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Isaac Stavisky #707  
6039 Collins Ave.  
Miami Beach, Fl 33140

Mr. Morton Blackwell  
The White House

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

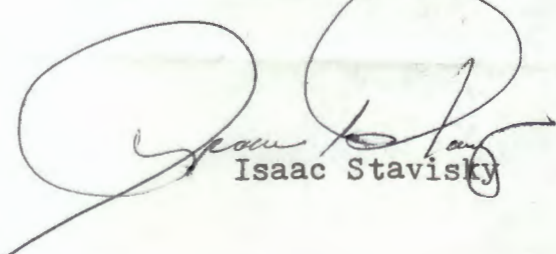
First of all, I would like to wish you a happy new year and a prosperous 1984.

When invited to speak at various colleges, I also gave interviews in newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations in the state of Massachusetts. I tried to contact you twice but I could only talk to your secretary.

I have to tell you that my trip was a complete success in trying to get across to the people of Massachusetts our points of view and President Regan's views on the situation of Nicaragua. I am happy to say that the President is going to get much more votes in the state of Mass. in the coming election.

I also would like to remind you that it has been a few months since I sent my and my son's papers in order to get our permit to travel outside the U.S. and I would like very much if you could tell me what is the status on these papers. Hoping to hear from you and best wishes for the new year.

I remain truly yours,

  
Isaac Stavisky

Will,  
please  
get  
this  
on  
for me.  
spoke by  
phone  
1/27/84  
MR



# Nicaraguan Exiles Ask for More Guns

By MARGARET ATTWOOD

CIA-backed rebel forces in Nicaragua "don't have enough guns and bullets," and need more money, according to exile Isaac Stavisky.

Stavisky and another Nicaraguan exile spoke against the Sandinista regime Wednesday at the Springfield Marriott Hotel as part of a program sponsored by the Mid-American Conservative Political Action Committee.

Stavisky, a businessman, said about 50 Jews was forced to flee the Central American country after being threatened with death.

"We were persecuted because we were Jews," he said.

The "Contras," a group of U.S.-backed guerrillas composed mainly of ousted military police from the Guardia Nacional, must have additional U.S. aid for ammunition and weapons to overthrow what he considers is a Cuban-style Marxist regime, Stavisky said.

"We're fighting to get our country back into a democracy. They're puppets of the the Soviet Union. This country doesn't realize that the rest of Central America is going to fall if it's going to have more than 100 million people trying to get into the United States," he said.

The security of this country is going to be in jeopardy. We need the American people to know what's going on. In Nicaragua, if you don't support the party you don't get a food rationing card. President Reagan is doing a lot to help us, but he's getting too much opposition from the politicians in the United States," he said.

Stavisky said he was not involved in the regime of the late Anastasio Somoza, but was persecuted because of his religion.

Ivan Pereira, a Miskito Indian

and a Christian Democrat, said he had been in favor of the revolution until Marxist forces began dominating the ideology of the revolutionary movement. He said the Miskito Indians have been persecuted by the Sandinistas.

Pereira said he fled the country prior to the revolution because his life was threatened. He said 50 of his people were killed in one night because they refused to submit to the ideals of the Sandinista government.

Carolynn Blair, who recently returned from a fact-finding tour in Nicaragua sponsored by the Independent Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, said she spoke with a Moravian missionary to the Miskito Indians during her visit to the country.

"He said it was a very complex situation, and that the Sandinista government realizes it made mistakes in dealing with the Miskito Indians."

Ms. Blair said the Miskito Indians are a separate group of people who live between Honduras and Nicaragua and who speak their own language and were left alone by the Somoza government.

Many of these people were moved to another location after the Sandinistas came into power, she said.

Pereira said he is not in favor of returning the country to a Somoza-style dictatorship, but would like to see a democratic government installed.

He disagreed with reports that the government has gained the support of most Nicaraguans. He said support was strong during the first few years following the revolution, but that the Sandinistas have since fallen out of favor with more than half of the people.



VIEWPOINTS — Isaac Stavisky, left, and Ivan Pereira discuss their views of conditions in Nicaragua during a Wednesday news conference in Springfield. (Mario Sarno photo)

*Springfield Daily News*

*12/8/83*





Tom Clor

Ivan Pereira, left, a former member of the Nicaraguan Human Rights Commission, listens as Isaac Stavisky, a former Nicaraguan businessman, denounces the Sandinista leadership during a press conference held Wednesday in Springfield.

## Nicaraguan Exiles Say U.S. Should Pressure Sandinistas

By DIANE LEVICK  
Courant Staff Writer

SPRINGFIELD — The United States should not be fooled by the Nicaraguan government's recent concessions to dissidents and should pressure the leftist regime more to hold free elections, two Nicaraguan self-exiles said Wednesday.

Ivan Pereira, former member of the Nicaraguan Human Rights Commission, and Isaac Stavisky, a former Nicaraguan businessman, denounced the Sandinista leadership during a press conference sponsored by the Mid-America Conservative Political Action Committee and the Massachusetts Conservative Caucus.

Both men said they fled Nicaragua in 1979, the year of the revolution in which the Sandinistas seized power, because they believed their lives were endangered.

Pereira, a lawyer who said he fought against the regime of President Anastasio Somoza Debayle and had been imprisoned many times, charged Wednesday that the Sandinistas betrayed the reasons for the revolution and have imposed "the worst dictatorship... in all our history."

Pereira and Stavisky cited media censorship — though recent news reports say it has been eased — persecution of the country's Miskito Indians and eco-

governments practices anti-Semitism.

The U.S. government should put more economic and diplomatic pressure on the Sandinistas to talk with their opposition and to submit to free elections supervised by the Organization of American States, Pereira said.

The Sandinistas' announcement Sunday that it will welcome back most exiles who fled since 1979 is an empty gesture, Stavisky said.

The government has required that the exiles return by Feb. 21, which gives them too little time to make arrangements, and has not promised that the returning exiles will not be jailed, Stavisky said. "They're not guaranteeing anything at all," he said.

The amnesty decree, Stavisky said, is meant just to boost the government's tarnished image. "They're doing a hell of a good job with a Madison (Avenue) type campaign in the U.S.," he said.

Stavisky, who owned textile, yarn and candy factories in Nicaragua, said he was one of about 120 Jews who fled in 1979.

The Sandinistas persecuted Jews by threatening them and seizing the country's only synagogue because the Sandinistas linked all Jews with Israel, which sold arms to the Somoza government, Stavisky said.

The businessman said he decid-

BUY A BONE FOR  
A DOG  
for Christmas



A Big Thank You  
from All of Us!

AND DON'T FORGET THE  
CATNIP FOR THE CATS

LITTLE GUILD OF ST. FRANCIS  
FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS  
West Cornwall, Conn.

DONOR'S NAME.....  
ADDRESS.....

Mail Tax Deductible Contribution to:  
Mrs. Florence Hunter, Treasurer  
Canaan, Conn. 06018

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Manchester Union Leader 12-9-83

## Tsongas, Others Misled, Nicaraguan Indian Says

BOSTON (UPI) — A Nicaraguan Indian critical of his country's Sandinista government and United States supporters yesterday said at least 500 Miskito Indians were killed in a single night by government soldiers.

Ivan Pereira and a Jewish exile, Isaac Stavisky, said U.S. officials, including Sen. Paul Tsongas, D-Mass., have been misled by the Nicaraguan government.

Pereira, a human rights commission director, left Nicaragua after he had been imprisoned several times. Stavisky said he left when his life was threatened.

Pereira said while some United States senators and congressmen have visited the country and said there are no human rights violations, he knows of at least one incident where 500 Miskito Indians were killed by the army.

Pereira said they were killed because the Indians resisted the government's attempts to teach Marxist ideologies.

Stavisky, an exiled businessman and human rights leader, said there are only two Jews left in that country because the rest escaped when the Sandinista government came into power.

He said Jews were forced out because the government believed they were pro-Israeli and the Sandinista government had its army trained by the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The two said American citizens have only heard the Sandinista government's propaganda and don't know there is persecution and oppression in Nicaragua.

"We're zeroing in on Tsongas' support of loans to this Marxist regime in Nicaragua and his total blind acceptance of persecution there," said Ted Temple, leader of a predominantly Republican conservative group which sponsored the two at a news conference.



**NICARAGUAN INDIAN**  
Ivan Pereira speaks out in Boston news conference against leftist Sandinista government.

(UPI TELEPHOTO)

The Nicaraguan government said Stavisky's safety cannot be guaranteed if he returns.

"The only two Jews left are a 70-year-old man and another man with relations in Cuba. Some senators and congressmen say the Jews are not being persecuted but they can't be because there's no Jewish population anymore," Stavisky said.

Pereira said "all the Nicaraguan people wanted revolution to free us from the dictatorship, but we soon realized all we got was a new dictatorship from the left."

"We're zeroing in on Tsongas' support of loans to this Marxist regime in Nicaragua and his total blind acceptance of persecution there," said Ted Temple, leader of a predominantly Republican conservative group which sponsored the two at a news conference.



# Local group told Nicaragua policy right

By EDWARD C. ACHORN  
News Staff Writer

FRAMINGHAM — While critics of President Reagan say he is driving Central America into the arms of the Soviets, a political leader who fled Nicaragua believes the US is pursuing the best course toward justice there.

"I think we still have a chance, if this government continues to put pressure on the Sandinistas to make concessions and have free elections in Nicaragua," Ivan Pereira said during a interview at *The Middlesex News* Thursday.

Pereira, party secretariat of the Christian Democratic Party in Nicaragua and a former Sandinista himself before he fled the country in 1979, toured the area this week, speaking on radio programs and to members of the press.

The conference was arranged by Ted Temple of Marlboro, New England executive director of the Mid-America Conservative Political Action Committee.

Pereira maintains that the ruling regime in Nicaragua despises the U.S. and will not heed its wishes for democratic reform unless pushed into a corner.

He says the rulers are intent on

spreading communism to other Central American countries and, without free elections, will only use any improvement in relations with the US to cement their regime and further that aim.

"They hate this country," he said. "Interior Secretary Tomas Borge has said many times that the number one enemy of the Nicaraguan people is the United States. In their national song they say the Yankee is the enemy."

"These are not merely intellectual Marxists. They are fanatics," he said.

It is open knowledge that the U.S. has been covertly sponsoring groups trying to overthrow the Sandinista government. Some members of Congress — including local legislators — have blasted that policy, saying it is against international law and besmirches America's reputation with developing countries. Administration spokesmen say that, even if the Sandinistas cannot be overthrown, the U.S. can force concessions from it.

"If you send aid in order to obtain concessions, you will be making a mistake," Pereira says. "First the Sandinistas must be willing to have democratic reforms

in Nicaragua."

Yet, he maintains that recent peace feelers by Borge and indications of concessions by the government are not to be taken seriously. They are timed to cash in on the upcoming elections and win a respite from US pressure, after which they will return to their old ways, he says.

"They are very smart people. They know very well that next year this country is going to begin a campaign for president and the Senate. They know that, when this country is going through an election year, foreign policy is almost paralyzed," he said.

Pereira says the reason they do not is that free elections and a free press would spell doom for the ruling regime. Agriculture, the economic base of the country, lies in ruins and the country remains desperately poor.

Pereira spoke about the Sandinista regime's reported murder of 500 Miskito Indians, traditionalists who refused to be absorbed into the mainstream of the culture. He said that unlike ter-

rorists of the right, the left-wing rulers insist on controlling every aspect of the national life, not just politics.

Pereira said he participated in the revolution against the Somoza regime, and "as a lawyer I defended many Sandinistas when they were in prison." He said he, too, "was imprisoned many times" and that one of his brothers and a cousin were killed fighting in the civil war.

But when the left-wing of the revolutionary movement took command, he fled the country, he said.

"They told me, 'If we are in power, you are the kind of person we must kill.' It is the reason I left the country," he said.

Pereira maintains that the most educated and successful people in Nicaragua are among the 250,000 who have fled the nation since 1979.

He says he will go back when and if the Nicaraguans ever hold free elections and establish freedom of the press.

"I am willing to work for my people. I know I have a commitment to work for my people," he said.

*Middlesex News 12/9/83*



# Academy for Educational Development

**AED**  
International Division

January 10, 1984

Mr. Morton Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the President  
Office of Public Liaison  
White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Morton:


The Academy for Educational Development is a nonprofit technical assistance organization with more than 20 years of experience in Latin America, the Caribbean and some 60 countries of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Our Board Chairman, Gerald Ford, and our President, Dr. Alvin Eurich, provide the primary leadership for an organization of some 80 professionals working in a broad range of development assistance.

We have followed recent developments in the Caribbean with great interest and feel that our experience may be of assistance to the Administration in its policy of expanded social and economic development in the area. I have included a brief background description of our organization and, as Executive Vice President and Director of our International Programs, I would be most pleased to provide you with any additional information you feel useful.

The Academy's particular strengths lie in the areas of telecommunications, rural development, and the use of mass communication to support development programs in agriculture, health, and education. Presently, we are implementing two USAID-financed contracts in the region, one at the University of the West Indies in telecommunications, and one in Honduras on the use of mass media to improve the delivery of health services to rural areas. We have recently completed a 10 year involvement in Guatemala aimed at improved agricultural development; we worked during the early '70s on the development of educational television in El Salvador; and we now have long-term technical assistance programs in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador, as well as the Caribbean.

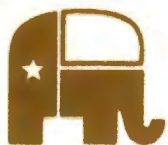
In order to become better informed on Administration Policy in the region, I would like to request an invitation to participate in the regular Outreach Meetings. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

  
Stephen F. Moseley  
Executive Vice President and  
Director, International Division

*Done*

1414 22nd Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037  
(202) 862-1900  
Cable ACADED WASHINGTON DC  
Telex 197601 ACADED WSH OR  
89660 ACADED WSH



**DIANA DENMAN**  
VICE CHAIRMAN  
REPUBLICAN PARTY OF TEXAS

October 18, 1983

*file*

Mr. Morton Blackwell  
The White House, RM 191  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Morton,

I am most concerned about the make up of the enclosed. We are not getting our first team out in this part of the country! Can you help on Kirkpatrick (re. enclosed) ?

The World Affairs Council was begun in San Antonio last year. It is bi-partisan and true Reagan supporters are scarce on its list. President Carter is coming in on November 2nd.

The San Antonio Republican Assembly is grass-roots. We need to re-fuel the troops and certainly broaden the base everywhere.

I plan to attend the Central American briefing on October 26th.

Best regards,

*Diana*

Diana Denman  
Vice Chairman  
Republican Party of Texas

DD/pjw



**THE  
WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL  
OF  
SAN ANTONIO**

*Cordially invites you to attend  
a dialogue on*

**"THE U.S. ROLE IN CENTRAL AMERICA"**

*with  
Distinguished Members  
of  
The House of Representatives*

**REP. TOM LOEFFLER**  
(R) - Tex.

Re-elected to his third consecutive term, Rep. Loeffler will serve the 98th Congress as the ranking member of the House Republican leadership through his position as Chief Deputy Republican Whip. He served on the Energy & Commerce Committee during his first term; was then named to the powerful House Appropriations Committee; and now holds a seat on the Budget Committee, as well as Appropriations. While still in his twenties, he was appointed Special Assistant for Legislative Affairs to President Ford.

**REP. BILL RICHARDSON**  
(D) - N. Mex.

Elected to the Congress in 1982, Rep. Richardson serves on the House Energy & Commerce Committee, and the Veteran's Affairs Committee. An Hispanic who was raised in Mexico City, he speaks fluent Spanish, and recently returned from a second fact-finding tour of Central America. Prior to his election, he held staff positions with the State Dept. Office of Congressional Relations, and with the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Relations Assistance.

*Saturday,*  
**October 15, 1983**  
*8:00 - 9:00 p.m.*  
*Incarnate Word College*  
*4301 Broadway*

*Marion Hall*

**PLEASE NOTE:** The discussion of "The U.S. Role in Central America" is *one* event within the framework of a two-day Symposium on Central America. Please consult the enclosed literature for further details. Council members are welcome to attend the 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. events on the evening of October 15th; those wishing to participate in the *entire* Symposium *must* complete the enclosed registration form, and return as indicated.



**Themes:** The symposium seeks to provide attenders with tools for understanding the forces at play in the region's turmoil, and the human, ethical, and political implications of the Central American crisis, rather than promote a particular policy line or partisan viewpoint. The symposium seeks to (1) introduce those unfamiliar with the region to the basic social, economic, and political features and problems--through the CENTRAL AMERICA FOR BEGINNERS program; (2) make available to persons more knowledgeable about the region in-depth and up-to-date information about the current situation--through the CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE program; (3) provide all participants with information and skills to help shape public policy, or assist refugees and other victims of violence in the region.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT will be available through Incarnate Word College. Please call (512) 828-1261 ext. 243 for more information.

FRIDAY, October 14, 1983: Perspectives on the Central American Crisis

- 7:00- 7:30pm Welcome and keynote address (San Antonio City Councilwoman Maria Berriozábal)
- 7:30- 8:15 Mexican Foreign Policy in Central America (Mexican Consul Raul Gonzalez Galarza)
- 8:30- 9:30 Experts discuss Central America (Antonieta García Villas, Salvadoran human rights activist; Philip Berryman, AFSC; John Spain, Maryknoll Fathers)
- 9:30-10:30 Reception

SATURDAY, October 15, 1983: Tools for Understanding Central America

- 8:00- 8:45am Registration
- 8:45- 9:00 Announcements and review of schedule
- 9:00- 9:30 Keynote address (Bishop Popp)
- 9:45- noon WORKSHOPS AND PANELS

CENTRAL AMERICA FOR BEGINNERS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE REGION

- 9:45-10:45am Historical focus on the region: local historical factors that influence current events. The colonial period, indigenous cultures, patterns of distribution of wealth, political conflict and military rule, the social and political role of the Church. (Dr. John A. Booth)
- 11:00- noon Foreign influences in Central America: cultural, economic, political, and military influences from abroad. The development of single-crop, export-oriented economies. The Cold War and the region. International banks and investments and their impact. (Dr. Michael Conroy and Philip Russell)

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE: WORKSHOPS

- 9:45- noon Participants may choose among four workshops that will run concurrently:  
-Using the media/communicating with the public (Latin America Assistance)  
-Congress and U.S. foreign policy (Dr. Catherine Edwards)  
-Refugees: relief, sanctuary, and asylum (Lee Terán and Janis Heine)  
-Religious commitment and Central America: how to communicate with the faithful (Sr. Theresa Billeaud)
- 12:00- 1:00pm Lunch break (box lunches for sale)
- 1:00- 2:00 CENTRAL AMERICA FOR BEGINNERS: The last five years-focus on El Salvador (Philip Russell)  
CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE: Recent developments in Nicaragua and Guatemala (Dr. Milton Jamail, Dr. John Donahue)
- 2:15- 3:15 Cultural Presentation
- 3:30- 5:00 WORKSHOPS (General, for all attenders)  
Guatemala (Dr. Milton Jamail)  
Nicaragua since the revolution (Dr. John Donahue and Dr. Michael Dodson)  
The mass media and Central America (Dr. Emile McEnany)  
Religious values and Central America: discussion, reflection, and prayer (Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America)  
Liberation Theology and Central America (Dr. Tarcisio Beal and Philip Berryman)  
Immigration Issues (Lee Terán)  
The Soviet Bloc and Central America (Dr. Thomas A. Baylis)  
Human Rights Advocacy (Dr. Rolando Castillo Montalvo, Antonieta García Villas, and Amnesty International)
- 5:00- 7:00 Dinner Break
- 7:00- 8:00 Local Religious leaders discuss Commitment to Peace and Justice
- 8:00- 9:00 Local Political leaders debate the U.S. role in Central America
- 9:00-10:00 Participant forum: The role of the U.S. Citizen?

SUNDAY, October 16, 1983: Presentation by Latin American Historians

- 10:00- noon Members of CEHILA (Commission of Studies in History of the Church in Latin America) will present a forum on the history of the Church in Central America at the Mexican American Cultural Center (3019 W. French Place). Refreshments will be served afterward.

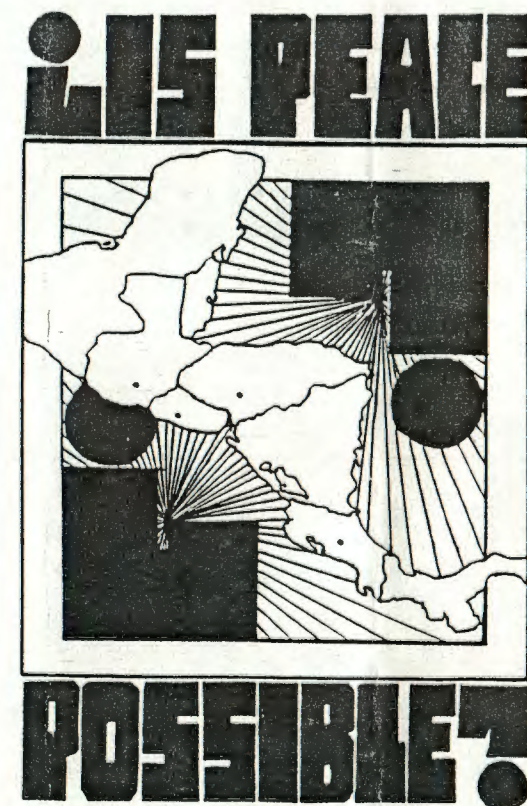


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Archdiocese of San Antonio  
Inter-University Faculty Network  
American Friends Service Committee  
Lutheran Coalition on Latin America  
Latin America Assistance  
The Live Oak Fund for Change (Austin)  
Civil Liberties Union (San Antonio)  
St. Mathew's Church, Justice and Peace Committee  
Viet-Nam Vets Against the War  
Holy Ghost Sisters, General Administration  
Mexican American Cultural Center  
Young Democrats (Incarnate Word College)  
Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America  
Social Justice Office,  
Sisters of Divine Providence  
Central America Resource Center (Austin)  
Catholic Campus Ministries  
Inter-Community Initial Formation  
Committee of San Antonio  
Missionhurst, CICM  
Omega Center (Boerne)  
Fellowship of Reconciliation  
Campus Ministry at UTSA, Steering Committee  
Justice and Peace Committee,  
Oblate Fathers of Texas  
San Antonio Friends Meeting  
Office of the Vicars for Religious  
Church and Society Committee,  
University Presbyterian Church  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious,  
Region XII  
St. Brigid's Parish Community  
Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word

+The World Affairs Council is sponsoring the  
policy makers' debate on the U.S. role in  
Central America.

CENTRAL AMERICA SYMPOSIUM  
P.O. Box 7219  
San Antonio, TX 78207



**A SYMPOSIUM ON  
CENTRAL AMERICA**

**OCTOBER 14-16, 1983  
INCARNATE WORD COLLEGE  
P.O. BOX 7219 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78207**

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 12, 1983

MEMORANDUM TO: FAITH RYAN WHITTLESEY

THROUGH: Jonathan Vipond, II  
Morton C. Blackwell *MB*

FROM: Dolf Droge *Dolf Droge by jst*

SUBJECT: Briefing Activities Report - Re: Central America

Following, in date order, is a listing of briefings which have been scheduled:

- June 24 ASIAN INDIAN-AMERICANS  
(Planned and Chaired by Linas Kojelis)  
Room #450 - OEOB  
Speakers: Steven Eisenbraun, State Department  
Representative from INS  
Jacqueline Tillman, representing  
Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick  
Dolf Droge
- June 28 WESTERN HEMISPHERE/LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARIANS  
(Sponsored by the Foreign Policy Caucus)  
Requested by the Vice President's Office -  
Planned & Chaired by Dolf Droge)  
Speakers: Otto Reich, Department of State/AID  
Jacqueline Tillman, Department of State/UN
- July 7 AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION PRESIDENTS  
(50 State Presidents of American Farm Bureau  
Federation)  
Speakers: The Honorable John Lehman,  
Secretary of the Navy  
The Honorable Nestor Sanchez,  
Deputy Secretary of Defense for  
Inter-American Affairs
- July 11 THE FORUM  
Women's Foreign Policy Discussion Group  
Washington, D.C.  
Speaker: Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick



- July 13 AMERICAN LEGION STATE CONVENTION - Pittsburgh, PA  
Speaker: The Honorable Nestor Sanchez,  
Deputy Secretary of Defense for  
Inter-American Affairs
- BUSINESS LEADERS BRIEFING (Room #450 - OEOB)  
Chaired by Faith Ryan Whittlesey  
Speakers: Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick  
Ambassador J. William Middendorf, II  
Richard McCormack, Assistant Secretary of  
State for Economic & Business Affairs  
Mr. Roger Fontaine, National Security Council
- July 15 AMERICAN LEGION STATE CONVENTION - Ocean City, MD  
Speaker: Ambassador J. William Middendorf  
Audience: 2,000
- July 21 WOMEN'S LEADERS BRIEFING  
Room #450 - OEOB 3:00 p.m.  
Speakers: Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick *Collaurence Tracy*  
Ambassador Vernon L. Walters *H. Eugene ...*
- July 28 RELIGIOUS BROADCASTERS BRIEFING  
Room #450 - OEOB 1:00 p.m.  
Speakers: Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick  
Ambassador Vernon L. Walters
- August 19 NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION - Seattle, WA  
Speakers: (Unconfirmed - awaiting response from  
Ambassador Richard Stone)
- Aug 12-19 NATIONAL CONVENTION, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Speaker: (Unconfirmed - Ambassador Richard Stone  
Requested)
- August 26-28  
CUBA INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATIC ANNUAL CONVENTION  
Los Angeles, CA  
Speaker: (Unconfirmed - Vice President and  
Ambassador Langhorne Motley requested)  
Audience: 200
- August 26-27  
AMERICAN SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING  
Speaker: The Honorable Nestor Sanchez, Deputy  
Secretary of Defense for Inter-American  
Affairs (morning - August 26)  
(Ambassador J. William Middendorf requested,  
not yet confirmed) (August 27 - 12:00 noon)

- Sept 3 STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE AMERICAN  
LEGION - Burbank, CA  
Speaker: Ambassador Vernon Walters  
Audience: 300-400
- Sept 12-14 GOP NATIONAL HISPANIC ASSEMBLY, Washington, D.C.  
September 12: Speaker: Major Ollie North, NSC, OEOB  
September 13: Speaker: Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick  
(Hyatt Regency, Crystal City)  
Speaker: (Ambassador Richard Stone and  
Ambassador Otto Reich, as yet  
unconfirmed)  
Audience: 250-400 delegates
- Sept 18 AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE COUNCIL, ANNUAL MEETING  
Philadelphia, PA  
Speaker: (Ambassador J. William Middendorf, Unconfirmed)
- Oct 4 DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AMERICAN LEGION QUARTERLY  
MEETING, Channel Inn, Washington, D.C.  
Speaker: Roger Fontaine, NSC
- Oct 12 HISPANIC FEDERATION, Los Angeles, CA (Banquet)  
Speaker: Ambassador Vernon Walters  
Audience: 200-250
- Oct 22 AMERICAN LEGION OF NORTH CAROLINA FALL MEETING,  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Speaker: Unconfirmed  
Audience: 500
- Oct 22 ACCURACY IN MEDIA CONFERENCE, New Hampshire  
Speaker: Ambassador Vernon Walters
- Oct 28-30 AMERICAN LEGION MID-WINTER MEETING, Douglas, AZ  
Speaker: (Unconfirmed)
- Nov 5 AMERICAN LEGION OF SOUTH CAROLINA FALL MEETING,  
Greenwood, S.C.  
Speaker: (Unconfirmed)  
Audience: 250
- Nov 5 AMERICAN LEGION OF VIRGINIA ANNUAL FALL MEETING  
Speaker: Ambassador J. William Middendorf (tentative)  
Audience: 350

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1984

- Jan 14-15 AMERICAN LEGION OF ARKANSAS MID-WINTER MEETING  
Little Rock, Arkansas  
Speaker: (Unconfirmed)  
Audience: 150



January AMERICAN LEGION OF CONNECTICUT MID-WINTER MEETING  
AMERICAN LEGION OF GEORGIA MID-WINTER MEETING  
AMERICAN LEGION OF ALABAMA MID-WINTER MEETING  
AMERICAN LEGION OF MISSISSIPPI MID-WINTER MEETING

Jan 29 AMERICAN LEGION AND AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARIES  
OF OHIO MID-WINTER MEETING, Columbus, Ohio  
Speaker: Colonel Lawrence Tracy, Department of  
Defense, IAA  
Audience: 1200

Feb 11 AMERICAN LEGION OF NEW MEXICO MID-WINTER MEETING,  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Speaker: The Honorable Nestor Sanchez,  
Deputy Secretary of Defense for  
Inter-American Affairs (Unconfirmed)  
Audience: 350

March AMERICAN LEGION OF CALIFORNIA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
Speaker: (Unconfirmed)

Jun 15-16 AMERICAN LEGION OF LOUISIANA STATE CONVENTION  
Speaker: Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick (Unconfirmed)  
Audience: 2300

July AMERICAN LEGION OF TEXAS STATE CONVENTION,  
El Paso, Texas  
Speaker: Ambassador H. Eugene Douglas  
Audience: 2000

Copy to /

~~Kerry Ptacek~~

~~Bob Reilly~~

~~Lincoln~~





Archdiocese of Washington

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Office of the Archbishop

For USCC: Public Affairs  
Bob Wonderly  
Bill Ryan

CONCERNS, CRITERIA AND FUTURE CHOICES  
FOR  
U.S. POLICY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Written Testimony of  
ARCHBISHOP JAMES A. HICKEY  
on behalf of the  
UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

before the  
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON  
U.S. POLICY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Washington, D. C.

October 21, 1983

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of the United States and our President, Archbishop John R. Roach, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before this National Commission on U.S. Policy in Central America.

### I. Our Perspective

As you know, the American Catholic Bishops are not new to this discussion. For more than four years the Bishops' Conference has been consistently raising questions about U.S. policy in Central America. I include for the record the Statement on Central America overwhelmingly adopted by the U.S. Bishops in November of 1981, which is the foundation of our frequent testimony. Speaking personally, I have been visiting and observing Central America for more than eight years as I sought to support our missionary efforts there and understand the forces at work in the region.

The American Catholic Bishops come to this discussion with several perspectives. As Americans, we want to see our vital national interests protected and our government's policies reflect our national values and ideals. As citizens we want U.S. policies to help bring about greater justice, democracy, and stability in this hemisphere and to limit communist influence in the region.

As Catholics we start with the social teaching of our Church which calls us to defend human dignity and human rights and to work for social justice and peace as an integral part of our faith. Our views have been shaped and our hearts moved by the inspiring witness of the Church in Central America as it seeks to defend the poor, work for justice and search for peace and reconciliation in the face of brutal violence, continuing conflict and frequent repression from regimes of both right and left. As Catholics we are not naive about Marxist influence or activity. We emphatically reject any innuendo that the Church's defense of the poor and advocacy of social justice serves Marxist interests. The Church's



mission requires it to defend human rights whenever they are threatened whether by dehumanizing ideologies or economic exploitation. Let me cite the activities of the Church in both El Salvador and Nicaragua, in both Poland and the Philippines as examples of this consistency.

As Bishops in the U.S. we are not experts or specialists, but as pastors and religious leaders we have the right and responsibility to judge the policies of our government by the values articulated in our teaching. We have developed our position in dialogue with our brother Bishops in Central America, but we speak as U.S. pastors to the U.S. government about U.S. policies in the region.

## II. Our Concerns

For that reason and on that basis, we welcome this opportunity to share our deep concerns about the future course of U.S. policy and activity. We fear that future U.S. policy may be based on a number of misconceptions regarding the basic issues and choices in Central America.

### The Roots of the Conflict

One concern is that the conflict in Central America is too often seen as primarily a geo-political battle -- a struggle between East and West, between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. We have repeatedly pointed out that long before there was outside intervention there was a legitimate struggle in El Salvador and other parts of the region for social, political and economic justice. The conflict has been over land, wages, the right to organize and the issue of political participation. To ignore this long struggle of people for justice, dignity and freedom is fundamentally to misunderstand the nature of the conflict today in Central America.

Because the conflicts in Central America are fundamentally rooted in questions of social injustice and the persistent denial of basic human rights for large sectors of the population, the USCC has always opposed interpretations of the Salvadoran and Central American conflict which place primary emphasis on the superpower or East-West rivalry. This is not to ignore the international implications and dimensions of the conflict. Nor to deny the willingness of outside actors such as the Soviet Union to take full advantage of the crisis. But we urge the Commission to reject the notion that the geo-political struggle is at the core of the problem in Central America.

#### The Search for a Military Solution

A second concern is the continuing pursuit of a military solution for Central America. U.S. statements move back and forth on this question, but our actions speak more clearly -- U.S. policy still has hopes that military force can solve the problems.

In El Salvador victory by either side, which could only mean abject surrender and bitter defeat for a large number of Salvadorans on one side or the other, would not serve the interest of either El Salvador or the United States. A society divided into victors and vanquished is unlikely to result in either stable peace or justice. Likewise, if the U.S. backed "contras" were to somehow topple the government of the Sandinistas, do U.S. policymakers really believe that would bring peace and stability to Nicaragua or the region? We hope the Commission will make clear that a continuing military struggle in an already devastated region is not in our interests or Central America's.

#### A Wider War

A major concern of ours and of the Bishops of Latin America is the imminent possibility of a wider war which will plunge the entire region into armed conflict. The heightened tensions, strident language and increased military activity make this threat a real



danger. Last August the Bishops of Latin America spoke of:

"the possibility of unleashing an open war covering the whole subregion with sorrow and destruction. Militarization is increasing; nations are feverishly readying for war, leading to serious deterioration of productive activities; tensions grow, accusations are hurled back and forth, border incidents multiply while, as a result, misery grows and with it the risk of outside interventions."

(CELAM, August, 1983)

We hope the Commission will seek a way to help Central America step back from the brink of regional war. We need to find ways to reduce the tensions in the region which are turning nations into armed camps with unfortunate consequences for their domestic life as well as the region.

### Intervention

When U.S. policymakers talk about the dangers of outside interference in Central America -- they refer to the Soviet Union and its proxies. When Central Americans talk about outside interference they are talking about the Soviets to be sure, but they are also talking about the United States. There is no need to recite the sad history of U.S. intervention in the region, a living memory for the people and leaders of Central America. The present and past experience of intervention has led to the unified opposition by the Latin American hierarchies to all outside intervention without exception. By outside intervention they do not refer to the efforts of other Latin American states to facilitate political dialogue; such efforts the bishops specifically endorse.

Rather, the unacceptable interference is that of the "foreign powers," essentially the Soviet Union and the United States. Latin America does not expect, nor desire, the United States simply to forfeit any active role in the Latin American quest for peace and development. Still less do they welcome expanded Soviet

influence in any area of the hemisphere. What they oppose now more strongly than ever in the past, is in the words of the Central American Bishops, "the meddling of foreign powers who come to support those in the countries who fit their own interests which are generally far from, even opposed to, those of the great majority."

To give a clearer sense of this nearly universal Latin American episcopal concern, let me cite the relevant paragraphs from the recent statements of the Bishops of Central and Latin America.

The Bishops of Latin America stated in July:

"We desire that neither the governments nor opposition groups invite foreign powers to intervene in this conflict, and that those foreign powers, if already present, leave; and if not present refrain from planning to do so. In this way both will avoid the repeated calamity of other historical experiences that have demonstrated the futility of such interventions."

(CELAM, July, 1983)

Even more strongly the Central American Bishops wrote in August:

"To the outside powers and ideological forces that are interfering politically and militarily in Central America contrary to our cultural values, we demand that they do not do so, so that our people and only they can end their conflicts, overcome their differences and plot their course toward the longed-for goal of peace."

"There must be absolute guarantees, now and for the future that all of them leave. If not, the intervention of one will automatically guarantee the intervention of the other and thus the establishment of peace will become progressively more difficult."

(SEDAC, August, 1983  
full texts attached)



The Commission must take into account the long history of outside interference in Central America and our role in it.

### Human Rights

One inconsistent aspect of the debate over Central America is the use of human rights criteria for tactical advantage or propaganda points rather than as a steady and consistent benchmark for governments in the region and our relationships with them. Selective application of human rights standards depending on our ideological preferences erodes our credibility both at home and abroad. Human rights are being violated throughout the region. The people of Central America are assaulted by death squads, arbitrary imprisonment, uninvestigated murders, harassment of land reform efforts, restrictions on free union activity, interference in education and journalism and other threats to life and freedom. While life itself is threatened in some parts of the region, human freedom and social justice are too often violated by powerful interests and governments across Central America. We need a consistent policy which sees human rights as a principal focus of U.S. concern, not as debater's points in our policy discussions. We hope this Commission will make respect for human rights a fundamental criteria for U.S. policy for all nations in the region.

### III. Criteria

In dealing with these concerns, we need a clear vision of our goals and a way to judge which policies hold the best chance of achieving them. Permit me to suggest some basic criteria for evaluating both present and future policies:

- Do they move the parties toward diplomatic rather than military options, toward ceasefire, dialogue and negotiations? Toward free and open elections where all can participate without the threat of violence or coercion?

- Do they increase respect for human rights and basic freedoms? Do they make respect for human rights a consistent standard for governments in the region?
- Do they address basic issues of social justice, genuine land reform, broad participation in development and economic justice? Do they in fact offer hope of a better life for the poor and dispossessed in the region?
- Do they build the capacity of people and their governments in the region to deal with their own problems? Do they promote self-determination and self-sufficiency?
- Do they respect and respond to the cultural, ethical and religious values of the people of Central America or impose answers from a distance?
- Do they respect and support the positive role of non-governmental and local institutions (churches, small business, trade unions, cooperatives, etc.)?
- Do they strengthen the hand of moderate and democratic forces or, by further polarization, help the extremes of both right and left? Do they combat communism by offering alternatives to Marxism as vehicles for needed reform?
- Do they support effective civilian control of the military, the rule of law and an effective criminal justice system?

#### IV. Critique of Current Policy

In applying these criteria, we remain deeply disturbed by the direction of current U.S. policy in Central America. Let me cite policy toward El Salvador and Nicaragua as the two examples I am most familiar with. This is not to minimize the serious problems in Guatemala and Honduras.



## El Salvador

The United States should use its influence to help bring about a ceasefire and dialogue among the relevant parties leading to serious negotiations aimed at elections and a stable government in El Salvador, as well as to begin the political, social and economic reconstruction of the country. These three elements have been stressed by the Salvadoran bishops and by John Paul II in his visit to El Salvador.

These steps are, if anything more necessary today than ever before. The violence has already taken the lives of 30,000-40,000 civilians, the majority killed by death squads or the security forces. Thousands of Salvadorans have been driven into exile. The tactics of the leftist opposition become more and more destructive as the war drags on. The U.S. role in El Salvador continues primarily in a military direction. A continuation of the present course is exceedingly dangerous for both the United States and for El Salvador. Archbishop Rivera Damas has described the conflict as a war which cannot and should not be won. The political option, a negotiated settlement, is the humane and wise way to end this brutal conflict.

It is not clear to me, however, either from the content of U.S. policy or from recent statements explaining it, that there is a real determination in the U.S. policy process to pursue the road of military force with a diplomatic facade, rather than a political policy with a military component.

## Nicaragua

U.S. policy gives the appearance of encouraging war in Nicaragua. It seems clear that intensified military pressure, through both overt measures and covert support of the "contras," is the principal element of U.S. policy.

Let me make clear that I am deeply disturbed by the trends inside Nicaragua. During my Nicaraguan visit last February much in the direction of the country disturbed me and the two other Archbishops accompanying me. I have shared my concerns before the Congress: the expanding control of key sectors of social life by the Nicaraguan government; the visits we had with journalists, labor leaders and businessmen who described restrictions on their activities and the imprisonment of some colleagues; and the harassment of Church leaders, including even the Holy Father during his visit there. My concerns also include the lack of positive commitment on the part of the Nicaraguan government to the promises for early and free elections together with genuine political and economic pluralism. I still have these same concerns; nothing in the intervening months has alleviated them. Violations of human rights must be brought to light and opposed. We have and are doing that.

I fear, U.S. policy is contributing to the deteriorating internal situation in Nicaragua. It provides precisely the pretext for increased government control and surveillance. The public rhetoric of our government toward Nicaragua, the cutoff of bilateral economic aid, U.S. support for a military buildup on the Honduran border, and covert efforts to destabilize the government employing even members of discredited Somosista elements, all contribute to a state-of-siege mentality which reinforces misguided policies. U.S. Actions do not determine internal Nicaraguan policy, but they exaggerate some of its most troubling aspects. The forces of political moderation in Nicaragua are being diminished by counterproductive U.S. policy.

Instead of a policy which isolates and provides an excuse for the Sandinistas to consolidate their power, the USCC has advocated that U.S. policy engage Nicaragua diplomatically. Our policy should include the provision of economic assistance under the same conditions we give aid to other countries, I refer especially to their human rights performance. We see no reason to change this advice



nor do we see reason to change our opposition to further funding of covert activity against Nicaragua. Let me state personally that as an American citizen and as a Catholic bishop, I find use of U.S. tax dollars for the purpose of covert destabilization of a recognized government to be unwise, unjustified and destructive of the very values that a democratic nation should support in the world. Such actions seem to be in violation of our treaty pledges and our commitments under the U.N. Charter.

In these two cases and other parts of the region, U.S. policy fails to respond to the criteria which we have laid out. It neglects the root causes of the problems, strengthens the extremists of both right and left, relies on military force rather than diplomatic creativity and applies human rights standards only selectively. In ignoring these criteria I fear our policies isolate us from our allies in the region and around the world, erode our credibility at home and undermine our future role and influence in the region.

#### V. Choices for the Future

##### Peace: The Primary Goal

The first requirement for future U.S. policy in Central America is to change the basic thrust of present policy and stop the drift toward a regional war in Central America. Among our goals in Central America should be a group of states developing and maturing under viable political systems, enjoying good relations with one another and with us. Therefore, our policy should foster regional stability through efforts which encourage the individual nations to reach an accommodation with one another and settle their differences without outside intervention or arms.

In Central America there are some tasks the United States is well suited to fulfill and other tasks which we should leave to other actors. I believe the United States can set a tone and an atmosphere in Central America which is conducive to diminishing

the military elements of the struggle and encouraging the opportunity for diplomatic dialogue. There are three dimensions to this role for U.S. policy

First, there is a superpower or geo-political dimension. I have argued throughout this testimony that this is not the way the problem in Central America should be defined, nor is it the principal aspect of the diplomatic agenda. But there is need for a direct approach by the United States to the Soviet Union to address Soviet intervention directly or by proxy in the Central American region. This aspect of U.S. policy has its greatest relevance in terms of Nicaragua, but it is a mistake to focus U.S. pressure only on Nicaragua. This puts us in the position of a superpower squaring off against a <sup>small</sup> state, ~~of minuscule size and diplomatic importance~~; it raises all the old memories of U.S. intervention and it fails to address the key issue -- the Soviet Union's conception of where its primary interests are in its relationship with the United States. The overall state of U.S. - Soviet relations has deteriorated in recent months, but it is still possible to recognize different levels of the relationship. Direct Soviet intervention in Central America is no more welcome, legitimate or tolerable than direct U.S. intervention in Eastern Europe. The point should be made clearly to the Soviets. Save for this direct approach on a superpower basis to the Soviets, the geo-political dimension of the problem should not be given a more expansive role in our policy.

Second, the principal focus of U.S. efforts to achieve peace in the region should be a regional approach. U.S. efforts should be primarily aimed at supporting the activity of the Contadora Group or a similar regional effort. The United States is not in a position to play a mediator's role in Central America. We are looked upon as partisans. The Contadora Group is a Latin American initiative aimed at solving the Central American crisis precisely because it has grave consequences for all of Latin America. The Contadora formula is aimed at disengaging the superpowers from the conflict, withdrawing all foreign military forces



and assistance and then proceeding to a multi-dimensional diplomatic dialogue.

Contadora nations can say and do things that the United States would be either unable or unwilling to say or do. But the Contadora initiative cannot succeed without strong, explicit, consistent U.S. support. I realize that the U.S. government has often said that it supports the Contadora activity, but U.S. warships in Central America and support for the "contras" do not provide a convincing picture of support to anyone.

Present U.S. policy follows an independent course in El Salvador, toward Nicaragua and in the region as a whole, while still giving verbal support to Contadora. The recommendation of this testimony is that the United States endorse the Contadora effort, subscribe to its component elements and then shape U.S. policy so that it supports at each stage the Contadora effort. Real progress requires a belief in Central America that the U.S. is truly supporting Contadora, not just tolerating it.

Third, if the United States did move fully in support of the Contadora process our policy toward individual countries in the region would have to shift. As I have argued above, we should seek genuine dialogue, ceasefire and negotiations in El Salvador as part of our support for Contadora. Such an approach would require pressure by the United States on the Salvadoran military and pressure by the Contadora countries on the FDR-FMLN. In relation to Nicaragua, genuine U.S. support for Contadora would mean first the stopping of covert support for the "contras" and, second, the willingness to open serious high level diplomatic dialogue designed to recast the U.S.-Nicaragua relationship. Such a re-orientation would not signify U.S. support for Nicaraguan policy, but it would be aimed at conducting diplomatic relations based on the recognition of the right of self-determination and respect for the principle of non-intervention by the Nicaraguans toward their neighbors, and by us toward the Nicaraguans.

A halt in the drift toward a regional war should be the first priority for U.S. policy. It must be clearly understood that no significant economic program for the region can be implemented when war rages in some countries and threatens others. A political solution must precede large-scale and lasting economic programs. Likewise, a proposed economic effort should not be used to justify more military aid for the region. The need is not for a military policy to protect economic development, but for a comprehensive policy which brings peace to Central America and with it a real chance for economic reconstruction and development.

#### Social Justice and Democracy

A second essential choice for the future is the acceptance, and more than that, the welcoming of dramatic social change to achieve social justice and human rights in the region. We need to define U.S. interest in a way which recognizes and supports substantial political and economic change in countries needing both. If we fail to define our interests to accommodate change, we are fated to oppose it. This will place the United States in opposition to the majority of the people in a region which cries out for change, and in opposition to the Catholic Church there which supports change. We must support genuine land reform and other efforts to eliminate the enormous inequities in the region.

In addition, our long term choices should reflect the best of our own political tradition. Not that we seek to impose it on others but that we are committed to abide by our deepest values in our policy toward others. We should strive to be seen as a mature, democratic, stabilizing force in the region, not a destabilizing bully. We should be confident enough of democratic values and virtues that we support moderate democratic regimes and that we use only democratic means in our support. Let us be known in Central America by the finest line of our heritage: liberty and justice for all.



Fund for Central American Development: A Long-Term Policy

I realize the Bipartisan Commission is examining ideas for a long-term approach to economic development in the Central American region. I am convinced that such an approach is absolutely necessary, and I am equally convinced that it cannot succeed unless it is linked to peace in the region. The United States should not repeat the mistake of the Mekong Delta proposal during the Vietnam era; it is not possible to carry out a large-scale, well planned development effort while a war is going on.

I am sure that a serious long-term development effort on the part of the United States would receive the support of the Church in our country, if it were shaped in accord with some key principles. My concern here is not to design a development program but to specify the importance of these principles.

The first principle is that the short-range objective of such economic assistance should be targeted to meet basic human needs. Existing U.S. law as well as the approach of multilateral agencies are presently geared toward a basic human needs approach. The people throughout Central America are in dire need of help in areas such as food, nutrition, health and housing. Given the historic problem of institutionalized structures of inequity in many countries of the region, a second principle for a development effort should be a system of monitoring how both short-term and long-term economic assistance are being used. Such a system of monitoring would have to be carefully and cooperatively designed with each country to protect both cultural autonomy and political self-determination, but some oversight is needed to assure that funds go to those most in need.

Third, a long-term effort should seek to build and preserve the human capital of the region through support for education, training, cultural development as well as much needed assistance for the reform of legal and justice systems. These efforts should make extensive use of multilateral agencies like the Inter-American Development Bank, The World Bank or other regional efforts. No one expects an enlargement of the activities of these institutions without significant new U.S. support, but they can act as mediating institutions which do not carry all the historic baggage the United States brings to any Central American policy.

Fourth, a long-term economic strategy should be aimed at complementing our support for political self-determination with effective action to enhance economic self-determination for the countries of Central America. In an interdependent world, nations do not achieve total independence, but they should not be forced to face a permanent state of dependence, a condition which epitomizes exploitation for Latin Americans. It is crucial that the economic reconstruction and development of the region be controlled by the Central Americans themselves, not by powerful outside interests or by the remnants of an oligarchy.

Fifth, long-term economic planning should be respectful and supportive of local institutions in Central America. These institutions which are social, educational, economic and religious often embody key cultural and ethical values which must be preserved. I know from my contact with El Salvador that key institutions of higher education, for example, are already in place and should be supported and not displaced. These efforts should involve and build upon the strengths of local institutions, cooperatives, trade unions, churches and non-governmental organizations. North American models and structures cannot substitute for the development of local efforts respectful of the values and beliefs of the people of the region.



Refugees and Displaced Persons: A Special Crisis

An urgent concern for both the Church in Central America and the Church in the United States is the question of refugees and displaced persons.

A first recommendation applies to the United States. The USCC has long advocated a policy of Extended Voluntary Departure for Salvadoran refugees in the United States. We find no good reason why this status is applied to other groups in similar situations and denied to Salvadorans. We hope the Commission will add its weight to this just and humane proposal in your final report.

A second tremendous tragedy and need is the situation of the more than one million displaced persons and refugees. These victims of the Central American crisis are throughout the region, but concentrated in Southern Mexico, El Salvador and Honduras. A major commitment is needed to meet the immediate human needs of these people and offer training and relocation to them as they seek to cope with the enormous trauma of displacement. Our own Catholic Relief Services is already working to develop effective assistance for these people. But our private efforts are not enough. Refugees are at least theoretically eligible for some assistance through the United Nations, but there is virtually no adequate help for people displaced within their own country.

In short, for a seed to grow and develop one needs to prepare the soil. The weeds and stones of past neglect, injustice and violence in Central America must be removed so as to permit the growth of those spiritual and social values on which true democracy thrives.

VI. Conclusion

In this testimony, we have outlined our concerns about current policy, criteria for future choices and our own proposals for peace and development in Central America. We are convinced they lay the foundation for a new relationship between the United States and Central America which will protect our national interests, help meet the needs of this troubled region and serve also to curb Soviet and Marxist inroads in this hemisphere.

In the past, U.S. policy toward Central America has too often been seen as defending the status quo and authoritarian regimes. Future policies cannot ask people to choose between the status quo and revolutionary violence, between continued injustice and Marxism. U.S. policy, given our history and traditional values, should stand as a beacon of hope, a force for justice and a defender of human rights.

Years ago the Catholic Church was perceived by some as distant from the struggles of ordinary people for justice, too closely linked to the status quo and authoritarian regimes. By reflecting on the Gospel and the situation in Latin America and by applying the Church's teaching on justice and peace to their own lands, the Church has renewed itself and become a leading advocate for nonviolent social change, a defender of human rights. The Church and its leaders are a powerful force for justice and reconciliation in Central America. As a Catholic, I am proud and deeply impressed by the witness of my Church. As an American, I want to be equally proud of my country's contributions to justice and peace in that region and in all the world.



October 16, 1983

Mr. Morton Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the President  
Suite 1910EDB  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20050

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

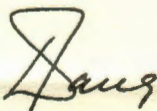
Attached is a copy of our recommendations to the administration on the Nicaraguan situation as well as a short background article. I would hope that you would place this material (at least the recommendations) before the NSC or other appropriate advisors to the President. A reference copy has been sent to Dr. Ikle.

Because of the difficulties connected with the "contra" operation — and more is yet to come — it is my impression that the administration would do well to get itself a fall-back position, and as quickly as possible. Our recommendations suggest one such fall-back position, although we propose them as a policy of choice.

It is my hope that you will be able to effect the slight course correction called for so that we can not only support the administration's general approach to the situation but also its specific operations. With the elections fast approaching, I would hate to see Mr. Reagan embarrassed by what is certainly developing into a Central American "Watergate."

As mentioned to Dr. Ikle, if you will give us the slightest encouragement, guidelines and/or backing, I think we can provide a credible alternative. There is some lead-time involved so that we would very much appreciate some expression of your position on the matter at the earliest time convenient.

With kindest regards,

+ 

+ Derek Lang  
Bishop of Middleburg

2103 South Portland Street  
Los Angeles, California 90007

Copy to

~~Menger~~

~~Placek~~

~~Bob Reilly~~

POSITION PAPER  
AND GENERAL POLICY FRAMEWORK  
of the  
OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AMERICA  
on  
NICARAGUA

Preliminary Remarks

1. CHURCH & POLITICS. - The Church holds itself to the standard of remaining non-partisan on political issues that do not present significant moral questions; but of giving clear instruction to the faithful on questions that do touch on faith or morals.

2. CLERGY & PARTISANS. - Every cleric must be the spiritual father of all who are entrusted to his care and (morally neutral) partisan political views have no place in the public ministry of the Church.

3. MORAL ISSUES. - a) Political activism: The Church rejects any form of political activism where sedition, subversion or moral delinquency are held justified by some "greater social good." b) Revolution: The Church rejects the notion that any clergy, religious, or laymen, have been "ordained" by God to violently overthrow legitimately constituted non-communist governments, even those which may yet be struggling to give greater expression to the human dignity of their subjects. c) Communism: The Church rejects all forms of atheistic materialism by whatever style or title. (Catholic faithful who support communist organizations incur the penalty of excommunication; those who support suspect organizations may be denied the Sacraments).

4. SPECIFIC ISSUES. - a) Seditious clergy: the Church properly sought to restrain American missionaries active in sedition against the civil government [Nicaragua, 1975-77]; b) Subversives: The Church properly identified the Sandinista movement as a communist organization [Nicaragua, 1976] and properly condemned it by pastoral letter [Nicaragua, 1978]; c) Communist regime: the Church properly called for the eradication of the Sandinista regime [Washington, D.C. 1980]; d) Civic and moral duty: the Church properly instructed the faithful on their duty to act against the Sandinista regime [Los Angeles, 1983]; and e) Dissident clergy: the Church properly institutes canonical proceedings against priests involved in supporting the condemned regime [Vatican, on-going].

5. MISSION IN NICARAGUA. - Because of the Church's uncompromising condemnation of the whole fabric of Sandinismo, it was required to suspend its mission in Nicaragua (Aug 1979) following the Sandinista seizure of power. It,

nevertheless, remains committed to its mission of contributing to the improvement of the moral and physical quality of life of the Nicaraguan people, now and in the long term future.

6. IMPEDIMENT. - The Church is persuaded that:

a) its mission can be fully accomplished only with the elimination of the impediment created by the Sandinista insurgents in Nicaragua and their replacement with a legitimate government that is responsive to the dictates of moral and international law; and

b) it has a duty to support those domestic and foreign institutions and governments that are committed to this end through the morally acceptable means.

7. PEACE & JUSTICE. - Many champions of "Peace and Justice" have revealed that they have an unbalanced understanding of these terms and, consequently, their efforts rarely promote either peace or justice. The Church has reason for concern:

a) when one's call for "peace" condemns legitimate self-defense by a nation under armed communist attack and at the same time, condones and encourages the violence, terrorism and subversion occasioned by hostile insurgents.

b) when it finds that the concept of "justice" is built on the simplistic notion that if there were no economic disparities in the world then both peace and justice would reign.

c) when the notion that justice is to be achieved through violence ("class struggle") and totalitarianism (the imposition of a "classless" society).

d) when "Peace and Justice" have become nothing more than slogans for socialist revolutionary philosophy and the errors of liberation theology.

Accordingly, in an effort to restore some balance, the Church has established a Task Force to address itself to the issues of Peace and Justice in Nicaragua and as the vehicle through which it will give expression to its ongoing commitment to the people of that nation.

8. TASK FORCE. - Amorphous good intentions are not enough to effect meaningful change. Intentions must be converted to actions, thoughtfully planned and morally impeccable. The immediate context (subject to change as events unfold) is one of: a) waging moral warfare against the manifest evil of the Sandinista regime and b) lending moral support to private and public entities that have similar objectives and use proper means to achieve them.

9. MORAL WARFARE. - The Church's opposition to the Sandinista revolution is primarily expressed in its Pastoral



Letters (see Appendix I), in Congressional testimony (see Appendix II), in media communications (see Appendix III), and in its own publications (see Appendix IV). The Task Force is charged with expanding and broadening this assault as through its efforts to create public awareness of the issues and marshal public support to the efforts of those who seek true Peace and Justice for Nicaragua (and Central America).

10. MORAL SUPPORT. - The Church's support of the involved entities (based on evidence of moral soundness in their objectives, motives and means) has been, lamentably extremely limited because of significant flaws that essentially render such support impossible. The two exceptions are:

a) United States Government. - The Reagan administration appears to have a clear understanding of its objectives in Central America and Nicaragua in particular. Whether it will fulfill its moral obligations in this regard remains another question. Differing perceptions of where its duty lies, or contrary advice for other reasons, can be decisively negative factors.

From the Church's point of view, the United States Government has a rare opportunity to regain some part of the integrity that it lost through the previous administration's betrayal of the confidence, loyalty and friendship that had built up over the previous seventy years between the Nicaragua and the United States; we refer, of course, to the Carter administration's literal and shameful handing of Nicaragua over to communist insurgents.

The present administration is following a difficult but essentially correct and highly commendable course; the Church can and does support it.

The course charted, never-the-less, appears to be based on a less than perfect understanding of the elements and the dynamics of the Nicaraguan situation. While sympathetic to the implied suggestion that 'anything is better than what exists there now' we are not as easily persuaded that 'anything' needs to be the only or the most viable option.

It is suggested, on good grounds, that a better alternative exists both in terms of the Church's view of morality and (we conjecture) the administration's view of the exigencies of domestic and foreign politics. Thus, the Church proposes to the administration a slight correction in course. This recommendation is related to the Church's appraisal and support of the second unflawed non-Church institution, discussed below.

b) National Guard of Nicaragua. - The Church affirms the moral right and duty of those still viable elements of the National Guard to discharge their responsibility to wage a temporal, defensive war against the Sandinista insurgency, such responsibility having been conveyed to them by lawful public authority.

The Church is committed to supporting the renewal of these elements. Such has been thusfar effectively frustrated by the continuing barrage of propaganda from the Sandinistas, who recognize the magnitude of the threat presented to them by a revitalized National Guard; from the partisan guerrilla groups whose own seizure of power would be thwarted by an effective National Guard; and also by some Guardsmen themselves, who have been demoralized by the same shameful treatment accorded to them as to our own soldiers returning from Viet Nam.

Due to logistical allocations based on a less than optimal appraisal of the situation, many National Guardsmen have been compelled to attempt regrouping under the banner of one or the other of the guerrilla groups (now composed of about 40% Guardsmen). Others recognize the partisan political and/or seditious character of such groups and, remaining loyal to higher principles, continue as best they can without adequate logistical support.

The Task Force and the National Guard are persuaded that there is reason to: i) question the motives of partisan guerrilla groups now in the field; and ii) assess their probable impact on Nicaragua in the event that they prevail. An impression, reinforced with great regularity, is that the majority of Guardsmen engaged in combat under extraneous banners would prefer to function as part of the legitimate military establishment of which they remain a part. The Task Force and National Guard are in search of a solution to this situation which avoids adding new challenges to an already delicate political balance in Washington.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

##### << Overview of Operation Phoenix >>

11. Representatives of the Church and of the National Guard are engaged in an assessment of the situation and the formulation of joint strategy (by the ecclesiastical and the military establishments of Nicaragua), with immediate to long term projections, on how they can effectively contribute to the attainment of mutually agreed upon objectives. Both entities are persuaded that representatives of the U.S. Government could contribute valuable insights if in participation. Tentatively, they are committed to the following:

a) Immediate objectives. - i) the restoration of the positive image of the National Guard; ii) the restoration of U.S. and international recognition of rights and duties of the National Guard; iii) the resumption of those duties in the context of a U.S. and/or CONDECA multinational force.

b) Intermediate objectives. - i) the complete removal of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua; ii) the prevention of a secondary seizure of power by any of the

partisan bands now engaged in combat against the Sandinistas; iii) the interdiction of all arms supplies to communist revolutionaries and partisan counter-revolutionaries from whatever source in Nicaragua and Central America; and iv) the maintenance by the National Guard (with U.S. and CONDECA support) of a free and peaceful environment in Nicaragua in which political pluralism and socio-economic development can be redeveloped.

c) Longer term objectives. - i) a meaningful (massive) and sustained commitment of the public and private sectors of the United States to the rehabilitation of the Nicaraguan economy; ii) the restoration of a viable interdependent relationship between Nicaragua, (Central America) and the United States based on similar values and objectives for the region; iii) the development of a vigorous "democracy in action" program; and iv) the elimination of the political vacume created by previous U.S. administrations through their excessive timidity or defensiveness about creating a "U.S. sphere of influence" in Central America.

12. It is the Church's view that Task Force efforts at the present are not only important for the future of Nicaragua but also to the shaping of relations between the United States and Nicaragua's neighbors. Much anti-American feeling in Central America is generated by the perception that the United States is indecisive and/or inconstant in its commitments to the region, and that it is insensitive to the difficulties associated with preserving "national identity" from a position of relative dependence. Adoption of the recommendations, above, would tend to ameliorate these perceptions by giving proper emphasis to the more true to life situation: that there is an interdependence between our nations and that it is a healthy, mutually facilitating relationship.

Los Angeles, California, October 16, 1983

I Derek Lang  
Bishop of Middleburg

Jaime A. Lopez  
Secretary to the Bishop

#### APPENDIX I

- Pastoral Letter:  
To the Nicaraguan People ..... July 8, 1978
- Pastoral Letter:  
To the Central American People ..... October 13, 1980
- Pastoral Letter:  
To Nicaraguan Commandoes in  
Central America ..... July 4, 1983

#### APPENDIX II

- Public Opposition to Sandinista Regime
- Congressional Record ..... February 26, 1980
  - Congressional Record ..... February 27, 1980
  - Senate Foreign Relations Committee .... March 24, 1980
  - The Times of the Americas ..... October 22, 1980
  - The Washington Post ..... May 16, 1980
  - The Washington Post ..... September 5, 1980
  - Jeffrey St John (WRC Radio, Washington, D.C.)  
(Discussion).....February 23, 1981
  - The Los Angeles Times ..... February 5, 1982
  - Current Controversies (Cable W TV, Santa Monica)  
(Discussion).....September 15, 1983
- Public Opposition to Clergy in Revolution
- The Washington Post ..... June 4, 1980
  - Der Spiegel .....Nr. 29/1980

#### APPENDIX IV

- Brief Reviews
- Course of the Nicaraguan Revolution ... August 5, 1980
  - Review of the Nicaraguan Situation ... August 20, 1981
  - Supplement ..... October 23, 1981
- The United States and Nicaragua:
- A Friendship Worth Defending ..... October 16, 1983



## THE UNITED STATES AND NICARAGUA : A FRIENDSHIP WORTH DEFENDING

by

Msgr. Derek Lang and Jaime Lopez

### Introduction

Nicaragua is a unique country, best described in terms of its many contrasts. It has its Alpine streams and lakes but also steaming tropical rain-forests; arid wastelands and fertile valleys; a tranquil countryside punctuated by active volcanoes. It is rich in human and natural resources but poor in material and economic development. As a people, the Nicaraguans are intensely individualistic and yet easily emulate those whom they esteem. These contrasts are as great as those found, on the one hand, in Tolstoy's "War and Peace" and, on the other hand, in a Walt Disney fantasy-adventure film. As a nation, it is torn between the geo-political and socio-economic imperatives of the real world and very unreal verbal constructs that appeal to a more fanciful instinct. The line of demarcation between reality and non-reality seems strangely obscured in Nicaragua.

It is a people of diverse ethnic composition. The origins of the pre-Columbian Indians, who lived around Lake Nicaragua, remain a mystery because they are unrelated to the Incas to the south or to the Aztecs to the north. "Where did they really come from?" is a question that tantalizes many anthropologists. "Who was this Indian chieftain, Nicarao, from whom the country derives its name?" We do not know.

It is known that in the 16th century, the Indians were found to be of such a pleasing character that most of the Spanish conquistadors settled down in the Pacific coastal zone and became part of Nicaragua's future. Later, Dutch and English pirates occupied the eastern half of the country and became the forebearers of the many blond headed Nicaraguans found especially in the central mountainous region. Until the late 19th century, the Atlantic zone was a British crown protectorate with its own native king. It had little to do with the western part of the country. In this period, migrations from Jamaica and the Grand Cayman islands gave Nicaragua its negro population. The "Costa Atlantica" is still inhabited by Miskito, Sumo and Rama Indians, by Caribbean islanders, and by remnants of German and American immigrants who arrived seventy to eighty years ago. Dutch, English and German surnames abound in Nicaragua even though it is a Latin nation. Indian dialects and English, rather than Spanish, are still spoken in certain parts of the country.

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This article represents the position of the Task Force on Peace & Justice of the Vicariate of Middleburg. The authors acknowledge the contributions of Eugenio Guevara, Luis Artola and Luis Agurto to parts of this paper.

The culture is as variegated as the people's origins. The typical music of the east coast, for example, reflects its African origins; that of Monimbo its Indian origins; and that of Matagalpa its European origins. It produced the great poet, Ruben Dario, whose name is commemorated in the national theater in Managua; one finds a bit of the poet in every Nicaraguan.

It must be fairly stated that Nicaragua has its negative side, too. It is here that one finds the highest homicide rate in the world and a people who thrive on disunity not unlike our own "Hatfields and McCoys." Prior to recent cataclysmic political changes, one had to accustom one's self to two idiosyncracies that were "very Nicaraguan": first, reckoning in a peculiar time frame (tiempo Nica), which is variously 2 to 6 hours or days after clock time (one simply never knew); and secondly, understanding that the people live more in a world of words than deeds so that in social exchanges all the right, expected and hoped for things are said but are as quickly and easily forgotten.

Because of their high degree of individualism, the Nicaraguans have been described as a virtually ungovernable people. This may well be to their advantage because it will be no small an achievement for the Sandinista elements now in power there to convince a majority that the Soviet orbit of influence (into which the nation has fallen) is in the long run better for them than a healthy interdependent relationship with the United States. To develop this theme, we turn to Nicaragua's political history.

### BELLIC SPIRIT

Before 1912, one could only describe the Nicaraguan political system as chaotic and brutal. From the day of its independence from Spain (1821) continuous conflict existed between Conservatives (farmers and cattlemen) and Liberals (artisans and tradesmen), each having its own partisan army. Political differences were resolved by force of arms. From 1824 to 1842, 18 heads of State succeeded each other in coup after coup. The electoral ballots of that day were the lives of Nicaragua's youth and the nation's economic resources, wasted on the field of battle for a momentary victory. One party would gain power and the other would begin the cycle anew to acquire power.

The emergence of U.S. commercial interests in Nicaragua did little to contribute to political stability. Indeed, for a time, American business seemed to fit right in with the prevailing system. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in the Vanderbilt-Walker affair. In 1849, Cornelius Vanderbilt and a group of New York financiers began to operate their Accessory Transit Company in Nicaragua. Their objective was to provide anxious Americans with relatively rapid transportation to the California gold fields. The ordinary route was a long ocean voyage from New York, around the tip of South America's Tierra del Fuego and northward to San



Francisco. Vanderbilt's idea was to cut the trip in half by crossing Nicaragua by overland stage-coach and taking a second ship up to San Francisco. It was a very successful venture.

But all of this was taking place against the backdrop of local partisan fighting. In 1855, the Conservatives were in power and the Liberals (naturally) wanted to oust them. At this point, another colorful American, William Walker and his "American Phalanx" arrived in Nicaragua at the invitation of the Liberals, who paid Walker to defeat the Conservatives. Walker and 58 adventurers went about their task with dispatch. They defeated the Conservatives and captured Granada in short order. To everyone's surprise, however, they turned right around and defeated their Liberal benefactors. Walker declared himself President of Nicaragua (1855-1857).

While falling short of democracy as we know it, Walker attained the presidency in the customary manner for that time and place. His government (with which the U.S. established diplomatic relations) was not a particularly bad government. Indeed, some historians credit him with having considerable administrative ability. Never-the-less, he was soon overthrown by Vanderbilt and his associates. Walker had made the fatal mistake of acting in the interests of the people of Nicaragua -- he nationalized Vanderbilt's Accessory Transit Company to keep the very considerable profits from leaving the country. Vanderbilt responded by hiring British, Costa Rican, Honduran, El Salvadoran and Guatemalan (mercenary) troops to oust the Walker government. Walker was defeated in May 1857 and returned to the United States.

Nicaraguans have a slightly more idealized version of this event and commemorate the legend of Andres Castro at the battle of San Jacinto as a symbol of their nationalism. We are all agreed, however, that the Liberal Party was seriously discredited by its involvement in the Walker affair. This led to thirty six years of relatively stable conservative rule.

In 1893, true to Nicaragua's bellic tradition, Liberal Jose Santos Zelaya led a successful revolt against the Conservatives and named himself President (1893-1909). He was a harsh ruler who quickly started meddling in the affairs of other Central American countries. Among his accomplishments was the invasion of Honduras to overthrow the Conservative government there. He threatened to bring regional warfare to Central America and was declared a "perturber of peace" by the Central American nations, the United States and Mexico.

#### STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

By 1909, Liberal General Juan Estrada and the conservatives (aided by 400 U.S. Marines) tried to overthrow the Zelaya government but did not succeed. The United States delivered a diplomatic ultimatum which forced President Zelaya's resignation. [The next U.S. ultimatum calling for the resignation of a Nicaraguan president occurred seventy years later in 1979. More of this later].

Having attained its immediate objective, the U.S. errantly pulled out before political leadership could be developed that was capable of controlling the still warring partisan armies. From 1909 to 1912 Nicaragua saw one of its bloodiest periods of insurgency. Conservative President Adolfo Diaz requested a peace-keeping force to assist him maintain order in the country. Thus, in August 1912, 2,700 U.S. Marines began arriving. The number was eventually reduced to 120 (as a rather substantial "embassy guard") but they remained in Nicaragua until 1925. [It seems fancifully expansive to suggest that Nicaragua was "occupied" for 20 years by the U.S. Marines but their presence was symbolic]. Finally, President Solorzano requested that all U.S. Marines be removed; their presence being a political irritant. The U.S. Government agreed but insisted that an American trained, non-partisan national military establishment be created to replace the century old partisan armies. That was agreed to.

In June 1925, retired Army Major Calvin B. Carter arrived in Nicaragua to command the National Guard of Nicaragua and build it into a force of uniformed, trained and disciplined voluntary recruits. Accordingly, the U.S. Marines left in August 1925, hoping that a new era of stability and peace might follow.

Two months later, Emiliano Chamorro successfully overthrew President Solorzano and seized the presidency in March 1926. By May, a Liberal uprising led to intense partisan fighting throughout the country.

On the diplomatic front, the U.S. increased its pressure on Chamorro (whose government it did not recognize) because of his efforts to politicize the National Guard and his return to partisan insurrection as a means of gaining and holding political power. On the military front, American-educated Anastasio Somoza Garcia captured San Marcos in a decisive battle. Chamorro resigned but passed on to his supporters a deep bitterness toward the principals involved in his downfall (Somoza and the U.S.).

Conservative Adolfo Diaz again assumed the presidency and, as before, he could not control the partisan armies. The National Guard was not yet ready to take on these duties. American aid was again requested and by March 1927, over 2,000 U.S. Marines and sailors were in Nicaragua as a peace keeping force.

In 1928, Washington sent former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson to Nicaragua to negotiate a peace between the Liberal and Conservative armies and to arrange for U.S. supervised elections. Stimson was successful in convincing all the generals to lay down their arms, excepting one, Augusto Cesar Sandino.

Sandino considered General Moncada, who signed the peace treaty for the Liberals, a traitor. When Moncada was elected president in 1928, Sandino intensified his insurgency under the banner of "anti-U.S. imperialism" with world-wide



communist support.

When the U.S. Marines were preparing to depart, General Calvin B. Mathews, director of the National Guard, sought a smooth transition by making bi-partisan appointments to the higher ranks of the National Guard. Anastasio Somoza Garcia, President Moncada's foreign minister and married to President-elect Sacasa's niece, was favored by General Mathews as the first Nicaraguan director of the National Guard. He was apparently acceptable to all sides.

In February 1932, a peace treaty was signed by Sandino and President Sacasa. It called for the cessation of all hostilities, complete amnesty, and the gradual disarming and disbandment of Sandino's forces [he was permitted to keep 100 men under arms for 1 year at government expense]. Sandino and Somoza publically embraced in celebration; the Communist Central Committee in Moscow denounced Sandino as a traitor.

Unfortunately, the stepdown from the state of insurrection was not immediately accomplished. The main National Guard arsenal at Managua was destroyed and in August 1933 (more than a year after the treaty) Sandino offered 600 armed partisans to President Sacasa as a private army. Sacasa did not accept and spot confrontations continued between the National Guard and Sandino's insurgents. General Somoza demanded that Sandino surrender all his arms in accordance with the treaty of 1932.

In February 1934, Sandino and some of his followers dined with President Sacasa and Generals Somoza and Abaunza to discuss disarmament. Sandino left the presidential palace and with two of his generals was taken by a National Guard patrol to the Las Mercedes airfield and shot. President Sacasa was deeply disturbed by this unilateral action by the National Guard. (There are accounts that in a secret meeting of high ranking National Guard officers, Somoza opposed the assassination of Sandino but was overruled by the faction led by General Abaunza and Colonel Santos. We have no way of confirming this).

The president sensed the possibility of a coup d'etat and demanded loyalty oaths from high ranking Guardsmen, he purged other officers, and issued a decree giving himself tighter control of the military establishment. His efforts were unsuccessful, however. He only further alienated the National Guard and thereby made his own downfall a certainty. In June, 1936, a two day bloodless coup took place and the Sacasa government fell.

#### TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

The December 1936 elections gave the presidency to Somoza Garcia as the Liberal Nationalist Party candidate; and the vice-presidency to Francisco Navarro. Nicaragua thus broke the cycle of internicine warfare between partisan armies and redirected its energies to national growth and development.

It also became a staunch ally of the United States. Nicaragua declared war on Japan and Germany on December 9, 1941 and on Italy two days later, becoming the first Latin nation to join the U.S. in World War II. It was a major supplier of raw material to the U.S. war effort and began to overcome the economic paralysis that had kept it from developing over the previous century.

#### Anarchy Reveals Itself

In September 1956, President Somoza was assassinated by Rigoberto Lopez Perez (later highly acclaimed by the Sandinista terrorists as one their own). Under the Constitution, the president of the Congress succeeded to the presidency. Luis Somoza Debayle thus followed in his father's footsteps. His brother, Anastasio Somoza Debayle remained director of the National Guard.

In 1961, Nicaragua participated with the U.S. in its ill-fated "Bay of Pigs" operation, an act that Fidel Castro was unable to forget. Nicaragua became the target of intense communist subversion, which skillfully fanned the flames of old partisan rivalries, especially those between the Somozas and the Chamorros.

#### Institutional Government Prevails

Luis Somoza died in 1958 and was succeeded in the presidency by Lorenzo Guerrero and he, in turn, by Rene Schick. The electoral process was finally working in Nicaragua. In 1967, Anastasio Somoza Debayle was elected to the presidency. He was followed by a triumverate consisting of R. Martinez, A. Lobo and F. Aguero but was re-elected in 1974. His term of office expired in 1981 and he could not succeed to another term under the Constitution.

Opposition to the Somoza government was built on years of animosity and a desire for vengeance, first by the influential Chamorro family, still bitter against the U.S. and Somoza for aborting the coup d'etat staged by Emiliano Chamorro (1926); and secondly by the Communists for thwarting their efforts to capture the Sandino insurgency and convert it into a communist revolution (1932) and for the Bay of Pigs fiasco (1961).

Because Nicaragua's National Guard was the instrument of bringing political stability to that country as well as a symbol of U.S. involvement in Nicaragua's painful movement into the twentieth century, it (as well as Somoza) became a prime target of subversion.

#### Anarchy Again Attempts to Assert Itself

In 1979, for the second time in this century, the United States delivered an ultimatum calling for the resignation of a Nicaraguan president. In this inexplicable reversal of U.S. foreign policy (based on the Carter administration's complete



lack of understanding of the dynamics of Nicaraguan history) all that had been painstakingly achieved over the previous seventy years was thrown out. The United States forced President Somoza's resignation; it emasculated the National Guard by embargoing munitions shipments vital to its counter-insurgency operations; and it handed over the government to communist revolutionaries openly backed by Cuba.

The ineptness of Carter in both domestic and foreign policy resulted in his being denied a second term as U.S. President but this is little consolation for the Nicaraguan people who must now suffer the long-term consequences of his folly. President Somoza was assassinated by the Sandino-communists and most of the officers and men of the National Guard who did not escape to other countries were tortured, murdered or sentenced to thirty years of hard labor. Only a small demoralized remnant remains.

### The Revolution

On July 19, 1979, the Sandinista insurgents occupied the city of Managua in a triumphal procession attended by several hundred thousand cheering and expectant citizens. The "new Nicaragua" began its struggle for 'popular democracy' by annulling the Constitution that had governed the country for more than a century and replacing it with rule by decree.

Who are these Sandinistas? In the post-Bay of Pigs era, Fidel Castro was determined to have his vengeance against Nicaragua, where the (U.S. backed) invasion of Cuba was staged. He had a ready made band of malcontents and delinquents to serve his purposes. The principal actors were Carlos Fonseca Amador and Tomas Borge Martinez, both trained in Cuba and Moscow in terrorist tactics, sabotage and subversion. The survivor of the two (Borge) was later joined by a group of twelve - a self styled "government in exile" - Ricardo Colonel K., Joaquin Cuadra Ch., Carlos Tunnerman B., Felipe Mantica A., Fernando Cardenal M., Emiliano Baltodano P., Arturo Cruz, Carlos Gutierrez S., Sergio Ramirez M., Casimiro Sotelo A., Ernesto Castillo M. and Miguel d'Escoto B.

Other conspirators in the sedition were: Eden Pastora, Indalecio Rodriguez, Alfonso Robelo, Violeta Chamorro, Daniel and Humberto Ortega, and a woman following in the footsteps of Germany's Ilsa Koch, one Nora Astorga.

Among the accomplishments of this pot pourrie are countless inhumanities but none so vicious as that done only by the Astorga woman, later named Chief Prosecutor of 7500 officers, NCO's, and enlisted men of the National Guard of Nicaragua. She was the principal in the foul killing of General Reynaldo Perez Vega, a high-ranking officer of the National Guard. The manner in which the murder was carried out was grisly even by the standards of this cruel century.

"Apparently Perez Vega and Astorga were having an affair and the night of the murder the General went to Astorga's

apartment. Astorga stated that she was out of liquor and Perez Vega thereupon dispatched his driver to buy some. Perez Vega and Astorga disrobed and got into bed, at which point an unknown number of co-conspirators entered the room and proceeded bludgeon Perez into a bloody pulp, gouging out his eyes, slitting his throat, hacking him with an ice pick and cutting off his genitals."

"After the action was executed I joined my comrades on the northern front, so I could continue to fight ..." wrote Astorga to her Sandinista brothers on March 30, 1979.

While Astorga argued that her actions were her own, each and every one of the Sandinista leaders (including three suspended priests) is guilty if not of the murder itself, then for their association with this psychopath and her appointment as "prosecutor" of the National Guard.

The socialist world now claims that the Sandinista's have brought democracy to Nicaragua for the first time since 1821.

The Sandinista concept of the democratic process is, and has been from the beginning, that the people should have the right to express their will on trivial matters but not on the substantive issues that affect life and death. Under today's ruling junta every Nicaraguan citizen has the right to support and work for the Sandino-communist revolution, but not to oppose it or even remain neutral.

In the last four years, the fruits of the revolution enjoyed by the "campesinos" are be summed up as: the annihilation of illiteracy, the provision of free health care, meaningful agrarian reform and personal security was never known in the Somoza era. To the Sandinista's, "literacy" amounts to being able to print your name and recognize "cat" and "mouse". The health care is provided by Cuban "barefoot doctors" (with the training of a hospital orderly). Agrarian reform means having the right to work (but not own or live on) government land if (and only if) you are a Sandinista. Personal security is guaranteed by CDS (Committee for the Defense of Sandinismo) spies on every block to keep track of the comings and goings of all the people.

The Sandinistas' popular democracy has caused over a hundred thousand citizens have flee in search of 'Yankee-imperialist oppression.' A few good reasons for this exodus are the superabundance of 'literacy, health care, free land and security' and the super-shortages of sugar, rice, beans, and other basic items for daily consumption; the devaluation of the Cordoba (formerly 7, now 135 per dollar) and demise of international trade in basic raw materials; and the creation of one of the largest military establishments in Latin America (with forced inscription). Nicaragua is today reliving Cuba's transformation from a proud democratic republic to a totalitarian state in the service of international communism.

Many people of Nicaragua have reacted to the Sandinista insurgency by voting with their feet. The thousands of exiles



that fled in 1979 have been joined by thousands more. The majority, however, are quietly suffering the social, economic and political barbarism of the regime which attained power by all that is unholy.

An increasing number of Nicaraguans have come to ask themselves, "Is this what we gave fifty thousand lives for?". Ever more clearly the answer comes back, "No, it is not!".

Today many Nicaraguans are facing the reality that they fought for an illusion created by Communist masters of deceit. Nicaragua's mortal sin was to have cast its hopes and aspirations in the image of the United States. Its initial (though hard won) successes in free enterprise and democracy, achieved through its longstanding, close alliance with the United States, were denigrated by a few nearby countries, who involved themselves in the communist insurgency to topple the pro-U.S. government of A. Somoza.

The dream of most Nicaraguans in exile is to recover for themselves and their country the freedom, democracy and real progress they had made between 1936 and 1979. To this end, their National Guard has continued the fight against the insurgents. The Guard, however, is now outnumbered by disenchanted Sandinistas who belatedly resist the Communist brutality, which they say they did not expect. These consist of six major groups, called the "contra": Robelo's MDN; Pastora's FRS; Chamorro's FARN-UDN; Calero's FDN; Fagoth's Misura; and Rivera's Misurasata.

#### POST-DEMOCRATIC PERIOD BEGINS

##### Post-Revolutionary Unity

It needs to be clearly understood that each of these six partisan para-military forces, i.e., the "contra," retains the basic elements of Sandinista ideology: (1) opposition to the National Guard, (2) a latent (if not overt) opposition to the United States, and (3) a burning desire that the people of Nicaragua should enjoy the benefits of its form of 'democracy,' which must be initially imposed.

These partisans, no less than the Sandinistas, have publically expressed both their rejection of the National Guard and their contempt for the United States with occasionally subtle but most often shocking vulgarity.

As for democracy: while the Sandinista faction (FSLN) in power urges that it has finally brought true democracy to the country, it, never-the-less, ruthlessly excludes and represses all of its serious opponents. The extent of one's freedom in today's Nicaragua is to support the Marxist revolution (but not to be neutral or to oppose it). This strange kind of democracy is usually called a 'popular democracy.' It is this repression and limited freedom imposed by the FSLN that puts the MDN, the FRS, the FDN, the UDN, the MISURA and MISURASATA outside the country trying to battle their way into to power.

The Sandinista Revolutionary Front (FRS) is based in Costa Rica and headed by Eden Pastora [originally a Sandinista insurgent and prominent member of that regime] now fighting for his own version (anti-U.S., anti-N.G.) of the revolution. He too wants 'democracy' for Nicaragua but has declared that he will continue fighting against anyone who is loyal to the Liberal Nationalist party or the National Guard or who might include them in having a voice in the future of the country. A strange understanding of democracy, indeed!

The Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) is based in Honduras. It has seven leaders who are bound by their common opposition to the government of the late President Somoza and the institutional National Guard as well as their commitment to what they (ambiguously) refer to as "social justice." From their ill-defined writings on the subject, we take this to mean soft communism (socialism).

Enrique Bermudez [originally a National Guard officer who led the Nicaraguan Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ADREN) and the 15th of September Legion] defines his objective as the "institution of a democratic government and authentic social justice for the majority of the people; a Nicaragua that would be an example to all Latin America in social advances."

He is joined by: (1) Adolfo Calero [Conservative] who, seeking the presidency of Nicaragua for himself, considers it vital that Communism be eliminated to prevent its spread to all of Central America. He remains silent on a socialist version of Sandinismo, i.e., one with anti-N.G. and anti-U.S. sentiment; (2) Alfonso Callejas [Liberal, the late-President Somoza's vice-president] who seeks true political pluralism for Nicaragua (also silent on the issue of the Liberal party); (3) Edgar Chamorro [Conservative] who seeks social justice and a respect for the rights and liberties of the individual (but without saying anything about Somocistas, Liberals, Guardsmen, etc.); (4) Indalecio Rodriguez [Sandinista and one of the founders of the FSLN] who decries persecution, incarceration and murder of minority groups (though once a founder of the FSLN); (5) Lucia vd de Salazar [supported Sandinista guerrillas] who now condemns international communist control of Nicaragua; and (6) Marco Zeledon [exponent of social justice] who suggests that Sandino-marxism will not lead to industrial development in Nicaragua. Unfortunately, none of these have very admirable track records as political heavy-weights.

Without exception, they talk about bringing democracy to Nicaragua but certainly not in a form that includes all the people of the country. Each insists that democracy be limited to those who more or less agree with its perspectives and intentions to gain or hold power; the opposition having no effective voice. On this basis, one is hard pressed to distinguish any one of them from the partisan armies of the 1920's, intent on catapulting themselves into political power by force of arms.

This situation is fraught with peril because of the high

risk of losing 50,000 more lives and ending up with something little if any better than the regime now in power. Nicaraguan history and the statements of these several factions make it exceedingly difficult to believe that a truly democratic, pluralistic political process could unfold under any one of them. On the contrary, history shows quite convincingly that Nicaragua's best hope for the future lies with the restructuring of the National Guard as a non-partisan peace keeping force, to preserve an environment conducive to free political activity. Forty percent of those making up the "contra" are Guardsmen who would prefer to be part of the proper military establishment but who will fight with the Devil himself to free their country.

#### Magnitude of the Problem

The problem of communist expansion is obvious. It needs to be dealt with by the Central American nations affected by it; not by the CONTADORA group outside of Central America or by partisan guerrillas. The Council of Central American Defense (CONDECA) is the obvious instrumentality for resolving the military aspect of the problem since, as the Sandinista leadership is reported to have said (and the facts clearly show), its revolution knows no frontiers. The council of Central American states organized 18 months ago offers one possible instrumentality for dealing with the political aspects of the problem; this, because the social problems arising from underdevelopment, which give communism a chance, also know no frontiers.

Geographic, economic and historic realities make the United States and Nicaragua natural allies. The two nations should recognize, at the very least, their interdependence. Real cooperation obligates the U.S. to meet the needs of Nicaragua by first, restoring it to its pre-1979 political condition and secondly, providing massive private investment and public development assistance to rebuild the economy. It obligates Nicaragua to provide the free, pluralistic environment in which the private and public sectors can effectively participate. Such interaction cannot, however, be achieved in the 'anti-Yankee' atmosphere created by the Sandinistas and espoused by the Sandinista dissidents of the "contra."

There is, interestingly, increasing recognition in both nations that under the so-called "Somoza dynasty" Nicaragua was a free country, it was an investor's paradise, and more U.S. economic and technical aid was channeled there than to any other country in the hemisphere. These three factors stimulated remarkable progress, a steadily growing economy, and increased benefits to more and more people each year. The contrast provided by the the Sandinista regime's failed performance puts the reality of the matter in high relief.

The deterioration of conditions in Nicaragua is deeply felt by those Americans who value what Nicaragua once gave to the United States: the warm friendship of a genuinely faithful partner and ally. Shorn of self interest, such Americans are

not unaffected by the self-destructive course being followed under the tutelage of a mutual and implacable enemy. The whole experience has been as painful as the loss of a close member of the family. It leaves a sense of emptiness.

#### NATIONAL GUARD OF NICARAGUA

##### Origins

The National Guard (GN) of Nicaragua was created in 1925 as a non-partisan peace keeping force, its organization was a U.S. State Department condition for the withdrawal of U.S. Marines from Nicaragua. The purpose of this new military establishment was to stabilize Nicaragua's chaotic political situation, which was the result of fighting between partisan armies of the Liberal and the Conservative parties that began at the time of Nicaragua's independence from Spain in 1821. History shows that the only way to attain political power in that period was by the use of arms and not by popular elections. The GN stabilized the terrible situation and it was the beginning of a long period of peace and tranquility in the country.

As stated, the Guard was initially headed by Americans, the first Chief Director (Jefe Director) was General Calvin B. Mathews. In 1932, when the Marines were preparing to return to the United States, General Mathews chose General Anastasio Somoza Garcia (from among other candidates) to serve as the first Nicaraguan Chief Director.

Since the organization of the military establishment a special tie developed between the two countries. The Guard's code of military law is a copy of the Marine Corps manual of 1932. More than eighty per cent of the Guard's high ranking officers attended one or more U.S. military schools (including the Command and General Staff College). Many Nicaraguan officers came to feel that the National Guard is virtually a part of the U.S. military establishment. They, as their Chief Director, emerged with a blind faith in the mutual integrity and loyalty of the governments and armed forces of the two countries. [It is an unpleasant admission for an American to make but, the absolute faith and confidence that the Guard had in the United States was badly misplaced. Putting aside the profound shame and disillusionment that we feel, it is to be asked, can the United States ever erase the stain left by the Carter administration's betrayal of Nicaragua?]

Never-the-less, the bond created by more than a half century of the closest of relations between the two military establishments, in the pre-Carter days, produced a warm and amicable atmosphere. This positive relationship extended to the government and private sectors. While keeping its own character, Nicaragua took on as its own the best of American idealism. It became the only true ally of the United States in western hemisphere, and quietly accepted much of the criticism levelled against it for being so close to the Yankees.



## Organization

The National Guard had a peace time compliment of about five thousand. Its duties were diverse - ranging from highway construction and maintenance, postal and telephone systems, local law enforcement, highway patrol, customs, and the unique "Accion Civica" - all in direct service to the people.

Its members were less trained and ready to defend the people from threats and hostile acts by foreign countries and organized insurgents than to fulfill their specialized duties. Throughout, the Guard was by-and-large non-partisan and it protected the rights of the people (inclusive of subversives) with fidelity.

The typical Guardsman was young man who may have finished the sixth grade, who came from a peasant background, and who saw in the National Guard a means of improving himself and serving his country. He may have entered the service at 15 or 16 years of age, completed his schooling and military training by the time he was 18 or 19. As in any organization, the capable rise in the ranks and the less capable remain pretty much where they were when they entered the Guard.

## Guerrilla Warfare

During the last two decades the GN gained some but not enough experience as it fought against sporadic terrorist actions executed by the Sandinistas. It was not until the mid 1970's that these guerrilla operations became a serious threat to the peace of the country. Aided by the immense propaganda and economic backing of the Communist and other countries in America, the Sandinistas ultimately managed to seize power.

Decisive for this success was the aid provided by the administration of former President James Carter. This aid was principally political but also took the form of, for example, preventing (under threat of cutting off U.S. aid) the reactivation of the Central American Council of Defense (CONDECA) to come to the assistance of the Nicaraguan government in 1978; and the embargo of a fully prepaid shipload of armament, munitions and other military equipment from Israel in 1979. These hostile acts deprived the Guard of any possible opportunity of putting down the Communist insurgents. It was left completely without munitions while the Sandinistas were well supplied by Cuba. (By international law such an embargo constitutes an act of war. We have some substantial difficulty in escaping the conclusion that the Carter Administration effectively declared war on Nicaragua and, by its aid to the Communist Revolution there, simply handed it over to the communists).

The National Guard's defense of the people and the civil government was a legitimate duty under the Constitution. It was the military establishment's responsibility to maintain peace and order throughout the seven year term of President Somoza D. and then to maintain peace under the next government as duly elected by the people. While it takes no mental giant

to understand that it was the Guard's duty to defend the presidency of the Republic, there is somehow a mental block on the matter of its defense of A. Somoza, who was the legitimate president of the Republic, and the Guard has been severely and unfairly criticized for this. The charge that the military establishment of Nicaragua was the pretorian guard of the Somoza family is as absurd as a charge that the U.S. Secret Service was the pretorian guard of J. Carter. It also goes against the fact that President Somoza, no more or less than any other individual on Nicaraguan soil, had every right to be secure in his person. This was precisely the task of the National Guard.

It was in the decade of the seventies that the Communist propaganda against the GN began in earnest. Its purpose was to discredit the military establishment by presenting it to the whole world as a foul and corrupt organization. This propaganda was designed by specialists in disinformation and widely circulated by active communists, by well meaning but ill-informed non-communists and by most segments of communications media in the U.S. and Latin America.

One of the instruments of psychological warfare used in modern times is defamation. Its object is to render one's enemy less effective both in terms of his ability to gain the support of the common man and in his image of himself. It was the tactic used by the Sandinista insurgents to defame the officers and enlisted men of the National Guard. Unfortunately, there were isolated incidents of bad conduct by a few members of the GN which were amplified out of proportion. These acts were carried out by irresponsible individuals and we cannot for a moment condemn the institution of the GN for them.

Those Guardsmen who may be guilty of crimes, not less than any other citizen, should be brought to trial under due legal process; but, as individual violators. There is certainly nothing in the regulations of Guard that is offensive to the common good or justified its en globo condemnation.

Another communist tactic commonly used in Nicaragua was urban guerrilla warfare. One of its purposes was also to discredit the GN, but in an especially sanguine manner. The Sandinistas would collect children from ten to fourteen years of age in the poorer neighborhoods to which they had sent clandestine operatives. They would begin an attack to draw the G.N.'s anti-terrorist units (BECAT) to the neighborhood. The Sandinistas would then steal away leaving the youths (whom they had armed) to face military combat. When the Guard managed to get control of the situation, invariably a few young people would have been killed. International news media were quick to publish headlines of National Guard atrocities. The youths were declared to have been heroes who gave their lives fighting to overthrow President Somoza. (In fact, they were the victims of an inhumane, cruel charade).

No less barbaric was the killing and torturing of Guardsmen for the purpose of terrorizing innocent bystanders. Who could

not be affected if he witnessed the savage murder of Lt. Juan Ocon - captured, tortured and shot, yet while still alive his head was hacked off. Or, by the cold blooded murder of thirteen members of the GN in the stadium at Leon after they had surrendered to the Sandinistas. Or, by the killing of Lt. Rene Silva's wife and children in Matagalpa while he was fighting to defend that city. The litany goes on with Major Domingo Gutierrez and six of his men, who were captured, placed in a hole, sprayed with gasoline, and burned alive. The case of Major Pablo Emilio Salazar cannot go unremembered. Captured in Honduras after the war, he was tortured to death. His face was beaten beyond recognition, his arms broken, his ears cut off, his genitals severed, strips of his skin peeled from his body and, finally, he was shot in the head.

For those Americans who think that this brutality is remote, it would be well to note that less than a thousand miles from Miami, Florida a Sandinista insurgent group, commanded by (the American) Clifford Scott, captured two female students of the Nicaraguan police academy. One was pregnant. Her abdomen was ripped open and the fetus torn out.

Yes, it is horrible! And while this is being written, there remain several thousand members of the National Guard in prison under the most barbaric and inhumane conditions. Their crime: defending their country against a communist insurgency; their glory: they have refused for four long years to be 're-educated' by the Sandinistas or to defile their honorable service to their country. N.B.: The Sandinistas have let it be known that if the "contra" advanced very far into Nicaragua all of these prisoners would be killed! Fifty such murders took place as this paper was being drafted.

#### Conclusion

The interests of both peace and justice would be served if those remaining elements of the Nicaragua's military establishment (the National Guard) were supported in the continuing effort to free that country of the Sandinista regime. The Nicaraguan National Guard should be integrated into a multinational Central American (CONDECA) force and charged with putting down the communist insurgency that has control of most of Nicaragua's national territory. Since it is on the success of a non-partisan military effort that the future political and economic development of Nicaragua depends, once in place, the National Guard should be supported in its proper peace-keeping function in Nicaragua.

The segment of the "contra" receiving a major part of the present level of assistance appears to be the Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN). While some of its objectives are praiseworthy, it remains that it is a partisan entity (not unknown for its anti-Yankee sentiments) and offers less than a convincing promise for a truly pluralistic, democratic future for Nicaragua. In the face of logical alternative (the National Guard joined to CONDECA), support of this partisan guerrilla band is curious not only from the American point of

view but also from that of many Nicaraguans. It seems to carry with it the implicit danger of another anti-American, pro-socialist regime.

We earnestly pray that, in God's providence, the administration of President Reagan may come to see the wisdom and rightness of following the course recommended here. And also, that it will follow through on its reconstruction commitments to not only Nicaragua but to Central America, which so very much needs the joint participation of the private and public sectors of each of the countries involved to bring an enduring peace and real progress for the people.