguel, and Morazan—less than half of the estimated beneficiaries have filed.

Productivity on reformed lands has reached levels comparable to the traditional sector. In almost all cases, differences in productivity were relatively minor. Neverthe-

less, there is still a need for better management of the cooperatives, improved financing, and for increased technical assistance to all beneficiaries. (See Chart 11.)

Final title to land reform beneficiaries can only be transferred upon completion of payment to the former landowners; delays in payment have motivated some former landowners to evict the new beneficiaries under land reform. There is an urgent need to speed up the process of repaying former owners and to end the violent eviction of the "land-to-the-tiller" beneficiaries.

The Salvadoran Government and its Armed Forces have taken the problem of evictions seriously. Of the some 5,000 illegal evictions reported to land reform authorities, more than 3,900 have been resolved by reinstalling the beneficiary on his land. So far, less than 2% of all Phase III beneficiaries who report to the authorities that they have been evicted are not yet reinstalled on their land. And the best available data indicates that at least 85% and probably more than 90% of applicants are working their land without interference.

Security

These economic, political, and social developments have all occurred against a backdrop of intense guerrilla conflict.

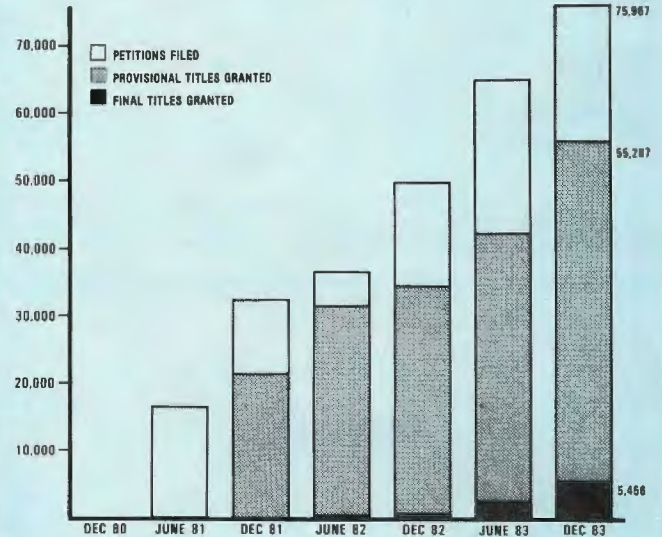
Increased weaponry and better training have permitted the guerrillas to transform a large number of their support forces into active combatants. Guerrilla activities since 1980 do not indicate any expansion of their influence among the general population. Indeed, the guerrilla strategy of targeting the economy has hurt the poor the most and has cost the guerrillas popular support. Nevertheless, the guerrillas' training, communications, and armament have improved greatly. This and other evidence disputes recent claims that Cuba and Nicaragua may be reducing direct support for the Salvadoran guerrillas or closing off their command-and-control center in Managua.

An estimated 9,000-11,000 guerrillas are now actively engaged in the field against the Salvadoran Armed Forces. Over recent months, through continued training and access to arms, the Salvadoran guerrillas have managed to provide formerly noncombatant personnel with equipment for combat. While this has increased the number of people with arms, it is not a reflection of increased popular support, and the overall number of people involved in the guerrilla movement itself has not really grown. More of them are simply armed. Their strategy is based on hit-and-run tactics. They capitalize on the Salvadoran Armed Forces' need to protect static positions (cities, bridges, dams, etc.) while simultaneously waging an effective, mobile, offensive campaign.

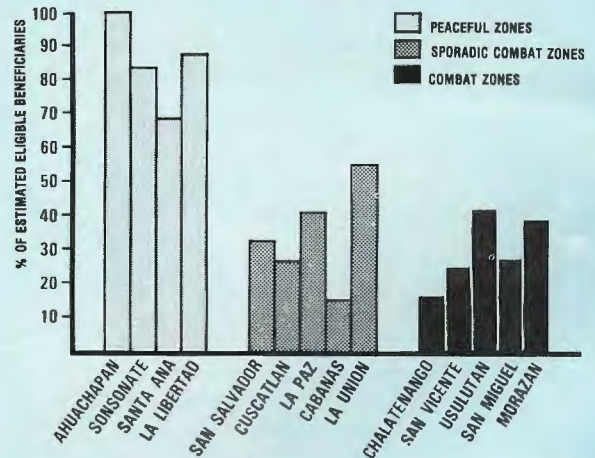
The Salvadoran military has prevented the guerrillas from gaining and holding ground. Though the guerrillas can stage raids, they cannot remain in any position from which the Salvadoran military wishes to remove them. Nor have they been able to disrupt such key events as the annual harvest or national elections.

The Salvadoran military has significantly increased in size. U.S. training has increased. Nevertheless, a number of serious gaps exist. There are still too few U.S.-trained troops and the size of the Salvadoran officer corps is insufficient to

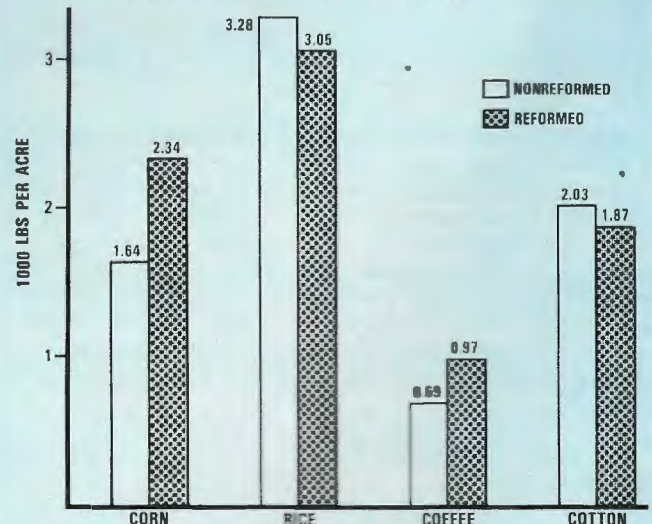
9- "Land-to-the-Tiller" Cumulative Petitions and Titles, December 1980-December 1983



10- "Land-to-the-Tiller" Applications by Department as of November 9, 1983



11- Comparative Yields of Reformed and Nonreformed Land, 1981-82 Harvest



12—Government and Guerrilla Strengths, 1979–January 1984

Government

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
12,000	16,000	17,000	28,000	32,000	39,000

Guerrilla

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
2,000	2,000	3,500-4,500	4,000-5,000	4,000-6,000	9,000-11,000

lead the rapidly expanding army in time of war. The latter has been a particular problem for command and control, military discipline, staff functions, and the general management of the war. (See Chart 12.)

U.S. Assistance

The Administration's original request to Congress for fiscal year (FY) 1984 for military and economic assistance totaled \$282 million, of which some \$260 million was approved under the Continuing Resolution. In the context of the global U.S. assistance effort, this amount is moderate both in view of the U.S. security interest in Central America and the turmoil and human suffering which our aid helps alleviate. The Administration's request for El Salvador is only about 3% of total U.S. assistance worldwide. (See Chart 16.)

U.S. economic assistance has always far exceeded military assistance. In all but 1 year, economic aid has been at least three times the amount provided to assist the Salvadorans defend against guerrilla destruction. (See Chart 14.)

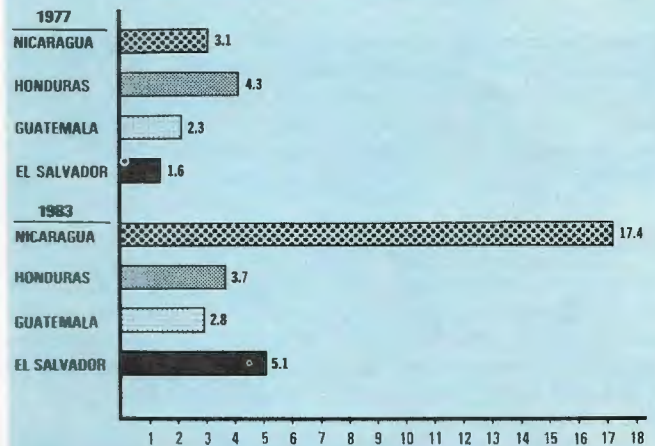
U.S. economic assistance grew from \$57.8 million in 1980 to more than \$240 million in 1983. It is divided into three elements:

- Economic support funds (ESF) to assist the Salvadorans to meet critical import needs, to finance their government's budget, and to pay for priority projects such as land reform and improved machinery for elections;
- Development assistance to finance employment-generation projects and other social needs; and
- PL-480 food donations to supplement shortages in basic dietary needs. (See Chart 15.)

U.S. military assistance has been an important element in preventing a guerrilla victory. In addition to providing arms, ammunition, and logistical support, we have helped train more than 15,000 Salvadoran soldiers and officers in a variety of military subjects, including respect for human rights. By the end of 1983, 33% of U.S.-trained troops and 90% of eligible noncommissioned officers were reenlisting.

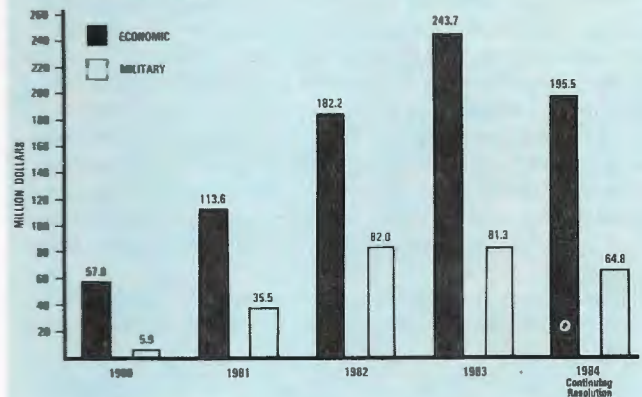
Congressionally approved assistance, however, has consistently been below the Administration's requested levels. For example, in FY 1984 the Administration requested \$86.3 million; Congress, through its Continuing Resolution, provided \$64.8 million for military assistance. And because 30% of this amount is withheld by law until a verdict is reached in

13—Total Armed Forces per 1,000 People

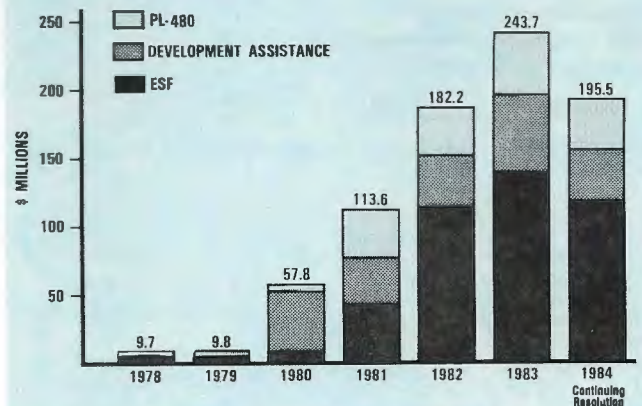


SOURCE: THE MILITARY BALANCE, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES (U.K.)

14—U.S. Military and Economic Assistance, FY 1980–84



15—U.S. Economic Assistance, FY 1978–84



the churchwomen's case, only some \$45 million is available to address El Salvador's urgent security problems. Over \$25 million of this \$45 million has already been obligated, and requests for an additional \$13 million are currently being processed. Funds will run out soon, possibly on the eve of elections.

Conclusion

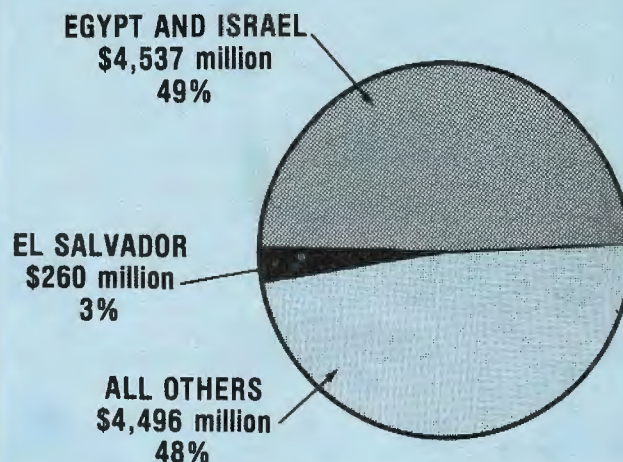
The democratic alternative in El Salvador, though faced with powerful opposition from terrorists and guerrillas, has made steady progress since 1979 in building a new, more equitable society and a more democratic and responsive government. Our political support and our military and economic assistance have helped.

In line with the recommendations of the President's National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, we will continue to support the Salvadoran Government. Our moral and strategic interests coincide. In February 1984, we will follow up on the recommendations of the commission to request additional funds from Congress to address the economic, social, and security needs of El Salvador and the other countries of Central America.

Presidential elections are scheduled in El Salvador for March 1984. The Government of El Salvador, through its Peace Commission, has sought direct talks to encourage the guerrillas to participate in the balloting. The Peace Commission remains prepared to meet with the armed left and its political associates to discuss their participation in free elections, including physical security for candidates and access to the media. Elections for the Constituent Assembly and local mayors will be held in 1985. The government is committed to continuing to try to bring the left into participation in these elections.

Nonetheless, there is every indication that the guerrillas will attempt to disrupt these moves toward democracy. It is,

16-U.S. Military and Economic Assistance, FY 1984



therefore, imperative that Congress provide the needed levels of military and economic aid. The commitment of Salvadorans of the democratic center, who are defying both the communist guerrillas and the violence of the reactionary right, clearly justifies the continued support of the United States. ■

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Central
America

Methodist Group Seeks Recall of Missionaries

Support for Sandinistas Discerned in Letter

By David E. Anderson
United Press International

A group of conservative members of the United Methodist Church said yesterday that Methodist missionaries in Nicaragua who support the Sandinista government "have betrayed the truth" and should be recalled.

In an open letter to the Board of Global Ministries of the 9.2 million-member church, 15 members associated with the independent United Methodists for Religious Liberty and Human Rights criticized a letter sent to the church's bishops by four U.S. missionaries living in Nicaragua.

The missionaries' letter said church life in Nicaragua remains "relatively unaffected" by the state of emergency imposed by the Sandinista government and they said religious figures having trouble with the government "have abused their freedom of religion and speech to actively work in support of the counterrevolution."

The conservatives' letter said the missionaries "condone practices that are contrary to the policies of the United Methodist Church and

unacceptable to any organization that purports to uphold a single standard of religious freedom and human rights."

The group, an affiliate of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, an anti-Marxist organization that frequently criticizes leftist governments and U.S. church bodies with liberal foreign policy positions, said the bishops should "recall the United Methodist missionaries currently serving in Nicaragua for a thorough reconsideration of the mission of the United Methodist Church in Nicaragua."

"Their poor judgment and ill-conceived response to the current state of emergency offer evidence that they may be inadequately suited to represent our church—and our Lord—in a difficult field of service such as Nicaragua," the letter said.

"The United Methodist missionaries have betrayed the truth by denying the suffering of fellow Christians trying to live their faith," the letter said, a reference to the alleged harassment by the Sandinistas of Jimmy Hassan, Nicaraguan representative of Campus Crusade for Christ.

LA
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THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA

Office of Public Diplomacy for
Latin America and the Caribbean
United States Department of State
January 1986

THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA

Recent developments in Nicaragua indicate that the Sandinistas have accelerated their efforts to consolidate a totalitarian regime. They are moving to silence internal dissent and to increase military pressure against the democratic resistance with the assistance of large quantities of Soviet and Soviet-bloc arms. They have intensified their propaganda campaign against the United States and the Central American democracies even while they steadfastly reject a regional settlement within the Contadora framework.

This report discusses the hidden agenda behind the Sandinistas' recent maneuvers. It also chronicles the Sandinistas' crackdown on domestic opposition, their refusal to negotiate with the democratic resistance, and their renewed efforts to mount a propaganda war.

The Comandantes' Approach

A commitment to Marxism-Leninism has been a consistent theme in the internal documents and statements of the principal leaders of Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). This theme was stated in 1971 by Carlos Fonseca Amador who said the FSLN was a "successor of the Bolshevik October Revolution": and that Lenin's ideas are a "guiding star." The theme was echoed in 1979 in the "72-Hour Document" which described the FSLN as the "vanguard party" and part of the "world revolution" against "American imperialism," and repeated in Bayardo Arce's 1984 speech which dealt with the Sandinistas' commitment to Marxism-Leninism.

While the FSLN's allegiance to communism is clear within Nicaragua, the Sandinistas have taken care that only occasionally is it revealed in statements that reach audiences abroad. During their first years in power, this approach brought unprecedented amounts of Western economic assistance while the Soviets provided military and economic aid (totaling about \$500 and \$750 million respectively).

By October 1985, the Sandinista leaders reached a crucial turning point. Faced with spreading domestic discontent, growing armed resistance, and increasing international criticism, they let the mask drop. The October 15, 1985, suspension of civil liberties--including freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and freedom from arbitrary imprisonment--forms part of a campaign to neutralize the internal democratic opposition--including political, labor, and business leaders--as well as the church and the free press.

Borge Points the Way

On October 17, 1985, Minister of Interior Tomas Borge's speech commemorating the sixth anniversary of his ministry sought to

justify the State of Emergency. The following quotations are taken from that speech:

"Anything that hinders the stability of the revolution is objectively anti-patriotic."

"Any legal political activity is permitted, and any public activity with prior authorization from the proper authorities." [emphasis added]

"The State of Emergency is only to tie the hands of the people's enemies."

"Whoever violates the revolutionary laws...must face the consequences...."

"...Our struggle against the enemies who are being manipulated from abroad must be equal to our struggle against our internal enemies, both the ones who are openly trying to become U.S. imperialism's fifth column and those who, disguised as saints, or anything else, corrupt and obstruct the course of...the revolution."

"...Each and every one of us...pledge to advance in a struggle during which we will be utterly ruthless."

Taking Aim on the Church

The Catholic Church has been a particular target of the Sandinistas. The campaign against the Church expanded in September, when eleven young seminarians were forcibly drafted. In response, priests in the town of Rivas closed their churches and led public demonstrations protesting the drafting of the seminarians. The protest threatened to spread to other parishes. The Church station, Radio Católica, was raided twice by armed officials of the Ministry of the Interior, and live broadcasts of Cardinal Obando y Bravo's sermons have been prohibited. In one instance, Radio Católica was closed down for two days in retaliation for the uncensored broadcast of a sermon by the Cardinal on the lives of the saints. The Curia social services office has been occupied by Ministry of the Interior officials and termed "illegal" since it had not been officially recognized by the Sandinistas. The newly published church newspaper, Iglesia, was confiscated, printing equipment seized, and the Church prohibited from publishing further issues. Cardinal Obando y Bravo is under orders to obtain the regime's permission to celebrate Mass outside Managua. The Cardinal's popular outdoor masses have been banned, and worshipers prevented from entering towns where he was holding services. Church leaders have been interrogated by State Security, threatened with physical harm, and warned that foreign priests--a significant percentage of Nicaragua's Catholic clergy--will be expelled if Sandinista orders are disobeyed.

Harassment was extended to Protestant churches and organizations. On September 29, 1985, "Day of the Bible" activities sponsored by a number of evangelical churches were disrupted by Sandinista "divine mobs" (turbas divinas). Three U.S. evangelists--Larry Jones, David Spencer, and Fernando Nieto--who were invited to preach at the event were denied entry to the country.

On October 30, State Security began rounding up leaders and youth activists from such groups as Campus Crusade for Christ, the First Evangelical Church of Central America, the National Council of Nicaraguan Evangelical Pastors, the Alliance for Children, and the Nicaraguan Bible Society. These men and women have been stripped naked and forced to wait for long periods of time in dark, cold cells before interrogation.

On November 1, the offices of Campus Crusade for Christ were occupied by State Security, and private documents and mimeograph equipment seized.

Taking on the "Agents of Imperialism"

In addition to the churches and religious organizations, the regime has identified independent labor organizations, the independent press, the political opposition, and the private sector as elements of the internal counterrevolution. Accordingly, prominent members of these sectors have been arrested and interrogated.

The Sandinistas have also harassed and attempted to intimidate Nicaraguan employees of the U.S. Embassy in Managua. Since early November, more than a dozen employees have been summoned to appear before State Security authorities. All have been subjected to intense and often abusive interrogation for as much as 6 to 13 hours. All have been subjected as well to psychological abuse. The abuses include being forced to sit for extended periods in small windowless rooms, being allowed to sit or speak only when permitted by the interrogator, and being forced to walk with their heads down and eyes on the ground, accompanied by armed guards. Their summonses have usually come late at night, with security agents ordering them to appear at State Security headquarters early the next morning. All have been accused of working for the CIA, and have been told they were "prisoners." So far all have been released, but with warnings that they will be under surveillance in the future.

Sandinista Rejection of National Reconciliation

National reconciliation through dialogue is a fundamental principle of the Contadora process, which has worked toward a regional peace settlement. The principle was accepted by all five Central American nations. The draft treaty Nicaragua said it accepted without change contains a section entitled "Commitments with Regard to National Reconciliation."

These commitments include, among others, the obligation of nations experiencing insurgencies to create mechanisms for dialogue with opposition groups. The agreements also provide that the commitments of the parties "are of a legal nature and are therefore binding."

Despite this, the Sandinistas adamantly reject domestic dialogue. On February 22, 1985, the domestic opposition proposed: a national dialogue under the auspices of the Church; lifting the State of Emergency; freedom of expression; a general amnesty and pardon for political crimes; restoration of constitutional guarantees and the right to habeas corpus; guarantees of the safety of members of the resistance movement who participate in the dialogue; and the implementation of these measures under the supervision of guarantor governments.

On March 1, 1985, representatives of the Nicaraguan resistance (including representatives of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force--FDN; the Miskito group--MISURA; the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance--ARDE; and prominent democratic civilian leaders such as Arturo Cruz) proposed a national dialogue to be mediated by the Nicaraguan Catholic Church. It included a mutual ceasefire and acceptance of Daniel Ortega as president until such time as the Nicaraguan People decided on the matter through plebiscite. On March 22, the Nicaraguan Catholic Church Episcopal Conference issued a communique reiterating its previously expressed support for a national dialogue and declaring its willingness to act as a mediator.

President Reagan on April 4 undertook an initiative to keep the possibility of dialogue alive. A key feature was the offer to refrain from providing military assistance to the democratic resistance if the Sandinistas accepted the March 1 offer. Over the course of the summer and fall the United States further sought to encourage national reconciliation by tying U.S. participation in bilateral talks with the Sandinistas to moves toward internal dialogue in Nicaragua. The President associated the two points in a June 11 letter to Representatives Michel, McCurdy, and McDade that was released to the public. On July 26 in Mexico City, Secretary Shultz publicly stated U.S. willingness to resume bilateral talks if resumption would promote progress in Contadora and national reconciliation in Nicaragua. On October 29, Special Envoy Shlaudeman told Nicaraguan Ambassador Tunnermann that the United States would resume bilateral talks if the Sandinistas accepted the March 1 offer of the Nicaraguan resistance. Tunnermann responded on October 31 that the March offer was totally unacceptable.

Sandinista Propaganda

The Sandinistas use propaganda as an integral part of their political strategy. They censor the local media, and they work with the Cuban/Soviet-bloc propaganda network to influence public opinion abroad.

A main theme of Sandinista propaganda is that their revolution is a nationalistic reform movement bringing Nicaragua through difficulties inherited from the Somoza period and exacerbated by U.S. hostile actions. They attempt to discredit the democratic armed resistance by alleging human rights abuses and asserting that the leaders of the resistance were henchmen of Somoza.

Although they periodically claim that the insurgency is being defeated, they seek to use its existence to justify their crackdown on civil liberties and to explain their economic difficulties. The Sandinistas attempt to associate the unarmed democratic opposition and the Catholic Church with the armed insurgency. They also claim imminent U.S. invasion of Nicaragua, and falsely blame recent epidemics and crop failures on U.S. germ and chemical warfare.

The Sandinistas formed the new Nicaragua News Agency (ANN) with offices abroad related to the Cuban/Soviet network. They try to influence American public (and congressional) opinion and have hired three public relations firms to work in the United States. In addition, the Sandinista "peace" and "solidarity" groups, such as the Nicaraguan Peace Committee (CONIPAZ) and the Committee in Solidarity with the Peoples, work with leftist groups abroad to disseminate FSLN propaganda.

To foster their propaganda lines, the Foreign and Interior Ministries work closely with the FSLN's "peace" and "solidarity" organizations to bring foreigners to Nicaragua for carefully guided tours. They are guided to talk with people who will say just the right things. To avoid unwanted meetings, the Interior Ministry routinely sends State Security agents to clear the way of troublesome individuals and plants its own "casual encounter" teams for the visitors to meet.

Sandinista propaganda coordination is used to conceal human rights violations, including institutionalized killing, disappearances, and torture. The Interior Ministry has a special commission to investigate cases that have received international attention. The resulting information is not used to punish those responsible for human rights violations, but to develop credible cover stories. The government-sponsored human rights commission serves as a propaganda arm, defending the Sandinistas' record and directing attention to alleged abuses by the democratic resistance. This commission, for example, paid the bills, provided transportation, lodging, and office space, and arranged interviews for a group of lawyers sent by the Sandinistas' U.S. attorney to prepare a report on human rights.

Recent Military Activities

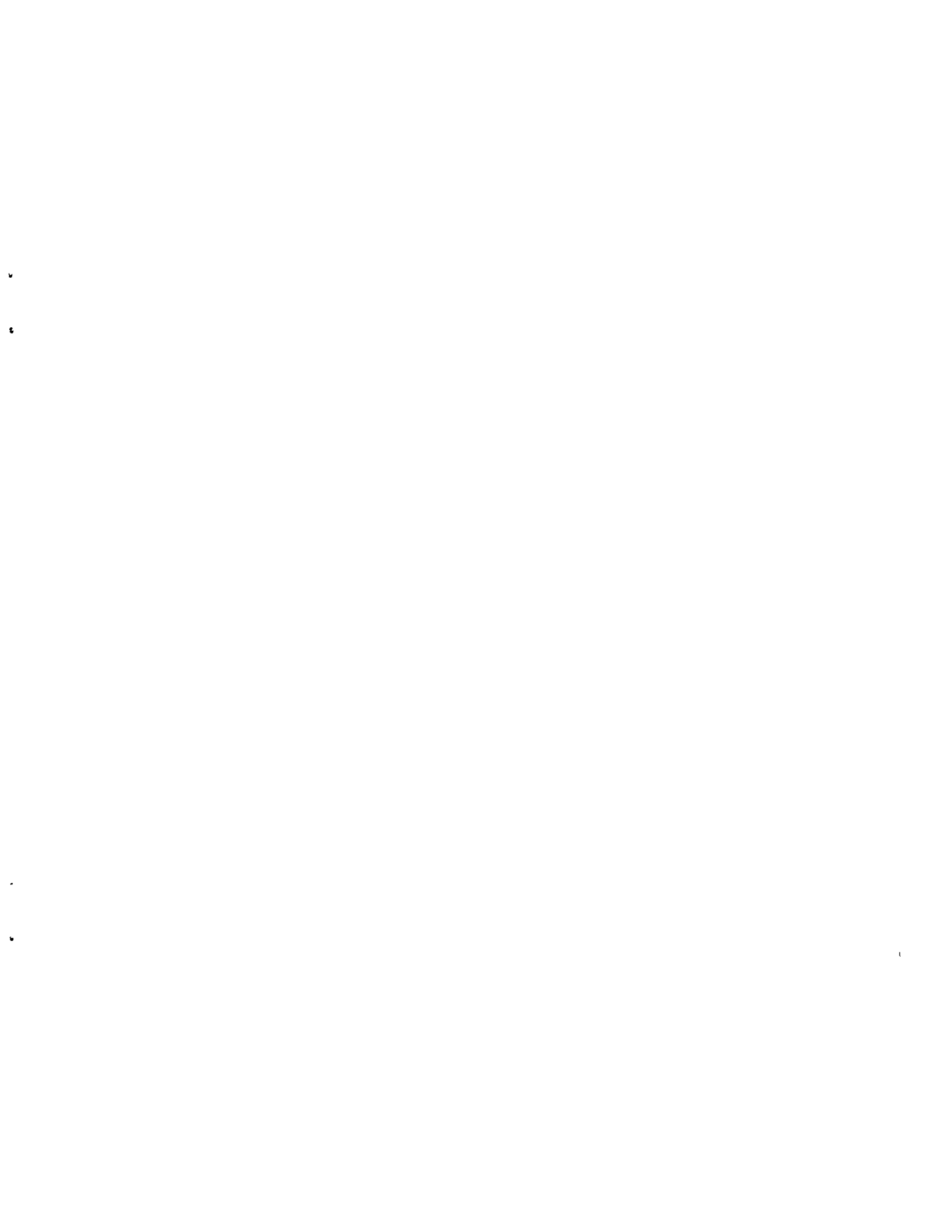
In recent months, the Sandinista armed forces have intensified military activities in the northern quarter of Nicaragua and the south-central region against democratic resistance forces.

The most dramatic new development in the Sandinista offensive has been the introduction of the Soviet-manufactured Mi-24 HIND-D attack helicopter. This helicopter has been widely employed by Soviet forces in Afghanistan and is currently being flown by Cuban combat pilots in offensive operations against the armed resistance. According to on-the-spot descriptions by resistance fighters, the combat tactics employed by these aircraft match standard Soviet patterns of engagement used in Afghanistan.

During the latter part of 1985, Cuban advisers assumed an increased command role in combat actions against the resistance. Recent defector information as well as debriefings of Sandinista prisoners of war have shown that Cuban officers have taken over key positions in several of the Sandinista special counterinsurgency battalions (BLIs). Resistance intelligence operations have also determined that the Cuban-advised Sandinista forces have infiltrated imposters who, claiming to be resistance fighters, have attempted assassinations of key resistance commanders. Interestingly, this was confirmed by Defense Minister Humberto Ortega in an interview with a U.S. reporter [transcript published in the FSLN official organ Barricada, October 10, 1985]. Multiple sources have confirmed that the Sandinistas, as part of their campaign to discredit the armed resistance, have established clandestine guerrilla units which pose as resistance bands and attack Nicaraguan civilians.

A Turning Point

In the last few months, the Sandinista government has gradually shed its mask of revolutionary respectability to reveal its frightening inner character. Promises of political and religious freedoms are replaced with broad suspensions of civil liberties. Increased censorship seeks to silence an already crippled independent press. Propaganda campaigns are geared to manipulate information Soviet-style. Meanwhile, Cuban and Soviet advisers manage the Nicaraguan armed forces. As each day passes, earlier promises of a free Nicaragua become disappointing memories. Increasingly, the Sandinistas' true agenda becomes apparent.



Sandinista persecution of Nicaragua's small Jewish community has resulted in the virtual disappearance of Jewish life in Nicaragua. An exiled Nicaraguan Jew has said: "Even before the Sandinistas came to power, they began threatening the Jews. . . . Graffiti by Sandinistas was widespread, with attacks on Jews and their religion. One was 'Death to Jewish pigs.' The initials FSLN in red and black left no doubt as to who was responsible."

- Oscar Kellermann, a former vice president of the Nicaraguan Jewish community suffered repeated harassment and three attempts on his life before finally being forced into exile just before the Sandinista takeover..
- Sarita Kellermann, Oscar's wife, returned to Nicaragua after the revolution, and received threatening phone calls ("What Hitler started, we'll finish.") repeated house searches without cause or warrant, vandalism and looting.
- Abraham Gorn, the 70-year-old former president of the Jewish community was imprisoned and forced to sweep the streets. Later his textile factory was confiscated and he was threatened with death unless he left the country.
- Official Sandinista publications contain anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist views, calling Jewish houses of worship "Synagogues of Satan," blaming the Jews for the death of Christ, and accusing the Jews of having a "bourgeois mentality."

Sandinista anti-Semitism dates to the 1960s when the FSLN made ties to the Palestine Liberation Organization, a terrorist group dedicated to the destruction of Israel and responsible for hundreds of attacks against Jews all over the world.

- Sandinista militants trained in guerrilla warfare at PLO camps in Libya in the 1960s and 1970s.
- Announcing their friendship with the PLO, Sandinista militants firebombed Managua's synagogue during a Friday night service in 1978. They later confiscated the synagogue, and covered it with pro-PLO, and anti-Zionist slogans.
- Sandinista officials and PLO leader Yasir Arafat have voiced their sympathy for each other, and their common cause, as commandante Tomas Borge did in 1980 saying, "We say to our brother Arafat that Nicaragua is his land and the PLO cause is the cause of the Sandinistas."

May 1985

CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1981-1985

Policy is Balanced

US policy has been balanced and prudent with four mutually reinforcing elements: encouragement for democracy; economic aid to help improve living conditions; active diplomacy for realistic political solutions if attainable; and, security assistance to give the people of Central America the means to defend themselves against expanded Soviet bloc/Cuban/Nicaraguan subversive aggression.

Much Progress Has Been Made

Much progress has been made in four of the five Central American countries since 1981: Costa Rican democracy remains stable; Honduras has succeeded in its peaceful transition to democracy; El Salvador has had three democratic elections, and the communist guerrillas are failing politically and militarily; Guatemala held fair and open constituent assembly elections in July 1984 and has scheduled democratic presidential elections in October--communist guerrillas there are weaker now.

Reasons to Support the Democratic Resistance

Support of the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance is correct for three reasons: first, it is legitimate self-defense, since the Sandinistas initiated armed subversion against their neighbors in 1979 and the Nicaraguan resistance, which began in 1982, is a clearly defensive response; second, it is more difficult for the Sandinistas to attack its neighbors when the Democratic Resistance attacks and ties up the military facilities used for this communist subversion; third, the Democratic Resistance Force prevents the Sandinistas from infiltrating thousands of their troops into neighboring countries disguised as domestic communist insurgents. The Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters are, thus, not only a reason for the Sandinistas to carry out their democratic commitment to the OAS, but a defense barrier for Nicaragua's neighbors.

Consequences of Communist Success

"Democracy can succeed in Central America, but Congress must release the funds that can create incentives for dialogue and peace. If we provide too little help, our choice will be a communist Central America with communist subversion spreading southward and northward. We face the risk that 100 million people from Panama to our open southern border could come under the control of pro-Soviet regimes and threaten the United States with violence, economic chaos, and a human tidal wave of refugees.

"If the United States meets its obligations to help those now striving for democracy, they can create a bright future in which peace for all Americans will be secure." (President Reagan; April 4, 1985)

NICARAGUA: OAS Diplomatic Recognition in 1979
The Requirement to Implement Democracy

On June 23, 1979, all OAS governments including the United States called for the immediate and definitive replacement of the Somoza government, through a resolution of the XVII Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of American States, which reads as follows:

"WHEREAS:

"The people of Nicaragua are suffering the horrors of a fierce armed conflict that is causing grave hardships and loss of life, and has thrown the country into a serious political, social, and economic upheaval;

"The inhumane conduct of the dictatorial regime governing the country, as evidenced by the report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, is the fundamental cause of the dramatic situation faced by the Nicaraguan people and;

"The spirit of hemispheric solidarity that guides Hemisphere relations places an unavoidable obligation on the American countries to exert every effort within their power, to put an end to the bloodshed and to avoid the prolongation of this conflict which is disrupting the peace of the Hemisphere;

"THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF CONSULTATION OF
MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,

"DECLARES:

"That the solution of the serious problem is exclusively within the jurisdiction of the people of Nicaragua.

"That in view of the Seventeenth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs this solution should be arrived at on the basis of the following:

1. Immediate and definitive replacement of the Somoza regime.
2. Installation in Nicaraguan territory of a democratic government, the composition of which should include the principal representative groups which oppose the Somoza regime and which reflects the free will of the people of Nicaragua.
3. Guarantee of the respect for human rights of all Nicaraguans without exception.
4. The holding of free elections as soon as possible, that will lead to the establishment of a truly democratic government that guarantees peace, freedom, and justice.

CENTRAL AMERICA & INTERNATIONAL LAW

By John Norton Moore

A principal argument of those opposed to U.S. funding of the counterrevolutionaries in Nicaragua is that it would be illegal under accepted norms of international law. The rule of law is at stake in Central America. But the real threat is the serious and sustained armed attack directed by Cuba and Nicaragua against El Salvador and neighboring states, in violation of the United Nations and Organization of American States charters.

To focus on the issue of funding, rather than on the Cuban-Nicaraguan attack, is to accept the childhood plea, "It all started when he hit me back." More dangerously, it is to confuse the defense with aggression, and thus to undermine the single most important normative restraint against the use of force. Moreover, the goals of deterrence and stability are at risk if we ignore the commitment made repeatedly by our country: that we will take effective action against aggressive use of force intended to deprive nations in this hemisphere of their right to self-determination. This commitment is found in the Monroe Doctrine and the hemispheric Rio Defense Treaty, and in the congressional Cuban resolution of 1962 and the 1965 House resolution on communist subversion in the hemisphere.

Since seizing power in 1959, Fidel Castro has directed insurgencies against 17 Latin American nations. Until the attack against El Salvador, the most serious of these was a sustained insurgency against Venezuela, condemned in 1964 by the OAS. The success of the Sandinistas—with substantial Cuban support—two decades after Castro's takeover in Cuba provided new ideological fervor and opportunity for what is now a joint Cuban-Nicaraguan policy of "revolution without frontiers."

Both the bipartisan Kissinger Commission and the House Select Committee on Intelligence have concluded that Cuba and Nicaragua are engaged in efforts to overthrow the governments of neighboring

states, particularly El Salvador. These efforts include meetings held in Cuba in December, 1979, and May, 1980, to forge a united Salvadoran insurgency under Cuban and Nicaraguan influence and assistance, including arms supply, training, financing, command and control, and political and technical support.

The resulting insurgency now fields well-trained armed forces one-fifth the size of the Salvadoran army, and operates 67 offices in 35 countries in political support of the continuing attack. As defectors' reports and weapon serial numbers demonstrate, the preponderance of the insurgents' weapons continues to be supplied externally. In fact, they had American M-16 rifles and M-60 machine guns (from stocks in Vietnam and Ethiopia) even before the Salvadoran army had those weapons.

Congress itself found, in the Intelligence Authorization Act of 1983, that the "actions of the governments of Cuba and Nicaragua threaten the independence of El Salvador and threaten to destabilize the entire Central America region, and the governments of Cuba and Nicaragua refuse to cease those activities."

These Cuban-Nicaraguan activities violate the United Nations Charter, the Charter of the Organization of American States, the Rio Defense Treaty, the United Nations definition of aggression, the 1965 U.N. General Assembly declaration on intervention, the 1970 General Assembly "friendly relations" declaration, the 1972 basic principles agreement, the 1975 Helsinki principles and even the Soviet draft definition of aggression.

This pattern of ongoing aggression constitutes an armed attack justifying the use of force in collective defense under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter and Article 3 of the Rio Treaty. Indeed, Article 27 of the OAS Charter declares that such an attack is "an act of aggression against . . . (all) the American states," and Article 3 of the Rio

Treaty creates a legal obligation on United States to assist in meeting armed attack. This obligation is parallel that owed by the United States to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (under Article 5 of the NATO Treaty) in the event of an attack on a NATO member.

A response in defense may lawfully be overt, covert or both, as has been the case in virtually every conflict in which America has fought in this century. In World War II no one suggested that Allied support of partisan forces or covert operations in Germany were illegal in responding to German aggression.

Certainly responses in defense must be proportional. But how is it disproportionate for the United States to respond against covert Cuban-Nicaraguan armed attacks aimed at overthrowing the democratically elected government of El Salvador by ruling out that same objective against totalitarian Sandinista military junta?

One of the most serious contemporary threats to world order is the aggressive covert political-military attack by an externally instigated and supported guerrilla insurgency. Such an attack from Cuba and Nicaragua is the world threat in Central America. Congress must decide whether it meant what it said in the 1962 Cuban resolution, when it pledged "that the United States is determined to prevent whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending, by force or the threat of force, its aggressive and subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere."

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Cuban Action</u>	<u>OAS Response</u>
1959	PANAMA - 80 to 100 fully armed guerrillas leave Cuba to invade Panama.	OAS investigating committee, using aircraft & patrol boats force invading forces to surrender.
1961	PERU alleges Cuban intervention and subversion.	OAS Council confirms Cuban subversion.
1961	COLOMBIA alleges Cuba a threat to peace and security of hemisphere.	Castro government excluded from participation in OAS.
1962	CUBA allows installation of nuclear weapons by USSR.	OAS authorizes individual and collective measures including force.
1963-64	VENEZUELA alleges Cuba depositing arms in Venezuela.	OAS verifies facts as true, votes sanctions against Cuba.
1967	VENEZUELA and BOLIVIA, allegations of Cuban intervention.	OAS condemns Cuba, extends sanctions including cutoff of government sales & credits to Cuba.

Since 1959, the OAS has sanctioned Castro Cuba a number of times for its export of subversion, which the OAS has considered a form of armed aggression. For example, in 1964, the 9th Meeting of Consultation of the OAS Ministers of Foreign Affairs established, among its conclusions, that "the Republic of Venezuela has been the target of a series of actions sponsored and directed by the Government of Cuba openly intended to subvert Venezuelan institutions and to overthrow the democratic government of Venezuela through terrorism, sabotage, assault and guerrilla warfare and that the aforementioned acts, like all acts of intervention and aggression, conflict with the principles and aims of the inter-American system (and therefore) resolves to declare that the acts verified by the investigating committee are considered an aggression and an intervention on the part of the Government of Cuba in the internal affairs of Venezuela which affect all the member states" (of the OAS).

January 11, 1984

BIPARTISAN COMMISSION REPORT--MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

Among the most important conclusions of the Bipartisan Commission's Report submitted to the President today are the following:

- the crisis is serious, and the US response must include support for democratic development, improved living conditions, diplomacy, and security assistance.
- the level of effort must be increased substantially.
- it is in the national security interest of the US to prevent a communist Central America: "the ability of the United States to sustain a tolerable balance of power on the global scene at a manageable cost depends on the inherent security of its land borders...therefore, the advance of Soviet and Cuban power on the American mainland affects the global balance. To the extent that a further projection of Soviet and Cuban power in the region required us to defend against security threats near our borders, we would face a difficult choice between unpalatable alternatives...either...a permanently increased defense burden, or see our capacity to defend distant troubled spots reduced, and as a result have to reduce important commitments elsewhere in the world." (meaning Europe, the Middle East and East Asia, chapter 6, page 91-92).
- Nicaragua violated its commitments to implement democracy and its export of subversion offers a forecast of what other marxist/leninist regimes would do: "as Nicaragua is already doing, additional marxist/leninist regimes in Central America could be expected to expand their armed forces, bring in large numbers of Cuban and other Soviet bloc advisers, develop sophisticated agencies of internal repression and external subversion, and sharpen polarizations, both within individual countries and regionally." (page 93)
- Consequences of this process would be severe in human as well as geopolitical terms: this would almost surely produce refugees, perhaps millions of them, many of whom would seek entry into the United States....The United States cannot isolate itself from the regional turmoil. The crisis is on our doorstep." (page 93)

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NICARAGUA - THE MILITARY BUILDUP SINCE JULY 1979

	TOTAL	Armed Forces (Active Duty and Mobilized Militia/ Reserves	Tanks	Other Armored Vehicles	Fix-Winged Aircraft/ Helicopters**	Airfields	Anti-aircraft Guns/Missile Launchers	Radars
July 1979	10	6	3	31	30/8	4	2/0	0
1 Jan 1980	22	16	3	31	30/8	4	2/0	0
1 Jan 1981	31	24	3	25	40/8	4	39/6	0
1 Jan 1982	51	39	30	45	40/10	4	100/6	0
1 Jan 1983	73	41	50	45	40/15	4	150/30***	0
1 Jan 1984	102	46	50	90	44/15	4	150/30***	0
1 June 1984	105	50	100	125	44/17	4	150/30***	Some
1 Nov 1984	119*	62	150	200	45/30**	5	200/300***	Some

* The Sandinistas have increased the armed forces, militia, and reserves to a total strength of 119,000. Of these, 62,000 are active duty and mobilized militia/reserves.

** Represents the minimum quantity present.

*** Sandinista Air Force now includes 30 helicopters of all types. At least five of these helicopters are MI-24 HINDS received in the last month.

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SANDINISTA AND HONDURAN MILITARY SINCE 1979

