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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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to See Below
from David Geller, International Relations
subject NICARAGUA

The situation of the Jewish community in Nicaragua has been a matter of serious concern to the AJC, especially following the publicity given to charges that the Sandinist government had been guilty of anti-Semitic excesses. The purpose of this memorandum is to put into some perspective the current situation based on information that we have received from a variety of sources, including AJC's Central American Office in Mexico City as well as contacts with Nicaraguan officials and Jewish emigres from that country.

Currently there are only four families remaining in Nicaragua, three in Managua and one in the interior. (Prior to the revolution there were some 50 families living in Nicaragua.) There are several families now living in Miami who travel to Nicaragua from time to time and there are also some families in Costa Rica.

The Jews who have emigrated attribute their decision to leave to various causes. Some of them say that the vitriolic anti-Israel articles that appeared in the media and the commentaries that were heard on the broadcast media created an atmosphere which made the Jewish community vulnerable and fearful. (The term "Israelita" used for Jews is associated with Israel.) There have also been reports of threatening phone calls at night and anti-Semitic graffiti.

Many, perhaps most, left for the same reasons that some 20,000 to 30,000 other non-Jewish Nicaraguans decided to leave, namely, their desire to live in a free society and their fear that their businesses and personal property would be confiscated and their economic situation drastically reduced. A number of individuals left immediately before the revolution and were able to sell their homes and businesses. There are others, however, who fled and left behind all of their possessions and who now fear returning.

There were two individuals who were arrested and accused of actively supporting the Somoza regime. They were later released.

A good deal of publicity has been given to the situation of the synagogue in Managua. The facts are that when the revolution occurred, the synagogue had

TO: Chapter Chairmen, Area Directors, Chapter IRC Chairmen, IRC Steering Committee, SAC

already been emptied and the Torah scrolls removed from the country. A number of poor families living in the immediate area of the synagogue had taken over as squatters. The Sandinist government evicted them and the building is currently being used as an institution for children. There was pro-PLO and anti-Israel graffiti on the synagogue but it is reported that this has been removed. There has been an agreement that the synagogue in Managua will be turned over to the Jewish community, i.e., the few Jews remaining in Nicaragua who ostensibly represent that community. They, however, are unable to assume the financial obligations required to maintain the synagogue, either as a synagogue or for any other purpose, and AJC is now involved in quiet negotiations to see if the synagogue structure can be turned over to FEDECO, the coordinating body of the Jewish communities of Central America and Panama.

In the meantime, anti-Israel, pro-PLO statements in the press continue but seem to have been less vitriolic in recent weeks, probably as a result of the attempt by the Sandinist government to mobilize support and sympathy in the United States and especially in the U.S. Congress.

The massive PLO operation in Managua maintains a pervasive presence and influence and has put a great deal of pressure on the government to continue a strong and vocal anti-Israel policy. This has been given added impetus by the fact that the Sandinist government has received financial assistance from Libya. Relations with Israel have been severed and there seems little chance that they will be re-established in the near future. Ostensibly, relations with Israel suffered because of charges that the Israel government was supplying arms to the forces opposing the Sandinists. It should be pointed out, however, that the Nicaraguan government continues to maintain relationships with other governments, including the United States, who have supported the opposition groups.

There have been several contacts between AJC and Nicaraguan officials in which they denied any active anti-Semitism on the part of the Nicaraguan government and in addition affirmed their government's readiness (1) to return the synagogue to the Jews in Nicaragua; (2) to welcome Jews back to Nicaragua and to insure their security as citizens; (3) to make restitution for expropriated properties; and (4) to make strong official statements in opposition to anti-Semitism.

We shall continue to monitor the situation closely and will keep you informed of any significant developments. If any information comes your way on this issue, please share it with us.

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IS NICARAGUA ANTI-SEMITIC ?

By Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum

The mass media have been filled with reports in recent weeks charging the Sandanista regime with being flagrantly anti-Semitic. The evidence given for those charges is that with the ascendency of the Sandanistas, some fifty Jewish families fled the country, their community synagogue was taken over, and their property expropriated.

In addition, the Sandanistas have lined up with the PLO, gave them a major office in Managua, and have followed an anti-Israel line in the United Nations and elsewhere. The Sandanistas argue that Israel provided substantial military aid to the hated Somoza regime, and the friend of their enemy is their enemy.

In recent weeks, we have met with Nicaraguan government officials and with several Nicaraguan Jewish leaders who have fled to the United States. It seems clear that the situation is more complicated, less simplistic than some Jewish groups have made it out to be by screaming headlines that reduces everything to anti-Semitism.

Nicaraguan Jewish leaders have told me that there was virtually no anti-Semitism under the Somoza regime. When the Sandanistas came to power as a Marxist revolutionary movement, some 20,000 middle class Nicaraguans fled the country, including the fifty Jewish families. That was a "class war" phenomenon, not an anti-Semitic one. But during the upheaval, there is no question that some Sandanista guerrillas, poisoned by the PLO propaganda, committed anti-Semitic acts. But anti-Semitism, as distinct from anti-Israel foreign policy, was not Sandanista government policy.

In recent weeks, the Sandanistas have repudiated anti-Semitism and have promised us to restore the synagogue to the Jewish community and to make restitution for expropriated Jewish property.

The crucial issue for the Jewish community is not their alleged anti-Semitism but their disastrous anti-Israel foreign policy and their deep alliance with PLO forces. Given their expansionist Marxist tendencies throughout Central America, that is the critical issue for us to cope with, not the hysterical cries of anti-Semitism.

NICARAGUA

Gloom but Not Yet Doom

Beset by war and weariness, the ruling Sandinistas are struggling

As a revolutionary road show, the event was unmistakably a flop. While visiting members of Nicaragua's Sandinista government waited on a wooden dais in a baseball stadium in the northwestern town of Chinandega last week, an estimated 4,000 local supporters filed dutifully onto the dusty grounds below. Hoping to add both life and numbers to the disappointing crowd, Sandinista organizers urged the audience to march through town as a way of drawing attention to the May Day rally. The demonstrators complied. When the parade returned some 30 minutes later, however, only half of the participants returned with it. The reduced crowd of 2,000 faithful remained to hear Nicaragua's agrarian reform minister, Jaime Wheelock Román, heap scorn on Nicaragua's Roman Catholic hierarchy for suggesting that the government should negotiate with the U.S.-backed *contra* guerrillas, who are waging hit-and-run warfare along the country's borders. Yet the generally desultory nature of the festivities was one more indication that the Sandinistas may be losing their grip on the popular imagination.

On the same hot afternoon in Managua, the capital, a vastly different drama was playing to a packed house. Some 4,000 Nicaraguans crowded into the modernistic Don Bosco Church as the new head of the country's nine-member Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference, Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega, used harsh language to describe the plight of his flock under the Marxist-led Sandinistas. Said Vega: "The tragedy of the Nicaraguan people is that we are living with a totalitarian ideology that no one wants in this country." While the priest spoke, nearly a dozen military Jeeps circled the building. Says a church spokesman, the Rev. Bismarck Carballo: "Our relations with the Sandinistas have totally deteriorated."

The lack of interest at Chinandega and the defiance at Don Bosco are aspects of a drastic change in mood that has descended upon Nicaragua's 2.9 million people. Only a few months ago, citizens eagerly rallied by the thousands to listen to the exhortations of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (F.S.L.N.). The reason: a willingness at that time to defend the 1979 revolution that ousted Dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle against the increasingly bold attacks of "Yankee imperialism," embodied in the *contra* forces trained and sup-



The priest: Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega at May Day Mass in Managua's Don Bosco Church

plied by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Sandinista rhetoric about the U.S. and the *contra* threat remains as shrill as ever. But as U.S. pressure has intensified, so has a deep sense of demoralization and frustration within Nicaragua that affects even the secretive Sandinista leadership. Among many Nicaraguans, there is a growing sentiment that their country faces an economic and military debacle that can be blamed as much on the Sandinistas as on the Reagan Administration—or even more. Says a prominent former F.S.L.N. supporter in the capital: "The one big difference these days is that people everywhere are now saying the Sandinistas are through, and no one is sorry to see them go."

That view is still wishful thinking. The Sandinistas, led by their nine-member National Directorate, retain an awesome monopoly of force in Nicaragua. They command a combined army and militia of some 100,000 well-equipped by Cuba and the Soviet Union. A network of neighborhood Sandinista Defense Committees gives the regime a pervasive system of surveillance and social control. Ever since March 1982, the regime has governed under a state of emergency that forbids political meetings and gives the Sandinistas sweeping powers of press censorship and arbitrary arrest. Those sanctions have been used this year against scores of obstreperous members of Nicaragua's opposition political parties and many other citizens accused of "counterrevolutionary activity." Says a Western diplomat in Managua: "The *comandantes* are not about to board a plane for Havana."

Nonetheless, the Sandinistas profoundly underestimated the dimensions and consequences of the CIA-backed guerrilla attacks. The 12,000 to 14,000 *contras* have not scored spectacular military successes, but they have become a distracting force that has shaken Nicaraguans psychologically far more than the Reagan Administration might have imagined. The Sandinistas announced last week that a fishing trawler sank in the Pacific port of Corinto after striking a mine that was left by CIA-directed operatives in the Administration's controversial program, now abandoned, of harassing Nicaraguan shipping. The Sandinistas also claimed that they had repelled two *contra* speedboat attacks at Corinto. Meanwhile, in



F.S.L.N. Candidates Ortega and Ramirez
Compromise vs. a hard line.

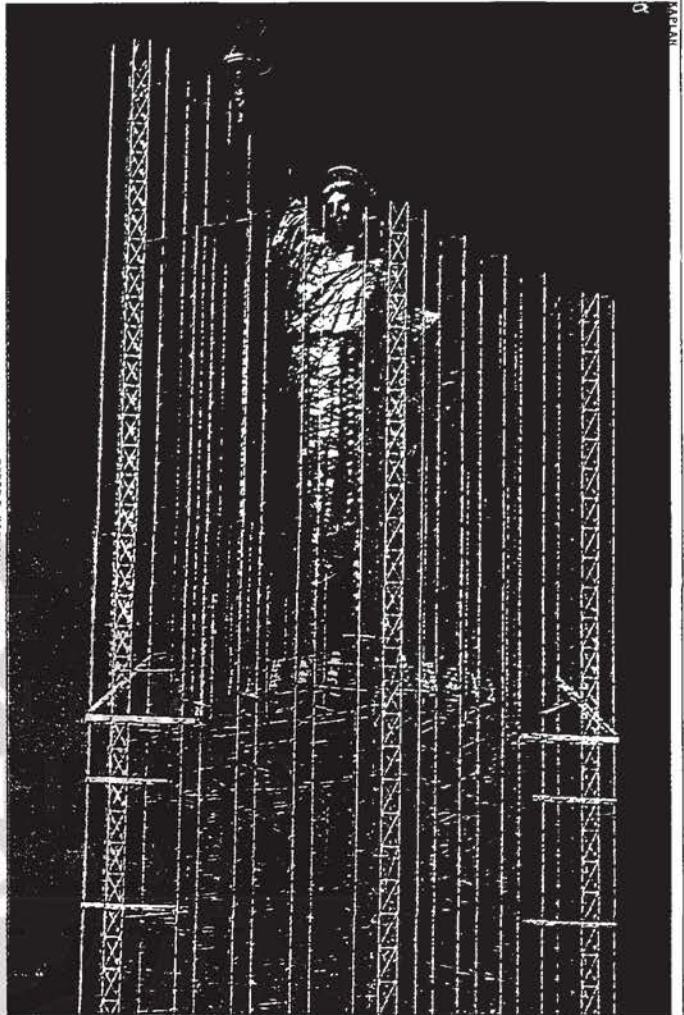
Miss Liberty's Make-Over

The tired, the poor and the huddled masses still flow to New York Harbor. And 98 years after its dedication, the Statue of Liberty remains a perfect emblem of America's self-image: colossal, principled, generous. The statue, with a shroud of scaffolding, has taken on another kind of symbolism: like the American cityscape, Miss Liberty is riddled with rust and holes.

The refurbishing that is just under way will cost \$30 million, virtually all from private donations. That is almost 40 times the bill for construction and installation in the 1880s. Over the next two years, the statue will undergo structural repairs of its upraised right arm, replacement of its torch and interior iron struts, renovation of the 168-step spiral staircase that leads to its crown and construction of a glass elevator that will travel from ground level to the top of the pedestal on which Liberty stands.



PETER S. HANLAN



MARVIN



DAN COHENISH



SUSAN MEISEL—MAGNUM

The comandante: Jaime Wheelock Román delivering May Day address in Chinandega

the north of the country, *contra* units continue to show their ability to roam deep inside Nicaraguan territory (see following story).

Economically, Nicaragua is reeling. Commodities from soap to cement are in short supply; factories are steadily closing down due to the lack of raw materials. Of some 500 Nicaraguan manufacturing firms operating in 1979, only about 80 are still functioning. Government food-rationing rules now permit the weekly purchase of only one chicken and 2 lbs. of beef per family of four—when supplies are available.

During his Chinandega speech, the F.S.L.N.'s Wheelock warned that "economic shortages will go on for many years because of the imperialist aggression on our borders from the U.S." But increasingly, Nicaraguans are reluctant to accept that explanation for the failure of the economy. Among other things, the Sandinistas' imposition of price controls has helped to bring about the shortages that plague Nicaragua, while their erratic policies of expropriation have destroyed incentives for investment. Says a concerned mother in Managua: "This is not what we thought the revolution would be like when we tore up streets to make barricades to fight Somoza."

A more troublesome result of the covert war has been a domestic backlash against Sandinista military policies. Nicaraguan mothers are angry at the drafting of up to 40,000 young people, many of whom are being trained in special counterinsurgency units and sent to fight in remote border areas. When their sons were

drafted, the women were told that the youths would be kept near major cities. Many of the soldiers have since deserted. The Sandinistas have tried hard to placate the mothers with neighborhood meetings explaining the government's actions. But within the past two months, in an uncommon demonstration of dissent, maternal protest marches against the draft have been held in several Nicaraguan towns, including the central city of Matagalpa.

The deepest pitfall of the covert war is one that the Sandinistas have dug for themselves: a loudly announced but nebulously described intention to relax their grip on power. That policy, known as *apertura* (opening), reached new rhetorical levels in February, when the Sandinistas declared that they would hold democratic presidential and legislative elections on Nov. 4. In March the Sandinistas produced an electoral law that, among other things, banned the *contra* leadership from participation in the contest. In subsequent weeks Managua buzzed with reports that the Sandinistas would lift the notorious state of emergency on May 4, a step that would be essential for free electoral competition. The day arrived, however, and nothing happened.

The inaction reinforced suspicion in Washington and elsewhere that the Sandinistas' democratic intentions are merely cosmetic. Locked in confrontation with the Reagan Administration, the Sandinistas are trying hard to rally dwindling Latin American and West

European support for their regime. A façade of political liberalization would help in that effort. Says Jesuit Father Xavier Gorostiaga, a leading Sandinista adviser: "My impression is that the internal dynamics of this country don't require us to have elections. The elections are much more for external benefit. They are a symbolic gesture."

Another view of the Sandinistas' plight is that they no longer have any choice about reaching a democratic accommodation. Asserts a West European confidant of the Sandinista leadership: "Neither Cuba nor the Soviet Union can help militarily or economically to the extent that they can solve Nicaragua's problems. The Sandinistas must keep the revolution acceptable to countries like Mexico and those in Western Europe. They have to risk their power in order to maintain it."

The Sandinistas have also been coming under heavy diplomatic pressure from some nearby countries. Costa Rica, which has tried to remain neutral toward its northern neighbor, last week asked Mexico to arrange a meeting with Nicaragua after Costa Rican security forces traded fire with Nicaraguan troops along the border. Costa Rica now describes its differences with the Sandinistas as "very, very grave."

Particularly painful measures against Nicaragua have come from the recently elected government of Venezuelan President Jaime Lusinchi. Reversing Venezuela's previously tolerant attitude toward the Sandinistas, Lusinchi has suspended all but formal relations with Nicaragua. That has meant a cutoff of economic assistance worth more than \$100 million to the Sandinistas. An important reason for Lusinchi's abrupt move was a deep Venezuelan skepticism about the *apertura*, or intention of sharing power through elections, and about Sandinista intentions in general. One Venezuelan diplomat referred to the Sandinistas' lectures on the superiority of their political system to that of Venezuela as "insufferable." A Latin American diplomat in Nicaragua put the problem more brutally: "In Cuba and the Soviet Union, there are elections too. You cannot have democracy where there is no personal liberty at all."

By some accounts, the National Directorate is now deeply divided over the liberalization issue. Some Sandinista intimates describe the group as being split into self-described "realist" and "revolution" wings, with the former accepting the idea of compromise and the latter advocating a hard-line course regardless of the cost. In the Directorate's closed-door deliberations over the F.S.L.N.'s official candidates in the Nov. 4 elections, the realists, led by Daniel Ortega Saavedra, Nicaragua's governing junta coordinator, appeared to have the upper hand. By one account, the leadership voted 8 to 1 in favor of making Ortega its presidential candidate. It passed over the leader of the revolutionary faction, hard-line Interior Minister Tomás Borge Martínez, who

nominated himself for the job. By the same margin, Borge was snubbed as the prospective vice-presidential nominee in favor of Sergio Ramirez Mercado, another governing junta member and a prominent novelist.

The Reagan Administration, however, insists that any true liberalization in Nicaragua would offer such features as freedom from censorship and the right of all opponents of the regime, including the *contra* leadership, to participate in elections. So far, the only serious challenger within Nicaragua to the Sandinistas has been the Roman Catholic Church. In a pastoral letter issued on Easter Sunday, the nine Nicaraguan bishops used some of the strongest language ever uttered publicly against the Sandinistas. The bishops blamed the regime for "young people's dying on the battlefield, abuses of power, use of schools for materialistic [i.e., Marxist] education, displacement of peasants and manipulation of family grief." They called for a direct dialogue between the government and the *contras*. "If this does not happen," the bishops wrote, "there will be no chance for an agreement, and our people, especially the poorest among them, will continue suffering and dying."

The Sandinistas allowed Nicaraguan newspapers to publish the letter, but then counterattacked by calling the authors of the episcopal document "false prophets." Church-state relations have sunk so low in Nicaragua that the country's Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo last week traveled to Rome for Vatican consultations.

Privately, the Sandinistas concede that Nicaraguans have grown tired and disheartened in the course of the revolutionary crusade. So, they confess, have they. The former guerrilla fighters describe the current period as one of the hardest they have ever faced in their frequently grim revolutionary careers. They claim that no matter what they do, almost no one outside Nicaragua seems to believe them and that in Washington, the Reagan Administration seems unwilling to give in on any point at all. At times, the *comandantes* even lapse into the past tense when referring to their revolution. At a Directorate meeting last week, the Sandinistas wearily asked Cuban revolutionaries whether the early years of the Castro regime were as difficult and frustrating. The Cubans said nothing specific in reply, but offered their condolences.

A Western diplomat in Managua describes the current foundering of the Sandinistas as "not a political vacuum, but the air is being sucked out." Yet he also warned that "their decline is not yet marked by the rise of anyone else's fortunes." Under those conditions, the Sandinistas will probably remain in power for the foreseeable future, but the pall of gloom over Nicaragua is likely to grow deeper. —By George Russell. Reported by William McWhirter/Managua



F.D.N. Comandante Alfa talks to his *contra* patrol during a march through Nueva Segovia

Fighting the "Rabid Dogs"

On patrol with the contras in Nicaraguan territory

As the Sandinistas struggle to preserve their revolution, U.S.-backed *contras* continue to harass the regime from across Nicaragua's northern and southern borders. The largest of the counterrevolutionary groups, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.), based in Honduras, claims 8,000 troops. Although able to move freely over thousands of square miles of northern Nicaragua, the *contras* are worried that their operations will be restricted if U.S. aid is cut off. Correspondent Ricardo Chavira and Photographer Bob Nickelsberg accompanied an F.D.N. patrol on a six-day foray that took them some 30 miles into the desolate hills of Nicaragua's Nueva Segovia department. Chavira's report:

From a base camp in Honduras no more than two miles from the border, we can hear the boom of Sandinista artillery. The 26 fighters who will accompany us into Nicaragua are part of a 1,000-man F.D.N. task force that operates in Nueva Segovia. They wear U.S. Army-issue fatigues or blue-green Honduran-made uni-

forms or, in the case of new recruits, civilian clothes. Armed with Belgian FAL or Chinese-made AK-47 assault rifles and trained by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in demolition and information gathering, they appear to be a well-conditioned, highly motivated team. Some members of the unit have crossed the border before us with mortars to reinforce other F.D.N. patrols battling advancing columns of Sandinista militia. Our patrol's standing orders are to move forward as far as 50 miles into Nicaragua, setting ambushes, campaigning among the peasantry and sabotaging electrical lines and bridges. "Within the past 18 months we have pushed the Sandinistas out of here," says the patrol's leader, Comandante Alfa, waving his hand across a ten-mile-wide strip of hilly forest.

As we shuffle into pine and scrub-oak hills, twice we find ourselves within half a mile of a village in which several hundred Sandinista troops are stationed. Because they control the department's extensive system of roads, the Sandinistas can quickly move their 20,000 troops and supplies to any point in the area. My companions are equipped by the U.S. from Honduras, but they grumble that they had to carry the arms and supplies across the border on their backs. The F.D.N.'s single, ancient C-47 transport plane cannot be used in Nueva Segovia because of heavy Sandinista defenses.

Over the past year, the civilian population has grown used to the *contra* presence and now provides a network of assistance. Our patrol carries rations of dried beef, rice, roasted cocoa beans and sugar, but peasants along the way offer us tortillas, bananas and water. More important, the local *campesinos* act as couriers and give our patrol intelligence about Sandinista troop movements. On the third and fourth nights of our trek, we are invited to sleep at



A rebel fighter hikes into Nicaragua

Civilians provide a network of assistance.

peasant homes. During the days, we frequently take long rests at farmhouses. The *contras* chat easily with our hosts, some of whom are their friends and relatives.

The civilians of Nueva Segovia are not shy about telling us why they dislike the Sandinistas, whom they call *piricucos* (rabid dogs). Some of the peasants say they have had family members tortured or property confiscated. Others are angry over government efforts to make them form agricultural cooperatives and sell their products exclusively to the state. At a farmhouse atop a hill, 13 peasants tell me they are disappointed that the Sandinistas have not met promises for better economic conditions, and in fact have allowed prices to rocket and wages to stagnate. "A bag of detergent costs ten times more than it did during the dictatorship," complains one barefoot *campesino*. Says another: "It is like that for everything. We were better off under Somoza."

Few Nicaraguans lament the 1979 overthrow of Anastasio Somoza Debayle and his right-wing dictatorship, of course, but many of the peasants of Nueva Segovia oppose the Sandinistas strongly enough to support the *contra* cause at great risk. Those who are caught aiding the guerrillas are often killed by the Sandinistas. The *contras* can be equally brutal when they uncover Sandinista informers or seize enemy troops. "If we capture them in a fight and they have no more ammunition, then they must die," said a sub-*comandante* known as Pelón. "That shows they were trying to kill us and gave up only because they had no more shells." If a Sandinista soldier surrenders with a full clip, however, the *contras* conclude he does not want to hurt them and he is spared. Says Pelón: "We give them the choice of going to Honduras with us or simply going back home."

At one point, the Sandinistas spotted our patrol and waited in ambush for us to link up with another F.D.N. unit. But a scouting patrol discovered the trap, and instead of marching to the rendezvous we stayed put, spending the night on the dirt floor of a farmhouse less than two miles from the ambush site. "Our mission is to protect you journalists," *Comandante* Alfa says the next day. "But if we had been alone, we would have fallen on them from the rear and sent them running."

Back in Honduras, F.D.N. leaders fret about whether the U.S. Congress will approve the pending \$21 million in aid. "These Congressmen should not think just about the next election," says Mack, a muscular former Nicaraguan military officer. "They should look ahead five or six years. If we are not around, the U.S. will have to send Marines in. Then it is going to take the sacrifice of American lives to solve the problem of Nicaragua." Says a high-ranking F.D.N. official: "If the Americans think they can now just say, 'It was a mistake, let's all go back home,' they're wrong. You can't play with people like that. If the Americans leave us, it will be worse than the Bay of Pigs." ■

EL SALVADOR

Taking Sides?

Charges of U.S. "manipulation"

As Salvadorans prepared to head for the polls last Sunday in the second and final round of presidential elections, the candidates launched the usual last-minute blitz of charges and countercharges. But one campaigner found some surprising ammunition. Hugo Barrera, the vice-presidential nominee of the right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), made public the text of a letter from Republican Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina to President Reagan demanding the removal of the U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador, Thomas Pickering. Helms accused Pickering of



Ambassador Pickering in San Salvador

A vote of "full confidence" from Reagan.

manipulating the elections, specifically by urging the country's provisional President, Alvaro Magaña, to veto an ARENA-sponsored proposal for loosening voting procedures. Wrote Helms: "Mr. Pickering has used the cloak of diplomacy to strangle freedom in the night."

The Helms letter drew quick rebuttals from the White House and congressional leaders. Asserting that Ronald Reagan had "full confidence" in Pickering, White House Spokesman Larry Speakes contended that the Administration had not taken sides in the runoff election between Christian Democrat José Napoleón Duarte and ARENA's Roberto d'Aubuisson. But in a speech on the Senate floor, Helms expanded his attack, contending that the State Department "bent over backwards to facilitate a Duarte victory" and that a member of the U.S. embassy staff in San Salvador told ARENA officials the U.S. would not support d'Aubuisson if he won. State Department officials rejected those charges as well.

Despite the U.S. denials, it is no secret

that the Reagan Administration strongly prefers Duarte, if only because a victory by d'Aubuisson, who is frequently alleged to have ties with right-wing death squads, would end any hopes for congressional approval of continued military aid to El Salvador. The election process itself has been carried out with great U.S. encouragement and assistance. Though Pickering is hardly the puppetmaster depicted by Helms, he has not refrained from voicing his government's views. When Duarte and d'Aubuisson were angling for the support of Francisco José ("Chachi") Guerrero, leader of the conservative National Conciliation Party, Pickering held talks with the Salvadoran politician and explained U.S. congressional attitudes toward d'Aubuisson, but stopped short of advising political neutrality for Guerrero in the election runoff. Nonetheless, neutrality is the position that Guerrero eventually took.

For his part, Helms is hardly a dispassionate observer. When d'Aubuisson's request for a U.S. visa was denied last November, the Senator loudly complained. Deborah DeMoss, a Helms aide who has visited El Salvador numerous times in the past year, tried to arrange a speaking engagement for d'Aubuisson at Georgetown University last January.

To underscore their concern about the election results, the Democratic leaders of the House of Representatives decided last week to postpone consideration of \$62 million in proposed emergency military assistance to El Salvador until after the balloting. Said Democratic Representative Clarence Long of Maryland: "We want to send a notice to the [Salvadoran] military. They had better honor that election."

Reagan is so frustrated by the aid postponement that he may blame Congress in a television address this week. White House aides are especially alarmed by intelligence reports that the guerrillas are planning a major offensive this fall. Some Central American sources say that the rebels are actually planning two major attacks, the first in July to coincide with the Democratic National Convention and the second in October just before the election. In the summer offensive, the rebels hope to expand their control of the northern departments of Morazán and Chalatenango. As part of that effort, the guerrillas will aim a public relations campaign at the Democrats when they gather in San Francisco July 16 to 20.

The October offensive will attempt to make the war a major issue as the U.S. heads for the polls. According to the guerrillas, they will try to assassinate U.S. advisers based at San Miguel and La Unión. The rebels say they have trained a hit squad in Morazán department to infiltrate the Salvadoran army and kill key officers as well as their U.S. instructors. Another scenario calls for the insurgents to concentrate on two or three spectacular attacks that would get front-page headlines in the U.S. The guerrillas obviously have decided that last Sunday's election is not the only one that matters. ■

Guatemalan Overtures

WHAT can be done when an American policy of high moral standards fails to achieve its goals? What should be done when a military and economic assistance quarantine does not help curb human-rights abuses?

That issue is raised anew in Guatemala. For seven years the United States refused to grant military and economic assistance to three different Guatemalan military regimes. The lofty goals are absolute. No American assistance is acceptable for a government that has so little respect for human life. If Guatemala wanted assistance from the United States, the rampant violations of human rights would have to be curbed.

The problem was that Guatemala did not seem to care. It did not even ask for assistance. Since 1977, Guatemala has gone it alone with no American help and spurned by other countries in the region. The country was the pariah of Central America.

Because of its isolation, Guatemala never was compelled to curb its human-rights abuses. By 1982, Guatemala's record for human-rights abuses was one of the worst in the world. No reward was offered if it improved its behavior, and there was no penalty for continued abuses. In effect, the United States had lost its ability to influence events in Guatemala. In the process, the virtually isolated Guatemalan regime had beaten — or at least brought under control — the guerrilla insurgency.

Now there are indications that Guatemala is willing to mend fences with its neighbors. The government of Brig. Gen.

Oscar Humberto Mejia Victores says its stay in power is temporary, that Guatemala will return to civilian rule in July 1985. The process will begin this July 1 with the election of an 88-member constituent assembly.

The question now is: How should the Reagan Administration and Congress react? Guatemala wants to buy \$2 million worth of spare helicopter parts in the United States. The Reagan Administration has proposed to give \$10 million in credit at current interest rates for the purchase of military equipment in fiscal year 1985.

Administration officials contend that congressional approval is not required to sell the helicopter spare parts. The proposed military credits, which do fall under Congress's jurisdiction, are conditioned on the legitimacy of the July 1984 constituent-assembly elections.

Because the policy of isolation has not helped curb human-rights abuses in Guatemala, the time may be right to lure improvements from the Guatemalan military in exchange for very limited, very tightly controlled, assistance. The spare parts for the helicopters might be a first step. Then, if meaningful elections actually are held, Congress properly could consider the \$10 million credit for purchase of military equipment.

America's Guatemalan policy has not prevented continued human-rights abuses. In view of the regime's apparent new desire to rejoin its hemispheric neighbors, the carrot-and-stick approach deserves a trial.

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*M. Tanenbaum, S. Medelsteiner,
I. Kowaloff, Dr. Penick, Fr. Hoff*

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Managua, according to Reagan

President Reagan complains about a "constant drumbeat" of press criticism which, he says, confuses Americans about Central America. The press seems not to appreciate the virtues of non-Communist governments, the danger of Central American leftists, the urgency of "the Soviet threat."

The President has his facts mixed up. He has had it easy thus far. Americans may have worried about the rigidity, bias, diplomatic inexperience and militaristic instincts they detect in the President's Central America policies, but even so they have granted the Administration a generous benefit of the doubt. Repeated allegations about Sandinista "repression," "arms traffic" to El Salvador and existence of a Cuban-Soviet "axis" of control have gotten too patient a hearing for too long.

It's time for Americans to look more closely at the nature of the Sandinista revolution to see if it's as bad as the President says. This isn't hard to do, because Nicaragua is not an Albania or North Korea. It's close by and wide open, at least for a country in a state of siege. Nicaragua receives a steady flow of US visitors and volunteers, religious workers, agrarian reform specialists and others. Collectively, these Americans offer a textured view of Nicaraguan reality that's at sharp odds with Reagan's scary caricature of a Stalinist tumor "closer to Texas than Texas is to Massachusetts."

The Nicaraguan picture emerges against a backdrop of deep poverty, illiteracy, illness, outrageous plunder by the former dictator and his cronies, massive destruction during the war, a disastrous market for commodities and crushing energy costs. Only then comes the bag of tricks, from battleships to economic boycotts, cooked up by national security adviser William Clark and UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, who by many accounts have been given a blank check to make hemispheric policy for the President's rubber stamp.

It is striking that, despite all these trials, the Sandinistas have continued to make tangible progress in achieving the revolution's basic goals: bringing health, education, agrarian reform and economic development to the great majority of Nicaraguans who are very poor. Moreover, despite the presence of a contra army which is clearly trying to sow panic, the Nicaraguan government has behaved with restraint.

For President Reagan, who has led Americans into a mind-boggling overindulgence in military hardware and has sent a CIA army against the Sandinistas, it takeschutzpah to complain about the military emphasis in Nicaragua. All the more so, now that after four years there is still no evidence that the Nicaraguan mobilization is essentially defensive in character, apart from its obvious political function of serving as a pep rally and a vehicle for leftist indoctrination. Administration allegations to the contrary, Nicaragua has shown no territorial ambitions.

The Reagan Administration, which rationalizes gruesome human-rights violations by the regimes it chooses to call friends, has not earned the right to criticize Nicaragua, where since the revolution in 1979 there has been no systematic torture, death squads, "disappearances," or assassinations, and relatively few political imprisonments. True, the Sandinistas have been guilty of censorship of an opposition newspaper, gratuitous alienation of some business interests, clumsiness in bringing revolutionary "reform" to an alienated Indian minority, questionable manners during Pope John Paul's visit and plenty of other errors. Criticism from friends of Nicaragua is warranted. Hypocritical reprimands from the sponsors of a cynical mercenary invasion are not.

Although there have been no national elections in Nicaragua, and none scheduled until 1985, there's enough participatory democracy

and effective delivery of services to have earned a high degree of loyalty to the Sandinista regime. US embassy officials in Managua admitted to recent visitors that if the Sandinistas held elections tomorrow they would win, overwhelmingly. The White House "drumbeat" about a betrayal of democracy is ridiculous, in view of US torpedoing of freely elected leftwing governments in Guatemala in the '50s and Chile in the '70s. Then, too, there's the precedent of the US Founding Fathers who, the Sandinistas like to point out, took eight years to get around to national elections after our Revolutionary War.

Managua embassy officials admit that arms flow to rebels in El Salvador, if it exists, has been "imperceptible" for several months. It's a safe bet that for many months before that, perhaps since 1981, it has been insignificant, because otherwise the Administration would have produced evidence. Even White House officials now acknowledge that the "arms traffic," which they have hyped constantly, has been mainly medicine and transistor batteries for walkie talkies.

What, then, is the Sandinista sin that has the right wing gnashing its teeth and engaging in an illegal war that defiles American values? It may be the Sandinistas' impending success as serious, left-wing social reformers.

There is no doubt that when the Sandinista "national rebellion" dumped Somoza in 1979 a shockwave traveled through Central America. That event proved that if revolutionaries got their act together they could win against the most vicious tyranny. It also suggested, perhaps prematurely, that the United States had matured enough politically to tolerate social change. The Sandinista victory terrified the right wing in countries such as El Salvador and heartened both moderates, such as reformist "young officers," and the left. To that extent Nicaragua has been crucial to the Salvadoran insurgents. Its vital contribution has not been arms or even sanctuary for Salvadoran leaders, but rather the international export of an uppity, confident, can-do revolutionary spirit. In other climes, today's code word for that commodity is "solidarity."

President Reagan cites the Sandinista slogan "revolution without frontiers" as evidence of intended aggression. Evidence indicates it is motivated not by territorial ambition but by the loneliness of left-wingers in a hemisphere where neighbors are reactionary, threatened, hostile, and funded by the United States. The Sandinistas naturally see continued momentum of social change around them as vital. They're in peril so long as they're an isolated left wing state.

Vietnam era "domino theory" is now reappearing as "virus theory" in Reagan Administration lingo. There's no international isolation ward available to seal Nicaragua off and keep its potentially contagious successes out of sight. In the final analysis, that probably explains why the Reagan Administration feels driven to bring the Nicaraguan revolution down if possible, or spoil it by goading the Sandinistas into a repressive crackdown, or smear it at the very least. It's clearly the reason no credit is given for Sandinista successes in areas such as land reform, education and health, where the Sandinistas far surpass our Salvadoran and Guatemalan "allies."

Americans have had four years to watch the Sandinista revolution. If Nicaragua were hurtling toward Stalinist aggression and repression, as the Reagan Administration has claimed, it would have happened by now.

Instead, the Sandinistas are engaged in a serious, popular, mostly well-intentioned and frequently competent national experiment not altogether unlike our own revolution, although set in a very different, and far more difficult, context. For America to try to destroy such a revolution out of fear that its example will awaken the downtrodden in other nations is a contemptible historical wrong.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

FAD/D

date September 12, 1983
to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
from Abraham S. Karlikow
subject Nicaragua

memorandum

As I mentioned to you, I asked Saul Kagan what procedure one ought to follow should one discuss with the Nicaraguan authorities re restitution. The attached sets out the steps he suggests.

ASK:en
Attach.

cc: Sergio Nudelstejer
William Trosten



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September 1, 1983

Mr. Abraham Karlikow
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56 Street
New York, NY 10022

Dear Abe:

In connection with your forthcoming negotiations, you may wish to press for the acceptance of the following points:

- (1) All property claims can be presented for discussions.
- (2) A joint fact-finding committee should be established which will examine individual property claims.
- (3) You should receive a list of properties--movable and immovable--which were either sequestered or confiscated, together with the formal rationale for each action.
- (4) You should receive copies of laws or decrees which served as the legal basis for the government seizures of property.

I believe that this is as much as can be obtained in the first meetings. You should press for a specific date for the next meeting of the joint fact-finding committee as suggested under (2) above. It will be necessary, at an early stage, to enlist the services of a lawyer conversant with the laws of the country, as well as with the present status of the judiciary in the country. It should be ascertained whether the "sanctity of private property" is still part of the laws of the country.

The above are just preliminary thoughts on the first steps that would appear to be indicated in order to create the basis for

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and the framework for handling such property claims. Please feel free to call on me if I can be of any help in this matter.

With every good wish for the New Year to you and yours, and for the fulfillment of your future plans.

Cordially yours,



Saul Kagan

SK/fr





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ON THE COVER: Sleuthing can be a dangerous profession. See story on page 63. Photo by Michael Ahearn.

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Sandinistas attending
revolutionary celebration.

IN THE WAKE OF THE PLO-BACKED REVOLUTION

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

By Stewart Ain

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

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

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

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

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

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

Stewart Ain is a reporter for the New York Daily News.

BLACK STAR/MICHAEL KIENITZ PHOTOGRAPHER

channel arms to Israel at a time when Israel needed it most.

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

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

It took a seven-week long civil war



Nicaraguan Jews Isaac Stavisky (above, left) and Isaac Gorn are now living in exile in the United States. They claim they were driven out of their country by acts of anti-Semitism.

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

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

He said also that Sandinista graffiti were widespread during the revolu-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The two worshippers, Lazlo
Continued on page 118

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Continued from page 72

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"They say it was all a mistake — taking away the synagogue — but

they knew what they were doing from the beginning," he insisted. "They just never expected to have so much pressure placed upon them."

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

Despite his status as president of the Nicaraguan Jewish community, Gorn was not immune to harassment from

The Sandinistas waged a terror campaign against Nicaraguan Jews.

the Sandinista authorities. In January 1979, part of his clothing factory was burned. Isaac Gorn said the insurance company agreed to pay \$1.5 million for the damage but that his family never saw a penny of the money. He speculated that the Sandinistas may have taken at least part of it.

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

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

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

NICARAGUA



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away, they had orders to bomb his car.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"During the conflict that brought down the Somoza regime in Nicaragua, virtually the entire Jewish com-

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

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

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

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

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

Broslawsky argued that not every attack upon an individual who happens to be Jewish is motivated by anti-Semitism. "Bugsy Siegal was not

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reagan himself spoke out against the Sandinista regime last July at a meeting with ADL officials and Isaac Stavisky. He said the "self-proclaimed blood unity between the Sandinistas and the PLO is evident for all the world to see and is an evil echo of history. Virtually the entire Jewish community of Nicaragua has been frightened into exile. . . . Please share



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the truth that Communism in Central America means not only the loss of political freedom but of religious freedom as well."

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

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

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

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

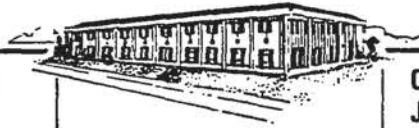
He also dismissed the AJC's contention that no Jews remain in Nicaragua, when in fact there are four left. One of them is protected because he is the brother of a Castro confidante; two others are old men with French passports; and the fourth carries a Venezuelan passport.

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

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

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

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The two men who were confronted by the Sandinistas as the synagogue doors burned were both survivors of Nazi concentration camps—Mr. Lazlo Gewurstz and Mr. Gyula Pinkes. This was a traumatic experience for them and other survivors, because it evoked terrible memories which they thought they had put behind them when they fled from Nazi terrors and found refuge in Nicaragua.

The Sandinistas threatened to take our property, and they did. They threatened our lives and for that reason we left our country. We want to return to Nicaragua and live with our fellow countrymen under a democratic government which respects human rights. We hope that we will be able to do that soon.

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whether they are merely repaying favors to their PLO supporters, the harassment of Jews is reprehensible. This behavior is consistent with the antireligious tenets of Communist doctrine, and with the pervasive actions the Sandinistas have taken against the Catholic Church.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who has entertained the belief that the Nicaraguan Government is benevolent and respectful of human rights would do well to examine its record on religious freedom. The Sandinista regime is a menace to the most fundamental rights and aspirations of man.

STATEMENT BY RABBI MORTON M. ROSENTHAL

I feel privileged to come before you today to speak about the plight of the Jews of Nicaragua and the activities of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Central America. I bring no policy recommendations, but I hope that my remarks will be useful to those who have such responsibility.

The Anti-Defamation League has long monitored PLO activity in the region. Our report on such activity reflects our conviction that a PLO presence represents a threat to the security of Jews. In the instance of Nicaragua, that has been validated by developments which led to the exile of the entire community and the confiscation of their properties, including the synagogue.

In a few minutes, a member of the Nicaraguan Jewish community will describe Sandinist anti-Semitism. When Nicaraguan Jews came to ADL and told us that their being Jewish was a major factor in their forced exile and the loss of their properties, we made representations on their behalf, in 1981, to the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua. We hoped that through "quiet diplomacy" we could obtain clarification as to the reasons for the confiscations and the forced exiling of the Jewish community. After 19 months, having concluded that the government of Nicaragua was not going to respond to any of our questions, we publicized the plight of Nicaragua's Jews via the article entitled "Nicaragua Without Jews."

The reaction of officials of the Nicaraguan Government to inquiries and protests that were stimulated by that article has created a dilemma. Government spokesmen repeatedly assert that they have no policy of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, Nicaraguan Jews insist that anti-Semitism forced them to flee the country, thus creating the dilemma of whom to believe.

The dilemma is more apparent than real. We know of no laws in Nicaragua that are aimed specifically at Jews. There may well be no "official" policy of anti-Semitism. But, the Nicaraguan situation demonstrates that one does not need official policy in order to persecute a small community. It can be effected far more subtly by threat, intimidation and confiscation, thus avoiding the condemnation that Nuremberg-type laws would invite.

In attempting to decide whether the world can rely on the government of Nicaragua's assurances that there is no anti-Semitism, we might usefully consider how it handled the confiscation of the Synagogue.

The Jewish community of Nicaragua built a new synagogue in 1976, to replace the one that had been destroyed in the devastating earthquake of 1972. We repeatedly inquired about the synagogue's status, but received no reply. When we met with the Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington last month, he refused even to acknowledge that there was a synagogue in Managua, saying only that it

START

RELIGIOUS REPRESSION IN
NICARAGUA

HON. JIM COURTER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 3, 1983

Mr. COURTER. Mr. Speaker, I commend to the attention of my colleagues two statements made at the White House recently on the subject of Nicaragua's repression of its Jewish community.

These statements were delivered by Rabbi Morton Rosenthal of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and Mr. Issac Stavisky, formerly of Nicaragua. They describe the actions of the Sandinistas, before and after their ascent to power, which have caused all of Nicaragua's Jews to leave their country.

Whether the Sandinistas are anti-Semites of their own volition, or

(over)

was a building owned by a private individual that was confiscated, along with his other assets.

Subsequently, we were informed, via a third party, that the government did not know that the building was a synagogue but it is now prepared to return it to the community. Unless Nicaraguan Jews are able to return to their country and recover their property, this is a meaningless gesture.

I have here a copy of a contract which was duly notarized in 1975, recording the purchase of the land for the purpose of building "A Jewish Temple" by "Congregation Israelita Del Nicaragua." The document lists the officers of the congregation and describes it as a legal entity with religious, cultural and social purposes.

Given the small size of the city of Managua, the contract, and the fact that the building has various architectural features which distinguish it as a synagogue, including the Star of David and stained glass, one must conclude that the government of Nicaragua has been less than candid.

Because the government has dissembled about the synagogue, we must necessarily doubt the reliability of government allegations against individual Jews, and others.

It is important to know that in almost all instances Jews were charged with being Somocistas or with selling arms were not given the benefit of a trial nor was proof brought forth to substantiate the accusations. The government's making the charge was sufficient to condemn the person. One man, however, had four trials; he won all of them. The case was then shifted to Managua, his lawyer disqualified and replaced by a court-appointed attorney. Within three days the government won and the properties were confiscated.

Historically, Jews of Nicaragua have not experienced major problems of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism at the hands of the Sandinistas cannot be traced to deep-rooted theological prejudice or long-standing cultural antipathy to Jews. The roots of contemporary anti-Semitism in Nicaragua are in the Middle East. There are three basic elements worth citing:

The Sandinistas have had a long relationship with the PLO. As the ADL report indicates, Sandinistas fought alongside the PLO in the Middle East in the early 1970's, and the PLO gave them entree to the Arab world from which they have received armaments and financing as well as political support. At the present time there is an officially recognized PLO office in Managua with its staff afforded full diplomatic status.

The objective of that PLO office, and other PLO offices in Latin America, is to fight against Israel. Their fight is also directed against the local Jewish communities, which are seen as sources of political and economic support for Israel. Sandinist anti-Semitism is an act of solidarity with the Arab world in its fight against Zionism and so-called imperialism.

A second factor is the historic relationship between Israel and the Somoza Government. When the newly-created State of Israel was fighting for its existence in 1948, General Somoza served as a source of desperately needed weapons. Israel later became a supplier of weapons for Somoza, which naturally angered the Sandinistas and served as an additional motivation for their anti-Zionism.

The third factor is the inability or unwillingness to distinguish between Jews who are citizens of Israel and those who are citizens of Nicaragua. This phenomenon was summed up by the graffiti on the synagogue wall which said, "Judaism, Zionism and Somoza—the same thing."

From their base in Nicaragua, PLO agents have spread their net of influence throughout the region, allied with the forces of revolution. This menace was cited by President Luis Alberto Monge shortly before he took office as President of Costa Rica last year. In El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and Honduras the PLO and Libyan agents are spreading the venom of anti-Semitism. In conversation with leaders of Jewish communities in Central America I have learned that they are profoundly troubled by that which has happened to the Jews of Nicaragua. They know the implications, for them, of victory by the revolutionary Left in their respective countries, because of its solidarity with the PLO and radical Arab states, such as Libya, which are spending large amounts of money in Central America and Panama.

Historically, Jews have suffered greatly at the hands of despots of all political orientations. For this reason, they are particularly sensitive to the dangers of anti-Semitism. For the Jews of Central America, the signs are writ large that the influence of the PLO and Libya are a direct threat to their security and well-being.

STATEMENT BY MR. ISAAC STAVISKY

On behalf of all members of the Nicaraguan Jewish community, I wish to express our appreciation for your interest and thank you for this opportunity to speak about the suffering which we have experienced at the hands of the Sandinistas.

The Jewish community has always been small, numbering about 50 families at its peak. Jews began coming to Nicaragua in the late 1920's from Eastern Europe. They dedicated themselves to farming, manufacturing and retail sales and made significant contributions to the country's economic development.

Nicaraguan Jews never encountered anti-Semitism, until the Sandinistas started their revolution. Even before the Sandinistas came to power they began threatening Jews. A favorite tactic was to anonymously phone Jewish homes with warnings that "We are going to get you Jews" claiming that we are responsible for the killing of our people by guns sold to the Somoza regime by Israel. Graffiti by Sandinistas was widespread, with attacks on Jews and their religion. One was "Death to the Jewish Pigs." The initials FSLN in red and black left no doubt as to who was responsible.

Once the Sandinistas came to power in July, 1979 they moved swiftly against Jews. Jewish owned properties were among the first to be confiscated and Jews were forced into exile.

A few specific cases might best illustrate the situation which we confronted.

Mr. Freddy Luft came to Nicaragua from Rumania after the Second World War, running away from the Russians. By hard work he became the owner of a textile plant and two retail stores, in partnership with Mr. Oscar Kellerman. Freddy Luft never participated in politics.

A young man by the name of Mauricio, who he appointed General Manager of his business, was a member of the Sandinista party. Mauricio was very active and used his position to have a valid excuse to stay around the synagogue and write down the license plates of the vehicles in which the Jews arrived for prayers. Mauricio warned Mr. Luft that as soon as the Sandinista Revolution took power, all his business would be confiscated and that he would be thrown in jail. A few weeks before the Sandinista victory, Mr. Luft went to the German Embassy in Managua and was evacuated with other members of the German community.

Mr. Max Najman, who was the Honorary Consul of the State of Israel, had to leave

Nicaragua one year before the Sandinistas came to power. He fled because the Sandinista's clandestine radio had announced they would execute Max Najman because he was the Consul of Israel.

He left his plastics factory in the hands of his son, Jimmy. He ran the factory for approximately one year and then the Sandinistas came to this factory and plainly informed him that the plant was being confiscated. When he was handed the decree he noticed that it had been dated one year before. He protested, to no avail. He then approached the newspaper, La Prensa, which carried his complaint publicly. After that publication, the Sandinistas came looking for him, but he was fortunate enough to cross the border on foot to Costa Rica.

Mr. Abraham Gorn's factory was burned. When the Sandinistas came to power they collected the insurance money from London. While the fighting for power was going on, Mr. Gorn left Nicaragua. When the Sandinistas came to power, Mr. Gorn returned to Nicaragua because he felt that he had done no wrong to anyone. As soon as he returned, he was accused of stealing land and was sent to jail. Mr. Gorn was 70 years old at that time. During the jail sentence he was made to sweep the streets.

After his release he went back to his business. He was running the factories for six months when the Sandinistas took away everything that belonged to him, forcing him to seek asylum in the Costa Rican Embassy where he remained until he was taken to Costa Rica in a private plane. The reason that the Sandinistas gave Mr. Gorn for the confiscation was that he had sold Israeli arms to Somoza. Since when do two governments need a civilian to make an arms deal?

The Sandinistas confiscated the synagogue. When they were asked by Rabbi Morton Rosenthal the reasons for such an act, the Sandinistas responded that the synagogue belonged to Abraham Gorn! This of course is not true; we have the deed that certifies that the synagogue belongs to the Jewish community of Nicaragua. It seems that the Sandinistas are creating the Gorn Case as an apparent parallel with the well known Dreyfus case.

Permit me some words about my personal situation. I, together with my brother-in-law, Mr. Saul Retelny, ran complex of factories manufacturing textiles and candy which employed at peaks, over 1,200 heads of families. For a period of 18 months prior to July, 1979 anonymous callers would contact Mr. Retelny and threaten his life and that of his wife. These calls came to his business office and to his home, now also confiscated, at all hours of the night. One favorite tactic was to call around three in the morning and tell my brother-in-law that I had been shot and killed! At the same time, I would get a telephone call claiming that my brother-in-law was shot and killed.

In addition, there were writings on the walls inside and outside the factories: "Death to the Jews; Isaac will be killed. Beware of Sandinista Justice." Dry runs of abduction attempts were made. In one instance, I was stopped, with my son inside the car, and at gun point my life was threatened. I was warned that my businesses were to be taken over when the Sandinistas came to power. Although Mr. Retelny and I were both born in Nicaragua, we never participated directly or indirectly, in politics.

In 1978, the Sandinistas sent a strong message to the entire community when the synagogue was attacked by five Sandinistas wearing face handkerchiefs. They set the building on fire, by throwing gasoline in the main entrance doors, shouting PLO victory slogans and anti-Jewish defamatory lan-

Continued from page 2

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Washington in FOCUS



A Bulletin on Congressional and Executive Activities Relating to Latin America

Vol. II No. 2
February 29, 1984

KISSINGER RECOMMENDATIONS BOOST AID TO CENTRAL AMERICA

On February 21, 1984, the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, Langhorne Motley, used no less than nine large charts to present to Congress the Reagan administration's policy for Central America. His presentation followed on the heels of the recommendations of the Kissinger Commission's report on U.S. policy in Central America presented to House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) and Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) audiences in early February. Secretary of State George Schultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger also laid the foundations for Mr. Motley's long-awaited presentation in separate congressional hearings on U.S. foreign aid plans worldwide. The upshot of these various congressional hearings, which form part of the normal spring cycle of executive budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year cycle (FY85), is a Reagan request for increased worldwide security assistance in the regular Foreign Aid Bill and, following the Kissinger Commission's recommendation, burgeoning military and economic aid for Central America in the so-called "Central America Democracy, Peace, and Development Initiative Act of 1984."

AUTHORIZATIONS BILLS -- Every February, the President must submit to Congress his budget for the next fiscal year (FY) which begins October 1. The testimonies of Secretaries Schultz and Weinberger to the HFAC and SFRC were to present foreign aid authorization requests, which will set spending levels and policy guidelines governing U.S. military and economic aid worldwide. (The Foreign Aid Appropriations bill, which actually allows dollars to be spent, closely follows the authorization bill in the legislative process.)

The Reagan administration's foreign aid authorization bill (H.R. 4873) as presented by Schultz, includes requests for FY85 programs as well as supplemental requests for military and economic aid for the current fiscal year (FY84). The "Central America Democracy, Peace, and Development Initiative Act of 1984" (H.R. 4874) includes legislation to authorize new policies and programs in Central America for FY84-89. This proposal will face rough sledding in Congress, since foreign aid is normally authorized on a one or two-year basis. The proposals stemming from the Kissinger Commission's recommendations for Central America are included in both bills, which are likely to be tied into one package by the HFAC before being sent to the House floor in April. The HFAC will debate and vote on the bills in legislative "markup" sessions the weeks of Feb. 27 and March 5. The SFRC will wait until the week of March 26 to consider and "markup" its version of the legislation.

IMPLEMENTING KISSINGER COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS -- In addition to abundant information, charts, graphs and even a map of Central America which does not name Nicaragua, the materials used to present the State Department requests for Central America included a six-page, 31-point summary of how the various recommendations of the Kissinger Commission would be implemented. Most of the

recommendations for economic and military aid will be executed through the regular foreign aid bureaucracy in the State Department and the Pentagon. Other plans will involve the active coordination of various departments of the U.S. government, such as a plan which would impose legal sanctions against death squad members in U.S. territories. Still other programs would require the formation or revitalization of various international organizations, such as the Central American Common Market. Some proposals, including lowering U.S. trade barriers, need no new funds; others require multi-year funding. Still other proposals would be financed by insuring or "guaranteeing" loans, for instance, for housing and infrastructure development.

Other projects in the implementation include:

- Assistance in renegotiating official and private debts
- U.S. trade loan guarantees [\$100 million aid, \$1.25 billion guarantees]
- U.S. economic aid to promote democracy [\$76 million]
- Support for export promotion efforts [\$684 million]
- Educational reform (includes literacy, vocational, university, U.S. scholarships, etc.) [\$751 million]
- Strengthening judicial systems (including police training) [\$80 million]
- Authorizing multi-year funding of military aid by allowing fiscal year-based appropriations to be available until spent.

ECONOMIC AID -- Closely following the detailed recommendations of the Kissinger Commission, the Reagan administration is asking for \$416 million in economic aid and \$200 million in export guarantees for Central America this year (FY84), a request which would double the aid currently being provided. The request for FY85 is for \$1.12 billion in economic aid and \$600 million in loan guarantees. For FY86-89, the administration is asking for an annual \$1.2 billion in economic aid and \$40 million in housing investment guarantees.

The Reagan administration's effort to "sell" its Central America aid plan to critics is partially reflected in a chart which breaks the economic aid requests in subtly-defined categories. The three largest categories are for stabilization, growth and equity, leaving a small portion for democracy and operating expenses.

Of the various controversial items in the economic aid request, one would allow \$20 million for improving the "Administration of Justice." This item would waive for Central America a prohibition established in the 1970's against the training of foreign police forces (Section 660 of the Foreign Assistance Act) due to the high incidence of the use of torture by U.S.-trained police forces.

Congress may also modify the request to authorize multi-year funding (for FY86-89) of economic aid because of the implied loss of Congressional control over the programs. Another controversial amendment is one which would allow U.S. funds to be used to compensate landlords for property lost due to the land reform in El Salvador. Also, it remains unclear how Congress will treat the request for establishment of a regional "Central America Development Organization" (CADO), whose activities include monitoring one quarter of all U.S. economic aid to the region.

MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Military assistance for Central America in FY84 will more than triple if Congress accepts the President's \$259 million supplemental military aid request. Congress has already provided \$114 million for the region for FY84.

The regional military aid request for FY85 is \$255.9 million. The majority of this aid will be provided as grants or low-interest sales credits, differing from the previous years when loan guarantees for military sales (FMS) made up a large part of military aid.

EL SALVADOR -- Current FY84 military aid to El Salvador is limited to \$64.8 million, of which \$18.5 million is supposed to be withheld until the investigation, trial and verdict are completed on the cases of National Guardsmen accused of the murders of four U.S. churchwomen. U.S. State Department sources have indicated that, of the military aid already granted, the \$45 million in available MAP grants has been expended and funds are urgently needed to purchase munitions before the March 25 Salvadoran presidential elections.

Another controversy with Congress has developed over the Reagan administration's stated desire to provide about \$80 million in "emergency" military aid to El Salvador. According to William Schneider, Assistant Secretary of State for Security Assistance and Scientific Affairs, the administration wants to provide the emergency military aid before the FY84 supplemental request is approved, possibly through section 21(d) of the Arms Export Control Act. Never used before in relation to Central America, section 21(d) would allow the President to delay for 120 days the payment on new military sales to El Salvador. Theoretically, payment on this fait accompli would be made when (if) Congress approves the President's request for FY84 supplemental military aid. The possible use of this "buy now, pay later" procedure sparked strong opposition on Capitol Hill.

Periodic certification of progress in human rights conditions in El Salvador would not be required as a prerequisite for U.S. military aid under the President's plan. However, the President would demand that progress and reforms there continue and he would voluntarily submit reports to Congress every six months on the human rights situation.

GUATEMALA -- Probably highest on the congressional hit list is the proposal that in FY85, U.S. military assistance be renewed to Guatemala. Guatemala has not received U.S. military assistance since 1977 due to its horrendous human rights record. Congress previously opposed Reagan requests for U.S. military aid and sales to Guatemala. Even U.S. development aid to Guatemala in FY84 was restricted to that which could be provided by private voluntary organizations. (AID activities were cut after the assassinations of several AID employees in 1983 were linked to the Guatemalan Army.)

HONDURAS -- U.S. military aid to Honduras will nearly double to \$78.5 million if the FY84 supplemental request is accepted by Congress. This dramatic increase in military aid to Honduras (Honduras received \$8.9 million in FY81) is dwarfed by U.S. plans for military construction in Honduras and two sets of extensive joint military "exercises" scheduled for 1984.

REGIONAL MILITARY TRAINING CENTER -- \$25 million in the FY84 supplemental request and \$20 million in the FY85 budget would permanently expand the temporary training center established in Puerto Trujillo, Honduras, where Salvadoran soldiers are currently being trained.

EMERGENCY AND CONTINGENCY FUNDS

In response to the FY84 supplemental and FY85 budget requests for Latin America presented by Assistant Secretary of State Motley, Rep. Sam Gejdenson (D-CT) asked, "And what is the FY 85 supplemental request?" This question

reflects the growing congressional concern over the abrogation of responsible fiscal management by the State Department in their foreign aid budgeting. The Reagan administration's consistent use of either contingency funds, emergency funds, reprogrammings or supplemental appropriations to bolster funding to Central America (FY81-84) blasts a hole in the normal fiscal year funding cycle. The Kissinger Commission's recommendation for FY84 supplemental funds for Central America reinforces the use of multiple funding requests each fiscal year. Congress' reluctance to fund foreign aid requests, which is normally more acute in election years, virtually ensures that more supplemental and emergency aid requests will be made after the U.S. elections.

Contingency funds (seen as slush funds) and funds for "Regional Programs" serve as easily-accessible sources of "emergency" aid. Congress normally frowns on the use of these sources. Nevertheless, the Reagan administration is soliciting regional program funds for Central America for AID and ESF for both FY84 (supplemental) and FY85, even though each country would already be receiving a very high increment of U.S. aid. The regional FY84 supplemental request is for \$2.8 million for AID and \$28 million for ESF. The Central America regional FY85 request is for \$62 million for AID and \$136.6 million for ESF. In an effort to trim deficits and avoid the controversial use of funds, Congress is likely to cut these requests.

LEGISLATIVE DEBATE

In the next few weeks, congressional committees and subcommittees will debate and "markup" the above authorization requests for Central America. The appropriations process will soon follow. The timing of committee work, less than a few weeks after the foreign aid proposals were presented, breaks with the normal funding process which allowed time for hearings in which private witnesses could present analysis and recommendations. Under the present arrangement Congress, especially the HFAC, has barely left itself time to read or analyze the requests. Only a handful of private witnesses have offered their critiques of the Central America proposals to congressional committees. This shortened schedule means that general public input of U.S. foreign aid programs has been stymied this year.

Given the complex proposals to dramatically increase U.S. aid and involvement in Central America in FY84 (supplemental) and FY85, it is very possible that the 1984 foreign aid bill will not be approved by Congress and funding will, once again, rely solely on the appropriations process.

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NICARAGUA

"Nothing Will Stop This Revolution"

Vestiges of pluralism remain, but the Sandinistas steadily tighten their grip



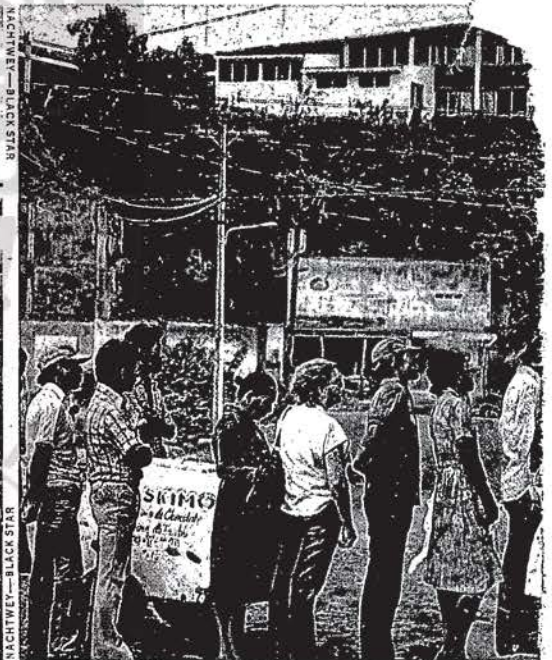
The country's leaders have proclaimed it the Year of the Militarization of the Process. And, indeed, almost everywhere in revolutionary Nicaragua there are signs of a nation girding for war. In the capital of Managua and throughout the countryside, youthful reservists, peasants and members of so-called mass organizations are being armed and dispatched to the borders under the red-and-black banners of the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front. Along roadsides and on the adobe walls of village buildings, posters inveigh against the evils of "Yankee imperialism." Other placards extol "rev-

olutionary heroes" who have fought against and died in a U.S.-backed "counterrevolutionary" threat. In local schools, factories and farming cooperatives, activists exhort citizens to volunteer for militia duty. Under a new conscription law that went into effect this month, Nicaragua, which already has the largest armed forces in Central America, will be able to double the size of its military, to 250,000 troops.

There is another kind of mobilization in Nicaragua: a daily muster to find food. Men, women and children line up outside government-run "supermarkets of the people" in Managua and other cities.

Their hope is to be first for whatever minimal, unpredictable rations of meat and chicken may be available that day. Even the early risers are frequently disappointed. At a typical scramble, housewives confront a butcher who tells them that the meat locker is empty and he has "no idea" when more supplies will arrive. Milk and fish are scarce, fresh eggs are the rarest of treats, and produce counters display only limp, miserable specimens of vegetables and fruit.

In some lush corners of Nicaragua, food shortages are not a problem. At a doctor's ranch-style home in a tree-lined southern suburb of Managua, thick chur-



Jet Threat

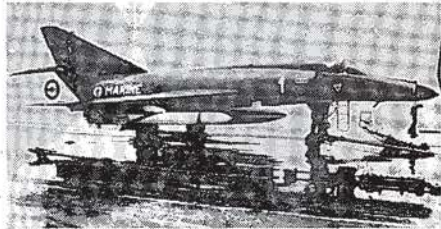
New Persian Gulf equation?

For the past three years, Iraq and Iran have been like scorpions in a bottle, stuck in a war that seemingly has no end. Well over 100,000 from both sides have been killed; thousands more have been taken prisoners. Now, a new element may enter the grim struggle, possibly altering its scope and stakes: according to French press reports, neither confirmed nor denied by the authorities over the weekend, the French government is sending to Iraq five highly sophisticated Super Etendard fighter-bombers. The planes, flown by French pilots, were said to have taken off from Landivisiau air base in Brittany, bound for southern France or Corsica prior to being handed over to Iraq.

Iraq has already received from France 20 Exocet air-to-surface missiles, the same weapon that the Argentines used to such deadly effect against the British in the Falklands war last year. Once the Super Etendards are equipped with the Exocets, the Iraqis would have a weapons system capable of hitting and blocking Iranian oil facilities that still ship an estimated 2.2 million bbl. per day of crude.

The Iranian government has warned that if its oil installations are threatened in any way, it will shut down ship traffic in the gulf by bottling up the entrance at the Strait of Hormuz. Such a move would seriously disrupt the lifeline of gulf oil, most notably from Saudi Arabia, to the rest of the world. About 50% of Japan's oil imports, nearly 40% of Western Europe's and 10% of the U.S.'s come from the region.

In past weeks, officials from the U.S., Britain, West Germany and several gulf nations have expressed their misgivings to



Super Etendard of French navy

the government of President François Mitterrand about the jet delivery. Paris did hold up the transfer for three weeks, partly because the government did not want the news to come out before Mitterrand's speech on nuclear disarmament at the United Nations late last month. But French officials have also argued that the Super Etendards might, in fact, persuade the Iranians to pursue a negotiated settlement—to which Iraq is already pledged—thus ending the bloodshed. The French have another, less noble reason: Iraq owes France between \$5 billion and \$7 billion for previous arms deliveries. If Baghdad loses the war, Paris has little hope of collecting.



Getting to know you: protected by sandbags, members of rival factions confer

LEBANON

Risky Business

Syria ups the ante again

Shipping arms to the Middle East is like carrying coals to Newcastle, but the news last week still brought shudders. Already a formidable player in the area, Syria will soon boast an even stronger hand. According to U.S. officials, the Soviet Union is preparing to send a new type of mobile battlefield missile, the SS-21, to Syria for the first time. The surface-to-surface weapon, developed in 1976 and never before deployed outside the Warsaw Pact nations, has a range of about 75 miles. Its immediate predecessor, the FROG-7, could go only 40 miles. Armed with the more accurate SS-21s, the Syrians would now be able to reach targets far inside Israel, as well as ships of the U.S. Sixth Fleet off the coast of Lebanon.

The Syrians are already equipped with FROG-7s and the older Scud missiles, along with batteries of SA-5 surface-to-air weapons manned by Soviet military officers. Since the Syrians seem extremely reluctant to risk a direct attack against Israel, the SS-21 deployment is viewed as a political response to the buildup of U.S. naval power along the Lebanese coast. Observed President Reagan during his weekly radio talk last Saturday: "We have to wonder aloud about Syrian protestations of their peaceful intentions."

Meanwhile, the government of Amin Gemayel announced last week that "new difficulties" had prevented Lebanon's multitudinous factions from agreeing on a time and place for their national reconciliation meeting. "New" difficulties? The problems seemed as new as Cain and Abel. If Lebanon's warring sects are given a chance to disagree, they will. This time, Suleiman Eranjeh, a former President (1970-76) and one of the leaders of the Syrian-backed National Salvation Front,

announced that he would not attend any conference held in Lebanon, while Camille Chamoun, head of the right-wing Christian-Lebanese Front, declared that he would not show up at talks convened outside the country.

The solution turned out to be the classic one: appoint a commission to study the dispute. Beirut Radio announced that a steering committee representing the country's sparring groups would meet this week to pave the way for the promised discussions on a fairer division of national power. The compromise came about after a meeting in New York City between Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal.

Since the cease-fire accord worked out by Saudi Arabia and the U.S. went into effect two weeks ago, the Syrian government has relentlessly asserted its influence over Lebanese affairs. Faced with Syrian opposition, Gemayel and the U.S. backed away from their suggestion that the U.N. monitor the cease-fire. The latest proposal calls for the observers to be drawn from U.N. forces now in Lebanon, but to keep them outside U.N. jurisdiction. Another alternative: ask nonaligned nations, such as India and Greece, to supply the truce policemen.

Signs of Syrian influence could be detected elsewhere. Franjeh told TIME Middle East Bureau Chief William Stewart that the first topic on the summit's agenda must be the rejection of last May's Israeli-Lebanese accord, which called for the total withdrawal of Israeli troops in exchange for closer ties between the two countries. Unless that is done, Franjeh warned, "no member of the commission will discuss any other point." Such a move would fulfill Syrian President Hafez Assad's short-term goal: to nullify Israel's political gains in Lebanon. That would be an important step on the way to his ultimate objective: a government in Beirut that is sympathetic, if not subservient, to Syrian interests.

World

dressed at least some of Nicaragua's crying social needs.

One showcase of Sandinista popularity is Barrio Riguero (pop. 11,000), an eastern slum neighborhood of Managua that was the scene of serious street fighting against Somoza. Spray-painted revolutionary slogans adorn virtually every ramshackle wall. Pigs root through street trash, and mothers bathe squealing infants in concrete laundry sinks in cramped backyards. A notable change in the landscape, however, is a tiny, spotless health post in the district. In four modest examining rooms, crisply attired nurses provide basic diagnostic and preventive care for anyone who wants it, free of charge.

A different kind of novelty in Barrio Riguero is the network of block associations, known as Sandinista Defense Committees (C.D.S.), that blankets the neighborhood. Modeled on similar organizations in Cuba, the committees provide a Sandinista-controlled conduit for a variety of needs, like monitoring local health-care requirements. But the committees also provide a means to disseminate Sandinista propaganda, call pro-government political rallies and arbitrate mundane neighborhood disputes.

The C.D.S. function that arouses the most concern is "revolutionary vigilance," meaning that committee volunteers keep careful tabs on every movement in the area. Suspicious activities are reported to the police and the local Sandinista chain of command. Government officials describe the C.D.S. as being little different from a U.S. block association. According to others, however, revolutionary vigilance is used to call out Nicaragua's highly organized security police and to unleash Sandinista mobs against anyone who is labeled a counterrevolutionary. Says a young Sandinista in a classically Orwellian turn of phrase: "There is no repression in Nicaragua. Just people keeping an eye on each other."

In El Dorado, a tidy, single-family haven of the Nicaraguan managerial middle class, just across the highway from Barrio Riguero, there is little enthusiasm for the system. Many El Dorado residents spurn the social welfare services of the block committees. But they seem acutely aware that the vigilance system is active. One El Dorado householder, the manager of a local pharmaceutical plant, chooses his words carefully as he says, "I am not an enemy of the revolution, but I am not in agreement with it." The manager testifies to the group pressure that the C.D.S. can bring to bear on dissidents. Says he: "If you are not a Sandinista, it is a crime; they call you a reactionary. There is no freedom of speech."

Other ambiguous benefits are attached to another area where the government claims to have made social strides: education. One of the earliest Sandinista triumphs was a "popular literacy campaign" in which thousands of teachers brought the Nicaraguan illiteracy rate down to a mere 12% in one year. The government now claims that 1 million Nicaraguans of all ages are enrolled in some kind of education program, up from 500,000 in 1979. But the system is suffering from rapid expansion: poorly educated teachers, too few textbooks, no paper. The consequences have been severe. Last year 53% of Nicaraguan first-graders were not promoted.

On the surface, the Sandinistas have done little to alter the basic three-Rs curriculum in the country's elementary schools. Still, there are disquieting signs that the educational system is being used as a propaganda outlet for the government. The government's newly issued primer at first seems to be little more than a Dick-and-Jane clone. But one of the examples of words beginning with the letter *d* is *defense*, and it is accompanied by a photograph of soldiers. "Valiant militias

march into the plaza," the caption reads. "The militias are from the people. The pueblo is ready for defense." In secondary schools, liberal disciplines in the Nicaraguan social sciences and humanities have been downgraded or replaced by courses on revolutionary history and Marxist economics and sociology. Even a natural science class at one of Managua's largest public schools includes a lesson on the alleged exploitation of the Third World by multinational corporations.

The same process has taken place at Nicaragua's Jesuit-run University of Central America. The social sciences are dominated by the Marxist disciplines of historical and dialectical materialism. There are also ugly signs of political intimidation on campus. A philosophy professor was recently expelled from the university after members of the so-called Sandinista Youth held protests outside her office. Her crime: in an interview she said, "If a university professor is not in agreement with the Sandinista Front, the Sandinista Youth consider you a counterrevolutionary."

Comparable principles of harassment and intimidation have been applied by the Sandinistas to the country's three main opposition political parties and its handful of independent labor unions. Roving Sandinista gangs known as *turbas* (mobs) have broken up meetings and stoned the houses of leaders. The Sandinistas claim no direct responsibility, and in fact there is evidence that the government has moved to quiet the *turbas*. Still, the net result has been to leave most of the country's remaining opposition spokesmen cowed, or at least in a state of uneasy truce with the government and its overwhelming monopoly of force.

The most bizarre Sandinista double standards seem to apply to the media. Nicaragua's two Sandinista-owned television stations offer a cultural hodgepodge without seeming to be ideologically bi-

The vanguard: three militia battalions parade in Managua before going out to fight, left; young loyalist hoists the Sandinista banner



rasco steaks wait beside an outdoor barbecue grill as some 20 weekend guests sip cocktails and pick at turtle egg and black conch appetizers. Half a dozen children race through the garden to the swimming pool. Most of the guests are middle-aged relatives. They talk little of politics but much of their kin who have left for the U.S. There is only a brief flare-up of political emotion as a woman berates her brother-in-law for the behavior of his son, who is a high-ranking member of the Sandinista Party. The man listens to the tirade with his head down. Finally, he lifts his eyes and declares, "My son is not a Communist. I'm convinced that he is not."

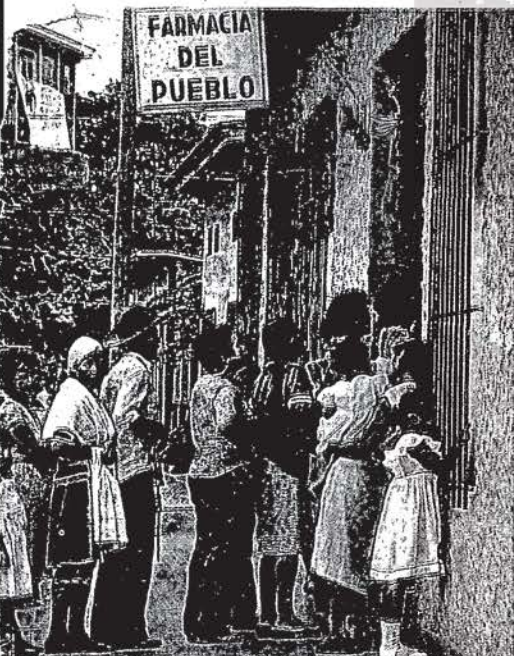
That sense of political separation is common among members of the rapidly dwindling middle and upper classes in Nicaragua (pop. 2.9 million). Their feeling of disquiet about the country's future is loudly echoed by the Reagan Administration. In Washington's view, Nicaragua and its four-year-old Sandinista government have emerged as a new and threatening variety of Marxist-Leninist rule on

the mainland of the Americas. The Reagan Administration has not hesitated to signal its concern by military means: a fleet of U.S. warships has been conducting "readiness exercises" off Nicaraguan shores, while 3,500 U.S. troops have assembled across the border in Honduras for the largest series of war games ever held in Central America. Most important, the U.S. is continuing to provide covert support to thousands of Nicaraguan insurgents, known as *contras* (counterrevolutionaries), whose hit-and-run attacks along Nicaragua's northern and southern borders have, according to the Sandinistas, claimed more than 700 lives. President Reagan has justified U.S. support for the *contras* by accusing the Sandinistas of having "betrayed" their countrymen, calling the junta members "counterfeit revolutionaries who wear fatigues and drive around in Mercedes sedans."

Four years after the popular uprising that overthrew the bloody and grasping dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza Debayle, Nicaragua is still lurching through

an erratic political and social transformation, in which many of the ultimate goals of the regime are, at best, haphazardly defined. Consequently, Nicaragua abounds in paradox and ambiguity as its leadership claims to be launched upon a new experiment: an attempt to align Marxism-Leninism with the principles of political pluralism and democracy. Says a sympathetic American observer: "The Sandinistas really like to believe they have invented a new way, a *laissez-faire*, non-structured Marxism in which people, if given a free choice, will naturally become more socialist."

While this may have been the intention of the Sandinistas, the reality is different. No one could deny that drastic social change of some kind was inevitable in Nicaragua after the 1979 revolution. Under Somoza, the country had an illiteracy rate (50%) and a health-care record (infant mortality: 46 per 1,000 live births) high even in a region notorious for its backwardness and poverty. The Sandinistas can claim with justification to have ad-



Paradox and ambiguity (clockwise from left): a belligerent plea for peace; queue at a pharmacy; a Catholic procession; hanging on to a crowded bus; learning to read; healing a child; mourning a Sandinista militiaman



ased: everything from documentaries on Cuban classical dancers to delayed showings of U.S. major league baseball games to reruns of *Lou Grant*. Print is another matter. The Sandinistas own or control two daily newspapers, the pro-government *Nuevo Diario* and the official Sandinista paper *Barricada*. Both provide a predictable medley of government propaganda, while the only opposition newspaper, *La Prensa*, is subject to strict censorship.

That newspaper's editors are forbidden to print anything negative about the Sandinistas either at home or abroad; criticism of Cuba, the Soviet Union or any other East bloc country; local stories about unclaimed bodies in the Managua morgue; reports on Nicaraguan unemployment; and news analysis that criticizes both the U.S. and the Soviet Union for their Central American policies. The very mention of censorship is forbidden.

The reason for the strict daily supervision, says State Censor Nelba Blandon, is that "*La Prensa* always distorts reality." But the censor's decisions can be capricious. For example, one *La Prensa* headline saying that Nicaragua's seasonal rains had not arrived on schedule was suppressed for fear that it would cause general alarm. *La Prensa* Editor Pedro Joaquín Chamorro (see box) also accuses the government of deliberately delaying the return of censored copy so as to prevent the paper from coming out in time for workers to buy it on their way home. According to Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomás Borge Martínez, the fact that the newspaper survives at all is "just another example of how this government supports freedom of the press." In fact, the Sandinistas allow *La Prensa* to stay in business because they realize that it has become a kind of test case of their commitment to pluralism.

Another target for Sandinista transformation is the Roman Catholic Church. In a Managua slum, the squat, red brick and stained-glass Santa María de los Angeles church has become a shrine of Nicaragua's new, revolutionary "popular religion." Inside the building, a painting depicts "Christ the Peasant" struggling under a crucifix; another panel features cherubim escorting slain fighters to heaven under the Sandinista flag. Says the local priest, Father Uriel Molina: "Revolutionary values are now in the everyday faith of the people."

Churchmen who do not accept the new credo get short shrift. The country's archbishop, Miguel Obando y Bravo, was long ago deprived of the right to give a televised sermon on Sundays without prior censorship; other priests have come



Junta Coordinator Daniel Ortega Saavedra



Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal



Minister of the Interior Tomás Borge

Trying to transform a country, with haphazardly defined ideas and goals.

in for selective abuse. Perhaps the most famous Sandinista attempt at intimidation came last March, when hecklers in Managua attempted to shout down Pope John Paul II during his Central American tour. The nation's best-known radical priest, Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal, later declared that the Pope was "against pluralism. He wants everyone to think like himself."

The Sandinistas are particularly proud of their major economic program, land reform. The Nicaraguan effort, they say, is more flexible and productive than similar U.S.-sponsored reforms in El Salvador. In four years, the Sandinistas claim, Nicaragua has moved from an agrarian economy in which 2% of the population owned the largest and most lucrative holdings to one where 23% of the rural population works on state farms and 15% in new cooperatives, and the remaining 62% enjoy private land ownership.

Nicaraguan human rights observers tell a different story. According to the Managua-based Permanent Commission on Human Rights, private ownership in Nicaragua, as codified in Articles 27 and 31 of the Statute on the Rights and Guarantees of the Nicaraguan People, now means only the "right to the use of the land" and to "receive the fruits of some-

thing not belonging to oneself." The regime has also reneged on promises to respect "responsible" private ownership by passing new decrees allowing the confiscation of property with government-determined compensation for reasons of "public utility." Says a prosperous Nicaraguan cotton farmer: "That is why there are so few of us left who are staying and reinvesting. They can take your land if they decide it is underutilized. If you show them it is really producing far above average yields, they can also confiscate it as a model for national priority."

The chaos that the Sandinista economic measures have spread is one reason for the shortages that have allowed sardonic Nicaraguans to dub Managua "the capital of queues." So far as the Sandinistas are concerned, the problem is simply being called "distribution," meaning a chronic short supply of operating buses and trucks in the country due to a lack of imported spare parts. The government blames that shortage on the U.S. for leading a campaign to cut off Nicaragua's international credit at a time when the country is staggering beneath an estimated \$3 billion in foreign debt. "If we do not have oil, bread and soap, it is the fault of aggressor imperialism," declares a typically hostile sign outside a low-income housing project in Managua.

The shortage of goods poses the danger of creating disaffection among the poor, whose interests the revolutionaries claim to represent. Many of the Sandinista leaders have moved into the luxury residences vacated by Somoza supporters who fled the country; members of the regime's elite 25,000-strong Sandinista People's Army have access to special gasoline supplies, duty-free stores and food outlets. Says a matronly nurse in a health clinic: "The situation is critical. The Sandinista leadership has benefited from this revolution but not the masses. I am 100% Sandinista, but not their type of Sandinista."

Complaints of that kind are more likely to come from older Nicaraguans. In general, the country's youth is still very sympathetic to the revolution, and many blame their hardships on "Yankee imperialism." Says Antonia García, a Managua church administrator: "Adults do not want to change their ways, but young people view the changes with enthusiasm."

The government has exploited that enthusiasm by invoking the threat of the CIA-backed *contras*. The Sandinistas began cracking down on dissent shortly after their 1979 takeover, and to impose a tough "emergency law" in March 1982 they seized upon an incident in which *contras* blew up two bridges near the Honduran border. Among the law's provisions: prior

ensorship and detention without due process. As the *contra* attacks have continued, the Sandinistas have successfully appealed to nationalist sentiment while using the external menace as an excuse for not fulfilling earlier promises. Says Junta Coordinator Daniel Ortega Saavedra: "For a country to achieve democracy, it needs stability." The Sandinistas have also discovered that the fervor of their young people has provided them with an effective, albeit inexperienced corps of militiamen eager to confront the enemy.

Typical of the young reservists is Miguel Sarria, 24, a truck mechanic from the southern city of Chichigalpa, who recently served in the border militia near the center of Ocotal. Sarria has lost two close friends to *contra* fire. "Nothing will stop this revolution," he says defiantly.

A U.S. analyst in the region agrees. "I don't see how the revolution can be dislodged or pre-empted," he asserts. But, in his view, the pressures in favor of maintaining some semblance of pluralism are still strong enough to prevent Nicaragua from becoming another Cuba soon. The analyst adds: "My guess is that Nicaragua will remain a relatively pluralistic Marxist state for some time."

Last month the Sandinistas made a concession by announcing legislative approval of a law recognizing that opposition political parties could be formed with the goal of "achieving political power." How that might occur is still unclear; the Sandinistas have promised to hold elections by 1985, but so far they have not determined the stakes in the race, or even the election rules.

The Sandinistas profess little concern about the fact that an estimated 77,000 Nicaraguans have fled the country in the past four years. "We made no promises to the bourgeoisie," says Junta Member Sergio Ramirez Mercado. "We made no promises to the U.S. We made our promises to the poor." Indeed, the Sandinistas repeatedly assert that continued U.S. hostility, particularly through support of the *contras*, guarantees a continued clampdown in Nicaragua. Warns Ortega: "The Reagan Administration can force us to take steps we do not want to take." Still unanswered is the question of what course Ortega and his colleagues would follow if they could not conveniently blame the U.S. for their own actions.

—By George Russell. Reported by Timothy Loughran, William McWhirter and Alessandra Stanley/Managua

A House Divided

Like other revolutions of thought and arms, the new Nicaraguan order has set friend against friend, brother against brother. Four years after the overthrow of Dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle, one remarkable family embodies the ideological divisions that tear at the fabric of the country: the old and respected Chamorro clan, a wealthy political and publishing dynasty that has given Nicaragua four Presidents and three generations of newspaper publishers. In their differing and passionately held points of view, the Chamorros are a microcosm of a nation at odds with itself.

Disharmony is new to them. For more than 40 years, the family was united in its opposition to the harsh and repressive regimes of successive members of the Somoza family. For three decades, that opposition was led by Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, brilliant and unflinching editor of the Managua daily *La Prensa*. On Jan. 10, 1978, Chamorro, 53, was gunned down on his way to the office by Somoza henchmen. The apparent motive: retaliation for a *La Prensa* disclosure that a blood bank owned in part by Somoza was selling much needed blood abroad at a profit.

Chamorro's assassination catalyzed the national rebellion that was already building against the regime, and subsequently served to sunder the bereaved family. In 1980, only a year after the revolution, the newspaper was paralyzed by a struggle between family members who supported the new Sandinista government and those critical of its Marxist-Leninist tendencies. The conservatives won, and Chamorro's brother Xavier, editor of *La Prensa*, left to form his own newspaper, taking most of the staff with him. Today Chamorro's widow, his brothers and sisters and four children are arrayed in almost equal numbers on opposing sides of the country's political battleground.

All three daily newspapers in Managua are published by

Chamorros, each with a different editorial line. *La Prensa* (circ. 56,000) is now jointly edited by Chamorro's eldest son and namesake, Pedro Joaquín, 32. Chamorro's cousin Pablo Antonio Cuadra, 71, and uncle Jaime Chamorro, 49, *El Nuevo Diario* (circ. 48,000), edited by Xavier, 50, is solidly pro-government. *Barricada* (circ. 80,000), edited by Chamorro's youngest son, Carlos Fernando, 27, is the official paper of the Sandinista movement.

The women in the family are also sharply divided in their political loyalties. Pedro Chamorro's widow Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, 54, served briefly in the first five-member junta after the revolution. The appointment was primarily symbolic, to honor her slain husband, and after a few months she resigned for reasons of health. She now openly opposes the Sandinistas. Chamorro's daughter Christiana, 31, also became disenchanted with the Sandinistas and left her civil service job in the press office of the Council of State two years after the Sandinistas came to power. Daughter Claudia, 30, an artist, continues to work for the Ministry of Culture, however, and is planning to study in Cuba.

As the reluctant matriarch of the divided clan, Violeta strives to keep politics out of the spacious white stone family residence in the center of Managua, a house in which other Chamorros gather regularly. "We don't discuss politics at home," she says firmly. "In this house, we are still a family." That is not always easy. Says Carlos, "Things will never be as they were before. It's hard."

But he also asserts that *La Prensa* under his brother's editorship is infiltrated by counterrevolutionaries and funded by the CIA. Pedro, meanwhile, scoffs at Carlos' belief that government censorship is necessary: "I'd like to see him be told to take out this, rewrite this, cut this. Believe me, he wouldn't like it at all." Asked to characterize this disparate brood, a family friend notes that the elder Chamorro was a man of passionate beliefs and considerable complexity. He observes: "No one child is exactly like the father. To me, it's as if each child inherited one facet of his personality."



Pedro Chamorro of *La Prensa*



Xavier Chamorro of *Diario*

EMBAJADA DE NICARAGUA
1627 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009

August 2, 1983

Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal
Director
Latin American Affairs Dept.
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Rabbi Rosenthal:

At our meeting on June 6, 1983, also attended by Mr. Abraham H. Foxman, Mr. I. Barry Mehler and Mr. Jess Hordes, I promised that my Government would investigate the charges that you made in your ADL Bulletin article, accusing Nicaragua of being "a country without Jews, but not without anti-Semitism."

These accusations were deeply disturbing to my Government which, as you know, came to power on July 19, 1979 as a result of a popular Revolution that overthrew the cruelly repressive and corrupt Somoza dictatorship. In sharp contrast to its predecessor, the new Government dedicated itself to the establishment and protection of all fundamental human rights, including the right to free exercise of one's religious beliefs.

My Government's commitment to religious freedom was manifested in the Fundamental Statute of the Republic, promulgated on July 20, 1979, which guarantees to all Nicaraguans the absolute right to freedom of religion. (Title II, Article 8). The Government also promulgated, as one of its earliest official enactments, the Statute of Rights and Guarantees of the Nicaraguan People. (Decree No. 52, August 21, 1979). Title II of that Statute, entitled "Individual, Civil and Political Rights," states that:

"All persons are equal before the Law and have the right to equal protection. There will be no discrimination based on birth, race, color, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, economic position or any other social condition.

"It is the obligation of the State to remove, by all available means, the obstacles that in fact impede

the equality of citizens and their participation in the political, economic and social life of the country."

Thus, from the first days after the triumph of our Revolution, our fundamental law has guaranteed Nicaraguan Jews, as well as other Nicaraguans, full freedom of religion and has prohibited any form of discrimination against them based on their religious beliefs or practice.

The specific activities alleged in the ADL Bulletin article -- the forced expulsion of all Jews from Nicaragua, confiscation of Jewish-owned properties, and confiscation and desecration of the Jewish community's synagogue -- are all prohibited by our fundamental laws, described above, as well as morally reprehensible. Thus, the allegations have been thoroughly and objectively investigated by, among others, the Nicaraguan Commission on Protection and Promotion of Human Rights.

Based on the findings of this Commission, I can now assure you that Nicaragua's Jewish citizens have fully enjoyed the protections of these laws, and that the accusations made in the ADL Bulletin article are false. Indeed, the Commission's investigation firmly establishes the contrary of what was reported in the article: in truth, Nicaragua today is a country with Jews and without anti-Semitism.

I am setting forth below the facts, found by the Commission, that refute the allegations appearing in the article. Beyond presenting you with these facts, however, I wish, by this letter, to renew my invitation to you, or your representatives, to come to Nicaragua so that you can decide for yourself what the facts really are. On such a visit you would be encouraged to meet and speak with members of our Jewish community, Commission members, Government leaders and others of your choosing. I am confident that, after such a visit, you will realize that my Government abhors anti-Semitism, as it abhors every other form of racial, religious or ethnic prejudice, and that it has guaranteed that Nicaraguan Jews will continue to freely enjoy all of the same rights and privileges as their fellow Nicaraguan citizens.

I will now address the specific allegations of your article.

First, you allege that, upon coming to power, my Government "succeeded in driving the entire small Jewish community -- numbering about 50 -- into exile" so that, today, Nicaragua is "a country without Jews." This is completely untrue, as is evident from the fact that there still exists in Nicaragua today a prospering Jewish community that practices its religion and maintains its identity freely and openly and without any interference from any source. Some of the more prominent members of this community are:

Bernardo Sehtam Gorn -- Mr. Sehtam, who resides in his own home in the exclusive "Las Colinas" neighborhood of Managua, owns the largest electronics supplies business ("Radio Centro") in the country. His volume of business is such that he is among those individuals with the highest net income in Nicaragua. He travels freely back and forth to Miami, where he also conducts business. None of his property has ever been confiscated or interfered with by the Government.

Cesar Tiommo -- Mr. Tiommo and his wife, Cecilia Kanarek, own an ice cream factory ("Lacmiel") and a restaurant (of the same name) in Managua. They are also partners in a prosperous business ("Refricentro") that sells accessories for refrigerators. Like Mr. Sehtam, Mr. and Mrs. Tiommo live in their own home in the "Las Colinas" neighborhood of Managua. Mr. Tiommo has advised the Commission he has never been persecuted for being Jewish, nor have any of his properties been touched by the Government, nor has he encountered any obstacles in his business activities.

Jaime Levy -- Mr. Levy resides in his own home in the "Los Robles" neighborhood of Managua, and he is the owner of a fabric importation business. He has declared to the Commission that he has conducted his business in the same manner since the Revolution as before it and that he has never observed anyone trying to hinder him in any way for being Jewish.

Other prominent Nicaraguan Jews are: Margarita Retelny, resident of Managua and owner of an automobile supply store in that city; Matias Wosk, who lives and has commercial and agricultural properties in Esteli; Rolando Najlis, a former businessman, now retired, who lives in Managua. Mr. Najlis, while living in Europe during the Second World War, was deported to a Nazi concentration camp. His daughter, Michele: fought with the popular forces against the Somoza dictatorship; has served my Government as a lieutenant in the Popular Sandinista Army and chief of the office of immigration and emigration; now works as the art critic for the independent newspaper El Nuevo Diario; and is considered one of Nicaragua's finest living poets.

I believe it would be most informative for you to speak with these people, and others of your choosing, personally, and I hope you will do so. They will assure you, as I do, that Nicaraguan Jews have not been expelled from the country, that those who emigrated did so voluntarily, and that all Nicaraguan Jews presently living abroad -- except those who actively collaborated with the Somoza dictatorship -- are welcome to return to Nicaragua at any time.

Your article also accuses my Government of confiscating all properties owned by Nicaragua's Jews. "Throughout the capital, Jewish-owned property has been confiscated," you wrote. This, too, is false. First, as stated above, the members of Nicaragua's existing Jewish community own their own homes, businesses and other property; nothing has been taken from them by the Government. Second, a number of Nicaraguan Jews now living abroad still own property in Nicaragua; none of their property has been taken or touched by the Government. Some examples are: Mr. Roberto Kellerman and his wife Frimer, who own the clothing store "Palacio de Modas" in Managua; Eliecer Globermann, who has a large real estate business and commercial real estate holdings in Managua; and Bertha Schubez, who owns the store "La Economia" in Managua. These living examples plainly disprove the accusation that Jewish-owned property has been confiscated.

To be sure, my Government has confiscated some

properties belonging to Nicaraguan citizens or former Nicaraguan citizens. In a few cases -- a very small minority of them -- the affected persons happened to be Jewish. But in no case -- I repeat, in no case -- was the owner's religion the cause of the confiscation. Rather, these properties were confiscated because of the owners' close allegiance to and active support for Somoza and his criminal dictatorship. Thus, pursuant to Decree No. 3, promulgated on July 20, 1979, all properties belonging to the Somoza family, to members of the National Guard and to officials of the dictatorial regime were confiscated in the name of the Nicaraguan people. Similarly, by Decree No. 38, promulgated on August 8, 1979, properties belonging to those persons who actively supported Somoza and his dictatorship were confiscated in the name of the Nicaraguan people.

Just as there were Nicaraguan Jews who fought heroically alongside their non-Jewish compatriots in the popular struggle to oust the dictatorship, there were some Nicaraguan Jews who supported the dictatorship and helped maintain it in power. Those Nicaraguan Jews in the latter category were affected -- as part of a group that was more than 99% composed of non-Jews -- by Decrees No. 3 and 38.

In the case of the the two individuals mentioned in your article, Mr. Abraham Gorn and Mr. Isaac Stavisky, their properties were confiscated pursuant to Decree No. 38, because they were active supporters of the Somoza dictatorship. The evidence establishing the complicity of these two men with Somoza is very strong. Mr. Gorn, for example, was a regular contributor of funds to Somoza and his Nationalist Liberal Party; he was among the select few Somoza intimates who regularly made "birthday" donations to his "Jefe," as he generally called Somoza. He once characterized his generous support of Somoza as follows: "if at any moment we have to risk all of our capital to defend Gen. Somoza, we are always ready to do it." Because of his loyalty to Somoza, Mr. Gorn was permitted to conduct business with the National Guard; only trusted Somoza supporters were given this privilege.

In January 1979, Mr. Gorn conspired with Jose Somoza, Chief of the National Guard, and with other National Guard officers with whom he was personally friendly, to set

fire to his textile factory, blame the fire on the popular forces opposing the dictatorship, and collect the insurance proceeds. This illegal scheme was, in fact, carried out and resulted in the unjust enrichment of Mr. Gorn and his co-conspirators, at the expense of the defrauded insurance company. Eyewitnesses have provided my Government with detailed accounts of all phases of this criminal enterprise.

After the triumph of our Revolution, it was discovered that Mr. Gorn was falsifying his business records in order to avoid his legal obligation to pay sales and income taxes. He was selling merchandise without sales receipts, and depositing the proceeds in his personal account, rather than the account of the corporation making the sale. Thus, no record of the sale or the income from it appeared on the corporation's books. Mr. Gorn also engaged in decapitalization of his businesses, which is prohibited by our laws. By various devices and artifices, he stripped the assets of his Nicaraguan businesses and sent them abroad.

In March 1980, for the foregoing reasons, Mr. Gorn's remaining properties in Nicaragua were confiscated. As far as Mr. Gorn himself is concerned, he was briefly detained shortly after the overthrow of the dictatorship, because of his collaboration with Somoza. As your article acknowledges, my Government ordered his release, pending further investigation of the charges against him. He immediately sought asylum in the Embassy of Costa Rica in Managua. My Government granted his request for safe passage to Costa Rica. At the time he left Nicaragua, Mr. Gorn was personally indebted to the National Bank of Development (Government-owned) for C\$3,740,781.52, plus interest (more than US\$370,000.00). He has made no principal or interest payments on this debt. Nor has he paid any of the sales or income taxes that he owes to the Government.

Like Mr. Gorn, Mr. Stavisky -- his son-in-law -- was also an active Somoza supporter affected by Decree No. 38. Moreover, at the time Mr. Stavisky's businesses were confiscated, they each had substantial unpaid income tax liabilities to the Government that exceeded their net worth and each had been abandoned for some time. One of these businesses, a manufacturer of textiles, owed the Government

its confiscation; the other, a manufacturer of candies, owed the Government more than C\$6,000,000.

Thus, as you can see, the allegation that my Government confiscated the properties of Mr. Gorn or Mr. Stavisky because of their religion is completely without foundation. Indeed, the only discrimination my Government has made is between those Nicaraguans -- Jews and non-Jews alike -- who collaborated with the Somoza dictatorship and those who did not. Nicaraguan Jews -- including Mr. Gorn's own nephew, Bernardo Sehtam Gorn -- who gave no support to the dictatorship are continuing to freely enjoy the use and benefits of their property without any interference by the Government.

Your article also accuses my Government of confiscation and desecration of the Nicaraguan Jewish community's synagogue. This, too, was thoroughly investigated by the Commission. The Commission determined that the following had transpired with respect to the synagogue:

1. The original synagogue, publicly registered in the name of the "Israelite Congregation," was destroyed in the December 1972 earthquake.

2. The land and building occupied by the new synagogue belonged to a private company owned by Mr. Eliecer Globermann; this company contracted to sell the property to the "Israelite Congregation" in 1975.

3. However, there was never an inscription in the public registry to record this transaction, as required by law.

4. Prior to the overthrow of the dictatorship the synagogue itself had been abandoned and looted. When the popular forces arrived in Managua, the building was inhabited by homeless families.

5. The building remained occupied by these families for approximately two years; during this time, no one claimed the property.

6. Ultimately, the Government relocated the occupants to new housing that had been constructed for them, and converted the building into a children's center.

7. In installing the children's center, the Government acted on the premise that the building was abandoned private property, and had no knowledge that it was owned by the "Israelite Congregation" because such ownership was never publicly registered.

Based upon these findings, Commander of the Revolution Tomas Borge Martinez, Minister of the Interior, has declared that if the synagogue "is in fact patrimony of the Jewish community, the Government will facilitate its return." This remains my Government's position.

I must vigorously protest your comment -- when you characterized an earlier similar offer, conveyed by then-Minister of Justice Dr. Carlos Arguello Gomez, as "a meaningless promise in a country without Jews" -- as both inaccurate and unfair. As shown above, Nicaragua is a country with a prospering Jewish community. It would surprise me if this community would consider it "meaningless" for the Government to return this building.

Your article speculates that my Government's alleged "anti-Semitism" is attributable to the nature of its relations with Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. This, too, is completely false. First and foremost, as demonstrated above, there is no anti-Semitism in Nicaragua. Second, my Government regards Nicaraguan Jews in the same manner as it regards Nicaraguan Catholics and Nicaraguan Protestants. Nicaraguan Jews are Nicaraguans; they are not Israelis. Thus, they receive, as they are entitled, all of the benefits and protections of Nicaraguan citizenship. They will continue to enjoy all of these benefits and protections regardless of my Government's relations with Israel or the PLO.

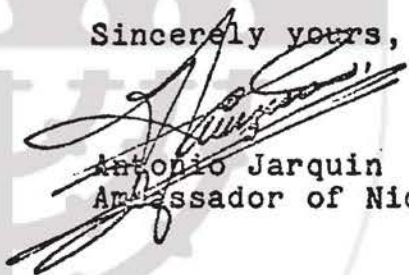
The accusations that you made have caused great harm to Nicaragua. I do not doubt your good faith for a moment. However, others, whose purpose is to disparage my Government in the eyes of U.S. public opinion -- in apparent hopes of

justifying further aggressions against our national territory -- have repeated and sought to sensationalize the charges, without considering or caring whether they are true or false. As a result, your article has set in motion a chain of sharp criticism of my Government which I believe -- as demonstrated above -- is totally unfounded. This is especially unfortunate in view of the fact that the article was written without benefit of first-hand knowledge and appears to have been based on sources of doubtful reliability.

For these reasons, we consider it particularly important that you review the facts presented herein, and that you accept my Government's invitation -- at the earliest possible date -- to come to Nicaragua and see things for yourself. Perhaps then, based on your own review of the facts, you will wish to make a new report to the distinguished readers of the ADL Bulletin.

I look forward to our next meeting.

Sincerely yours,



Antonio Jarquin
Ambassador of Nicaragua

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The U.S. and Nicaragua

With the crisis deepening in Central America, we asked Tomas Borge Martinez, a founding member of the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua, to address American concern about his government's policy—for instance, what it means that the Nicaraguan revolution has not made good on its promises of free elections and whether Nicaragua is so beholden to Cuba or Marxism that it cannot accept restraint for the sake of regional peace. Mr. Borge, who was given the title "Commander of the Revolution" and serves as minister of the interior, cabled his replies to these and other questions.

Tomas Borge Martinez

'An Aggression of Constant Lies, Half-Truths, Accusations'

A great nation gains in honor and prestige by respecting the sovereignty of small, weak nations, rather than by oppressing those who fight to secure their rights.

—A. C. Sandino,
the Nicaraguan general who led the fight
against U.S. Marine intervention in Nicaragua,
1927-33, and served as inspiration for the San-
dinista National Liberation Front.





It is recognized internationally that Nicaragua is the victim of an unjustified military aggression. This aggression is in violation of international laws and the very laws of the United States. As many facts concerning this aggression are well known by now, there is no need to enter into details about it.

There is another, less apparent form of aggression, an aggression of constant lies, half-truths, accusations based on false premises and interpretations motivated by bad faith.

It is obvious that this latter form of aggression was planned months ago in order to justify to an uninformed public a later military aggression. This is an affront to the intelligence and good will of the people of the United States.

What is said of Nicaragua? That the revolution has altered its original program and that the present government has liquidated democratic liberties to establish a totalitarian regime.

Several political parties covering a broad span of the political spectrum are active in Nicaragua today. We distinguish clearly between legitimate opposition and counter-revolutionary opposition: the latter is based on anti-national premises that seek a return to dictatorship and the forfeiting of our people's needs to the interests of other nations.

"Have the American people, after 200 years, forgotten that the United States required 13 years of reorganization before the first national elections were held in 1789?"

We asked our people to give us five years to reorganize a country destroyed by war. Part of this reorganization is setting the institutional bases for elections to be held in 1985. Have the American people, after 200 years, forgotten that the United States required 13 years of reorganization before the first national elections were held in 1789?

Today the process is moving forward. Our council of state is studying the political systems of other countries, including the United States, in order to see what aspects are pertinent to our reality, and to develop our own democracy.

A law of political parties, which guarantees political parties access to power through the electoral process, has been approved by our legislature.

Political pluralism is growing side by side with a strong mixed economy. In 1982, the private sector received 60.5 percent of the credits approved by the banks. That sector also obtained 68.8 percent of the authorized foreign exchange. More than 70 percent of the land and 60 percent of industrial activities are private. The agrarian reform is not based on whether the land is privately held or not; rather, it is founded on the productive use of the land.

Don't these facts disprove the statements made by the government of the United States concerning Nicaragua's political and economic reality?

In Nicaragua today there is a greater percentage of private enterprise than is the case in

countries such as Venezuela, Mexico and Brazil, to state a few examples.

In just four months in 1980 we reduced illiteracy from 51 percent to 12 percent and have developed programs to prevent relapse into illiteracy. The entire child population is incorporated into the school system. (Some of these schools have been attacked by the CIA-financed counterrevolutionary forces.) The number of children attending primary school has doubled, and there is an increase of 53 percent at the secondary level. There has been a 92 percent increase in university registration.

The achievements in health care during the last four years have been greater than the accomplishments during the previous 150 years. We have eliminated diseases such as poliomyelitis, reduced tuberculosis, virtually eradicated malaria, reduced infant mortality by about 50 percent and increased the number of vaccinations by 190 percent. The entire population is incorporated into the program of preventive medicine. Nicaragua is recognized by international organizations to be at the forefront in public health care. Both education and health care are available to our people free of charge.

Is this not respect for human, economic and social rights? Is the Reagan administration fighting against this? What other country in Latin America has accomplished so much in such a short period of time, in spite of sabotage and the opposition of the most powerful country of the planet?



We have been accused of religious persecution. Many religious organizations have stated the contrary.

Since 1979 full freedom of religious expression exists in Nicaragua for the first time in our history. There are 240 priests in the country, most of whom support the revolution. Sixty percent are foreigners. They offer more than 300 masses daily in more than 350 churches located in 155 parishes. Catholic orders, including the Dominicans, Calazans, Jesuits and Maryknolls, as well as dozens of Protestant churches including the Moravians, are all represented in Nicaragua. The Protestant and Evangelical churches have quadrupled their memberships since 1979. Several Catholic priests serve as ministers of state, and a Jesuit priest, Father Fernando Cardenal, is one of the leaders of the Sandinista Youth Organization.

Is this reality consistent with the accusations leveled against us by the government of the United States? And if there are doubts as to whether we have freedom of religion, why don't they come to Nicaragua and see firsthand, as have so many honest and open-minded U.S. citizens who have changed their opinion after visiting our country?

Recently we have been accused of anti-Semitism. In Nicaragua no one is persecuted because of his religion, race or political beliefs. Those who participated directly or indirectly in the genocide carried out against the people of Nicaragua by the Somoza dictatorship were punished. Two individuals of Jewish origin had their properties confiscated because of their involvement in the above-mentioned crimes. We

THE CUANTIFIABLE HARM TO NICARAGUA CAUSED BY CIA IN THE LAST 8 MONTHS, WHICH EXCEED 12% OF OUR TOTAL EXPORTS, IS PROPORTIONALLY EQUIVALENT IN TERMS OF THE U.S. ECONOMY, TO A LOSS OF 25 BILLION DOLLAR. LOSSES IN HUMAN LIFE ONLY IN 1983, ARE PROPORTIONALLY EQUIVALENT TO ALL OF THE DEAD SUFFERED BY THE US. IN VIETNAM WAR.



"If, in the process of reviewing the case of the alleged confiscation of a synagogue, the government finds sufficient grounds to consider the building—though registered in the name of an individual very much linked to the Somoza regime—is in fact patrimony of the Jewish community, the government will facilitate its return."

are sending documentation to Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, who initiated these charges against us. Moreover, we have invited him to come to Nicaragua so he can see for himself how mistaken he has been.

If, in the process of reviewing the case of the alleged confiscation of a synagogue, the government finds sufficient grounds to consider that the building—though registered in the name of an individual very much linked to the Somoza regime—is in fact patrimony of the Jewish community, the government will facilitate its return.

To pose the issue of the Central American crisis as part of the East-West confrontation could be considered ridiculous, if it did not have such dramatic consequences.

When we were fighting against Somoza, the Soviet Union gave neither arms nor advice to us Nicaraguans.

Following the revolutionary victory, Nicaragua has established diplomatic and commercial relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, within the normal parameters that are the rights of all modern states that are fighting to keep from dying.

Our people are fighting to keep from dying of hunger. Our struggle is against hunger and backwardness. Hunger and backwardness create a conflict between the selfishness of bloody dictatorships and the people. What does the East-West conflict have to do with gastroenteritis, illiteracy and the genocide of repressive military rulers?

I think that this argument is a brutal sophism to deceive the people of the United States to justify the aggression of a powerful, rich country against a small, impoverished, weak country. This argument is a deliberate lie whose only force lies in its constant repetition.



Central America has been victimized by dictatorships, each of which might have provided chapter and verse for the apocalypse. It has been calculated that the National Guard, Somoza's army, in the course of nearly half a century, assassinated more than 300,000 Nicaraguans. Since 1954, more than 10,000 persons have been assassinated in Guatemala, and the Salvadorans since 1979 have offered more than 50,000 victims to the holocaust.

They accuse us of being dominated by the Cubans and the Soviets. All Nicaraguans remember that, in the evil hour of Somocismo, the maximum authority in our country was the ambassador of the United States. We overthrew Somoza, fundamentally, in order to be the masters of our own decisions. This is a Sandinista principle of elementary national pride.

I can affirm, with full knowledge of the facts, that neither the Cuban ambassador nor Fidel Castro, with whom we have frequently conversed, nor the Soviet leader, Yuri Andropov, with whom we have also spoken, has ever told us what we must do. To think the contrary would be to accept that we have no criteria of our own, that we are simply puppets. If we were nincompoops, if we were so dishonorable as to sell out to somebody, there can be no doubt whatever that it would be much easier and much more comfortable to sell ourselves to the government of the United States. We Sandinistas never have been, are not and never will be anybody's satellites. The Manichean concept, that a country which has stopped being a satellite of one country has to become a satellite of another country, is simply inconceivable to us.

Our concept of nonalignment is not inconsistent with our right to establish relations with other countries based on the principle of mutual respect. What is more, it is our hope that the United States will become one of these countries. We are not to be blamed that there exist those who maliciously confuse the diversification of our relations with alignment.

"I can confirm, with full knowledge of the facts, that neither the Cuban ambassador nor Fidel Castro, with whom we have frequently conversed, nor the Soviet leader, Yuri Andropov, with whom we have also spoken, has ever told us what to do."



Another accusation that has been launched against Nicaragua is that we are fomenting an arms race in Central America. Let us see what the real facts are:

Nicaragua was first threatened and then invaded. We have the right and the obligation to defend ourselves, as we also have the obligation to not attack other countries. We do not propose to invade Honduras, and neither do we propose—however unnecessary it be to mention this—to invade the United States. Nicaragua has clearly demonstrated over the past four years that it is not a threat to the national security of any country. It is not we who have constructed naval bases in the Gulf of Fonseca, military training bases outside our borders, military air bases from which C130s daily unload munitions. We do not violate the airspace of any country with espionage overflights, nor do we send, against the coasts of any country, powerful naval task forces, complete with aircraft carriers and missile cruisers.

Faced with the escalation of armaments in Central America, clearly directed against us, we have the elemental right of self-defense. In this regard, we are certain that we will receive aid from all around the world, including the American people.

The problem of Central America is not the supposed expansionism of Cuba or the Soviet Union in the region. It is not the aggressiveness of Nicaragua with respect to its neighbors. The problem is the philosophy of the big stick: the inconceivable concept that the United States believes it has the right to decide who should govern our countries, and to become irritable if other peoples determine styles and forms that fail to please whatever U.S. president happens to be in office.

We have made numerous proposals for dialogue, for negotiation. The response of the United States has always been either silence or

an escalation of threats and aggression. It has responded similarly to proposals launched by such countries as Mexico and France. We always insist that our problems are with Honduras, whose territory is being used as a base of U.S. military operations and attacks against Nicaragua.

Because of that, negotiations must be of a bilateral nature with those two countries. The U.S. response, and consequently that of Honduras as well, is that the so-called "regional problem" that Nicaragua supposedly represents must be negotiated multilaterally.

Very well. In order to avoid pretexts, on July 19 we announced that we are disposed to negotiate multilaterally. We proposed a nonaggression pact with Honduras. We proposed the absolute end to all supplies of weapons by any country to the forces in conflict in El Salvador, so that the Salvadoran people may resolve their problems without foreign interference. We proposed an end to the militarization of the area and to the use of any territories to launch aggressions against any other country. We also proposed the noninstallation of military bases and respect for the self-determination of each country. Who can doubt that all of these are measures conducive to peace?

This has been recognized by personalities such as Bernardo Sepulveda, foreign minister of Mexico, who stated publicly that the six-point proposal presented by the government of Nicaragua "is a step forward in the process toward peace in the region."

And what has been the response? In the first instance, the dispatch of powerful naval fleets to "carry out maneuvers" along our Pacific and Atlantic coasts. At the same time, statements that the principal obstacle to peace was "the leftist government of Nicaragua."

But the international reaction remains on the side of reason and common sense. The presidents of Panama, Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica have stated their opposition, as has the president of Mexico, who warned that a generalized war in Central America "would result in victory for neither side" and called on the international community to take steps "to stop the outbreak of an irrational war before it destroys the legitimate yearning for peace and development."

The foreign ministers of France and Japan have also made similar statements. The Social Democratic Party of Germany and the Labor Party of Great Britain have demanded that their respective governments expressly condemn the policy of the United States toward Central America.

"We do not violate the airspace of any country with espionage overflights, nor do we send against the coasts of any country powerful naval task forces, complete with aircraft carriers."

It seems that the unanimous statements in favor of peace and against war have somewhat moderated the U.S. government's language a bit. In its most recent declarations it says that the United States "is not preparing a war" against Nicaragua, and it hopes peace can be achieved "without bloodshed."

But the facts contradict these affirmations. The aircraft carriers are there. U.S. troops are carrying out "prolonged maneuvers" in Honduras. The CIA continues financing the counter-revolution. The Green Berets continue training the Honduran army. And we continue contributing the dead.



We want peace. We need peace in order to work, to study, in order to sing, to laugh, in order to simply live.

We want peace. Why don't they leave us in peace?

What wrong have we done to the people of the United States? We have offered the hand of friendship. Why does their government respond with a clenched fist?

We want peace, but we are disposed to defend ourselves. Neither our petition for peace nor our determination to defend ourselves is rhetorical.

Our people, like Sandino, prefer "to die as rebels rather than to live as slaves."

George Washington, that apostle of truth, would have applauded this determination of our national hero and this heroic determination of the Nicaraguan people.

Perhaps the gravest error is to believe that the force of arms is superior to the force of truth, or to the force of peoples who have conquered their liberty.

"We do not propose to invade Honduras, and neither do we propose—however unnecessary it be to mention this—to invade the United States."

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FAD/D

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date August 29, 1983
to Bill Trosten
from Abraham S. Karlikow
subject

cc: Gordon Zacks
Hyman Bookbinder
Howard Friedman
Jacobov Kovadloff
Sergio Nudelstejer
Marc Tanenbaum ✓

Jacobov Kovadloff and I met Friday afternoon Mr. Antonio Jarquin, the Nicaraguan Ambassador to the United States, and with Minister Manuel Cordero. They transmitted to me the enclosed letter which - apart from making me President of the organization - invites us to go down to Nicaragua along with other Jewish organizations to investigate the charges of anti-Semitism.

Howard Friedman will be getting the appropriate official letter of invitation.

That the Nicaraguan Government has clearly taken the counter-offensive against the ADL charges is also demonstrated by the fact that they released to the press their letter of August 2 rebutting the ADL charges.

I would recommend that we accept this invitation, whether in conjunction with other groups or separately. In our conversation with Messrs. Jarquin and Cordero, we insisted on, and got, assurances:

- That the Nicaraguans were ready to discuss the situation of any Jew of Nicaragua whether inside the country or out. We pointed out that it was precisely the situation of those Jews whom they say they will not permit to return, because of association with Somoza, that might be the subject of the most critical discussion.
- That Nicaraguan officials were ready to discuss their relations with the PLO.
- That they would be ready to discuss with us relations with Israel.

With regard to this last point, the Ambassador declared that there were two nations to whom Nicaragua would not repay any outstanding debts, Israel and Argentina, because these debts had been incurred for the purchase of arms by Somoza.

ASK:en

EMBAJADA DE NICARAGUA
1627 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009

August 25, 1983

Dear Mr. Karlikow:

I am writing on behalf of my Government to extend an invitation to you to visit Nicaragua, along with other Presidents of major Jewish organizations, as soon as possible after the coming Jewish High Holy Days.

On such a visit, you would have the opportunity to meet and speak openly with members of the Nicaraguan Jewish Community, leaders of my Government, representatives of the press, and numerous others. You would obtain first-hand knowledge of our Nicaraguan reality, ranging from the treatment of our Jewish Community to the accomplishments and problems of our Revolutionary Government on a broad range of social, economic and political issues.

Many false accusations have been made against my Government. Some of the accusers have acted in good faith, but based on mistaken information. Other accusers, however, have been motivated more by a desire to justify further aggressions against our national territory than by any concern for truth or justice.

One of the most pernicious accusations made against my Government has been that it is "anti-Semitic." My Government has been accused of expelling the entire Nicaraguan Jewish Community, confiscating all Jewish-owned property, and confiscating and desecrating the Jewish community's synagogue. As demonstrated in my letter to Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, a copy of which is enclosed herewith, all of these accusations are completely false: There is a Jewish Community in Nicaragua today, and its members enjoy the absolute right -- guaranteed to all Nicaraguan citizens -- to practice their religion freely and openly and to be free from prejudice or discrimination in any form. As demonstrated in the enclosed letter, Nicaraguan Jews own their own homes and businesses, just like their fellow Nicaraguan citizens; my Government has never confiscated any property belonging to anyone because of his or her religion, race or national origin. Furthermore, my Government has recently pledged to assist the Jewish Community in securing the return of its synagogue.

Mr. Abraham Karlikow
American Jewish Committee
Institute of Human Relations
165 E. 56 St.
New York, N.Y. 10022

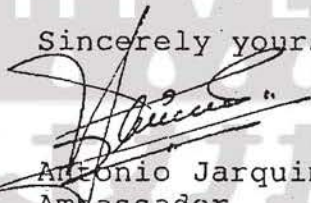
I urge you to come to Nicaragua, so that you can see and decide for yourself whether the accusations against my Government are true or false. I also took forward to your visit as an opportunity to further communication and understanding between the Nicaraguan people and the people of the United States.

Although you are welcome to stay in Nicaragua as long as you like, I would imagine that, due to your busy schedule, it would be difficult for you to arrange to spend more than three or four days in my Country. Accordingly, we would like to arrange a four-day visit for you and your colleagues for some time in late September or October of this year. We will attempt to arrange the trip for the four-day period that is most convenient to the majority of those coming. Please let me know, at your earliest convenience, if you can come and, if so, please indicate which dates would be most convenient for you.

I look forward to hearing from you.



Sincerely yours,


Antonio Jarquin
Ambassador



Managua's Jews Reject Anti-Semitism Charge

By Edward Cody

Washington Post Foreign Service

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—Amid the charges and countercharges exchanged between Washington and Managua, the lot of Nicaraguan Jews—numbering only a few dozen—has become a focus of attention in the United States and of attacks against the Sandinista government.

According to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, an organization devoted to combating anti-Semitism, the Sandinistas have systematically repressed and forced into exile Nicaragua's small Jewish community. The league's charges, first aired last May, have been disseminated widely.

Some influential Americans considered friends by the Sandinistas have harshly criticized them on the basis of the league's report and the Reagan administration has added anti-Semitism to its accusations against the Nicaraguans.

Sandinista officials say the league has propagated a severe distortion of the situation here. Their denial of the charges is backed up by a number of the few resident Jews, who say that despite the league's contention that the "entire Jewish community" was driven out, they are living in peace and relative prosperity.

Both sides in the conflict believe it has broader implications, and deeper roots, in other battles far away from here. Last summer, Nicaragua broke relations with Israel, whose government was long allied with Anastasio Somoza, the dictator overthrown by the Sandinistas in

1979. During the Nicaraguan revolution, Israel shipped arms to Somoza after Jimmy Carter had ended all U.S. support of his regime. The Sandinistas received similar support from the Palestine Liberation Organization and have close relations with the PLO.

A year and a half ago, Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, director of the Anti-Defamation League's Latin American department, met with Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto in New York to ask about reports from Nicaraguan exiles concerning persecution of Nicaraguan Jews.

The Sandinistas first responded with facile denials, said Rosenthal, then a letter to D'Escoto last fall remained unanswered and the Nicaraguans stopped returning his telephone calls.

Sandinista officials now say the issue got lost in the whirl of other problems, particularly those with the United States, and they erred in not being more responsive. In May, the league's bulletin published a report by Rosenthal.

Only two Nicaraguan Jews, Abraham Gorn and Gorn's brother-in-law Isaac Stavinsky, both now living in the United States, were cited in the report. Rosenthal said in an interview that "I've met with other people who are similarly aggrieved. These two are in the news because they are the ones who came forward."

The Reagan administration, which backs rebel groups trying to overthrow the leftist Sandinistas, picked up the charges of anti-Semitism. Despite reports to the contrary from the U.S. Embassy here, President Reagan suggested that the Sandinista government had stifled Jews' religious freedom.

Sandinistas, U.S. Embassy Dispute Rabbi's Widely Circulated Report

Nicaraguan authorities, their concern aroused, now are seeking to deal with the storm. They met once with Rosenthal in June, supplied him with a lengthy report on the situation and have scheduled a second meeting for today of their ambassador in the United States and the rabbi.

The Sandinistas also have offered to restore to Jewish ownership a synagogue that was abandoned in 1979 and taken over a year later by the government for use as a youth group headquarters.

But the remaining Jews here say they are too few to support the building, and they deny there is any reason for the uproar in the first place.

"What do you want to say?" asked Jaime Levy, a French Jew who immigrated before World War II and set up a textile and garment import business. "That I was persecuted? It is absolutely untrue."

In addition to denying that they or their government are anti-Semitic, Sandinista officials pointed out that four government ministers have Jewish ancestry, although they are assimilated and some practice Roman Catholicism. Levy and his several fellow Jews who have remained unassimilated also issued denials.

But since Rosenthal went public May 23, the accusations have

seemed to have a higher volume than the denials. On May 27, the Nicaraguan consul's home in Toronto was stoned by youths who, according to press reports, said they came from the Jewish Defense League. A newspaper reflecting rightist views in the U.S. capital, *The Washington Inquirer* weekly, published a story June 3 headlined "Little Hitlers in Managua."

The charges were repeated Wednesday in a lengthy opinion piece in *The Wall Street Journal* written by the executive director of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs.

Even critics of administration policy toward Nicaragua have voiced strong concern. Ten days after Rosenthal's report appeared, Rep. Michael Barnes (D-Md.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Latin America, released a letter in which he accused the Sandinistas of "government-sponsored anti-Semitism" and expressed outrage at having read about the "forced exile by your government of the entire Jewish community."

The day after Rosenthal met with Nicaraguan Ambassador Antonio Jarquin on June 6, the rabbi's office issued a statement calling on the Nicaraguan government to return the synagogue, which it said had been confiscated from the Jewish community here and plastered with anti-Zionist propaganda. This statement said the Anti-Defamation League's charges had no connection to U.S. policy on Nicaragua.

On July 20, however, Rosenthal visited the White House with Gorn and Stavinsky. According to an account by the league, Reagan told those present: "Virtually the entire Jewish community of Nicaragua has been frightened into exile . . . Please share the truth that commu-

nism in Central America means not only loss of political freedom but of religious freedom as well."

The visit was part of a series organized by the White House Office of Public Liaison under Faith Ryan Whittlesey to promote administration policy of aid to the anti-Sandinista rebels. Whittlesey later said in an interview that the Sandinistas have "persecuted Jews, Protestants and Catholics."

At least three weeks earlier, according to knowledgeable sources, the U.S. Embassy here had reported to Washington that it investigated the anti-Semitism charges and found insufficient evidence to back them up. The Nicaraguan government-sponsored National Commission for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights also had investigated and published a similar conclusion, as did the antigovernment Nicaraguan Permanent Commission on Human Rights.

"This does not mean there have not been abuses," said the permanent commission's national coordinator, Marta Patricia Baltodano. "But it was not because they are Jewish, rather because they had certain connections with the Somoza regime or did not follow the Sandinista line."

The State Department's "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

for 1982," while detailing several cases of religious conflict in Nicaragua, says, "Adherence to a particular church does not confer advantage or disadvantage in any sphere in Nicaragua."

Rosenthal said last week that he may have erred in citing Nicaragua's "entire Jewish community" as forced exiles, and noted that "obviously some people have other interests and are using the story" for their own purposes. But, he said, "I feel comfortable with the factual information" reported. As to reports contradicting his own, Rosenthal said, "I couldn't believe some of the reporting out of the embassy. It was child-like."

According to Levy and Rolando Najlis—who along with Gorn's nephew Bernardo are the most prominent remaining Jews here—Abraham Gorn was arrested and held for interrogation for two weeks in 1979 because of business ties to the family of the late dictator Anastasio Somoza, particularly with Somoza's half-brother Jose.

The national human rights commission reported that Sandinista suspicions also flowed from a Jan. 27, 1979, telegram from Honduras directing Gorn to pick up an air freight shipment labeled, in Spanish, "Supplies, National Guard."

Soon after Gorn was released, he left the country in a chartered plane sent by friends in Costa Rica. His property, including a factory and estate, was confiscated. The takeover, according to Jews here and Sandinista officials, was based on Gorn's ties to the Somoza government, as were similar confiscations that hit Jews and Christians by the hundreds who fled the Sandinistas. "When it became obvious that Somoza would be overthrown, Nicaraguans with strong ties to Somoza

left the country," said a study by the University of Central America's Historical Institute here and distributed by Georgetown University's Intercultural Center. "The Jewish people who left in 1979 were part of a larger exodus from Nicaragua of those who felt their future would be uncertain with changes by the revolutionary government."

In the background were several considerations that could have made the future seem even more uncertain for Jewish businessmen linked to Somoza. Israel was clearly identified as a Somoza ally—Somoza's father had supplied arms to the nascent Jewish state in 1948—and some Jewish businessmen were reputed to be intermediaries for Israeli arms sales to the embattled Somoza government.

Perhaps as a result, an explosive charge was tossed at the synagogue in 1978 during civil unrest leading up to the civil war.

The Nicaraguan government has allowed a PLO legation to function like an embassy here. It broke relations with Israel last summer during the invasion of Lebanon. About the same time, the pro-government newspaper *Nuevo Diario* published an editorial backing the Palestinian cause in which it mentioned the Jewish religion as a source of support for Israel. The editorial said Reagan must have Jewish blood because of what it called his unqualified support for Israel.

"This editorial confuses Zionism and Judaism," the Historical Institute said, adding that the paper's commentary on occasion "has had clear anti-Semitic overtones."

By 1979, only 50 Jews still not assimilated remained from a community of 150 that had grown from the 1930s, then diminished rapidly after the 1972 earthquake. All but a half dozen of those, including Gorn and Stavinsky, fled during and shortly after the 1979 revolt. Most of those who left had their property confiscated.

The departure meant the synagogue stood empty. At first, some refugee families moved in, according to neighbors, but they found other housing within a year and the building was turned into headquarters for the Sandinista Children's Association under government ownership.

"All those who used to go to the synagogue left," said Najlis. "It was abandoned. Like all abandoned property here, it was taken over by the government."

The building has been painted with children's drawings of camping scenes and filled with partitions to create makeshift offices. Only the scallop-shaped windows recall its past. During a recent visit, an association official, Alejandro Morales, and one of the youngsters were seen reading "The Green Path," a newspaper distributed in Spanish by the Libyan Embassy to explain the goals of Col. Muammar Qaddafi.

Stung by the charges that persist in Washington, the Sandinista government has notified Levy and Najlis it would like them to form a legally recognized association and take over the former synagogue. Levy, concerned about the responsibility, telexed Rosenthal Aug. 3 saying:

"The government will pay expenses for legal fees but we need the aid of the New York consistory for monthly maintenance of the building—taxes and the rest. Remember, there are hardly three of us."

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Foreign Affairs Department
Abraham S. Karlikow

Bill —

This raises the
question of AJC
identification once
more. I think we
need publicly to re-state
policy both for lay
people + staff

cc: M. Tamara ✓
S. Nidekster

PHILLIPS - VAN HEUSEN CORPORATION

1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10104 / (212) 541-5200

August 17, 1983

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

JERUSALEM POST
Jerusalem, Israel

To the Editor:

I have just returned from an eight-day, fact-finding trip to Honduras and Nicaragua. I was appalled to learn of the extent of Israel's involvement and support of the right wing government of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatamala.

Jews in the Diaspora understand the problems of balance of trade but many of us have been embarrassed for years by Israel's involvement with South America. Those of us that are concerned with the basic rights, dignity, and welfare of the underprivileged of the world are saddened to learn of the support and sale of arms to oppressive governments anywhere.

Israel may choose to endure the anti-Zionism that is being created in many Central American countries by her actions, but may not be aware that the people of these countries are often not sophisticated enough to differentiate between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

Some of the arms sold to Honduras are, as Israel well knows, being turned on the people of Nicaragua by Somoza's ex-National Guardsmen. The valiant peasants and poor of Nicaragua are fighting desperately to make their embrionic revolution work and, as these efforts are being resisted and thwarted by the counter-revolutionaries the animosity towards their helpers (the United States and Israel) grows.

Nicaragua may soon be forced into Russia's camp. Anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism may well pervade all of Central America if the people of each country perceive Israel as one of their enemies.

What possible advantage, other than short term, short sighted economic gain, could Israel get from the sale of arms? The price we all must pay goes far beyond the struggle of the Nicaraguan people to survive. We Jews who are proud of our association with the plight of the underprivileged are both embarrassed by your arms sales and dumbfounded by your masochism which is spawning anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

Is it worth the price?

Sincerely

Lawrence S. Phillips

Lawrence S. Phillips

(Lawrence S. Phillips is President of Phillips-Van Heusen Corporation, and a director of the Fund for Peace, Oxfam-America, and the American Jewish Committee.)

*Memo*

October 17, 1983

TO: NJCRAC Member Agencies

FROM: Abraham J. Bayer, Director, International Commission

RE: Invitation to Visit Nicaragua, Confiscation of Managua Synagogue, etc.

As you know, on October 4, we convened a meeting to consider the Nicaraguan Ambassador's recent invitation to major Jewish organizations to visit his country (copy of invitation to Jackie Levine is attached).

BACKGROUND

This meeting was an outgrowth of a previous discussion held on September 19, convened by the ADL to hear two Nicaraguan Jewish-community leaders living in the United States describe conditions in their country as they relate to the confiscation of the synagogue in Managua and anti-Semitism as they experienced it under the Sandanista regime.

Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, director of the ADL's Latin American Affairs Department, described his agency's efforts in the past two years to obtain compensation for the synagogue confiscation and to influence the Sandanistas' attitudes towards Jews and Israel. From the reports rendered, it was established that although there had been intimidating incidents, there was, however, an ambiguity as to whether the government was anti-Semitic. Out of an approximately 120 Jews prior to the revolution, only three remain in the country now; and there seemed little likelihood of a return to Nicaragua aside from a handful.

The general inclination of this September 19 meeting was for the Jewish community not to visit Nicaragua. But since only six organizations--AJCongress, AJCommittee, CCAR, the Presidents' Conference, Pioneer Women, and NJCRAC--were present at that meeting, in addition to members of the ADL Latin American Affairs Committee, NJCRAC was asked to convene its national member agencies for the purpose of coordinating a joint response. We were sounded out by an unofficial representative of the Nicaraguans about meeting with the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, who was in the U.S. for the United Nations General Assembly.

CONSENSUS OF OCTOBER 4 MEETING OF NJCRAC

All of the NJCRAC national member agencies were invited to the October 4 meeting. The following attended: Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, ADL; Phil Baum, AJCongress; David Geller, AJCommittee; Mark Brandriss, Hadassah; AmPlutzer, United Synagogue; Dr. Harris Schoenberg, B'nai B'rith; Malcolm Hoenlein, N.Y. JCRC; Abe Bayer and Charney Bromberg of NJCRAC, and the Israeli Deputy Consul General in New York, Herzel Inbar.

At this meeting, many of the aforementioned views were refined and agreement was reached on the following points:

1. A visit could enable the Nicaraguans to draw distinctions between Jews and Israel; in other words, they might make gestures about returning the synagogue, even condemn anti-Semitism, but in the same breath might denounce Zionism and Israel. Additionally, we might become embroiled in the real possibility that Nicaragua might use the American Jewish community against the policies of the U.S. Government in Central America at this time. These last points are especially delicate because of the Sandanista association with the third world and the Arab- and Soviet-inspired propaganda equation that "Zionism equals racism," so prevalent today in third-world countries.
2. The major issue as far as the American Jewish community is concerned is the Nicaraguan Government's negative attitudes towards Israel and Zionism and its association with the PLO. Focusing mainly on the synagogue confiscation would, therefore, tend to blur what is at best an ambiguous situation with regard to official anti-Semitism.

However, the group paid tribute to the energetic and positive work of the ADL for successfully engaging the Nicaraguans on the highest levels, privately and publicly, about the synagogue, anti-Semitism and their attitudes towards Israel.

3. Therefore, there was complete agreement that it was inopportune for American Jewish organizations to visit Nicaragua at this time, that such a visit could be manipulated in a way that would white-wash the Sandanista hostility toward Israel and their propaganda against Zionism.
4. With regard to the apparent invitation to meet with the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister in New York, it was ascertained through intermediaries that the Minister would officially extend the invitation through NJCRAC if, in fact, we agreed to hold such a meeting. Although we agreed to do so and so informed the Nicaraguans, we were informed, again indirectly, that "the Foreign Minister's schedule became terribly complicated and, therefore, he will not be able to meet with members of the Jewish community."

For your information and guidance, we are enclosing a copy of Jackie Levine's reply to the Nicaraguan Ambassador and other material relevant to the ADL discussion on the synagogue and the general political climate in Nicaragua. We will keep you informed if there is anything further on this subject meriting attention.

AJB:tn
enclosures

O,EX,INT
X,X-EC,I

National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council

443 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016

(212) 684-6950

October 12, 1983

Ambassador Antonio Jarquin
Embassy of Nicaragua
1627 New Hampshire Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

This letter is in response to your recent communication inviting me as Chairperson of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council to visit Nicaragua along with other presidents of major Jewish organizations during this period.

Our national member agencies whose names appear on the back of this letterhead, as well as other major Jewish organizations, have concluded that a visit would unfortunately not be possible at this time.

We thank you for your interest and invitation and look forward to contacts as circumstances permit.

Sincerely yours,

Jacqueline K. Levine

Jacqueline K. Levine
Chairperson

JKL:mh

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EMBAJADA DE NICARAGUA
1627 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009

September 8, 1983

Dear Mrs. Levine:

I am writing on behalf of my Government to extend an invitation to you to visit Nicaragua, along with other Presidents of major Jewish organizations, as soon as possible after the coming Jewish High Holy Days.

On such a visit, you would have the opportunity to meet and speak openly with members of the Nicaraguan Jewish Community, leaders of my Government, representatives of the press, and numerous others. You would obtain first-hand knowledge of our Nicaraguan reality, ranging from the treatment of our Jewish Community to the accomplishments and problems of our Revolutionary Government on a broad range of social, economic and political issues.

Many false accusations have been made against my Government. Some of the accusers have acted in good faith, but based on mistaken information. Other accusers, however, have been motivated more by a desire to justify further aggressions against our national territory than by any concern for truth or justice.

One of the most pernicious accusations made against my Government has been that it is "anti-Semitic." My Government has been accused of expelling the entire Nicaraguan Jewish Community, confiscating all Jewish-owned property, and confiscating and desecrating the Jewish community's synagogue. As demonstrated in my letter to Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, a copy of which is enclosed herewith, all of these accusations are completely false. There is a Jewish Community in Nicaragua today, and its members enjoy the absolute right -- guaranteed to all Nicaraguan citizens -- to practice their religion freely and openly and to be free from prejudice or discrimination in any form. As demonstrated in the enclosed letter, Nicaraguan Jews own their own homes and businesses, just like their fellow Nicaraguan citizens; my Government has never confiscated any property belonging to anyone because of his or her religion, race or national origin. Furthermore, my Government has recently pledged to assist the Jewish Community in securing the return of its synagogue.

Mrs. Jacqueline K. Levine
Chairperson
National Jewish Community
Relations Advisory Council
443 Park Ave. S., 11th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10016

I urge you to come to Nicaragua, so that you can see and decide for yourself whether the accusations against my Government are true or false. I also took forward to your visit as an opportunity to further communication and understanding between the Nicaraguan people and the people of the United States.

Although you are welcome to stay in Nicaragua as long as you like, I would imagine that, due to your busy schedule, it would be difficult for you to arrange to spend more than three or four days in my Country. Accordingly, we would like to arrange a four-day visit for you and your colleagues for some time in late September or October of this year. We will attempt to arrange the trip for the four-day period that is most convenient to the majority of those coming. Please let me know, at your earliest convenience, if you can come and, if so, please indicate which dates would be most convenient for you.

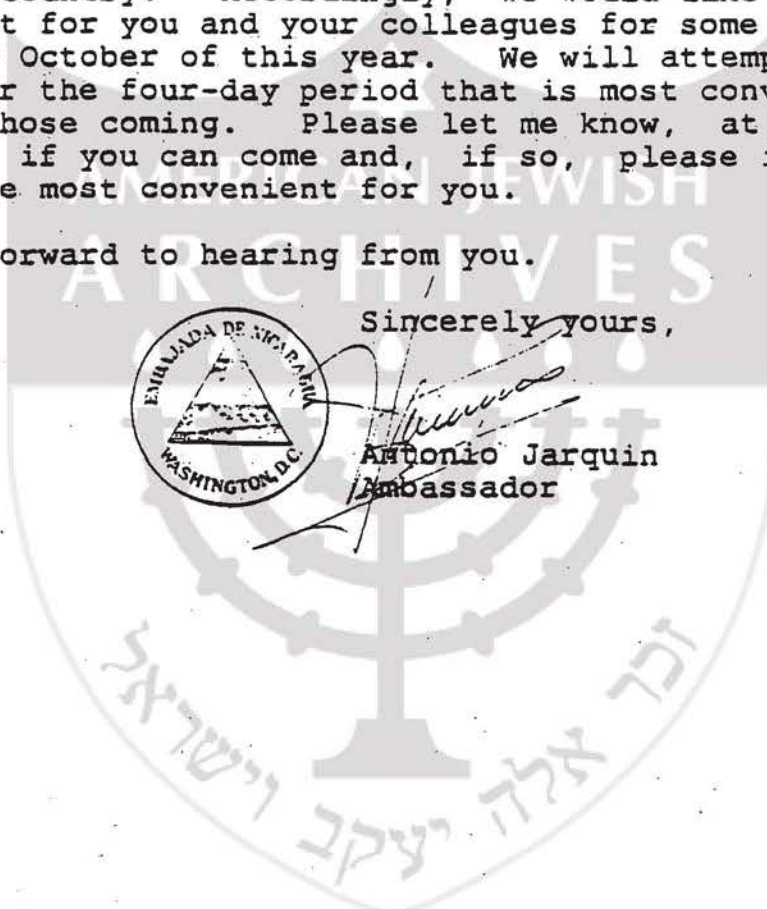
I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,



Antonio Jarquin
Antonio Jarquin
Ambassador

Enclosure



September 21, 1982

Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto
c/o Nicaraguan Mission to the UN
820 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Minister:

On October 5, 1981 you met with a group of religious leaders at the offices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in New York City. At that time, I discussed with you the fact that the small Jewish community of Nicaragua had left the country because they perceived that the new government was treating them in an unfair and discriminatory fashion. You very graciously agreed to study the issue and maintain a dialogue with the Anti-Defamation League; you designated Mr. Orlando Moncada Zapata as the liaison person for this purpose.

Since then, I have met with Mr. Moncada Zapata and spoken with him on various occasions. We were very pleased to be informed by him that the government of Nicaragua would reopen the case file of any Nicaraguan Jew, upon petition by the Anti-Defamation League. Subsequently, the Anti-Defamation League requested that the government review the complaint of Mr. Abraham Gorn, who was president of the Jewish community, and those of Isaac Stavisky and Rosita Retelny.

Although we submitted data on Mr. Gorn in February of this year and information on Stavisky and Retelny in April, no reply has been received. Our request for clarification on the status of the synagogue in Managua has also gone without response. For that reason, we address ourselves to you in the hope that you will, through your personal intervention, ensure a prompt response to our various requests.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal
Director
Department of Latin American Affairs

MMR:bl

cc: Orlando Moncada Zapata
Albert Bildner
Abraham H. Foxman

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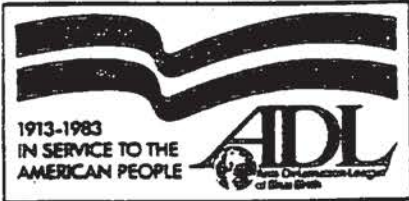
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National Vice-President

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National Vice-President

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September 20, 1983

Ambassador Antonio Jarquin
Embassy of Nicaragua
1627 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Ambassador Jarquin:

I am writing to you pursuant to our conversation at your embassy on August 29. At that time, you agreed to cooperate with the Anti-Defamation League in attempting to resolve uncertainties surrounding the status of Nicaraguan Jews and the status of their properties.

As promised, I am attaching to this letter a list of names of Nicaraguan Jews. For each name, we are requesting that you send us, as quickly as possible, the following information:

1. What charges, if any, are outstanding against the individual.
2. If charges are outstanding, please send us documentation to substantiate the charges. In addition, we request that you inform us if the individual has been tried.
3. What is the status of the individual's property in Nicaragua? This should include real estate, businesses, bank accounts and any other assets which the individual might own.

As you know, there is general uneasiness in the minds of many Nicaraguan Jews who fear for their safety if they were to return to Nicaragua. We are, therefore, requesting that your government advise us what assurances it is prepared to offer those Jews who may decide to return to Nicaragua.

I wish to stress that your government's prompt attention to the foregoing is of utmost importance. I trust that with your cooperation we will be able to make progress in our efforts to achieve a just and speedy resolution to the problems of the Jews of Nicaragua.

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal, Director
Department of Latin American Affairs

MMR:lfg

cc: Kenneth J. Bialkin, David Brody, Abraham H. Foxman,
I. Barry Mehler, Sidney Jarkow

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NICARAGUA/PLO

Evidence mounts of anti-Semitism among Sandinista functionaries

THE SANDINISTAS' link with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has come glaringly into focus in recent reports of their oppression of Nicaraguan Jews.

So fierce was that oppression — epitomized by property confiscations in 1979 — that reportedly all Nicaraguan Jews have fled the country. Rep. Jim Courter, R-N.J., says that "whether the Sandinistas are anti-Semites of their own volition, or whether they are merely repaying favors to their PLO supporters, the harassment of Jews is reprehensible . . . consistent with the anti-religious tenets of Communist doctrine, and with the pervasive actions the Sandinistas have taken against the Catholic Church."

When the Sandinistas' human-rights record is written, their confiscation of the synagogue in Managua will be in bold relief. At a recent meeting in the White House, Rabbi Morton Rosenthal of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) said Nicaragua's ambassador in Washington refused even to acknowledge that there was a synagogue in Managua. He said only that it was a building owned by a private individual that was confiscated, along with his other assets.

The Sandinistas claim now that they didn't know the building was a synagogue, and want to return it. But as Rabbi Rosenthal noted, unless Jews can go back and recover their

property, "this is a meaningless gesture."

Sandinista ties with the PLO go back at least 10 years, according to ADL. Rabbi Rosenthal said, "Sandinistas fought alongside the PLO in the Middle East in the early 1970s, and the PLO gave them entree to the Arab world from which they have received armaments and financing as well as political support. At the present time there is an officially recognized PLO office in Managua with its staff afforded full diplomatic status."

More ominous was his declaration that "PLO agents have spread their net of influence throughout the region, allied with the forces of revolution . . . In El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and Honduras the PLO and Libyan agents are spreading the venom of anti-Semitism."

The Sandinistas well knew that they had seized a synagogue. A Nicaraguan exile, Issac Stavisky, at that White House meeting, said five Sandinistas, wearing white handkerchiefs, had set fire to the building in 1978 while shouting "PLO victory slogans and anti-Jewish defamatory language. This direct attack showed the PLO influence on the Sandinistas."

Their oppression of Jews and PLO involvement is a side of the Sandinistas not generally well known. But it graphically defines how events and causes oceans apart may be joined in overall purpose.

Michael G. Rapp

ASB

Jewish Community Relations Council
105 West Fourth Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Phone: 241-5620

WHITE HOUSE DIGEST

WHITE HOUSE DIGEST
is a service provided by the
White House Office of Media Relations and Planning

July 20, 1983

THE PLO IN CENTRAL AMERICA

The Palestine Liberation Organization is an active ally of Communist revolutionaries throughout Central America. The PLO supplied training and materiel for the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, and is still supplying military aid and advisors to the Communist Sandinista government. For their part, Sandinista revolutionaries were fighting beside their PLO comrades in the Middle East as early as 1970 and are anti-Semitic and are dedicated to the destruction of Israel.

Right now, the PLO is giving the Salvadoran Communists the same sort of help. Since the late 1960s, the PLO has been working with Fidel Castro and his network of Latin American revolutionaries and has developed ties to revolutionary organizations in a number of Latin American countries.

"BLOOD UNITY"

Though this alliance has received little attention in the press, neither the PLO nor its Latin Communist allies trouble to deny it. On June 7, 1979, six weeks before the

Sandinistas came to power, Sandinista press spokesman Jorge Mandi delivered a particularly strong testimonial to the alliance:

There is a longstanding blood unity between us and the Palestinians. Many of the units belonging to the Sandinista movements were at Palestinian revolutionary bases in Jordan. In the early 1970s, Nicaraguan and Palestinian blood was spilled together in Amman and in other places during the Black September Battles.

.....

It is natural therefore, that in our war against Somoza, we received Palestinian aid for our revolution in various forms.

Mandi also made it clear that the Sandinistas had participated in PLO terrorist acts such as hijacking.¹

START WITH CUBA

Cuba has been the great organizing center and supply depot for Communist revolution in Central America. Fidel Castro introduced the PLO into the region and has vigorously promoted and supported the PLO's activities there.

Until the mid-1960s, Castro supported Israel. But, in 1966, Castro sponsored the First Conference of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, bringing together revolutionary leaders from three continents in order to get them to work together.

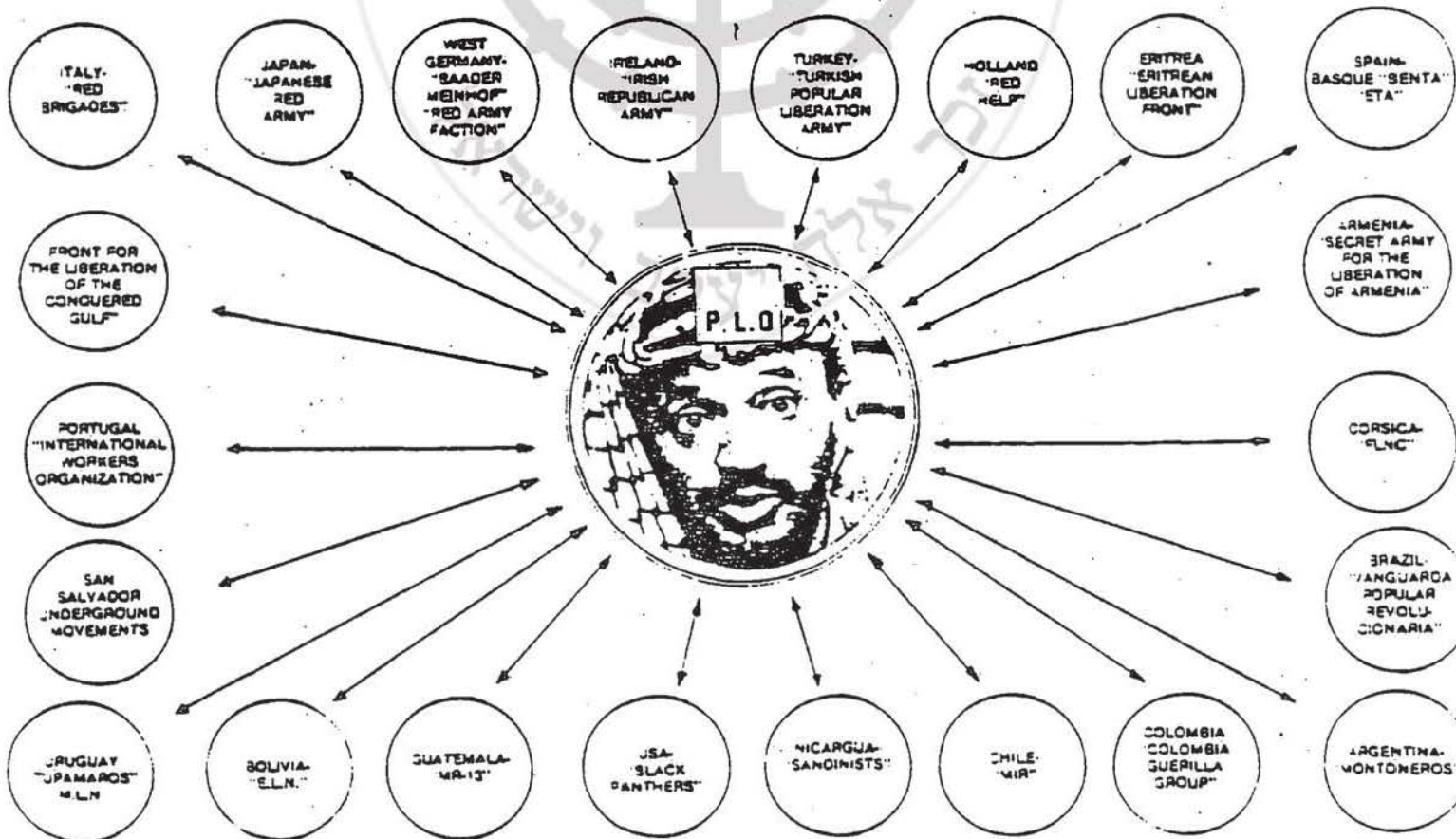
PLO representatives attended, and Castro began efforts to make the PLO a part of international revolutionary activities, especially in Latin America.

By 1968, Cuban intelligence and military personnel were assisting the PLO in North Africa and Iraq. By 1969,

Cuban officers were in joint training with PLO officers in the U.S.S.R. In June 1969, Cubans from that training class participated in a joint raid with the PLO in the Sinai desert.²

In 1972, Castro met with PLO leaders in Algeria and the two sides agreed to step up their joint activities.³ The PLO undertook to augment Cuban training of Latin American terrorists with specialized training in Lebanon, South Yemen, and Libya. In 1973, Castro broke relations with Israel. Cuba had become one of Israel's most dedicated enemies. In 1974, the PLO opened its first Latin American office in Havana.⁴

Since being introduced to the region by Castro, the PLO has developed ties with revolutionary groups in nearly half the countries in the region.



Intelligence information has linked the PLO with terrorist and guerrilla organizations around the world.

THE NICARAGUA CONNECTION

Cooperation between the Sandinistas and the PLO goes back at least to 1969, seven or eight years before most Americans had heard of the Sandinistas. That year, some 50 Sandinista guerrillas went to Tyre for training under the PLO.⁵ Other Sandinistas went to train in terror at PLO camps in Algeria.⁶

The Sandinista terrorists fit right in with their PLO counterparts. It has been reported that Pedro Arauz, a Sandinista who had hijacked a Nicaraguan airliner in 1969, trained under the PLO in 1970.⁷ As the quote from Jorge Mandi makes clear, Sandinista troops fought beside the PLO against King Hussein of Jordan in 1970.⁸

Thomas Borge, Interior Minister of the Sandinista regime, has confirmed that he and other Sandinist-leaders were trained by Al Fatah, the leading PLO group, prior to 1970. Borge repeatedly spent much of the early '70s working for Castro, and was frequently in the Middle East, where he used Libyan money and PLO assistance to obtain arms for Central American guerrilla movements.⁹

The first official confirmation of the PLO-Sandinista alliance came in February 1978. The two groups issued a joint communique in Mexico City that affirmed the "ties of solidarity" existing between the two revolutionary organizations. They were united in their hatred of what they called the "racist state of Israel."

In a similar incident in March of 1978, the Sandinistas went so far as to join the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine in a joint "declaration of war" against Israel.

As the Sandinistas became more confident of victory, PLO aid became more concrete. Early in 1979, shortly before the

final Sandinista victory, the PLO sent an arms shipment to the Sandinistas but it was intercepted by the government of Morocco.¹⁰ During the final weeks of the revolution, several large shipments of arms arrived from the Middle East.¹¹ According to one source, Thomas Borge arranged for a shipment of guns to be sent from North Korea on a ship owned and operated by the PLO.¹²

Within two weeks of the Sandinista victory in July 1979, the Sandinistas sent a mission to Beirut to establish official contacts with the PLO. The PLO facilitated a \$12 million loan to the Sandinistas.¹³ Today, Nicaragua is one of the few countries in the world where the PLO mission is officially designated as an Embassy and the ranking PLO official is referred to as "Ambassador" -- a testimony to the importance the Sandinistas attach to their PLO connections.

THE STORMS OF REVOLUTION

In 1980, on the first anniversary of the Sandinista Communist takeover, Yasser Arafat came to Managua as an honored guest. Thomas Borge proclaimed, "the PLO cause is the cause of the Sandinistas." And Arafat replied, "the links between us are not new; your comrades did not come to our country just to train, but to fight. . . .Your enemies are our enemies."¹⁴

The PLO information bulletin, Palestine, commented:

There is no doubt there is a common line between Nicaragua, Iran, and Palestine. A common front against a common enemy. . . .

The Palestinian revolution understands the international dimensions of its struggle and its international task of supporting, within its capabilities,¹⁵ international liberation movements.

Current estimates suggest that there are about 50 PLO personnel in Nicaragua. Some are involved in training Sandinista military in the use of Eastern Bloc weapons, some training pilots and flying helicopters, maintaining aircraft and training Salvadoran guerrillas to export Communist terror to that country.

IN EL SALVADOR

There is also a strong alliance between the PLO and the Salvadoran Communist guerrillas. The Salvadoran Communists, like the Sandinistas, share the PLO's fierce opposition to Israel.

One of the first clear signs of sympathy between the two groups emerged when one of the major Salvadoran Communist guerrilla groups, the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL) kidnapped and murdered the South African Ambassador to El Salvador. The FPL demanded, as part of the ransom, that the Salvadoran government break relations with Israel and establish official relations with the PLO.

Just a month later, the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), another Salvadoran communist guerrilla group, bombed the Israeli embassy in San Salvador to show "solidarity with the Palestinian people," and demanded that the government recognize the PLO.

In May 1980, a delegation from Revolutionary Coordination of the Masses (CRM), the unified political front for all the important Salvadoran Communist groups, met in Beirut with one of Yasser Arafat's deputies, Abu Jihad, and with George Habash, head of the terrorist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and arrived at agreements for training programs and arms purchases. The first group of Salvadoran trainees finished a "course" in PLO-style terrorism at an Al Fatah camp in June, 1980.16

On July 23, 1980 representatives of the Salvadoran United Revolutionary Directorate (DRU) which was then the unified military command for the various Salvadoran Communist groups, met with Arafat in Managua. Arafat promised them arms and aircraft.¹⁷ Later in the year, Arafat did send some arms to the DRU,¹⁸ and according to published reports, PLO fighters were sent to El Salvador in September.¹⁹

The alliance picked up steam in 1981. In March, Shafik Handal, a Salvadoran of Palestinian descent and head of El Salvador's Communist Party, met with Arafat and representatives of Habash's Popular Front in Lebanon. The meeting resulted in a joint communique that, among other points, included an agreement to continue cooperation between the unified Salvadoran guerrilla groups and Habash's group.²⁰

By early 1981, according to Congressional testimony from Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs John Bushnell, there had been "a massive influx of arms from Soviet and other Communist sources. Radical Arab states and the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the terrorist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine have furnished funds, arms, and training.

In January 1982, Arafat said publicly that PLO guerrillas were serving in El Salvador.²¹ And documents captured in Beirut during the summer of 1982 reveal that there were Salvadoran guerrillas in PLO camps in Lebanon.

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Though these fragments of information have left a clear trail, even without them there would be no doubt about the relationship between the Central American Communists and PLO terror, because both sides have loudly proclaimed it. In 1981, Yasser Arafat spoke in words too clear to be mis-

understood or explained away:

We are a great revolution that can never be intimidated. We have connections with all the revolutionary movements throughout the world, in El Salvador, in Nicaragua -- and I reiterate Salvador²² -- and elsewhere in the world.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
FOOTNOTES

1. Al Watan (Kuwaiti newspaper) June 7, 1979.
2. Palestine (PLO Information Bulletin), June, 1980.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Hadar, The Jerusalem Post, August 14, 1981.
6. Washington Post, July 12, 1979.
7. Bell, Human Events, November 25, 1978.
8. Israeli Defense Force paper, "Report -- The PLO and International Terror," March 1981..
9. Newsletter, Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, June, 1983.
10. State Department paper, "Communist, PLO and Libyan Support for Nicaragua and the Salvadoran Insurgents." May 25, 1983.
11. U.S. News and World Report, September 1, 1980.
12. Op. cit., Hadar.
13. London Daily Telegraph, December 2, 1981.
14. Op. cit., Israeli Defense Force
15. Palestine, July 16-31, 1980.

16. Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Briefing, May 16, 1982.
17. U.S. Department of State Special Report #30, Feb. 23, 1981.
18. Op. cit., Israeli Ministry.
19. Op. cit., U.S. News.
20. Op. cit., Israeli Ministry.
21. Op. cit., Palestine, July 16-30, 1980.
22. Associated Press, April 14, 1981.



PHILLIPS - VAN HEUSEN CORPORATION

1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10104 / (212) 541-5200

August 17, 1983

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

JERUSALEM POST
Jerusalem, Israel

To the Editor:

I have just returned from an eight-day, fact-finding trip to Honduras and Nicaragua. I was appalled to learn of the extent of Israel's involvement and support of the right wing government of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Jews in the Diaspora understand the problems of balance of trade but many of us have been embarrassed for years by Israel's involvement with South America. Those of us that are concerned with the basic rights, dignity, and welfare of the underprivileged of the world are saddened to learn of the support and sale of arms to oppressive governments anywhere.

Israel may choose to endure the anti-Zionism that is being created in many Central American countries by her actions, but may not be aware that the people of these countries are often not sophisticated enough to differentiate between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

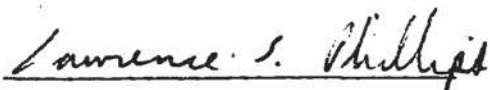
Some of the arms sold to Honduras are, as Israel well knows, being turned on the people of Nicaragua by Somoza's ex-National Guardsmen. The valiant peasants and poor of Nicaragua are fighting desperately to make their embryonic revolution work and, as these efforts are being resisted and thwarted by the counter-revolutionaries the animosity towards their helpers (the United States and Israel) grows.

Nicaragua may soon be forced into Russia's camp. Anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism may well pervade all of Central America if the people of each country perceive Israel as one of their enemies.

What possible advantage, other than short term, short sighted economic gain, could Israel get from the sale of arms? The price we all must pay goes far beyond the struggle of the Nicaraguan people to survive. We Jews who are proud of our association with the plight of the underprivileged are both embarrassed by your arms sales and dumbfounded by your masochism which is spawning anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

Is it worth the price?

Sincerely



Lawrence S. Phillips

(Lawrence S. Phillips is President of Phillips-Van Heusen Corporation, and a director of the Fund for Peace, Oxfam-America, and the American Jewish Committee.)

PHILLIPS - VAN HEUSEN CORPORATION

1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10104 / (212) 541-5200

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 22, 1983

Fr. Miguel Descoto
Foreign Minister
Managua
Nicaragua

Dear Father Descoto:

At our last meeting in your office with my associates from OXFAM AMERICA on August 6th, you expressed some very pessimistic prophesies about the implacability of the U.S. Policy and the inevitability of an armed conflict with Honduras and/or the U.S.

You said that nothing Nicaragua would say or do would turn off President Reagan's hostility, economic pressures and his support of the counter-revolutionaries.

Given the colossal task of reorganizing every part of your infrastructure and the criticality of reversing or neutralizing the position of the U.S. Government: - and

Given that the success of the revolution might depend on your ability to reverse U.S. Policy: -

Therefore I would like to make a series of suggestions that I believe would go a long way toward achieving this end.

Although most of my recommendations affect internal matters, I believe the view of middle and liberal Americans and therefore the position of the Mondale administration can be very supportive of Nicaragua if certain changes could be achieved.

These thoughts are based on decades of involvement with the vocal and very influential liberal wing of the Democratic party. Many of this group of well-educated, politically-sensitive voters now have reservations about what is going on in Nicaragua due to the extensive access to the media that the administration commands.

I suggest that many of these reservations can easily be removed and that our incoming administration might well become enthusiastic supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution.

... /

Is this too much to hope for? Perhaps, but the downside risk is so great that if it were my decision I would pull out all stops to try to achieve this result.

These are the areas that I would tackle:

- 1) The Mosquito Indians
- 2) Freedom of the Press
- 3) The Human Rights Commissions
- 4) The Pope's visit
- 5) The Jewish problem
- 6) Political Pluralism
- 7) Non-alignment - The Russian-Cuban Problem
- 8) Itinerary for important visitors

1. THE MOSQUITO INDIANS

Many groups in the U.S. are concerned about what has happened and is happening to the Mosquitos and the other inhabitants of the Atlantic coast. My primary recommendation is to release all or almost all of the 400 (or 1000) Mosquitos imprisoned. A general amnesty, while having some dangers, would be a startling and welcome move that would heal many remaining wounds both inside and outside Nicaragua. Concurrently, I would mobilize a number of Indians to tell the story publicly about what happened in the past and what is being done today to rectify earlier errors and problems.

I would have people like Norman Bent and leaders of the Moravian Church involved in telling and retelling the story.

2. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Nobody need emphasize how important this subject is to Americans and to the American press. What a great demonstration of confidence it would be if most of the censorship encumbering La Prensa was removed. The world would be very impressed if international news from the wire services was printed - including critical news stories about Poland, the Bulgarian plot and the conflicts within the PLO.

The time delays and extra costs caused by censorship should be eliminated so La Prensa can be placed on an equal footing with the other two papers.

Perhaps it would be wise to have the owners sell the paper to an independent syndicate that would act and report as the conscience of the revolution. A paper that would be supportive of the revolution and free to make constructive criticism would be very impressive.

Would you like me to get together a group in the U.S. to buy La Prensa or act as a conduit to turn it over to independent Nicaraguans?

3. THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS

The extremely sensitive subject of Human Rights requires that any Human Rights commission be 100% pure and independent and have the complete support of the government in its investigatory work. Any embarrassment caused to the government by violations of rights would be more than affected by the simple fact that Nicaragua permits a real Human Rights commission to exist and that the government cooperates with it and heads its findings.

I fear that anybody meeting with commission members such as Mary Hartman or Father Lopez of the National Human Rights Commission would quickly sense that the strong pro-revolution bias of these people disqualifies them from being objective members of any human rights commission.

Conversely anybody dedicated to the preservation of human rights would be impressed with the dedication and commitment of the members of the Permanent Human Rights Commission. This group should be encouraged, receive prompt cooperation in their investigations, and have their findings accepted.

4. THE POPE'S VISIT

There remains an impression that the Pope was mistreated and disrespected during his visit to Nicaragua. The real story should be made clear by respected members of the clergy such as Rev. Molina. This would be quite newsworthy and the U.S. media would be interested in doing a feature story or special program.

5. THE JEWISH PROBLEM

This seemingly small matter has become a major propaganda weapon of our administration and some well-meaning politicians. It should be settled quickly and the thorn removed as the Jewish constituency is very influential in any election year. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith under Rabbi Rosenthal's guidance have made much of the status of the thirty or fifty Nicaraguan Jews now living in Miami. It should be simple to resolve whatever grievances exist.

The cases could be presented to the Inter-American Court for Human Rights in Costa Rica or negotiated in Washington or Miami by an authorized Nicaraguan government official, such as Ambassador Jarquin. The cases of Isaac Gorn, Isaac Stavisky and the return of the synagogue should receive priority attention.

6. POLITICAL PLURALISM

Very few Americans know anything about the composition of the Council of State, the formulation process and intentions regarding the Law of Political Parties and the Law of Elections.

It would be wise to maximize awareness in this country of these very important endeavors. Perhaps the delegation from the Council of State could be the vehicle for such publicity while meeting with the Harvard Law professors in late September. Perhaps the planned December visit to Nicaragua of Fred Snyder, Harvard's Dean of International Legal Studies, could be the center of major announcement or endorsement.

7. NON-ALIGNMENT - THE RUSSIAN-CUBAN PROBLEM

This major problem cannot be dealt with by lip service to non-alignment. However difficult it may be, it is essential to persuade the U.S. that Nicaragua is not a puppet of anybody. Careful consideration should be given to your votes in the U.N. and at other international bodies to create a sense of balance and neutrality.

It would be wise to condemn Russia's action in Afganistan instead of abstaining.

It would be wise to abstain on some anti-Israel, pro-PLO resolutions.

It would be wise to increase Ambassador Chamarro's visability (i.e., by attending the U.N., We Believe dinner on September 21st).

It would be wise to phase out, or down, the Cuban presence in Nicaragua. In their place teachers and doctors from all over the world should be invited in to help (especially on the Atlantic coast).

I realize that the entire subject of non-alignment is especially sensitive both to you and to Washington. I have not dealt with the subject in any depth for obvious reasons.

8. ITINERARY FOR IMPORTANT VISITORS

The usual one or two day visits to Nicaragua cannot do justice to the accomplishments of the revolution, the attitude of the campesinos or the damage to the economy being inflicted by the counter-revolutionaries and the U.S.

It is essential that visitors see first-hand the spirit and life in the cooperatives especially in Esteli, Madriz and Nuevo Segovia. A visit with Carlos Morales in Esteli would be worth more than a dozen meetings with government officials in Managua.

I would suggest a day long trip by helicopter to a variety of northern farms and crops, to independent farmers such as Samuel Amador and Israel Mizro in Sebaco, to Jalapa, and to the new Mosquito camps on the Atlantic coast.

A series of invitations should be extended by the Nicaraguan government to the entire Kissinger commission, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Tip O'Neill. These invitations should include a helicopter tour for one or two days to "the people" and/or wherever they would like to go.

*** *** ***

As I review these eight suggestions and put myself in your shoes, I think I might be somewhat upset that all this is necessary to win the favor of the big neighbor to the north. This irritation would be very understandable given everything you have accomplished in only four years. Yet with all due respect, I make these suggestions in the sincere belief that much could be accomplished.

If viewed in the context of insuring the success of the revolution and removing the major stumbling blocks that the U.S. has put in the way, the magnitude and onerousness of these suggestions may become palatable and acceptable to you.

I have written this letter because of my deep respect for what you and your associates have accomplished and my fervent hope that success can and will be achieved.

With my deepest affection and regard.

Sincerely,


Lawrence S. Phillips

LSP:mq



Zionist Organization of America

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CABLES: ZIONISTS, NEW YORK

In Israel:
ZOA HOUSE
1 DANIEL FRISCH ST., TEL-AVIV
CABLES: ZOAHOUSE, TEL-AVIV

August 3, 1983

To: ZOA Leaders

From: Paul Flacks

THE WHITE HOUSE DISCLOSES ITS CONCERN THAT THE PLO IS AN ACTIVE
ALLY OF COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

On Tuesday, July 20, 1983, ZOA President Alleck A. Resnick, Ivan J. Novick, Chairman of the Administrative Board, and myself, were invited to the White House for an extraordinary briefing by President Reagan and his staff. A small representative group of Jewish community leaders joined a limited number of other invitees representing various influential groups, to hear about the prevalence of anti-semitism in Central America and how the relationship between the PLO and Central American Communists threaten the interests of the United States.

In addition to the President's personal comments, a "White House Digest," was distributed, which spelled out in detail the PLO's involvement with revolutionaries in Central America. This clearly vindicates ZOA's long-standing efforts to inform the American people why the PLO not only constitutes a threat to Israel's security, but is a serious obstacle to achieving peace between Israel and its neighbors, as well as enhancing America's interests in that area.

The "White House Digest" not only spells out in specifics the role of the PLO, but it contains a diagram which illustrates how Arafat is the center of terrorist activities, not only in Central America, but throughout the world. Individuals or organizations who advocate accomodation and negotiation with the terrorist PLO, are either naive, or deliberately represent views that are contrary to the best interests of the United States as well as the State of Israel.

Included in the White House Digest were the following allegations:

1. The PLO has been working with Fidel Castro and Latin America Revolutionaries since the late 1960's.
2. In 1969 Sandinista guerillas went to Tyre in Lebanon for training under the PLO.

August 3, 1983

3. Sandinista revolutionaries were fighting with the PLO in the Middle East as early as 1970.
4. In 1978 the Sandinistas joined the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine in a joint "declaration of war" against Israel.
5. Nicaragua is one of the few countries in the world where the PLO Mission is officially designated as an Embassy, and the ranking PLO official is referred to as "Ambassador."
6. In 1980 representatives of the Salvadoran United Revolutionary Directorate met with Arafat and were promised arms and aircraft, which were reportedly delivered.
7. In 1982 Arafat said publicly that PLO guerillas were serving in El Salvador, and documents captured in Beirut during the summer of 1982 revealed that there were Salvadoran guerillas in PLO camps in Lebanon.

Alleck A. Resnick, the President of the Zionist Organization of America, asked if the Administration had attempted to seek assurances from Saudi Arabia, the PLO's principal source of financial assistance, that the Saudis would try to effect a PLO withdrawal from Central America. Resnick went on to observe that President Reagan's comments and the information circulated at the meeting, seemed to reflect an important shift by the Administration in identifying the PLO as a terrorist organization.

After the meeting, Mr. Resnick commented that the ZOA was pleased that the White House, which long held Arafat to be a "moderate", had now publicly acknowledged his pivotal role in destabilizing regimes in many areas in the world. "Certainly", Resnick added, "these revelations should convince those who urge Israel to negotiate with the PLO, that this tack is naive and contrary to the interest of both Israel and the United States. We hope that this new sensitivity on the part of the Administration will enable it to deal more realistically with the PLO's destructive role in the Middle East".

The report from the White House is enclosed, and it warrants the following actions on the part of ZOA Regions and Districts:

1. Duplicate this Digest and deliver copies to the personal attention of the local editor of your anglo-Jewish newspaper, urging that it be reprinted.

To: ZOA Leaders

- 3 -

August 3, 1983

2. The general media in your community probably will not publicize this report. Since it is based on official White House information it should be of important interest to the total community and, therefore, your local media editors should also be given copies without delay.
3. Please advise us promptly how the media in your community used the material you furnished to them.

The PLO is considering the establishment of a government in-exile in either Tunis or Cairo. It would be headed by Yasser Arafat and would consist of his supporters within the PLO.

The Washington Times reports that a PLO government in-exile would win recognition from most of the 114 nations which now recognize the organization -- among them, Greece, Spain and France.

At a time when the PLO's military capability has been severely diminished and its political influence compromised a PLO government in-exile would serve to revitalize its credibility at the very time when the nations of the world should renounce their acceptance of this terrorist organization.

It would be incongruous and even immoral if those nations who are America's friends and allies would recognize a PLO government in-exile at the very time when the Administration discloses how Arafat has been directly involved in collaborating with revolutionaries in Central America.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Regards.

Cordially yours,


Paul Flacks
Executive Vice President

PF:DG

ההסתדרות הציונית של ארצות הברית



Zionist Organization of America

JACOB and LIBBY GOODMAN ZOA HOUSE • 4 EAST 34th STREET • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016 • (212) 481-1500
CABLES: ZIONISTS, NEW YORK

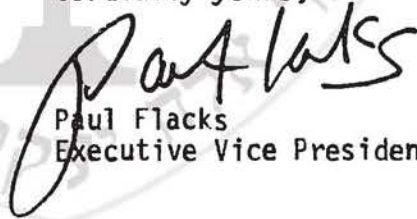
In Israel:
ZOA HOUSE
1 DANIEL FRISCH ST., TEL-AVIV
CABLES: ZOAOUSE, TEL-AVIV

July 26, 1983

Dear Editor:

I believe that the attached information regarding an unusual meeting recently held in the White House will be of special interest to you and your readers. It appears that it received very little notice in the media and it is a story worth reporting.

Cordially yours,



Paul Flacks
Executive Vice President

PF:f
attachment

MEMO

from *Abraham J. Bayer*
Director, International Commission

TO: Mark Tanenbaum



National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council
443 Park Avenue South New York, N.Y. 10016
212-684-6950



B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL

1640 Rhode Island Ave., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036
(202) 857-6600
TWX 710-822-0068 / Cable BNAIBRITH WASHDC

Memorandum

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

To: Dr. Daniel Thursz

From: Warren W. Eisenberg *WWE*

Date: June 1, 1983

Subject: Meeting With State Department Officials

I had lunch the other day with several State Department officials to exchange notes on developments in Latin America. They were [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I had seen them during the meeting with Secretary of State Schultz and they were anxious to get together to discuss Jewish concerns in Latin America.

Specifically they were interested in what I perceived to be the Jewish organizational view of the El Salvador situation. I indicated to them that since B'nai B'rith had met with key Salvadoran officials that I had discussed, with other Jewish organizational representatives the situation with respect to U.S. aid. I informed the State Department officials that I saw little strong sentiment for Jewish organizations to step out strongly in favor of an aid package. In a discussion during a recent Washington Jewish representatives meeting most of them had resisted the attempt because of strong ideological differences that many organizations feel towards the Salvadoran government or specifically towards involvement in what they questioned as a Jewish issue. There has been some attempt by Michael Gale and the White House to lobby for support of the Reagan Central American policy. Most of them were quite concerned about the connection between Israel and Central America, more particularly arms to Guatemala. I indicated that Jewish organizations would be hard put to develop a direct policy of support for the Reagan Administration's position although I suspected most felt aid was necessary to save El Salvador, to promote economic development, and to shore up the chances for democratic institutions taking over. But I also indicated that I thought that Jewish organizations, like Congress would want strings attached to aid.

We turned to a discussion of the country by country situation in Latin America. They expressed keen concern about Jewish survivability in the area. One of them commented that if the U.S. had to provide emergency refugee aid there would be a severe problem with many individuals in the administration. They expressed particular concern about growing malaise in Argentina and basically wanted to know what they could do to help and what the magnitude of the problem might be. I indicated that I would be meeting with our own people from Argentina we would look into the situation with respect to any help that might be provided.

They also expressed concern about Mexico specifically because of reports of stepped up anti-Semitic and anti-Israel activities, fomented by the PLO and in some cases anti-Semites. Here again they expressed a sense of frustration.

We agreed to compare notes again shortly on conditions in the region.

WWE/bmm
0532.1



B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL

1640 Rhode Island Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 857-6600
TWX 710-822-0068 / Cable BNAIBRITH WASHDC

Memorandum

To: Philip Lax

From: Warren W. Eisenberg *WWE*

Date: May 11, 1983

Subject: Meeting With Salvadoran Officials

On Wednesday, April 27 Dr. Thursz and I were visited by officials of the Salvadoran government who brought greetings from President Magana. They were: the Minister of Economics, Jose Manuel Pacas Castro, who spoke English; the Director General of the National Police, Col. Carlos Reynaldo Lopez Nuila; the Minister to the President, Dr. Francisco Guerrero. They were accompanied by Roberto Liebes, a Salvadoran Jew who is now a member of B'nai B'rith and whose father had been leader of both the Jewish community and of B'nai B'rith in El Salvador until his assassination by terrorists two years ago.

Over recent weeks we have talked to Mr. Liebes who had been asked to contact us by former Senator Richard Stone, President Reagan's newly designated special ambassador for Central America. Also present were Rabbi Joel Meyers and George Spectre.

The Salvadorans had clearly come looking to gain support of their government's plea for military and economic assistance. The meeting served to allow them to present their case, and it allowed us to describe the political landscape in the United States. After presenting opening pleasantries they made their case for aid both to combat terrorism and communism. They suggested that their opponents were preventing the agricultural peasants from cultivating their land, through a reign of terror so effective that crop yields are down by two-thirds. The Economics Minister also indicated that no economic recovery is possible under these circumstances. He also made the point that the war is currently costing the country \$600 million.

The Salvadorans paid homage to Israel's situation in the Middle East, which they attempted to liken to their own: a country surrounded by hostile forces threatening to take them over. They indicated they would like Israel's armed support for their cause.

In attempting to describe to Salvadoran officials, the perils of the American political landscape, Dr. Thursz described the complexity of concerns that operate here in Washington. He indicated that there are those who doubt the validity of a

"Domino Theory", to Central America,. In other words, El Salvadore falls followed by the rest is Central America and even Mexico, all going to the communist. He indicated that many Americans, while they oppose communism, are more concerned with human rights; the reputation of El Salvador in many quarters in the United States, is of a country where the peasant population is caught between warring sides on the right and left. Few Americans can condone reports of sizable killings that have taken place in the country.

I, too, indicated that it is difficult to arouse support for the government of El Salvador when many Americans are convinced that the government has been responsible for substantial deaths. I questioned Colonel Lopez Nuila, head of the national police about the operation of the President's Human Rights Commission, of which he is a member. I indicated that there were reports of atrocities and mass deaths perpetrated by government forces. I raised a question as to whether the commission had investigated the charges and whether the perpetrators had been found and prosecuted. He said the commission investigates but can only recommend to the judiciary that action be taken. The answer was a rather fuzzy one. Pacas said that terrorists hide among the peasants making them "indistinguishable" from other Salvadorans.

We indicated that it would be difficult for most American groups, including Jewish groups, to involve themselves in a major effort as long as the government did not take a position to work to — guarantee human rights and the functioning of rule of law. All three Salvadorans said that they wanted the government to operate in a legal way. I suggested that any aid that is given would unquestionably be tied to the question of guaranteeing human rights and seeking perpetrators of crime, whether they be in the army or the national police. (This seems to be the direction Congress is taking.)

At the end of the meeting Dr. Thursz suggested that the Salvadorans might benefit from releasing more information on the — connection of terrorists to the PLO. In addition he thought that a panel of distinguished journalists, chosen by outsiders, might go down to the country to evaluate the claims of some of the human rights groups, which the Salvadoran government disputes. We offered to suggest some names. They stated that the charge of hundreds and hundreds of deaths were greatly inflated.

They made a strong plea for support and indicated, as did President Reagan later that day in his speech, that a general amnesty would be offered to political prisoners and that elections would be held in the near future. Roberto Liebes informed me that the delegation was pleased with their meeting.

WWE/yej
0003

cc: Gerald Kraft
Dr. Daniel Thursz
Stuart Raskas
Shalom P. Doran
Isaac Frenkel
Fred S. Worms
Bill Korey
Harris Schoenberg
George Spectre
M. H. Shusterman



Israeli Arms Sales to Nicaragua

On November 19, in an article of the New York Times datelined Managua, Nicaragua, Alan Riding, after describing the crushing of the resistance groups and the killing of hundreds of civilians by the armed cars, tanks and aircraft of the Nicaragua National Guard in September, asserted that since then there had been "several secret arms shipments from Israel, which were delivered by air at night during curfew hours". He further alleged that surface-to-air missiles had been added to the aircraft, patrol boats, sub-machine guns, etc., delivered before the September insurrection.

Rumors and reports regarding such arm shipments had been circulating for some time before the New York Times article appeared. At a mid-October press conference in Mexico, Rafael Fernandez, leader of the Mexican Socialist Party criticized Israel for sale of arms to Ecuador, Chile and Nicaragua "helping and supporting the United States' policy of oppression." His statements were widely reported in Mexican newspapers and magazines. In other countries of Latin America, while the press published the cables of the international news services, there was little comment. Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, despite their military governments, are not sympathetic to Somoza, fearing that his attempt to remain in power will fail, and a second "Cuba" will be engendered in Latin America. Furthermore, Argentina and Chile are among those governments to whom Israel (as well as other countries such as France) are selling weapons.

In Brazil, which in recent years has adopted an openly pro-Arab policy, comments, strongly critical of Israel, have appeared in their newspapers. But there has been no editorial comment regarding alleged Israeli arms to Nicaragua. The Venezuelan government has been strongly critical of Somoza and has recently cut off oil exports to Nicaragua, and Venezuelan newspapers have commented unfavorably on reports of Israel arms shipments to Nicaragua.

In the United States, there have been some critical editorials in several major newspapers, and organizations such as the National Council of Churches and other Church-related bodies have adopted resolutions criticizing Israel and urging the United States government to put pressure on Israel to discontinue its arms shipments to Nicaragua. In early November, at the meeting of the Socialist International in Vancouver, Canada (incidentally attended by Shimon Peres) a resolution of solidarity with Nicaraguan opposition elements was adopted, which included a statement critical of Israel for selling arms to the Somoza regime.

The reports of Israeli arms shipments to Nicaragua seem to have been accepted without question. Yet in a recent news broadcast in New York on November 26, 1978, it was reported that President Somoza had denied receiving arms from Israel during the last two months and indicated further, that the arms received prior to

that were largely replacement parts. As for the Israeli Government, it has refused to either confirm or deny the reports. However, it has denied the report that an airlift of supplies, such as that described in the above-mentioned New York Times article, had in fact occurred. A United States State Department representative has confirmed the Israeli statement.

It should also be pointed out that all countries with arms industries seek markets for their products without necessarily requiring ideological certification. In the world arms market, Israeli sales comprise about 2%, and Israelis feel that the singling out of Israel is but another example of the unfair double standard of which Israel has been a victim over a number of issues.

It must also be remembered, that since 1947, when General Anastasio Somoza Garcia, the father of the current Nicaraguan President, helped the Israelis procure weapons with which to defend themselves against the Arabs during the Israeli War of Independence, Nicaragua has been unwavering in its support. Given the present pressures arrayed against Israel, such support is not taken lightly nor easily discarded.

In any event, when the present contractual obligations are fulfilled, (and this may have already been achieved), it is possible that no new contracts will be negotiated. Israel will thus follow the policy of the United States which has only just recently terminated its military assistance programs with Nicaragua.

One further consideration must be taken into account. At the present time it is difficult to foretell the kind of government that will take over if Somoza resigns. While Somoza's declarations that all forces opposing him are Communist or Communist-inspired have been contradicted by all responsible observers, there is validity to the fear that left-wing groups, comprising the Sandanistas, will attempt to take over the management and direction of the Opposition. This is of great concern to several Latin American countries including Costa Rica which has been most helpful to the resistance groups and provided asylum for thousands of Nicaraguans. The threat of a left-wing takeover is also obviously of major importance to the United States. But for the Israelis, this is of particular concern since there have been reports that these groups, loyal to the Soviet Union and Cuba have agreed to join forces with the PLO in opposing Israel.

Has Israel been harmed by its arms trade with Nicaragua and the attendant unfavorable publicity? At this stage it is difficult to judge. Israel's friends would have wished that Israel did not feel constrained to enter into such agreements, and especially that such agreements not be publicized. Israel's enemies have been handed a convenient stick with which to flail against her in the press and other media. But as of now, no friend of Israel has turned against her because of this affair.

from the desk of
LAWRENCE S. PHILLIPS

bring the Mark -
about
How Jewish?
Catholicism
interesting
important to me
very

PHILLIPS - VAN HEUSEN CORPORATION

1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10019 / (212) 541-5200

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

TO: Mr. Robert Reilly
Mr. & Mr. C. Smith

September 12, 1983

FROM: Lawrence Phillips

For the invitations you are sending out, I give you the following information:

Reverend Alvaro Arguello, holds or has held the following positions with the Government of Nicaragua -

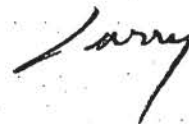
- 1) Director of Central American Historic Institute
- 2) Professor of Law at the Central American University of Managua
- 3) Representative of the Clergy in the Council of State
- 4) Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Council of State
- 5) Chief Legal Advisor to the Council of State

The meeting will be called for 5:15 p.m. on September 26th in the Terrace Room of the Roosevelt Hotel. The Reverend Arguello should probably commence his talk at 5:30 p.m., allow time for questions and answers, and the meeting should be adjourned by 6:30 p.m.

Would you let me know approximately how many people you are inviting, and shortly before the meeting give me a count on the acceptances. I assume the three of you will act as hosts and one of you will introduce Reverend Arguello.

It should be a very interesting affair as Arguello is brilliant and articulate.

LSP:mq



DEMOCRACY IS THE ISSUE IN NICARAGUA

The people of Nicaragua, after overthrowing the Somoza tyranny, are again being forced to struggle for their freedom and their dignity. Their struggle, like that in neighboring El Salvador, has been waged against extremes both of the Right and the Left. Today they need and deserve the help of all who share the democratic faith.

The Sandinista rulers of Nicaragua are now seeking to impose a totalitarian system upon their people. They will not be deterred simply by humanitarian pleas, diplomatic appeals or economic pressures. If the Sandinistas succeed, the Nicaraguan people will suffer greatly, and democracy throughout the Americas will face an unprecedented threat.

But the Nicaraguan democratic resistance movement can alter this dangerous course of events. Its leaders—figures such as Arturo Cruz, Adolfo Calero, Pedro Joaquim Chamorro and Alfonso Robelo—proved their dedication to democracy in the struggle against the Somoza dictatorship. They seek negotiations for an honorable peace with the Sandinistas through the good offices of the Nicaraguan Catholic Bishops. But the Sandinistas still refuse to negotiate with their own people. So the resistance leaders are now asking for our help.

There are many issues in the present debate over U.S. policy toward Nicaragua, but the basic issue is this: will we stand beside the Nicaraguan democratic resistance in its struggle against totalitarianism? Or will we declare that this movement is a lost cause, and offer only to help its supporters adjust to lives as victims, refugees and exiles?

We the undersigned—Democrats, Republicans and Independents, liberals and conservatives, trade unionists, businessmen, professionals, religious workers and intellectuals—believe that our government and our people must now send an unmistakable message to Managua, Moscow and Havana: the American people support the struggle for democracy in Nicaragua. We may differ over what form our assistance should take, but we are firmly united in the conviction that our aid is a moral and strategic obligation.

We urge you to join us by making your views known to the President, your Congressmen and your community. Help us build a movement of support throughout the United States for those in Nicaragua who, at great risk, are standing up for democracy. Please send a generous contribution so this message can be reprinted in other publications, so speakers can be sent out to present our case, so radio and television messages can be broadcast, and so our leaders (and the Sandinistas) will hear the voice of democratic America.

Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America (PRODEMCA)

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- Mr. & Mrs. Wick Allison**
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- Kenneth S. Smiten**
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- Maurice Sonnenberg**
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- R. James Woolsey**
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- Harriet M. Zimmerman**
Member, Board of Directors, Coalition for a Democratic Majority

*Organizational affiliations are for identification purposes only.

PRODEMCA: The Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America (PRODEMCA) is a non-partisan citizens' organization working to build public support for solving problems of conflict and development in Central America by strengthening the processes of democracy. We believe that democracy is proving—as, for example, in El Salvador—to be a practical alternative to extremism of the Left and the Right in this important region. Both the values and the interests of the United States compel us to support those of our neighbors who have undertaken the difficult but promising effort to establish democratic institutions and practices of their own.

To: Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America (PRODEMCA)
2000 L Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036 Phone: 202-466-8264

Yes, you may add my name as a supporter of the above statement in support of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance movement.

I enclose my contribution of \$_____. Make checks payable to PRODEMCA. Contributions are tax-deductible under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Send me a full text of the proposal for peace and democracy of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance.

Name _____ Phone _____

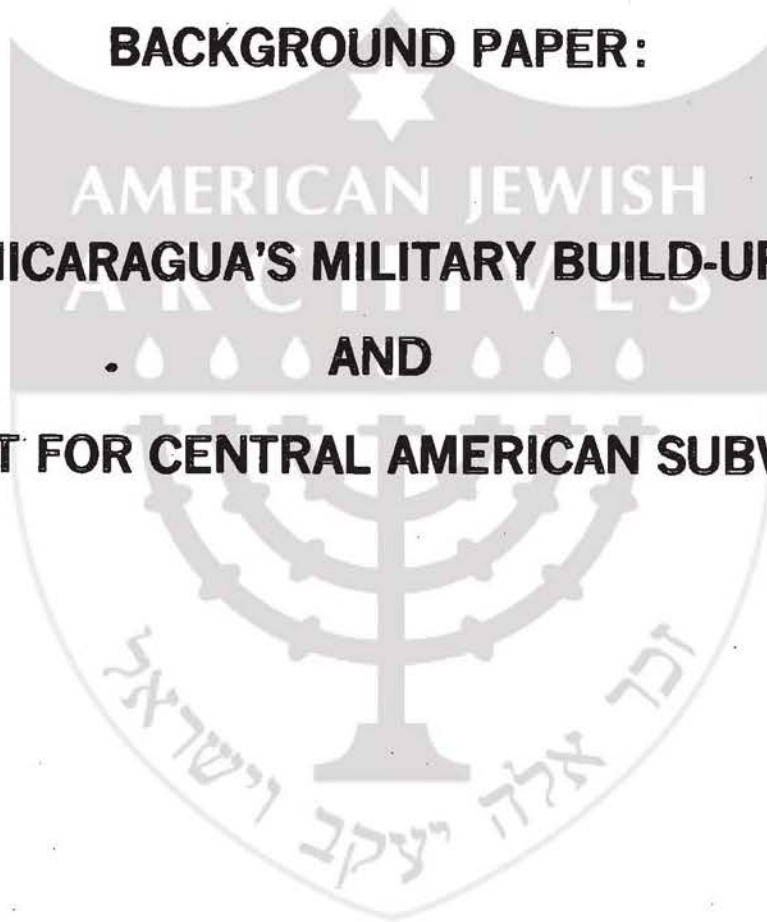
Address _____

Signature _____

BACKGROUND PAPER:

**AMERICAN JEWISH
NICARAGUA'S MILITARY BUILD-UP
AND**

SUPPORT FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN SUBVERSION



SUMMARY

The Sandinista leaders of Nicaragua have sought to project an image of themselves as "nationalist revolutionaries." Unfortunately for their immediate neighbors, the day-to-day reality of the Sandinistas' behavior does not match the moderate image that many who live far from the reality still perceive. This report examines Sandinista words and actions from the July 19, 1979, seizure of power to the present, particularly as they relate to Nicaragua's military power, ties to Cuba and other communist countries, and relations with guerrillas and subversive groups in neighboring countries.

The picture that emerges is troubling. The Sandinista leaders understood in 1979 that their plans for establishing a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship in Nicaragua would arouse resistance among their neighbors and in the United States. They also knew that blatant revelation of their Marxist-Leninist orientation would tend to reduce the amount of aid they could expect from the West. During visits of Westerners to Managua and in their own travels abroad, the Sandinistas masked their real intentions. Nevertheless, they have worked quietly and steadily toward their objectives of building the power of the state security apparatus, building the strongest armed forces in Central America, and becoming a center for exporting subversion to Nicaragua's neighbors. The Sandinistas believed that they would have to expand their revolution to the rest of Central America or see it defeated. They chose expansion.

In less than five years the Sandinistas have built the largest and best equipped military force in Central America. About 240 tanks and armored vehicles, surface-to-air missiles, 152mm howitzers and 122mm multiple rocket launchers give it a mobility and firepower capacity unmatched in the region. (Honduras, for example, has a total of 16 armored vehicles.) Nicaragua has a 48,800-man armed force. A total of about 100,000 men have been trained and could be mobilized rapidly.

The rapid growth of Nicaraguan military strength could not have been possible without the help of about 3,000 Cuban military-security advisers, some of whom are deeply involved in the decision-making process in Nicaragua. A total of about 9,000 Cubans are in Nicaragua. In addition, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Libya have military and/or civilian advisers in Nicaragua. Also, international groups, including the PLO, Argentine Montoneros, Uruguayan Tupamaros, and the Basque ETA all have offices or representatives in Nicaragua.

The subversive system that seeks to destabilize neighboring democratic governments includes communications centers for Salvadoran guerrillas, safehouses, arms depots, vehicle shops, training camps for guerrillas, and assistance in transporting military supplies to Salvadoran guerrillas via air, land, and sea. El Salvador has been the principal target of guerrillas and Nicaraguan-sponsored subversion, but Costa Rica and Honduras have also been subjected to armed attacks, bombings, attempted assassinations and other violent activity.

The threat from Nicaragua to the democratic governments of Central America and the support system Nicaragua maintains for guerrillas are all the more formidable because behind Nicaragua, providing support, are Cuba and the Soviet Union.



BACKGROUND PAPER:
NICARAGUA'S MILITARY BUILD-UP
AND
SUPPORT FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN SUBVERSION

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Introduction

When the Sandinistas and other anti-Somoza Nicaraguans seized power in Nicaragua in July 1979, people in the United States and elsewhere tended to believe Sandinista public pledges to have genuine democracy in Nicaragua and to live at peace with neighboring countries. Nicaragua's clear need at the time was to restore its economic health so that its people could begin to enjoy a better life. Its neighbors were not hostile; indeed two of them--Panama and Costa Rica--had helped in the struggle against the Somoza regime. In 1979 and 1980, the U.S. Government, as evidence of its good will, granted Nicaragua the largest economic assistance program provided to any Central American country at that time.

The Sandinista leaders tried initially to maintain a moderate image in the United States and elsewhere in the Western world. In the two months before taking power in July 1979, Sandinista leaders in various public pronouncements pledged adherence to non-alignment in foreign policy and pledged to hold elections, to guarantee human rights, and to permit private enterprise to continue.¹ In their early meetings with U.S. Administration officials, members of the Congress, and non-government groups, the Sandinistas sought to portray their regime as non-aligned and not patterned after Cuba or the Soviet Union.

Evidence that the Sandinistas have not lived up to their original promises has steadily mounted. Step by step, they have become a menace to their neighbors and to the Nicaraguan people. Although most Central Americans no longer harbor illusions about the Sandinistas,² some people in the United States and elsewhere still think of the Sandinistas as

¹"Nicaraguan Rebels Soften Stand on National Guard," New York Times, July 12, 1979, p. A-14.

²A public opinion poll, commissioned by the U.S. Information Agency, was conducted by an experienced Costa Rican affiliate of Gallup International in 1983. Using standard Gallup sampling and questioning procedures, the poll was carried out in the capitals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica. (Nicaragua does not permit independent public opinion surveys.) The results of the poll suggest that Nicaragua is perceived as a military threat by the people of neighboring countries, and Cuba is seen as a tool of the Soviet Union. Both countries are viewed as destabilizing the area, especially by respondents in Costa Rica and Honduras. For full results of the survey, and notes on methodology, see the November 20-24, 1983, editions of La Nacion International, San Jose, Costa Rica.

idealistic and nationalistic revolutionaries. This view is illusory. Behind the facade of friendship and moderation very different plans were being made, despite the honeymoon the Sandinista leaders were enjoying with the democratic world. In just under five years the pattern of their actions and policies shows an image very different from what they sought to project in 1979.

In his weekly radio address of April 14, 1984, President Reagan noted that:

- o Central America has become the stage for a bold attempt by the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua to install communism, by force, throughout this hemisphere.
- o Costa Rica, Honduras, and El Salvador are being threatened by a Soviet-bloc and Cuban-supported Sandinista army and security force in Nicaragua that has grown from about 10,000 under the previous government, to more than 100,000 in less than five years.
- o In 1983 the Soviet bloc delivered over \$100 million in military hardware. The Sandinistas have established a powerful force of artillery, multiple rocket-launchers, and tanks in an arsenal that exceeds that of the other countries in the region.
- o Our friends in the region face subversion from across their borders that undermines their democratic development and wrecks their economies. This subversion has been felt by all of Nicaragua's neighbors.
- o El Salvador, struggling to hold democratic elections and improve the conditions of its people, has been the main target of Nicaragua's covert aggression.
- o The region also contains millions of people who want and deserve to be free. We cannot turn our backs on this crisis at our doorstep. Nearly 23 years ago President Kennedy warned against the threat of communist penetration in our hemisphere.

The following report elaborates on two of the three aspects of Sandinista behavior mentioned by President Reagan: the arms build-up and export of subversion to other countries in the region, and the Cuban/Soviet involvement in both of these areas. (The third area is that of internal repression.)

The public record of the past five years in Central America contains extensive evidence of the Sandinista military build-up, links to the Cubans and other communist countries, and support for guerrillas. We have cited Sandinista documents, press reports, and interviews with captured guerrillas and defectors in preparing this report, but intelligence sources also have provided thousands of pieces of information that support the conclusions in this report. We have not, however, cited specific intelligence reports because of the potential consequences of revealing sources and methods. Statistics provided herein, such as the number of tanks in the Sandinista arsenal, are based on intelligence information, unless specific sources are identified.

The availability of enough supplies and money to keep 10,000 guerrillas fighting in El Salvador is in itself strong evidence of outside support. What has been lacking in the past has been a systematic compilation of available evidence. In this report we provide details--and a framework--for analyzing the Nicaraguan military build-up and support for subversion in Central America. There is little in this report that alone is sensational, but the sum total adds up to a composite picture of Nicaragua's involvement as a support system for advancing communism in Central America.

Privately the Sandinistas and Castro have admitted their involvement to diplomats and others. During an interview in 1982 with Stephen S. Rosenfeld of the Washington Post, Nicaragua's Foreign Minister admitted that arms and supplies were flowing through Nicaragua to Salvadoran guerrillas but he denied that the flow was "substantial" and that it was authorized.³

The body of intelligence documenting Nicaraguan and Cuban involvement in subversion and support for guerrillas active in Central America has been reviewed by the Senate and House Select Intelligence Committees. In May 1983, the House Intelligence Committee, after reviewing the intelligence-based evidence and finding it convincing, reported:

³Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "The Sandinistas Call it War," Washington Post, March 8, 1982, p. A-13.

It is not popular support that sustains the insurgents. As will be discussed later, this insurgency depends for its life blood--arms, ammunition, financing, logistics and command-and-control facilities--upon outside assistance from Nicaragua and Cuba. This Nicaraguan-Cuban contribution to the Salvadoran insurgency is longstanding. It began shortly after the overthrow of Somoza in July 1979. It has provided--by land, sea and air--the great bulk of military equipment and support received by the insurgents.⁴

Evidence obtained from intelligence continues to reveal Nicaraguan involvement in providing Salvadoran guerrilla groups with material, command and control support, and safe haven.

Sandinista Strategy in 1979: Two Faces to the World

When the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN) was mounting its struggle against the Somoza dictatorship, its leaders were careful to present themselves to the public and governments of the Western world as "nationalist revolutionaries" struggling against a right-wing dictatorship, somewhat reminiscent of the "Robin Hood" image that Fidel Castro tried to project 20 years earlier. Indeed, Castro, who in retrospect apparently felt that he had shown his true Marxist-Leninist colors too early after his seizure of power, consistently advised the Sandinista leaders to go slow in showing their Marxism-Leninism to avoid scaring Western donors and provoking a strong United States reaction before their

⁴U.S. Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Report to Accompany H.R. 2760, 98th Cong., 1st Session, 1983, Rept. 98-122, Part 1, p. 2..

rule could be consolidated. He also advised them to consolidate their revolution quickly. Sandinista leaders made strenuous efforts to get a broad array of international backing. They travelled repeatedly to the United States to lobby in favor of the large economic assistance package that the Carter Administration had presented to Congress. They sought to convince United States Government and private sector leaders of their moderate nature.⁵

It is now clear that the strategy of the hardline Marxist-Leninists among the Sandinistas was one of deceiving the outside world. They knew that their policies would eventually generate resistance from their neighbors and the United States. But in the meantime they were deliberately seeking to cultivate favor and support among sympathetic people in the U.S. Government, Congress, private sector, religious community, and others both to hide their true nature and to delay eventual alienation. Reportedly the Sandinistas hoped that a confused and deeply divided American public opinion would immobilize United States policy responses toward Nicaragua as the Sandinistas built up their military power, supported subversion and guerrillas in neighboring countries, and installed the internal security apparatus of a totalitarian state.⁶

Most of the Sandinista rank and file, and some former Sandinista leaders, such as Eden Pastora Gomez, or Commander Zero as he is popularly known, appear to be genuine nationalists. But the nine members of the Sandinista National Directorate, the center of power in Nicaragua today, are all Marxist-Leninists. Soon after the July 19, 1979, victory, the non-communist leaders and supporters of the revolution began to be put aside by the Marxists. The issue was clear: The nine comandantes had begun, slowly but surely, to establish a Marxist-Leninist regime. Had the world been listening earlier, it might have anticipated the Sandinistas' intentions. One of the founders of the Sandinista movement, Carlos Fonseca Amador,

⁵For a more complete analysis of Nicaraguan strategy, see Ernest Evans, "Revolutionary Movements in Central America: The Development of a New Strategy," Howard J. Wiarda, ed., Rift and Revolution (Wash., D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984) pp. 177-180.

⁶Ibid.

sent a message to the 1971 Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in which he referred to the FSLN as "the successor of the Bolshevik October revolution" and went on to state that "the ideals of the immortal Lenin are a guiding star in the struggle."⁷

From the outset, the Sandinista leaders in private regarded the United States as an enemy. This was evident in the Sandinistas' first major policy and planning document, prepared two months after their July 19, 1979, seizure of power. In that document they identified the United States as the "rabid enemy" of peoples struggling for "national liberation" and referred to the Nicaraguan middle class as the "traitorous bourgeoisie." Although the document focused on consolidating their power internally, it also discussed strengthening the Central American, Latin American, and worldwide revolution.⁸

Arturo Cruz Sequeira, a Sandinista government official who was intimately familiar with the thinking of the top FSLN leadership, confirms that, given the Sandinistas' long-term revolutionary goals for the region, conflict with Nicaragua's neighbors and the United States was inevitable:

According to the National Directorate, a region as small as Central America allowed for only one of two options: a revolutionary solution for the entire region, given the "ripple effect" of the Nicaraguan revolution, or the eventual defeat of Nicaragua. Thus, the detente with Honduras at the beginning of the revolution could only be temporary. To the comandantes, it was not even certain that friendly relations would continue with Costa Rica and Panama. The new Nicaragua could not expect favorable inter-national public opinion indefinitely. The Nicaraguan advance toward socialism, and the country's

⁷"Central America's Guerrillas Aren't 'Robin Hoods,'" Human Events, March 31, 1979, p. 16.

⁸This 36-page document, formally titled "Analysis of the Situation and Tasks of the Sandinista Peoples' Revolution," dated October 5, 1979, is also known as the "72-Hour Document." It reported in detail on an extraordinary meeting September 21-23, 1979, of the top leadership of the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN). It outlined the situation in Nicaragua and the world as the Sandinista leaders saw it and set forth their plans for consolidating the revolution.

ties with the Soviet Union and Cuba would, sooner or later, alienate the European social democrats, American liberals, and even regional governments such as Venezuela and Mexico.⁹

The Sandinistas constantly seek to portray the build-up of their armed forces as a reaction to the policies of the Reagan Administration and to the Nicaraguan opposition. The truth is quite different. The Sandinistas were launched on their present path long before 1981. Many Nicaraguans who now oppose the Sandinistas were active in the struggle against Somoza and tried to collaborate with the Sandinistas during the post-1979 period. Some of the present anti-Sandinista leaders who were members of the post-1979 leadership--Alfonso Robelo and Eden Pastora are examples--did not oppose the Sandinistas until the military build-up was well underway and the Sandinistas showed no intention of allowing a democratic system, including peaceful opposition, to develop.

In an Op-Ed article written for the New York Times, in mid-1982, Eden Pastora outlined the reasons he broke with the Sandinistas:

I left the Government in mid-1981. I had tried in vain to convince the Sandinista leaders of the need to adhere to the principles of the revolution. As the situation continued to deteriorate I began in April this year [1982] to speak out publicly against Nicaragua's new dictatorship....

To ensure its control over the nation, the Directorate has set up a powerful secret police apparatus with the help of foreigners, most of them East German or Cuban agents. This local version of the Gestapo spies on citizens and arrests those it deems enemies of the state. Today in Nicaragua there is terror where there was once bright hope.¹⁰

⁹Arturo Cruz Sequeira, "The Origins of Sandinista Foreign Policy," in Robert S. Leiken, ed., Central America: Anatomy of Conflict (Wash., D.C.: Pergamon Institute, Carnegie Endowment for Peace, 1984), p. 104. (Cruz Sequeira is the son of Arturo Jose Cruz Parros, former junta member and later Nicaraguan Ambassador to the United States.)

¹⁰"Tyranny of Far Left or Far Right? Nicaraguan Sees Another Choice," New York Times, July 14, 1982, p. A-23.

The Largest Armed Force in Central America

An immediate priority of the Sandinistas after July 19, 1979, was to transform their guerrilla force of about 6,000 men into a conventional army and concurrently to develop large militia and reserve forces. The "72-hour Document" of October 1979 made clear the Sandinista intention to build a powerful military force.

After nearly five years of effort, the Sandinistas have increased the number of their troops on active duty--army, air force, navy, active reserves, and militia--to some 48,800.¹¹ In addition, they are continuing to expand the militia and have enacted a nationwide universal military service law. All told, the armed strength available to Nicaragua, if fully mobilized and including the reserves, is over 100,000.

Concurrently, with the rapid increase in the number of men under arms, the Sandinistas have more than doubled the number of major military installations. The configuration of most of these installations clearly indicates the Soviet/Cuban influence. Dozens of smaller military facilities have also been built or converted from former civilian use.

Nicaragua's Armor Units and Artillery: An Offensive Capability?

Nicaragua now has about 100 Soviet medium tanks (T-54/T-55), over 20 light amphibious tanks (PT-76), and 120 other armored vehicles. Two deliveries of tanks and APCs on Bulgarian ships this year have more than doubled the size of Nicaragua's tank and mechanized forces since May 1983.¹² By contrast, Honduras has 16 armored reconnaissance vehicles. These are not amphibious and cannot carry personnel other than crew members. Costa Rica has no army, much less any tanks, and El Salvador, while having a few dozen armored personnel carriers, does not have tanks. Nicaragua also has increased

¹¹The National Guard of Anastasio Somoza numbered about 7,500 in peacetime and about 14,000 at the height of the 1978-79 civil war.

¹²"More Soviet Weapons Landed in Nicaragua", Washington Times, June 5, 1984, p. A-1.

its inventory of other military vehicles sharply. During the first six months of 1984, the U.S. Government noted the arrival in Nicaragua of over 200 military trucks, about 300 jeeps, plus smaller numbers of other vehicles and spare parts. In 1983, Nicaragua received nearly 500 trucks, over 500 jeeps, and about 100 other vehicles. East Germany alone has provided more than 1,000 trucks since 1980. The Soviets have supplied at least six heavy ferries to give additional amphibious mobility to the Nicaraguan armed forces. With these ferries, the non-amphibious tanks could be taken across rivers or other bodies of water.

We have confirmed the deployment of almost 50 Soviet 152mm and 122mm howitzers in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas have received at least 24 122mm multiple rocket launchers from Soviet-bloc suppliers. The rocket launchers and howitzers, in addition to the 240 tanks and armored vehicles, give Nicaragua a firepower and mobility unmatched in the region, and the amphibious ferries provide a water-crossing capability for the armor force.¹³

Until 1982, Soviet deliveries of weapons to the Sandinistas were made primarily via Algeria, from which they were transshipped on commercial cargo vessels, perhaps to mask Moscow's deep involvement in Nicaragua. Since late 1982, however, arms shipments from the Soviet Union and Bulgaria have been primarily in their own and other bloc country ships.

The Sandinista Air Arm

In addition to the land forces build-up, the Sandinistas have put together the foundation for a strong air force. They have about 120 Soviet-made anti-aircraft guns and at least 700 SA-7 surface-to-air missiles. They have about ten MI-8 helicopters and six AN-2 light transport aircraft received from the Soviet bloc. Despite initial Soviet and Sandinista claims that the helicopters were for civilian use, they have been armed and camouflaged and are flying military missions against the anti-Sandinista and Indian insurgents.

¹³Nicaragua's neighbors cannot help but note that parts of their borders with Nicaragua are demarked by rivers and that in other places rivers run close to the frontiers and would have to be forded in the event of a Nicaraguan attack.

The Sandinistas have received four Italian-made trainer/tactical support aircraft, we believe from Libya. These airplanes are armed with machine guns and have been used in combat operations against anti-Sandinistas. They also have received helicopters from Libya, and about 20 Libyan pilots and mechanics. The Sandinistas have formed a new airborne special troop battalion. Two Soviet-made AN-26 transport planes arrived in April 1983.

Preparations for using Soviet fighter aircraft in Nicaragua have been underway for more than three years. In 1980, a first group of Nicaraguans reportedly was sent to Eastern Europe for flight training in MiGs. Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) pilots and mechanics have been in Nicaragua, reportedly to provide assistance to the Nicaraguan Air Force. Aircraft revetments to handle high-performance military aircraft have been completed at Sandino airfield outside Managua, and runway extensions and improvements continue at Puerto Cabezas. A new military airfield at Punta Huete, when completed, will have the longest runway in Central America (3,200 meters), and will be capable of receiving any aircraft in the Soviet inventory. (See photo.)

Thus a basis has been laid for the receipt of modern jet fighters and for accommodating large military planes, such as heavy transport planes and Soviet "Backfire" bombers. If Nicaragua were to receive MiG fighters, the Sandinistas could rapidly develop a formidable air force. A Nicaraguan defector who had been part of the Sandinista security apparatus provided information on the Sandinistas' consideration of the acquisition of Soviet MiG fighter aircraft. In discussing the arms build-up, he said: "There are already assigned MiGs waiting in Cuba. Nicaraguan pilots who will graduate from schools in Bulgaria will fly the MiGs."¹⁴

A more recent indication that the delivery of MiGs remains a possibility was a statement by junta leader Daniel Ortega, on June 10, 1984, that Nicaraguan pilots are being trained to fly

¹⁴Excerpt from Washington Post interviews with Miguel Bolanos Hunter, at the Heritage Foundation, June 16-17, 1983. For statements from Defense Minister Humberto Ortega in 1982 saying that Nicaragua was pushing forward with plans to acquire Soviet MiG or French Mirage fighters, see "Nicaragua Says It Seeks Soviet, French Planes," Washington Post, July 29, 1982, p. A-1, A-24.

both MiGs and Mirage fighter aircraft.¹⁵ This was followed June 12 by an editorial in the pro-government El Nuevo Diario, stating that the Sandinista National Directorate "had resolved" to use high performance combat aircraft. Undoubtedly, any delivery of MiGs to Nicaragua would arouse deep concern among Nicaragua's neighbors and the United States.

The Cuban Presence and Involvement

The pervasiveness of the Cuban presence led Alfonso Robelo, a former member of the Sandinista junta, to refer to Nicaragua as "an occupied country...where no crucial decision is taken without the approval of the Cubans."

Approximately 9,000 Cubans are now in Nicaragua. Of these, some 3,000 are military and security personnel attached to the Nicaraguan armed forces and to internal security and intelligence organizations, from the general staff down to individual battalions. The rapid build-up of Nicaraguan military strength from 1979 to the present could not have been possible without the presence of the Cuban military/security advisers and large-scale arms and equipment shipments from the Soviet Union. Other Soviet-bloc governments, radical regimes such as Libya, and groups including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), have also made significant contributions to the growth and training of Nicaragua's armed forces.

Although only about 3,000 of the Cubans in Nicaragua are assigned directly to military/security positions, many others have had military training and could be mobilized to form part of an armed force, just as happened in Grenada. For example, the 2,000 Cubans sent to Nicaragua in mid-1982 have been given basic military training. Cubans are involved in virtually every Nicaraguan Government agency and in activities such as teaching, medicine, and participation in mass organizations.¹⁶

¹⁵Reported in the daily Barricada, Managua, Nicaragua, June 11, 1984.

¹⁶For a description from public sources of the extent of Cuban influence in Nicaragua from the perspective of an ex-Sandinista security official, see the transcript of Miguel Bolanos Hunter's testimony, October 19, 1983, before the Senate Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, as well as Bolanos' interview with the Washington Post at the Heritage Foundation, June 16-17, 1983. Information on Cuban activities from a different source, a captured Salvadoran guerrilla leader, is contained in "Cuba Directs Salvador Insurgency, Former Guerrilla Lieutenant Says," New York Times, July 28, 1983, p. A-10.

The Sandinista Directorate's Marxist-Leninist Nature and Close Ties with Communist Governments

The Sandinista government represents the first triumph of the generation of Latin American guerrilla fighters trained and unified by Fidel Castro. The ideological orientation and backgrounds of key Sandinista leaders leave no question as to why the ideals of Lenin are a "guiding star" in their struggle. Tomas Borge Martinez, Nicaragua's interior minister, who received indoctrination and guerrilla instruction in Cuba, became "General Coordinator" of the FSLN guerrilla organization. Thenceforth, Borge was the key liaison with Cuba. Other beneficiaries of instruction in Cuba on guerrilla tactics and ideology include the brothers Humberto and Daniel Ortega Saavedra, Defense Minister and Coordinator of the government junta, respectively, and Henry Ruiz Hernandez, Planning Minister.

In early 1979, the FSLN was composed of three groups. One of these contained some democratic elements. Castro, dissatisfied with the lack of coordination between the groups, wanted a unified FSLN command structure. To accomplish this--as well as the hidden agenda of strengthening the Marxist-Leninist elements of the FSLN--Castro called Borge and the Ortegas to several meetings in Havana. Non-Marxist-Leninist FSLN members were excluded. The message Castro delivered at these meetings was that a unified command structure would have to be formed prior to the FSLN's receiving additional Cuban assistance.

The unification of the Sandinista forces in March and April 1979 coincided with the end of Carlos Andres Perez' tenure as President of Venezuela. Under Perez, the Sandinistas had received the bulk of their logistical support from Venezuela via Panama. In the spring of 1979, Cuba became the Sandinistas' primary supplier of military assistance, acting through a logistics network set up near the northern Costa Rican city of Liberia. At least 21 Cuban aircraft loaded with weapons and ammunition flew directly from Cuba to Llano Grande Airport in Liberia. This logistical support was important to the Sandinistas. It enabled them to take advantage of the Somoza government's increasingly widespread unpopularity by pushing for a military victory over the disintegrating National Guard.¹⁷

¹⁷See report of the Special Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica on Arms Traffic, May 14, 1981.

Immediately after the Sandinistas and other anti-Somoza Nicaraguans seized power in July 1979, with the general support of the populace, more Cuban advisers arrived in Managua. (A limited number of Cubans were already in Nicaragua assisting the FSLN clandestinely.) Panamanian offers of military advisers were rejected. In less than two years, about 600 Cuban military advisers were introduced into Nicaragua, despite the protests of many non-Marxist leaders who fought with the Sandinistas against Somoza. Through intelligence sources, the U.S. Government learned that one of Castro's most experienced high-ranking officers, General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez, was sent to Nicaragua in June 1983 to oversee the arms build-up and strengthen the overall Cuban role. Ochoa had previously supervised Cuban military activities in Angola and Ethiopia.¹⁸ According to Nicaraguan defectors and other sources, Cubans have been assigned to key ministries within the Sandinista government, including Interior and Defense. The Cuban influence extends beyond participation in the Nicaraguan security and training apparatus.

In the opinion of at least two Sovietologists, the triumph of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua signaled a milestone in what Moscow considered the progressive transformation of the Caribbean basin, perhaps equal in importance to the victory of Castro in Cuba. In both cases, according to the same analysts, the United States was perceived by the Soviets as suffering humiliating political defeat.¹⁹ Evidence of the importance of Nicaragua is reflected in the following excerpt from a memorandum of conversation between Soviet Army Chief of Staff Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov and the Grenadian Army Chief of Staff: "The Marshal said that over two decades ago, there was only Cuba in Latin America; today there are Nicaragua, Grenada, and a serious battle is going on in El Salvador."²⁰

¹⁸For more information on General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez see "Cuban Commander in Nicaragua Post," New York Times, June 19, 1983, pp. A-1, A-10.

¹⁹See Jiri Valenta and Virginia Valenta, "Soviet Strategy and Policies in the Caribbean Basin," Howard J. Wiarda, ed., Rift and Revolution (Wash., D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984), pp. 197-247.

²⁰March 10, 1983, memorandum of conversation between Soviet Army Chief of General Staff Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov and Grenadian Army Chief of Staff Einstein Louison, who was then in the Soviet Union for training.

Military and/or civilian advisers from the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Libya, and East Germany are also active in Nicaragua, albeit in smaller numbers than the Cubans. Their apparent mission is to build a Sandinista-controlled political apparatus and to expand Nicaragua's military and security forces to unprecedented levels.

Crucial to the Central American support system for subversion in Nicaragua are the officers and representatives of guerrilla and subversive groups from elsewhere in Latin America, as well as from the Middle East and Africa. These include the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Argentina's Montoneros, Chile's Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), Spain's separatist Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA), and Uruguay's Tupamaros. Their numbers are small. The PLO office, equivalent in status to a diplomatic mission, helped to train the Sandinista Air Force and serviced military aircraft. NOTE: Although activities initiated by the PLO in the period 1980-82 have continued, its severe reversal in southern Lebanon in 1982 and subsequent events in the Middle East apparently prevented the initiation of new activities during 1983 and 1984.

Montonero leader Mario Firmenich frequently traveled to Nicaragua and other Central American countries prior to his arrest in Brazil in February 1984.²¹ One of his lieutenants, Estela Caloni, operated safehouses and propaganda facilities for the Montoneros in Managua during 1983.²² Caloni also held a job in the Nicaraguan Government's press office. Nicaraguan defectors report that veteran Argentine and Chilean guerrillas serve as instructors at Cuban-staffed training camps for guerrillas from El Salvador and other Central American countries, further confirming the fact that the Sandinistas have turned Nicaragua into a center for insurgency in Central America. Members of these international organizations are suspected of having participated in assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, and other violence in neighboring countries, particularly Costa Rica.

²¹Firmenich has been detained in Rio de Janeiro, pending a Brazilian Supreme Court decision on an Argentine government extradition request. We understand that a decision was made during the week of June 17, 1984, to honor the Argentine request.

²²Miguel Bolanos Hunter interviews with the Washington Post, June 16-17, 1983, at the Heritage Foundation, and discussions at the State Department, November 1983.

Creation of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)

Anti-government guerrillas in El Salvador are directed by the Frente Farabundo Marti de Liberacion Nacional (FMLN). Cuban and Nicaraguan involvement with the FMLN's main components and leadership cadres in El Salvador predates the Sandinista rise in Nicaragua.²³ By July 1979, Cuba had trained over 200 guerrillas of the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL) faction of the FMLN in guerrilla warfare tactics.²⁴ Ferman Cienfuegos, leader of another Salvadoran group, the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN), which engaged in an extensive kidnapping campaign against the Salvadoran and foreign business community, also met regularly with Cuban intelligence officers.

During a visit to Mexico in May 1979, Fidel Castro declared that "Nicaragua and El Salvador will soon fall to guerrilla forces" and their governments will "take their place in the trash heap of history."²⁵ At that time the FSLN victory was all but assured in Nicaragua, and terrorist activity (which preceded full-scale guerrilla war) in El Salvador was reaching its peak.²⁶ However, with the launching of agrarian, banking, and export sector reforms in El Salvador, the leftist groups realized that the political ground had been cut from beneath them, and by June 1980 they had turned to war.

²³Before the FMLN was formed in 1980, there were five smaller, independent Salvadoran guerrilla organizations. These continue as distinct entities but under the umbrella of the FMLN. The FMLN is named after Farabundo Marti, a Salvadoran communist of the 1930s who for a time fought alongside Augusto Sandino in Nicaragua. Sandino, however, who was a nationalist, not a Marxist, expelled Farabundo Marti from his forces because of Marti's communist orientation.

²⁴Miguel Bolanos Hunter discussion at the State Department, November 1983; also see Chicago Tribune, June 27 and July 1, 1979, for reporting on Cuban involvement.

²⁵Reported on NBC Evening News, May 18, 1979, and in "Will El Salvador Be the Next to Fall?" Human Events, August 11, 1979.

²⁶Prior to 1980 the five Salvadoran Marxist-Leninist factions focused on terrorist activities, such as bombing of public buildings (including supermarkets), bank robberies, assassinations, and kidnappings for ransom. This effort, which was centered primarily in urban areas, focused on terrorizing the populace, raising funds for the guerrilla treasury, and setting the stage for widespread guerrilla warfare.

Just as Cuba had done earlier with the Sandinistas, it conditioned training and material support for the five Salvadoran guerrilla groups on the formation of a unified front. Feelings between groups on the Salvadoran extreme left were antagonistic. Traditionally they had engaged in violent infighting which sometimes resulted in assassinations within the guerrilla groups, but they unified to gain Castro's support. In May 1980, following meetings the previous month of Salvadoran revolutionary leaders, including Cayetano Carpio of the Frente Popular de Liberacion (FPL) and Communist Party Chairman Shafik Handal, as well as top Sandinista and Cuban officials, the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU) was created. It encompassed both the political and military arms of the guerrilla alliance.²⁷ In October 1980, the five guerrilla factions, loosely coordinated under the DRU, took a step toward closer unity by forming the FMLN.²⁸

One of the top leaders of the Salvadoran guerrillas, Joaquin Villalobos, in mid-1980 explained the role of Cuba in the Salvadoran revolution to one of his chief field commanders) Alejandro Montenegro. Montenegro, who was captured in mid-1982

²⁷Events surrounding the formation of the FMLN were described in Shafik Handal's diary, which was among documents captured by the Salvadoran army in 1980. As early as 1979 the close working relations between Cubans, Sandinistas, and Salvadoran guerrilla groups were becoming clear. The Cubans were training both the Sandinistas and the Salvadoran guerrilla cadre and providing large-scale shipments of arms to the former. Also the Salvadoran guerrillas were helping the Sandinistas. For example, during the 1979 kidnapping of Israeli honorary consul and leading coffee exporter in El Salvador, Ernesto Liebes, the FARN demanded that part of the ransom for his release be deposited in FSLN bank accounts in Costa Rica.

²⁸The political front for the FMLN is the Frente Democratico Revolucionario (FDR), which was formed in April 1980. It includes three tiny non-communist parties as well as representatives of the Marxist-oriented guerrilla groups. The democratic elements of the FDR have no voice in the DRU, which makes decisions affecting the conduct of the war and the overall political strategy for the FMLN. The FDR's primary role is to serve as a non-communist facade in the FMLN's relations with democratic groups abroad.

in Honduras, quoted Villalobos as saying, "We have to recognize that the Cubans are the fulcrum of the revolution in Latin America." According to Montenegro, in order to unify the diverse guerrilla functions, the Cubans even sanctioned assassinations within the guerrilla groups: "A top leader in Managua killed in the 1980-1981 period was Ernesto Jovel, a FARN (Armed Forces of National Resistance) chief. The Cubans killed him because he always openly opposed Cuba's plans. His plane exploded while he was on the way to Costa Rica."²⁹

During an interview with the New York Times, Montenegro further underlined the Cuban role: "From the political and military point of view, all the decisions that the DRU took--from the strategic sense, from the military sense--were done in coordination with the Cubans. For example, in November 1980, when guerrilla leaders met in Havana, the military plan for the final offensive in January 1981 was authorized by the Cubans."³⁰

The Nicaraguan support structure for the Salvadoran DRU has been incorporated into the FSLN's party structure and state apparatus. The "Comision Politica," headed by FSLN national coordinator Bayardo Arce, is in charge of facilitating propaganda and diplomatic support for the Salvadoran guerrillas. Nicaraguan military support for the FMLN is coordinated through the "Comision Militar," which is composed of Cuban and Nicaraguan staff officers working with Salvadoran

²⁹Montenegro interview with State Department officials, March 12, 1984. NOTE: The circumstances surrounding Jovel's death were deliberately obscured by the FMLN leadership. First, they announced that he had been killed in the war in El Salvador. Their next release said he had been killed in an automobile accident. Finally, they acknowledged that he had been killed in a plane crash, alleging that he had been enroute to Panama. Montenegro's allegation that the Cubans had Jovel killed appears to be the version accepted privately within the guerrilla leadership. We have no information from outside the guerrilla leadership to corroborate the allegation that the Cubans planned Jovel's aircraft accident.

³⁰"Cuba Directs Salvador Insurgency, Former Salvadoran Guerrilla Says," New York Times, July 28, 1983, p. A-10.

guerrilla leaders based in Managua.³¹ This body operates out of the Ministry of Defense in Managua under the control of Defense Minister Humberto Ortega Saavedra. Joaquin Cuadra, the Cuban-trained Sandinista Army Chief of Staff, directs the day-to-day supervision of the "Comision Militar."

The Nicaraguan Supply Operations for the Salvadoran Guerrillas

Arms shipments through Nicaragua to Salvadoran guerrillas increased dramatically after the formation of the DRU in June 1980. Communist governments and other "revolutionary" sponsors abroad began to send Western-made weapons, including M-16 rifles, through Cuba and Nicaragua to the guerrillas. To accelerate donations of arms for the so-called "final offensive," which was launched in January 1981, Cuba and other Soviet-bloc countries also agreed to replace any arms that the Sandinistas donated.³²

The rate and composition of the supply flow to guerrillas in El Salvador has varied, depending on a number of factors. During the initial rapid build-up from November 1980 to January 1981, arms and ammunition made up much of the shipments and the flow in arms was heavy. Since then, the Salvadoran guerrillas and their mentors in Managua have varied the flow of arms and supplies, depending on their tactical requirements and the interdiction efforts they have encountered. Throughout, there has been a steady flow of ammunition, explosives, medicines, and clothing. There have also been sporadic increases in the movement of guerrilla weapons to meet the demands of planned offensives or the organization of new guerrilla groups.

The supply network between Nicaragua and El Salvador follows various routes. Deliveries routinely go by land, using Honduran territory, and by air and sea. Questioned by the New York Times about the arms flow from Nicaragua, former guerrilla Commander Montenegro said that the guerrilla units under his command in 1981 and 1982 in San Salvador and north of the city received nearly all of their arms from Nicaragua. They received monthly

³¹Miguel Bolanos Hunter interviews at the Heritage Foundation with the Washington Post, June 16-17, 1983. For more information on the Nicaraguan Government's linkages with and support for Salvadoran guerrillas and the direct Cuban role in these activities, as well as Cuban controlling influence in certain aspects of the Nicaraguan state security apparatus, see the transcript of Bolanos' October 19, 1983, testimony before the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

³²Ibid.

shipments, mostly via the overland route through Honduras in specially designed trucks. Montenegro said that guerrilla commanders were under orders from their commander in chief (in Nicaragua) to give false information when asked about arms supplies, i.e., that the arms were captured or purchased when in fact they had come from Managua.³³

Vessels disguised as fishing boats leave from Nicaragua's northwestern coast and then transfer arms to large motorized canoes which ply the myriad bays and inlets of El Salvador's southeast coast. Two active Nicaraguan transshipment points for delivery of military supplies to Salvadoran guerrillas were attacked and damaged by anti-Sandinista forces in September 1983. These were located at La Concha in Estero de Padre Ramos, 40 km NW of Corinto, and at Potosi on the Gulf of Fonseca. Western reporters visited La Concha.³⁴ A radio-equipped warehouse and boat facility disguised as a fishing cooperative served as a center of arms trafficking on the island. Local fishermen reported seeing wooden crates being unloaded from military vehicles and put into motor-powered launches. The site was littered with empty ammunition boxes.

Arms continue to be shipped from points in Nicaragua across the Gulf of Fonseca to southeastern El Salvador. The Salvadoran Government has had some success in disrupting the internal Salvadoran part of the supply network. For example, on May 21, 1984, two Salvadoran patrol teams in the Isla Montecristo area near the Lempa River delta engaged a small group of guerrillas in an exchange of fire, killing two guerrillas and capturing one. Acting on information provided by the prisoner, on May 25 the Salvadoran army raided a guerrilla camp north of where the prisoner had been captured. After a stiff fight, the camp was taken and destroyed. The camp's main purpose had been to serve as a link in the supply route from Nicaragua. Thirty-four large canoes were captured.

³³See Hedrick Smith's "A Former Salvadoran Rebel Chief Tells of Arms From Nicaragua," New York Times, July 12, 1984, p. A-10. This article also includes Montenegro's description of the supplies received, and the overland routes used by the trucks.

³⁴"Base for Ferrying Arms to El Salvador Found in Nicaragua," Washington Post, September 21, 1983, pp. A-29, A-31. NOTE: La Concha is also named La Pelota.

Among the documents found at the site were maps of the coastal area depicting guerrilla-controlled supply routes. (See guerrilla map.) Once weapons and supplies are landed in southeastern El Salvador, they are transported along trails, primarily by backpack, to the northern war zones. Recent reports indicate that young Salvadorans forced into service with the guerrillas are being used to carry arms as their initial duty in the guerrilla ranks.³⁵

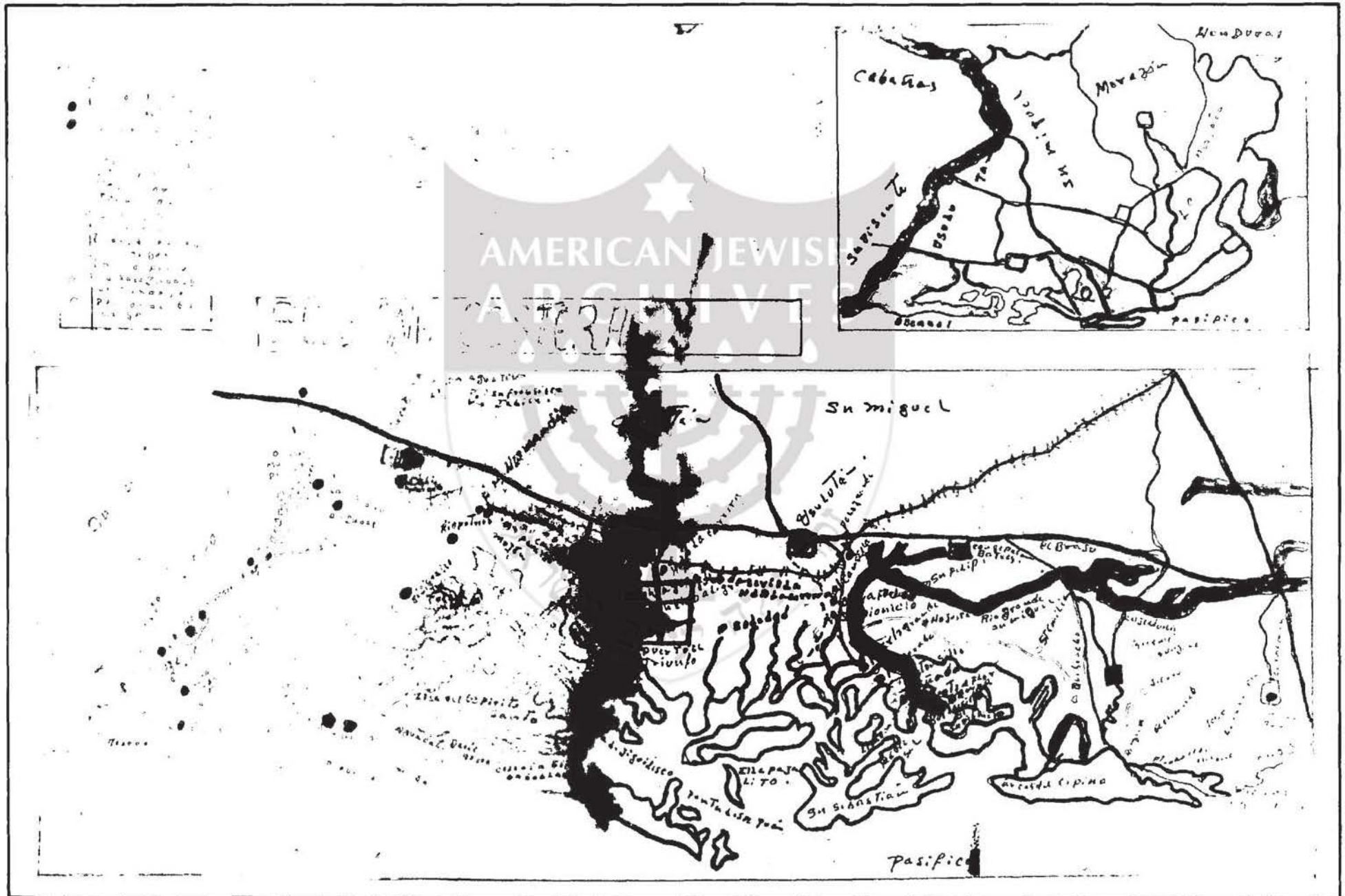
Honduran authorities have occasionally interdicted some weapons passing overland through Honduras from Nicaragua to El Salvador. A dramatic interdiction occurred in January 1981, when a refrigerated trailer truck from Nicaragua, passing through Honduras on its way to El Salvador, was found to be carrying more than 100 M-16 rifles and thousands of rounds of ammunition, including rockets and mortar shells, in its hollowed roof. The guerrillas are using a combination of automobiles, small vans, trucks, mules, and people with backpacks for transporting arms overland. A group of Salvadoran guerrillas were caught by Honduran authorities in March 1983 with arms and a map tracing a route from Nicaraguan through Honduras to El Salvador. (Photograph of weapons captured are at the end of this report.) Also the Hondurans have succeeded in locating safehouses and breaking up some groups including Honduran and Salvadoran guerrillas (see pp. 26-29). A former Nicaraguan security official reported in 1983 that arms were also transported through Mexico and Guatemala to the Salvadoran guerrillas. He also said that increased reliance was being placed on small aircraft to fly supplies from Nicaragua to El Salvador.³⁶

Salvadoran military and civilian observers have frequently sighted light aircraft flying from Nicaragua. The number of such flights increases significantly prior to major guerrilla operations. Some of these flights originated at an airstrip on a former sugar plantation at Papalonal, north of Managua.

³⁵"Rebels Use Harsher Methods: Guerrillas Recruit Youths by Force in Salvadoran Town," Washington Post, June 18, 1984, pp. A-1, A-19. Radio Cadena, San Salvador, (0025 GMT, May 28, 1984) provided details on how guerrillas use children as young as 10 years old as couriers. From March 1 to June 9, 1984, the FMLN reportedly forcibly recruited over 1,500 individuals. As a response to these activities, the Salvadoran Catholic Church has demanded that the guerrillas assume a more respectful attitude toward the civilian population.

³⁶Miguel Bolanos Hunter, discussions at the State Department, November 1983.

This map of a Salvadoran coastal area, located 75 miles northwest of Nicaragua, was discovered during a May 25, 1984, Salvadoran Army raid on a guerrilla camp. The map depicts guerrilla camps and routes for transporting arms within El Salvador.



The main drop points are located in guerrilla-controlled areas of Morazan Province in northeastern El Salvador. In addition to dropping material by parachute, the planes land on roads, highways, and dirt airstrips for offloading. Many of the crew members for these arms flights are foreign nationals, recruited for the airborne supply operations by José Trejos, a Costa Rican who organized air delivery of weapons for the Sandinistas while they were fighting Somoza. He was identified by Bolanos Hunter as the technical coordinator for the Sandinista airlift to guerrillas in El Salvador.³⁷

The collaboration of Nicaragua with Cuba and other suppliers of arms for Central American guerrillas, particularly Nicaragua's active participation in providing logistical support and the free use of its territory for smuggling of military supplies, has been of immeasurable help to guerrillas in the region. Bolanos Hunter maintains that the FMLN in El Salvador in 1983 was far better armed than the Sandinistas were in Nicaragua in mid-1979, just prior to taking power.³⁸

American reporters, interviewing Western European and Latin American diplomats in Nicaragua during April 1984, were told that the Nicaraguan Government is continuing to send military equipment to the Salvadoran insurgents and to operate training camps for them inside Nicaragua. One European diplomat in Managua was quoted: "I believe support for the revolutionaries in El Salvador is continuing and that it is very important to the Sandinistas."³⁹

Sources of FMLN Armaments

In mid-1980, an FMLN delegation led by Salvadoran Communist Party chairman Shafik Handal visited Cuba, the Soviet Union, Vietnam, East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Ethiopia to obtain arms for use in El Salvador. Soviet officials helped to arrange for large-scale shipment of U.S. arms, most of which had been captured by Vietnamese forces. These arms were shipped

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹"Salvador Rebels Still Said To Get Nicaraguan Aid," New York Times, April 11, 1984, pp. A-1, A-8.

first to Cuba, then airlifted to Nicaragua for subsequent shipment to the guerrillas in El Salvador.⁴⁰ This arrangement disguised the Soviet-bloc origin of the weapons and helped lend credence to FMLN propaganda that the guerrillas arm themselves with weapons captured from the Salvadoran Army or bought on the black market. Many of the M-16s captured from or turned over by guerrillas to the El Salvador Government still bear serial numbers indicating that they had been shipped to Vietnam by the U.S. during the conflict there. Others have had the serial numbers filed off to hide their origin. Former guerrilla leader Montenegro, speaking of the arms that the guerrillas began receiving in December 1980, said: "After that the majority of arms was given by Vietnam, American M-16s. The arms came from Vietnam to Havana. Havana to Managua. Managua to El Salvador."⁴¹

In addition to Vietnam, Montenegro also identified Algeria, Ethiopia, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua as suppliers of arms.⁴² Grenades used by Salvadoran guerrillas are of Soviet-bloc origin, and some military equipment captured from the guerrillas bears markings in Amharic, a language native only to Ethiopia.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) also has helped ship arms to Salvadoran guerrillas. In January 1982, PLO leader Yasser Arafat boasted publicly of the PLO's links to the Salvadoran guerrillas: "We [PLO] have connections with all revolutionary movements throughout the world, in Salvador, Nicaragua--and I reiterate Salvador--and elsewhere in the

⁴⁰This information and a detailed account of Handal's meetings during his trip were obtained from Handal's diary, which was among documents captured in San Salvador in December 1980. For more details, see Background Paper: Central America, released by the Departments of State and Defense, Washington, D.C., May 27, 1983.

⁴¹"Cuba Directs Salvadoran Insurgency, Former Salvadoran Guerrilla Says," New York Times, July 28, 1983, p. A-10.

⁴²Another public reference to Algeria as a source of arms to revolutionaries in Central America is contained in Christopher Dickey, "PLO's Nicaragua Office Dealing in Military Expertise," Houston Chronicle, June 4, 1982, Sec. 1, p. 12.

world."⁴³ Again the same month, he was quoted in Beirut's As Safir as saying his group had sent pilots to Nicaragua and guerrilla fighters to El Salvador.⁴⁴

Libya also has shipped arms to Nicaragua. It is likely that a portion of this material was destined for El Salvador. Guerrilla leader Cayetano Carpio, leader of the FPL faction, was visiting Libya when his FPL colleague, Melida Anaya Montes, was murdered in Managua by other FPL members in a power struggle.⁴⁵ In April 1983, Brazilian authorities seized four Libyan transport aircraft (three Soviet-made Ilyushins, and one U.S.-made C-130) that had stopped in Brazil while en route to Nicaragua with nearly 100 tons of armaments, labeled as "medical supplies." Some Libyan arms shipments subsequently arrived in Nicaragua, including one flight that, according to the Trinidad press, was denied permission to refuel in Trinidad and Tobago on August 23, 1983.

Training, Communications, and Staging of the FMLN

Salvadoran President Alvaro Magana told a Spanish newspaper on December 22, 1983, that "armed subversion has but one launching pad: Nicaragua. While Nicaragua draws the attention of the world by saying that for two years they have been on the verge of being invaded, they have not ceased for one instant to invade our country."

The close ties between the Sandinista leaders and Salvadoran guerrilla leaders are well known. Events surrounding the deaths in Managua of Salvadoran guerrilla leaders in April 1983 provided public confirmation of the presence of top guerrilla leaders in Nicaragua and of their close relationship with the Sandinista leadership. In the April 6 announcement of the stabbing death of Nelida Anaya Montes, the second in command of the Salvadoran FPL forces, the

⁴³Arafat speech before the General Confederation of Palestinian Writers, quoted in "Arafat Says PLO Aids Foreign Guerrilla Units," Wall Street Journal, January 14, 1982, p. 4.

⁴⁴"PLO's Nicaragua Office Dealing in Military Expertise," Houston Chronicle, June 4, 1982, Sec. 1, p. 12.

⁴⁵"Key Salvadoran Rebel Leader Kills Himself," New York Times, April 21, 1983, pp. A-1, A-24.

Nicaraguan Minister of Interior revealed her permanent residence in Managua.⁴⁶ Carpio's death on April 12, allegedly by suicide, was made public by the Nicaraguan Ministry of Interior at the request of the Salvadoran guerrillas.⁴⁷

Captured guerrillas and Nicaraguan defectors have confirmed that central command and control, training, communications, and other support activities were established for Salvadoran guerrillas in Nicaragua. After the Grenada events in late 1983, the Sandinistas allowed rumors to spread that the guerrilla command and control center would leave Nicaragua. Immediately thereafter, some of the FDR politicians departed, but there is no indication that the guerrilla leaders or their command center were transferred.

Safehouses are maintained in Managua for the exclusive use of the FMLN. Guerrillas posing as refugees are funneled into these installations through Sandinista front organizations such as the Comite de Solidaridad con la Lucha Salvadorena. At these safehouses FMLN members rest and receive medical treatment. They often are assigned there to await new instructions or arrangements for special training at guerrilla camps elsewhere in Nicaragua or in Cuba.⁴⁸

A former Salvadoran guerrilla commander described how instructions were passed to guerrilla field units in El Salvador through the network of FMLN communications facilities in Nicaragua. Several of these facilities were located in northwest Nicaragua. One or possibly two of these communication facilities

⁴⁶For press reporting on these dramatic events, see: "Salvadoran Rebel Leader Assassinated in Nicaragua," Washington Post, April 7, 1983, pp. A-30; "Nicaragua Warns Honduras on Raids," New York Times, April 10, 1983, pp. A-1, A-16; and "Key Salvadoran Rebel Leader Kills Himself," Washington Post, April 21, 1983, pp. A-1, A-24.

⁴⁷On April 21, 1983, Barricada, the official organ of the FSLN, announced the death of Carpio with the front page headline "Muere Marcial, pero El Salvador Vencera ("Marcial Dies, but El Salvador Will Triumph"). Under the headline is a photo of Daniel Ortega and Tomas Borge standing next to the Salvadoran guerrilla (FPL) banner, which displays the Soviet hammer and sickle. (See photo.)

⁴⁸Montenegro interview at State Department, March 12, 1984.

were attacked on February 2 and 3, 1984, by aircraft of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN).⁴⁹ Another radio was near the outskirts of Managua in a residential area at the end of Via Panama. Its high frequency transmitters had long antennae that could be seen from the Pan American Highway; it was moved to a more secluded location after authorities concluded it had become too visible.⁵⁰

At least three military camps in Nicaragua have been used exclusively as training areas for Salvadoran guerrillas.⁵¹ They include the base of Ostional in the southern province of Rivas, a converted National Guard camp in northwestern Nicaragua close to the River Tamarindo, and the camp of Tamagas, about 20 kilometers outside Managua. These training facilities have been operated by Cuban military personnel serving as instructors and administrative staff. The direct Nicaraguan presence has been limited to one representative officer and the camps' security forces. In the Tamagas camp, FMLN guerrillas undergo special instruction in sabotage techniques. The camp has been run by a Cuban major who trained the FMLN team that carried out the January 1982 assault on the Salvadoran Air Force base of Ilopango during which the major part of El Salvador's military aircraft were destroyed. Alejandro Montenegro, who commanded that attack, later revealed details of his team's training in Tamagas as well as prior guerrilla instruction in Cuba.⁵²

⁴⁹Credit for the attack was claimed by FDN leader Adolfo Calero during a press conference in Washington, D.C. See "Chairman of the Contras," Washington Post, February 4, 1984, p. C-1.

⁵⁰Montenegro interview at State Department, March 12, 1984.

⁵¹Miguel Bolanos Hunter discussion at the State Department, November 1983.

⁵²Montenegro interview at State Department, March 12, 1984.

The Honduran Front

Honduras as well as El Salvador became a target for extension of Marxist-Leninist subversion in Central America immediately after the Sandinistas' July 1979 victory in Nicaragua and long before the anti-Sandinistas began their operations. This has been confirmed by captured guerrillas and Nicaraguan defectors. The following excerpt from the transcript of Miguel Bolanos Hunter's June 1983 interview with the Washington Post (at the Heritage Foundation) indicates that Honduras was already a Sandinista target in 1979:

When I was an assistant to Cuadra [Joaquin Cuadra, Vice Minister of Defense of the Nicaraguan Government and Chief of the General Staff of the Sandinista Army] in 1979, a month after the triumph, I was able to witness five or six Soviet generals that were his advisors. They looked at a map of Nicaragua and Honduras. The map outlined symbols of men and airplanes and where they were. Also outlined were the Sandinista forces and the number of people necessary to become a force. From that time on we began to study how to use confrontations with Honduras. We looked at the real possibilities.... The plan was to beat Honduras.

The saga of the late Honduran guerrilla leader, Jose Antonio Reyes Mata, illustrates the collaboration between Honduran guerrillas and the Nicaraguan and Cuban Governments. Reyes Mata, a long-time Honduran communist leader, led a group which in April 1980 kidnapped Arnold Quiros, an American who was Vice President of Texaco's Caribbean operations. The effort failed when Reyes and his men lost their way enroute to a ~~safehouse and were captured~~ by Honduran authorities. Reyes was later released as part of an amnesty decreed by the newly elected Honduran President, Roberto Suazo Cordova. Reyes proceeded to Nicaragua and then to Cuba.

In March 1981, a group called "Cinchoneros" hijacked a U.S.-bound Honduran airlines flight and diverted it to Managua. They threatened to blow it up with all the passengers and crew on board unless the Honduran Government released 15 prisoners, including 13 Salvadoran FMLN members who had been captured in Honduras while smuggling arms for guerrilla operations in El Salvador. Honduran government officials were denied access to the radio control tower of Managua's airport during the episode. The Nicaraguans also turned down a Honduran request to launch a commando mission to recover the aircraft. The Honduran Government was ultimately forced to accede to the hijackers' demands, freeing two Hondurans with the 13 Salvadorans and flying them to Cuba.

In late 1983, Reyes Mata was back in Honduras again as leader of a 96-member guerrilla group column with the objective of establishing a rural guerrilla base (a "foco") in the Department of Olancho. The group had returned to Nicaragua from Cuba where they had been given training. In Nicaragua they were equipped with guerrilla gear, including two rifles each, and then were infiltrated into Honduras carrying their equipment with them. The second rifle given to each man was provided in anticipation of finding and equipping new recruits in Honduras.

Honduran authorities were alerted to the plan by guerrillas who defected when they entered Honduras from Nicaragua, and by peasants living in the area. Honduran guerrilla defectors, who participated in the attempt to establish the base, told interviewers that they were duped into going to Nicaragua in October 1981 with promises of agricultural and mechanical schooling. Instead, they were sent to Cuba where they received guerrilla instruction for nine months at Camp P-30, run by the Cuban Ministry of Interior's Department of Special Operations, in Pinar del Rio Province. They were sent back to Nicaragua in September 1982 and were quartered at a safehouse in Managua before infiltrating back into Honduras as part of the 96-member guerrilla group. According to the defectors, some of the group attempted to desert in Nicaragua and were imprisoned by Sandinista security. Their group was the advance element of a larger force designed to operate in four Honduran provinces, using a network of logistical bases in the rural highlands. Air drops of arms and supplies had been promised to the Honduran insurgents by Nicaragua.⁵³ But supplies did not materialize in time to save the operation in Olancho, where Reyes was killed.

The guerrillas had more success in other violent actions in Honduras. One of the country's leading bankers, Paul Vinelli of the Banco Atlantida, was kidnapped in 1981 and held for a ransom of more than \$1 million. The leader of that operation was reported in the Honduran press to be a Salvadoran guerrilla trained in Nicaragua.

⁵³For a detailed press account of the operation in Olancho, including descriptions of how Hondurans had been sent abroad to Nicaragua and Cuba for guerrilla training, see "Honduran Army Defeats Cuban-Trained Rebel Unit," Washington Post, November 22, 1983, pp. A-1, A-14.

By late 1981, the Salvadoran ERP had formed a joint Salvadoran/Honduran military and political command in Tegucigalpa. The unified command directed a military organization of 50 persons, 15 of whom were Salvadorans. The command was led and dominated by Salvadorans but had some Honduran leaders in secondary positions to give the impression of a joint organization. On July 4, 1982, the Salvadoran ERP sabotaged the main power station in Tegucigalpa and on August 4, 1982, bombed various U.S. businesses, including IBM and Air Florida. The ERP attributed the operations to a "phantom" Honduran group to confuse local authorities. A Salvadoran guerrilla captured in Honduras admitted to helping in the sabotage of the Tegucigalpa power station and the IBM attack. He had obtained explosives from Nicaragua and transported them to Tegucigalpa in concealed containers in a truck modified for arms trafficking in Nicaraguan guerrilla workshops.

The arms for these operations were brought from Nicaragua by the Salvadoran FMLN. Before being deposited at various hiding places, the weapons were processed through a "logistical center for war material transformation" located in a farm house on the outskirts of Tegucigalpa. Police also arrested four Salvadoran FMLN operatives who were in Tegucigalpa at the time of the attack, including Comandante Alejandro Montenegro.⁵⁴

As it did in El Salvador and Nicaragua, Cuba (now working with Nicaragua) has tried to develop a unified guerrilla movement in Honduras. Training of Honduran guerrillas was already underway in 1979. In March 1983, Honduran guerrilla organizations merged into the National Unity Directorate of the Revolutionary Movement of Honduras (DNU-MRH), just as the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran guerrilla groups had formed unified commands to receive Cuban backing.⁵⁵ Guerrillas who subsequently defected from this group estimated that at least 250 Hondurans had been recruited to go to Nicaragua for guerrilla training in March 1983. Some also were sent to Cuba.

⁵⁴Background Paper: Central America, Departments of State and Defense, Washington, D.C., May 27, 1983.

⁵⁵The Frente Morazanista de Liberacion Hondureno (FMLH), the "Cinchoneros" Peoples' Revolutionary Union/Popular Liberation Movement (URP/MPL), and the Central American Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRTC) issued a joint message which announced the armed struggle against the Government of Honduras. See "Honduras: Proclama de Lucha Armada Contra el Gobierno," Barricada, Managua, Nicaragua, April 21, 1983.

Another consequence of Nicaraguan actions against Honduras has been the danger to vehicles travelling inside Honduras near the frontier. Attacks on vehicles seldom draw media attention except when foreigners are the victims. For example, in June 1983, two American journalists were killed while travelling on a Honduran road which had been mined by Sandinista troops.⁵⁶

Introducing Political Violence into Costa Rica

Even Costa Rica, which had supported the Sandinistas and other Nicaraguans in the struggle against the Somoza regime, has become a target of what the Sandinistas call "revolutionary internationalism." That small country, one of the most stable democracies in Latin America, is particularly vulnerable to the Nicaraguan threat. Since 1981, it has experienced sporadic terrorist acts including bombings, kidnappings, and other attacks, some of which have been traced to Nicaragua, and others to the Salvadoran guerrilla factions. Commenting in January 1984 on the threat from Nicaragua, Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge said: "I never thought I would say, as I do now, that we would have it worse in four years [of Sandinismo] than in 40 years of Somoza."⁵⁷

Intelligence sources have reported for some time that a small number of Costa Rican leftists are fighting alongside Sandinista troops against the Nicaraguan rebels. Some of them are reportedly Cuban-trained and, according to a U.S. journalist who visited Costa Rica recently, some Costa Ricans believe they will return to Costa Rica to begin guerrilla activity when the time is right.⁵⁸

Underlying Costa Rican concerns are a number of violent incidents, including shootings, kidnappings, and bombings. For example, in July 1981, Costa Rican authorities intercepted six heavily armed men who had entered the country from Nicaragua.

⁵⁶"Honduran Says Land Mine Killed 2 U.S. Newsmen," Washington Post, June 30, 1983, p. A-35.

⁵⁷Syndicated Columnist Georgie Anne Geyer, "Central America Faces up to Sandinista Expansion," Washington Times, January 10, 1984, p. 2C.

⁵⁸Ibid.

Their stated objective was to seize the Guatemalan Embassy and hold the ambassador hostage in order to demand the release of prisoners convicted of violent terrorist acts in Guatemala. The six-man team, equipped with grenades and submachine guns, included two Nicaraguans affiliated with the Sandinista Front, a Salvadoran, two Guatemalans, and a Mexican.

In 1982, a group of Salvadoran guerrillas and one Nicaraguan in San Jose attempted to kidnap expatriate Salvadoran businessman Roberto Palomo Salazar and Japanese corporate executive Tetsuji Kosuga, the San Jose representative of the Matsushita Electric Corporation. Kosuga was mortally wounded in the attempt, and the Matsushita Corporation pulled all of its personnel out of Costa Rica. The two incidents caused sufficient concern to provoke uncertainty in the climate for private investment.⁵⁹ Press reports of June 1984 indicate new threats of similar foreign-supported violence in Costa Rica.⁶⁰

In July 1982, the same week that Honduran airlines (SAHSA) offices were bombed in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, a bomb exploded at the SAHSA office in San Jose. Costa Rica's investigation into the bombing implicated a Colombian M-19 member who had been recruited by Nicaraguan Embassy officials in Costa Rica. Two Nicaraguan diplomats were expelled from Costa Rica as a result. The Costa Rican government expelled these Nicaraguan diplomats after the M-19 member had demonstrated his connections with the Embassy by arranging a clandestine meeting with one of the diplomats, whom the Costa Ricans detained on the spot.

At the same time, the Nicaraguan, Cuban, and Soviet media had embarked upon a campaign seeking to portray democratic Costa Rica as a dictatorship. With reference to this campaign, President Monge stated: "The Communist Party international

⁵⁹During the initial stages of insurgent activity in El Salvador, one of the groups operating in San Salvador, the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN), which today forms part of the FMLN, employed similar tactics to drive the Japanese textile firm INSICA out of El Salvador. FARN abducted two of INSICA's local managers and killed the company's president, Fujio Matsumoto.

⁶⁰"Threatened U.S. Executives Are Said To Leave Costa Rica," New York Times, June 21, 1984, p. A-4.

campaign has been to place Costa Rica as an aggressor nation, and many in the Socialist International have taken this up. And we do not even have an army. While we see ourselves as a country under attack, we are being pictured as a country with the U.S. against Nicaragua."⁶¹

The Central American subversive network has also used Costa Rican territory for receiving and transshipping arms and supplies to Salvadoran guerrillas. For example, on March 15, 1982, Costa Rican security forces raided a San Jose safehouse and captured nine suspected subversives along with a large supply of weapons, material, and vehicles. Those captured included four Salvadorans, two Nicaraguans, a Chilean, a Costa Rican, and an Argentine. An Argentine Montonero, the group's commander, admitted that the weapons were to have been delivered to insurgents in El Salvador prior to the March 20, 1982, election. The passport of one of the Salvadorans showed Costa Rican entry stamps indicating at least 15 trips to Costa Rica, presumably for the purpose of picking up arms and ammunition and for other guerrilla liaison work.⁶² The multinational composition of this group is further evidence of how the international subversive network centered in Nicaragua functions and enjoys support from leftists throughout the region.⁶³

Since exiled Nicaraguan opponents of the Sandinista regime established the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE), the government in Managua has dispatched agents to Costa Rica to assassinate ARDE leaders. On June 26, 1983, a former

⁶¹Syndicated columnist Georgie Anne Geyer, "Costa Rica President Must Contend with Chaos After Nicaragua Revolt," Columbia Missourian, January 5, 1984.

⁶²Among the arms and other material captured during the March 11, 1982, raid in San Jose were: about 175 weapons (including about 70 M-16s, 50 of which were traceable to Vietnam), fragmentation grenades and a grenade launcher, homemade bombs, dynamite and ammunition, 500 combat uniforms and gas masks, 13 vehicles (Mercedes Benzes and BMWs) with hidden compartments for arms concealment, blank travel papers and drivers' licenses, passports (Costa Rican and Ecuadorean), airport/immigration seals from more than 30 countries, and a printing press for producing false documents.

⁶³For extensive reporting on this incident, see La Nacion, San Jose, Costa Rica, March 16-21, 1982.

Nicaraguan Vice Minister of Health, Rodrigo Cuadra, accompanied by an undercover agent of the Nicaraguan General Directorate of State Security (DGSE), Francisco Martinez, entered Costa Rica to meet with ARDE leaders Eden Pastora and Alfonso Robelo. The two officials pretended to be Nicaraguan Government defectors seeking to join ARDE, and had arranged to speak with Robelo and Pastora. Cuadra and Martinez were carrying a time bomb hidden in an attache case which they planned to leave with the ARDE leaders once their meeting was concluded. However, apparently because of an error in setting the timer, the device exploded in their car on June 29, killing Cuadra and critically wounding Martinez.⁶⁴

Hector Frances, an Argentine citizen who reportedly was working with Nicaraguan insurgents elsewhere in Central America, was kidnapped on the streets of San Jose, Costa Rica, where his wife resided. Subsequently, Nicaraguan official television paraded a haggard Frances before the cameras to confess to a litany of anti-Sandinista activity. Frances has not been seen since the TV show.

The 1982 kidnapping of Kaveh Yazdani, an Iranian emigre who resided in San Jose, illustrates the manner in which Costa Rica is buffeted by regional insurgencies which respect no borders. Yazdani was kidnapped by Salvadoran guerrillas (including, however, at least one Nicaraguan citizen) of the FARN faction of the FMLN on January 8, 1982. He had no connection to the Salvadoran conflict, and was apparently chosen solely as a means to raise money--his father was very wealthy. Although no direct Nicaraguan Government involvement in the kidnapping has ever been proven, during the year in which Yazdani was held, representatives of his family met at least twice in Managua with the Salvadoran guerrillas to discuss the ransom payments needed to keep his captors from murdering him. This is another example of Nicaraguan safehaven for the FMLN.

On March 17, 1981, a small Costa Rican group which called itself La Familia blew up an American Embassy vehicle carrying three marine guards and a Costa Rican driver who were proceeding to the Embassy to stand watch. In this first attack on a marine guard detail, one marine--who still suffers from

⁶⁴"Bomb Kills Nicaraguan in Costa Rica," Washington Post, June 30, 1983, p. A-35.

the wounds--was gravely injured. The others escaped with minor injuries. La Familia was a group of middle-class youths with links to the Salvadoran FMLN. They had been recruited by exiles from the Montonero and Tupamaro groups who had taken up residence in Costa Rica. Subsequently, La Familia murdered several policemen and even a taxi driver before the group was broken up and members charged and convicted by the Costa Rican courts. This splinter group was an offshoot of the Marxist-Leninist splinter party called the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo (MRP), whose leadership had ties to both Cuba and Nicaragua.

The International Connection

In September 1983, Costa Rican police arrested Gregorio Jimenez Morales, a member of the Spanish Basque separatist organization ETA.⁶⁵ Costa Rican authorities concluded that Jimenez, using the alias of "Lorenzo Avila Teijon," had been instructed by the Nicaraguan Government to assassinate Eden Pastora.⁶⁶ At the moment of his capture, Jimenez was sketching a map outlining various approaches to Pastora's home. He had entered Costa Rica from Nicaragua in May 1983 and remains in detention in San Jose awaiting a ruling on an extradition request by the Spanish Government.⁶⁷

The Costa Ricans reportedly had been warned about the presence of ETA operatives in Central America by Spanish authorities through INTERPOL.⁶⁸ While the Sandinista government was denying any connection with either Jimenez or the ETA, Nicaragua's official press was reporting the formation

⁶⁵According to an article in El Pais, Madrid, Spain, on January 13, 1984, ETA's first guerrilla cadre or members of its "rama militar" (military branch) were trained in 1964 at training camps in Cuba. The Basque organization has carried out extensive campaigns of violence in Spain for more than twenty years.

⁶⁶"Cien Etxarras en Nicaragua," Cambio 16, Madrid, Spain, October 3, 1983, p. 22.

⁶⁷Jimenez, who joined ETA in 1979, was highly trained and experienced in handling explosives. He had carried out several actions in Spain during 1981, including the destruction of electric power facilities in the northern Spanish city of Besain. Pursued by Spanish police, Jimenez escaped into France in February 1982 and made his way through Cuba to Nicaragua.

⁶⁸"Cien Etxarras en Nicaragua," Cambio 16, Madrid, Spain, October 3, 1983, p. 29.

of a "Basque Brigade" in Nicaragua to help with the coffee harvest. A Spanish weekly, Cambio 16, reported in October 1983 that over 100 ETA members were present in Nicaragua, serving as instructors at guerrilla bases.⁶⁹ Spain's leading daily, El Pais, maintains that ETA runs an office for forging documents in Managua.⁷⁰

The Cambio 16 article, in describing ETA and Sandinista linkages, stated that the ETA has a recruiting station, called "Team International," in Mexico City. The station allegedly is directed by a Palestinian described as the right arm of Abu Nidal, chief of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (FPLP). According to the article, the FPLP executes "dirty work" for the Sandinista regime in Latin America. Allegedly this office made the initial contacts for the Sandinistas with the Argentine Montoneros and the Chileans who assassinated Anastasio Somoza in Paraguay.⁷¹

Costa Rican authorities suspect that international terrorists were responsible for the May 30, 1984, assassination attempt on Eden Pastora near the Costa Rican/Nicaraguan border. In this action, four people--an American reporter, a Costa Rican TV cameraman, and two members of Pastora's rebel group--were killed, and 27 others, including Pastora, were wounded.⁷² (A significant aspect of the Pastora assassination attempt was that the Sandinista radio announced that the device was made of plastic explosive several hours before anyone in Costa Rica had determined the nature of the explosive.)

ETA has also been linked to the Salvadoran FMLN. According to Alejandro Montenegro, ETA operatives in Nicaragua entered into an agreement in 1979 with one of the FMLN's main

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰"Un Comando de ETA Intento Asasinar en 1983 al Ministro de Defensa de El Salvador, Segun Informe del Gobierno," El Pais, January 13, 1984, Madrid, Spain, p. 11.

⁷¹"Cien Etarras en Nicaragua," Cambio 16, Madrid, Spain, October 3, 1983, p. 22.

⁷²For two accounts of the status of the Costa Rican investigation into the bombing see "Basque Terrorist Sought in Attack on Nicaragua Rebel," Miami Herald, June 8, 1984, p. 14A, and "Costa Rican Officials Admit Mistakes in Bombing Probe," Miami Herald, June 14, 1984, p. 24A.

components, the Peoples' Revolutionary Army (ERP), to provide training and personnel for guerrilla operations in El Salvador. ETA also reportedly delivered \$250,000 to the ERP and contributed an assassination team to target top government officials in San Salvador. ETA operatives were reportedly involved in two abortive attempts on Salvadoran Defense Minister Jose Guillermo Garcia's life in 1982 and 1983.⁷³

The Significance of the Subversive Network

Nicaragua, by itself, without its international revolutionary ambitions, would not necessarily be a serious threat to any of its neighbors--except perhaps in the military sense--since its military force is the largest and the only one in the region with a large number of tanks and armored vehicles. But what magnifies the Nicaraguan threat to its neighbors are the resources of an international subversive network that operates with Nicaragua as a nerve center. Along with Nicaragua, a key element of the network is Cuba and, behind it, the Soviet Union. The linkages extend to other communist governments of the Eastern bloc, including Vietnam, to the radical regimes of Libya and Ethiopia, and to international groups such as the PLO, the Basque ETA, the Argentine Montoneros, and Uruguayan Tupamaros. The collaboration and joint action (which was shown in some of the incidents described herein) lends a credibility to Nicaraguan threats. One example is Nicaragua's suspected use of "internationalists" in assassinations of Nicaraguan opposition leaders in Costa Rica. Another example is the team of Argentine and Chilean assassins who killed Anastasio Somoza in Paraguay in 1980. Intelligence reports, apparently shown to the press at the time, indicated that "the Nicaraguan Government had in fact been involved up to its neck in planning and financing Somoza's murder."⁷⁴

Thus, in attacking their enemies the Sandinistas can rely upon the resources of other members of the subversive network centered in Nicaragua. Assassinations can be accomplished through one of the international groups without seemingly involving Nicaragua. They can also use the powerful Cuban/Soviet propaganda machines to advance their efforts.

⁷³"Un Comando de ETA Intento Asasinar en 1983 al Ministro de Defensa de El Salvador, Segun Informe del Gobierno," El Pais, January 13, 1984, Madrid, Spain. Also confirmed in Montenegro interview with State Department officials, March 12, 1984.

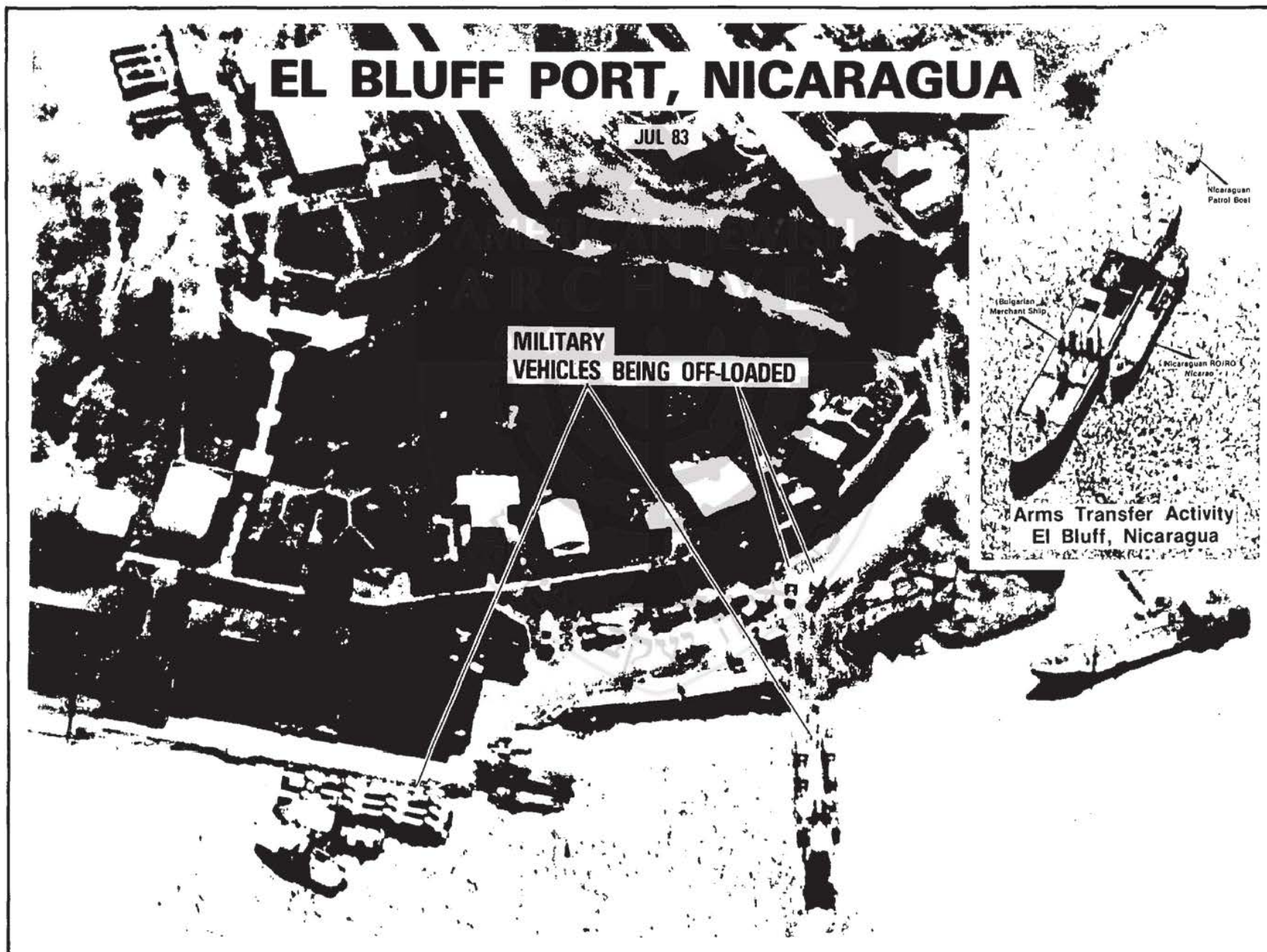
⁷⁴See Cord Meyer's "Somoza's Difficult Ghost," The Washington Star, October 18, 1980, p. A-11. Also see "Cien Etraras en Nicaragua," Cambio 16, Madrid, Spain, October 3, 1983, pp. 22-28, for a description of Sandinista, Basque, and Montonero linkages.

Conclusions

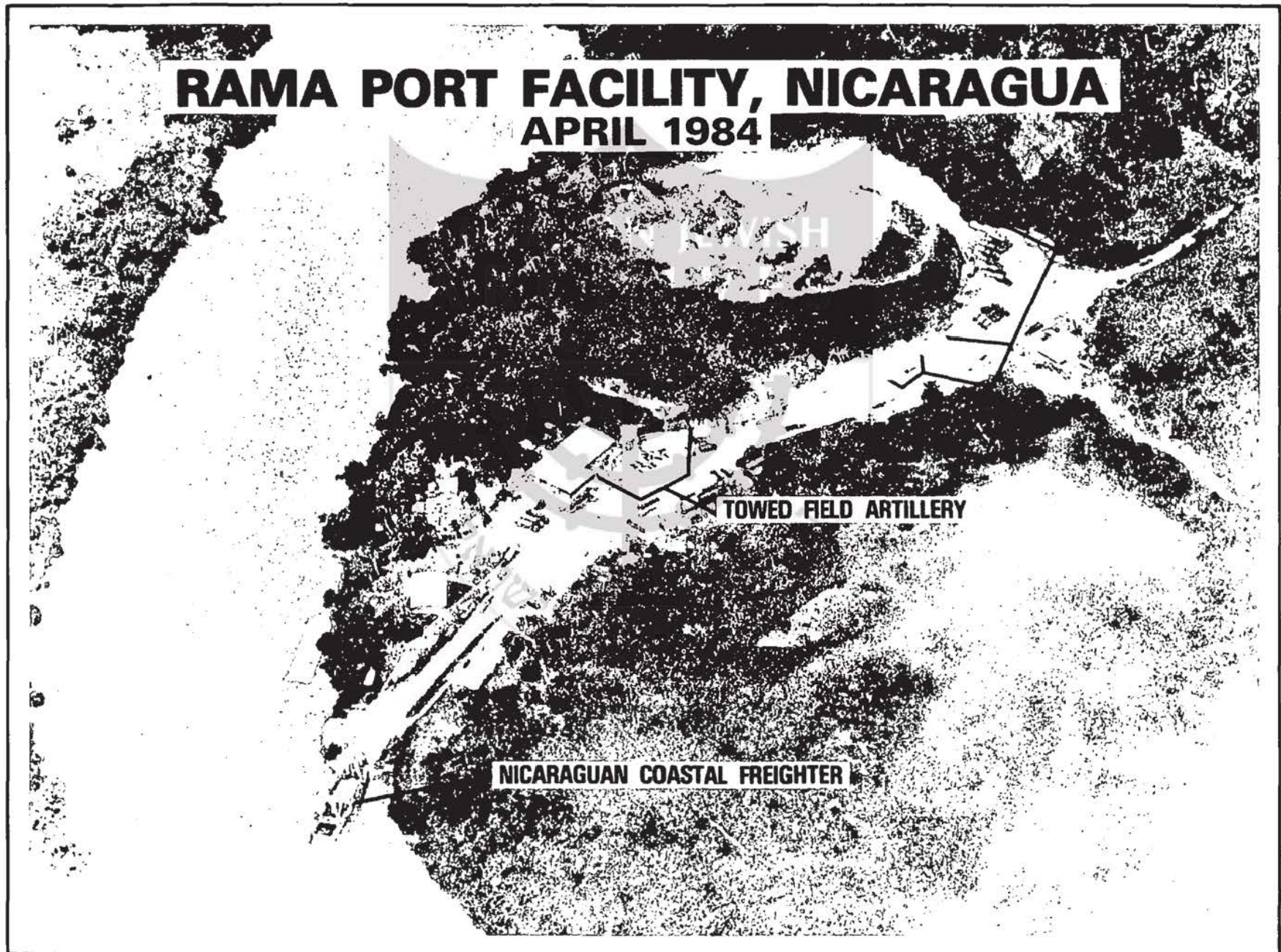
- o The Central American democracies face serious threats from forces within and outside the Central American region.
- o Since 1979, Nicaragua has provided a support base for groups attempting to destabilize and, in some cases, overthrow neighboring governments.
- o Nicaragua's Sandinista leaders, beginning in 1979, understood that their plans for establishing a dictatorship in Nicaragua and for expanding the revolution would bring opposition from their neighbors and the United States; and eventually alienate democratic socialists in Europe.
- o They sought to delay the process of alienation by concealing their true intentions and their Marxism-Leninism by adopting a gradualist approach for implementing communism in Nicaragua.
- o In 1979 they began to plan for the largest and best equipped armed forces in Central America, for a Cuban/Soviet style internal security apparatus, and for cooperation with the Cubans and others in supporting guerrilla movements.
- o The Sandinistas now have almost 49,000 men on active duty, and an additional 50,000 men who could be mobilized.
- o Nicaragua now has over 120 Soviet-made tanks and 120 other armored vehicles. No comparable armored force exists elsewhere in the Central American region.
- o The infrastructure for a formidable air force is developing rapidly in Nicaragua.
- o This rapid growth of military strength would not have been possible without the help of some 3,000 Cuban military/security advisers, some of whom are deeply involved in the decision-making process in Nicaragua. (A total of about 9,000 Cubans are in Nicaragua.)
- o Not only Cuba, but also the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, have or have had military and/or civilian advisers in Nicaragua.

- Some international groups, including the Argentine Montoneros, Uruguayan Tupamaros, and the Basque ETA, have a presence in Nicaragua and form part of the support system for subversion in Central America.
- Cuba has played a crucial role in unifying and supporting the guerrilla groups of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.
- Guerrilla and Sandinista defectors maintain that the Nicaraguan regime provides the Salvadoran guerrillas communications centers, safehouses, storage of arms, shops for vehicles, and transportation of military supplies.
- Costa Rican and Honduran authorities have exposed Nicaraguan diplomats directly involved with guerrillas and terrorists.
- Most military supplies used by Salvadoran guerrillas and similar groups in Honduras and Costa Rica are provided by communist-bloc countries and by countries such as Ethiopia and Libya.
- Training of Central American guerrillas has taken place in Nicaragua, Cuba, and Vietnam.
- Because of the subversive system involving a number of governments and terrorist organizations centered in Nicaragua, the Sandinista Government is able to threaten neighboring countries and to carry out the threats, indirectly, through one or other of the organizations.

The port of El Bluff is a Caribbean Sea unloading point for Eastern-bloc military deliveries to Nicaragua. The equipment is then ferried by Nicaraguan roll on/roll off ships (as shown in insert) 50 km up river to the port of Rama.



The river port of Rama is located at the beginning of the only paved road connecting eastern and western Nicaragua. After being off-loaded, the equipment, such as the Soviet-bloc origin artillery shown here, is transported by road to military units.



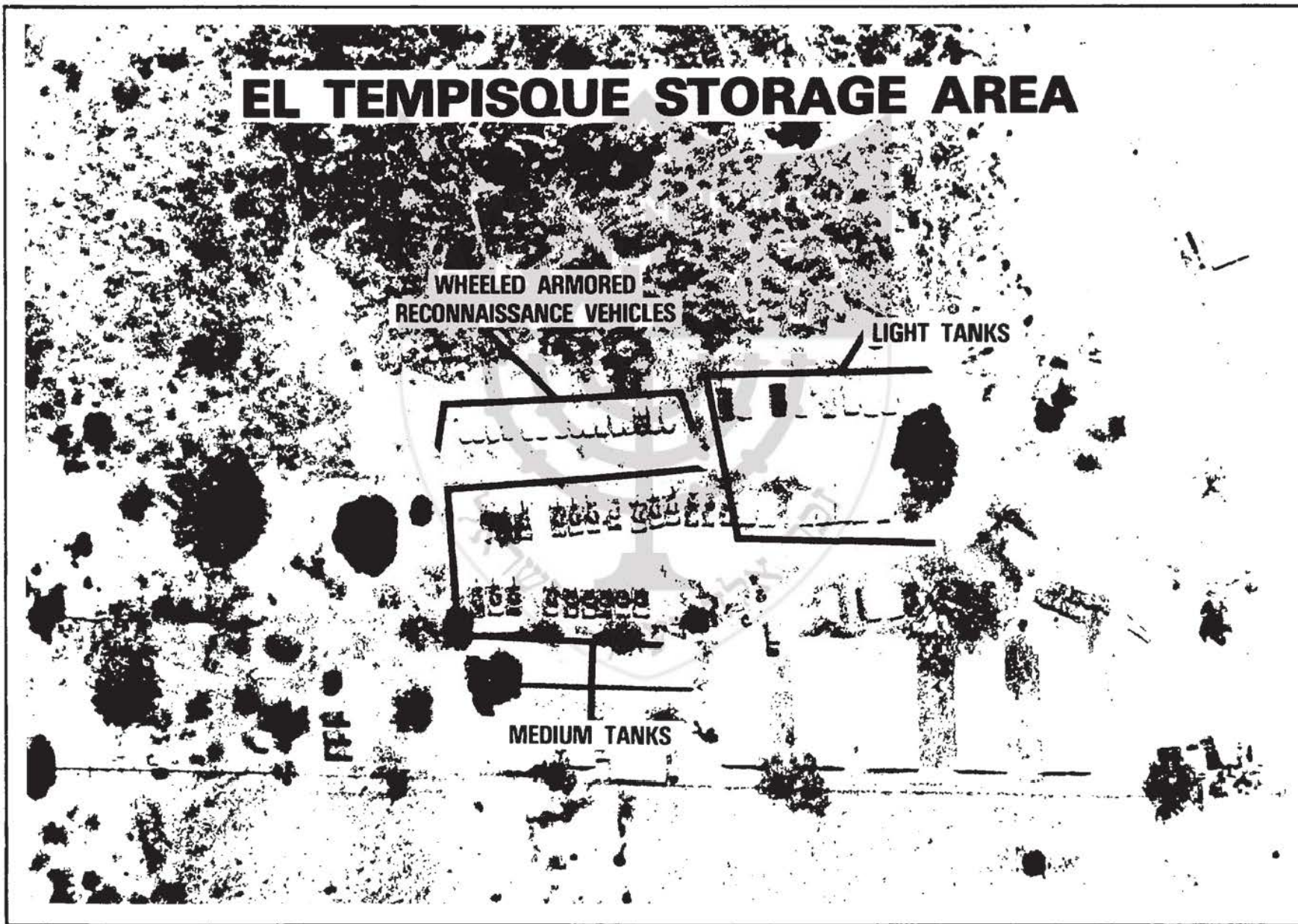
El Tempisque is one of two known tank garrisons in Nicaragua. The Soviet-made tanks and armored reconnaissance vehicles shown here are part of a March 1984 delivery made by a Bulgarian merchant ship. The PT-76 light amphibious assault tanks, with their greater mobility, are a significant addition to the Sandinista armored vehicle inventory which has doubled in the past year.

EL TEMPISQUE STORAGE AREA

WHEELED ARMORED
RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLES

LIGHT TANKS

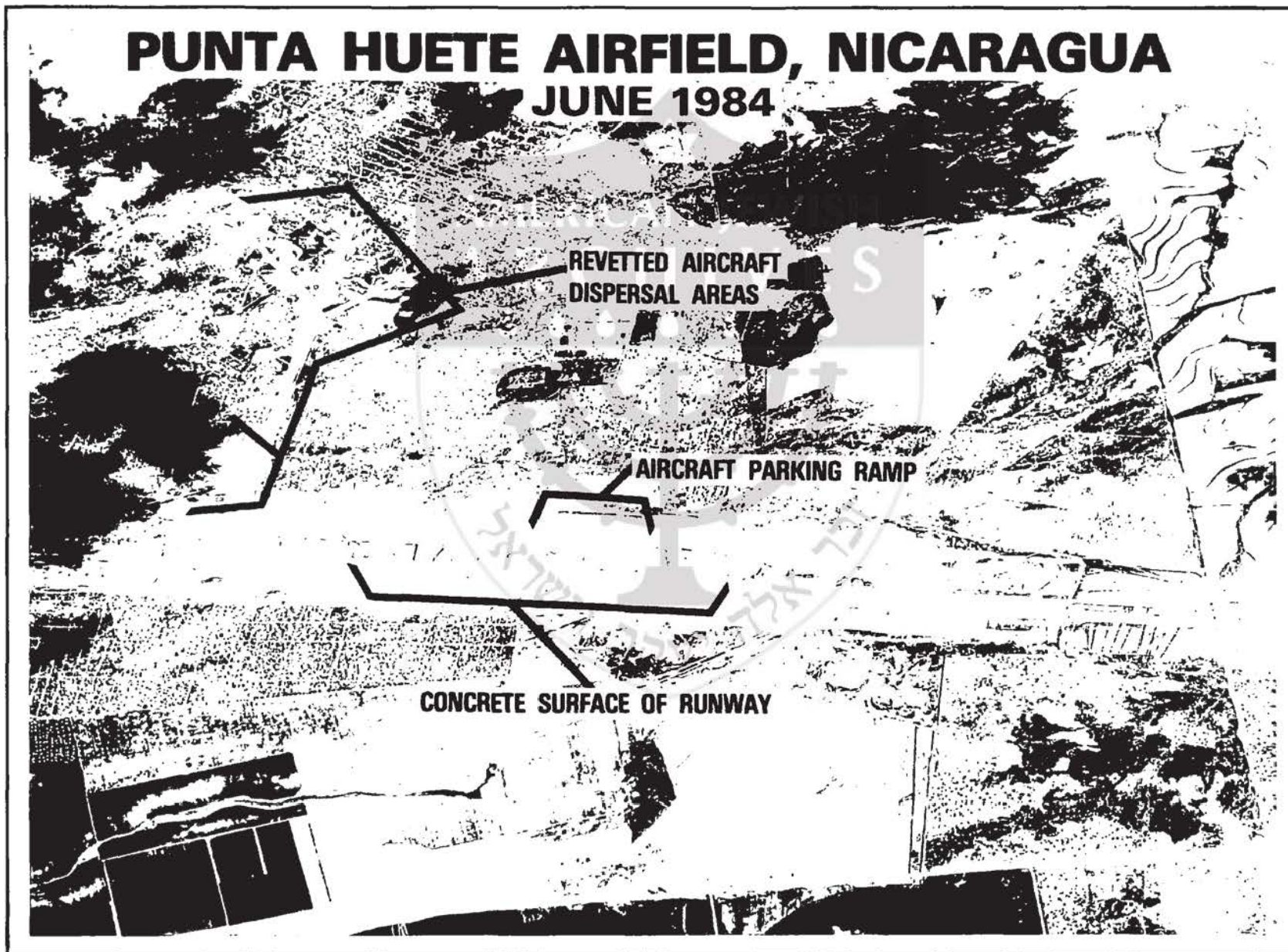
MEDIUM TANKS



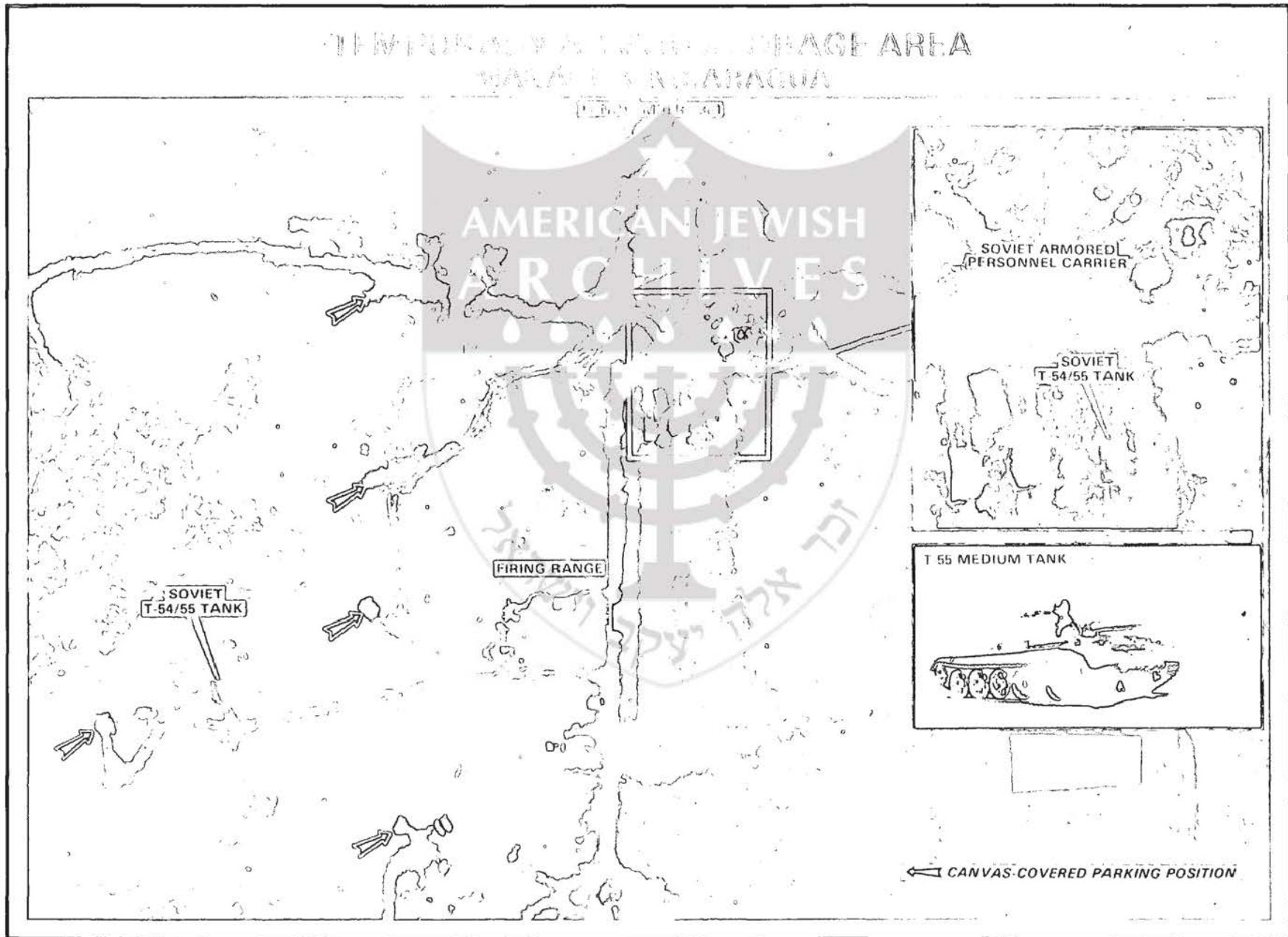
When completed, this air base at Punta Huete, 30 km northeast of Managua, will have at least 16 revetted areas for aircraft protection. Its 3200 meter length, 44 meter width and one meter thickness will make it the largest and most capable military airfield in Central America. It will be capable of receiving aircraft in the Soviet inventory to include their strategic-capable BACKFIRE bomber.

PUNTA HUETE AIRFIELD, NICARAGUA

JUNE 1984



The tanks and armored personnel carriers shown in this November 1981 photo were delivered to Nicaragua several months earlier, long before armed resistance activity began.



This photo shows the Nicaraguan military camp at Rio Blanco. Note the Salvadoran guerrilla logo, "FMLN", on the ground.

RIO BLANCO MILITARY CAMP, NICARAGUA

18 APR 83

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

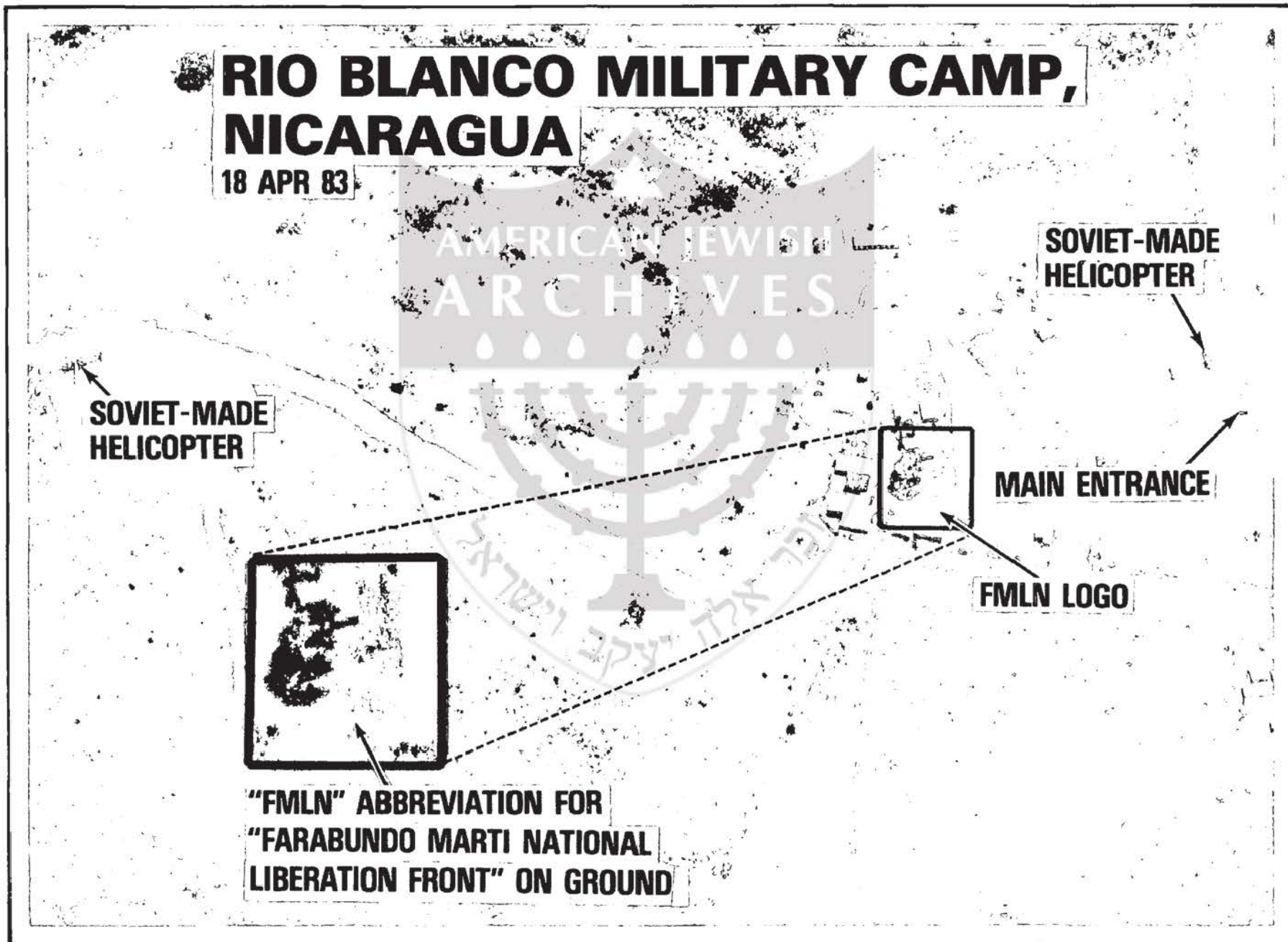
SOVIET-MADE
HELICOPTER

SOVIET-MADE
HELICOPTER

MAIN ENTRANCE

FMLN LOGO

"FMLN" ABBREVIATION FOR
"FARABUNDO MARTI NATIONAL
LIBERATION FRONT" ON GROUND



This "fishing cooperative" at La Concha has served as a transshipment point for arms to Salvadoran guerrillas.

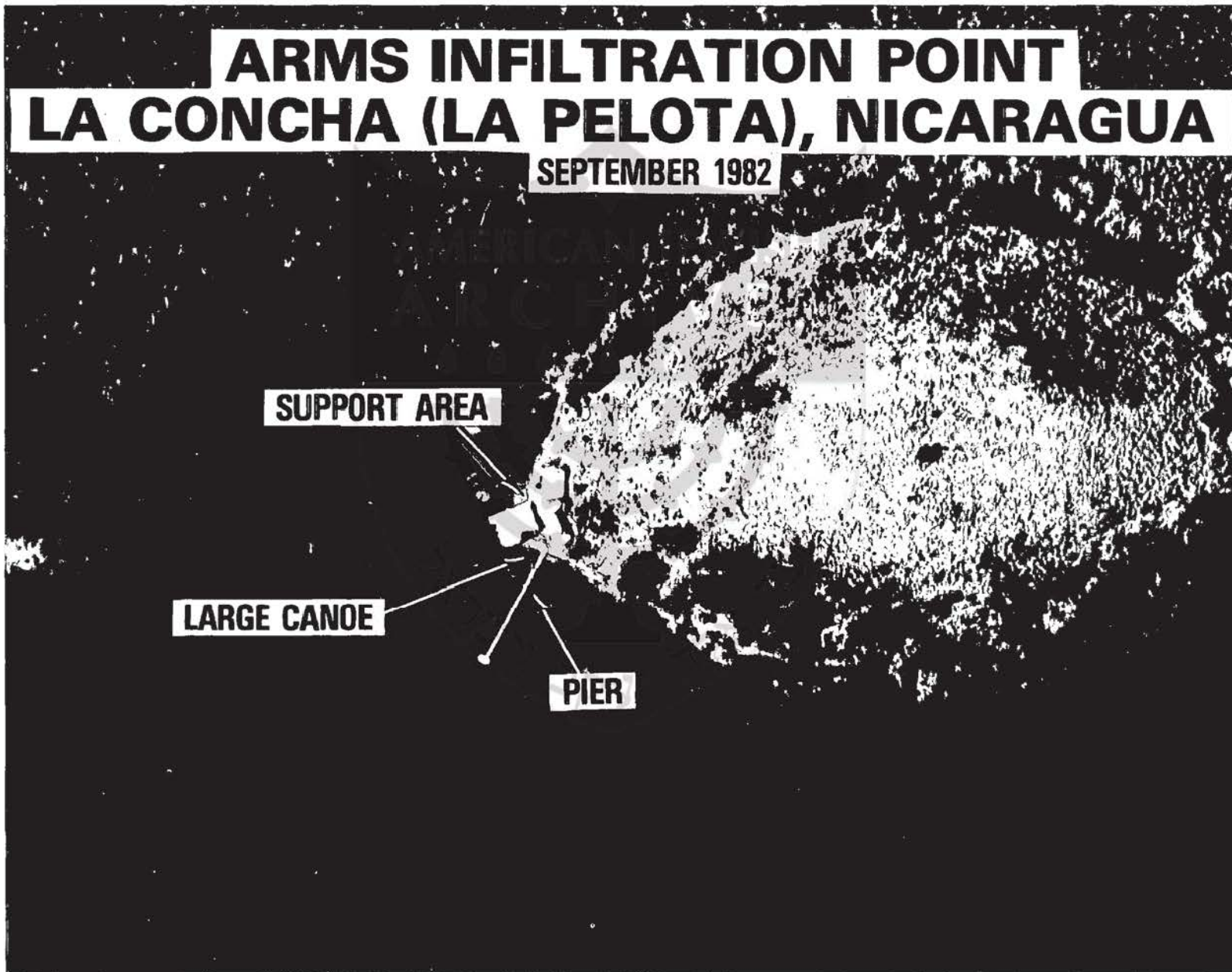
ARMS INFILTRATION POINT LA CONCHA (LA PELOTA), NICARAGUA

SEPTEMBER 1982

SUPPORT AREA

LARGE CANOE

PIER



Another transshipment point used to transport arms and supplies across the Gulf of Fonseca to Salvadoran guerrillas was located at Potosi. Both La Concha and Potosi were attacked and damaged by democratic resistance forces in September 1983.

ARMS INFILTRATION POINT POTOSI, NICARAGUA

MARCH 1984



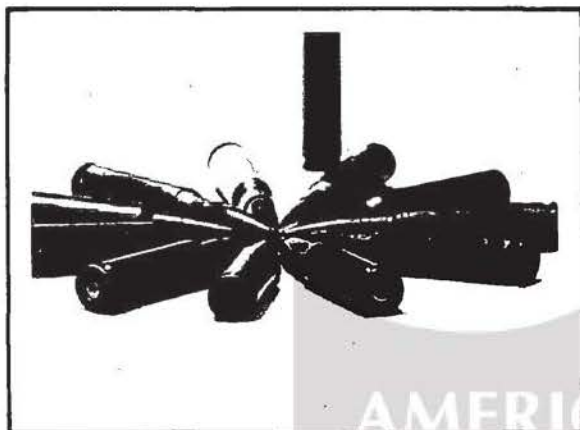
In March 1983, a group of Salvadoran guerrillas was intercepted by Honduran security forces in Honduras. A notebook found on the body of the slain guerrilla squad leader contained over 30 well-known place names in Honduras and El Salvador, and traced a route from Nicaragua through Honduras to El Salvador. Shown here are some of the weapons captured (including two M-16s originally shipped to Vietnam by the U.S. government) as well as a guerrilla flag and documents (see enlarged section of photo below).



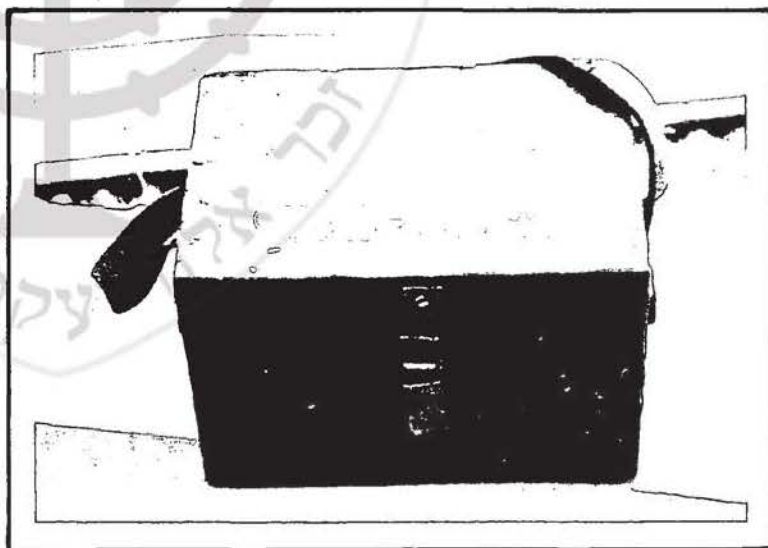
The documents captured included a booklet with the initials FSLN (the Sandinista party) and FMLN (the Salvadoran guerrilla organization) on the cover, a booklet entitled "We Are Sandinistas" in Spanish, and a pamphlet on the military situation in El Salvador.



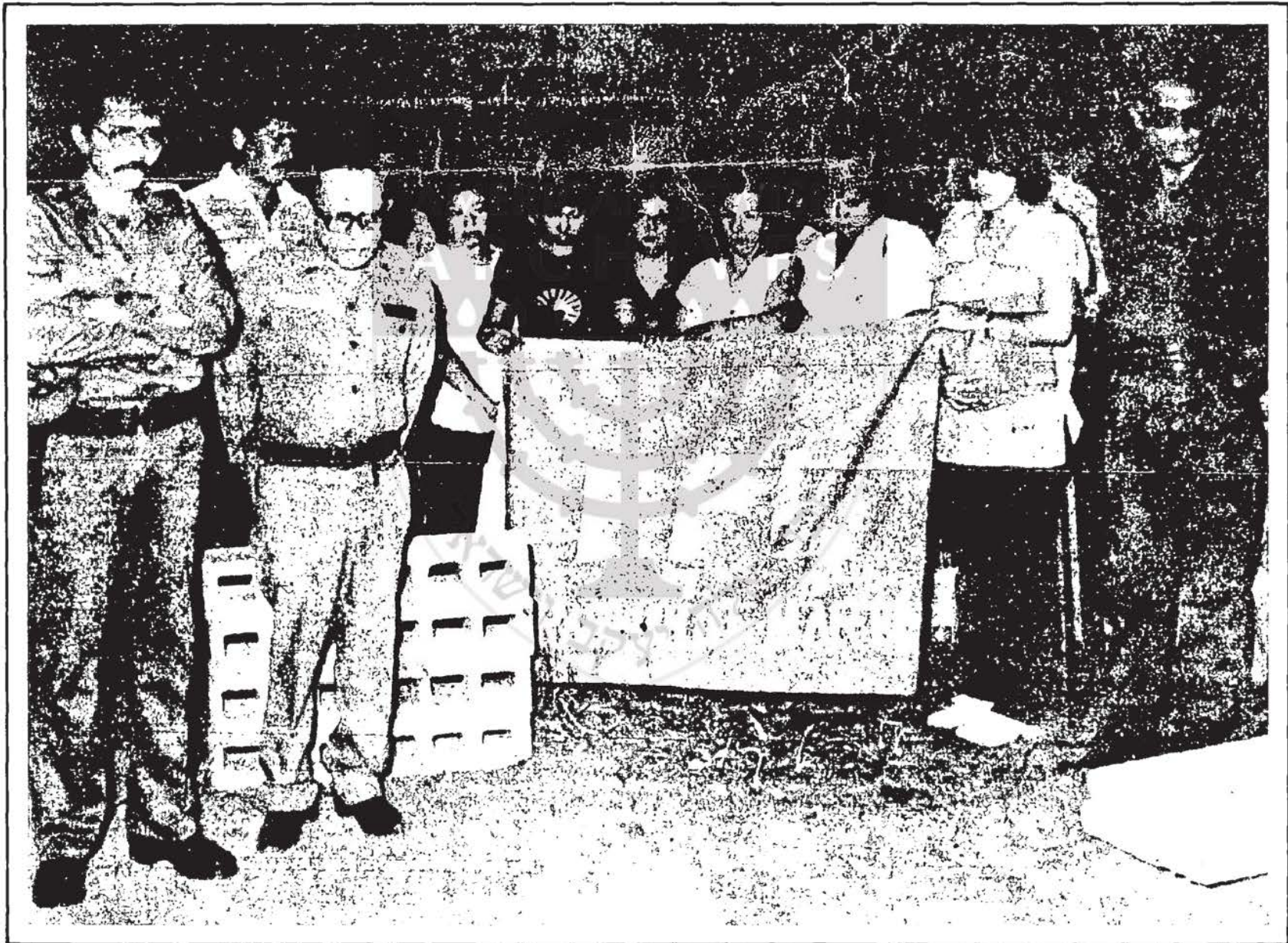
This ammunition, captured by the Salvadoran Army in May 1984, was manufactured in Bulgaria.



Also captured in May 1984 was this mortar sight found in a box with Vietnamese markings. It has been modified to fit the US-made 81 mm mortar.



This photo, from the Sandinista newspaper "Barricada", shows the Sandinista leaders Daniel Ortega and Tomas Borge at the funeral of Salvadoran guerrilla leader Cayetano Carpio in Managua, Nicaragua, in April 1983. The flag with the hammer and sickle is that of the FPL, the guerrilla faction Cayetano Carpio headed.



Salvadoran guerrilla poster proclaiming "Revolution or Death! The Armed People Will Triumph!"

X ANIVERSARIO

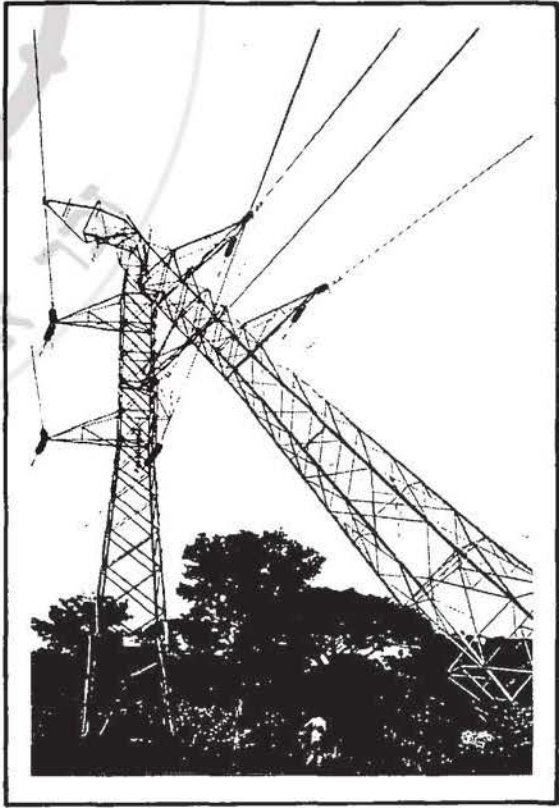
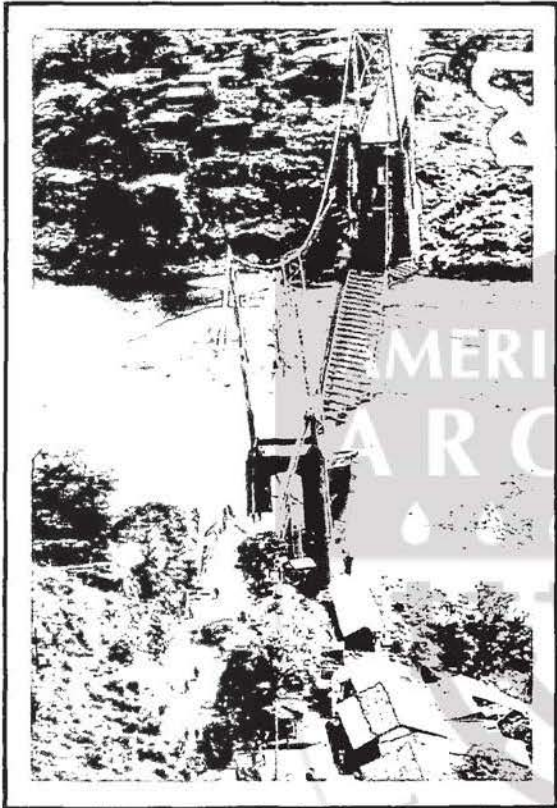
1970

1980



¡ REVOLUCION O MUERTE !
¡ EL PUEBLO ARMADO VENCERA !

A central focus of the Nicaraguan-backed guerrillas has been the destruction of the Salvadoran economic infrastructure.



This is one of three demolition charges used by the Salvadoran guerrillas in a January 1982 attack on Ilopango Air Base, near San Salvador. The blasting caps, mechanical time delay igniters, and the fuzes of the demolition charges were of Soviet origin. Alejandro Montenegro, who directed the attack, subsequently defected from the Communist guerrilla cause. He and his team were trained for the Ilopango raid in Cuba.

