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**Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs**

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January 5, 1984

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Special Assistant to the President  
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Office of Public Liaison  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Morton,

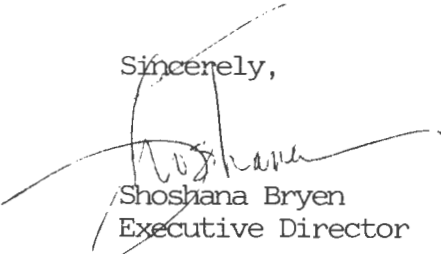
I thought the enclosed would be of interest to you.

The first is from the Washington Jewish Week. It contains so many factual problems that I have enlisted the aid of others to respond. I will let you know if the responses see print.

The second is from a quarterly magazine supplement to the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent. It raises good points which are of concern to the American Jewish community.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

  
Shoshana Bryen  
Executive Director

Shoshana Bryen  
Executive Director

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# Jews Spurn Reagan's Central America Crusade

## ISRAEL SELLS ARMS TO PRO-U.S. REGIMES

BY JERRY STILKIND

**T**he campaign by the Reagan administration to enlist American Jews in its crusade against the revolutionaries of Central America has had no visible success so far. Jewish leaders and organizations are putting no pressure on their friends in Congress who are critical of the administration's policies.

For Rep. Clarence D. Long (D-Md.), the reason is simple: "The great majority of Jews have too much sense to get involved in backing small groups in Central America trying to keep power by murder and assassination."

Another strong supporter of Israel, Rep. Michael D. Barnes, (D-Md.), is, like Long, chairman of a sub-committee important in making policy for Central America and a long-time critic of the President's policies. He, too, is a logical target for lobbying. Nevertheless, no Jewish leader or organization has asked him to modify his opposition since the White House and the State Department began their campaign last spring.

This refusal to join the administration comes despite the campaign's emphasis on two points: the long-standing ties between the Palestine Liberation Organization and guerrilla movements in Central America; and the charges that the revolutionary government in Nicaragua is anti-Semitic and drove out the small Jewish community in 1979 and 1980.

The Nicaraguan government makes no apologies for receiving and giving aid to the PLO, but strongly denies having discriminated against the Jewish community.

Israel in turn makes no apologies for having sold arms to Nicaragua prior to the 1979 Sandinista takeover or for its sales to other

America. They helped Israel in the past with arms and diplomatic support, and now are a source of earnings for Israel's vital defense industry.

### Trooper in campaign

The Reagan administration hopes such considerations will tear American Jews away from their traditionally liberal positions and toward the support of the counter-revolutionaries in Central America. One of the dedicated troopers in that campaign is Richard Krieger, associate coordinator of the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Refugee Affairs.

A six-foot, 200-pounder still as solid looking as the wrestler he was as an undergraduate in the 1950s at New York University, Krieger was an officer with the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies for 14 years before joining the Republican National Committee in 1980 as director of Jewish affairs. He was appointed to his State Department post a year later.

In the past two years, Krieger has spoken to more than 100 groups throughout the country: ethnic gatherings, conferences on terrorism and refugee affairs, and meetings of organizations concerned with international issues. Many of the groups have been Jewish. In all cases, he mentions how certain international crises have created or could create refugee populations.

The announced core of his message to Jewish groups is "The PLO Connection in Central America." He points out that the PLO trained "several" Nicaraguan Sandinista guerrillas in the Middle East in the early 1970s. In 1980, the PLO established an embassy in Nicaragua.

*Jerry Stilkind, a Washington freelance writer, is a student of Central America.*

PLO boss Yasser Arafat celebrated the first anniversary of the Sandinista's triumph in July 1980 in Nicaragua.

Krieger tells his audiences that another sworn enemy of Israel, Col. Muammar Qaddafi of Libya, has lent money to Nicaragua and supplied it with arms. The guerrillas in El Salvador, Krieger says, also have ties to the PLO and Qaddafi.

But this is only part of the issue to Krieger. "The enemy in Central

America, the major enemy in the Middle East, the major problem in Europe is the same, and it is the Soviet Union," he says. "Its target is the destabilization of any country with ties to the West, in general, and to the United States, in particular."

The same crusading spirit is expressed at another set of briefings for Jewish groups organized by the White House. "The same forces that operate in the Mideast operate in Central America," said to this reporter Michael R. Gale, who was White House liaison with the Jewish community until earlier this month.

Critics take strong exception to the administration's generalizations. They argue that poverty and repression, not the Soviet Union, cause rebellion in Central America.

About 100 groups numbering 25 to 200 local leaders from various Jewish organizations have come to Washington since March for briefings on the situation in the Middle East. The White House liaison makes sure that they also get a briefing on the PLO ties in Central America and anti-Semitism in Nicaragua.

Speaking to this reporter, a spokeswoman for the Nicaraguan embassy, Angela Saballos, acknowledged there were ties to the PLO. But she was reluctant to discuss the issue because, she said, she did not know much about it and, in any case, it would be used to discredit her government among American Jews.

Nicaraguan Sandinistas are still outraged at Israel's aid to the Somoza dictatorship, Saballos emphasized. "The only international debt of the Somoza government that we didn't pay (about \$60 million) was to Israel because it was directly for arms. It was a moral question for us," she said.

Her bitter tone comes from the belief that Israel supplied arms and ammunition to the Somoza regime down to the end, even after the United States had cut off its aid in 1979. The fighting left about 40,000 dead in a population of 2.5 million.

Published reports and U.S. government sources who asked not to be identified agreed that Israel was a major supplier of the Somoza government. According to the authoritative Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Israel in 1975 became a major source of planes, artillery, small weapons and ammunition in Central America.

There are no official figures on Israel's arms exports because the government has a long-standing policy of not making them public, according to Victor Harel, press counselor at the Israeli embassy in Washington.

### Arms purchases

Over the years, there have been many reports in major newspapers on Israeli arms sales. A usually reliable independent observer of

this murky world is a group of Washington-based newsletters published by a private company called Defense and Foreign Affairs, Ltd. Michael Collins Dunn, the publications' managing editor, compiled a list from various sources of Israeli sales to Central America as of 1982. He reports El Salvador bought about 24 French-built fighter planes from Israel beginning in 1975, 25 Israeli-made Arava short take-off and landing planes (particularly good for counterinsurgency fighting) from 1974 to 1981, 200 Uzi submachine guns and 200 80mm anti-tank rockets.

Guatemala purchased, according to Dunn, 11 Aravas, 10 to 25 RBY Mark 1 armored vehicles beginning in 1975, up to 20,000 Galil assault rifles, and an unknown number of Uzis.

Honduras, Dunn said, purchased 12 French-built Super Mystere B-2 fighter planes in 1979, two Aravas in 1980, 14 RBY Mark 1 armored vehicles, 10 107mm mortars in 1979, 16 160mm mortars in 1979, nine 106mm recoilless rifles in 1979 and some 4.2 inch mortars in 1979.

Israel had several reasons for selling arms to the Somoza regime. For one thing, dictator Anastasio Somoza's father arranged arms sales to the beleaguered Jewish forces in the 1948 War of Independence and

Nicaragua remained a friend of Israel at the UN. For another, continued Arab hostility has forced the Israelis to develop a defense industry all out of proportion to the size of its economy. This makes the sale of weapons an economic necessity.

Thus, Third World countries and liberation movements that support the Arab cause have helped bring about the very condition they deplore—a large Israeli defense industry ready to sell to almost anyone ready to buy.

The only help the Sandinistas could get in the early 1970s was from Cuba and the PLO because both were anti-American. Strained relations with Israel were inevitable once the revolutionaries came to power. This might not possibly be the case in El Salvador and Guatemala, where military repression has forced almost all of the center and moderate left to join the extreme left guerrillas in the hills. The center had no history of anti-Israeli leanings but this could change if, for example, closer ties now planned between El Salvador and Israel lead to counterinsurgency aid by Israeli experts.

### No decisions

"I think the discussion between the two countries this past summer covered all areas where El Salvador needs aid, in agriculture, maybe internal security," an Israeli embassy spokesman said. "But no decisions have been made, to the best of my knowledge." U.S. State Department sources also said they were not certain what closer Israeli-El Salvadoran ties might include.

### Sandinista anti-Semitism

The accusation that Sandinista anti-Semitism drove the small Jewish community of 50 persons into exile was made last May by Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal, director of the Latin American Affairs Department of the Anti-Defamation League.

In an article in the ADL Bulletin, he charged that "Nicaragua today is a country without Jews, but not without anti-Semitism." Antonio Jarquin, the Nicaraguan ambassador in Washington, replied in a nine-page letter on Aug. 2, arguing that, after an investigation by his government, he could confidently state "that the accusations...are false."

The Nicaraguans did not respond to all of the rabbi's charges. For example, he wrote that a bomb thrown at the synagogue in Managua, the nation's capital, the year before the Sandinistas were victorious, was a clear example of Sandinista anti-Semitism.

Other examples of anti-Semitism, Rabbi Rosenthal stated, could be found in a pro-government newspaper in 1982 that raised the old canard of Jews controlling the finances of the world.

In some instances, the rabbi seems to overstate his case. For example, he wrote that the Sandinistas drove out all Jews. The ambassador's response lists eight Jews living and working in Nicaragua, and others who still own property there even though they are out of the country. The ambassador also invited those who left to return—provided they had no ties to the ousted dictatorship.

Another problem is that the only individuals named by the rabbi as having grievances against the Sandinistas stand accused of having been close to the Somoza family, and of income tax and other frauds.

A long Washington Post article in August quoted some of the few

remaining Jews in Nicaragua as saying there was no anti-Semitism there.

Finally, the American Jewish Committee first investigated such charges in 1980 and found no basis for them. Its director of Latin American affairs, Jacobo Kavadloff, is now reinvestigating the charges because of Rabbi Rosenthal's work, but he has found no reason so far to change the earlier conclusion. Furthermore, he said, a Panamanian rabbi representing the World Jewish Congress who visited Nicaragua this summer along with a Roman Catholic and a Protestant clergyman "found no reason to accuse the government of anti-Semitism."

President Ronald Reagan seized on the anti-Semitism charges on July 20, even though four days earlier the U.S. embassy in Nicaragua reported "the evidence fails to demonstrate that the Sandinistas have followed a policy of anti-Semitism or have persecuted Jews solely because of their religion."

The President told about 200 people, including Rabbi Rosenthal, that "Jews were terrorized into leaving Nicaragua," and that "the Sandinistas seem always to have been anti-Semitic."

Perhaps Rabbi Rosenthal would not have been at the meeting if the Sandinistas had replied to his concerns in 1981 when he first quietly brought them up with Nicaraguan officials. Repeated requests for information were not answered—not until he went public with his charges last spring and the Nicaraguans saw their enemies picking up the accusations.

The rabbi told this reporter that his work is not meant to support the administration's policy in Central America. Now that he has the attention of the Nicaraguans, he has asked them: What charges, if any, are pending against Jews who have left the country; what is the status of their property; and whether their safety can be assured if they were to return.

His charges are being used by the enemies of the Sandinistas and they are being publicized in Jewish magazines and newspapers. "Rabbi Rosenthal's position...happens to coincide with the administration's position," this reporter was told by Morton Blackwell, program officer of the White House Central American Outreach Group.

"We're trying to build a national consensus for the President's policies," Blackwell explained. He, like the State Department's Krieger, is not discouraged because the campaign does not seem to have had any effect in Congress.

For one thing, they say, they are forbidden by law from urging anyone to lobby Congress. For another, they believe it will take time. "We have a big educational job to do."

But those on the side of the Central American

doves in Congress who are pro-Israel have strong reasons to believe that the campaign will never succeed. They argue that the PLO ties to the revolutionary left, while real, are minimal, and that there is no reason to believe they will amount to more in the future.

#### **No firm evidence**

Also, there is no firm evidence so far that systematic anti-Semitism drove out the Jewish community of Nicaragua. Certainly, the Sandinistas did not understand one of the most basic fears of Jewish communities all over the world—persecution and expulsion—until they saw the political damage that such charges could have on their support in this country.

Finally, congressional critics of the administration's policies have distanced themselves from the Nicaraguan and other Central American revolutionary movements.

They say they are not supporting the Nicaragua government but are opposing the administration's attempts to overthrow a government it does not like. They do not support the guerrillas in El Salvador or Guatemala, but oppose what they say is a waste of economic, diplomatic and military aid on right-wing regimes that either never had or have lost the support of their own people. Similarly, they have no faith that the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries could win without massive U.S. aid.

The underlying theme here is the need to stay clear of a Vietnam-type swamp. That probably still has powerful appeal in the American Jewish community, particularly when one can read and see daily reports about government backed death squads in El Salvador and Guatemala and former leaders of the Nicaraguan dictatorship heading the counter-revolutionary forces.

# IN THE WAKE OF THE PLO-BACKED REVOLUTION

*The exiled Jews of Nicaragua  
ask the world for help.*

By Stewart Ain

The Palestine Liberation Organization is at work not only in the Middle East but on the very doorstep of the United States — Central America. And as in the Middle East, its target is the Jew. Already virtually every Jew in Nicaragua has been forced into exile by that country's PLO-backed Sandinista regime, and the PLO is using Nicaragua as its base of operations in Central America and Panama.

One Latin American ambassador said the amount of PLO arms and financial support pouring into Nicaragua represents an "Arab offensive" unprecedented in Central America.

The ties are clear between the PLO and the Sandinista regime that ousted President Anastasio Somoza Debayle on July 17, 1979. A Sandinista spokesman, Jorge Mandi, stated that many members of the Sandinista movement had been to Palestinian bases in Jordan. He also said that in the early 1970s, "Nicaraguan and Palestinian blood was spilled together in Amman and in other places during the Black September battles."

He went on to say that a "number of Sandinistas took part in the operation to divert four aircraft" seized by the PLO and sent to airfields in Jordan. "It is natural, therefore, that in our war against Somoza, we received Palestinian aid for our revolution in various forms," Mandi said.

Only recently, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, the leader of the Sandinista junta, dedicated a geothermal energy plant to the late Patricio Arguello Ryan, one of the squad of PLO members who was shot and killed by Israeli security forces in 1970 as the group tried to hijack an Israeli airliner at Lod Airport. Ortega hailed the slain Sandinista idol as an "exemplary internationalist" who died in the "people's struggle."

The Somoza regime, on the other hand, was friendly toward Israel. When Israel declared its independence in 1948 and was then forced to fight its Arab neighbors for its very survival, Somoza was one of the few who came to Israel's aid. He acted as a middleman to surreptitiously channel arms to Israel at a time when Israel needed it most.

Israel never forgot Somoza and in later years sent arms to him in his battle against the Sandinistas. The two nations maintained cordial relations and exchanged non-resident ambassadors. And Israel could always count

on Nicaragua for support in the United Nations.

Nicaraguans flew to Israel to take courses in such subjects as agriculture and community organization. And Israelis traveled to Nicaragua to help with agricultural settlement and to conduct a mobile course in agricultural cooperation. By 1969, Israel was exporting about \$100,000 worth of products to Nicaragua, primarily synthetic fibers.

It took a seven-week long civil war to topple the Somoza regime. An estimated 10,000 Nicaraguans were killed and half a million were made homeless in the bloodbath. But the Sandinista struggle to undermine the Somoza regime began many months earlier and among the first to feel it were the Jews of Nicaragua, who numbered only 50 in 1978.

"Nicaraguan Jews never encountered anti-Semitism until the Sandinistas started their revolution," recalled Isaac Stavisky, a 43-year-old Nicaraguan-born Jew. "Even before the Sandinistas came to power, they began threatening Jews. A favorite tactic was to anonymously phone Jewish homes with warnings that, 'We are going to get you Jews.' They claimed that we were responsible for the killing of Nicaraguans because of guns sold to the Somoza regime by Israel."

He said also that Sandinista graffiti were widespread during the revolution, much of it directed against Jews. Such scrawlings as "Death to the Jewish Pigs" were commonplace. And the fact that they were signed with the initials FSLN left no doubt that they were put there by the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

In addition to graffiti, the Sandinistas also waged a terror campaign against the Jews of Nicaragua. Stavisky, who together with his brother-in-law, Saul Retelny, ran a complex of three factories that manufactured yarn, textiles and candy, was a victim of that campaign. It included anonymous phone calls to Retelny that threatened both his life and that of his wife.

"The calls came to his business office and to his home at all hours of the night," Stavisky said. "One favorite tactic was to call my brother-in-law around three o'clock in the morning and tell him that I had been shot and

killed. At the same time, I would get a telephone call claiming that my brother-in-law had been shot and killed."

The Sandinistas also covered the walls of their factories — both inside and out — with such warnings as: "Death to the Jews," "Isaac will be killed," "Beware of Sandinista Justice."

The terrorists weren't just anonymous graffiti artists and voices on the phone. In May 1979, Stavisky recalled that he was riding in his car with his 12-year-old son when he stopped at a traffic light in the capital city of Managua. A motorcyclist pulled up beside the car, put a gun to Stavisky's head and said, "We know your number. I am going to kill you, you dirty Jew. When the revolution comes, I am going to get you. You sold arms to Somoza from Israel."

The terrorist then sped away. Stavisky is convinced that the man was a Sandinista because, had he been simply a deranged fanatic, "he would have killed me then and there."

The Nicaraguan Jewish community received a clear message of intent in 1978 when five Sandinista sympathizers wearing face handkerchiefs fire-bombed Managua's only synagogue in the middle of Friday night services. The gasoline bomb set fire to the main entrance. Two of the worshippers ran to a side door to escape but were met by a burst of automatic gunfire. "Get back inside, you dirty Jews, or we'll kill you."

The two worshippers, Lazlo Gewurstz and Gyula Pinkes, were forced back inside the burning building. Stavisky said both men are survivors of Nazi concentration camps and this traumatic experience "evoked terrible memories which they thought they had put behind them when they fled from Nazi terrors and found refuge in Nicaragua."

Other worshippers called the fire department and the blaze was extinguished before it spread beyond the doors. The arsonists had earlier fled shouting anti-Jewish slogans and "long live Sandino."

The synagogue was one of the first properties confiscated by the Sandinistas when they seized power. Last April, Carlos Arguello, the vice-minister of justice in Nicaragua, told the Human Rights Committee at the United Nations that the governing junta had turned the synagogue over to the Association for Sandinist Children to be used for social purposes. The four Stars of David on the outside of the building were covered with propagan-

da posters; and the inside walls and stained glass windows were plastered with anti-Zionist propaganda.

In 1981, Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal, director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith's Latin American Affairs Department, quietly began asking Nicaraguan officials about the status of Jews in Nicaragua. He provided them with the names of three Jews who claimed that their property had been illegally confiscated. The officials said they would look into the matter, but did nothing.

Last June, Rosenthal again met with Nicaraguan officials and they refused to even acknowledge the presence of a synagogue in Managua. They said only that a building owned by a man named Abraham Gorn had been confiscated along with his other assets.

But after members of the Nicaraguan Jewish community-in-exile produced a copy of a 1975 notarized contract recording the purchase of land for the purpose of constructing a "Jewish temple," the Sandinistas conceded that the synagogue existed and offered to give it back to the Jews who had fled.

That has not lifted the spirits of Gorn's son, Isaac, 47, who like Stavisky and many other Nicaraguan Jews now lives in Miami.

"They say it was all a mistake — taking away the synagogue — but they knew what they were doing from the beginning," he insisted. "They just never expected to have so much pressure placed upon them."

It was Abraham Gorn who, as president of the Nicaraguan Jewish community, first apprised Rosenthal of conditions in Nicaragua after the Sandinistas took over. The two men had met in 1978 when Rosenthal was on a visit to Nicaragua. And it was information provided by Gorn and other Jews that led the ADL to claim that the Jews of Nicaragua were forced from their homes because of anti-Semitism on the part of the Sandinistas.

Despite his status as president of the Nicaraguan Jewish community, Gorn was not immune to harassment from the Sandinista authorities. In January 1979, part of his clothing factory was burned. Isaac Gorn said the insurance company agreed to pay \$1.5 million for the damage but that his family never saw a penny of the money. He speculated that the Sandinistas may have taken at least part of it.

The elder Gorn left Nicaragua at the end of June 1979 when the fight for power intensified. Gorn waited in Miami for the revolution to end and then returned to Managua because, his son said, "He felt he had done nothing wrong."

But no sooner did he return than Gorn was arrested and jailed on charges of stealing land. During his imprisonment, he was ordered to sweep the streets twice a day. He was 70 years old at the time.

Isaac Gorn flew to Costa Rica as soon as he learned of his father's arrest. He contacted officials in the Ministry of Defense, who interceded in the elder Gorn's behalf. Gorn was then cleared of the charges against him and released. For the next six months, he ran his jeans factory until one day the Sandinistas came and told him it was no longer his. Some employees warned Gorn that if he did not stay away, they had orders to bomb his car.

"To make things doubly painful," said Isaac Gorn, "when they later drove to his home to kick him out of there too, they drove up in my confiscated car. My mother had left Nicaragua two weeks earlier to see a doctor in the United States. So my father just sat in the street until a friend finally picked him up and took him to the Costa Rican Embassy.

"When I heard the news, I went back to Costa Rica and hired a charter plane for \$500 to fly my father out of Nicaragua. They wouldn't let him take a commercial plane. He went to the airport in an embassy car. The Sandinistas had guards watching him to make sure he wouldn't run away. Where was he going to run — a 70-year-old man?"

There are other stories. Freddy Luft came to Nicaragua from Rumania after World War II and by the time of the Sandinista take-over, he owned a textile plant and two retail stores. He hired a member of the Sandinista party to be his general manager. This man warned him that once the Sandinistas gained control, Luft's business would be confiscated and Luft thrown in jail. So Luft went to the German Embassy in Managua and was evacuated along with members of the German community.

Max Najman was the honorary consul of the State of Israel. He was forced to flee in 1978 after the Sandinistas' clandestine radio station announced that he was marked for death because of his post with the Israeli government.

Najman left his plastic factory in the hands of his son, Jimmy, who ran it for one year until the Sandinistas came and told him it was being confiscated. He protested to the newspaper *La Prensa*, after which the Sandinistas came looking for him. He then managed to flee on foot to Costa Rica.

Despite this evidence, not everyone is convinced that the Jews of Nicaragua fled because of anti-Semitism. The American Jewish Committee's director for Mexico and Central America, Sergio Nudelstejer, found in 1980 that although the Jews of Nicaragua left during the revolution, they did so because they saw no future for themselves in that country.

"During the conflict that brought down the Somoza regime in Nicaragua, virtually the entire Jewish community of some 75 families moved out of the country," he wrote. "The Sandinista government, it should be pointed out, has not demonstrated any anti-Semitism or anti-Jewish stance; simply, the community had almost vanished by the time it came to power. Some Jews had suffered from the earthquake that devastated the capital city of Managua some years ago, others fled during the revolutionary fighting. A few have returned, but seemingly just to liquidate their holdings."

Abraham Karlikow, the AJC's director of foreign affairs, said that in light of the ADL charges, his office is going to reexamine the situation. He hastened to point out that Jews have been quick in the past to level charges of anti-Semitism.

"The ADL spoke to some Nicaraguan Jews in order to come up with its conclusions," Karlikow said. "We want to see what the other Nicaraguan Jews have to say. When we put out our position paper three years ago, we were satisfied with it. In the end, we may be wrong. Then again, we may be right."

He pointed out that the Nicaraguan Jewish community is not totally decimated; three or four Jews still live there. He said that efforts might be made to contact them, as well as the Sandinista government. But he stressed that he did not want to offer any opinion about the ADL findings because he did not want to "prejudge" the outcome of the AJC investigation.

Farrel Broslawsky, a professor at Los Angeles Valley College, sharply attacked the ADL report in an article printed in the *L. A. Weekly* and reprinted in *Israel Today* (Sept. 23, 1983). He maintained that Gorn and Stavisky were close friends and associates of Jose Somoza, the dictator's half brother "who headed the vicious National Guard and who was best known for his delight in the more refined forms of torture. With the fall and flight of the Somozas, the business activities of Abraham Gorn and his associates

came under Sandinista judicial scrutiny. Evidence was found linking him to armament shipments to the National Guard in the twilight days of the dictatorship."

Broslawsky argued that not every attack upon an individual who happens to be Jewish is motivated by anti-Semitism. "Bugsy Siegal was not killed because he was a Jew; Meyer Lansky was not hounded because he was a Jew. . . . the same is true of a small number of Jews who fled Nicaragua after the Sandinista revolution and who now publicly whine that they were the victims of Sandinista anti-Semitism." During a visit to Nicaragua, Broslawsky could not find any evidence of anti-Semitism — no posters, no graffiti and no one who would corroborate the evidence in the ADL report.

The Sandinista government is also upset about the ADL findings. Nicaraguan Ambassador to the United States, Antonio Jarquin, told representatives of ADL last August that his country has nothing against Jews. He denounced anti-Semitism as "morally reprehensible" and said that it is contrary to Nicaraguan law.

Nevertheless, as Rosenthal pointed out last June, the "Nicaraguan situation demonstrates that one does not need official policy in order to persecute a small community. It can be affected far more subtly by threat, intimidation and confiscation, thus avoiding the condemnation that Nuremberg-type laws would invite."

And sometimes the Nicaraguan newspapers speak louder than diplomats. During the initial weeks of the Israeli incursion into Lebanon, *Nuevo Diario*, the Managua newspaper that closely adheres to the government line, claimed that the Israelis "used the myth of God's chosen people to massacre the Palestinian people without mercy."

In a subsequent edition, the paper wrote that the "world's money, banking and finances are in the hands of descendants of Jews, the eternal protectors of Zionism. Consequently, controlling economic power, they control political power as now happens in the United States."

It added that President Reagan's support of Israel during the conflict must mean that he has "Jewish ancestry."

Reagan himself spoke out against the Sandinista regime last July at a meeting with ADL officials and Isaac Stavisky. He said the "self-proclaimed blood unity between the Sandinistas and the PLO is evident for all the

world to see and is an evil echo of history. Virtually the entire Jewish community of Nicaragua has been frightened into exile. . . . Please share the truth that Communism in Central America means not only the loss of political freedom but of religious freedom as well."

There are reports that the Sandinistas are sending arms to leftist rebels in El Salvador. Meanwhile, the Israelis, with the encouragement of the United States, have been sending captured PLO arms to rebels in Honduras who are bent on overthrowing the Sandinista regime.

Throughout this international intrigue, the Nicaraguan Jewish community-in-exile is angered because of the lack of knowledge or concern being displayed by fellow Jews in the United States. Gorn has said that he doesn't know of one Nicaraguan Jew who was interviewed by the AJC before it issued its report clearing the Sandinistas in 1980 of any anti-Semitism.

"They are just as bad as the Sandinistas," he said of the AJC. "They don't want to see that our synagogue was taken over. They are only looking at one side. My father believed in the country. Whatever he made, he invested in Nicaragua. Now he has lost it all."

To counter the AJC charge that the Jews left because they saw no future in the country, Gorn cited the rebuilding of the synagogue following the 1972 earthquake as evidence of their desire to stay. He said that although half of the Jewish community left after the earthquake, those who stayed poured \$100,000 into rebuilding the synagogue.

He also dismissed the AJC's contention that no Jews remain in Nicaragua, when in fact there are four left. One of them is protected because he is the brother of a Castro confidante; two others are old men with French passports; and the fourth carries a Venezuelan passport.

Gorn's countryman, Isaac Stavisky, expressed concern for Jewish people in other Central American countries, no matter how small their numbers.

"A lot of people don't know what is going on," he said. "They think they are in an oasis here in the United States and that the hatred for Jews will not come to them."

"But it's not just on behalf of the few remaining Jews in Nicaragua that we speak. It is for the other Jews, those in Peru who are now leaving because of the PLO activity there. There are 3,000 Jews living in Peru." □