

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Blackwell, Morton: Files
Folder Title: Central America – IV
(1 of 4)
Box: 54

To see more digitized collections visit:
<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:
<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Council

16 May 1983

NOTE FOR: Faith Ryan Whittlesey

In the event it might be of interest to you for the Central America Outreach Group, I am attaching three items:

- A three page suggested communications strategy written in November 1981
- A set of one page, unclassified materials which provide information on different major themes--including a one page overview
- A set of unclassified, printed materials and photographs which were released by the government some time ago but which have not reached many key persons in the US or abroad.

I shall look forward to meeting you today.

Constantine C. Menges
Dr. Constantine C. Menges
National Intelligence Officer
for Latin America

24 November 1981

POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR CENTRAL AMERICA -- BRIEF SUGGESTIONS

It is widely recognized that the truth about events in Central America has not been effectively communicated and that much more needs to be done on an urgent basis. An effective communications effort must inform both US domestic audiences and a variety of international participants on the Central American events. In each case, there is a need for factual information which can reach key leadership groups as well as the general public through the communications media.

This brief outline will summarize a number of themes and suggest a linkage between key audiences and private institutions which might have an interest in participating on a voluntary basis.

I. Essential Communications Themes

A. Nicaragua

1. The Marxist/Leninist Directorate virtually controls the society with its:
 - a. new secret police
 - b. large and well-equipped military forces
 - c. dominant Sandinista Party
 - d. mass organizations (e.g., Sandinista Defense Committee)
 - e. large foreign communist and radical Arab presence and help
2. Moderate and democratic forces still exist and include:
 - a. two trade union federations (35,000 members)
 - b. five democratic political parties
 - c. business associations and cooperatives (75,000 members)
 - d. Catholic and Protestant Churches
 - e. Atlantic Coast Indian communities of 150,000 -- Protestant and English-speaking
 - f. one newspaper and two radio stations
3. The Sandinista Government is violating its promises to the OAS
 - a. 23 June 1979 OAS resolution called for free elections, press, trade unions, media

- b. 12 July 1979 Sandinista letter to OAS affirmed its intention to establish democracy and implement the above resolution

B. El Salvador

1. The Extreme Left

- a. history, purpose, tactics
- b. estimated number of people killed and kidnapped by the extreme left, 1976-81
- c. the strategy of economic destruction and the human consequences
- d. propaganda and false claims of the extreme left, e.g., May 1980 claim that Israeli and US troops invaded El Salvador

2. The Extreme Right

- a. history, purpose, tactics
- b. estimated number of victims, 1976-81
- c. efforts to overthrow the current Salvadoran government (three coup attempts 1980-81)
- d. some degree of collaboration from minorities in some government security forces (mafia, big city police department analogy)

3. Moderate Groups Ranging from Democratic Left to Conservative

- a. moderates include most of the military, anti-communist labor unions, most of the Catholic Church, most of the business community -- tangible accomplishments of the moderate civil/military coalition including
 - a-1. surviving against both extremes
 - a-2. major demonstrations of public support
 - a-3. land reform of 1980 benefitting more than one million peasants among 1.8 million formerly landless
 - a-4. other reforms

C. Transnational Forces

1. For the Moderates in Central America

- a. Venezuela, Costa Rica, Colombia, other Latin democracies
- b. Christian democratic parties of Latin America and Europe

- c. free trade unions of the US, Latin America, and Europe
- d. the US
- e. social democratic parties of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and important factions in other European and Latin American parties have condemned the extreme left in Central America

2. For the Extreme Left

- a. Cuba, other communist states
- b. Libya/Palestinian terrorist groups
- c. Mexico-signs of second thoughts outside the government
- d. Social Democrats--some divisions

II. Linking Possible Communicators with US Leadership Groups

Better understanding about Central America can be encouraged both by the direct communications efforts of the US Government and by better informing various private organizations, which in turn have credibility with different leadership groups. The following schematic outline suggests some possible linkages by designating with an X those organizations which might inform different leadership groups.

Leadership Groups to be Informed

Possible Communicators	Congress	Media	Religious Groups	Intellectuals & Colleges	Liberal Civic Groups	Conservative Civic Groups	Veterans & Business Groups
<u>US Govt.</u>							
State	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Defense	X					X	X
CIA	X						
AFL-CIO/AIFLD	X	X	X	X	X		
Council of the Americas (bus)	X					X	X
Freedom House	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Instit. for Religion & Democracy	X	X	X		X	X	
Committee on the Present Danger	X	X		X		X	X
Natl. Strat. Info Center	X	X					
Land Council (NY)	X			X	X		
Cmte for the Free World		X		X	X	X	

III. Improving the Information Available to Influential International Participants in Central America

The participation of the US free trade union movement (AFL-CIO and AIFLD) provides an opportunity to reach into the Social Democratic parties of Europe and Latin America through their links with their own independent trade unions and the various anti-communist international confederations. This and other such communications linkages are suggested by the following schematic outline.

Leadership Groups to be Informed

<u>Possible Communicators</u>	<u>Intl Trade Unions-e.g. ICFTU, OR-IT</u>	<u>Chris. Dem. Trade Unions</u>	<u>Soc. Dem Trade Unions, Parties, & Soc. Int.</u>	<u>Democratic Socialist Government</u>	<u>Latin Govts.</u>	<u>Mexico</u>
<u>US Govt.</u>						
State						
ICA/Labor	X	X	X	X	X	X
Defense				X (NATO)	X (Rio)	X (military)
AFL-CIO/AIFLD	X	X	X			X (labor)
ICFTU/ORIT		X	X			
Freedom House			X	X	X	X
Soc. Dem. Parties of CR, Nic			X	X		X (parties)
Venezuela	X	X		X	X	X
Chris. Dem. Parties & Federations	X	X			X	
Committee for the Free World		X	X			

CENTRAL AMERICA/MEXICO -- OVERVIEW

- I. Democratic trends in Latin America
23 of 32 countries with 70% of population are democratic (17) or liberalizing (6).
- II. Soviet Bloc/Cuban/Nicaraguan support for guerrillas/subversion
- Targets include democratic as well as authoritarian regimes
 - recall 1960s Marxist Leninist guerrillas against Venezuela, Uruguay
 - since 1978 a massive increase and targets include democratic Colombia, Costa Rica
 - Large scale of Cuban support for subversion illustrated by actions on three continents
 - Africa - 70,000 military and other personnel; active in 14 countries
 - Middle East - working closely with Libya, South Yemen, PLO
 - Latin America - 8,000 Cubans in Nicaragua; Cubans helping dictatorships consolidate power in Grenada, Nicaragua, Suriname...plus current major subversive operations in Central America, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Chile
- III. Conclusive evidence of Soviet Bloc/Cuban support for the violent left in Central America
- HUMAN intelligence provides location of training camps, command centers, arms supply routes
 - We have evidence of Nicaragua based command and control of guerrilla forces
 - PHOTO INT adds by showing massive Soviet Bloc arms inflow to Nicaragua, airfields for arms supply to guerrillas (PAPALONAL example), 40 new military bases
 - Capture of safe houses, arms supply cars and trucks in Costa Rica/Honduras; illustrates cooperation among regional Marxist-Leninist terrorists and Cuban/Nicaraguan support (example July 1982 Colombian M 19 member caught in Costa Rica with Nicaraguan embassy officers as his controls also caught in terrorism campaign against the anti-communist social democratic president, Luis Alberto Monge)
- IV. Nicaragua - the real situation
- internal
- Marxist-Leninist Directorate in control with new secret police army, 8,000 Cubans, 500 or more Soviet Bloc, Libyan, PLO personnel
 - genuinely democratic groups (parties, trade unions, church, business) still exist but have no power
 - Sandinistas have broken the democratic promises made in July 1979 and OAS required
 - Anti-Sandinistas are NOT SOMOCISTAS, rather want to implement democracy
- external
- full cooperation with Soviet Bloc/Cuba...treaties since March 1980 Moscow visit
 - massive military build-up and export of subversion continues
- Western economic aid has been generous and has had no moderating effect
- Since July 1979 Western aid \$1.6 billion of which \$1.2 billion bilateral
 - all the rest of Central America received only \$750 million in bilateral aid
 - European socialist international legitimation of the Sandinistas has been a major factor
- V. Three forces are competing in El Salvador
- violent right - some large landowners angered by the land reforms plus clandestine non-government groups, and a very small element of the military/security leadership
 - violent left - led by the FMLN/DRU formed in Havana at Castro's initiative
 - consists of six Marxist-Leninist groups including the Communist Party
 - non-Marxist-Leninist component is very small (400 among 4,000-6,000 guerrilla fighters), has no real influence and is self-admittedly under the command of the Marxist-Leninists.
 - responsible political forces ranging from Christian democrats, other centrists, conservatives also includes democratic trade unions (UPD/UCS), most of the business community, Catholic Church leadership and 85% of the military officers.
- Accomplishments
- continuing the battle against the violent left and substantially weakening the power of the violent right.
 - elections in 1982 with 85% participation and those scheduled for late 1983.
 - land reforms implemented since March/April 1980 with benefits for 550,000 peasants.

Latin America: Forms of Government



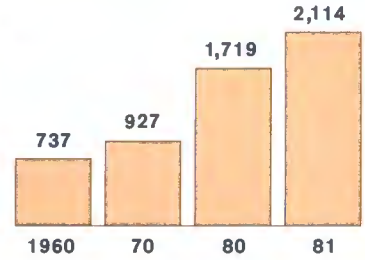
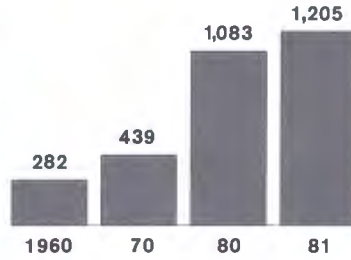
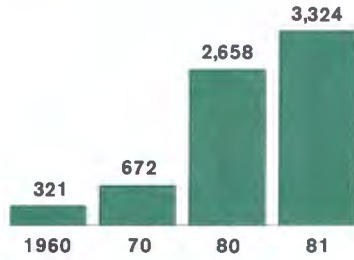
Latin America: Selected Economic and Social Indicators

Mexico

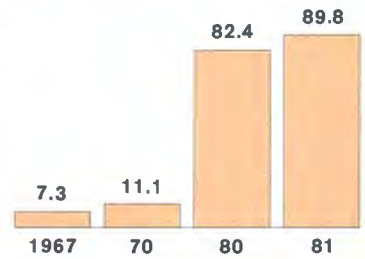
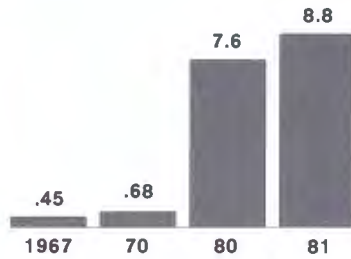
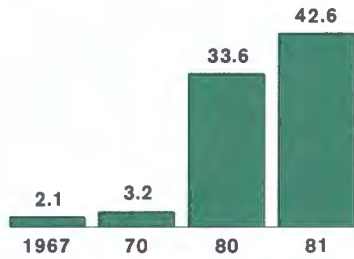
Central America and Panama

South America

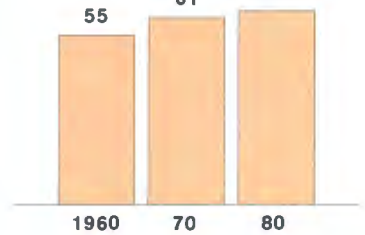
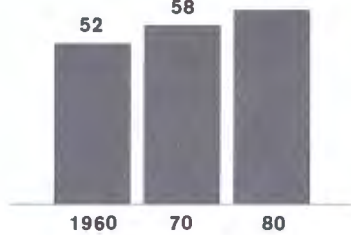
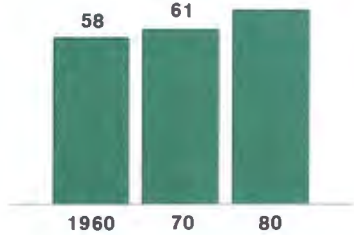
GNP per capita (US \$)



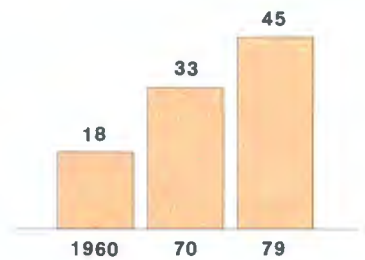
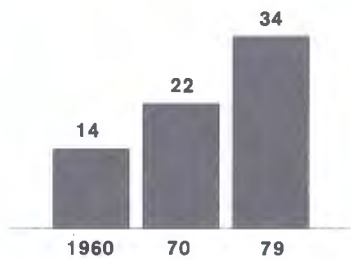
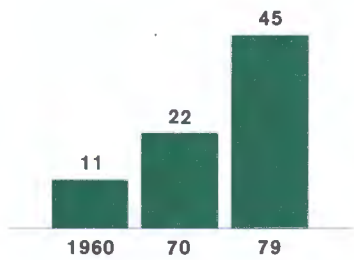
External Public Debt (billion US \$)



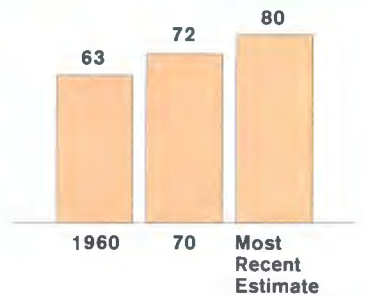
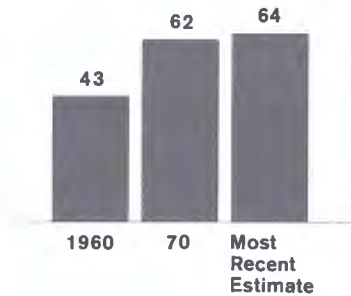
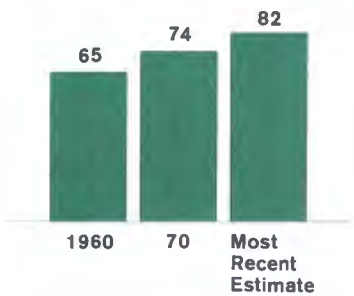
Life Expectancy At Birth (years)



Secondary Education Enrollment (percent of age group)



Adult Literacy Rate (percent)



OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPROVEMENTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA
1960-1978

Country	Population		Adult Literacy		Life Expectancy		Economic Growth** (% Increase in Real GNP)	
	1960 million	1980	1960 percent	1980*	1960	1980*	1960-1977	1982 est
COSTA RICA	1.2	2.2	NA	88	62	70.0	+5.7	-6.0
EL SALVADOR	2.4	4.7	49	62	50	63	+5.3	-5.5
GUATEMALA	3.8	7.3	31.5	46	47	57	+5.7	-3.5
HONDURAS	1.8	3.7	45	57	46	57	+7.8	-1.2
PANAMA	1.1	1.9	73	78	62	70	+6.3	+1.0
NICARAGUA	1.4	2.6	NA	57	47	55	+6.2	-5.0
AVERAGE INCREASE FROM 1960 - 1980:			10 years		11%			

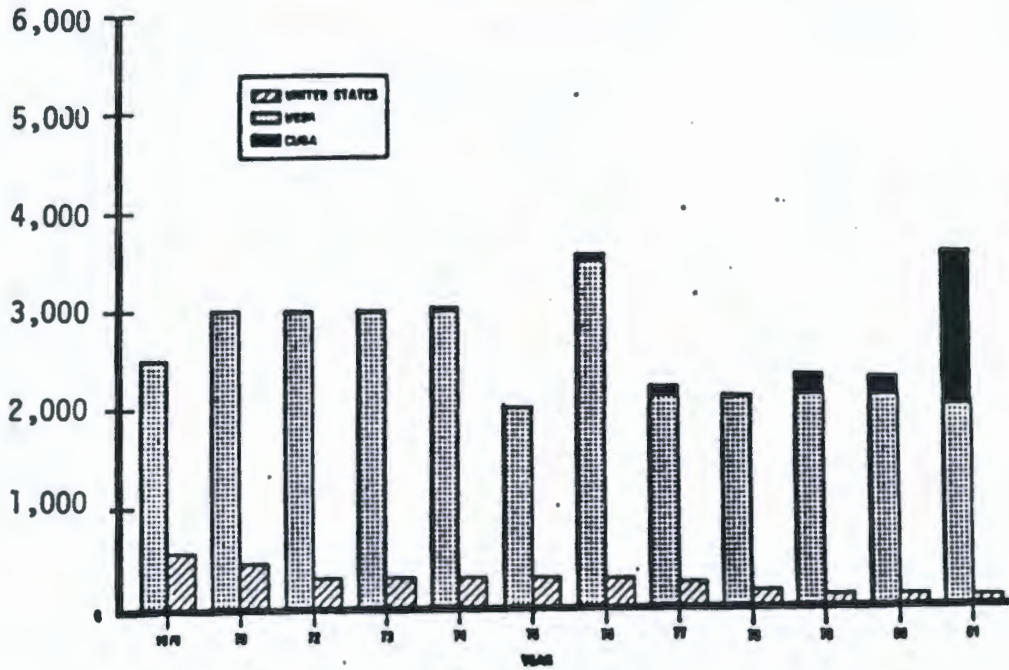
*Represents 1980 or estimate of most recent year

**Since 1978, the combination of global economic problems and increased guerrilla violence and terrorism have combined to bring about far lower economic growth.

UNCLASSIFIED

MILITARY ADVISORS IN LATIN AMERICA: U.S., USSR, CUBA
1970 -- 1981

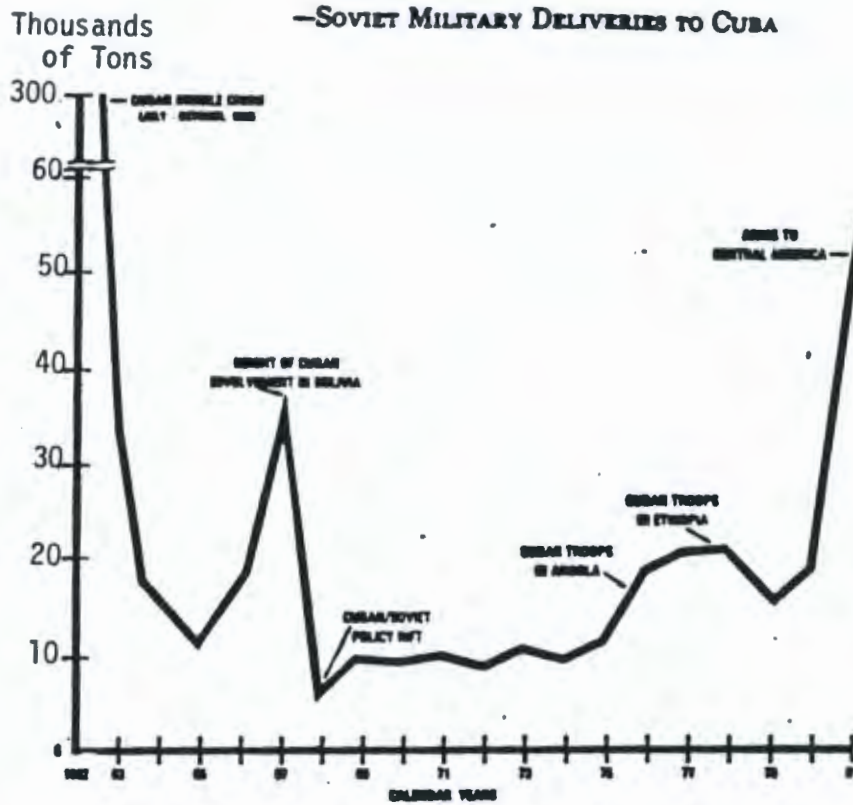
-MILITARY ADVISORS WITH LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES



Source: From the testimony of Dr. Fred C. Ikle to the US Senate hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion; Hearings before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, February 26 to March 12, 1982.

UNCLASSIFIED

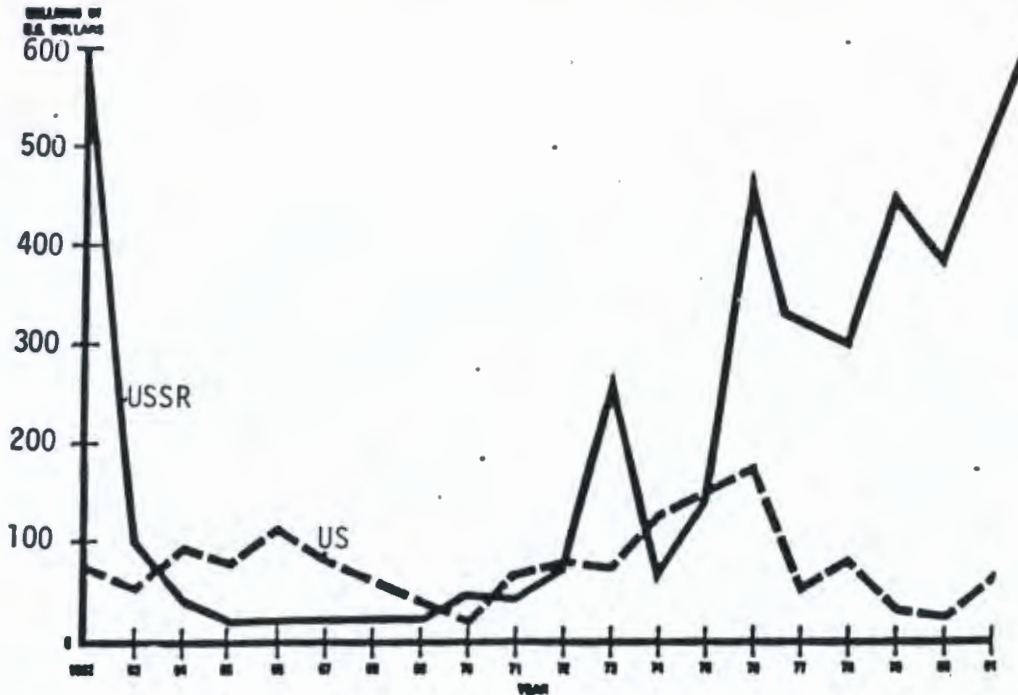
SOVIET MILITARY DELIVERIES TO CUBA: 1962 TO 1981



Source: From the testimony of Dr. Fred C. Ikle to the US Senate hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion; Hearings before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, February 26 to March 12, 1982.

US AND SOVIET SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO LATIN AMERICA
1962 - 1981

**-SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO LATIN AMERICA
(\$ IN MILLIONS)**



Source: From the testimony of Dr. Fred C. Ikle to the US Senate hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion; Hearings before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, February 26 to March 12, 1982.

CUBAN PRESENCE IN NICARAGUA

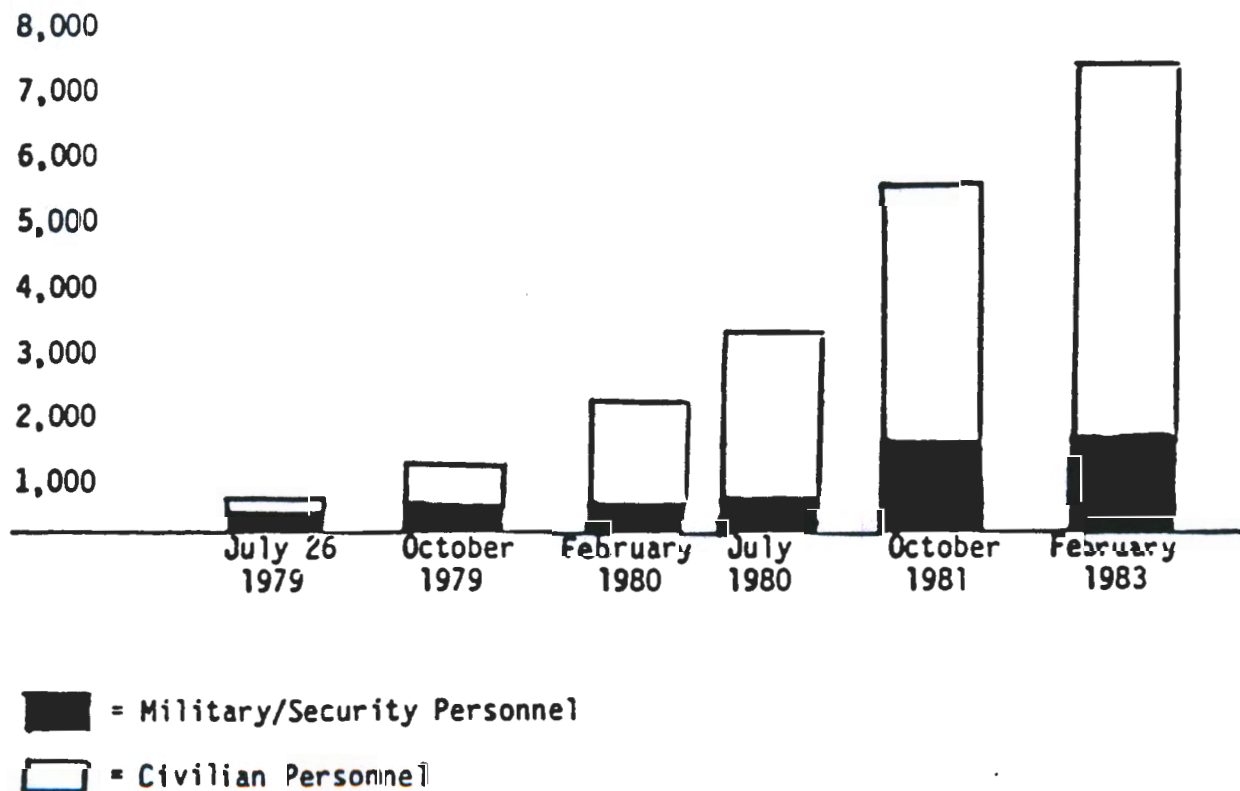


TABLE C

GROWTH IN THE ARMED EXTREME LEFT IN CENTRAL AMERICA 1960-1982 (U)

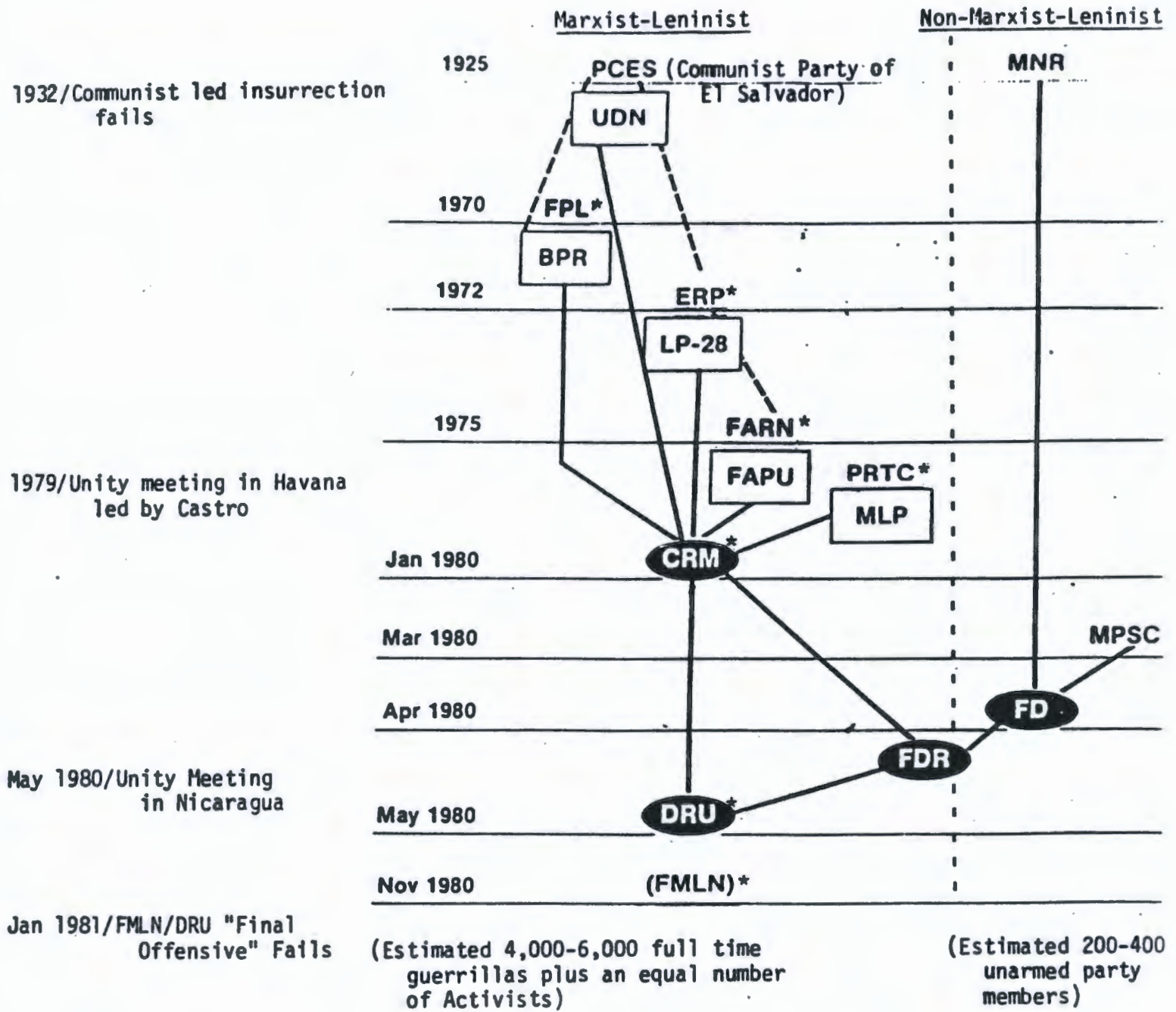
	<u>1960-1970</u>	<u>1971-1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>	<u>Armed Extreme Left</u>
TOTAL:	750	1,200	3,450	7,600	6,500	7,600	7,700
Nicaragua	150	300	2,000	4,500			
<u>Current Targets</u>							
El Salvador	0	300	850	2,000	3,500	4,500	4,500
Guatemala	600	600	600	1,000	2,000	3,000	3,000
Honduras	0	0	some	some	some	100	200
Costa Rica	some	some	some	some	some	some	some
SUB-TOTAL:	600	900	1,450	3,000	6,500	7,600	7,700

UNCLASSIFIED

US/IADB-ECONOMIC AID AND SANDINISTA ACTIONS - THE FIRST TEN WEEKS - 1979

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u> (in million)	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SANDINISTA ACTIONS</u>
Aug 79	USAID	\$1.9	Food through GRN Ministry of Health & Social Welfare	Aug 79	Newspaper, <u>El Pueblo</u> , shut down
"	USAID	\$6.9	Govt to Govt loan commodities for distribution	"	Sandinistas begin military build up, including construction of new bases and airfields
"	USAID	\$17.6	Loan to GRN to finance sale of agric. commodities	"	Sandinistas move to consolidate labor unions under 2 Sandinista umbrella organizations.
Sept 79	IADB	\$20	Multi-purpose loan	Sept 79	606 Nicaraguan students go to Isle of Youth, Cuba
"	IADB	\$36.5	Agriculture/Industrial	"	A new militia begins to be organized
"	IADB	\$25	Industrial	"	Sandinistas begin to aid Salvadoran insurgents by facilitating shipment of arms, supplies; providing training facilities
				"	Pham Van Dong, premier of Socialist Republic of Vietnam arrives
				"	Daniel Ortega and Alfonso Robelo meet with Pres. Carter at White House
TOTAL		<u>\$102.6</u>			

El Salvador: Development and Status of the Extreme Left Coalition



Legend:

----- Faction which left the Communist Party

□ Front Organization

● Umbrella Organization

* Violent Extreme Left Group or Command Authority

11 March 1983

SURINAME -- CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
25 November 1975	Suriname granted independence from the Netherlands.
May 1979	Diplomatic relations established with Cuba.
25 February 1980	Sergeant Bouterse and "The Group of 16" seize power.
August 1980	Bouterse accuses Cubans of encouraging a leftist coup. Parliament dissolved. Seven leftist including Sgts Sital, Mijns and Joeman arrested for planning a coup.
March 1981	Pro-Cuban sergeants are released after Coup attempt
May 1981	Government issues manifesto putting Suriname on socialist footings; six member Policy Center created.
June 1981	Havana established an official mission in Paramaribo
March 1982	Coup attempt foiled; Sgt Hawker executed.
May 1982	Increased contacts with Cubans
October 1982	Cuban Ambassador Cardenas presents his credentials in Paramaribo. Grenadan Prime Minister Bishop visits Suriname.*
8 Decmeber 1982	Fifteen opponents of the Bouterse regime executed, including Cyrill Daal (head of the largest trade union federation-Moederbond); the editor of the local news agency and three other leading journalists; the chairman of the lawyers association and three other attorneys; the university's dean of economics; and two former cabinet ministers--one a local sports hero.
30 January 1983	Deputy Army Comander Horb and 14 others arrested.
2 February 1983	Horb is alleged to have "committed suicide."
28 February 1983	New cabinet is named with PALU leader Alibux as Prime Minister.
4 March 1983	Bouterse flys with Castro and Bishop to NAM summit in New Delhi.

* This Cuban Ambassador is an intelligence agent and was in Granada before, during, and after the 1979 coup. It resulted in a pro-Cuban government there.

Socio-economic facts: GNP = \$1 billion (2,800/capita); 85% literacy

Major Central American Arms Routes



Mexico and Central America: A Global Perspective



Unclassified

633902 (A01028) 3-83

Boundary representation is not warranted by this office.

Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in Latin America

December 14, 1981



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

Following is the text of a research paper presented to the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by the Department of State, December 14, 1981.

CONTENTS

PREFACE

SUMMARY

I. POLICIES

II. METHODS

III. CASE STUDIES

Central America

Nicaragua
El Salvador
Guatemala
Costa Rica
Honduras

The Caribbean

Jamaica
Guyana
Grenada
Dominican Republic

South America

Colombia
Chile
Argentina
Uruguay

IV. POSTSCRIPT

PREFACE

Any formulation of U.S. foreign policy for Latin America and the Caribbean would be incomplete without in-depth analysis of Cuba's role in the region. Some of Cuba's international activities have received publicity and attention, but much has taken place out of the public view. While understanding the full range of Cuba's activities abroad is obviously essential for governments engaged in foreign policy planning, the general public is often uninformed about the nature and extent of Cuba's involvement in other countries. This study of Cuban activities in Latin America and the Caribbean is being issued in the interest of contributing to better public understanding of U.S. foreign policy and developments in the region.

The focus of this study is Cuba's activities in the Americas. It does not attempt to give a description of conditions in the countries in which Cuba is active or to analyze why violent groups develop, but instead examines the degree to which Cuba is directly engaged in efforts to destabilize its neighbors by promoting armed opposition movements. Cuba is clearly not the sole source of violence and instability in the region, but Cuban activities militarize and internationalize what would otherwise be local conflicts. In a region whose primary needs are for economic development, social equity, and greater democracy, Cuba is compounding existing problems by encouraging armed insurrection.

This report describes Cuban activities that are either publicly known or can be revealed without jeopardizing intelligence sources and methods. Cuban involvement is not limited to the examples contained in this study.

SUMMARY

A country-by-country examination of Cuba's activities in Latin America and the Caribbean makes clear that Cuba has renewed its campaign of the 1960s to promote armed insurgencies. In particular, Cuba has stepped up efforts to stimulate violence and destabilize its neighbors, turning away from its earlier policy of strengthening normal diplomatic relations in the hemisphere.

Since 1978, Cuba has:

- Worked to unite traditionally splintered radical groups behind a commitment to armed struggle with Cuban advice and material assistance;
- Trained ideologically committed cadres in urban and rural guerrilla warfare;
- Supplied or arranged for the supply of weapons to support the Cuban-trained cadres' efforts to assume power by force;
- Encouraged terrorism in the hope of provoking indiscriminate violence and repression, in order to weaken government legitimacy and attract new converts to armed struggle; and
- Used military aid and advisers to gain influence over guerrilla fronts and radical governments through armed pro-Cuban Marxists.

Unlike Che Guevara's attempts during the 1960s, Cuban subversion today is backed by an extensive secret intelligence and training apparatus, modern military forces, and a large and sophisticated propaganda network. Utilizing agents and contacts nurtured over more than 20 years, the Castro government is providing ideological and military training and material and propaganda support to numerous violent groups, often several in one country.

Cuba is most active in Central America, where its immediate goals are to exploit and control the revolution in Nicaragua and to induce the overthrow of the Governments of El Salvador and Guatemala. At the same time, Cuba is working to destabilize governments elsewhere in the hemisphere. Cuba provides advice, safehaven, communications, training, and some financial support to several violent South American organizations. In the Caribbean, Cuban interference in the post-election period has been blunted in Jamaica, but Grenada has become a virtual Cuban client.

Cuba's new drive to promote armed insurgency does not discriminate between democracies and dictatorships. And attempts by Cuba to destabilize governments occur in spite of the existence of diplomatic ties.

This long-range campaign is directed by the Cuban Communist Party, which oversees farflung operations that include secret training camps in Cuba, intelligence officers abroad, training programs for select foreign students, networks for covert movement of personnel and material between Cuba and abroad, and propaganda support.

Cuba's enormous investment of energy, money, and agents in this campaign would not be possible without Soviet help. Soviet assistance, now totaling over \$8 million a day, enables Cuba to maintain the best equipped and largest per capita military forces in Latin America and to channel substantial resources abroad. In return, Cuba usually is careful not to jeopardize ongoing government relationships in Latin America important to the Soviet Union.

The scope of Cuba's activities in the hemisphere has prevented Cuba from always keeping covert operations hidden. For instance, during 1981 alone:

- In Nicaragua, Cuba has quietly increased its presence to 5,000 personnel, including more than 1,500 security and military advisers.

- In El Salvador, Cuba's key role in arming the Salvadoran guerrillas was exposed and Castro admitted supplying arms.

- In Costa Rica, a Special Legislative Commission documented Cuba's role in establishing an arms supply network during the Nicaraguan civil war and found the network was later used to supply Salvadoran insurgents.

- In Colombia, Cuba was discovered to have trained guerrillas attempting to establish a "people's army."

Cuba's new policies abroad and its reaction to emigration pressures at home have reversed the trend in Latin America toward normalization of relations with Cuba. During the last 2 years, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Jamaica suspended or broke relations with Cuba. Venezuela, Peru, and Ecuador withdrew their ambassadors from Havana.

Cuban intervention is, of course, not the sole source of instability. The origins of occasional violent conflict in Latin America lie in historical social and economic inequities which have generated frustrations among a number of people. Sustained economic growth over the past 20 years and resilient national institutions, however, have limited the appeal of radical groups. But in some countries, particularly the small nations of Central America, dislocations resulting from rapid growth compounded existing tensions, leading to the emergence in several countries of radical movements, which often originated with frustrated elements of the middle class. Subsequent economic reversals have subjected already weak institutions to additional stress, making these countries more vulnerable to the appeals of radical groups backed by Cuba.

Cuba is quick to exploit legitimate grievances for its own ends. But its strategy of armed struggle is not based on appeals to the "people." Instead, Cuba concentrates on developing self-proclaimed "vanguards" committed to violent action. Revolutions, according to this approach, are made by armed revolutionaries.

Cuba's readiness to train, equip, and advise those who opt for violent solutions imposes obstacles to economic progress, democratic development, and self-determination in countries faced with growing economic difficulties. The spiraling cycle of violence and counter-violence which is central to Cuba's policy only exacerbates the suffering of ordinary people and makes necessary adjustments more difficult.

Cuba's renewed campaign of violence is of great concern to many countries, including the United States. Cuba should not escape responsibility for its actions. Exposing Cuba's efforts to promote armed struggle will increase the costs to Cuba of its intervention.

I. POLICIES

When it first came to power, the Castro regime had its own theory of how to spread revolution: to reproduce elsewhere the rural-based guerrilla warfare experience of Castro's 26th of July Movement in Cuba. In Che Guevara's words, the Andes would become the Sierra Maestra of South America.

Initial attempts to repeat Cuba's revolution elsewhere failed decisively. During the late 1960s, the Castro regime gradually reined in its zealots. Without abandoning its ideology or its ties to radical states and movements, Cuba began to pursue normal government-to-government relations in the hemisphere. By the mid-1970s Cuba's isolation in the Americas eased, and full diplomatic or consular relations were reestablished with a number of countries.

But diplomacy proved unable to satisfy the Castro government's ambitions. First in Africa and now in Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba's policy has again shifted to reemphasize intervention.

On July 26, 1980, Fidel Castro declared that the experiences of Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile, and Bolivia teach us that there is no other way than revolution, that there is no other "formula" than "revolutionary armed struggle." Castro's statement was an attempt to justify publicly what Cuban agents had been doing secretly since 1978: stepping up support for armed insurgency in neighboring countries.

This study traces the development of this latest phase in Cuba's foreign policy.

Early Failures. The original Cuban theory held that a continental Marxist revolution could be achieved by establishing armed focal points (*focos*) in several countries. Operating in rural areas, small bands of guerrillas could initiate struggles that would spread throughout the continent.

In 1959, Castro aided armed expeditions against Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. During the early and mid-1960s, Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia all faced serious Cuban-backed attempts to develop guerrilla *focos*.

In seeking indigenous groups with which to cooperate, the Cubans rejected the orthodox Latin American Communist parties, which they regarded as ineffectual. Instead, they lent their support to more militant groups dedicated to armed violence even when their Marxism was not fully articulated.

The Soviet Union was suspicious of Cuba's policy of inciting armed violence, preferring to work through established Moscow-line Communist parties. Disagreement over this issue was a serious point of friction for several years. Cuba denounced the Soviet policy of "peaceful coexistence" as a fraud, arguing that it implicitly undercut the legitimacy of aiding "national liberation" struggles. At the 1966 Tricontinental Conference, Cuba sought to enlist North Vietnam and North Korea and create a more aggressive revolutionary internationalism.

None of the Latin American insurgencies fomented by Havana, however, aroused much popular support. The most severe blow to Cuba's policy during this period came in Bolivia in 1967, when Che Guevara's guerrilla band was opposed by both the peasantry and the Bolivian Communist Party.

After this maverick approach failed to establish a continental revolution, Cuban foreign policy moved into closer conformity with that of the Soviet Union. Castro endorsed the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and accepted Soviet views on East-West relations. Within the hemisphere, Cuba generally conformed to the Soviet approach of fostering state-to-state relations with several Latin American countries.

The Turn to Africa. In the mid-1970s, Cuba renewed its penchant for direct intervention, not in Latin America but in Africa.¹

- In Angola, 20,000 Cuban troops, supported by Soviet logistics and materiel, assured the supremacy of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which had the strongest ties to Moscow of the three movements competing for power after Portugal's withdrawal.

- In Ethiopia, the integration of Soviet and Cuban operations was even more complete, with the Soviets providing overall command and control, materiel, and transport for 13-15,000 Cuban troops fighting against Somali forces.

¹Cuba's military and political activities in Africa are intense and wide-ranging. Cuba still maintains expeditionary forces of at least 15-19,000 in Angola and 11-15,000 in Ethiopia. Cuba has military and security adviser contingents in a number of other African countries and in South Yemen.

The Moscow-Havana Axis. These African operations gave evidence of Cuba's military value to the Soviet Union. In areas of the Third World where the Soviets were under constraints not binding on Cuba, Havana could portray its actions as an outgrowth of its own foreign policy of support for "national liberation movements."

Cuba's extensive and costly activities overseas would have been impossible, however, without Soviet aid. The Cuban armed forces, some 225,000 strong, with new sophisticated weaponry from the Soviet Union, became a formidable offensive military machine. Soviet aid and subsidies to the Cuban economy have climbed to more than \$3 billion annually or about one-fourth of Cuba's gross national product. In December 1979, at a time when Soviet oil deliveries to Eastern Europe were being cut back and prices raised, Castro announced that the Soviet Union had guaranteed Cuba's oil needs through 1985 at a price roughly one-third that of the world market. The Soviet Union also pays up to four and five times the world price for Cuban sugar.²

In return, Cuba champions the notion of a "natural alliance" between the Soviet bloc and the Third World in the nonaligned movement. At the Cuban Communist Party Congress in December 1980, Castro explicitly endorsed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and defended the Soviet "right" to intervene in Poland. He also reiterated that Cuba is irrevocably committed to communism and to supporting "national liberation" struggles around the world.

Cuba's policies abroad are thus linked to its relationship to the Soviet Union. By intervening in behalf of armed struggle in Latin America, Cuba injects East-West dimensions into local conflicts.

²According to the World Bank, Cuba's per capita annual growth rate averaged minus 1.2% during the period 1960-78. Cuban economic performance ranked in the lowest 5% worldwide and was the worst of all socialist countries. Only massive infusions of Soviet aid have kept consumption levels from plummeting. Cuba today depends more heavily on sugar than before 1959. The industrial sector has been plagued by mismanagement, absenteeism, and serious shortages in capital goods and foreign exchange. The economic picture is so bleak that in 1979, and again in October 1981, the Cuban leadership had to warn that 10-20 more years of sacrifice lie ahead.

II. METHODS

Even when pursuing an open policy in the 1970s of establishing normal diplomatic relations with a number of Latin American countries, Cuba retained its clandestine ties with remnants of the insurgents and other pro-Cuban elements in Latin America, providing asylum, propaganda, some training, and other support. Between 1970 and 1973, Cuba's security services moved arms and agents into Chile. At the same time, Cubans helped organize President Allende's personal security and trained many leaders of the Chilean Movement of the Revolutionary Left.

Cuba's renewed campaign to promote insurgencies draws on these contacts and experiences and combines several different elements.

Sophisticated Strategy. Learning from Che Guevara's failure in Bolivia, Cuban doctrine now emphasizes the need to enlist support for armed struggle through advanced training of local guerrilla cadres, sustained aid and advice, and extensive propaganda activities. The *foco* approach of the 1960s—when a Cuban-sponsored team in the field was considered enough to spark insurrection—has given way to a more sophisticated strategy involving extensive commitments and risks.

Soviet Support. A major difference from the 1960s is that, instead of throwing up obstacles, the Soviet Union generally has backed Cuban efforts to incorporate nondoctrinaire groups into broad political-military fronts dedicated to armed struggle. Particularly in Central America, Soviet ties to local Communist parties and bloc relationships have been used to favor insurrectionary violence. For example, a senior Soviet Communist Party functionary traveled to Panama in August 1981 to discuss strategy for Central America with Cuban officials and leaders of Central American Communist parties. The Soviet Union has also used its extensive propaganda network selectively to discredit governments and build support for armed opposition groups.

Allowing Havana to take the lead in the hemisphere enables Moscow to maintain a low profile and cultivate state-to-state relations and economic ties with major countries like Brazil and Argentina.

Cuba, in turn, is generally cautious not to undercut the Soviet Union where the Soviets have established valued relationships. In Peru, for example, Cuba has been careful to exercise restraint to avoid prejudicing the status of the 300 Soviet officials there or jeopardizing the Soviet Union's arms supply arrangement.

Central Control. Most of the covert operations in support of this strategy are planned and coordinated by the America Department of the Cuban Communist Party, headed by Manuel Pineiro Losada. The America Department emerged in 1974 to centralize operational control of Cuba's covert activities. The department brings together the expertise of the Cuban military and the General Directorate of Intelligence into a farflung operation that includes secret training camps in Cuba, networks for covert movement of personnel and materiel between Cuba and abroad, and sophisticated propaganda support.

Agents of the America Department are present in every Cuban diplomatic mission in Latin America and the Caribbean—in at least five recent instances in the person of the ambassador or charge d'affaires. America Department officials frequently serve as employees of Cuba's official press agency, Prensa Latina, of Cubana Airlines, the Cuban Institute of Friendship with People, and other apparently benign organizations. When too great an identification with Cuba proves counterproductive, Cuban intelligence officers work through front groups, preferably those with non-Cuban leadership.³

Cuban military intelligence personnel selected for clandestine operations in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East go through an elaborate training program conducted by Cuban, Soviet, East German, and Czech instructors in Havana, with special sessions in surrounding cities. In addition to the language and customs of the area to which they are assigned, and typical intelligence operations such as infiltration procedures and photography techniques, the Cubans are instructed in handling explosives. To disguise their true occupation, the intelligence agents are also instructed in civilian skills such as automotive mechanics, carpentry, and heavy equipment operation.

³Cuba maintains some front organizations set up in the 1960s. One of these, the Continental Organization of Latin American Students, still holds irregular congresses of student leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean (the most recent in Havana in August 1981) and publishes a monthly journal distributed by the Cuban Government.

Armed Struggle. The new Cuban offensive relies heavily on violence. In outline, Cuba's strategy is to:

- Unite traditionally splintered radical groups behind a commitment to armed struggle with Cuban advice and material assistance;
- Train ideologically committed cadres in urban and rural guerrilla warfare;
- Supply or arrange for the supply of weapons to support the Cuban-trained cadres' efforts to assume power by force;
- Encourage terrorism in the hope of provoking indiscriminate violence and repression and generalized disorder in order to weaken government legitimacy and attract new converts to armed struggle; and
- Use military aid and advisers to gain influence over guerrilla fronts and radical governments through armed pro-Cuban Marxists.

The application of this strategy is demonstrated in detail in the case studies that follow. It should be noted, however, that Cuba sometimes emphasizes certain tactics over others. In pursuing its long-term strategy, Cuba concentrates initially on building a network of loyal cadres. When local extremist groups are not capable of or committed to armed struggle, Cuba generally draws on them in support of active insurgencies elsewhere while developing their capacity and willingness for agitation in their homeland. In addition, foreign policy concerns may deter Cuba from promoting armed struggle in a particular country. For example, Cuba attempts to avoid activities which could jeopardize its relations with the Mexican Government since Castro seeks Mexico's support to avoid isolation in the hemisphere.⁴

Propaganda. Cuba's extensive cultural exchange and propaganda activities are tailored to support covert operations and elicit support for armed

⁴Although Cuba is not involved in actions directly threatening to Mexican internal stability, Cuba has taken advantage of Mexico's open society and its extensive presence there—Cuba's Embassy in Mexico City is its largest diplomatic mission in the hemisphere—to carry out support activities for insurgencies in other countries. Mexico is a principal base for Cuban contacts with representatives of several armed Latin American groups on guerrilla strategy, logistical support, and international activities.

struggle.⁵ For example, during the past year, Cubans have used Mexico as a base for coordination of propaganda on behalf of insurgents in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia. Radio Havana and other Cuban media recently have publicized statements by Chilean Communist Party leaders urging unity of the Chilean left and calling for armed action to topple Chile's government. Radio Havana has directed broadcasts to Paraguay urging the overthrow of the Paraguayan Government.

Sports competitions, youth and cultural festivals, and special scholarships to Cuba provide channels to identify potential agents for intelligence and propaganda operations. In Ecuador, Cuban Embassy officers in Quito used their ties with Ecuadorian students to try to orchestrate pro-Cuba demonstrations when the Government of Ecuador threatened to suspend relations after Cuba's forcible and unauthorized occupation in February 1981 of the Ecuadorian Embassy in Havana, following its seizure by a group of Cubans seeking to leave Cuba.

Military Training. Witnesses and former trainees have described several camps in Cuba dedicated specifically to military training, including one in Pinar del Rio Province and another near Guanabo, east of Havana. The camps can accommodate several hundred trainees. Groups from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Colombia, Grenada, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Haiti, Chile, and Uruguay have been trained in

⁵Prensa Latina, the press agency of the Cuban Government, has field offices in 35 countries, including 11 Latin American and Caribbean countries, and combines news gathering and propaganda dissemination with intelligence operations. Radio Havana, Cuba's shortwave broadcasting service, transmits more than 350 program hours per week in eight languages to all points of the world. Cuba also transmits nightly mediumwave Spanish-language broadcasts over "La Voz de Cuba," a network of high-powered transmitters located in different parts of Cuba. In the Caribbean alone, Radio Havana's weekly broadcasts include 14 hours in Creole to Haiti; 60 hours in English; 3 hours in French; and 125 hours in Spanish. Prensa Latina and Radio Havana, in close coordination with TASS and Radio Moscow, regularly use disinformation to distort news reports transmitted to the region, especially those concerning places where Cuban covert activities are most intense.

these facilities during the past 2 years.⁶

Recruits are normally provided false documentation (sometimes Cuban passports) by Cuban agents in third countries and are flown to Cuba on civil aircraft under cover as "students" or other occupations. Panama has been used as a regular transit point for Central and South Americans to and from military training in Cuba.⁷

Once in Cuba, trainees generally are taken immediately to the guerrilla training camps where they usually are grouped according to nationality and the organization for which they are being trained in order to promote a sense of cohesiveness and esprit de corps.

Training normally lasts 3-6 months and consists of instruction by Cuban cadres in sabotage, explosives, military tactics, and weapons use. Although military training is frequently tied closely to operational requirements—the M-19 guerrillas who landed in Colombia in early 1981 did so immediately upon completion of their military instruction in Cuba—witnesses report that political indoctrination is also included in the curriculum.

Many Cuban instructors are active military officers and veterans of Cuban expeditionary forces in Africa. Soviet personnel have been reported at these camps, but they apparently do not participate directly in the guerrilla training.

Political Training. Each year Cuba offers hundreds of scholarships to foreign students. All Cuban mass organizations operate schools in organizational

work and indoctrination open to carefully selected foreign students.⁸ In addition, some 11,000 non-Cuban secondary school students, mostly teenagers, were enrolled in 1980 in 15 schools on the Isle of Youth alone. Cuba does not publicize complete foreign enrollment statistics nor does it release the names of those trained. From the eastern Caribbean alone, close to 300 students are currently in Cuba studying technical and academic subjects. The study of Marxism-Leninism is compulsory in many courses, and military affairs is compulsory in some. When governments have turned down Cuban scholarship offers, as occurred recently in Belize and Dominica, Cuba has gone ahead and concluded private agreements. Local Marxist-Leninist groups with ties to Cuba play a major role in selecting those students who receive scholarships.

In sum, the infrastructure for Cuba's intensified revolutionary agitation in Latin America is a multifaceted yet carefully coordinated mechanism. The Cuban Communist Party, through its America Department, provides cohesion and direction to a complex network that consists of intelligence officers, elements of Cuba's foreign ministry, armed forces, mass organizations, commercial and cultural entities, and front groups.

This extensive apparatus is designed to support one objective: a systematic, long-range campaign to destabilize governments.

⁶Courses in agitation and propaganda open to foreigners include the Central Union of Cuban Workers' Lazaro Pena Trade Union Cadre School and similar courses run by the Union of Young Communists, the Cuban Women's Federation, the National Association of Small Farmers, and the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. Even the Cuban Communist Party offers special courses for non-Cubans in party provincial schools and in the Nico Lopez National Training School, its highest educational institution. The Cuban press reported graduation ceremonies July 17, 1981, for this year's 70 Cuban graduates and announced that 69 foreigners had also attended advanced courses at the Nico Lopez school. Foreign students represented political organizations from Venezuela, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Chile, Grenada, Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Sao Tome y Principe, and South Yemen. Official Cuban Communist Party newspaper *Granma* labeled their presence "a beautiful example of proletarian internationalism." Courses of instruction at the Nico Lopez school, which is chaired by senior party leaders, include "political training for journalists," "political training for propagandists," economics, and ideology.

III. CASE STUDIES

The Cuban activities described in the case studies which follow must be considered to understand developments within the countries in question. However, the focus of the case studies is Cuban involvement in each country. Readers should, therefore, guard against assuming that the cases below provide a comprehensive picture of the general situation in the country where the events described have taken place.

Central America

Nicaragua. In July 1979, internal and external factors converged to bring about the triumph of the anti-Somoza insurrection and the subsequent domination of the new Nicaraguan Government by the Cuban-trained leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). These events provided a key test for Cuba's new mechanisms and strategy for promoting armed pro-Cuban movements in this hemisphere.

Opposition to Somoza's authoritarian rule in the late 1970s was widespread. The 1978 killing of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, publisher of Nicaragua's most respected newspaper, *La Prensa*, converted many Nicaraguans to the armed opposition of which the FSLN was the core; FSLN assurances on democracy and pluralism were accepted by newly allied political moderates and private businessmen. Internationally, sympathy for the struggle against Somoza led Venezuela, Panama, and Costa Rica to aid the insurgents, while Somoza stood practically without friends.

This environment enabled Cuba to disguise the extent of its support for the FSLN and avoid disrupting the fragile alliances between the FSLN and other opponents of Somoza. Behind the scenes, Cuba played an active role in organizing the FSLN and in training and equipping it militarily.

Cuba had provided some training and arms to the FSLN in the early 1960s. Until late 1977, however, Cuban support consisted mainly of propaganda and safehaven.

In 1977 and early 1978, a high-ranking America Department official, Armando Ulises Estrada,⁹ made

⁹Ulises Estrada was given his first ambassadorial post in Jamaica following the July 1979 victory of anti-Somoza forces (see Jamaica case study). He is currently Cuba's ambassador to South Yemen.

⁶Latin Americans are not the only trainees. In a May 1978 Reuters interview published in Beirut, Abu Khalaf, a leader of the military branch of Al Fatah, confirmed that Palestinian agents have received training in Cuba since the late 1960s. Palestinian organizations, with Cuban assistance, have reciprocated by training various Latin American groups in the Middle East. Libya, which hosted a meeting of Latin American "liberation movements" January 25-February 1, 1979, also has trained some Latin American extremists.

⁷Public exposure in March 1981 of the use of Panama as a transit point for Colombian guerrillas trained in Cuba led to sharp criticism of Cuba by the Panamanian Government. Panama imposed greater controls on activities of exiled Central and South Americans, and the transit of guerrillas through Panama appears to have ceased, at least temporarily.

numerous secret trips to facilitate the uprising by working to unify the three major factions of the FSLN. Stepped-up Cuban support to the Sandinistas was conditioned on effective unity. During the XI World Youth Festival in Havana in late July 1978, the Cubans announced that the unification of the three factions had been achieved and urged Latin American radicals present at the meeting to demonstrate solidarity with the FSLN by staging operations in their own countries.

At the same time, Estrada concentrated on building a supply network for channeling arms and other supplies to guerrilla forces. International sympathy for the struggle against Somoza provided a convenient facade for Cuban operations. In preparation for the first FSLN offensive in the fall of 1978, arms were flown from Cuba to Panama, transhipped to Costa Rica on smaller planes, and supplied to Nicaraguan guerrillas based in northern Costa Rica. To monitor and assist the flow, the America Department established a secret operations center in San Jose. By the end of 1978, Cuban advisers were dispatched to northern Costa Rica to train and equip the FSLN forces with arms which began to arrive direct from Cuba. FSLN guerrillas trained in Cuba, however, continued to return to Nicaragua via Panama.

In early 1979, Cuba helped organize, arm, and transport an "internationalist brigade" to fight alongside FSLN guerrillas. Members were drawn from several Central and South American extremist groups, many of them experienced in terrorist activities. Castro also dispatched Cuban military specialists to the field to help coordinate the war efforts. Factionalism threatened Sandinista unity again in early 1979, and Castro met personally with leaders of three FSLN factions to hammer out a renewed unity pact.

When the insurgents' final offensive was launched in mid-1979, Cuban military advisers from the Department of Special Operations, a special military unit, were with FSLN columns and maintained direct radio communications to Havana. A number of Cuban advisers were wounded in combat and were evacuated to Cuba via Panama.

The operations center run by the America Department in San Jose was the focal point for coordination of Cuba's support. After the triumph of the anti-Somoza forces in July 1979, the chief of

the center, Julian Lopez Diaz, became Cuban Ambassador to Nicaragua. One of his America Department assistants in San Jose, Andres Barahona, was redocumented as a Nicaraguan citizen and became a top official of the Nicaraguan intelligence service.

Castro has counseled the Sandinistas to protect their Western ties to keep the country afloat economically. But to insure that the FSLN could move to dominate the Nicaraguan Government, Cuba has acted quickly to build up Sandinista military and security forces.

Since July 1979, Cuba has provided substantial military, technical, and political assistance. Some 5,000 Cuban advisers, teachers, and medical personnel work at all levels of the military and civilian infrastructures.¹⁰ Of this number, more than 1,500 military and security advisers are actively providing military instruction and combat training; instruction in intelligence and counter-intelligence activities; instruction on security protection for the FSLN leadership; and advice on organization of the Nicaraguan police force. In addition, Nicaragua has received within the past year approximately \$28 million worth of military equipment from the U.S.S.R., Eastern Europe, and Cuba. This has included tanks, light aircraft, helicopters, heavy artillery, surface-to-air missiles, anti-aircraft weapons, hundreds of military transport vehicles, as well as tons of small arms and ammunition.

Cuba presently is using Nicaraguan territory to provide training and other facilities to guerrillas active in neighboring countries. The Cuban Ambassador to Nicaragua and other America Department officials frequently meet with Central American guerrillas in Managua to advise them on tactics and strategy. Individual Sandinista leaders have participated in such meetings and have met independently with Guatemalan and Salvadoran insurgents. The FSLN also

¹⁰The very quantity of Cuban advisers has caused resentment among nationalist Nicaraguans, leading to sporadic outbursts of anti-Cuban feelings. On June 3, 1981, the FSLN announced that 2,000 Cuban primary school teachers presently in Nicaragua would return to Cuba in July, at the mid-point of Nicaragua's academic year. The Nicaraguan Education Minister announced on June 18 that 800 of those departing would return in September after vacations in Cuba, while Cuba would replace the other 1,200 teachers in February. By November 1981, however, all 2,000 Cuban teachers had returned to Nicaragua.

has cooperated in a joint effort by Cuba and Palestinian groups to provide military training in the Mideast to selected Latin American extremists. Some Sandinistas were themselves trained by the Palestine Liberation Organization, which maintains an embassy in Nicaragua.

Between October 1980 and February 1981, Nicaragua was the staging site for a massive Cuban-directed flow of arms to Salvadoran guerrillas. Arms destined for Salvadoran and Guatemalan guerrillas continue to pass through Nicaragua.

El Salvador. Before 1979, Cuban support to Salvadoran radicals involved training small numbers of guerrillas, providing modest financial aid, and serving as a political conduit between Salvadoran extremists and Communists outside the hemisphere.

During the Nicaraguan civil war, Cuba concentrated on support for the FSLN. After the fall of Somoza, Cuba began intense efforts to help pro-Cuban guerrillas come to power in El Salvador. When a reform-minded, civil-military government was established in October 1979, Cuba's first priority was to tighten the political organization and unity of El Salvador's fragmented violent left. At first, arms shipments and other aid from Cuba were kept low as the Cubans insisted on a unified strategy as the price of increased material support. To forge unity, Cuba sponsored a December 1979 meeting in Havana that resulted in an initial unity agreement among the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN), the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL), and the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES), which had itself formed an armed wing at Cuban and Soviet insistence. In late May 1980, after more negotiations in Havana, the Popular Revolutionary Army (ERP) was admitted into the guerrilla coalition.

The new combined military command assumed the name of the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU). During this period, Cuba also coordinated the development of clandestine support networks in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua, sometimes using arms supply mechanisms established during the Nicaraguan civil war.

With unified tactics and operations now possible, Cuba began to assist the guerrillas in formulating military strategy. Cuban specialists helped the DRU devise initial war plans in the summer of 1980. The Cubans influenced the guerrillas to launch a general offensive in January 1981. After the offensive failed, guerrilla leaders traveled to Havana in February 1981 to finalize a

strategy to "improve our internal military situation" by engaging in a "negotiating maneuver" to gain time to regroup.¹¹

Cuba provided few weapons and ammunition to Salvadoran guerrillas from its own resources but played a key role in coordinating the acquisition and delivery of arms from Vietnam, Ethiopia, and Eastern Europe through Nicaragua.¹² After the unmasking of this network, Cuba and Nicaragua reduced the flow in March and early April. Prior to a guerrilla offensive in August an upswing in deliveries occurred. The arms flow continues via clandestine surface and air routes. In addition, the Cubans over the past year have established a network of small ships to deliver arms to Salvadoran insurgent groups.

Cuba also assists the Salvadoran guerrillas in contacts with Arab radical states and movements to arrange military training and financing for arms acquisitions. In September 1980, Cuba laundered \$500,000 in Iraqi funds for the Salvadoran insurgents. In March 1981, the Salvadoran Communist Party Secretary General, Shafik Handal, visited Lebanon and Syria to meet with Palestinian leaders. Cuba also coordinates the training of a relatively small number of Salvadoran guerrillas in Palestinian camps in the Mideast.

Cuban training of Salvadoran guerrillas increased sharply in 1980 as Cuba concentrated on building a trained army able to mount major offensives. A typical 3-month training program included courses in guerrilla tactics; marksmanship and weapons use; field engineering; demolition; fortification construction; land navigation; use of artillery and mines. One observer reported seeing groups up to battalion size (250-500 men) under instruction, sug-

¹¹A guerrilla document outlining this strategy was found in Nicaragua in February 1981. Guerrilla representatives later confirmed its authenticity to Western Europeans with the disclaimer that the strategy elaborately developed in the paper had been rejected.

¹²The Cuban role as arms broker to the DRU since 1979 has been documented in the Department of State's Special Report No. 80, *Communist Interference in El Salvador*, February 23, 1981. In April 1981, when Socialist International representative Wischniewski confronted Castro with the evidence in the report, Castro admitted to him that Cuba had shipped arms to the guerrillas. In discussions with several Inter-Parliamentary Union delegations at the September 1981 IPU conference in Havana, Castro again conceded that Cuba had supplied arms.

gesting that some guerrillas trained as integral units.¹³

Cuba has provided selected guerrillas more intensive training on specialized subjects. A former FPL guerrilla who defected in fall 1981 reported that during 1980 he had received 7 months of military training in Cuba, including instruction in scuba diving and underwater demolition. Soviet scuba equipment was used. The group trained as frogmen called themselves "combat swimmers" and were told that their mission was to destroy dams, bridges, port facilities, and boats.

Cuba also gives political, organizational, and propaganda support to the guerrillas. Cuban diplomatic facilities worldwide help guerrilla front groups with travel arrangements and contacts. The Cuban press agency, *Prensa Latina*, has handled communications for guerrilla representation abroad. Cuba and the Soviet Union have pressed Communist parties and radical groups to support the insurgency directly, and through solidarity organizations with propaganda and facilities (office space, equipment, etc.).

The Salvadoran insurgents have publicly stressed the importance of solidarity groups. A member of the FPL, Oscar Bonilla, who attended the Fourth Consultative Meeting in Havana of the Continental Organization of Latin American Students (OCLAE), a Cuban front group, told *Radio Havana* in August 1981 that OCLAE "has been the most important means of solidarity of all the peoples and has gotten us ready to form an anti-interventionist student front in El Salvador, Central America and the Caribbean. . . . We believe that it is good to carry out immediate plans for actions which will permit us to stop an imperialist intervention in El Salvador. In this respect, the students of Latin America will have to confront and attack U.S. interests so that the United States will see how the Latin American and Caribbean student movement responds to an aggression by imperialism in El Salvador."

With Soviet assistance, Cuba has orchestrated propaganda to distort the realities of the Salvadoran conflict. Unattributed foreign media placements and efforts to organize protests against the Salvadoran Government and U.S. policy, which have accompanied official propaganda, stress the theme of U.S. in-

¹³Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez tacitly admitted that Cuba was providing military training to Salvadoran guerrillas in an interview published in *Der Spiegel* on September 28, 1981.

tent to intervene militarily in El Salvador.

Unfounded claims and accusations originated by the Salvadoran guerrillas are routinely replayed to a regional and world audience by Cuba's *Radio Havana* or *Prensa Latina*, then echoed by the official Soviet Press Agency TASS, *Radio Moscow*, and Eastern European media. For example, a false report of a U.S. soldier killed in El Salvador that resounded widely in Cuban/Soviet propaganda during 1980 was traced finally to the Salvadoran Communist Party. This rumor was to support an even bigger lie: that hundreds of U.S. soldiers were in El Salvador, building U.S. bases, and herding peasants into Vietnam-style strategic hamlets.¹⁴

Guatemala. Castro has stepped up Cuba's support to Guatemalan guerrillas whom he has aided with arms and training since he came to power.

As elsewhere, Cuba has influenced divided extremist groups to unite and has conditioned increased Cuban aid on a commitment to armed struggle and a unified strategy. During 1980, discussions about a unity agreement were held among leaders of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), the Organization of People in Arms (ORPA), and the dissident faction of the Guatemalan Communist Party (PGT/D). At the invitation of Sandinista leaders, representatives of the four groups met in Managua under strict security to continue discussions. In November 1980, the four organizations signed a unity agreement in Managua to establish the National Revolutionary Union (with a revolutionary directorate called the General Revolutionary Command—CGR). Manuel Pineiro Losada, Chief of the America Department, and Ramiro Jesus Abreu Quintana, head of its Central American Division, represented Fidel Castro at the signing ceremony. Following the signing of the unity agreement, representatives of the CGR traveled to Havana to present the document to Castro. ORPA publicized the agreement in a communique issued

¹⁴At the time these reports first appeared, the United States was providing neither arms nor ammunition to El Salvador. In January 1981, the United States responded to the Cuban-orchestrated general offensive by sending some military assistance and later sent American military trainers, whose number never exceeded 55. There are no U.S. combatants, bases, or strategic hamlets in El Salvador. TASS continues to report falsely that "hundreds" of U.S. military personnel are in El Salvador and participate in combat.

November 18, 1980. All parties agreed it was significant that the unity agreement was the first such document signed on Central American soil.

After this unity agreement was concluded, Cuba agreed to increase military training and assistance. A large number of the 2,000 or more guerrillas now active have trained in Cuba. Recent military training programs have included instruction in the use of heavy weapons.

During the past year, arms have been smuggled to Guatemala from Nicaragua passing overland through Honduras. The guerrilla arsenal now includes 50mm mortars, submachine guns, rocket launchers, and other weapons. Captured M-16 rifles have been traced to U.S. forces in Vietnam. On June 26, 1981, Paulino Castillo, a 28-year-old guerrilla with ORPA, told newsmen in Guatemala that he was part of a 23-man group of Guatemalans that underwent 7 months of training in Cuba, beginning around February 1980. His group was divided into sections for urban and rural combat training in explosives and fire-arms use. To get to Cuba, Castillo traveled to Costa Rica from Guatemala by public bus. In Costa Rica, a go-between obtained a Panamanian passport for Castillo to enter Panama. In Panama, other contacts equipped him with a Cuban passport and he continued on to Cuba. Castillo returned to Guatemala via Nicaragua to rejoin the guerrillas. He later surrendered to a Guatemalan army patrol.

Guatemalan guerrillas have collaborated with Salvadoran guerrillas. In January 1981, the EGP, ORPA, FAR, and the PGT/D circulated a joint bulletin announcing the intensification of their activities in support of the general offensive in El Salvador. The Salvadorans in turn have provided the Guatemalans with small quantities of arms.

Unity has not been fully achieved, as the four groups have not yet carried out plans to establish a political front group. The joint military strategy, however, is being implemented. The guerrillas have stepped up terrorist actions in an effort to provoke repression and destabilize the government. For example, the EGP took responsibility for placing a bomb in one of the pieces of luggage that was to have been loaded onto a U.S. Eastern Airlines plane on July 2. The bomb exploded before being loaded, killing a Guatemalan airport employee.

Costa Rica. Cuba took advantage of Costa Rica's strong popular and governmental opposition to Somoza's authoritarian government and of Costa Rica's open democratic society to estab-

lish and coordinate a covert support network for guerrilla operations elsewhere in Central America. The apparatus was established during the course of the Nicaraguan civil war and maintained clandestinely thereafter. Costa Rica was well disposed toward groups that opposed Somoza, including the Sandinista guerrillas. Aid provided by Panama and Venezuela was openly funneled through Costa Rica to the Nicaraguan rebels. Cuba, however, kept its role largely hidden.

A Special Legislative Commission established in June 1980 by the Costa Rican legislature revealed Cuba's extensive role in arming the Nicaraguan guerrillas. The commission determined that there were at least 21 flights carrying war materiel between Cuba and Llano Grande and Juan Santamaria Airports in Costa Rica.¹⁶

Costa Rican pilots who made these flights reported that Cubans frequently accompanied the shipments. Although Cubans were stationed at Llano Grande, their main operations center for coordinating logistics and contacts with the Sandinistas was set up secretly in San Jose and run by America Department official Lopez Diaz. The Special Legislative Commission estimated that a minimum of 1 million pounds of arms moved to Costa Rica from Cuba and elsewhere during the Nicaraguan civil war, including anti-aircraft machine-guns, rocket launchers, bazookas, and mortars. The commission also estimated that a substantial quantity of these weapons remained in Costa Rica after the fall of Somoza in July 1979.

The Special Legislative Commission concluded that after the Nicaraguan civil war had ended, "arms trafficking [began], originating in Costa Rica or through Costa Rican territory, toward El Salvador, indirectly or using Honduras as a bridge." Through 1980 and into 1981 traffic flowed intermittently through Costa Rica to El Salvador, directed clandestinely by the Cubans.

In the summer of 1979, the Cubans and their paid agent, Fernando Carrasco Illanes, a Chilean national residing in Costa Rica, along with several Costa Ricans previously involved in the logistics effort for the FSLN, agreed to continue smuggling arms to Salvadoran guerrillas. The Cubans arranged for acquisition of some of the arms and ammunition remaining in Costa Rica from the Nicaraguan airlift to supply the Salvadoran insurgents.

¹⁶The commission's report was issued May 14, 1981.

This new Cuban operation was coordinated from San Jose, first from their secret operations center, then later directly from the Cuban Consulate. The major coordinator, until his expulsion from Costa Rica in May 1981 following the break in consular relations between Costa Rica and Cuba, was Fernando Pascual Comas Perez of the America Department. Comas worked directly for Manuel Pineiro and had the cover title of Cuban Vice Consul in San Jose. Cuban agents made arrangements to store arms for transshipment to El Salvador and to help hundreds of Salvadoran guerrillas pass through Costa Rica in small groups on their way to training in Cuba. Cuban operations have been facilitated by Costa Rica's three Marxist-Leninist parties, which have provided funds, safehaven, transportation, and false documents.¹⁶

Terrorism had been virtually unknown in Costa Rica until March 1981 except for scattered incidents of largely foreign origin. The first Costa Rican terrorists made their appearance in March when they blew up a vehicle carrying a Costa Rican chauffeur and three Marine security guards from the U.S. Embassy in San Jose. In April, four terrorists from the same group were captured after machine-gunning a police vehicle. In June, the group murdered three policemen and a taxi driver. Costa Rican authorities have arrested some 20 accused terrorists and are continuing to investigate leads linking them to South American terrorist groups such as the Argentine Montoneros, the Uruguayan Tupamaros, and Colombia's M-19, and to Cuba itself. Two of the accused terrorists are known to have received training in the Soviet Union.

Director of the Judicial Investigation Organization Eduardo Aguilar Bloise told a press conference August 12 that captured terrorist documents indicated that two Costa Rican peasants had been given "ideological/military training" in

¹⁶In a recorded interview broadcast by Radio Havana on June 16, 1981, Eduardo Mora, Deputy Secretary General of Costa Rica's Popular Vanguard Party (the Moscow-line traditional Communist party, the least disposed to violence of the country's several Marxist parties and splinter groups) explained his party's position: "We establish ties with all revolutionary organizations in Central America. We have close ties and are willing to give all the aid we possibly can in accordance with the principles of proletarian internationalism because we believe that the struggle of the Central American people is the struggle of our own people."

Cuba and returned to work in the Atlantic coastal zone of Costa Rica. The documents indicate that the two were in Cuba from 8 to 12 months—possibly in 1978—and were financed by the terrorist group known popularly in Costa Rica as “the family.” Aguilar said he did not discount the possibility that others had been trained in Cuba.

Although most of Costa Rica's Marxist-Leninist parties have advocated a peaceful line in respect to Costa Rica, one group with close ties to Cuba—the Revolutionary Movement of the People (MRP)—while disavowing responsibility for terrorist acts, has spoken of them as “well intentioned.” Some of the arrested terrorists are known to have belonged to the MRP at one time. On November 5, the Office of National Security announced the discovery of a terrorist cell clearly connected with the MRP. Among the arms and terrorist paraphernalia confiscated was an Uzi submachinegun with silencer. Earlier, the authorities had confiscated a “plan for Guanacaste” from an MRP official which noted such objectives as “prevent the electoral process from developing in a festive atmosphere” and “the taking of power by the armed people.” The head of the MRP has traveled many times to Cuba, and Cuba has given training to other MRP leaders.

Honduras. Cuba provided para-military training to a small number of Hondurans in the early 1960s, but relations with Honduran radicals were strained until the late 1970s. Cuba then resumed military training for members of the Honduran Communist Party (PCH) and integrated them into the “internationalist brigade” fighting in the Nicaraguan civil war. After the war, PCH members returned to Cuba for additional training.

Since then Cuba has concentrated primarily on developing Honduras as a conduit for arms and other aid to guerrillas active elsewhere in Central America. In January 1981, Honduran officials discovered a large cache of concealed arms intended for Salvadoran guerrillas, which included M-16 rifles traced to Vietnam. Smuggled arms have continued to be intercepted.

While considering Honduras a useful support base for insurgencies elsewhere, Cuba is also working to develop the capacity for insurrection within Honduras. In the normal pattern, Havana has urged splintered extremist groups in Honduras to unify and embrace armed struggle. While holding back from levels of support given to Salvadoran and Guatemalan guerrillas, Cuba has in-

creased its training of Honduran extremists in political organization and military operations. Cuba has also promised to provide Honduran guerrillas their own arms, including submachine-guns and rifles.

On November 27, Honduran authorities discovered a guerrilla safehouse on the outskirts of Tegucigalpa. Two guerrillas were killed in the resulting shoot-out, including a Uruguayan citizen. Nicaraguans as well as Hondurans were captured at the house, where a substantial arsenal of automatic weapons and explosives was seized. Incriminating documents, including notebooks which indicate recent attendance in training courses in Cuba, were also confiscated. One of those arrested, Jorge Pinel Betancourt, a 22-year-old Honduran, told reporters the group was headed for El Salvador to join Salvadoran guerrillas. Two additional guerrilla safehouses located in La Ceiba and San Pedro Sula were raided on November 29, and authorities seized sizable arms caches, explosives, and communications equipment. These arms may have been destined for use within Honduras.

The Caribbean

Jamaica. In the late 1970s, Jamaica became a special target for Cuba. Fidel Castro and other Cuban officials developed close relationships with important members of the People's National Party, which governed Jamaica from 1973 until 1980. Cuban security personnel trained Jamaican security officers in Cuba and Jamaica, including members of the security force of the office of the Prime Minister. Cuba also trained about 1,400 Jamaican youths in Cuba as construction workers through a “brigadista” program. Political indoctrination in Cuba formed part of this group's curriculum. A considerable number of these Jamaican youths received military training while in Cuba, including instruction in revolutionary tactics and use of arms.

During this same period, the Cuban diplomatic mission in Jamaica grew. Most of the embassy staff, including former Ambassador Ulises Estrada, were Cuban intelligence agents. Ulises Estrada, who had served as a deputy head of the America Department for 5 years, had a long history of involvement in political action activities and intelligence operations and went to Jamaica in July 1979, after playing a major role in Cuba's involvement in the Nicaraguan civil war.

Cuba was instrumental in smuggling arms and ammunition into Jamaica. A Cuban front corporation (Moonex International, registered in Lichtenstein, with subsidiaries in Panama and Jamaica) was discovered in May 1980 to be the designated recipient of a shipment of 200,000 shotgun shells and .38 caliber pistol ammunition shipped illegally to Jamaica from Miami. Jamaican authorities apprehended the local manager of the corporation, accompanied by the Jamaican Minister of National Security and Cuban Ambassador Estrada, as the manager was attempting to leave the country, in defiance of police instructions, on a private plane. The manager subsequently paid a fine of U.S. \$300,000 set by a Jamaican court.

In 1980, weapons were reported stockpiled in the Cuban Embassy for possible use by Jamaicans during the election campaign. M-16 rifles then appeared in Jamaica for the first time and were used in attacks against supporters of the opposition Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) and the security forces. Over 70 of these weapons have been found by Jamaican authorities. Some of the M-16s found in Jamaica have serial numbers in the same numerical series as captured M-16s shipped to Salvadoran guerrillas from Vietnam.

Ambassador Ulises Estrada was withdrawn from his post in November 1980, at the request of the newly elected JLP government. In January 1981, the Jamaican Government terminated the “brigadista” program and recalled Jamaican students remaining in Cuba under this program. The government decided to maintain diplomatic relations but warned Cuba to stop its interference in Jamaican affairs. Cuba continued to maintain some 15 intelligence agents at the Cuban Embassy in Kingston. On October 29, the government broke diplomatic relations with Cuba, citing Cuba's failure to return three Jamaican fugitive criminals as the immediate cause for this action. On November 17, the government publicly detailed Cuba's role in providing covert military training under the curtailed “brigadista” program.

Guyana. In 1978, as many as 200 Cuban technicians, advisers, and medical personnel were stationed in Guyana. However, while claiming fraternal relations with Guyana's Government, Cuba maintained contact with radical opposition groups. Guyanese authorities suspected the Cubans of involvement in a crippling sugar strike. In August 1978, five Cuban diplomats were expelled for involvement in illegal activities.

Cuban military advisers have provided guerrilla training outside Guyana to members of a small radical Guyanese opposition group, the Working People's Alliance. Five of the seven members of the Cuban Embassy are known or suspected intelligence agents.

Grenada. Cuban influence in Grenada mushroomed almost immediately after the March 1979 coup led by the New Jewel Movement of Maurice Bishop. Bishop and his closest colleagues were Western-educated Marxist radicals, and they turned for help to Fidel Castro, who proved willing to provide assistance.

To allow close Cuban supervision of Grenadian programs, a senior intelligence officer from the America Department, Julian Torres Rizo, was sent to Grenada as ambassador. Torres Rizo has maintained intimate relations with Bishop and other People's Revolutionary Government ministers, such as Bernard Coard.

The Grenadian Government has followed a pro-Soviet foreign policy line. Cuban and Grenadian voting records in international organizations have been nearly identical, so much so that they alone of all Western Hemisphere nations have voted against U.N. resolutions condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Cuban aid to Grenada has been most extensive in those areas which affect the security of its client government and the island's strategic usefulness to Cuba. Cuba has advisers on the island offering military, technical, security, and propaganda assistance to the Bishop government. Many Grenadians have been sent to Cuba for training in these areas. Last year journalists observed Cuban officials directing and giving orders to Grenadian soldiers marching in ceremonies in St. George's.

Cuba is aiding the construction of a 75-kilowatt transmitter for Radio Free Grenada. Grenada's state-controlled press, enjoying a government-enforced monopoly, currently hews to a strict "revolutionary" line. Indications are that the new transmitter will continue this emphasis while providing facilities for beaming Cuban and Soviet-supplied propaganda into the Caribbean and South America.

Cuba's largest project in Grenada is the construction of a major airfield at Point Salines on the southern tip of the island. Cuba has provided hundreds of construction workers and Soviet equipment to build the airfield. This airfield, according to Grenadian Government statements, is required to bring tourism

to its full economic potential and will be used as a civilian airport only. Many questions have been raised, however, about the economic justification for the project. The Grenadian Government has ignored requests for a standard project analysis of economic benefits. The planned 9,800-foot Point Salines runway, moreover, has clear military potential. Such an airfield will allow operations of every aircraft in the Soviet/Cuban inventory. Cuba's MiG aircraft and troop transports will enjoy a greater radius of operation. The airport will give Cuba a guaranteed refueling stop for military flights to Africa.

Bishop himself has given an implicit endorsement of future military use of the airfield. A March 31, 1980 *Newsweek* report quoted Bishop's comments to a U.S. reporter: "Suppose there's a war next door in Trinidad, where the forces of Fascism are about to take control, and the Trinidadians need external assistance, why should we oppose anybody passing through Grenada to assist them?"

Dominican Republic. With its renewed commitment to armed struggle, Cuba's interest in the Dominican Republic has revived. Since early 1980, the Cubans have been encouraging radicals in the Dominican Republic to unite and prepare for armed actions. Cuban intelligence officials, like Omar Cordoba Rivas, chief of the Dominican Republic desk of the America Department, make periodic visits to the island.

The Soviet Union, Cuba, and other Communist countries have mounted extensive training programs for Dominican students. In July 1981, the Moscow-line Dominican Communist Party (PCD) for the first time publicized the Soviet scholarship program. Some 700 Dominican students are currently studying at Soviet universities, principally Patrice Lumumba University, with another 75 in five other Communist states (Bulgaria, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, and Romania). The PCD itself selects the more than 100 students who begin the Soviet program each year.

At the same time, the Soviet Union has been pressuring the PCD to unite with other extreme left organizations. The PCD and the pro-Cuban Dominican Liberation Party receive funds from both Cuba and the Soviet Union and send significant numbers of their members and potential sympathizers for academic and political schooling as well as military training in Communist countries. Cuba also has given military instruction to many members of small extremist splinter groups like the Social

Workers Movement and the Socialist Party.

South America

Colombia. Since the 1960s, Cuba has nurtured contacts with violent extremist groups in democratic Colombia. During the 1970s, Cuba established full diplomatic relations with Colombia; Cuban involvement with Colombian revolutionaries was fairly limited, although Cuba provided some training to guerrilla leadership. Many leaders of the April 19 Movement (M-19), including the founder, Jaime Bateman—who also attended a Communist cadre school in Moscow—were trained in Cuba. Leaders of the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the Moscow-oriented Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) also received Cuban instruction.

Cuban assistance to Colombian guerrillas was stepped up after the February 1980 seizure of the Dominican Republic Embassy in Bogota. A number of diplomats, including the U.S. Ambassador, were taken hostage by M-19 terrorists. As part of a negotiated settlement, the terrorists were flown on April 17, 1980 to Cuba, where the remaining hostages were released and the terrorists were given asylum.

During mid-1980, Cuban intelligence officers arranged a meeting of Colombian extremists, attended by representatives from the M-19, FARC, ELN, and other Colombian radical groups, to discuss a common strategy and tactics. The M-19 had previously held talks with the Nicaraguan FSLN on ways to achieve unity of action among guerrilla groups in Latin America. Although the meeting did not result in agreement by Colombian guerrillas on a unified strategy, practical cooperation among the guerrilla organizations increased.

In late 1980, the M-19 set in motion a large-scale operation in Colombia with Cuban help. In November, the M-19 sent guerrillas to Cuba via Panama to begin training for the operation. The group included new recruits as well as members who had received no prior political or military training. In Cuba the guerrillas were given 3 months of military instruction from Cuban army instructors, including training in the use of explosives, automatic weapons, hand-to-hand combat, military tactics, and communications. A course in politics and ideology was taught as well. Members of the M-19 group given asylum in Cuba after the takeover of the Dominican Republic Embassy also participated in the training program.

In February 1981, some 100-200 armed M-19 guerrillas reinfiltated into Colombia from Panama by boat along the Pacific coast. The guerrillas' mission to establish a "people's army" failed. The M-19 members proved to be poorly equipped for the difficult countryside, and the Cuba-organized operation was soon dismantled by Colombian authorities. Among those captured was Rosenberg Pabon Pabon, the M-19 leader who had directed the Dominican Republic Embassy takeover and then fled to Cuba. Cuba denied any involvement with the M-19 landings but did not deny training the guerrillas.¹⁷

Cuba's propaganda support for Colombian terrorists was impossible to deny. When a group apparently consisting of M-19 dissidents kidnaped an American working for a private religious institute, Cuba implicitly supported the terrorists' action through Radio Havana broadcasts beamed to Colombia in February 1981, which denounced the institute workers as "U.S. spies." Radio Moscow picked up the unfounded accusation to use in its Spanish broadcasts to Latin America. The American was later murdered by the kidnapers.¹⁸

Colombia suspended relations with Cuba on March 23, in view of the clear evidence of Cuba's role in training M-19 guerrillas. President Turbay commented in an August 13 *New York Times* interview: "... When we found that Cuba, a country with which we had diplomatic relations, was using those relations to prepare a group of guerrillas to come and fight against the government, it was a kind of Pearl Harbor for us. It was like sending ministers to Washington at the same time you are about to bomb ships in Hawaii."

Chile. After Allende's fall in 1973, Castro promised Chilean radicals "all the aid in Cuba's power to provide." Although Cuban officials maintained regular contact with many Chilean ex-

iles, divisions among the exiles inhibited major operations. The Moscow-line Chilean Communist Party (PCCH), holding the position that revolutionary change could be accomplished by non-violent means, was critical of "left-wing forces" like the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) with which Cuba had close relations.

Throughout the 1970s, members of the MIR received training in Cuba and in some cases instructed other Latin American revolutionaries. This training ranged from political indoctrination and instruction in small arms use to sophisticated courses in document fabrication, explosives, code writing, photography, and disguise. In addition, Cuban instructors trained MIR activists in the Mideast and Africa.

With its renewed commitment to armed struggle, Cuba increased its training of Chileans beginning in 1979. By mid-1979, the MIR had recruited several hundred Chilean exiles and sent them to Cuba for training and eventual infiltration into Chile. At the same time, members of the MIR who had been living and working in Cuba since Allende's overthrow began to receive training in urban guerrilla warfare techniques. The training in some cases lasted as long as 7 months and included organization and political strategy, small unit tactics, security, and communications.

Once training was completed, Cuba helped the terrorists return to Chile, providing false passports and false identification documents. By late 1980, at least 100 highly trained MIR terrorists had reentered Chile, and the MIR had claimed responsibility for a number of bombings and bank robberies. Cuba's official newspaper, *Granma*, wrote in February 1981 that the "Chilean Resistance" forces had successfully conducted more than 100 "armed actions" in Chile in 1980.

By late 1979, the PCCH was re-evaluating its position in light of events in Nicaragua, where the fragmented Nicaraguan Communist Party emerged from the civil war subservient to the FSLN. In December 1980, PCCH leader Luis Corvalan held talks in Cuba with Fidel Castro, who urged Corvalan to establish a unified Chilean opposition. During the Cuban Party Congress that month, Corvalan delivered a speech which sketched a new party line calling for armed struggle to overthrow the Chilean Government and for coordination of efforts by all parties, including the violent left. In January 1981, Corvalan commended MIR terrorist acts as "helpful" and stated that the PCCH was willing not only to talk with MIR repre-

sentatives but also to sign agreements with the group. Several days after this offer, Corvalan signed a unity agreement with several Chilean extremist groups, including the MIR.

Until January 1981, when the new PCCH policy evidently had been ironed out and validated by the agreement for a broad opposition coalition, Corvalan's statements were issued from such places as Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Cuba, and Peru—but never from Moscow. Within 2 weeks of the agreement, however, Moscow showed its implicit approval of the policy change and began broadcasting in Spanish to Latin America—and to Chile in particular—PCCH explanations of the new policy and calls for mass resistance and acts of terrorism to overthrow the Chilean Government.

Terrorist activities by MIR commandos operating in Chile have increased substantially during the past year. These have included increased efforts by MIR activists to establish clandestine bases for rural insurgency, killings of policemen, and a number of assassination attempts against high government officials.

Argentina. The Cubans have a long history of association with, encouragement of, and active backing for terrorism in Argentina. The Cubans were linked to the two groups responsible for unleashing the wave of leftist terrorism that swept Argentina in the early and mid-1970s, the Montoneros and the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP). Cuba backed these organizations with advice on tactics and instructions on recruiting operations and with training in Cuba in urban and rural guerrilla techniques. During the height of Argentine terrorism, the Cubans used their embassy in Buenos Aires to maintain direct liaison with Argentine terrorists.

The Argentine terrorists were virtually defeated by 1978. In that year, Castro permitted the Montonero national leadership to relocate its headquarters in Cuba. Today, the Montonero top command, its labor organization, and its intelligence organization, among other units, are all located in Cuba. The Cubans facilitate the travel and communications of Montoneros, supplying them with false documentation and access to Cuban diplomatic pouches. Montoneros have been among the Latin American guerrillas trained in guerrilla warfare over the past year in the Mideast as part of a cooperative effort between Palestinian groups and Cuba.

Following the move of their high command to Havana, the Montoneros made repeated attempts to reinfiltate

¹⁷Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez explained in an interview published in *Der Spiegel* on September 28, 1981 why Cuba had not denied training the M-19 guerrillas: "We did not deny this because in the past few years many people came to our country for various reasons to ask for training. We did not deny this desire. If a revolutionary for Latin America wishes to learn the technique and organization of resistance for his own self-defense, we cannot refuse in view of the brutal oppression. This also holds true for the Salvadorans."

¹⁸The U.S. citizen killed, Chester Allen Bitterman, was working for the Summer Institute of Linguistics, a religious group which develops written forms of indigenous languages.

Argentina. In late 1979, small groups of infiltrators eluded detection and were able to carry out several terrorist actions, including four murders. Subsequent attempts by the Montoneros to infiltrate terrorists in early 1980 proved unsuccessful.

With Cuban support, Montoneros are active outside Argentina. Cuban-trained Montoneros were among the members of the "internationalist brigade" that Cuba supported in Nicaragua in 1979. This connection was highlighted when Montonero leader Mario Firmenich attended the first anniversary of the July 1979 victory, wearing the uniform of a Sandinista commander. Montoneros have been active elsewhere as well. Montoneros largely staffed and administered Radio Noticias del Continente, which broadcast Cuban propaganda to Central and South America from San Jose until it was closed by the Costa Rican Government in 1981, after war materiel was discovered on its installations.

Uruguay. After the failure of the urban insurgency organized in the early 1970s by the National Liberation Movement (MLN-Tupamaros), several hundred Tupamaros went to Cuba. During the mid-1970s, Cuba provided some of them with training in military and terrorist tactics, weapons, and intelligence. Several of these former Tupamaros subsequently assisted Cuba in running intelligence operations in Europe and Latin America. Some participated in the Cuban-organized "internationalist brigade" that fought in the Nicaraguan civil war.

Cuba continues to provide propaganda support for the Tupamaros and the Uruguayan Communist Party. Radio Havana reported on June 30, 1981 that the leader of the Communist Party of Uruguay attended a ceremony "in soli-

arity with the Uruguayan people's struggle" at the headquarters of the Cuban State Committee for Material and Technical Supply in Havana. Pro-Cuban Uruguayan leaders are given red carpet treatment when they visit Havana and are usually received by at least a member of the Cuban Politburo.

IV. POSTSCRIPT

Cuba's renewed campaign of violence has had a negative impact on Cuba's relations with its neighbors. Cuba's policies abroad and its reaction to emigration pressures at home have reversed the trend in Latin America toward normalization of relations. Although the Castro government has developed close ties to Nicaragua and Grenada, Cuba finds itself increasingly isolated throughout the Americas.

Peru nearly broke relations and removed its ambassador in April 1980, when the Cuban Government encouraged Cubans eager to leave the island to occupy the Peruvian Embassy. After more than 10,000 Cubans crowded into the embassy compound, Castro thwarted efforts by concerned governments to develop an orderly departure program and opened the port of Mariel to emigration, also expelling many criminals and the mentally ill, and ultimately allowing more than 125,000 people to leave under sometimes perilous conditions. But Cuba still refuses to issue safe conduct passes to the 14 Cubans who remain cloistered in the Peruvian Embassy in Havana today.

Cuba's neighbors were further shocked when Cuban MiG 21s sank the Bahamian patrol boat "Flamingo" on May 10, 1980 in an unprovoked attack in Bahamian coastal waters. Subsequently, four Bahamian seamen were machine-

gunned while trying to save themselves after their vessel sank. Their bodies were never recovered. U.S. Coast Guard aircraft were harassed by Cuban MiGs while searching for survivors at the request of the Bahamian Government.

Relations between Venezuela and Cuba deteriorated badly in 1980, principally over the asylum issue, to the degree that Venezuela removed its ambassador from Havana. In November 1980, Jamaica expelled the Cuban Ambassador for interference in Jamaica's internal affairs and in October 1981 broke diplomatic relations. Colombia suspended relations in March 1981 over Cuba's training of M-19 guerrillas. Cuba's handling of an incident in which a group of Cubans demanding asylum forcibly occupied Ecuador's Embassy in Havana prompted Ecuador to remove its ambassador from Cuba in May 1981. Also in May, Costa Rica severed its existing consular ties with Cuba, expelling Cuban officials active in coordinating support networks for Central American insurgents.

Today, outside the English-speaking Caribbean, only Argentina, Panama, Mexico, and Nicaragua conduct relatively normal relations through resident ambassadors in Havana. Use of Panama as a transit point for Colombian guerrillas, however, led Panama to reassess its relations with Cuba and resulted in sharp public criticism of Cuba's "manifest disregard for international standards of political co-existence" by a high Panamanian Government official. ■

Published by the United States Department of State • Bureau of Public Affairs
Office of Public Communication • Editorial Division • Washington, D.C. • December 1981
Editor: Norman Howard • This material is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission; citation of this source is appreciated.

Bureau of Public Affairs
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Postage and Fees Paid
Department of State
STA-501



Official Business

If address is incorrect
please indicate change. ▶
Do not cover or destroy
this address label.

Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence



Cover: Soviet Mi-24 HIND helicopter gunship,
1982 addition to Cuban arsenal.

Cuban Armed Forces and the Soviet Military Presence

Summary

Cuba has by far the most formidable military force in the Caribbean basin with the single exception of the United States. In terms of size, its forces are larger than any other Central American or Caribbean nation. In all of Latin America, only Brazil—a country with a population 12 times that of Cuba—has a larger military establishment. The quantitative and qualitative improvement of the armed forces and increasing Soviet-Cuban military ties have enabled Cuba to assume a far more influential role on the world scene than its size and resources would otherwise dictate.

Since 1975 the USSR has undertaken a major modernization of all branches of the Cuban military, transforming it from a home-defense force into the best equipped military establishment in Latin America, one with significant offensive capabilities. Equipment delivered to the ground forces has enhanced both its mobility and firepower. The Air Force now is probably the best equipped in Latin America, possessing some 200 Soviet-supplied MiG jet fighters. The Navy has acquired two torpedo attack submarines and a Koni-class frigate, all of which will be able to sustain operations throughout the Caribbean Basin and will enable Cuba to project power far beyond its shores, posing a threat to shipping in the Caribbean as well as intimidating and threatening neighbors.

As a result of this modernization program and Cuba's combat experience in Angola and Ethiopia, the Castro regime possesses a significant regional intervention capability. Havana has increased the size of its airborne-trained forces to a current level of some 3,000 to 4,000 troops, and has significantly improved its airlift and sealift capability as well. Although this capability is modest by Western standards, it is impressive in the Central American or Caribbean context. This capability would be most effectively employed in aiding an ally in the region against an external invasion or in the suppression of internal conflict. Cuba does not have the wherewithal to conduct an outright invasion of another nation in the region except for the Caribbean micro-states. Havana does not have sufficient amphibious assault landing craft or aircraft capable of transporting heavy equipment.

Cuba has on occasion demonstrated some recklessness in the utilization of its capabilities. The most recent example occurred May 10, 1980, when Cuban Air Force jet fighters attacked and sank a clearly marked Bahamian patrol vessel inside Bahamian territorial waters in broad daylight. Four crewmembers died in the attack. The following day, Cuban MiGs buzzed for a prolonged period a populated island belonging to the Bahamas. In addition, a Cuban helicopter carrying Cuban troops landed on the same island in pursuit of the surviving crewmembers of the sunken patrol vessel.

The Cuban Military

Since the mid-1970's, when Cuba intervened in Angola on a large scale and the Soviet Union began to modernize Cuba's armed forces with new equipment, the Cuban military has changed from a predominantly home-defense force into a formidable power relative to its Latin American neighbors. The deliveries of Soviet military equipment that have taken place in recent months are the latest in a surge of deliveries to Cuba over the past year. During 1981, Soviet merchant ships delivered some 66,000 tons of military equipment, as compared with the previous 10-year annual average of 15,000 tons. The large amount of weapons delivered in 1981 represents the most significant Soviet military supply effort to Cuba since a record quarter of a million tons was shipped in 1962 (see chart 1 in appendix).

There are several reasons for this increase:

- the beginning of a new five-year upgrading and replacement cycle;
- additional arms to equip the new Cuban territorial militia, which Cuba claims to be 500,000 strong but which Cuba expects to reach 1 million;
- increasing military stockpiles, part of which is passed to Nicaragua;
- a convincing demonstration of Moscow's continuing support for the Havana regime.

In addition to major weapons systems, large quantities of ammunition, small arms, spares and support equipment probably were delivered. Cuba's armed forces cur-

rently total more than 225,000 personnel—200,000 Army, 15,000 Air Force and Air Defense, and 10,000 Navy—including both those on active duty either in Cuba or overseas and those belonging to the ready reserves, subject to immediate mobilization. With a population of just under ten million, Cuba has by far the largest military force in the Caribbean Basin and the second largest in Latin America after Brazil, which has a population of more than 120 million. More than 2 percent of the Cuban population belongs to the active-duty military and ready reserves, compared with an average of under 0.4 percent in other countries in the Caribbean basin (see charts 2 and 3). In addition, Cuba's large paramilitary organizations and reserves would be available to support the military internally.

The quantitative and qualitative upgrading of the armed forces since the mid-1970's, and their recent combat experience in Angola and Ethiopia, give the Cuban military definite advantages over its neighbors in Latin America. Cuba is the only country in Latin America to have undertaken a major military effort abroad since World War II, giving both Army and Air Force personnel recent combat experience in operating many of the weapons currently in their inventories. About 70 percent of Cuban troops that have served in Africa have been reservists who were called to active duty. Cuban reservists generally spend about 45 days per year on active duty and can be readily integrated into the armed forces. Cuba has effectively used its civilian enterprises, such as Cubana Airlines and the merchant marine, to support military operations. Havana has dedicated significant resources to modernize and professionalize its armed forces and to maintain a well-prepared reserve. Cuba has demonstrated that, when supported by the Soviet Union logistically, it has both the capability and the will to deploy large numbers of troops, and can be expected to do so whenever the Castro government believes it to be in Cuba's best interest.

The cost of Soviet arms delivered to Cuba since 1960 exceeds \$2.5 thousand million, and all of the deliveries have taken place on a grant basis. Soviet arms deliveries, plus Cuba's \$3 thousand-million annual Soviet economic subsidy, are tied to Cuba's ongoing military and political role abroad in support of Soviet objectives.

Equipment delivered to the Army since the mid-1970's, such as T-62 tanks, BMP infantry combat vehicles, BRDM armored reconnaissance vehicles, anti-tank guns, towed field guns, BM-21 multiple rocket launchers and ZSU-23-4 self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, have begun to alleviate earlier deficiencies in Cuba's mechanized capability, as well as providing increased firepower. In addition to its qualitative advantage, the Cuban Army has an overwhelming numerical superiority in weapons over all of its Latin American neighbors.

The Cuban Air Force is one of the largest and probably the best equipped in all Latin America. Its inventory includes some 200 Soviet-supplied MiG jet fighters, with two squadrons of FLOGGERS (exact model of second squadron recently delivered is not yet determined). The MiG-23s have the capability to reach portions of the southeastern United States, most of Central America and most Caribbean nations (see chart 4). Cuban-based aircraft, however, would be capable of conducting only limited air en-

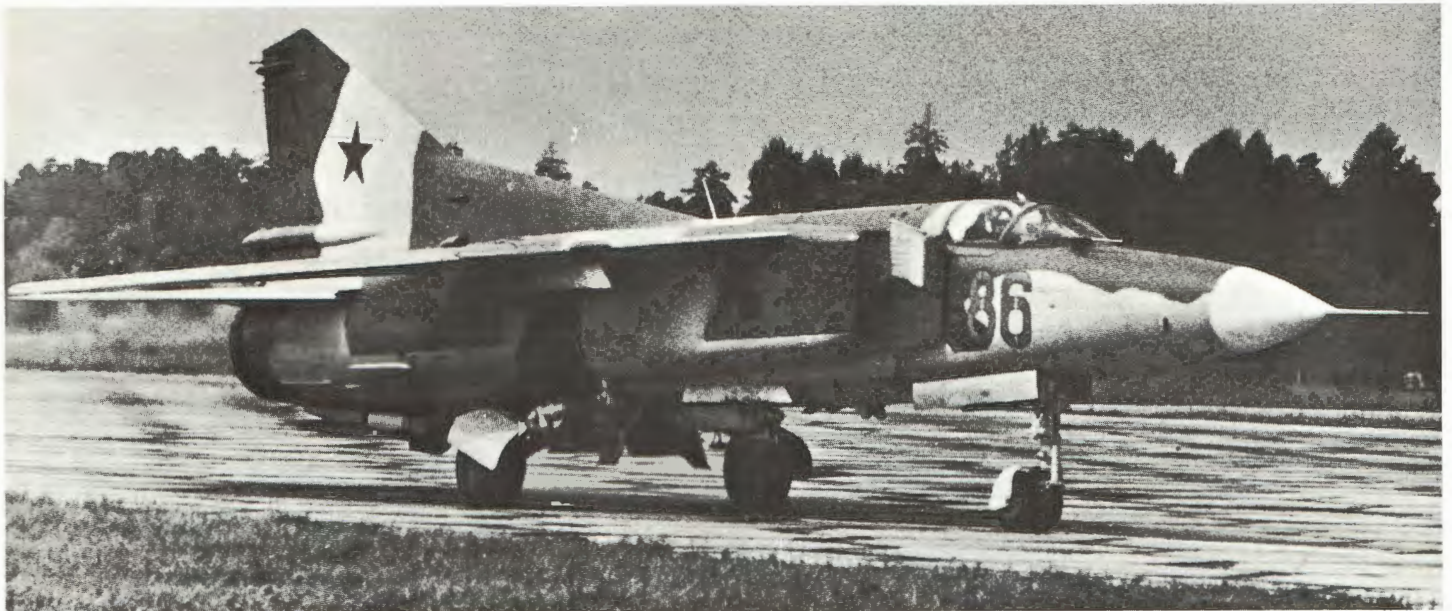


BMP infantry combat vehicle.

agements in Central America on a round-trip mission. Cuba's fighter aircraft could be effectively employed in either a ground-attack or air superiority role, however, if based on Central American soil—a feasible option given the closeness of Cuban-Nicaraguan relations. A similar arrangement would be possible in Grenada once Cuban workers complete the construction of an airfield with a 2,700-meter runway there. If the MiG-23s were based in Nicaragua and Grenada, their combat radius would be expanded to include all of Central America, including the northern tier of South America.

Cuban defenses have been strengthened by the additions of mobile SA-6 missile launchers and radars for that air defense missile, additional SA-2 transporters, SA-2 missile cannisters, new early warning and height-finding radar stations, and electronic warfare vans.

The Cuban Navy, with a strength of about 10,000 personnel, remains essentially a defensive force, although its two recently acquired FOXTROT-class submarines and single Koni-class frigate, once fully integrated into the operational force, will be able to sustain operations throughout the Caribbean Basin, the Gulf of Mexico, and, to a limited extent, the Atlantic. The Koni, for example, has an operating range of 2,000 nautical miles without refuel-



MiG-23, shown here shortly before shipment to Cuba, is one of some 200 Mig jet fighters supplied to Cuba by the Soviet Union.

ing or replenishment. The FOXTROTS have a range of 9,000 nautical miles at seven knots per hour and a patrol duration of 70 days.

The primary vessels for carrying out the Navy's defensive missions are Osa- and Komar-class missile attack boats whose range can extend well into the Caribbean. They are armed with SS-N-2 STYX ship-to-ship missiles (see chart 5). Cuba has received, in addition, Turya-class hydrofoil torpedo boats, Yevgenya-class inshore minesweepers and a Sonya-class minesweeper. Although not equipped for sustained operations away from its main bases, the Cuban Navy could conduct limited interdiction missions in the Caribbean. In addition to the Navy, Cuba has a 3,000-man coast guard organization.

Cuba's capability to intervene in a hostile environment using its indigenous transport assets is modest by Western standards, but considerably more formidable in the Central American context. As in 1975, when a single battalion of Cuban airborne troops airlifted to Luanda at a critical moment played a role far out of proportion to its size, a battle-tested Cuban force injected quickly into a combat situation in Central America could prove a decisive factor. Moreover, since the Angolan experience, Havana has increased the training of airborne-qualified forces, which now number some 3,000 to 4,000 troops and consist of a Special Troops Contingent and a Landing and Assault Brigade. In addition, Cuba has improved its airlift and sealift capability.

Cuba continues to lack sufficient transport aircraft that can support long-range, large-scale troop movements and would have to turn to the Soviets to achieve such a capability. Cuba does have the ability to transport large numbers of troops and supplies within the Caribbean region, however, using its military and civilian aircraft. Since 1975, the Cuban commercial air fleet has acquired seven IL-62 long-range jet transport aircraft and some TU-154 medium-to-long-range transport aircraft, each capable of

carrying 150 to 200 combat-equipped troops. (By comparison, Cuba conducted the airlift to Luanda in 1975 with only five medium-range aircraft, each having a maximum capacity of 100 troops.) Cuba has recently acquired the AN-26 short-range transport. The most effective use of this aircraft from Cuban bases would be in transporting troops or supplies to a friendly country, but it is capable, with full payload, of airdropping troops on portions of Florida, Belize, Jamaica, Haiti, the Bahamas, and most of the Dominican Republic (see chart 6). If based in Nicaragua, however, the AN-26s would be capable of reaching virtually all of Central America in either role. In addition, more than 30 smaller military and civilian transport planes, including the aircraft of the Angolan conflict, also could be used to fly troops and munitions to Central America.

Introduction of sophisticated Soviet weapons geared toward mobility and offensive missions has improved Cu-

Soviet T-62 tanks, shown here during Warsaw Pact maneuvers.





Koni-class frigate.

ban ability to conduct military operations off the island. The recent Soviet military deliveries, specifically, could improve the effectiveness of Cuban forces already abroad. In Angola the mobile SA-6 surface-to-air missile system operated by Cubans could provide a valuable complement to other less effective air defense systems. They also would enable Havana to continue assistance to Nicaragua. The MiG-23 and MiG-21 fighters probably would be most effective in aiding the Sandinista regime. The deployment of a few dozen MiGs would not seriously reduce Cuba's defenses, and Cuban-piloted MiGs would enable Nicaragua to counter virtually any threat from within the region.

In early 1982 Cuba received some Mi-24 HIND-D helicopters. This is the first true assault helicopter in Cuba's inventory, although Cuba also has Mi-8 helicopters. Primarily a gunship, the Mi-24 is also designed to carry a combat squad of eight men. It is armed with a 57 mm cannon, mini-gun and rocket pods. It will provide Cuba with improved ground support and offensive combat operations capabilities.

Cuba's ability to mount an amphibious assault is constrained both by the small number of naval infantry personnel and by a dearth of suitable landing craft. Cuba would, however, be capable of transporting significant numbers of troops and supplies—using ships belonging to the merchant marine and navy—to ports secured by friendly forces if the United States did not become involved.

Cuba's Paramilitary Organizations

Cuba's several paramilitary organizations involve hundreds of thousands of civilian personnel during peacetime who would be available to support the military during times of crisis. Although these groups would be far less combat-capable than any segment of the military, they do provide at least rudimentary military training and disci-



Osa-class missile attack boat.

FOXTROT-class submarine.



pline to the civilian population. The primary orientation of these paramilitary organizations is internal security and local defense (see chart 7).

The extent to which the military is involved in the civilian sector is further reflected by its activity within the economic sphere. In addition to uniformed personnel, the



SA-6 surface-to-air missiles on display.

Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR) has over 30,000 civilian workers employed in factories and repair facilities in Cuba and in building roads and airfields in Africa. Many are employees of MINFAR's Central Directorate for Housing and Construction which, in addition to military construction, builds housing and apartment complexes for military and civilian personnel of both MINFAR and the Ministry of the Interior. The Youth Labor Army also contributes to economic development by engaging in agricultural, industrial and construction projects.

The Soviet Presence

The Soviet military presence in Cuba includes a ground forces brigade, a military advisory group and an intelligence collection facility. There are 6,000 to 8,000 Soviet civilian advisors and 2,000 Soviet military advisors in Cuba. Military deployments to Cuba consist of periodic visits by naval reconnaissance aircraft and task groups.

The ground forces brigade, located near Havana, has approximately 2,600 men and consists of one tank and three motorized rifle battalions, plus various combat and service support units. Soviet ground forces have been present in Cuba since shortly before the missile crisis in 1962.

Likely missions of the brigade include providing a small symbolic Soviet commitment to Castro, implying a readiness to defend Cuba and his regime, and probably providing security for Soviet personnel and key Soviet facilities, particularly for the Soviets' large intelligence collection operation. The brigade almost certainly would not have a role as an intervention force, although it is capable of tactical defense and offensive operations in Cuba. Unlike such units as airborne divisions, the brigade is not structured for rapid deployment, and no transport aircraft capable of carrying its armed vehicles and heavy equipment are stationed in Cuba.

The Soviet Military Advisory Group in Cuba con-



The Mi-8 helicopter, shown here during 1980 Warsaw Pact maneuvers.

sists of at least 2,000 military personnel, who provide technical advice in support of weapons such as the MiGs, surface-to-air missiles, and the FOXTROT submarines; some are also attached to Cuban ground units. The Soviets' intelligence collection facility—their largest outside the USSR—monitors U.S. military and civilian communications.

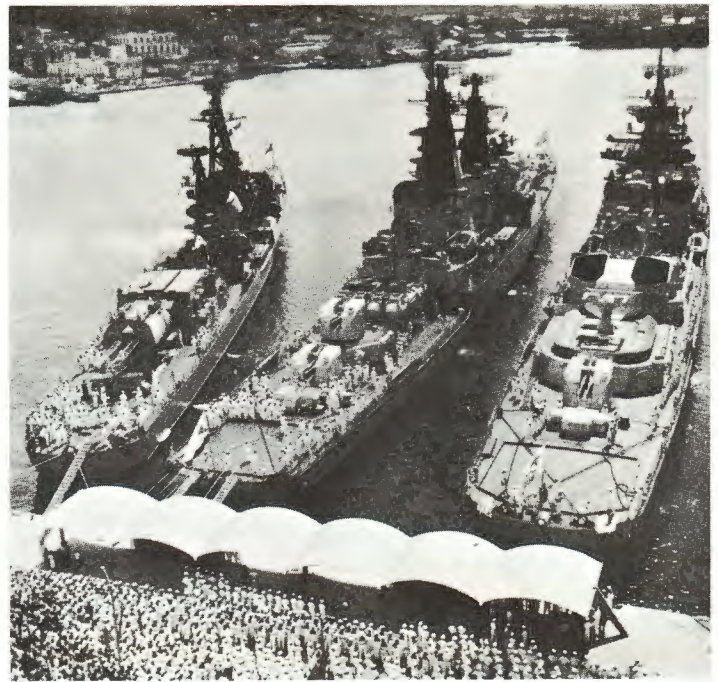
Since the naval ship visit program began in 1969, 21 Soviet task groups have been deployed to the Caribbean, virtually all of them visiting Cuban ports. The most recent visit occurred in April and May 1981 and included the first by a Kara-class cruiser—the largest Soviet combat ship to have ever visited the island. Soviet intelligence collection ships operating off the U.S. East Coast regularly call at Cuba during their patrols, as do hydrographic research and space-program support ships operating in the region. In addition, the Soviet Navy keeps a salvage and rescue ship in Havana for emergency operations.



Cubans in Africa: Top, Cuban artillery unit in front-line position in Ethiopia. Below, Soviet-built tank manned by Cuban troops guards road junction in Luanda, Angola, during civil war in 1976.



Soviet TU-95 Bear D reconnaissance aircraft have been deployed periodically to Cuba since 1975. These aircraft are deployed in pairs and stay in Cuba for several weeks. The flights use Cuban airfields to support Soviet reconnaissance missions and naval maneuvers in the Atlantic, and to observe U.S. and NATO naval maneuvers and



Soviet naval visits to Cuba began in 1969. Here, from left, a Kildin-class guided-missile destroyer, a Kynda-class guided-missile cruiser and a Kashin-class guided-missile destroyer at port in Havana.

sea trials. The flights have historically been associated with periods of increased international tension, such as the Angolan and Ethiopian wars.

The Soviets apparently sent a significant number of pilots to augment Cuba's air defense during two periods—early 1976 and during 1978—when Cuban pilots were sent to Angola and Ethiopia. The Soviet pilots filled in for Cuban pilots deployed abroad, and provided the Cuban Air Force with enough personnel to perform its primary mission of air defense of the island.

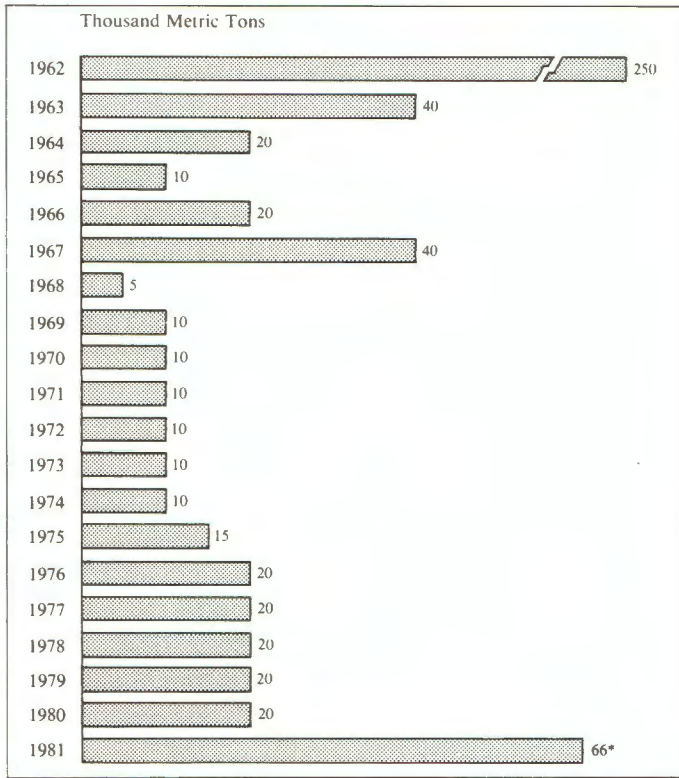
Threat to Hemispheric Strategic Defense

Cuban military ties with the Soviet Union, the Soviet presence in Cuba, including the presence of a large Soviet intelligence-gathering facility, and the periodic Soviet air and naval presence pose significant military threats to U.S. security interests in the Hemisphere. Because of Cuba's proximity to vital sea lanes of communication, the Soviets or Cubans, in wartime, could attempt to interdict the movement of troops, supplies and raw materials in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea, and could strike key military and civilian facilities in the area. ■

APPENDIX

Chart 1

USSR: Seaborne Military Deliveries to Cuba



approximate figure

Chart 3

Relative Military Strength of Selected Caribbean Basin Nations

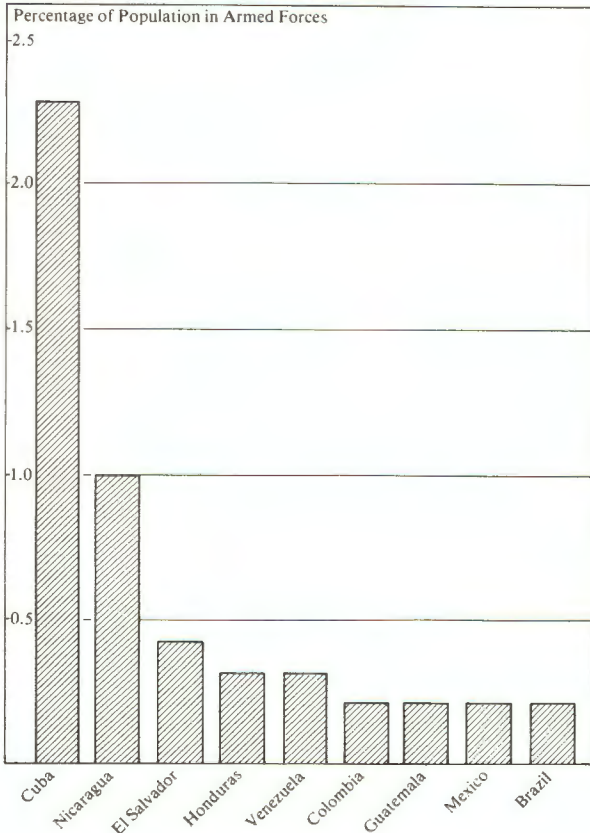


Chart 2

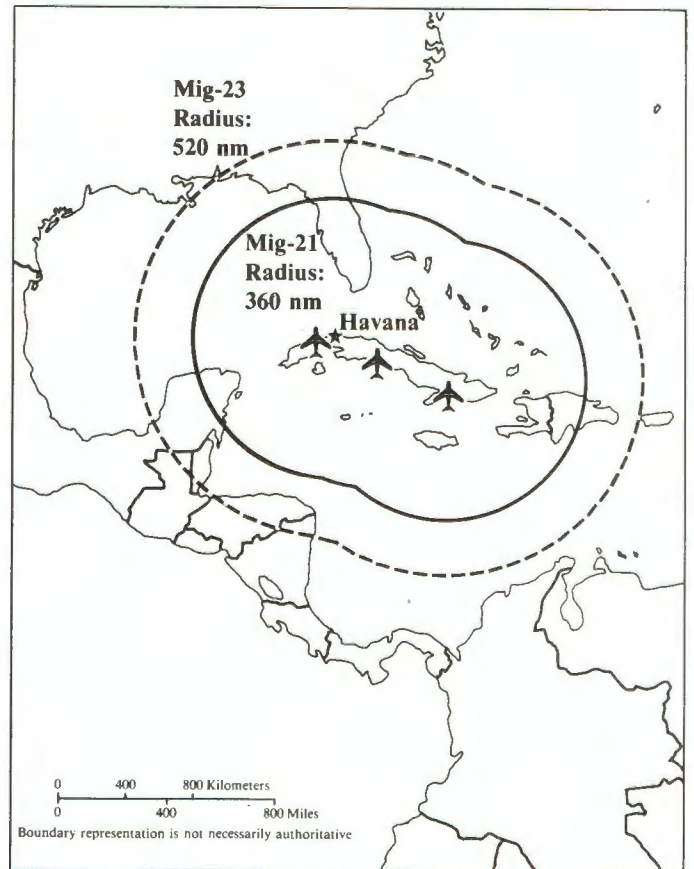
For Selected Latin American Countries*

Country	Population (in thousands)	People in Military (in thousands)	Percentage of Population in Military
Cuba	9,900	226.5	2.29
Argentina	27,000	139.5	.51
Bolivia	5,285	23.8	.45
Brazil	126,000	272.55	.22
Chile	11,200	88.0	.79
Colombia	26,520	65.8	.25
Ecuador	7,900	38.8	.49
Paraguay	3,300	16.0	.48
Peru	17,400	95.5	.55
Uruguay	3,300	30.0	.91
Venezuela	15,400	40.5	.26
Dominican Rep.	5,620	19.0	.34
Guatemala	6,950	14.9	.21
Honduras	3,700	11.3	.31
Mexico	71,500	107.0	.15

* Data is from *Military Balance*, 1980-81.

Chart 4

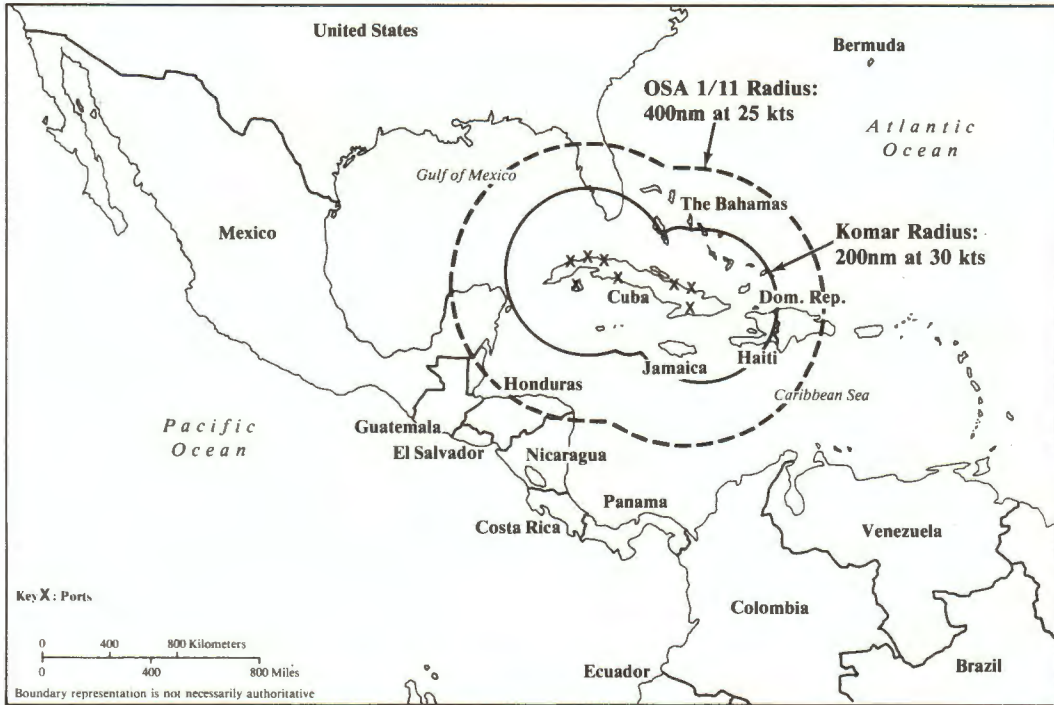
Optimum High-Altitude Combat Radii of Cuban Mig-21s and Mig-23s



Key: Mig-21/23 Base

Chart 5

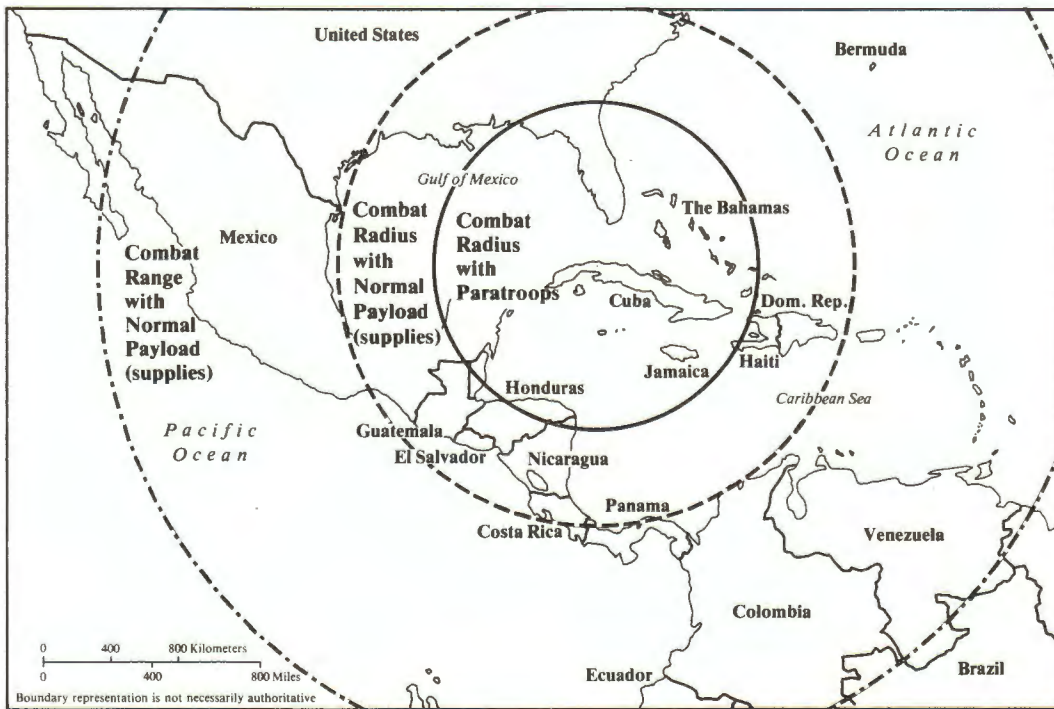
Operating Areas of OSA- and Komar-class Guided Missile Patrol Boats from Cuban Ports*



*Operating areas shown are based on each craft's normal tactical speed, and could be up to 50 percent less if high-speed operations were being conducted. The maximum speed of the OSA is 36 knots and that of the Komar 40 knots.

Chart 6

Range and Radius of AN-26s from Havana



*Combat radius is the outbound distance attainable on a flight carrying payload to a destination, with sufficient onboard fuel reserves to return to point of origin. For a paratroop mission, stated radius allows for sufficient time-on-station to airdrop paratroops. For the delivery of supplies, stated radius allows for landing and take-off at destination, and assumes that entire payload is delivered before return. Combat range is the total distance attainable on a one-way flight carrying payload the entire distance.

Chart 7

Strength and Missions of Cuba's Paramilitary Organizations

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Subordination</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Mission</u>
Youth Labor Army	MINFAR (Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces)	100,000	Civic action force, receiving little military training in peacetime. One wartime mission would be to operate and protect the railroads.
Civil Defense Force	MINFAR	100,000	"Military" units would assist in providing local defense; non-military would provide first aid and disaster relief.
Territorial Troop Militia	MINFAR	More than 500,000 at present; still forming	Regional security/local defense.
Border Guard Troops	MININT (Ministry of the Interior)	3,000 full-time, plus unknown number of civilian auxiliaries	Help guard Cuban coastline.
National Revolutionary Police	MININT	10,000, plus 52,000 civilian auxiliaries	Responsible for public order in peacetime; could help provide rear area security during wartime.
Department of State Security	MININT	10,000-15,000	Counterintelligence and prevention of counter-revolutionary activities.

Chart 8

Cuban Advisors

<u>Nation</u>	<u>Total Number (Estimated)</u>	
	<u>Military</u>	<u>Civilian</u>
Angola	20,000	6,000
Ethiopia	11,000-13,000	600
Nicaragua	1,800	3,500
South Yemen	200-300	100
Grenada	30	300

Photos: Front Cover, Department of Defense. 2, Department of Defense. 3, top—Gamma-Liaison/J.P. Quittard; bottom—Sovfoto. 4, top—U.S. Navy (2); bottom—Department of Defense. 5, top—Department of Defense; bottom—Camera Press. 6, top left—Gamma-Liaison/Bernard Couret; top right—Wide World; bottom—TASS from Sovfoto.

NICARAGUA

THE STOLEN REVOLUTION



NICARAGUA: THE STOLEN REVOLUTION

By Max Singer

Max Singer is a Visiting Scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation and a freelance journalist. He has written articles on Central America for *The Washington Post*, *The Miami Herald*, *Commentary*, and the *Reader's Digest*. He is a founder and former president of the Hudson Institute.

Cover: Crowds gather during commemoration of first anniversary of the revolution against Somoza.

Introduction: Making Judgments

Free and progressive people throughout the world exult when a revolution succeeds in overthrowing a tyrant. And so it is hard to accept facts that show that the hopes raised by a successful revolution have been betrayed, and the revolution has been transformed into a new tyranny and a new colonialism.

The Sandinista leadership promised pluralism and pragmatism. Did they mean it? Or were they classic Marxist-Leninists determined to impose their ideology on their countrymen by force as quickly as they prudently could? Were the visible elements of pluralism and pragmatism evidence of uncertainty or disagreement within the leadership? Or were they the result of a Sandinista decision to move only gradually to install totalitarian rule? Did the Sandinistas move slowly in squeezing independent groups to conceal their true nature for as long as possible, and thus preserve the benefits of Western financial and political support? Or were they forced to militarize and to repress opposition because of hostility and danger from the United States?

Initially, the question of what they "intended" was confused with the question of who "they" were. Was the revolutionary government that of Alfonso Robelo, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, Eden Pastora, and dozens of other reformers and democratic revolutionaries, or was it firmly in the hands of the Marxist-Leninist leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN)? If the FSLN Directorate was in control, was it unified, or were there pluralist factions within it?

Despite the difficulty of these questions, some people seemed to

know the answers before they looked at the facts. Many in the United States, Europe and elsewhere seem to think that any reform designed to help the poor at the expense of the rich and middle class is at least the first step down a slippery slope to communism. Some still see any criticism of the United States, or any connections with Russia or Cuba, as proof of communism. And some have a double standard that perceive any violence against a government, however tyrannical, as intolerable, but condone violence by government forces.

On the other hand, many individuals uncritically accept the claims of any group who learns how to disguise its true character with the thinnest blanket of anti-Western, leftist rhetoric. Such people see any attempt to question the credentials of those seeking power "on behalf of the masses" as automatically reactionary, or as excessive anti-communist zeal.

Given such strong preconceptions among large numbers of individuals, the inability of political experts and ordinary citizens, within Nicaragua and without, to reach clear-headed judgments about the nature of the Sandinista regime is not surprising. The difference between a genuine commitment to democracy may be difficult to distinguish from a forgery, at least initially. Therefore, it is necessary to go beyond a recitation of superficial facts and statements and look at character, motivation and intention.

Today, after a record of three years of Sandinista rule, the evidence now is there for all to examine.

Nicaragua Now

What are facts about Nicaragua?

The Sandinista leadership declared that they were committed to pluralism and the encouragement of a mixed economy. Neither of these commitments is being kept. As the facts demonstrate, the Sandinistas

have instituted policies designed to harass, eliminate or win control of the press, independent labor unions and political parties, the Church and ethnic minorities such as the Miskito Indians. In short, the Sandinista Directorate is openly repressing the very groups that are the essence of political and social pluralism.

Post-revolutionary Nicaragua probably has registered some gains. Health care has improved in some areas, and literacy has been increased by 20 percent according to official reports. At least for a time, more citizens had a sense of political participation through a revolutionary block system, the Sandinista Defense Committees. But the price has been high: economic failure that has resulted in intermittent food shortages, uncontrolled inflation, growing foreign debts, a weakened private sector vulnerable to expropriation and severe problems in agriculture.

Cuban and Soviet influence is large and growing, and the Sandinistas have launched ambitious programs to militarize substantial segments of the society. Nicaragua's military, underwritten by the Soviet bloc, provides training, arms and logistical support to guerrillas in El Salvador and threatens its neighbors, Costa Rica and Honduras.

As a result of these domestic and international policies, the Sandinista Directorate today is isolated; many of its former comrades-in-arms have left in disillusionment, and support for the regime is waning among virtually every sector of Nicaraguan society—among the very people in whose name the Sandinistas fought the revolution.

As U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders has charged: "The new Nicaraguan regime is turning into a new dictatorship based once again on a privileged and militarized caste. Like the Somoza regime before it, Nicaragua's government is beginning to make war on its own people."



Daniel Ortega (at microphone), one of the leading members of the Sandinista Directorate, speaks to a gathering shortly after victory over the Somoza regime in 1979.

The Background

It is not necessary to detail the wrongs committed by the Somoza dynasty during the nearly half century that it ruled the small Central American republic of Nicaragua. It is an all-too-familiar story of greed and corruption by a regime maintained in power by the repressive use of force.

The Somozas were no mild authoritarian regime reasonably reflecting the desires of most of its constituency and omitting only the forms of popular control. The last of the line, Anastasio "Tacho" Somoza, added incompetence to the family's list of vices. He exploited and

oppressed the people of Nicaragua, and in return provided neither efficiency, inspiration, nor any other redeeming feature.

The best evidence of the nature of Somoza's rule is that by 1979 all elements of Nicaraguan society except the National Guard had decided that the regime must be overthrown. The consensus against Somoza included workers, the priests and bishops of the Catholic Church, business and professional communities, peasants and villagers.

The history of pre-revolutionary and revolutionary Nicaragua is a complicated story of organizational and ideological maneuvering among various opposition groups and social sectors. The final stage in the struggle began in January 1978 after the murder of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, owner and publisher of *La Prensa*, Managua's principal daily newspaper. Democratic and moderate opposition groups then realized that all hopes of peaceful political protest and reform were vain, and decided to join forces with the Sandinista movement,

accepting the leadership of its nine-man Directorate, which included Daniel Ortega, Humberto Ortega, Tomas Borge and Jaime Wheelock.

The main sectors of the community, including the Broad Opposition Front, the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), and the National Patriotic Front led by a distinguished "Group of Twelve" democrats, agreed to work with the FSLN only after negotiations in which the Sandinistas agreed to preserve political pluralism and a mixed economy, and to hold free elections quickly.

Most of the Sandinista Directorate were known to influential Nicaraguans. It is a small country and generally the Sandinistas were not peasants or villagers from the hinterland, but sons of members of the small middle- and upper-class groups of Nicaragua. Citizens knew that the three main factions of the FSLN had

been united by Fidel Castro, and that in the preceding years Castro had supplied at least two of the factions with guns and money.

But the leaders of the democratic left and center who opposed Somoza decided to accept the risk of alliance. The third "Tercerista" faction of the FSLN was less clearly Marxist-Leninist, and the entire Directorate made solemn promises of political pluralism and a mixed economy. The moderate leaders hoped that if the democratic groups joined the struggle with the Sandinistas, and they made a revolution against Somoza together, the democratic majority would be able to prevail. "By playing the game, we hoped to influence the process," said Arturo Cruz, who held a series of high positions in the revolution until he resigned as Ambassador to Washington early in 1982.

Joaquin Cuadra Chamorro, father of Joaquin Cuadra, current FSLN Defense Vice Minister, expressed a similar hope when he said: "So we reached an agreement with the clear understanding that socialism is not possible for Nicaragua. I saw my role as trying to rescue our youth from radicalism."

The Sandinista promises to their revolutionary allies were embodied in the program released by the Junta of the Provisional Government on June 27, 1979, in San Jose. These promises included: "effective democracy," "the operation of political parties without ideological discrimination (except Somocistas)," "universal suffrage," "freedom of expression, of worship, and for forming unions, guilds, and popular organizations," and "a foreign policy of independence and nonalignment."

The Sandinistas made similar commitments to the Organization of American States (OAS) in a letter of July 12, 1979, which also explicitly promised "the first free elections our country has known in this century."

But even after virtually all of Nicaragua decided that Somoza's rule had to end, and agreed to work together under Sandinista leadership

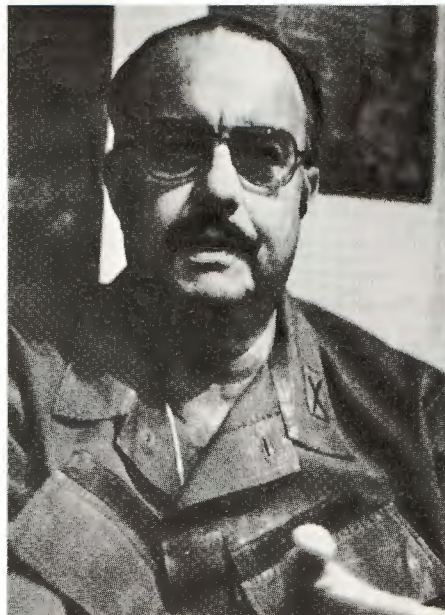
to do the job, Nicaragua suffered massive bloodshed and destruction before Somoza was ousted. The armed struggle probably cost more than 10,000 lives.

During the final stages of the revolution, the Sandinistas, because of their broad popular support at home, received significant help from democratic governments in the area, such as Venezuela and Costa Rica.

On July 19, 1979, a Government of National Reconstruction (GRN) headed by a five-member Junta which included two non-Marxists, Alfonso Robelo and Violeta Chamorro (widow of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro), officially assumed power. The Junta also established a large Council of State whose members represented a wide range of views and affiliations, but which proved to have no substantial power.

The Struggle for Revolutionary Control

Since the Marxist-Leninist minority had most of the top positions from the beginning, the "struggle for power" was never a close contest. Arturo Cruz, who was a member of the



Anastasio Somoza, ousted dictator of Nicaragua.

"Group of Twelve" allied with the FSLN, and who had been made head of the national bank in the Provisional Government (GRN), described to Patrick Oster of the *Chicago Sun-Times* how he realized in the second week after the revolutionary victory that the Sandinistas and not the GRN Junta were in control. On one day he got approval from the Junta for a bank action. But on the next, the Junta met again with two uniformed members of the Sandinista Directorate present, and the Junta reversed itself. It was clear to Cruz that the Directorate controlled the majority of the Junta.

The following April, Cruz reports, the Sandinistas expanded the Council of State to give themselves a majority on that body too. That action led to the resignations of Alfonso Robelo and Violeta Chamorro from the Junta (Chamorro "for reasons of health"). But Robelo urged Cruz to take his place. And Cruz, although he says that he already could see that pluralism wasn't working, decided to join the Junta and try to change the situation. His efforts were frustrated and he resigned from the government, but he was prevailed upon to accept the post of Ambassador to Washington—an action that, in retrospect, was part of a successful effort by the Sandinista regime to conceal its true character and direction.

Yet the fact is that the Sandinistas, like many ideologues, wrote and published openly about their intentions. And even though they spelled out their totalitarian plans and their commitment to the Soviet bloc, they still were able to convince people that they were "well-meaning idealists" and at least potentially neutral. On October 5, 1979, the Sandinistas issued an "Analysis of the Situation and Tasks of the Sandinista People's Revolution" containing the political and military theses presented to a three day Assembly of FSLN Cadre held from September 21 to 23. In this report, the FSLN Directorate stated:

—The GRN (which had two independents on the five-member Junta) was “an alliance of convenience organized by the Sandinistas to thwart Yankee intervention [and] it was not necessary to negotiate with the bourgeoisie, just to give some representation to people with a patriotic reputation.”

—They noted that although “without doubt there is no domestic power stronger than the FSLN,” they had so far produced “only a foundation” and were setting up a wide array of their own organizations, including “an army politicized without precedent, organized within a state that was trying to conserve relics of old institutional forms.”

—In their discussion of the economy they said that because of grave difficulties “at the present moment it is necessary to maintain a neutral position with respect to the imperialists.”

—They saw no immediate danger from a resurgent National Guard or from their neighboring countries. The main factors that had influenced their policies since July 10 included: the

need to train the army, to maintain an alliance with the bourgeoisie and “the expectation of financial help from the Western bloc.” But they noted that this “need to appear reasonable during the ‘intermediate’ period was beginning to cause dangerous problems such as “an independent labor movement.”

—The Directorate said that a variety of steps needed to be taken to protect the FSLN from “enemies of the revolution” during the “stage of democratic transition” in which small political parties must be maintained “because of international opinion.”

—They emphasized the need for unity in an ideology of “support of the World Revolution.” And they concluded by making it plain that “we are an organization whose greatest aspiration is to retain revolutionary power” and that “the first task is to educate the people to recognize that the FSLN is the legitimate leader of the revolutionary process.”

This extraordinary document makes it clear that the Sandinista leadership was determined from the beginning to hold power by totalitarian

methods and to use that power to establish a Marxist-Leninist system.

The Sandinistas also made it clear that they saw the world as divided into imperialist and socialist camps, and were determined that Nicaragua would reject true nonalignment and ally itself completely with the socialist camp (which does not include the West Germany led until recently by Helmut Schmidt).

Humberto Ortega, one of the representatives of the “least Marxist” Tercerista faction, made another explicit statement of FSLN thinking in a speech to a meeting of “military specialists” on August 25, 1981. Ortega said:

Marxism-Leninism is the scientific doctrine that guides our revolution, our vanguard's analytical tool for...carrying out the revolution....We cannot be Marxist-Leninist without Sandinism, and without Marxism-Leninism Sandinism cannot be revolutionary. Thus, they are indissolubly linked....Our political strength is Sandinism and our doctrine is Marxism-Leninism.



Arturo Cruz, a former member of the Junta, was disillusioned with the Sandinistas but continued in the revolutionary government until 1982, when he resigned as Ambassador to Washington.



The Nicaraguan Junta with Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo Odio in 1979. From left to right: Moises Hassan, Sergio Ramirez, Violeta de Chamorro, President Carazo, Daniel Ortega and Alfonso Robelo. Chamorro and Robelo, both non-Marxists, resigned in 1980.

Ortega's speech is over 4,000 words of pure, hard-line Marxism-Leninism. For example, he refers, without any hint of satire, to the Lenin-led Bolshevik revolution as "the creation of a classless society in which man's exploitation of his fellow man could gradually be eliminated."

He went on to say that:

...on July 19, 1979, world society was polarized into two major camps.... the camp of imperialism, the camp of capitalism, headed up by the United States and the rest of the capitalist countries in Europe and throughout the world...[and] the socialist camp made up of various countries in Europe, Asia, and Latin America and with the Soviet Union in the vanguard.

Although Ortega delivered this speech two years after the FSLN took power, no one who reads it can believe that he only recently had arrived at these convictions. At no point did he refer to any statements or actions of the Reagan Administration as having influenced his view of the United States. He gave no basis for seeing how any amount of American friendliness or generosity toward the Nicaraguan revolution could have changed his view of the world.

In the same speech, reported by Branko Lazitch in the Paris-based magazine *Est & Ouest*, Ortega notes that, "on 19 July...our people were...ideologically backward." And he also explained that the elections planned for 1985 "...will in no way—like a lottery—decide who is going to hold power. For this power belongs to the people, to the FSLN, to our Directorate...."

In the same article Lazitch refers to another statement of Ortega's describing the temporary alliance with the middle class as "exclusively tactical. We have accepted the collaboration of the middle class, which is ready to betray its country, but at any moment we can take its factories without firing a single shot...."

It is now clear that the defeat of the democratic left majority in the revolution in Nicaragua was, to use the word preferred by revolutionaries Eden Pastora and Alfonso Robelo, a

"counterrevolution" from the top—like that of Fidel Castro and the Cuban Communist Party in 1959-60. Instead of a real struggle for power, there has been the largely one-sided process of concentrating the tools of political and physical power in FSLN hands, while weakening all independent groups and leaders.

From the moment of victory over Somoza, the Marxist-Leninists of the FSLN Directorate have controlled the revolution almost totally, with no intention of sharing power. They allowed the normal disagreements, failures of coordination and differences of phrasing among themselves to deceive people about their essential unity. And from time to time they indulged their personal feelings and relationships with individual non-Marxist Nicaraguans to give an image of "personalism" and flexibility. And they have made temporary concessions whenever necessary to reduce resistance and to preserve illusions of their pragmatism or openness.

The Sandinistas also have used the simplest technique of all to confuse people about their intentions. They lied. As late as April 1982 Tomas Borge said to James Nelson Goodsell, Latin American correspondent for *The Christian Science Monitor*, "Nothing will deter us from maintaining political pluralism and a mixed economy...no matter what the cost." Goodsell also quotes a "top Sandinista leader" as scoffing at reports of Nicaraguan complicity in the arms flow to El Salvador as "a pack of lies," and cites Junta president Daniel Ortega as saying, "We believe in nonalignment."

This technique worked even with a reporter as experienced as Goodsell, who reports that "the Sandinista Directorate...is composed of nine men widely viewed as well-meaning idealists who are genuinely concerned about the Nicaraguan people," and are "self-proclaimed Marxists." A theme of Goodsell's article was that

the Sandinista leadership is still "trying to find its way." The government of "Marxist-leaning guerrillas...has yet to define itself."

Human Rights

Immediately upon taking power, the FSLN began to build totalitarian instruments of physical coercion and control.

The Sandinista police, or security force, which performs the functions of the former Somoza National Guard, has grown to more than 5,000 men. In addition, a revolutionary block committee system, the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), similar to that established by Castro in Cuba, has been established to provide direct sources of information and coercion for the FSLN in each neighborhood.

Eden Pastora, Commandante Zero, a hero of the revolution, stated on April 15, 1982:

...in the light of day or in the dead of night, the seizures, expropriations and confiscations oppress somocistas and anti-somocistas, counterrevolutionaries and revolutionaries, the guilty and the innocent. In the jails they beat the counterrevolutionaries together with the Marxist revolutionaries, these latter punished for the grave crime of interpreting Marx from a different point of view than the comrades in power.

One of the most widely respected figures in Nicaragua for many years was Jose Esteban Gonzalez, a vice president of the Social Christian Party, who organized the Nicaraguan Permanent Commission for Human Rights in 1977 to oppose abuses of the Somoza regime. As noted in reports of his press conference in August 1982, during Somoza's rule Gonzalez had been able to arrange the release from prison of Tomas Borge and other Sandinista leaders. Borge returned the

favor by having Gonzalez jailed and lifting his passport. Only through the intervention of the International Commission of Jurists, Gonzalez says, was he able to go into exile. He since has been sentenced in abstentia to 16 years in prison.

Gonzalez now heads the Nicaraguan Committee for Human Rights in San Jose, Costa Rica. In March 1982 he wrote the following in *The Washington Post*:

What has happened in Nicaragua is very grim. There have been massacres of political prisoners. I myself with other members of the Human Rights Commission examined mass graves at two different sites near the city of Grenada in October 1979 and March 1980. Other persons in whose truthfulness I have full confidence have witnessed similar evidence at other sites—and even those who are still in Nicaragua will testify. These killings cannot be dismissed as rash acts of post-revolutionary anger. They have continued for over two years—some occurred within the past few months.

The official number of political prisoners in Nicaragua now stands at 4,200—higher than the highest figure ever registered under Somoza. There have been hundreds of disappearances—although the government never responds to inquiries about such persons.

The recent report of Gonzalez's Commission on Human Rights, covering the first three years of the revolution, cites many instances of torture by the security forces. Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge admitted the Sandinista use of torture as early as his press conference of November 14, 1979, at which he made unredeemed promises to punish those responsible.

The Press

There now are three newspapers in Managua. The afternoon paper is *La Prensa*, which has been the country's leading paper for many years and one of the foremost opponents of the Somozas. It is now edited by Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, Jr., the older son of the man murdered by Somoza. The two morning papers are *Barricada*, the official paper of the FSLN, run by Carlos Fernando Chamorro, Pedro Joaquin's younger son, and *El Nuevo Diario*, a paper started by Pedro Joaquin's brother, Xavier Chamorro.

Previously there were four newspapers. In January 1980, security forces closed down the far-left newspaper *El Pueblo*, and Bayardo Arce of the Directorate warned that other media could receive the same medicine. Similar threats are made frequently, and the regime has issued a number of decrees constraining the news media.

In April 1980, a Sandinista-backed strike closed *La Prensa* for three days. As part of the strike settlement Xavier Chamorro left *La Prensa* and started the new pro-Sandinista paper, *El Nuevo Diario*.

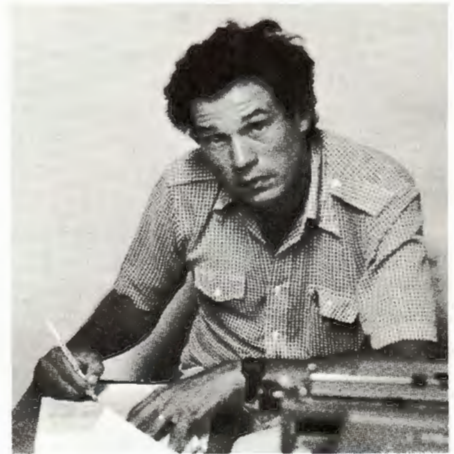
In July of the following year, the government shut down *La Prensa* for

two days. Since then it has been forcibly closed a number of times: five times in the last three months of 1981 alone. The Orwellian reason given is that it "violated freedom of the press." Then in January 1982, a mob attacked the paper. Three people were wounded by shots from the paper's guards, and it was closed again for two days.

A few days later the government closed Radio Amor indefinitely for broadcasting a report that the owner of the station was beaten for having broadcast a Venezuelan denial of Sandinista charges that Venezuelan Embassy employees were plotting sabotage in Nicaragua.

After declaring a "State of Emergency" on March 15, 1982 (originally for 30 days, now extended until January 1983), formal censorship began. Censorship is used extensively to harass the press and to hold back news that the Sandinistas don't want publicized—including such straightforward items as the Conservative Party's announcement that it was supporting Argentina in the Falkland-Malvinas dispute (as was the FSLN). The government even closed the friendly *El Nuevo Diario* for a day for the offense of using the phrase "state of siege" (reminiscent of Somoza) to describe the new state of emergency.

In his March *Washington Post* article, Jose Esteban Gonzalez said: "The official Sandinista press



Past and present editors of *La Prensa*: Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, Sr. (left), an outspoken critic of the Somoza regime, was assassinated by an unknown gunman in 1978. Chamorro's son, Pedro (right), took over as editor. Pedro Chamorro, Jr., has endured even worse censorship and harassment than his father as a result of the paper's independent, often critical stance toward the regime in power.

regulations permit less freedom of the press in Nicaragua today than under the 'black code' of the Somoza dictatorship." In his Washington press conference in August 1982, Gonzalez reported that in July Sandinista thugs beat up Horacio Ruiz, an editor of *La Prensa*, and that they attacked Cruz Flores, a photographer, a few days later.

Censorship and harassment of *La Prensa* continues. In August 1982, editorial page editor Humberto Belli stated that he left Nicaragua for exile in Caracas because it was no longer possible to publish his opinions in *La Prensa*. Even within the strictures of existing censorship, he added, the selection and play of the news angers the Junta and results in repeated closings of the paper.

One survey of *La Prensa* in mid-August 1982 showed that the Junta's Office of Communications Media censored 60 to 65 percent of news material intended for publication. Most of the censored news stories related to confrontations between church and state, notably reports of violence in the town of Masaya that differed significantly from official versions published in pro-Sandinista newspapers.

Violeta Chamorro wrote the following in a letter to "The People of Nicaragua," which was censored in *La Prensa*:

With each passing day, freedom of the press is found to be more limited.... But the ultimate limit of this lack of freedom has occurred with the letter which Pope John Paul II sent to the Nicaraguan bishops, which on three consecutive occasions we were prohibited from publishing. And when permission to publish was given to us, they wanted to impose the obligation of heading the letter with a communique from the Office of Communications Media, which besides being insulting to His Holiness, was false. For those reasons La Prensa did not publish on (the 9th, 11th and 12th) of August.

LA PRENSA
 DECANO DEL PERIODISMO NACIONAL
 C\$3.00 14 PAGINAS
 APARTADO No. 192 16,419
 TELEX 215-181

Violencia en Masaya
 Cuatro muertos y varios heridos en un atentado en Masaya

El incidente en los colegios religiosos

LA PRENSA
 DECANO DEL PERIODISMO NACIONAL
 C\$3.00 14 PAGINAS
 APARTADO No. 192 16,419
 TELEX 215-181

Confirman pluralismo como mejor gobierno
 Compromiso en la Dominicana

Arafat se instalará en Túnez
Aprobado el plan de salida de OLP

Different front pages of the August 17, 1982, issue of *La Prensa* illustrate the impact of censorship imposed by the Sandinistas. Two headlines of the uncensored edition, top—"Violence in Masaya" and "The Incident in the Religious Schools"—contrast with the censored version, above, approved by the government—"Pluralism Confirmed Best Government" and "PLO Exit Plan Approved."

Scarcely three years (after I entered my homeland at the head of a new Government of National Reconstruction) the Sandinista government, guided by totalitarian ideologies imported from other countries far from our history and our culture, is trying to maintain the concept that liberty of conscience is divisionism or ideological war.

It has been my fate to live...during the greater part of the 45 years in which we endured the bloodiest dynasty that this hemisphere has had. Many of the current leaders had not yet been born and therefore do not know the brutal methods used by Somoza....But I feel now that I am reliving that horrible nightmare.

In sum, Nicaragua is not yet as totalitarian as some other countries with regard to the press. Independent media still function, albeit under tremendous pressures. They continue, however, to be regarded as enemies of the revolution, are censored and harassed, and will be tolerated only on Sandinista terms.

Political Parties

Nicaragua has five political parties in addition to the FSLN (which Daniel Ortega told *Chicago Sun-Times* reporter Patrick Oster is not a political party but "the vanguard" of the revolution): the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN), established in 1979 and headed by Alfonso Robelo, member of the first revolutionary Junta; the Social Democratic Party; the Social Christians; the Democratic Conservative Party, a long-time opponent of Somoza; and the Liberal Constitutionals. In April 1981, all of the parties joined in a statement condemning the Sandinista attacks on political organizations as demonstrating a "decision of the Sandinistas to set up in our country a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship."

In November 1980, the government denied the MDN a permit to hold a rally. A mob sacked party headquarters, with police watching; authorities prohibited publication of the story.

In March 1981, the Sandinistas blocked a MDN rally and mobs sacked the houses of some of Robelo's supporters. In January 1982, the police cancelled a rally of the Conservative Democratic Party.

MDN head Alfonso Robelo had to flee the country in the spring of 1982. He



Alfonso Robelo, former Junta member, resigned after nine months with the Sandinista Directorate, and has announced his support for Pastora (Commander Zero).



A hero in the 1979 revolution, Eden Pastora, known as Commander Zero, resigned as Deputy Defense Minister of the new government and formed an organization that opposes the current Sandinista Junta.

said in an interview on Panamanian television:

In Somoza's time many of his opponents, including myself, faced him openly and decisively....I cannot return to Nicaragua. It would be suicidal. I fought from inside, first as a member of the government Junta... and later from outside the government, but always from within the revolution....I am a part of the true Nicaraguan revolution, fighting against the real counterrevolutionaries who are now in power in Nicaragua....I spent two years in Nicaragua fighting from the plains, denouncing the Marxist-Leninist leaders, who respond only to Soviet-Cuban interests. My life had been so gravely threatened that I felt that I had already taken enough risks....

Religion

Nicaragua is 95 percent Catholic, with a feeling for the Church that is closer to that of Poland's than to that of Italy's. Most of the rest belong to several Protestant denominations, notably Moravians, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.

The Catholic hierarchy, led by Managua's Archbishop Obando y Bravo, and the bulk of the clergy, were an important part of the opposition to Somoza. Most of the Protestant churches supported the revolution as well.

The Sandinistas consider the Church a threat and have moved to control it and limit its influence, although they have been at some pains to emphasize that they are not against Nicaraguans practicing their religion.

In July 1982, the government halted the traditional Sunday television broadcast of the Archbishop's church service. Twice mobs have attacked the Archbishop physically, and his car has been heavily damaged by mobs.

In August a group of men seized Father Carballo, spokesman for the Church hierarchy, and beat, stripped and paraded him in front of a jeering

mob. They then arrested him, refused to notify the Archbishop, threw him into a cell and interrogated him, still naked, for six hours.

In the same month a mob badly beat the auxiliary bishop, Monsignor Vivas. Several opposition "church groups" occupied the Church of Our Lady of Fatima to protest the Archbishop's transfer of a priest who embraced the "theology of liberation."

A small group of priests, several of whom are in the government, and who call themselves the "People's Church," still support the Sandinistas. But the hierarchy, led by Archbishop Bravo, and apparently most of the priests, have become disillusioned with the FSLN. But as in Poland, the freedom of the Church to criticize the government is limited.

Some argue that the "split" in the Church is between ecclesiastical conservatives concerned only with religion and the hereafter, and those clergy who believe that the Church also must be concerned with the lives of its parishioners. And some officials have tried to claim that the dispute is between those who believe the Church should identify with the poor and oppressed, or with the rich and

powerful. Tomas Borge has tried to propagate this view, stating that: "We have a church of the rich and the church of the poor."

But this description is false and divisive. Archbishop Obando y Bravo and his bishops supported the revolt against the Somoza regime, and have remained strongly committed to social action on behalf of the poor and oppressed of Nicaragua. They believe, however, that the Sandinistas are not truly serving the poor.

Pope John Paul II sent an eight-page letter to the bishops of Nicaragua to express his support for them. He urged them to continue working for the unity of the Church in Nicaragua, stating that it was "absurd and dangerous" to assert that a "People's Church" should be organized next to the existing Church. And he described such a "Popular Church" as a "grave deviation" from the will and plan of Jesus Christ.

Most of the Protestant churches also have become disillusioned with the Sandinistas after initially supporting the revolution. In March 1980, the government arrested 20 Jehovah's Witness missionaries from the United States, Canada, Britain and Germany.



Archbishop Obando y Bravo greets some of his parishioners following a mass honoring heroes of the revolution. A long-time foe of Somoza, he has suffered from Sandinista violence.



Crowds attend a religious procession in Masaya, where violent protests in 1982 between anti-Sandinista groups and government supporters over incarceration of a priest, left several persons dead and injured.

Nineteen were deported; security forces killed one "while attempting to escape," according to the Ministry of Interior.

On August 9, 1980, Sandinista Community Defense Organizations (CDS) temporarily occupied more than 20 small churches belonging to several Protestant groups. The spokesman for the CDS charged that the action was directed against the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Seventh Day Adventists, alleging that these churches were counter-revolutionary and in communication with the CIA.

The Miskito Indians

The Atlantic Coast region of Nicaragua traditionally had been largely isolated from the main part of the country. The 70,000 Protestant, English-speaking Indians and blacks

who live there, including 55,000 Miskito Indians, comprise about half the population of the area. The Indians are organized in 256 communities with elected representatives. The people of the Atlantic largely have kept aloof from politics in the rest of the country. They did not support Somoza. And 115 Miskitos, led by a member of the Council of Elders, joined the FSLN, although they left after a few months because of Marxist-Leninist indoctrination.

Shortly after coming to power in July 1979, the Sandinistas tried to replace the Councils of Elders of the Miskito communities with Sandinista Defense Committees. In the first week of August, authorities arrested a number of Miskito leaders. The conflict soon worsened when the Miskitos grew angry with Cuban teachers working in a literacy program who tried to propagate "Marxist dogma." In October a Miskito leader, Lyster Athers, was murdered under suspicious circumstances.

The Miskitos also rejected government proposals that they felt would have amounted to confiscation of their property and given the Sandinistas the power to select Miskito leaders. Subjected to intensifying harassment, some Indians began moving across the Coco River into Honduras.

In March 1982, Steadman Fagoth, the elected representative of the Miskitos, reported in the *AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News*:

While I was in Seguridad Estado Jail Number 3 in Managua, on March 18, 1981, at seven in the evening Tomas Borge, Juan Jose Ubeda and Raul Gordon came to my cell and warned me that Sandinismo would be established on the Atlantic Coast, even if every single Miskito Indian had to be eliminated. On May 10, 1981, I was put under house arrest after having been tortured for 59 days by the Sandinistas.

Fagoth was released because he promised to go to the Atlantic Coast to try to calm the situation and travel to the Soviet Union for study. Instead he fled to Honduras.

The pressure on the Miskitos, and the movement to Honduras continued during the rest of 1981. Fagoth states: "December 27, 1981, there was a massacre at Leimus. Thirty-five people were buried alive; some were dug out by their relatives. One survivor, a 19-year old named Vidal Poveda from Waspu, lives today in a refugee camp in Honduras. On December 27, 1981, another massacre occurred in Pilpilia...." Some investigators who have tried to confirm reports of such massacres have found evidence to support the claims, others have not.

By February 1982, 10,000 of the 55,000 Miskitos estimated to have been in Nicaragua in 1979 had fled to Honduras, where about half of them are living in refugee camps.

The Sandinistas then moved against the entire Miskito community. They forcibly removed at least 8,500 Indians from their homes along the Coco River, leveled their villages and placed them in new settlements. Many of them, such as those located at Tabsa Fry and Sumubila, are more accurately termed detention camps, since the inhabitants, after being marched there, are not permitted to travel beyond the immediate vicinity of the camps.

On February 18, 1982, the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua issued a communique signed by all of the nation's bishops. The communique explicitly recognized the right of the government to take actions it deems necessary in connection with national defense, but noted that there are "inalienable rights that under no circumstances can be violated." The bishops' communique went on to state:

...we must state, with painful surprise, that in certain concrete cases there have been grave violations of the human rights of individuals, families, and entire populations of peoples. These include:



Miskito Indians, displaced by the Sandinistas, are forced to live in "resettlement" camps which they are not permitted to leave. Miskitos were given six hours to gather their personal effects and leave their homes. After an eight-day walk, they arrived at camps such as this. Rather than accept Marxist-Leninist doctrine and live in what amount to detention facilities, many Miskitos have sought refuge in Honduras. Because of their resistance to the Sandinistas, some Miskitos have been tortured or killed.

- Relocations of individuals by military operations without warning and without conscientious dialogue;*
- Forced marches, carried out without sufficient consideration for the weak, aged, women and children;*
- Charges or accusations of collaboration with the counterrevolution against all residents of certain towns;*
- The destruction of houses, belongings and domestic animals;*
- The death of individuals in circumstances that, to our great sorrow, remind us of the drama of other peoples of the region.*

The Sandinistas claim that their actions are part of a long-term plan to improve the living conditions of the Miskitos and to protect them from "counterrevolutionaries." But the so-called counterrevolutionaries only became a threat following Sandinista repression.



Aerial view of a Miskito "resettlement" camp in Sumubila, Nicaragua.

Labor and the Private Sector

Before the revolution, Nicaragua possessed a labor union movement with a growing democratic wing that had two main components: the Nicaraguan Workers' Central (CTN), affiliated with the international agencies of the Christian-Democrat labor centers; and the Confederation of Labor Unification (CUS), affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), and which participates in the programs of the U.S. labor movement's American Institute for Free Labor Development. (Despite a propaganda campaign to the contrary, the Institute has never received any CIA money).

A Somoza-controlled labor group was also active, as well as a breakaway Marxist-oriented labor organization.

CUS was a leader in the general strike of business and labor protesting the murder of Pedro Chamorro and in the final general strike of June 1979. Luis Medrano, the CUS Secretary General, who went abroad to try to promote an international boycott of Nicaragua, was murdered on his return.

CUS and CTN were part of the Broad Opposition Front (FAO) against Somoza. But although the FAO had numbers and organization in the fight against Somoza, the FSLN had most of the guns.

When the FSLN took power it immediately began to create its own mass organizations to take the place of FAO groups: workers in the Sandinista Workers' Central (CST), farmers in the Association of Campesino Workers (ATC), as well as mass organizations for women, youth and children.

The CST, which in 1981 joined the Soviet-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), began to

compete with the two main free union movements, CTN and CUS, often using the army and the police. Armed units frequently accompanied CST organizers to meetings of workers, for example, and increased their vote totals accordingly, either because audiences were impressed or intimidated. Many workers also joined the CST because they thought it would have more influence on Sandinista-managed enterprises formerly owned by Somoza interests.

In December 1979, as part of a campaign to pressure the Health Care Workers Union (FETSALUD) into leaving CTN and joining CST, authorities imprisoned a FETSALUD leader in El Chipote, formerly Somoza's prison for political opponents. Members of the Junta appeared at a FETSALUD branch meeting calling on the workers to switch affiliations, and CTN protestors were arrested.

The Sandinistas used similar actions against other branches of CTN. Police machine gunned their offices and vehicles, and the CST seized the CTN office in Pueblo Nuevo with the help of the army.

In January 1980, authorities, at the instigation of the CST, arrested the CUS leader of the stevedores union in Corinto, Zacarias Hernandez, and held him without charges for several days. The house of a CUS officer was bombed, and the army arrested two officers of another CUS union. In the next month, two CUS activists, Victoria Garcia Montoya and Guadalupe Garcia, were arrested and interrogated in prison.

In March a "spontaneous" demonstration led by the police, with members shouting "people's power," stormed the offices and arrested the leaders of the Central for Labor Action and Unity (CAUS), a Maoist-led union with strong representation among textile workers who were on strike because of the decline in real wages. Ivan Garcia, the Secretary-General of the Sandinist CST, who witnessed the demonstration, said that "the Nicaraguan workers have realized that all those elements that help stop production here are acting against the fundamental interests of the revolution."

The Sandinistas have continued their role as strikebreakers. On the day that they succeeded in ending a strike by sugar-cane cutters, the head of the Marxist-oriented union explained on the radio that "the working classes are independent in capitalist states because there are antagonistic contradictions. In the revolutionary state these contradictions do not exist. Any differences are resolved through high level dialogue, through revolutionary positions held both by the administrators of the state and the workmen who produce material goods."

On November 24, 1980, the CST released a document describing its view of the role of labor. It said that although some unions resorted to "labor stoppages," the CST would "intensify the revolutionary process.... the workers must work under austere conditions."

The conflict between the free unions and the CST and the FSLN continues. The pressure of arrests and beatings, together with various legal and economic actions, has greatly reduced the strength of CUS and CTN. As with all organizations that seek to remain independent and resist repression, the Sandinistas falsely accuse them with being counterrevolutionaries and agents of the CIA.

The CLAT, the organization of Latin American unions associated with Christian Democratic parties and the AFL-CIO, has condemned the CST and strongly supported the free unions in their struggle to survive against the Sandinistas. But the ICFTU and other labor groups have not officially supported the position of the free unions, with which they long have been affiliated, in their dispute with the government-sponsored unions, because they are effectively unable to take a stand different from that of the Socialist International. Many people think it ironic that the socialist movement should find itself being used to protect government-controlled "company unions" in their effort to destroy free unions.

Even though Nicaragua is a country of only 2.5 million people, its private sector has been organized extensively. The umbrella organization for the private sector—including business, professional and agricultural groups—is the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), which opposed the Somoza regime and joined with the FSLN in the revolution.

The move against businessmen began early in the regime. On November 17, 1980, the Sandinista security forces, using a sophisticated entrapment plan, killed Jorge Salazar, a prominent businessman, and arrested others. As a result, COSEP and the moderate political parties withdrew from the Council of State.

Harassment continued in a variety of forms. Then on October 21, 1981, four businessmen, including Enrique Dreyfus, President of COSEP, were taken from their homes in the middle of the night, imprisoned and interrogated rigorously for several weeks. Three were released four months later, after being convicted of anti-government activities. Their crime: writing a public letter to the government criticizing its actions.

Militarization

Most Latin American countries have only a quarter or third of one percent of their population in the military (active duty and ready reserves). Exceptions are Argentina and Peru with more than half of one percent, Chile with three quarters, and Uruguay with more than nine tenths of one percent in the armed forces. Prior to his final year in power, Somoza's National Guard—a combined national police and defense force—did not exceed 7,500 men. During the last year, the Guard's ranks rose to slightly less than 15,000—and at that swollen level constituted no more than three-fifths of one percent of the country's population.

The Sandinistas have placed more than two and one-half percent of the Nicaraguan population in the armed forces, with 22,000 in the standing military and 50,000 in the still-growing militia, according to Oster of the *Chicago Sun Times*. (There are published reports that the Sandinista plan calls for a standing military—including the air force—of 50,000.) They have added 36 major military installations to the 13 that Somoza had, and have expanded four airfields—all documented in aerial photographs released by the U.S. government.

In military terms Nicaragua is following the Cuban pattern. Cuba has

2.3 percent of its population in the armed forces. Its army is large enough to dominate its neighbors (except the U.S.), to provide overwhelming support for the ruling party at home, and to make forces available for overseas missions such as in Angola and Ethiopia.

The Sandinista military program, which was well underway by early 1980, is moving Nicaragua to a new level of armament for Central America. They are preparing for advanced jet fighters (while their neighbors have planes of the early-1950's), for heavy tanks (so far 20 to 30 T-55's have arrived, plus a dozen armored personnel carriers),



Parade of tanks (top) rolls by a crowd during celebration of first anniversary of victory over Somoza. Nicaragua's rapidly expanding military buildup threatens its neighbors. Among the latest additions to the army's inventory: heavy Soviet T-55 tanks.

Local militia (above) unit is part of military force that is twice as large as that of any country in Central America—and is still growing.



heavy artillery (including 152-millimeter howitzers), anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, and missiles.

The military, which will dwarf the forces of Nicaragua's neighbors, is composed of 20 newly formed and armed battalions, one of which is armored, and half of which are motorized.

Costa Rica, Nicaragua's southern neighbor, is noted for not having any army at all, although it does have a small semi-military national police force of several thousand men equipped with light arms. Honduras, Nicaragua's other neighbor, has an army of only 12,000 men. Some exile groups of Nicaraguans, a minority of whom are ex-Guardsmen, are also in Honduras, but they could not assemble even a lightly armed military force of as many as 3,000 men. El Salvador, whose border is only 80 kilometers from Nicaragua, has a more sizable army, totaling some

17,600 men, but it is heavily engaged by local guerrillas armed and supported by Nicaragua, Cuba and Soviet bloc forces.

The expanding Nicaraguan army poses a major threat to its neighbors, even if political constraints prevent it from crossing borders in brigade- or division-size invasions. It can send "volunteers," or provide recruits for guerrilla forces. The Nicaraguan military certainly will be capable of powerful military raids against any target within 50 to 80 kilometers of its borders. None of its neighbors will have the ability to defend effectively against such raids, which gives Nicaragua's neighbors an uncomfortable sense of vulnerability.

Moreover, there is no good reason to doubt, despite the denials, that

Nicaragua is continuing to train guerrilla units that are infiltrated into El Salvador, as well as to transship locally significant amounts of arms into the country. Debates in the press on this issue usually revolve around the nature and quality of this evidence. No sophisticated Latin American has any doubts that Nicaragua is providing such support; Castro and Nicaraguan leaders even occasionally admit it in private.

In late 1980 and early 1981, Nicaragua served as an important staging site for a massive Cuban-directed flow of arms to Salvadorean guerrillas. The Salvadorean anti-government guerrilla coalition, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, (FMLN), continues to receive sustained logistic support with the help of the Sandinistas, primarily by air and sea, but also by land. Nicaragua also is the site of FMLN training camps.



Fidel Castro (opposite page, third from left) accompanied by Daniel Ortega and members of the Junta, arrives in Nicaragua for celebration of first year of Sandinista rule.

May 1980: Daniel Ortega visits the Soviet Union for discussions with President Leonid Brezhnev.

The size of the military and security forces means that young Nicaraguan citizens face a draft plus strong pressures to serve in the militia or reserves, which many individuals resent. It is unlikely that foreign military assistance accounts for all the costs of the military program. As a result, the Nicaraguan economy, and in the end, the people, bear a large part of the mounting cost of the Sandinista military establishment.

Foreign Influence

Many supporters of the revolution overlooked all the failings, and even the crimes, of the FSLN as part of the inevitable excesses of any revolution; but they are unable to accept the degree of Cuban domination of their country that they have witnessed.

Men like Eden Pastora felt that they hadn't freed their country from Somoza to turn it over to Fidel Castro, however much they preferred a progressive political orientation.

The armed forces of Nicaragua—which number 70,000, including militia and ready reserves—have approximately 2,000 Cuban advisers and trainers. This means that Cubans, in addition to advising at headquarters and running training and technical programs, can be assigned down to the company level.

Dozens of East Germans are working with the secret police and other security forces. The Palestine Liberation Organization has a large "embassy" and, according to Christopher Dickey of *The Washington Post*, was involved in the operation of

five of the eight new Nicaraguan military training camps. According to U.S. sources, Bulgaria has trained Nicaraguan pilots to fly the advanced Soviet MIG aircraft that recently have been shipped to Cuba. Soviet-bloc personnel also provide advanced communications and other technical capabilities, U.S. officials report, with Cuba coordinating many of these programs as well as providing support for the intelligence services.

It is easy to underestimate the impact of such a large foreign presence. The Nicaraguan labor force is about 800,000, of whom 500,000 are farmers, which means that since the FSLN took power, there has been one Cuban in Nicaragua for each sixty or so Nicaraguan non-farm workers. Although a majority of the Cubans have been doctors and teachers, they perform political work as well, and constitute part of a large, intrusive foreign presence.



In 1979 shortages forced people to stand in long lines for food, as here in Masaya. Today, three years after the revolution, failing economy continues to plague the country.

Welfare and the Economy

The individual Miskito Indians, union leaders, members of the press, clergy, and business and political leaders who have borne the weight of Sandinista repression are only a small minority of the population. The rest of the populace has suffered less and had some compensating gains. Some of the Cuban aid has been used to implement educational programs, and the medical assistance program probably has raised the level of health care, although not enough foreign

assistance has been used to buy the medicines that Nicaragua needs.

In the beginning virtually all Nicaraguans supported the revolution enthusiastically. In getting rid of the Somozas, citizens felt that they had taken control of their lives, that, at long last, they had a government that worked and spoke for the peasant and the working man and woman. Much of the new activity, such as the appearance of foreign doctors and teachers, and the work of block committees, made people feel that the government cared about them. As a result, many were willing to accept sacrifices, including limits on political action and expression, as the price to be paid for these gains.

But the cost of the revolution now has become too high for most people and the benefits—including the psychological gains—are fading. These costs go beyond the loss of

freedom and human rights, and the pressure on the Church. The practical day-to-day costs that most people experience come largely from two directions: the demands for military service and failure of the economy.

Sugar is rationed, for example, and each adult is allowed only one pound per week regardless of the size of the family. Real wages have declined sharply because of the increased inflation rate since 1979.

In 1979 Nicaragua was a fairly poor country, but far from the ranks of the poorest. According to the World Bank its per capita Gross National Product (GNP) was \$840 in 1978 and had grown 14 percent since 1970. This placed Nicaragua at a level with Colombia and the Dominican Republic.

The fight to overthrow Somoza caused substantial damage and disruption to the economy. With last-minute plundering by Somoza and his cohorts, 1979 GNP dropped by about one quarter. But in 1980, the first full year after the revolution took power, GNP apparently only climbed about half way back up to where it had been in 1978. According to the government, GNP increased 8.7 percent in 1981, which meant that average income still remained below that of 1979.

The years since the revolution have been difficult for economies like that of Nicaragua all over the world. High interest rates and oil prices, combined with low commodity prices and world recession, hit many countries hard—although nations comparable to Nicaragua still managed to increase their GNP. Nicaragua also suffered from heavy rains and floods in 1982.

Clearly there are many negative factors in the Nicaraguan economic situation for which the regime is not to blame. But the Sandinistas are responsible for policies that have damaged the economy severely, among them high military and security costs, and weakened business confidence and productivity.

The cost of the increase in military manpower alone probably approaches one percent of GNP, even assuming that the heavy weapons and support construction comes free from foreign suppliers—which it doesn't. Overall, it is reasonable to estimate that Sandinista militarization has cost Nicaragua at least \$100 million in 1981 alone, or in excess of \$300 per family.

The support that enabled the Sandinistas to take power had been based on a Sandinista commitment to

a mixed economy. The government inherited the Somoza family enterprises, which automatically gave the state an immediate major share in the economy, perhaps as high as 40 percent.

From the beginning, however, the Sandinista leadership demonstrated that it gave absolute priority to gaining a monopoly of political power and developing a military/security machine over the needs of the economy.

These priorities certainly hurt the private sector; but in addition, the Sandinistas set out on a conscious course to weaken and reduce the private sector. Sandinista expropriation of private enterprises may have raised the government share of the economy to close to 50 percent.

If the Sandinistas have displayed malice in their policies toward private



Two members of the Nicaragua Junta, Daniel Ortega (second from left) and Sergio Ramirez (fourth from left) join cotton pickers in Leon. The regime's mismanagement of agriculture has resulted in plummeting harvests.

business, their record in agriculture is one of ineptitude. Nicaragua's harvests have dropped by as much as 50 percent since the regime assumed power, including drastic cuts in output of the country's chief export crops, cotton and coffee.

And although its economic impact is minor, many Nicaraguans also have been affected psychologically by seeing Sandinista leaders take over the large villas and Mercedes cars of the Somocistas. As in Russia and China, the high-ranking cadre live very well indeed in Nicaragua, and at a time when workers are being exhorted to practice "revolutionary austerity."

The result of these blows to the economy, and of Sandinista economic disinterest and mismanagement, is that Nicaragua simply isn't producing enough to go around. In the end, the people pay the price—and must make some hard decisions about who is responsible for this growing economic fiasco. Are these hardships the legacy of Somoza, the result of outside forces, and the necessary price for revolution? Or is the economic suffering the result of policies of a clique who is sacrificing the welfare of the people to the demands of ideology and their own political aggrandizement?

Eden Pastora, a founder in 1959 of the FSLN, who still believes that "injustice and class exploitation are the roots of the tragedy," thinks that many of Nicaragua's people have come to the second conclusion. He says: "With sadness I have seen in my people the reign of unease, of anguish, of fear, and of the bitterness of frustration and personal insecurity, ... (because of) this regime of terror...."

Recently mass demonstrations have broken out against the government. According to eyewitness accounts, 3,000 people in San Judas joined a funeral procession for a boy

killed and mutilated by the security service after trying to steal a car. In August 1982, violent protest in Masaya, the town where the Sandinista revolution began, lasted several days.

In brief, three years after the FSLN takeover, the people are oppressed by a regime unable to provide either bread or freedom. Moreover, they must bear an increasing military burden and accept growing Soviet and Cuban intrusion in their domestic affairs.

The Failure of Excuses

The Sandinistas and their supporters take advantage of people's ignorance or forgetfulness about Central American history to develop convenient myths that excuse their own actions and place responsibility for the new Nicaraguan tyranny on the shoulders of others. It is vital to keep the record straight:

—The Sandinistas propounded the main features of their basic commitment to Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism in the report of their meetings of September 21-23, 1979.

—Individuals and organizations independent of the Sandinistas have been systematically forced from power. In April 1980, for example, Violeta Chamorro and Alfonso Robelo resigned from the Junta to protest the FSLN unilateral move to give itself a majority in the Council of State.

—The regime moved immediately against the Atlantic Coast Indians. Miskito leader Lyster Athers was murdered in October 1979. Sandinista promises to return his body and punish his murderers were never fulfilled. Since then, large numbers of Miskitos have been forcibly deported from their homelands and placed in settlements that are little more than detention camps.

—The Sandinistas were implementing plans for a greatly expanded army and rapid national militarization by the first half of 1980.

—The Directorate established close ties to Cuba and to other communist and terrorist countries and organizations, such as Libya and the PLO, in the same period. Cuba had over 2,000 people working full time in Nicaragua by July 1980.

—The totalitarian, militarized character and program of the FSLN was clearly evident by July 1980, the end of their first year in power.

—During the Sandinista's first year, U.S. banks made a generous extension of Nicaragua's foreign debt with current payments to be less than half the market level (the rest to be paid at the end of the loan). The United States also greatly increased its aid to Nicaragua, compared to what it had given during Somoza's regime. The Carter Administration suspended aid in December 1980, only when it was evident that Nicaragua was continuing to supply arms and training to guerrillas in El Salvador.

—Western governments and international financial institutions provided hundreds of millions of dollars to Nicaragua during the Sandinistas first year, with U.S. support.

—There is no real "Somocista" threat. The remnants of the National Guard are either in prison or dispersed in exile. Those in Honduras possess neither the arms nor the numbers to challenge the regime. Somocism has no substantial political appeal or supporters, even among exiles and those who now reject that new regime. It has never represented a danger to the revolution in Nicaragua.

—Occasionally, news stories appear about groups of Nicaraguan exiles "training" in private camps in the southern United States. Politically, these stories bolster the myth of Nicaraguan beleaguerment and provide convenient justification for the Sandinista military expansion. But realistically such groups pose no military threat to Nicaragua whatsoever.

Conclusion: The Now and Future Nicaragua

In 1979, the Sandinistas chose to militarize Nicaragua; to destroy the political power of their democratic allies in the unions, the Church, and in the business and political communities; to build a security apparatus that can enforce totalitarian controls; to

enlist aid from Cuban and the Soviet bloc nations to secure their domestic power base; and to build a large military organization.

At present, Nicaragua is a grave threat to all the countries of Central America, beginning with its immediate neighbors, Costa Rica and Honduras. Sandinista troops regularly cross the border into Honduras and have been responsible, according to recent reports, for the kidnapping and disappearances of more than 100

Honduran citizens living in the border areas. Second, Nicaragua is a threat to El Salvador, where the Sandinistas already provide a flow of arms and logistical support to guerrilla forces.

One of the reasons why some political leaders in Honduras and Costa Rica have hesitated to oppose Nicaragua and to organize their defenses is that they are concerned about the international political and intellectual forces that Nicaragua might bring to bear against them. But if Nicaragua is



Sandinista soldiers on training maneuvers near the Honduran border.

isolated from all political support except that of Cuba and the Soviet Union and its allies, and if nonaligned countries, and independent left voices around the world join in unmasking Nicaragua's totalitarian character and tactics of aggression, then regional democratic forces will be able to unite to defend themselves.

Recently, the democracies of Central America have moved collectively to counter the Sandinista threat by bolstering their own defenses, and through concerted diplomatic initiatives. Honduras, for example, has proposed a regional plan calling for an end to border incursions, a freeze on imports of heavy weapons and comprehensive verification. The United States also has made a series of proposals centered around a nonaggression agreement between the U.S. and Nicaragua, and an end to Nicaraguan intervention in El Salvador and interference in Costa Rica and Honduras. And in October 1982 at San Jose, Costa Rica, the nations of Belize, Columbia, El Salvador, the United States, Honduras, Jamaica, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic called upon all nations in the region to respect each other's territorial integrity, to reaffirm the commitment to human rights, to reject threats or the use of force, and to halt escalation of the arms race in Central America.

Almost all of the allies of the Marxist-Leninist leadership of the FSLN have become disillusioned and moved into opposition, including figures as diverse politically as Eden Pastora, Alfonso Robelo, Arturo Cruz and the editor of *La Prensa*, Pedro Chamorro, Jr. Moreover, the regime has alienated the entire spectrum of moderate, democratic-left and center groups and organizations, from the Church to union, business and professional groups.

Although Nicaragua is ruled by an ideological regime that has established much of the apparatus of totalitarian control, islands of independence, small democratic voices, still survive. These independent democratic groups and individuals have little authority or power, and are unable to influence policy. Yet they remain—and must be preserved.

As Jose Esteban Gonzalez wrote in March 1982:

The people of Nicaragua still yearn for freedom, and have no wish for a return to government like that of the Somoza era. The Catholic Church is strong, and firmly devoted to human rights. Other groups—the private sector, political leaders, trade unionists—are still pressing for the fulfillment of the promises of the revolution. And the Sandinistas have at times proved sensitive to international pressures for human rights.

An international campaign for Nicaraguan human rights could have a very significant impact...[but] stop romanticizing a revolutionary leadership that has turned against the democratic promises of the revolution.

International awareness is a powerful weapon in the hands of the forces of democracy. They can focus so much attention on *La Prensa*, the Church, the free unions, political parties and the private sector that the Sandinistas cannot afford the political cost of eliminating them. Further, Western democratic political organizations and nations can deny legitimacy to Nicaraguan claims against its neighbors. These actions can reduce the Nicaraguan threat and help demonstrate that democracies can understand and defeat totalitarian aggression.

The voices of pluralism and democracy in Nicaragua, and their oppressors, need to know that eyes from all over the world are on them. If free and progressive people everywhere maintain a continuing commitment to the issue of freedom in Nicaragua, if they insist that the Sandinistas comply with their promises to their revolutionary partners and to the OAS, then the islands of democracy in Nicaragua can be sustained and endure. ■

Editors: Howard Cincotta, Adrienne Price
Art Director: Gary Soderstrom, Robert Banks
Editorial Assistant: Diane Lewis

Photos

- Front Cover, Sygma/Owen Franken
- 2. Sygma/Patrick Chauvel
- 3. The Washington Post
- 4. Left, The New York Times/Teresa Zabalo, UPI
- 6. Left, UPI, The New York Times/Alan Riding
- 8. Left, The New York Times/Alan Riding,
Sygma/Emilio Rodriguez
- 9. Sygma/Chauvel
- 10. Top, The New York Times/Riding
- 11. Top, Phillipot (2), U.S. Defense Department
- 13. Top, Sygma/Franken, Sygma/Philippot
- 14. Sygma/Franken
- 15. Tass from Sovfoto
- 16. Gamma-Liaison/Matthew Naythons
- 17. The New York Times/Riding
- 19. Gamma-Liaison

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the United States Government

United States Information Agency

