

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

Digital Library Collections

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

Collection:

Green, Max: Files, 1985-1988

Folder Title:

[Nicaragua] (3 of 11)

Box: Box 18

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

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

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

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

The Nicaraguan Peace Process: A Documentary Record

April 1985



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

CONTENTS

2	Introduction	8	Initial Regional Support
2	The Contadora Framework	8	President Duarte of El Salvador, April 4, 1985
2	Contadora Document of Objectives, September 9, 1983	8	President Betancur of Colombia, April 5 and 7, 1985
3	Nicaraguan Calls for Dialogue	8	President Suazo of Honduras, April 8, 1985
3	Pastoral Letter on Reconciliation From the Nicaraguan Bishops, April 22, 1984	9	President de la Madrid of Mexico, April 8, 1985
4	Statement of the <i>Coordinadora Democrática Nicaraguense</i> , February 22, 1985	9	President Barletta of Panama, April 10, 1985
5	Document on National Dialogue of the Nicaraguan Resistance, March 1, 1985	9	President Lusinchi of Venezuela, April 10, 1985
6	Communique of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference, March 22, 1985	9	President Febres Cordero of Ecuador, April 10, 1985
7	President Reagan's Proposal	9	President Monge of Costa Rica, April 10, 1985
7	Remarks by President Reagan, April 4, 1985	9	President Alfonsín of Argentina, April 11, 1985
		9	Chronology
		10	Additional References

Introduction

The Contadora process had as one of its agreed objectives "to promote national reconciliation efforts wherever deep divisions have taken place within society, with a view to fostering participation in democratic political processes."

Nicaragua is one of the signatories.

An internal dialogue to promote national reconciliation has been a central feature of President Duarte's policy in El Salvador, where four competitive nationwide elections have been held in 3 years.

The establishment of an effective dialogue for national reconciliation has been a critical necessity in Nicaragua ever since the failure to establish a working democracy, perhaps the fundamental objective of the revolution against the Somoza dictatorship.

This special report provides basic documentation concerning the Nicaraguan peace process, including the Contadora framework, the proposals of the Nicaraguan Catholic bishops and the various opposition groups, and the positions taken since by President Reagan and leaders in the region itself.

The Contadora Framework

The Contadora negotiations involve five Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) and the four members of the Contadora Group (Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela).

The text of the basic negotiating objectives agreed to by all nine Contadora countries is reprinted below. Three of the 21 objectives deal with the centrality of democracy and internal reconciliation to the resolution of conflict in Central America.

Contadora Document of Objectives¹

Considering:

The situation prevailing in Central America, which is characterized by an atmosphere of tension that threatens security and peaceful coexistence in the region, and which requires, for its solution, observance of the principles of international law governing the actions of States, especially:

The self-determination of peoples;
Non-intervention;
The sovereign equality of States;
The peaceful settlement of disputes;
Refraining from the threat or use of force;
Respect of the territorial integrity of States;
Pluralism in its various manifestations;
Full support for democratic institutions;
The promotion of social justice;
International co-operation for development;
Respect for and promotion of human rights;
The prohibition of terrorism and subversion;

We want to help opposition groups join the political process in all countries and compete by ballots instead of bullets.

President Reagan,
April 27, 1983

The desire to reconstruct the Central American homeland through progressive integration of its economic, legal and social institutions;

The need for economic co-operation among the States of Central America so as to make a fundamental contribution to the development of their peoples and the strengthening of their independence;

The undertaking to establish, promote or revitalize representative, democratic systems in all the countries of the region;

The unjust economic, social and political structures which exacerbate the conflicts in Central America;

The urgent need to put an end to the tensions and lay the foundations for understanding and solidarity among the countries of the area;

The arms race and the growing arms traffic in Central America, which aggravate political relations in the region and divert economic resources that could be used for development;

The presence of foreign advisers and other forms of foreign military interference in the zone;

The risks that the territory of Central American States may be used for the purpose of conducting military

operations and pursuing policies of destabilization against others;

The need for concerted political efforts in order to encourage dialogue and understanding in Central America, avert the danger of a general spreading of the conflicts, and set in motion the machinery needed to ensure the peaceful coexistence and security of their peoples;

Declare their intention of achieving the following objectives:

To promote detente and put an end to situations of conflict in the area, restraining from taking any action that might jeopardize political confidence or obstruct the achievement of peace, security and stability in the region;

To ensure strict compliance with the aforementioned principles of international law, whose violators will be held accountable;

To respect and ensure the exercise of human, political, civil, economic, social, religious and cultural rights;

To adopt measures conducive to the establishment and, where appropriate, improvement of democratic, representative and pluralistic systems that will guarantee effective popular participation in the decision-making process and ensure that the various currents of opinion have free access to fair and regular elections based on the full observance of citizens' rights;

To promote national reconciliation efforts wherever deep divisions have taken place within society, with a view to fostering participation in democratic political processes in accordance with the law;

To create political conditions intended to ensure the international security, integrity and sovereignty of the State of the region;

To stop the arms race in all its forms and begin negotiations for the control and reduction of current stocks of weapons and on the number of armed troops;

To prevent the installation on their territory of foreign military bases or any other type of foreign military interference;

To conclude agreements to reduce the presence of foreign military advisers and other foreign elements involved in military and security activities, with a view to their elimination;

To establish internal control machinery to prevent the traffic in arms from the territory of any country in the region to the territory of another;

To eliminate the traffic in arms, whether within the region or from outside it, intended for persons, organiza-

¹Emphases added.

tions or groups seeking to destabilize the Governments of Central American countries;

To prevent the use of their own territory by persons, organizations or groups seeking to destabilize the Governments of Central American countries and to refuse to provide them with or permit them to receive military or logistical support;

To refrain from inciting or supporting acts of terrorism, subversion or sabotage in the countries in the area;

To establish and co-ordinate direct communication systems with a view to preventing or, where appropriate, settling incidents between States of the region;

To continue humanitarian aid aimed at helping Central American refugees who have been displaced from their countries of origin, and to create suitable conditions for the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, in consultation with or with the co-operation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international agencies deemed appropriate;

To undertake economic and social development programs with the aim of promoting well being and an equitable distribution of wealth;

To revitalize and restore economic integration machinery in order to attain sustained development on the basis of solidarity and mutual advance;

To negotiate the provision of external monetary resources which will provide additional means of financing the resumption of intra-regional trade, meet the serious balance-of-payments problems, attract funds for working capital, support programs to extend and restructure production systems and promote medium- and long-term investment projects;

To negotiate better and broader access to international markets in order to increase the volume of trade between the countries of Central America and the rest of the world, particularly the industrialized countries; by means of a revision of trade practices, the elimination of tariff and other barriers, and the achievement of the price stability at a profitable and fair level for the products exported by the countries of the region;

To establish technical co-operation machinery for the planning, programming and implementation of multi-sectoral investment and trade promotion projects.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Central American countries, with the participation of the countries in the

Contadora Group, have begun negotiations with the aim of preparing for the conclusion of the agreements and the establishment of machinery necessary to formalize and develop the objectives contained in this document, and to bring about the establishment of appropriate verification of monitoring systems. To that end, account will be taken of the initiatives put forward at the meetings convened by the Contadora Group.

Panama City, 9 September 1983

Nicaraguan Calls for Dialogue

The peace process in Nicaragua is framed by the four documents excerpted below.

The Nicaraguan bishops' 1984 Easter Pastoral took stock of the worsening conflict inside Nicaragua and its spillover into neighboring countries in Central America. The bishops called for a dialogue among "all Nicaraguans inside and outside the country . . . [including] Nicaraguans who have taken up arms against the government."

After the elections of November 4, 1984, had failed to provide either free competition or reconciliation, the inter-

If Managua proves responsive to serious negotiations, hopeful vistas open up for the beleaguered peoples of Central America, including those of Nicaragua. . . . We prefer to resolve the conflicts in the region peacefully.

National Bipartisan
Commission
on Central America,
January 10, 1984

nal political resistance—in a February statement issued by the *Coordinadora Democrática Nicaraguense*—reaffirmed its interest in genuine dialogue.

While some resistance leaders, notably Sandinista hero Eden Pastora, continued to stress the need for armed struggle as the only way to end the betrayal of the revolution to the Soviet Union and Cuba, important leaders from both the political and the armed resistance came together to call for

dialogue in a joint statement signed in San Jose, Costa Rica, on March 1, 1985.

On March 22, the Bishops' Council then reemphasized its availability to mediate among all Nicaraguans without exception or favoritism.

Pastoral Letter on Reconciliation From the Nicaraguan Bishops, April 22, 1984

To the priests and deacons in our dioceses:

To members of religious orders:
To catechists and bearers of the Word:

To our brothers and sisters in the apostolic lay movements:

To principals, teachers, and students in Catholic schools:

To all our beloved faithful:

Grace and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dear brothers and sisters:

At this solemn Easter celebration, the ultimate expression of God's love for mankind through the redemption, we invite you to share more fully in the spiritual wealth of the Holy Year, which will be extended in Nicaragua by a special concession from Pope John Paul II until June 17, 1984, the feast of the Holy Trinity.

This extension and the urgent need in our society for sincere and brotherly reconciliation through individual conversion have moved us to send you this exhortation. . . .

II. OUR SITUATION

1. The Problem of Sin in the World

Pope John Paul II, in his message for the 17th World Day of Prayer for Peace on January 1, 1984, expressed his concern about the current world situation, a concern which we, too, share: "Peace is truly precarious, and injustice abounds. Relentless warfare is occurring in many countries, continuing on and on despite the proliferation of deaths, mourning, and destruction, without any apparent progress toward a solution. It is often the innocent who suffer, while passions become inflamed and there is the risk that fear will lead to an extreme situation."

2. In Nicaragua

A. Belligerent Situation:

Our country, too, is plagued by a belligerent situation pitting Nicaraguan against Nicaraguan, and the consequences of this situation could not be sadder:

- Many Nicaraguan youths and men are dying on the battlefields.
- Many others look toward the future with the fear of seeing their own lives prematurely ended.
- A materialistic and atheistic educational system is undermining the consciences of our children.
- Many families are divided by political differences.
- The suffering of mothers who have lost their children, which should merit our great respect, is instead exploited to incite hatred and feed the desire for vengeance.
- Farmworkers and Indians, for whom the Church reserves a special love, are suffering, living in constant anxiety, and many of them are forced to abandon their homes in search of a peace and tranquility that they do not find.
- Some of the mass media, using the language of hate, encourage a spirit of violence.

B. The Church:

One, albeit small, sector of our Church has abandoned ecclesiastical unity and surrendered to the tenets of a materialistic ideology. This sector sows confusion inside and outside Nicaragua through a campaign extolling its own ideas and defaming the legitimate pastors and the faithful who follow them. Censorship of the media makes it impossible to clarify the positions and offer other points of view.

3. Foreign interference

Foreign powers take advantage of our situation to encourage economic and ideological exploitation. They see us as support for their power, without respect for our persons, our history, our culture, and our right to decide our own destiny.

Consequently, the majority of the Nicaraguan people live in fear of their present and uncertainty of their future. They feel deep frustration, clamor for peace and freedom. Yet their voices are not heard, muted by belligerent propaganda on all sides. . . .

III. RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH

1. Conversion and Reconciliation. . . .

2. Confession: the path to conversion. . . .

3. Dialogue:

The road to social peace is possible through dialogue, sincere dialogue that seeks truth and goodness. "That [dialogue] must be a meaningful and generous offer of a meeting of good intentions and not a possible justification for continuing to foment dissension and violence." (John Paul II, Greeting to Nicaragua, March 4, 1983)

***If we do not sit down to talk,
to try to find solutions to our
problems in civilized ways,
with talks . . . the flow of blood
will continue. . . .***

Archbishop of Managua
Obando y Bravo,
April 7, 1985

It is dishonest to constantly blame internal aggression and violence on foreign aggression.

It is useless to blame the evil past for everything without recognizing the problems of the present.

All Nicaraguans inside and outside the country must participate in this dialogue, regardless of ideology, class, or partisan belief. Furthermore, we think that Nicaraguans who have taken up arms against the Government must also participate in this dialogue. If not, there will be no possibility of a settlement, and our people, especially the poorest among them, will continue to suffer and die.

The dialogue of which we speak is not a tactical truce to strengthen positions for further struggle but a sincere effort to seek appropriate solutions to the anguish, pain, exhaustion, and fatigue of the many, many people who long for peace, the many, many people who want to live, to rise from the ashes, to see the warmth of a smile on a child's face, far from terror, in a climate of democratic harmony.

The terrible chain of reactions inherent in friend-enemy dialectics is halted by the word of God, who demands that we love even our enemies and that we forgive them. He urges us to move from distrust and aggressive-

ness to respect and harmony, in a climate conducive to true and objective deliberation on our problems and a prudent search for solutions. The solution is reconciliation (cf. John Paul II, Peace and Reconciliation. Address by the Pope in El Salvador, March 6, 1983).

If we are not open to objective acknowledgement of our situation and the events that distress our people ideologically, politically, and militarily, then we are not prepared, in a true and Christian way, for reconciliation for the sake of the real, living wholeness of our nation.

Considering that freedom of speech is a vital part of the dignity of a human being, and as such is indispensable to the well-being of the nation inasmuch as a country progresses only when there is freedom to generate new ideas, the right to free expression of one's ideas must be recognized.

The great powers, which are involved in this problem for ideological or economic reasons, must leave the Nicaraguans free from coercion. . . .

Done at Managua, April 22, Easter Sunday, 1984 (to be read and published in the usual manner), Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua.

Pablo A. Vega
Bishop of Juigalpa
President

Miguel Obando Bravo
Archbishop of Managua

Leovigildo Lopez Fitoria
Bishop of Granada

Salvador Schlaeffer B.
Bishop of Bluefields

Pedro L. Vilchez V.
Prelate of Jinotega

Bosco Vivas Robelo
Assistant Bishop of Managua
Secretary

Julian Barni
Bishop of Leon

Ruben Lopez Ardon
Bishop of Esteli

Carlos Santi
Bishop of Matagalpa

**Statement of the Coordinadora
Democratica Nicaraguense,
February 22, 1985**

The *Coordinadora Democratica Nicaraguense* (Nicaraguan Democratic Coordinating Board) wishes to make the following known to the people of Nicaragua and the free peoples of the world:

The situation in Nicaragua is deteriorating daily and has reached a state of true anguish. The people are suffering because there is a shortage of food and the salaries are low; there is no work, no medicine, no gasoline, no candles, no toilet paper, no toothpaste, no spare parts. The people are suffering because their children are receiving an education that can be more accurately described as Marxist-Leninist political indoctrination. Day and night, young people live with the fear that they will be unexpectedly detained and sent to perform military service in which they do not believe because it is identified with the interests of the party. Consequently, some choose to leave Nicaragua and others join the ranks of the armed resistance.

Just as our 1978-79 civil war was basically the result of the political intransigence of the Somoza dictatorship, the current civil war, and most of the other evils afflicting the Nicaraguan people, are basically the result of the intransigence of the FSLN [Sandinista National Liberation Front], which has adopted a Marxist-Leninist program and departed from the original plan. Approximately six years under the FSLN government have shown that it has not, to date, brought about liberation, as its name suggests, but rather burdens and subjugation.

... A successful solution will not be attained piecemeal or through separate dialogues involving the government and the farmers, the government and the cattle ranchers, or the government and the labor sector or even from dialogues with foreign governments. A comprehensive, fundamental solution [could] come about through a consensus between all Nicaraguans on a political, social, economic, moral, and human program for a new Nicaragua based on democracy sustained in freedom.

... We know that the number of citizens who no longer expect anything from such a civilized solution is continually growing because previous attempts at dialogue have shown that when the FSLN suggests such a course of action it is doing so, not with the honest desire to negotiate, but rather for the sole purpose of simulating democratic forms of government for foreign consumption. Nevertheless, we believe that there is still a way to bring about the honest, sincere, and effective dialogue that we are seeking and we suggest that the most promising way to bring it about would be to have it convoked, organized, and coordinated by the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua.

It shares the people's suffering and their yearning for freedom, which has strengthened its moral authority, and it enjoys the absolute confidence of all sectors.

We therefore respectfully invite the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua to convoke such a dialogue without delay, providing for the representation of all Nicaraguans. In addition we request of the bishops that the dialogue sponsored by them be attended by guarantors whose presence would endorse the commitments made to the Nicaraguan people.

An honest desire to hold such a dialogue should be demonstrated in advance by halting armed actions and lifting the state of emergency for a reasonable period of time during which the dialogue should produce results; through a decree providing for general amnesty as well as complete and effective pardons; and through absolute respect for freedom of expressions, association, and assembly, as well as the rights set forth in the laws on amparo and habeas corpus. . . .

The anguish, the misery, the uncertainty, and the frustration of the Nicaraguan people all call for national dialogue. Let us heed that call.

Document on National Dialogue of the Nicaraguan Resistance, March 1, 1985

We, democratic citizens, representatives of all sectors of the Nicaraguan Resistance, announce to the Nicaraguan people, to the governments and peoples of the Americas and of the world, the following manifesto:

The Present Situation of Nicaragua

In recent years, the Sandinista Front has submerged our people in a crisis without precedent in our national history.

At this time, the impact of this crisis is evident in the economic, political, social and moral spheres of the nation.

This situation is rooted both in the abandonment of the original Program of Government and the Fundamental Statute as well as in the interference of the Soviet bloc in our internal affairs. . . .

The solution to the national crisis can only be found through a genuine understanding among all Nicaraguans that might end the civil war and lead to the reconciliation of the Nicaraguan family.

The proposal [of the opposition, issued on March 1] offers more than a chance for national reconciliation. It lets Nicaraguans remove their fate from foreign hands and restore it to Nicaraguan hands alone.

***Washington Post Editorial,
March 17, 1985***

Members of the *Coordinadora Democrática Nicaraguense*

- CTN: *Central de los Trabajadores Nicaraguenses* (Nicaraguan Workers Central)
- CUS: *Confederación de la Unidad Sindical* (Confederation of Labor Unity)
- PLC: *Partido Liberal Constitucionalista* (Liberal Constitutionalist Party)
- PSD: *Partido Social Democrático* (Social Democratic Party)
- COSEP: *Consejo Superior de la Empresa Privada* (Superior Private Enterprise Council)
- PSC: *Partido Social Cristiano* (Social Christian Party)

We wish to emphasize that this initiative is not taken to search for a quota of power, but rather it seeks only to establish in Nicaragua the rule of law which will permit the people to live in peace and to go about resolving our problems within a new constitutional order. . . .

Therefore, in view of the gravity of the moment, and conscious of our civic responsibilities and of the urgent need to save our people from greater suffering, we accept the call of the Nicaraguan Democratic Coordinating Board and exhort the Sandinista Front, for the last time, and in definitive and absolute fashion, to participate in a national dialogue which will end the national crisis. This dialogue should follow these modalities:

Convocation

The Nicaraguan Bishops Conference is the entity with the necessary moral authority to organize and coordinate the national dialogue. In this regard, we reiterate the petition made to it by the Democratic Coordinating Board to convene the national dialogue.

Participants

In order that the dialogue be efficient and produce the desired results, it is necessary to structure it in accordance with Nicaraguan reality. There are two political tendencies in Nicaragua: the totalitarian one which for the moment has accepted the Sandinista Front as its

sion of armed activities, with a ceasefire *in situ*; lifting of the state of emergency; absolute freedom of expression and assembly; general amnesty and pardon for political crimes and related crimes; entry into effect of the right of protective legal procedure (*amparo*) and *habeas corpus*, adding the granting of full protection of the physical and moral integrity of those members of the resistance who participate in the dialogue, in the event that it should take place in Nicaragua.

The application of these measures should be carried out under the supervision of the guarantor governments.

tional dialogue has not begun or has not progressed in clear and substantial form, it will be definitely suspended by the Nicaraguan Resistance, thereby terminating the possibilities for a peaceful resolution of the national crisis.

If the Nicaraguan Bishops Conference considers it useful to hold conversations with this group for purposes of preparations leading to the speedy realization of the dialogue, we announce our immediate availability to participate in such conversations. To that end we appoint as our representatives Messrs. Arturo J. Cruz, Alfonso Robelo and Adolfo Calero.

May love for our fatherland overcome selfishness and foreign involvement, so that the National Directorate of the Sandinista Front will respond positively to this our last effort to grant to our country a civilized solution.

God Save Nicaragua!

Wide possibilities are opening up for a political solution with the participation of all the sectors of the Nicaraguan population. The example that President Jose Napoleon Duarte gave when he accepted dialogue in El Salvador is relevant to the current Nicaraguan picture.

Carlos Andres Perez,
Vice President of the Socialist
International and former
President of Venezuela,
January 6, 1985

[Signed in San Jose, Costa Rica, March 1, 1985, by Arturo J. Cruz, Alfonso Robelo, Adolfo Calero P., Fernando Chamorro, Pedro J. Chamorro, Fernando Aguero, Indalecio Rodriguez, Carlos Coronel Kautz, Leonel Poveda S., Claudio Picasso, Jose Luis Velasquez, Benjamin Gallo Lacayo, Jaime Morales C., Zacarias Hernandez, Jose Molina, Ulises Fonseca, Felix P. Pastora G., Federico Arguello S., Donald Lacayo N., Jairo Sanchez, Luz Marina Smith.]

vanguard, and the democratic one which is divided into armed organizations and civilian organizations; therefore, the dialogue should be between these two political tendencies so that both can name their respective delegates, as many as the Bishops Conference feels is appropriate.

Observers and Guarantors

We suggest to the Bishops Conference that it request the participation of the Central American governments in the dialogue as guarantors of the agreements which may be reached, given the fact that our fellow Central Americans are, in the final analysis, those which have been most directly affected by the Nicaraguan crisis.

The presence of these governments as guarantors in no way hinders the presence as observers or even as guarantors of other governments and democratic entities of the American continent.

Minimum Requirements

We support fully the minimum requirements demanded by the Democratic Coordinating Board in order to initiate the national dialogue. They are: suspen-

Temporary Permanence of the Executive

If this dialogue is carried out, we pledge to accept that Mr. Daniel Ortega continue acting as head of the Executive Branch until such time as the people pronounce themselves in a plebiscite. During this period, Mr. Ortega should govern in fulfillment of the promises of the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Government Junta contained in the document of July 12, 1979 transmitted to the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, and in fulfillment of the original Program of Government, the Fundamental Statute and the American Human Rights Convention or Pact of San Jose. . . .

Initiation of the National Dialogue, Instrumentation and Deadlines

In order to carry out the national dialogue proposed by the Democratic Coordinating Board, on the basis of the statements contained in this document, and conscious of the Leninist tactic of stalling in order to consolidate the totalitarian program of the Sandinista Front, said dialogue must begin by March 20, 1985. This date cannot be postponed. If by April 20, 1985 the na-

Communique of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference, March 22, 1985

The bishops of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference after holding a regular meeting at our Episcopal House in Managua to meditate, in light of the Gospel, on the painful current situation in Nicaragua, wish to inform our faithful people and all men of good will of the following:

1. We bishops feel as our own the pain and suffering of all Nicaraguans, without any exceptions.

2. While we pray to our Lord Jesus Christ and to his Holy Mother for our brothers in the countryside and in the cities, we would like to cooperate, on the basis of our pastoral mission as conciliators, in seeking solutions to put an end to so much pain and so many tears.

3. It should be understood that this line of pastoral concern should include all our meetings or talks, be it with the Nicaraguan Government, or with any other person or organized sector in Nicaragua.

4. We feel that under the current circumstances, everything stated in our pastoral letter of 22 April 1984 is still valid, particularly in relation to the dialogue as the path toward conciliation.

5. Under the conviction that violence will never solve a problem from its roots, we express our willingness to mediate in an internal dialogue, as long as the following points are clear:

A. The church cannot impose a dialogue.

B. A dialogue must be accepted by both sides.

C. Our stance must not be interpreted as a political position in favor of a specific party or ideology.

We urge Catholic Church members to work hard at becoming promoters of peace and conciliation in their homes, and we urge our brothers suffering in one way or the other to share their pain with Jesus Christ, in order to obtain forgiveness and achieve harmony among Nicaraguans.

[Signed in Managua by Msgr. Bosco Vivas Robelo, Managua's Auxiliary Bishop and Secretary of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference.]

President Reagan's Proposal

"In a sincere effort to start a dialogue aimed at true internal reconciliation which can bring peace and liberty to Nicaragua" (Radio address April 6, 1985), President Reagan on April 4, 1985, added his prestige to the building Nicaraguan peace process.

The President's proposal made clear that because U.S. support for the Nicaraguan resistance had peace and democracy as its priority objectives, that support would be treated as part of the peace process.

Remarks by President Reagan, April 4, 1985

I want to announce today a proposal for peace in Central America that can enable liberty and democracy to prevail in this troubled region and that can protect the security of our own borders, economy, and people.

On March 1 in San Jose, Costa Rica, the leaders of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance met with a broad coalition of other exiled Nicaraguan democrats. They agreed upon and signed a historic proposal to restore peace and democracy in their country.

The members of the democratic resistance offered a cease-fire in return for an agreement by the Nicaraguan regime to begin a dialogue mediated by the Bishops' Conference of the Roman Catholic Church with the goal of restoring democracy through honest elections. To date, the Nicaraguan regime has refused this offer.

What matters is the commitment to democratic institutions governed by regular popular elections. Unlike the guerrillas in El Salvador, we are not demanding power, we are demanding only our rights. . . . we want a constitutional solution.

Arturo Cruz, Sr. and Jr.,
March 18, 1985

The Central American countries, including Nicaragua, have agreed that internal reconciliation is indispensable to regional peace. But we know that, unlike President Duarte of El Salvador who seeks a dialogue with his opponents, the communists in Nicaragua have turned, at least up until now, a cold shoulder to appeals for national reconciliation from the Pope and the Nicaraguan bishops. And we know that without incentives, none of this will change.

For these reasons, great numbers of Nicaraguans are demanding change and taking up arms to fight for the stolen promise of freedom and democracy. Over 15,000 farmers, small merchants, whites, blacks, and Miskito Indians have united to struggle for a true democracy.

We supported democracy in Nicaragua before, and we support democracy today. We supported national reconciliation before, and we support it today. We believe that democracy deserves as much support in Nicaragua as it has received in El Salvador. And we're proud of the help that we've given to El Salvador.

You may recall that in 1981, we were told that the communist guerrillas were mounting a final offensive, the government had no chance, and our approach would lead to greater American involvement. Well, our critics were wrong. Democracy and freedom are winning in El Salvador. President Duarte is pulling his country together and enjoys wide support from the people. And all of this with America's help kept strictly limited.

The formula that worked in El Salvador—support for democracy, self-defense, economic development, and dialogue—will work for the entire region. And we couldn't have ac-

complished this without bipartisan support in Congress, backed up by the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, headed by Henry Kissinger. And that's why, after months of consulting with congressional leaders and listening carefully to their concerns, I am making the following proposal: I'm calling upon both sides to lay down their

arms and accept the offer of church-mediated talks on internationally supervised elections and an end to the repression now in place against the church, the press, and individual rights.

To the members of the democratic resistance, I ask them to extend their offer of a cease-fire until June 1.

To the Congress, I ask for immediate release of the \$14 million already appropriated. While the cease-fire offer is on the table, I pledge these funds will not be used for arms or munitions. These funds will be used for food, clothing, and medicine and other support for survival. The democratic opposition cannot be a partner in negotiations without these basic necessities.

If the Sandinistas accept this peace offer, I will keep my funding restrictions in effect. But peace negotiations must not become a cover for deception and delay. If there is no agreement after 60 days of negotiations, I will lift these restrictions, unless both sides ask me not to.

I want to emphasize that consistent with the 21 goals of the Contadora process, the United States continues to seek:

1. Nicaragua's implementation of its commitment to democracy made to the Organization of American States;

2. An end to Nicaragua's aggression against its neighbors;

3. A removal of the thousands of Soviet-bloc, Cuban, PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization], Libyan, and other military and security personnel; and

4. A return of the Nicaraguan military to a level of parity with their neighbors.

Now, later today, I will be meeting with Arturo Cruz, Adolfo Calero, and Alfonso Robelo [leaders of the Nicaraguan opposition] to discuss my proposal. Democracy is the road to peace. But if we abandon the brave members of the democratic resistance, we will also remove all constraints on the communists.

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

We strongly support President Duarte's dialogue with Salvadoran guerrillas. The lack of a parallel development in Nicaragua was 1984's major disappointment.

Secretary Shultz,
Special Report No. 124,
April 1985

Central America is not condemned to that dark future of endless violence. If the United States meets its obligations to help those now striving for democracy, they can create a bright future in which peace for all Americans will be secure.

So, in the spirit of Easter, let us make this so. I look forward to working with the Congress on this important matter in the coming weeks.

Initial Regional Support

The President's Easter peace proposal focused attention on the need for dialogue as essential to peace in Central America.

President Duarte of El Salvador:

*Letter to President Reagan,
April 4, 1985*

Dear Mr. President:

I want to thank you most sincerely and warmly for your letter delivered to me today which explains your new peace initiative in Nicaragua and Central America. Your initiative and approach have my complete support and I strongly urge all of the friends of Central America in your Congress to give it their full backing. It is the right step at the right time in our quest for peace and democracy in this region. We appreciate as well your continuing strong support for democracy in El Salvador.

As you know, the Salvadoran people have just been to the polls for the fourth time in three years. While we do not yet have the official results, the apparent significant victory of my government and my party is, in my opinion, first and foremost an endorsement of the efforts we have made, with the help of the people and government of the United States, to bring peace, reconciliation and democracy to our own country through an internal dialogue. We believe our approach of opening such a dialogue and offering a full opportunity to all of our Salvadoran brothers to participate in a free and constitutional democratic process in our country should also be offered to all of those who are struggling for democracy in Nicaragua. I speak for all Salvadorans in warmly applauding your efforts.

We remain concerned, as we have been for some time, by the continuing flow of supplies and munitions from Nicaragua to guerrilla forces here in El Salvador which are fighting against my government and our programs of reform, democracy, reconciliation, and peace. This continuing intervention in our internal affairs is of great concern to us and we deeply appreciate any efforts which your government can take to

build a broad barrier to such activities—efforts which a small country like El Salvador cannot take in its own behalf.

Please accept my personal thanks for this courageous step and my best wishes to you and your family.

Sincerely,

JOSE NAPOLEON DUARTE
President of the Republic of
El Salvador
San Salvador.

President Betancur of Colombia:

Press Conference, April 5, 1985

The step the President of the United States has taken fits perfectly within the philosophy and within the reach of the Document of Objectives which the countries of Central America freely signed. . . .

Address to Nation, April 7, 1985

I am in agreement with the President in seeking a dialogue between the Sandinista government and the opposition especially the *Coordinadora Democrática*—all within the spirit of Contadora which seeks national reconciliations and for which the President confirmed to me his support.

President Suazo of Honduras:

*Letter to President Reagan,
April 8, 1985*

Dear Mr. President:

I have received your kind communication of April 4 by which you brought to my attention the efforts that the Government of the United States is making with the purpose of strengthening democratic institutions in Nicaragua and supporting a dialogue between the opposition forces and the Sandinista government with the mediation of the Catholic Church in that country.

Since the month of June 1983, when my government actively participated in the drafting of a document known as "Bases for Peace in Central America," Honduras has firmly supported actions intended to put an end to the armed conflicts being experienced in some Central American countries. We have supported actions of national reconciliation, dialogue, and the free manifestation of popular will as ways which could lead to

- establishment of authentic democratic, pluralistic, and representative institutions in all of the countries in our region.

In this sense, your initiative has the enormous merit of supporting negotiated solutions to the Central American crisis and at the same time positively supporting the efforts of the Nicaraguan people to find peace in democracy.

I very much appreciate the advance notification of actions which your government will take in the near future. For my part, I want to reiterate once again that the government over which I preside will not hesitate even for an instant in its efforts to achieve a comprehensive, regional agreement which is fully verifiable, as is specified in the Twenty-one Objectives approved by the Central American countries in the framework of the Contadora negotiations. In this sense, my government shares and supports the ends that you pursue with this important initiative.

Please accept, Mr. President, my congratulations for this decision while at the same time I reiterate my sentiments of personal respect.

ROBERTO SUAZO CORDOVA
Constitutional President of the
Republic of Honduras

President de la Madrid of Mexico

*Excerpt From Office Communiqué,
April 8, 1985*

Cessation of hostilities is, in Mexico's opinion, an indispensable objective for the promotion of a climate appropriate for dialogue and negotiation among the countries of the area and among the different political groups within each country. President Reagan's proposal to encourage cessation of hostilities could constitute a forward step in the solution of this delicate conflict.

President Barletta of Panama:

*Excerpt from Foreign Ministry Bulletin,
April 10, 1985*

In President Barletta's opinion, there exist positive elements in President Reagan's proposal. Above all, the proposal moves forward both on the cessation of hostilities in Central America as well as on dialogue instead of confrontation. President Barletta indicated that in any case it is important to open a breathing space that would permit deeper study of President Reagan's proposal in order to determine its true scope. President Barletta indicated his

pleasure with the support President Reagan is giving to the Contadora Group's effort.

President Lusinchi of Venezuela:

*Press Conference, New York,
April 10, 1985*

We believe that [President Reagan's proposal] is valid, as it explores a possibility for a peaceful solution to the internal crisis in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan Government would not lose anything by entering into conversations with the opposition.

President Febres Cordero of Ecuador:

*Press Conference, New York,
April 10, 1985*

I've already looked favorably on the call for a dialogue. If the left has been suggesting in general a dialogue between the guerrillas and the legitimately constituted government in El Salvador, and all the parties in Guatemala take part in the democratic process, why can't there be a dialogue between the Sandinista Government and the opposition forces?

President Monge of Costa Rica

*Letter to President Reagan,
April 10, 1985*

I feel obliged to convey my enthusiastic support for [the President's] proposal. . . . As a Costa Rican, I should note that my position is justified above all because it is a proposal for a peaceful solution to one of the great problems of our time in Central America, aimed at achieving peace and making possible democracy. Having for many years resolved our problems in a peaceful manner, through the exercise of democracy, Costa Ricans fervently desire that all the peoples of Central America likewise receive the benefits which such procedures convey and that by their means they may resolve their problems, thus definitively distancing Central America from the nightmare of war, both international and civil.

President Alfonsín of Argentina:

*Washington Post, Interview,
April 11, 1985*

I think [President Reagan's proposal] is a positive policy that, if taken up by Latin America, might produce some formula for a solution.

Chronology

June 1979

Anti-Somoza opposition issues communique from San Jose, Costa Rica, promising first free Nicaraguan elections in 100 years.

Resolution of 17th Meeting of Consultation of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of American States (OAS) calls for installation of democratic government in Nicaragua including representatives of all groups opposing the Somoza regime.

July 1979

Anti-Somoza opposition sends cable promising free elections to the Secretary General of the OAS.

Anti-Somoza opposition coalition assumes power in Nicaragua; United States begins economic assistance.

October 1979

General Romero is overthrown in El Salvador by military and civilian group promising extensive political, social and economic reform.

April 1980

Alfonso Robelo resigns from Nicaraguan Government after Sandinistas pack Council of State with its supporters by enlarging the membership from 33 to 47.

March 1980

Agrarian reform begins in El Salvador.

November 1980

Sandinista security forces murder Jorge Salazar. Business group (COSEP) and independent political parties withdraw temporarily from Council of State.

January 1981

Salvadoran FMLN guerrillas, using arms supplied by the Soviet bloc through Nicaragua, launch "final offensive" against the Salvadoran Government; United States suspends aid to Nicaragua.

March 1982

Constituent Assembly election in El Salvador.

October 1982

Declaration of San Jose (signed by Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, and the United States) calls for internal reconciliation and democracy in each Central American country as requirement for regional peace.

January 1983

Contadora peace process launched by Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela.

February 1983

El Salvador Peace Commission established, including a representative from the church. Efforts focused on promoting the participation of all social and political sectors in the democratic process.

April 1983

President Reagan announces appointment of a Special Envoy for Central America. Focus included facilitating internal dialogue in both El Salvador and Nicaragua.

September 1983

21-point "Document of Objectives" signed by the five Central American and the four Contadora countries.

December 1983

Nicaraguan opposition *Coordinadora* issues nine-point communique calling for dialogue leading to open elections.

February 1984

Nicaraguan armed opposition FDN offers to lay down arms in exchange for participation in elections.

April 1984

Easter pastoral letter of the Nicaraguan bishops calls for dialogue, including with armed opposition.

May 1984

Jose Napoleon Duarte elected President of El Salvador in run-off election.

September-October 1984

International and regional efforts to induce Sandinistas to allow open, fair competition for November 4 elections fail.

October-November 1984

Salvadoran President Duarte calls at UN General Assembly for dialogue with armed opposition; meetings between government and FMLN take place October 15 at La Palma and November 20 at Ayagualo.

February 1985

Statement calling for church-mediated dialogue issued in Managua by the opposition *Coordinadora*.

March 1985

Document on national dialogue of the Nicaraguan resistance issued in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Communique of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference, accepting mediation role in dialogue.

Legislative and municipal elections in El Salvador; fourth free election in 3 years.

April 1985

President Reagan calls on Nicaraguan Government to accept dialogue.

Additional References

Resolution of the 17th Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of American States, Washington, D.C., June 23, 1979 (OAS Document 40/79, rev. 2, June 23, 1979).

Cable from the "Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction" of Nicaragua to the Secretary General of the OAS, Dr. Alejandro Orfila, July 12, 1979.

Final Act of the Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Countries Interested in the Promotion of Democracy in Central America and the Caribbean, October 4, 1982 (Bulletin Reprint, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.).

Reagan, Ronald, *Central America: Defending Our Vital Interests*. Address before a joint session of Congress, April 27, 1983 (Current Policy No. 482, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.).

Statement in *La Prensa* of the *Coordinadora Democratica Nicaraguense*, Managua, Nicaragua, 26 December 1983 (FBIS, January 5, 1984).

The Wall Street Journal, "Socialist International Leader Sends Daniel Ortega His Regrets," (January 11, 1985, p. 19).

Motley, Langhorne A., *The Need for Continuity in U.S. Latin American Policy*. Based on a statement before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, January 29, 1985 (Current Policy No. 655, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.).

Shultz, George P., *America and the Struggle for Freedom*. Address before the Commonwealth Club of California, San Francisco, California, February 22, 1985 (Current Policy No. 659, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.).

Cruz, Arturo and Arturo Cruz, Jr., "A Peace Plan for Nicaragua." (*The New Republic*, March 18, 1985, Issue 3,661, pp. 17-18.)

Calero, Adolfo, "A Struggle by Nicaraguans, for Nicaragua." (*Washington Post*, April 7, 1985, p. A-10.)

Facio, Gonzalo, "El Plan Reagan para la paz en Nicaragua." (*Diario Las Americas*, April 9, 1985, p. A-5.)

Sustaining a Consistent Policy in Central America: One Year After the National Bipartisan Commission Report (Special Report No. 124, April 1985, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.). ■

Published by the United States Department of State • Bureau of Public Affairs
Office of Public Communication • Editorial Division • Washington, D.C. • April 1985
Editor: Colleen Sussman • This material is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission; citation of this source is appreciated.

Comandante Bayardo Arce's Secret Speech before the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN)



Introduction

Bayardo Arce, one of the nine comandantes of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), delivered a revealing speech to the political committee of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN) in Managua in May 1984. (The PSN is a small Moscow-line communist party which is allied with the FSLN in the Patriotic Front of the Revolution.) This secret speech on the November 4, 1984, Nicaraguan elections was tape-recorded without Arce's knowledge and printed in its entirety in Barcelona's *La Vanguardia* (July 31, 1984). According to *Foreign Report* (August 23, 1984), published by *The Economist* in London, Junta Coordinator (now President) Daniel Ortega acknowledged the authenticity of the speech. The text presented here is a translation of the speech as printed in *La Vanguardia*.

Arce's speech is particularly significant not only because he is the Coordinator of the FSLN's Political Committee and therefore one of the most powerful men in the Sandinista leadership, but because he was selected by the Sandinistas to manage the FSLN's participation in the elections. Notwithstanding his lack of any official position within the government, he was also chosen by the Sandinistas to negotiate in Rio de Janeiro with the Democratic Coordinating Board (Coordinadora Democrática) regarding its participation in the elections. The Coordinadora, represented by Arturo Cruz, is the largest and most influential political opposition to the Sandinistas. After intense discussions, Arce indicated his acceptance of a tentative agreement; however, as preparations were being made to make it public, he suddenly withdrew from the talks, effectively eliminating any hope that the democratic opposition would participate in the elections.

In his May speech to the PSN, Comandante Arce commented candidly on several themes: the usefulness of elections to consolidate the domination of Nicaraguan political life by the Marxist-Leninist left under the FSLN banner; the Sandinista goal of establishing a single-party state; and the benefits that could accrue to the FSLN and its allies through a new constitution. He also explained the political and propaganda value of the three principles the Sandinistas promised to uphold before coming to power in 1979—political pluralism, international non-alignment, and a mixed economy. He made clear that the FSLN never had any intention of fulfilling

these promises and merely regarded them as a "tool" for generating international support. (These promises were a major factor in bringing about the Organization of American States' call for an end of the Somoza regime in June 1979.)

The construction of "socialism" in Nicaragua with a single party is a constant theme in Comandante Arce's speech. The new constitution, according to him, would legitimize Sandinista rule and create a juridical and political framework for a single-party state. This key Sandinista's words and rhetoric clearly demonstrate his commitment to Marxism-Leninism.

Arce said that "imperialism" has demanded that the Sandinistas abandon "interventionism," sever strategic ties with the Soviet bloc, and practice democracy. He stated that to cease Nicaraguan internationalism (what Western democracies call intervention in neighboring states' political processes and support of armed insurgents) would be to cease being revolutionary. To sever strategic ties with the Soviet Union would also be an abandonment of revolutionary principles. He called the elections a "nuisance," and said that if it were not for the state of war, "the electoral problem would be totally out of place in terms of its usefulness."

Comandante Arce sought to justify the elections to his Marxist comrades in the PSN by explaining that substantial gains could be realized by staging them. One benefit, he said, was that the elections provided a means to lessen pressure from the United States and other nations which demanded the Sandinistas uphold their 1979 promises. His characterization of the elections demonstrates the Sandinistas' lack of commitment to genuinely free elections. Furthermore, the speech describes the elections as a tool for consolidating a one-party state and continuing revolutionary "internationalism." Arce concluded the speech by stating another significant benefit that would be gained from the elections: "the unity of the Marxist-Leninists of Nicaragua."

In substance Comandante Arce's speech is highly reminiscent of the now famous "Line of March" secret speech given by the late Grenadian Prime Minister, Maurice Bishop, on September 13, 1982. Arce's speech is also consistent with the major Sandinista policy document "Analysis of the Situation and Tasks of the Sandinistas Peoples' Revolution," dated October 5, 1979 (also known as the "72-Hour Document").

English Translation of Comandante Bayardo Arce's Secret Speech before the Political Committee of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN) in Managua, May 1984

Reprinted with the permission of *La Vanguardia*, Barcelona, Spain. No further republication is permitted without the specific permission of *La Vanguardia*. For Spanish text see *La Vanguardia*, July 31, 1984.

* * * *

Good morning, comrades. In the first place, I should like to convey the greetings of the Sandinista Front to this meeting of the central committee of the Partido Socialista Nicaraguense [Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN)]. In a recent meeting we had with the leaders of the PSN on the focus that we Communists should give the electoral process, the idea emerged that we could explain to you directly our idea of the electoral process and also advance a few of the more in-depth strategic ideas we have begun to discuss in the National Directorate of the Sandinista Front.

I believe that, in order to better understand our approach, it is important to understand our position. We believe that during the course of the Nicaraguan revolutionary process we have had the weakness, for a number of reasons, of still not having achieved the unity of our entire people, particularly of the revolutionary militants.

We consider that our country is living in a state of war, which though not formally declared, has been declared on a *de facto* basis. A war, furthermore, forced on us by the biggest imperialist power, which,

"Of course, if we did not have the war situation imposed upon us by the United States, the electoral problem would be totally out of place in terms of its usefulness."

since 1980, has been acquiring a series of characteristics, a series of manifestations governed by our capability of being able to influence its course.

Yesterday in a working meeting we tried to make a comprehensive assessment of our situation. We saw that U.S. military intervention, which is the strongest action the Reagan policy could take against us, would be possible if the United States succeeded in consolidating four factors.

First, if there were a large degree of domestic breakdown in Nicaragua. In other words, if the reactionary forces were organized, if substantial progress were made in sowing confusion among the people so

that we would now be in a state of domestic discord, a civil war at home.

Second, we saw that the other factor was to see whether the regional countries, particularly our neighboring countries, Costa Rica, Honduras, and El Salvador, might offer optimum conditions for becoming a launching pad for aggression against Nicaragua. Indeed, just using the seas is not feasible, aircraft carriers are not enough, landing craft are not enough. All that is too limited.

Third, we looked at the international situation, which also includes the domestic situation in the United States. We therefore talked of four factors, because we make a distinction. Had the U.S. managed to have the international community, well, not support the policy of the Reagan government but just remain indifferent to the impact that policy is having in Central America, that would have had repercussions right away inside the United States in the way of greater indifference toward our problems. Naturally, that situation would have determined the likelihood of intervention, which is the most the U.S. can do to us after what it has already done.

Two-Way Strategy

Ever since we were confronted with this state of war, we have been following a two-way strategy. On the one side, confrontation with aggression of the type we are experiencing. On the other, the development of the construction of socialism consistent with the war setting we find ourselves in.

We believe that the fact that we are approaching the fifth anniversary of the triumph of the revolution free of the most effective means of destruction imperialism could bring into play, which is intervention, and the fact that we still retain strong international support, are still achieving some degree of domestic neutralization in the U.S., are still keeping the Central American countries from being converted into launching pads for aggression against our land, and, despite all the calamities brought upon us by the state of war, have still avoided any deep division from occurring among our own people (any other type of division does not interest us), this has been an important achievement of the revolution.

This interval has enabled us to move ahead in strategic ways. When we say move ahead in strategic ways, we mean that we have already turned over more than 700,000 *manzanas* [1 manzana equals 1.7 acres] of land to the peasants. We have turned rural credit around, we have successfully begun to promote cooperatives, and, coupled with that, are working in terms of an agro-industrial development which, in our judgment, is the hub of socialist transformation of our society.

Agro-Industrial Projects

Agro-industry for us is the same as metallurgy or energy for other countries. We have no choice but to process what we produce. And, as discussed a great deal by us, a number of agro-industrial investment projects will, within a few years, change the face of our country's economy.

But all of this is linked to the elections for one simple reason. We think the electoral process, which we announced and committed ourselves to as part of the program of the revolution, was and continues being an offensive tool from the standpoint of confronting U.S. policy. Intervention was at the point of occurring when we were struggling against the dictatorship. You are all aware that an American proposal to send a peace force here, to Nicaragua, was discussed in the Organization of American States in June 1979. Its purpose was to prevent a revolutionary triumph and to seek a manipulated triumph—in fact not even that, but a manipulated way out for the dictator. And, furthermore, we were directly threatened by the United States, which, as you will surely recall, began to establish bases in Costa Rica, surrounded our country with ships, and also began to

“... for us it is useful, for example, to be able to display an entrepreneurial class and private production in the mixed economy system we promulgated, while we move ahead in strategic ways.”

establish bases elsewhere in Central America to give it the capability to influence the dynamics of our struggle against the Somoza dictatorship.

Against that background, we thus launched what we called the program of national reconstruction. As part of that program we spoke of bringing about revolutionary change based on three principles which made us presentable in the international context and which, as far as we were concerned, were manageable from the revolutionary standpoint.

Three Revolutionary Principles

Those principles were non-alignment abroad, a mixed economy, and political pluralism. With those three elements we kept the international community from going along with American policy in Nicaragua; in fact, we got a number of governments of various tendencies to back the position of Nicaragua, the position of the Sandinista Front and of the revolutionary forces.

Of course, once defined in specific terms, this imposed certain commitments. One was that we said we were going to elect a constituent assembly, that we were going to have elections. While we might view those commitments as negative, if we analyze our revolution in

black and white, we still consider them to be positive at this time. Of course, if we did not have the war situation imposed on us by the United States, the electoral problem would be totally out of place in terms of its

“... any investment project in our country belongs to the state. The bourgeoisie no longer invests—it subsists.”

usefulness. What a revolution really needs is the power to act. The power to act is precisely what constitutes the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat—the ability of the [working] class to impose its will by using the means at hand [without] bourgeois formalities.

For us, then, the elections, viewed from that perspective, are a nuisance, just as a number of things that make up the reality of our revolution are a nuisance.

But from a realistic standpoint, being in a war with the United States, those things become weapons of the revolution to move forward the construction of socialism. Furthermore, for us it is useful, for example, to be able to display an entrepreneurial class and private production in the mixed economy system we promulgated, while we move ahead in strategic ways. The important thing is that the entrepreneurial class no longer controls all the means to reproduce itself. It no longer controls the banks, foreign trade, or the source of foreign exchange. Therefore, any investment project in our country belongs to the State. The bourgeoisie no longer invests—it subsists.

The Establishment of Socialism

In the future of our country, all change through development is in the hands of the revolutionary authority. That is well, just as it is well to be able to call elections and take away from American policy one of its justifications for aggression against Nicaragua, because the other two factors cannot be conceded.

Imperialism asks three things of us: to abandon interventionism, to abandon our strategic ties with the Soviet Union and the socialist community, and to be democratic. We cannot cease being internationalists unless we cease being revolutionaries.

We cannot discontinue strategic relationships unless we cease being revolutionaries. It is impossible even to consider this.

Yet the superstructure aspects, democracy as they call it, bourgeois democracy, has an element which we can manage and even derive advantages from for the construction of socialism in Nicaragua. What are those advantages, what was it we explained to the party leadership? The main thing about the elections, as far as we are concerned, is the drafting of the new constitution. That is the important thing. The new constitution will

allow us to shape the juridical and political principles for the construction of socialism in Nicaragua.

We are using an instrument claimed by the bourgeoisie, which disarms the international bourgeoisie, in order to move ahead in matters that for us are strategic. On the one hand, it allows us to neutralize the aggressiveness of imperialism, while on the other it is going to provide us with a tool for moving ahead on substantive aspects of our revolution.

"Imperialism asks three things of us: to abandon interventionism, to abandon our strategic ties with the Soviet Union and the socialist community, and to be democratic. We cannot cease being internationalists unless we cease being revolutionaries. We cannot discontinue strategic relationships unless we cease being revolutionaries."

In saying this, we, the Sandinistas Front, are indicating that we cannot go into the elections with a pink flag in order to make a red constitution. That would weaken us and would create new international pressure on us. That means that the program the Sandinista Front is going to take into the elections is a more radical one—one that may be expressed in the constitution. But more so in implementing actions, which have their dynamics apart from whatever is said. We are getting things done.

An Appropriate Juridical Framework

This new juridical framework will enable us to move at a new, more dynamic pace, and that is the advantage we think we can get out of the electoral process. In that context—that the elections are going to enable us to be clearer in a number of things—we wondered what role the forces that have been called the allied forces were going to play. We cannot assess those forces with the same yardstick. For us, as we have told the leaders of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party and showed them in practice, our relationship with the Socialist Party is not the same as with the Popular Social Christian Party or with the Independent Liberal Party (PLI).

There is an ideological concept at the heart of the matter in such relations. Even the Independent Liberal Party, because of ideology, was gradually attracted and is virtually on the side of the right, regardless of the personal quality of some of its men.

The Popular Social Christian Party is a weak party and the Socialist Party a Marxist-Leninist party. We therefore have to approach each one from the angle of

principles. We wondered what the purpose would be in encouraging the Socialist Party, for example, to run alone in the elections. But under what flag? That is one

". . . democracy as they call it, bourgeois democracy, has an element we can manage and even derive advantages from for the construction of socialism in Nicaragua."

question we asked ourselves. To show there was pluralism; that is one factor that has been useful until now—to be able to say there are 11 parties here. Because we were operating in the absence of constitutionality, there was no law, nothing that allowed you to say, well, here is our revolutionary institutionality. All there was, was the determination of the Sandinista Front which was going to be expressed by the existence or non-existence of different political forces. But now the situation has changed.

[We propose] including a certain number of Socialist Party candidates for the national assembly on the ballot which the Sandinista Front is going to submit. We say to our colleagues that for practical reasons but most of all on principle—a more strategic perspective—we could not agree to having the ballot of the revolution bear the emblems of the three parties. And we told the Popular Social Christian Party the same thing, because if they run alone they will disappear.

For practical reasons and a little bit because this is the quickest explanation, our people would become confused by a three-flag notion (even though we have made progress in the political-ideological aspect and in the cultural aspect). With that business of putting three flags on the ballot people would not know who they were voting for. It is logical for them to vote for the red and black flag. Yet, more substantively—and we should discuss this strategically—what does a vote for Sandinismo mean under these circumstances? Imperialism is not attacking the Patriotic Front of the Revolution; it is

"We believe that the elections should be used in order to vote for Sandinismo. . . ."

not attacking parties. Imperialism says that Sandinismo means totalitarianism, Sandinismo means Marxism-Leninism, Sandinismo means the spread of Soviet-Cuban influence, Sandinismo is an imposition on the Nicaraguan people.

Vote for Sandinismo

We believe that the elections should be used in order to vote for Sandinismo, which is being challenged and stigmatized by imperialism, in order to be able to

“Why are we communists going to be putting on different shirts if real, concrete socialism is being constructed through the strategy of power of the Sandinista Front?”

demonstrate that, in any event, the Nicaraguan people are for that totalitarianism, the Nicaraguan people are for Marxism-Leninism. Contrary to what they did in Chile, here they are not going to be able to reverse the vote by force because the people also have the ability to exercise such force.

We are not the ones who, by international manipulation, converted Sandinismo into the symbol of those interests, of those factors in the world revolution. That was done by imperialism. We have not declared ourselves Marxist-Leninists publicly and officially, we get along without definition. The United States did us the favor of saying who we are and tried to frighten the whole world. But they failed. So now, what ideological value do we see in the electoral process?

The people will ratify, in a bourgeois-type exercise, this Sandinismo, which is totalitarianism, which is Marxism, which is the end of freedom, which means the spread of Soviet-Cuban influence, which is everything that gobbles up little children.

Hence, we contend that the ballot must be headed by one banner, the red and black emblem, that it should represent a vote for Sandinismo. Now, just what is San-

“We see the elections as one more weapon of the revolution to bring its historical objectives gradually into reality. Therefore, we intend to take advantage of them. . . .”

dinismo, what has it been in the past and will actually be for a long time to come?

Sandinismo is not just militancy in the Sandinista Front. Sandinismo has been a revolutionary policy dominated by the Sandinista Front, because it has succeeded in maintaining a framework of national unity in order to move ahead in the transformation of this nation. We told our comrades that we would include on

our ballot non-Sandinista entrepreneurs, because our ballot would stand for the hegemony of the Sandinista Front which will also guarantee the new constitution and national unity. We will include everybody. That is the reality of our revolution in coping with imperialism.

The comrades raised the point, quite properly, that this might dilute the image, even the identity of the Socialist Party, contending that for all practical purposes it would not appear as a separate entity. We suggested two ways to retain that identity. First, for the deputies who belong to the Socialist Party (or representatives, I do not know what they will be called, I call them deputies because that is their name everywhere, and there is no need to fear the word), for the candidates to the assembly who belong to the Socialist Party, the candidates on the ballot, to run as Socialist Party candidates. Moreover, in individual campaigning that will have to be done on their behalf—because there will have to be individual campaign advertising for each one—identify them as members of the Socialist Party.

Constitutional Legality

But that is a short-term proposal. Here we get into a more substantive item, which in part was what led the political committee of the party to invite us here to talk.

“Our strategic allies tell us not to declare ourselves Marxist-Leninists, not to declare socialism.”

In November, a government will be elected in Nicaragua. Furthermore, an assembly will be elected that is going to write a new constitution, establish the political-judicial principles for progress in the construction of socialism. None of that is going to bring a stop to the U.S. war; that will go on, except that we will be given a new tool, for by then we will be legal.

The same thing is going to happen to us as to the couple who had been living together for 10 years and had a bunch of children, but it was not until they got married that their parents said, OK, you can come home to visit now. We are soon going to be legally married and gain a little more recognition. In that context, then, we ask, do we have strategic differences with the Socialist Party or does the Socialist Party have them with us? With that approach, we see that the matter is more substantive and we would ask our comrades whether the time has not come to make the Party of the Revolution stronger, to gradually form a single party. Why are we Communists going to be putting on different shirts if real, concrete socialism is being constructed through the strategy of power of the Sandinista Front?

We thus urge the party, for this is still not a decision for us to make (we have begun to discuss it), but urge you also to discuss the matter—whether we decide

after the elections to drop the fiction of a Marxist-Leninist Socialist Party on the one side and on the other those of the Sandinista Front who have not yet changed labels. The problem of identity in the electoral process becomes absolutely secondary. What is the difference whether you have separate status or not in the electoral process if it is already perfectly clear what the strategic goal is from the viewpoint of the forces governing the society. We can [not] talk with the Eli Altamirano people [Communist Party of Nicaragua (PCdeN)] because our ideas are not the same. Nor can we talk with the Popular Social Christian Party because, in another area, our ideas are different. We cannot reach an understanding, strategically speaking.

The Elections as a Weapon

We see the elections as one more weapon of the revolution to bring its historical objectives gradually into reality. Therefore, we intend to take advantage of them; first, to wage a political-ideological indoctrinary campaign among the people. We must raise the revolutionary consciousness of the people. Second, we are going to use the outcome to legitimize the revolution insofar as what it has done thus far, is doing now, and will continue to do in the future.

We are even trying to avoid changing appearances, let alone substance, in order to prevent confusion. Let the people vote for agrarian reform, which will continue. Let them vote for everything that has been done in the revolution, for literacy, adult education, confiscations,

“... we’ve talked about this being the first experience of building socialism with the dollars of capitalism.”

nationalization of the banks and foreign trade, free education, the Soviet and Cuban military advisers, the internationalism of the revolution. Let them vote for all that. That is the reality of our revolution and everything we have done has that dynamic behind it.

The Constitution as Legitimacy

The most important thing, once again, is to be able afterward to write a constitution legitimized by the exercise of the ballot, which will allow us to say, “Here is our law.” Up until now, with power exercised by decree, they come along and pressure us, even over a prisoner. The governing junta has issued some 100,000 decrees. A lot of ballpoint pens have been used for signing decrees.

There must be a continuing, stable legal framework. When we govern by decree, we are more subject to pressures, but when we have a legal framework nobody

is going to tell a country to change its constitution. This will give us more stability, for what is vital to the revolution. It is vital to survive and advance. It is vital for us to defeat the anti-Nicaraguan policy of the United States.

The war will not end on November 4 or on January 10. The war will continue with or without Reagan; it may take on other forms but it will go on. What we are going to do is arm ourselves better in order to continue to develop and to cope with it.

From that angle, what then is important and strategic for the revolution? To be able to unite all

“We must take advantage of the change offered by the elections to gain other positive benefits: the unity of the Marxist-Leninists of Nicaragua.”

forces and concentrate them on the primary considerations. We are a single force. Why use an activist of the Front and another of the Socialist Party on the same business? Why run an activist of the Front and another of the Socialist Party in the same district? We believe the elections compel us to think about these things.

We have a discussion pending with your political committee to work on three issues that will come up, as I understand it, in the meeting of the central committee. One, the idea of putting an end to all this artifice of pluralism—Socialist, Communist, Social Christian, Social Democratic parties, etc.—which has been useful thus far. That is over. And we are going to work to determine the direction of the revolution. That is one issue which would determine how we go into the elections, whether we run on the same ballot.

Even though still not valid, by common analysis, we insist that running together without alliances will have the least effect on the awareness of the masses. I still fail to understand what banner other than ours the Socialist Party could run under. If it becomes more radical it will be with Eli Altamirano; if less radical, with the Independent Liberal Party. That is our assessment.

The Previous Political Debate

Thus far in our discussions, held with their usual openness, we have no differences. Our strategic allies tell us not to declare ourselves Marxist-Leninists, not to declare socialism. Here and in Rome, we know, we’ve talked about this being the first experience of building socialism with the dollars of capitalism.

From that angle we do not see much difference. The other thing is that if, by your own decision, by the sovereign decision of the Socialist Party, you decide to run alone, we would then have to discuss the programs we are going to debate in order to avoid confusing the people.

We wanted to have that discussion with the Independent Liberal Party, but they actually believe they have 60% of the votes and have begun to place themselves in an integrated situation. . . . We have not yet started up our electoral machinery, we have other problems right now: patriotic military service [compulsory military conscription], the BIRs [reserve infantry battalions], the militias, the war. We have not begun to operate in terms of the internal political debate. This is causing a little friction, people who are reluctant but do not believe they are. . . . We still have not worked the *turbas* [Sandinista mobs], as they say, because it is not yet time.

Our job right now is to concentrate all our forces in the military effort, but later we will have to get into this as well. The important thing, if we are going to debate at all, is to clarify how we are going to debate. We believe that between the Nicaraguan Socialist Party and the Sandinista Front, strategically there is nothing to debate. We must take advantage of the change offered by the elections to gain other positive benefits: the unity of the Marxist-Leninists of Nicaragua.

Thank you.

Other References to Comandante Arce's Secret Speech

"Nicaraguan rebels credited with pressure for elections," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 9, 1984.

"Bayardo Arce dice una cosa en Caracas y otra en Managua," *El Diario de Caracas* (Caracas, Venezuela), October 4, 1984.

"A Secret Sandinist Speech," *Foreign Report*, Published by *The Economist*, August 23, 1984.

"A Secret Sandinist Speech (2)," *Foreign Report*, Published by *The Economist*, September 6, 1984.

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, "Nicaragua votes to abolish democracy," *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, December 9, 1984.

Juan Tamayo, "Elections Bothersome, Managua Official Says," *Miami Herald*, August 8, 1984.

"Managuas undemokratische Institutionalisierung," *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* (Zurich, Switzerland), September 27, 1984.

Joaquim Ibarz, "El Comandante Bayardo Arce afirma que se va a implantar el marxismo-leninismo y el partido unico," *La Vanguardia* (Barcelona, Spain), July 31, 1984.

Carlos Rangel, "The Double Lives of Nicaragua's Comandantes," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 1984.

Juan Tamayo, "Nicaraguan Decries Need for Vote," *Washington Post*, August 8, 1984.

Both Maurice Bishop's "Line of March" speech and the "72-Hour Document" are available on request from the Office of Public Diplomacy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

S/LPD, Room 6253
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Statement by Jimmy Hassan
National Religious Broadcasters Conference
Washington, D.C.,
February 3, 1986

Good afternoon. My name is Jimmy Hassan. I am the National Director of the Campus Crusade for Christ in Nicaragua. Before involving myself full-time in this ministry, I had, for most of my life, been involved in Christian work. Before becoming a full-time member of the Campus Crusade for Christ I practiced the profession of law. And for three years I was a judge in the criminal district in Masaya--this was after the triumph of the Sandinista Revolution.

October 31st of last year at about six in the morning, between fifteen and twenty soldiers of the Ministry of Interior arrived at my house. They knocked loudly on my door and forced me to open it. When I asked them why they had come, they responded that they had come to take me in for having violated the Law of Emergency. When I asked them the reason for this, they said that I had printed and was distributing counterrevolutionary literature. So I replied that perhaps they were mistaken because I was not affiliated with any political party and had no counterrevolutionary literature; I dedicated myself full-time to the preaching of the gospel and the literature that I had was a completely evangelistic type of literature. Could they please show me an example of counterrevolutionary literature that I had had printed. They took out copies of The Four Spiritual Laws [an official publication of CCC] and they said this was the proof that I was printing and distributing counterrevolutionary material.

They ordered me to accompany them, and so they took me in a patrol to the offices of the Campus Crusade in Managua and they proceeded to confiscate all the evangelistic material we had--about two thousand copies of The Four Spiritual Laws and other booklets that made reference to the Holy Spirit. This is the booklet that you can see when we finish [shows booklet]. Then they ordered me to take them to a commercial printing house where we had ordered six thousand printings of The Four Spiritual Laws. When we arrived at that printing press they confiscated all that material and they warned the owner of the press that if he ever again did printing for us or for any other evangelical organization, his printing house would be confiscated and he would be arrested for having violated the Law of Emergency.

From there they took me to the jail of the Ministry of Interior [El Chipote] where they had me for several hours under interrogation about the content of this material and why we produce material that alienated the people, that caused people to depart from the revolutionary ideas that they were communicating.

In the afternoon they told me that they were going to set me free. But Captain Charlotte Baltodano, who was at that time the chief of Mass Media for the Ministry of Interior, pointed her pistol against my chest and told me that if I told anyone in another country or within Nicaragua what had happened, the Ministry of Interior would hold me responsible and I would "be sorry that I had been born." But they themselves had given much publicity to the matter because they took me around many streets in Managua in their patrol car when they were confiscating the material. When I arrived in my house, there was a patrol car from the Ministry of Interior in front.

During the first hours of the evening various persons arrived to visit me. They had been told that to be involved with me was dangerous. At 11 pm, four officials of the Ministry of Interior arrived and they gave me a citation to appear the next day at the State Security at 8 in the morning.

Earlier than that hour I arrived at the offices of the State Security [El Chipote]. They made me go in a small room and at 8 o'clock sharp three officers of State Security came in and suddenly one of them exploded with violence and he said to me: "We are going to establish the rules of the game. First, to us you're a dog. We are going to destroy you. You're an enemy of the revolution. We are all powerful." They said if I wanted to save myself I had to confess to them that I was an agent of American imperialism, that I was a CIA agent, and that along with other Christian leaders I was conspiring to overthrow the Sandinista government. Since all that was absolutely false, I contradicted all their affirmations. They continued for the next two or three hours hurling charges at me; for example, that I preached to the young people and because of that they were leaving Marxism. Also that I was the enemy of the revolution because I was not a member of CEPAD [Evangelical Committee for Aid to Development].

After about two and a half hours of being in that room, they said there was nothing they could do with me and that they would keep me there indefinitely. Then they opened the door and a very tall officer entered the room. He asked them if I had cooperated. They told him no. Then he pulled out his pistol and put it up to my forehead. He said, "With me you're not going to play around." He pushed me and made me sit down again and he said, "Now you're going to confess immediately that you're an enemy of the revolution and agent of the CIA, and all the work that you do is a projection of American imperialism." So I said, "I am cooperating and speaking the truth. If I accepted a lie, that would be against you." He got up angrily and put the pistol again at my forehead. He pulled the trigger, but the gun was empty. Then he ordered me to stand up. They took me out of that room.

They put me in a jeep facing the floor, with my forehead on the floor, and then they took me to the State Security jail, located behind the Intercontinental Hotel. They took me out of

the jeep, making me go down to a basement. They made me walk through several hallways with my face down toward the floor. Then they took me to a particular hallway where there were a number of small rooms. They opened one door and put me inside. The room measured exactly two feet by two feet. There was no opening for air to enter. You could only stand up. And then constantly two or three officers would be opening the door. One would say to the other, "Should I kill him now or later." And the other would say, "No, later." They would slam the door shut.

About three hours later they took me to a room far away. It was a larger room and in this room they took my fingerprints. They measured me. They weighed me. They took photos from the front and the side. And then they ordered me to undress. But I told them I would not undress. They would have to undress me, if they wanted it done. Several times after pretending they were about to hit me, they took me out of the room. They put me back in the tiny cell, then they took me to another small room which was extremely cold--more or less what it would be like if you walk out of the door of the hotel, here; but not the way it feels today, but how it felt on Sunday. In Managua the temperature is very hot. For two hours they had me in that room. And then finally they said that they were going to begin proceedings to arrest my wife because I had not wanted to confess my links with the counterrevolutionaries.

Again they took me to the hallway of the two-by-two cell. They opened the door and inside the room there was one of the members of the Campus Crusade. They shut that door and opened another one. There was another staff member completely nude. And then they shut that door and opened another one, and in that room there was a young woman involved in the movement, completely nude. They shut the door and opened another one and put me in. About an hour later they took me out of the cell and back in the cold room. Here they told me that all my fellow staff members had confessed everything and that they didn't need my confession, but that they wanted to give me another opportunity. Because I kept insisting on my innocence, they took me back to the offices where they had me in the morning.

They put me in a jeep again and took me back to the Campus Crusade office. Just as we arrived they arrested five of the young men of the movement who were there praying at that time. At that point they began to remove all the files that we had in the office. They took films, projectors, seven projectors, fourteen films, photocopiers, all of the office equipment. All material that we had. The only thing that they didn't take was the desk and a coffee maker they said wasn't working. Afterwards they told me I was free, but I had to go to my house, and that I should not leave my house.

When I arrived in my house I found my wife; they had not arrested her. You see, when I was in the cold room the second

time I began to hear the crying of a woman and the officer told me that possibly she was my wife. So when I was set free there at my office I thought that my wife was arrested.

I began looking for the other staff members that had been arrested. While in jail I had seen the Director of the Bible Society, Ignacio Hernandez; the President of the Children's Evangelist Fellowship, Modesto Alvarez. We went to their houses. Only one of the staff members had been set free. At dawn the next day they set the others free. And then via the testimony of Benedicto, one of the young men that I had seen nude in the cell, I learned he had been interrogated about the material taken from the office, totally vandalistic. When they had him nude they had taken him to another cell where they had held a hose, wet him down, and then taken him to the cold room. Then, when he shivered, they hit him. At dawn they set him free. Next day Boanerges Mendoza was arrested. He is the pastor of the First Evangelical Church of Managua. On November 3rd they arrested Reverend Juan Simon Videa, Superintendent of the Assemblies of God in Nicaragua. They also arrested Saturnino Cerrato, the Vice-Superintendent of the Assemblies of God. The fourth was a day of rest. The fifth of November they arrested Reverend Felix Rosales, President of the Council of Pastors in Nicaragua [CNPEN]. The same day, in the course of celebrating an evangelistic campaign in the Western side of Managua, a group of armed people [turba] arrived and hit children and women. The police arrested the preacher Guillermo Sandoval. They took about 3 million cordobas [the Nicaraguan currency] and destroyed all the equipment in the campaign. On the eighth of November they arrested Guillermo Gustavo Sevilla, the President of the Council of pastors of Managua. And then they arrested Reverend Guillermo Ayala, President of the Pentecostal Baptists in Nicaragua. Next day they arrested Rolando Mena, President of the Evangelical radio station. And in the various departments or states in Nicaragua, they arrested several Evangelical pastors.

After my arrest, until December 10th, State Security visited all my relatives, my friends, my companions at work, and they interrogated all of them and they prohibited them to have any contact with me with the threats that they would take them to jail.

Briefly, this is my testimony. I would like to state that I am a privileged person because dozens of Nicaraguan Christians have passed through much more painful experiences than mine. They have suffered much more. Especially the churches in the countryside. And especially those that have very little communication with the city. I will be glad to answer any question related to the things I have shared with you this afternoon.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. There are rumors that CEPAD tried to help you. What did CEPAD do to help you?

A. As I said earlier, Captain Charlotte Baltodano told me that the Ministry of Interior would make sure that I was sorry I had been born if I had declared what I had experienced that day. So this is my situation in Nicaragua. I was under that threat. CEPAD did absolutely nothing to help me.

Q. Are you going back to Nicaragua, or are you planning on staying in the United States?

A. I have no plans of staying in the United States. I am evaluating my future in the light of the experience I have lived.

Q. What is it that you preach that would encourage the young to repudiate the revolution.

A. Lieutenant Mendez said to me after my second day of arrest that my problem was that I preached and that my message caused the young to depart from Marxism and that this will never again be allowed in Nicaragua. What I preach in Nicaragua, and what I preach anywhere in the world where I am, is basically what's contained in this booklet: God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. Man is sinful, separated from God. Jesus Christ is the only provision for man's salvation. We must receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This is the only message I have preached in Nicaragua. Whatever interpretation of this message depends on what you hear, but I consider the message of Jesus Christ the most revolutionary message.

Q. Have you ever addressed the issue of the military service?

A. Never have I spoken in Nicaragua, nor in any other place, against the military service. I have always limited myself to preaching the gospel in the evangelical churches in Nicaragua. Only the gospel is preached because we believe it is the power of God for everyone who believes. We haven't preached against any law of the Sandinista government. Nor, in any sense of the word, against the government.

Q. Mr. Hassan, after the experiences that you have had, how has this affected you about the war being waged by the contras?

A. When one of the officers at State Security told me that I could go to my house, I said to him I wanted to leave it clear that as a Christian I loved him and I wanted him to know Christ. I gave him three books that had been left. And this is the same point of view that I have at this moment. We love all Nicaraguans. All Nicaraguans need to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and that every man needs Christ and evidently without Christ one has no hope. I consider myself an Ambassador of Christ of all Nicaraguans.

Q. I have personally spoken to one of the gentlemen that you mentioned here, along with other Nicaraguans, and they have reported to me numerous assassinations of both evangelical pastors and membership of the churches in Nicaragua. Is this something that Mr. Hassan has information about? Can he confirm any of this?

A. You must understand that I come from a country where the information is totally censored. For this reason, all the information that I know and have about Nicaragua comes from what the government wants Nicaraguans to know. Or is received under very difficult circumstances. I think that here in this city there are people who come from Nicaragua, as, for example, Reverend Prudencio Baltodano who lived in the mountains. He can give you a testimony nearer to the one I have given.

Q. What is the general feeling of the average Nicaraguans for or against the Freedom Fighters?

A. As I responded earlier. The information that we are able to have in Nicaragua is totally censored. Even a simple conversation can carry very great consequences for our security. I left recently Nicaragua and I am unable to evaluate a situation that would require knowing a great deal from freely gathered information.

Q. Have you met in an official capacity with any member of the U.S. government since you've been here?

A. Neither officially nor unofficially.

Q. My name is David Jessup, I am a member of the board of the Institute for Religion and Democracy and also a member of the United Methodist Church. There is a group of four United Methodist missionaries in Nicaragua, sustained by contributions from our denomination. They recently wrote a letter which was reported partly in The Washington Post today. Their letter, in essence, takes the point of view of the Nicaraguan government. It accuses your group of, in fact, in essence, of being agents of the CIA. It accuses the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Nicaragua, and this is a direct quote, "They have abused their freedoms of religion and speech to actively work in support of the counterrevolution." And finally it quotes CEPAD as saying you who were arrested suffered no torture. Members of our group will have a response to this letter on Wednesday. We find it very shameful. I would like to ask if you are aware that this letter had been written and if you have any response to this group of U.S. missionaries living in Nicaragua.

A. In the first place I'd like to make clear that I am not from the CIA nor from the KGB. I am with neither the left nor the right. I am not with those in the front or in the back. Neither with those in the center; neither with those that are above or below. I am in a different dimension. I am with Christ. Whatever charge they make against me and the leaders

of the Crusade in Nicaragua, about having any ties with any government or organization, will have the same answer. I am unable to evaluate the motives for why they would give this information. But I know that men are capable of producing any idea--even what this letter has to say.

Q. Is there any information in Nicaragua about the contras.

A. I haven't had any relation with the people who are fighting against the Sandinista government. The information--the press, radio, television, and other mass media--is completely controlled, censored by the government. That's what I've said. Let me respond to something that was left in the air, that I had not been tortured, only arrested. According to the Vice Minister of Interior, Omar Cabezas, he said that we had not been tortured--only that we had had a pleasant conversation with State Security agents. I pray that no Nicaraguan will have another of these cordial chats.

Q. From your experiences in Nicaragua as a born-again Christian, should Christians in Nicaragua and around the world take a stand against the Marxist government in Nicaragua through nonviolent resistance or through the violent counterrevolution?

A. I think that the Christian needs to act and I am making a call to the Christian Church to place themselves alongside the church in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan church needs at this time to know that they are not alone. And that they can count on the solidarity of the church in the entire world, including here in the U.S. This is to say that you as Christian communicators have in your hands the possibility to transmit to the churches here in the United States the necessity--grave and urgent--that exists in Nicaragua, and the need for help that the church in Nicaragua has today.

Q. What kind of help?

A. In the first place, the Nicaraguan government, I believe, I want them to know that the Christians in Nicaragua are not some isolated group, but that we are part of a worldwide body and that this body is alongside of its brothers in Nicaragua. I urge the American churches and churches in the entire world to write to the Nicaraguan government. In this city there should be a Nicaraguan embassy and in the capitals of the whole world. I think a first step would be to write the Nicaraguan government letting them know that the church in the world has its eyes placed on the church in Nicaragua--that the liberty, the integrity, the well-being of the Nicaraguan church is being observed by the entire world and that no single violation of the liberty of worship, liberty of conscience, liberty of communication, to move about, will be overlooked because the church is taking it into account. On the other hand, the situation in Nicaragua is such that not only does the government need to know that the violations will not be

overlooked, but also that the church in Nicaragua know that all her brothers and sisters are interested.

Q. I would like to know how many evangelicals are in Nicaragua. All the persons that you mentioned, are they free or are they still in prison? How do you see the situation of the church in Nicaragua? Is there underground worship or underground churches?

A. Thirteen percent of the Nicaraguan population are evangelical Christians. All the names that I mentioned are out of jail, but their liberty is limited because every movement that they make is followed by State Security. For example, one of the most prominent leaders in Managua is constantly detained in the streets, and they don't let him participate in any meeting. The same thing happened with me. State Security is visiting every Christian leader daily to interrogate them. So I say that they are out of jail, but without the liberty that they should have.

If there is an underground church, it would necessarily be secret. But I know that the Christian church is strong, will resist any circumstance whatever. We are not depending on the circumstances, because we are in the hands of God.

Vol. 132

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1986

No. 16

Congressional Record



United States
of America

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 99th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

United States
Government
Printing Office

SUPERINTENDENT
OF DOCUMENTS
Washington, DC 20402

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for private use, \$300

SECOND CLASS NEWSPAPER

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Government Printing Office
(USPS 087-390)

ent, coequal and separate. But today there are very few people who would say that the President was not supreme and all-powerful. Let me say that Paul Volcker is far more powerful, the way things are today, than any President of the United States or the Congress itself.

The Congress is the heart of the matter. The Congress, through actions, founded such an entity as the Federal Reserve Board. The Congress through inaction has let it get beyond supervision and control and accountability. But I think that the point, even though it is late, it is never too late to correct an evil or begin thereabouts on that job, and I think we should. I thought that perhaps after one of these hearings in which the Reserve Chairman would come before the committee there would be some semblance of reaction and movement in the midst of the Congress. I regret to see none.

I say that we cannot sell our tremendous heritage for this temporary mess of pottage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] is recognized for 60 minutes.

[Mr. GINGRICH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

H.R. 4130, CORRECTING AN ESTIMATING ERROR ON THE PART OF THE VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION AND THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LAKE TUSCALOOSA PRESERVATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. SHELBY] is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. Speaker, there are two subjects that I would like to discuss today here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt you and the rest of my colleagues have been hearing from veterans throughout the country inquiring about the impending shutdown of the VA's Home Loan Guaranty Program. The committee has also heard from mortgage bankers, realtors, and homebuilders about the inability of veterans to obtain VA guaranteed loans after April 1.

This serious problem results from the fact that the Veterans' Administration and the Office of Management and Budget grossly underestimated the number of loans that would be initiated this current fiscal year due to lower interest rates.

Today, the full committee is reporting to the House H.R. 4130 to correct this estimation error.

I wanted to let my colleagues know so that when the bill is scheduled hopefully early next week, we will be able to resolve this matter so that veterans throughout the country will be able to continue to receive VA guaran-

teed home loans without severe restrictions.

I am also happy to report to my colleagues that the Senate is moving an identical bill, and I am hopeful that this President will have the bill on his desk in early March.

I appreciate the cooperation of the distinguished chairman of the committee, Mr. MONTGOMERY, and the ranking minority member, Mr. HAMMER-SCHMIDT, for moving so quickly to report this bill.

Mr. Speaker, the other subject that I would like to address today is the Lake Tuscaloosa Preservation Act.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Lake Tuscaloosa Preservation Act, a bill designed to protect Lake Tuscaloosa in my home county and the people there who benefit from it.

The purpose of the legislation is to prohibit the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [FERC] from issuing a preliminary permit, exemption, or license for the construction of a hydroelectric project at the dam on Lake Tuscaloosa in Tuscaloosa County, AL. The legislation is intended to be narrow in scope and nonprejudicial in nature. I am introducing this bill in response to unified and intense local concerns of my individual constituents and of the city of Tuscaloosa.

The dam impounding Lake Tuscaloosa was built in 1971 so that a water supply for west Alabama, including Tuscaloosa, would be assured. Lake Tuscaloosa is 5,885 acres in size and 27.7 miles in length. The dam itself is 1,280 feet long and 125 feet high. The dam and lake are wholly owned by the city of Tuscaloosa. Because the lake is located within the city limits, a substantial number of primary residences, as well as some second homes, have been constructed around or near the lake. Many residents of west Alabama use the lake for recreational purposes.

After the passage of the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 and during the period of high energy costs in that decade, the city of Tuscaloosa conducted a study of the financial feasibility of constructing a hydroelectric facility on the Lake Tuscaloosa Dam. The report indicated that the project was marginal at best unless the water level was drawn down to an unacceptably low level during a large part of the year. A drawdown of more than 2 feet would make many public and private dock facilities unusable. Further, a drawdown of as much as 15 feet during some parts of the year might be necessary for substantial economic benefit to be derived from the project's operation. Because the project would not be feasible on a cost-benefit basis, the city rejected the idea of constructing a hydroelectric project at Lake Tuscaloosa.

However, an outside party headquartered far outside Alabama stimulated intense local concern when it made a development proposal to the FERC several years ago. Although the FERC rejected its preliminary permit appli-

cation, my constituents remain concerned about an outside party obtaining permission to construct a hydroelectric project at Lake Tuscaloosa, and any resulting control over the use of their lake.

In order to ensure local control of a Lake Tuscaloosa hydro project, if the FERC were to issue such a license, the city of Tuscaloosa is currently pursuing its own preliminary permit application for the site. However, several Tuscaloosa elected officials have requested this legislative measure so that the city will not have to pursue its application any further. Local opposition to hydroelectric development at Lake Tuscaloosa is united and firm. It ranges from the mayor and city council members to individuals who have organized the Concerned Citizens for Lake Tuscaloosa.

As you know from my other legislative initiatives, I am a proponent of hydroelectric energy development. The power produced by falling water is our cheapest and cleanest energy source. However, because of the infeasibility of this particular project and the united local opposition, I firmly believe that hydroelectric development at Lake Tuscaloosa should clearly be prohibited. We should listen to the people who live near the lake and are benefited or harmed by development there.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their attention to this matter which is so important to my constituents and urge their support of the Lake Tuscaloosa Preservation Act.

CENTRAL AMERICANS SUPPORT U.S. POLICY

[Withheld From Record of Wednesday, February 13, 1986]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, U.S. policy toward Central America has been one of most controversial aspects of the Reagan administration. At various times, public opinion in this country has been divided on our policies in Central America. The same has been true of Central American public opinion.

The Reagan administration has been successful in promoting democratic institutions in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, and the vast majority support our efforts to help these fledgling democracies survive.

However, Nicaragua remains another story. After 6½ years, that country remains in a state of civil war, with the prospects for peace, respect for human rights, and the establishment of democratic institutions no nearer today than under the Somoza regime. This state of affairs was brought on Nicaragua by the Sandinistas, who betrayed the people's anti-Somoza revo-

lution to implement their Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

During this session, as we debate the question of whether to continue assisting the Nicaraguan Democratic resistance, it is important for us to take into account the opinions of those in Central America who are on the frontline of Democracy's march.

Recently, I came across a public opinion poll conducted by Interdisciplinary Consultants on Development, Gallup Poll's Costa Rican affiliate. This poll was conducted between June and November 1985, in Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. In each country, about 800 people were interviewed; those polled were based on representative samples of adults who had completed at least 1 year of secondary school.

This poll's importance should not be understated. During the past 2 to 3 years, opponents of aid to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance have argued that United States policy is not supported by the people of Central America. This Gallup poll refutes that assertion. U.S. policies are supported by Central American.

Before going through the poll in depth, here are some of the major findings:

Majorities approve of United States military aid to El Salvador, and the victory of President Duarte's government over the Communist guerrillas is favored by at least 6 to 10 in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala.

Nine out of 10 in Costa Rica and Honduras see Nicaragua—not the United States—as a military threat.

Over 75 percent of those interviewed trust the United States to come to their rescue if attacked.

The United States military presence in the region is seen favorably. In Costa Rica, 8 in 10 approve of the presence of our 20 military advisers, and, in Honduras, the same proportion approves of joint United States-Honduras military maneuvers.

In each country, at least 60 percent say the United States interferes in Central America. But, when asked further, nearly 70 percent in each country describes this interference as being positive. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua are together named as interfering more often than the United States, and their interference is unanimously characterized as negative.

As for the elections in El Salvador and Nicaragua, Central Americans generally hold the Salvadoran elections to have been honest, while those in Nicaragua are seen as dishonest.

And, finally, the issue of United States aid to the Nicaraguan opposition, the Contras, three-fourths of those interviewed in Costa Rica approve of our assistance, while in the other countries, aid is favored 2 to 1.

Now I would like to review some of the specific data in greater detail.

When asked, "In your opinion, which country, if any, is a military

threat to our country," The respondents named Nicaragua as the first military threat by 87 percent in Costa Rica, 79 percent in Honduras, 30 percent in Guatemala, and 56 percent in El Salvador. Overall, Nicaragua was named as one of two military threats by 92 percent in Costa Rica, 89 percent in Honduras, 48 percent in Guatemala, and 67 percent in El Salvador.

Cuba was mentioned as the first military threat by 2 percent in Costa Rica and Honduras, 21 percent in Guatemala, and 11 percent in El Salvador. As one of two threats mentioned, however, Cuba was named by 25 percent in Costa Rica, 17 percent in Honduras, 41 percent in Guatemala, and 38 percent in El Salvador.

The Soviet Union was seen as a threat by a total of 17 percent in Costa Rica, 4 percent in Honduras, 41 percent in Guatemala, and 38 percent in El Salvador.

Compare this with the United States, which was mentioned as a threat by a total of 4 percent in Costa Rica, 2 percent in Honduras, 5 percent in Guatemala, and 5 percent in El Salvador.

When asked which country "would come to our aid immediately, if we were attacked," 88 percent in Costa Rica, 94 percent in Honduras, 77 percent in Guatemala, and 80 percent in El Salvador named the United States as the country which come to their rescue.

And what about Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Soviet Union? Less than 0.5 percent mentioned Cuba and Nicaragua in Costa Rica, Honduras, or Guatemala, and 1 percent in El Salvador named all three countries as coming to their aid.

The responses to the question of who is trying to weaken their government went like this: Nicaragua was named by a total of 70 percent in Costa Rica, 63 percent in Honduras, 27 percent in Guatemala, and 52 percent in El Salvador. The total for Cuba was 28 percent each in Costa Rica and Honduras, 31 percent in Guatemala, and 38 percent in El Salvador. And the total for the Soviet Union was 17 percent in Costa Rica, 13 percent in Honduras, 15 percent in Guatemala, and 18 percent in El Salvador. The United States was mentioned by a total of 5, 3, 9, and 3 percent, respectively.

Which government is trying to keep their government stable? Nicaragua was mentioned less than 0.5 percent in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala, and 1 percent in El Salvador as attempting to keep their government stable. The same percentages went to Cuba and the Soviet Union. The United States, however, was mentioned as working to keep their government stable: Total responses were 76 percent in Costa Rica, 89 percent in Honduras, 58 percent in Guatemala, and 82 percent in El Salvador.

Much the same percentage followed for the question, "which country is helping us be better prepared to

defend ourselves." The United States was named by a total of 84 percent in Costa Rica, 97 percent in Honduras, 47 percent in Guatemala, and 84 percent in El Salvador. Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviet Union were named by less than 1 percent in all four countries.

The question "how likely is it that another country will attack us in the next few years?" Was answered as "very likely" or "fairly likely" by 65 percent in Costa Rica, 74 percent in Honduras, 36 percent in Guatemala, and 41 percent in El Salvador. Those who answer that this was "little likely" or "not at all likely" was 34 percent in Costa Rica, 25 percent in Honduras, 62 percent in Guatemala, and 54 percent in El Salvador.

It should be noted that those interviewed in the two countries sharing the longest border with Nicaragua—Costa Rica and Honduras—believe an attack likely in the next few years. This is highlighted by the question, "which country is the one that could attack?" Nicaragua was named by 64 percent in Costa Rica, 67 percent in Honduras, 16 percent in Guatemala, and 30 percent in El Salvador.

When queried about which country they believed was "most responsible for creating conditions that gave rise to war in Central America," Nicaragua was the first country mentioned by 33 percent in Costa Rica, 17 percent in Honduras, 18 percent in Guatemala, and 14 percent in El Salvador. As one of two countries responsible, 32 percent in Costa Rica, 21 percent in Honduras, 30 percent in Guatemala, and 24 percent in El Salvador named Nicaragua. The total for Cuba was 32 percent in Costa Rica, 42 percent in Honduras, 44 percent in Guatemala, and 39 percent in El Salvador. The total for the Soviet Union was 26, 30, 23, and 14 percent, respectively.

The United States was mentioned as the first choice creating war conditions by 10 percent in Costa Rica, 14 percent in Honduras, 12 percent in Guatemala, and 6 percent in El Salvador.

They were then asked, "In what way is [the country mentioned] responsible for conditions giving rise to war in Central America?" For Cuba, "promoting communist ideology" was the response of 12 percent in Costa Rica, 15 percent in Honduras, 13 percent in Guatemala, and 11 percent in El Salvador. Other answers were "aiding guerrilla movements," "gives Nicaragua aid, arms, training," and "sends arms to Central America."

Respondents in Costa Rica, for example, said Nicaragua "exports communism," 11 percent; "aids guerrilla movements in Central America," 10 percent; "revolution is expansionist," 7 percent; and "deceived people about the revolution," 5 percent. Other categories came to 6 percent.

Next, those interviewed were asked their general opinion of various countries. For instance, Colombia was men-

tioned as "very favorable" or "somewhat favorable" by 81 percent in Costa Rica, 86 percent in Honduras, 77 percent in Guatemala, and 84 percent in El Salvador.

Nicaragua and Cuba, however, were overwhelmingly mentioned unfavorably—96 percent in Costa Rica, 94 percent in Honduras, 86 percent in Guatemala and El Salvador had a "somewhat unfavorable" or "very unfavorable" opinion of Nicaragua. The negative opinions also held for Cuba, which was mentioned unfavorably by 92 percent in Costa Rica and Honduras, 87 percent in Guatemala, and 83 percent in El Salvador.

The United States, however, was held in a favorable light—95 percent in Costa Rica, 92 percent in Honduras, 86 percent in Guatemala, and 93 percent in El Salvador responded that they had favorable opinions of the United States.

Respondents were then asked to describe the relations between their country and various others. They were asked to describe relations as being very good, somewhat good, not very good, or not at all good. Relations with Nicaragua were described as not very good or not at all good by 98 percent in Costa Rica, 94 percent in Honduras, 74 percent in Guatemala, and 90 percent in El Salvador.

Respondents were asked, "What do you think of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua—do you have a favorable opinion, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion * * *?"

Ninety-three percent in Costa Rica, 84 percent in Honduras, 78 percent in Guatemala, and 68 percent in El Salvador had either a somewhat unfavorable or a very unfavorable opinion of the Sandinista government.

As for the November 1984 Nicaragua elections, interviewees were asked, first, how much they had heard about these elections and, second, what their opinion of the elections was. The percentage of those saying the elections were very honest or fairly honest against those saying the elections were somewhat dishonest or very dishonest was: 5 to 86 percent in Costa Rica, 14 to 64 percent in Honduras, 19 to 48 percent in Guatemala, and 5 to 51 percent in El Salvador.

What is interesting is that the Costa Rica, Central America's oldest democracy, 73 percent thought the Nicaraguan election was "very dishonest."

Interviewees were asked if they knew who was the current President of Nicaragua. Majorities in each country named Daniel Ortega.

They were then queried as to whether they thought the Sandinista Government represents the majority of the Nicaraguans or a minority. No one answered that the Sandinistas represented the majority of Nicaraguans. For example, Costa Ricans described the minority as "the military," 19 percent; "the Sandinistas," 18 percent; "Communists," 16 percent; "leaders—

dirigentes," 14 percent; "well to do," 5 percent; "the people—pueblo," 4 percent; and unspecified or others, 16 percent.

When asked about whether the Sandinista Government had become more or less democratic, 52 percent in Costa Rica, 42 percent in Honduras, 37 percent in Guatemala, and 27 percent in El Salvador answered that the Sandinistas have become "less democratic." Another 42, 38, 39, and 42 percent, respectively, said the Sandinistas have not changed much.

Following this, they were asked questions about the right of Nicaraguans to "say openly and freely what they think about their government"; about Sandinista protection of human rights; and about Sandinista treatment of the Nicaraguan people.

Ninety-six percent in Costa Rica, 80 percent in Honduras, 72 percent in Guatemala, and 61 percent in El Salvador answered that Nicaraguans cannot speak very freely or not at all freely. As for the protection of human rights, 92 percent in Costa Rica, 72 percent in Honduras, 64 percent in Guatemala, and 54 percent in El Salvador said the Sandinistas are making little or no effort to protect human rights.

And, in answer to the question, "how does the government of Nicaragua treat the people," 93 percent in Costa Rica, 80 percent in Honduras, 65 percent in Guatemala, and 52 percent in El Salvador replied that the treatment was somewhat or very unjust. In Costa Rica, 81 percent thought the Sandinista treatment of the Nicaraguan people was "very unjust."

Next the questions turned to Cuba. Eighty-seven percent in Costa Rica, 89 percent in Honduras, 78 percent in Guatemala and 73 percent in El Salvador believe Cuba is a threat to Central America.

Larger majorities think Cuba is acting as a tool for the Soviet Union: Eighty-nine percent in Costa Rica, 92 percent in Honduras, 83 percent in Guatemala, and 76 percent in El Salvador.

As for Nicaragua acting as an instrument of Cuba and of the Soviet Union, 93 percent in Costa Rica and Honduras, 80 percent in Guatemala, and 78 percent in El Salvador agreed that Nicaragua was a Soviet-Cuban tool.

On whether it was better for El Salvador if government forces won the war, majorities in Costa Rica, 59 percent; Honduras, 71 percent; and Guatemala, 69 percent, agreed. However, a fewer number, 46 percent in Costa Rica, 59 percent in Honduras, and 50 percent in Guatemala, thought the government forces were winning the war.

Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Soviet Union were named as the countries giving military aid to the Salvadoran guerrillas. Cuba was mentioned more often in Costa Rica, 53 percent; Honduras, 55 percent; and Guatemala, 60 percent; than Nicaragua, which was

mentioned 40, 42, and 47 percent, respectively. In El Salvador, Nicaragua was given by 77 percent of those interviewed, Cuba by 70 percent, while the Soviet Union was named by 43 percent.

The United States was named most often as the country giving help to the Salvador government. By 59 percent in Costa Rica, 71 percent in Honduras, 75 percent in Guatemala, and 92 percent in El Salvador. When asked if they strongly or somewhat approved of United States military aid to El Salvador, 59 percent approved in Costa Rica, 69 percent in Honduras, 66 percent in Guatemala, and 77 percent in El Salvador. Those disapproving were 17 percent in Costa Rica, 11 percent in Honduras, 18 percent in Guatemala, and 13 percent in El Salvador.

Here's how they responded when asked whether there would or would not be war in El Salvador without Cuba and Nicaragua: By 55 percent in Costa Rica, 78 percent in Honduras, 59 percent in Guatemala, and 46 percent in El Salvador said there would be no war without Cuba and Nicaragua. 41, 19, 35, and 37 percent, respectively, said, "yes, there would be war without Cuba and Nicaragua."

When asked about the Soviet Union's role in armed conflicts in Central America, 93 percent in Costa Rica said the Soviets definitely or probably foment conflicts, while 92 percent in Honduras, 86 percent in Guatemala, and 79 percent in El Salvador agreed with this. Those saying that the Soviets probably do not or definitely do not foment conflicts was 4 percent in Costa Rica, 5 percent in Honduras, 9 percent in Guatemala, and 3 percent in El Salvador.

As for assistance to the Nicaraguan "Contras," majorities approve of aiding them. Responding that they approve strongly or somewhat strongly were 69 percent in Costa Rica, 55 percent in Honduras, 54 percent in Guatemala, and 52 percent in El Salvador. Those disapproving strongly or somewhat strongly were 24, 25, 22, and 19 percent, respectively.

How do they feel about U.S. treatment of their country? Answering very fair or somewhat fair was 89 percent in Costa Rica, 86 percent in Honduras, 63 percent in Guatemala, and 63 percent in El Salvador. One percent in Costa Rica and Honduras, 2 percent in Guatemala, and 12 percent in El Salvador said we treated them very unfair or somewhat unfair.

Mr. Speaker, what this survey shows is that Central Americans understand the threat Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviet Union pose to their future. They also understand that the United States is working to help them surmount their problem. When we debate the issue of continued United States assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance we should keep in mind that the people of Central America support us.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST TO CONGRESS ON AID
TO THE NICARAGUAN DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE

President Reagan has asked Congress for authority to transfer \$100 million of FY 1986 Defense Department funds for additional assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. This request gives the President the resources needed to encourage a negotiated, democratic outcome to the conflicts engendered by the Sandinistas.

Of the \$100 million:

- o 25 percent to become available immediately and the remainder released in 15 percent increments every ninety days upon the submission of reports to Congress;
- o \$30 million is reserved for humanitarian aid, including \$3 million solely for human rights programs; the Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office (NHAO) would administer.
- o \$70 million to be allocated as the President deems appropriate, through any agencies he desires, subject to normal Congressional oversight procedures. Approval of the request would satisfy statutory requirements regarding involvement of DOD and CIA in carrying out the program.

The President's request undertakes that:

- o concrete Sandinista responses to central U.S. concerns (Soviet/Cuban ties, military build-up, support for subversion, internal repression, and refusal to negotiate in good faith) will be addressed through positive economic, political, and diplomatic measures in consultation with Congress;
- o the United States will engage in talks with the Sandinistas simultaneously with internal dialogue as proposed by UNO;
- o our actions will not involve use of force by the United States; are consistent with our right to protect our security and assist our allies, and with our right to protect our security and assist our allies, and with our support for a comprehensive verifiable Contadora agreement;
- o the administration will report to the Congress every 90 days on diplomatic efforts, human rights, and the use of appropriated funds.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 25, 1986

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

When the Congress approved humanitarian assistance for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance last year, it assured the survival of those fighting for democracy in Nicaragua. However, this assistance has not been sufficient to bring about changes in the policies of the communist Government of Nicaragua that would make possible a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Central America and end Nicaragua's aggression against our allies there.

Determinations

Negotiations based on the Contadora Document of Objectives of September 9, 1983, have failed to produce an agreement, and other trade and economic measures have failed to resolve the conflict. At the same time, the legislation for humanitarian assistance is about to expire. If no further action is taken, it is clear that the Nicaraguan communists will steadily intensify their efforts to crush all opposition to their tyranny, consolidating their ability to use Nicaragua, in concert with their Soviet-block patrons, as a base for further intimidating the democratic nations of Central America and spreading subversion and terrorism in our hemisphere.

In these circumstances, the laws providing for humanitarian assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance permit me to request authority to provide additional assistance, and specify expedited procedures for action by the Congress on my request. I am transmitting herewith a formal request for such additional assistance. As required by law, I have consulted with the Congress in formulating this request.

Why Negotiations and Other Measures Have Failed

In reports that I transmitted to the Congress in November 1985 and February 1986, I described the continued efforts by the United States to promote a negotiated settlement in Central America and in Nicaragua based on the Contadora Document of Objectives. Our persistent efforts to achieve a peaceful solution have failed to resolve the conflict because Nicaragua has continued to reject meaningful negotiations. Communist attempts to circumvent and subvert Contadora, apparent from the beginning of the negotiating process, have left a clear trail of lost opportunities for peaceful reconciliation. In most recent months, Nicaragua has repeatedly frustrated negotiations aimed at producing a final, comprehensive Contadora treaty.

Recent Contadora meetings to discuss a comprehensive, verifiable regional agreement have been inconclusive largely due to Nicaraguan intransigence on key issues. Following two rounds of talks in October, on November 11, 1985, Nicaragua made public a letter from President Ortega to the Contadora Group and Support Group governments setting forth objections to the September 12, 1985, draft agreement tabled by the Contadora Group governments. Nicaragua argued that it could not assume the obligations of a Contadora agreement unless it reached a prior accommodation with the United States.

more

(OVER)

On December 3, President Ortega formally requested a suspension in Contadora negotiations until May 1986, that is until after the governments to be elected in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala will have been installed. Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala, however, joined 25 other OAS member states in voting for a resolution at the OAS General Assembly in Cartagena that urged continuation of the Contadora negotiations. Of all OAS members, only one member -- Nicaragua -- voted against that resolution. Subsequently, only Nicaragua refused to resume Contadora talks -- a major reason why the United Nations General Assembly failed to achieve consensus on a resolution of support for the Contadora process.

On January 12, the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and Support Group, meeting at Caraballeda, Venezuela, issued a joint statement intended to revitalize the process. The Foreign Ministers of the five Central American states, including Nicaragua, signed the "Declaration of Guatemala" on January 15, endorsing the Caraballeda message. Afterwards, the Government of Nicaragua issued a press communique which, although claiming "total adherence" to the Caraballeda message, characterized the various actions suggested in the Caraballeda message as prerequisites to resumption of Contadora negotiations. This communique also reaffirmed the Nicaraguan position of November 11 objecting to the Contadora draft agreement.

On February 5, President Ortega repeated this position in his speech to the Third Cuban Communist Party Congress in Havana noting that "the peace document that the Contadora Group submitted in September 1985 is unacceptable to Nicaragua."

On February 10, Secretary of State Shultz met with the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and Support Group. The Secretary welcomed the good offices of the two Contadora groups to promote national reconciliation as expressed in the Caraballeda message, and offered to resume bilateral talks with Nicaragua simultaneously with the beginning of Sandinista dialogue with the democratic resistance. Secretary Shultz also informed the Foreign Ministers that the United States was prepared to take further steps in response to changes in Nicaraguan behavior on the four key issues of concern -- support of subversion, the Cuban/Soviet presence, the military buildup, and internal repression. He pointed out that a dialogue and ceasefire would mean that cessation of the application of force and the process of national reconciliation would go forward at the same time. My Special Envoy, Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman, began consultation with the Contadora and Support Group governments the week of February 16 on this initiative.

Meanwhile, the Sandinistas have rejected a February 6 proposal from opposition political parties in Nicaragua for suspension of hostilities, an effective general amnesty law for reconciliation of all Nicaraguans, a repeal of the state of emergency, an agreement for the establishment and observance of a new electoral process, effective fulfillment of Nicaragua's commitments for democratization and international assistance in the implementation of these demands. Also, another Contadora negotiating session held February 14-15 was inconclusive because of continued Nicaraguan refusal to address the remaining issues to be resolved in the current Contadora draft agreement.

more

Description of Request

The request transmitted herewith asks your approval for the transfer of \$100,000,000 from funds already appropriated for the Department of Defense so that those funds would also be available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. I am requesting this transfer authority, in lieu of a supplemental appropriation, because I regard this request as a matter of high priority for the national security of the United States. Including a proposal for additional funds in this request would have diverted attention from the basic national security issues here involved. However, the resulting reduction in the funds available for the Department of Defense, if not remedied, will inevitably impair ongoing efforts to restore and maintain the readiness of the armed forces. This impairment in defense readiness will be addressed separately.

The \$100,000,000 to be made available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance would include funds that have been appropriated to remain available for obligation beyond September 30, 1986. Obligations will be made on an incremental basis, with 25 percent available when the request is approved and an additional 15 percent to become available at 90-day intervals as reports are provided to the Congress on actions to achieve a resolution of the conflict in Central America. However, no obligations may be incurred after September 30, 1987.

Of the \$100,000,000, \$30,000,000 will be for a program of humanitarian assistance administered by the present Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office, including \$3,000,000 exclusively for strengthening the observance and advancement of human rights. This emphasis on human rights reflects a determination that human rights must be respected. As in our support for democracy elsewhere, human rights training and assistance can be expected to achieve significant positive results.

Should a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America be achieved during the period these funds remain available, the remaining funds could then be used for assistance to Central American countries, including Nicaragua, for relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

Approval of this request will permit me to use any department or agency in the Executive Branch, including agencies involved in intelligence activities, in carrying out programs and activities to assist the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. The statutory requirements for congressional approval of the use of such agencies, as well as statutes requiring prior authorization for the use of appropriated funds will be satisfied by the approval of my request.

Finally, the request contains a series of undertakings by me, which I am asking the Congress to accept. These undertakings, which were developed in consultations with the Congress, are intended to assure that a clear and explicit understanding exists between the Executive and Legislative Branches as to the purposes of the requested assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and United States objectives in Central America.

In particular, I am undertaking in this request:

more

(OVER)

-- That United States policy toward Nicaragua will be based on Nicaragua's responsiveness to our well-known concerns about the Government of Nicaragua's close military and security ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union, its military buildup, its unlawful support for subversion and terrorism, its internal repression, and its refusal to negotiate in good faith with its neighbors or its own people;

-- That, in addition to support for the democratic resistance, the United States will rely on economic, political and diplomatic measures to address these concerns. In this regard, I am publicly affirming two offers that I have previously made through diplomatic channels in an effort to obtain a peaceful resolution of the conflict. First, we will engage in formal bilateral discussions with the Nicaraguan Government, to commence simultaneously with a church-mediated national dialogue in Nicaragua, as has been proposed by the United Nicaraguan Opposition. Second, we will take other positive actions in response to Nicaraguan steps toward meeting our concerns.

In determining how to implement these offers, I will consult with the Congress and will be guided by the observable behavior of the Government of Nicaragua. We will not be satisfied with expressions of intent. But we will respond to changes of behavior in areas such as freedom of the press and religion, reductions of foreign arms and military personnel, respect for a cease-fire, and cessation of support for insurgents and terrorists.

My request affirms that our actions are consistent with our right to defend ourselves and assist our allies, and are directed toward achieving peace based on the Contadora Document of Objectives and a democratic reconciliation in Nicaragua, all without the use of force by the United States. I do not intend to introduce the armed forces of the United States into combat against the Government of Nicaragua, and I affirm that I will not regard approval of my request for assistance as authorizing any such action.

The final undertaking in this request responds to the desire of the Congress to be kept informed about efforts to achieve resolution of the conflict in Central America. I am undertaking to report every ninety days on progress toward a negotiated settlement, as well as on the disbursement of assistance funds and on human rights issues. The continued availability of assistance funds will be contingent upon the receipt by the Congress of these periodic reports.

The Need For This Assistance

Since the beginning of my first Administration, there has been no foreign policy issue more directly affecting United States national interests than the conflict in Central America, for this conflict challenges not only our strategic position but the very principles upon which this Nation is founded. We can be justifiably proud of progress in the region to alleviate and ultimately eliminate the causes of that conflict. With strong support from the United States, freedom and democracy, the fundamental pillars of peace, have made dramatic gains. Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador have held free and open elections. Costa Rica continues its tradition as a vigorous democratic example. United States economic, political, and military support have strengthened the moderate center in Central America and reversed the tragic polarization on the left and right that threatened to engulf

more

the region in endless violence. As a result, the only president in Central America who wears a military uniform today is Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua. He presides over a repressive regime, armed to the teeth by the Soviets and Cubans, which is the most immediate threat to the progress of its neighbors.

Few now question that the rulers of Nicaragua are deeply committed communists, determined to consolidate their totalitarian communist state. Their long, documented record of brutal repression leaves no room for doubt. Nor can there be any dispute that they seek to export their ideology through terrorism and subversion to neighboring countries. Their neighbors' success in offering democracy as a viable alternative for the people of Central America is a major threat to the system they advocate. The Sandinistas have been constrained principally because they have not yet crushed opposition to their regime at home. The struggle of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance for democracy in their own homeland has provided a shield for democratic progress in other Central American countries. But the Sandinistas, with massive Soviet and Cuban military assistance, have clearly made the elimination of these freedom fighters their number one priority. If they achieve that goal, there will be no remaining obstacle to their efforts to destabilize neighboring states.

Despite this threat to peace, we do not accept that conflagration is inevitable in Central America. The path to peace is clear. The origin of the conflict in Nicaragua is the revolt of the Nicaraguan people themselves against tyranny. A church-mediated dialogue, serious negotiations between the Sandinistas and the external and internal opposition, including the democratic resistance, is the place to begin. The United States strongly supports such negotiations, and we welcome the efforts of the Latin American nations of the Contadora Group and Support Group to promote national reconciliation talks to resolve the Nicaraguan conflict. We will steadfastly support the Contadora process in its efforts to find a solution in Central America that will be the basis for lasting peace. We will also continue to look for flexibility in the Nicaraguan position and are prepared to respond with appropriate measures to encourage them to come to terms with their own people in a democratic framework.

At the same time, we can entertain no illusions that the Sandinistas will enter negotiations on steps to allow legitimate democratic dissent unless democratic forces in Nicaragua can credibly and forcefully assert their right to a voice in Nicaragua's future. The Sandinistas' record of repression of democratic opposition groups leaves little hope that they will willingly follow such a course. They will never embrace open, democratic norms unless confronted with undeniable demands from steadily growing numbers of Nicaraguans prepared to fight for liberty and for their right to participate in their country's political life.

Our experience with the Sandinistas over six and a half years points unmistakably to the need to accompany diplomatic policy with substantial pressure focused on the same objectives. Without power, diplomacy lacks leverage. The Sandinistas will not take meaningful steps toward national reconciliation until they realize that opposition to the consolidation of a Marxist-Leninist regime is too strong to be

more

(OVER)

repressed. Approval of this request will enable the United States to be in a position to provide assistance that permits the resistance to conduct sustained operations in Nicaragua and expand their area of operations. The resistance will be able to incorporate more of the thousands of volunteers waiting to join their forces but who cannot be accepted for lack of supplies. They will be able to establish a stronger presence among a larger segment of the Nicaraguan population, thus increasing the pressure on the Sandinistas to enter into dialogue with all opposition elements, and to negotiate seriously in the Contadora process.

The cause of the United States in Nicaragua, as in the rest of Central America, is the cause of freedom and ultimately, our own national security.

The Soviet Union and its satellites understand the great stakes in Nicaragua. The Soviets have already made their decision to support the Sandinistas. Cuba's Castro has already made his decision to support the Sandinistas. Libya's Qadhafi has already made his decision to support the Sandinistas saying, "...because they are fighting America at its doorstep. Nicaragua means a great thing; it means fighting America near its borders."

Congress must act decisively to prevent an outcome deeply injurious to the security of our Nation.

If the enemies of democracy thousands of miles away understand the strategic importance of Nicaragua, understand that Nicaragua offers the possibility of destabilizing all Central America, of sending a tidal wave of refugees streaming toward our southern border, and of tying down the United States and weakening our ability to meet our commitments overseas, then we Americans must understand that Nicaragua is a foreign policy question of supreme importance which goes to the heart of our country's freedom and future. With its vote, Congress will make its decision.

Those fighting for freedom in Nicaragua deserve and desperately need our help. The humanitarian assistance approved by the Congress in 1985 has proven insufficient. Cuban and Soviet military aid in the form of training and sophisticated hardware have taken their toll. If the Nicaraguan democratic resistance is to continue its struggle, and if peace, democracy, and security in this hemisphere are to be preserved, the United States must provide what is necessary to carry on the fight. If we fail to help friends in need now, then the price we will pay later will be much higher.

Your approval of the request I am transmitting to you will provide the necessary help. I urge the prompt enactment of a joint resolution expressing that approval.

RONALD REAGAN

THE WHITE HOUSE,

February 25, 1986.

more

Request for Additional Authority and
Assistance for the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance

Pursuant to the provisions of section 722(p) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-83) and section 106(a) of chapter V of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1985 (P.L. 99-88), I hereby request that the Congress approve additional authority and assistance for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance, as follows:

(1) That the sum of \$100,000,000 appropriated by the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1986, as contained in P.L. 99-190, shall be available for transfer by the President to appropriations available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and shall be available for that purpose, subject to the terms and conditions of this request.

(2) That the funds transferred under paragraph (1) will include funds that have been made available for obligation beyond September 30, 1986, as provided by law: Provided, That not more than 25 percent shall be available for obligation upon the enactment of a joint resolution approving this request, and an additional 15 percent shall become available upon submission of each report to the Congress required by paragraph (6) (E) of this request, and no obligations may be incurred after September 30, 1987.

(3) That, of the funds transferred under paragraph (1), \$30,000,000 shall be available during the period of availability of those funds for continuation of a program of humanitarian assistance to be administered by the Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office established by Executive Order 12530, of which at least \$3,000,000 will be used exclusively for strengthening programs and activities of the United Nicaraguan Opposition for the observance and advancement of human rights.

(4) That, notwithstanding the proviso contained in paragraph (2) of this request, in the event of a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America during the period that the funds transferred under paragraph (1) are available for obligation, any remaining balance of such funds shall then also be available for purposes of relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction in Central American countries, including Nicaragua, in accordance with the authority of chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(5) That the approval by the Congress of this request be deemed to satisfy the requirements, terms, and conditions of section 105(a) of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1986 (P.L. 99-169) as well as statutory requirements for the authorization of appropriations (including section 10 of P.L. 91-672, section 502 of the National Security Act of 1947, and section 8109 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1986), subject to --

more

(OVER)

(A) all applicable provisions of law and established procedures relating to the oversight by the Congress of operations and departments and agencies; and

(B) the further terms and conditions specified in this request.

(6) That the approval by the Congress of this request be deemed to constitute the acceptance of the following undertakings:

(A) United States policy toward Nicaragua shall be based upon Nicaragua's responsiveness to continuing concerns by the United States and Nicaragua's neighbors about --

(i) Nicaragua's close military and security ties to Cuba, the Soviet Union, and its Warsaw Pact allies, including the presence in Nicaragua of military and security personnel from those countries;

(ii) Nicaragua's buildup of military forces in numbers disproportionate to those of its neighbors and equipped with sophisticated weapons systems and facilities designed to accommodate even more advanced equipment;

(iii) Nicaragua's unlawful support for armed subversion and terrorism directed against the democratically elected governments of other countries;

(iv) Nicaragua's internal repression and lack of opportunity for the exercise of civil and political rights that would allow the people of Nicaragua to have a meaningful voice in determining the policies of their government; and

(v) Nicaragua's refusal to negotiate in good faith for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Central America based upon the comprehensive implementation of the September 1983 Contadora Document of Objectives and, in particular, its refusal to enter into a church-mediated national dialogue as proposed by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance on March 1, 1985.

(B) The United States will address these concerns through economic, political, and diplomatic measures, as well as through support for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. In order to assure every opportunity for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, the United States --

(i) will engage in simultaneous bilateral discussions with the Government of Nicaragua with a view toward facilitating progress in achieving a peaceful resolution of the conflict if the Government of Nicaragua engages in a church-mediated national dialogue, as proposed by the United Nicaraguan Opposition; and

more

(ii) will take other positive actions in response to steps by the Government of Nicaragua toward meeting the concerns described in subparagraph (A).

(C) The duration of bilateral discussions with the Government of Nicaragua and the implementation of additional measures under subparagraph (B) shall be determined, after consultation with the Congress, by reference to Nicaragua's actions in response to the concerns described in subparagraph (A). Particular regard will be paid to whether --

(i) freedom of the press, religion, and assembly are being respected in Nicaragua;

(ii) additional arms and foreign military personnel are no longer being introduced into Nicaragua;

(iii) a cease-fire with the Nicaraguan democratic resistance is being respected; and

(iv) Nicaragua is withholding support for insurgency and terrorism in other countries.

(D) The actions by the United States in response to the concerns described in subparagraph (A), authorized by the approval of this request, are consistent with the right of the United States to defend itself and to assist its allies in accordance with international law and treaties in force. Such actions are directed to achieving a comprehensive and verifiable agreement among the countries of Central America, based upon the 1983 Contadora Document of Objectives, and internal reconciliation within Nicaragua, based upon democratic principles, without the use of force by the United States. The approval of this request shall not be construed as authorizing any member or unit of the armed forces of the United States to engage in combat against the Government of Nicaragua.

(E) The President will transmit a report to the Congress within 90 days after the date of approval of this request, and every 90 days thereafter, on actions taken to achieve a resolution of the conflict in Central America in a manner that meets the concerns described in subparagraph (A). Each such report shall include --

(i) a detailed statement of any progress made in reaching a negotiated settlement, including the willingness of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and the Government of Nicaragua to negotiate a settlement;

(ii) a detailed accounting of the disbursements made to provide assistance with the funds made available pursuant to paragraph (1); and

(iii) a discussion of alleged human rights violations by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and the Government of Nicaragua, including a statement of the steps taken by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance to remove from their ranks any individuals who have engaged in human rights abuses.

U.S. OBJECTIVES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Regional Situation and U.S. Interests

- o Central America in the recent past had experienced economic growth, social modernization, and increased democracy. It has also faced uneven development, an increase in Cuban-supported subversion, and the new threats of narcotics trafficking and terrorism.
- o A hostile or destabilized Central America close to our border would pose an unacceptable threat to our vital interests in Mexico, the Panama Canal, and the Caribbean sea lanes.
- o Over 50 percent of U.S. seaborne trade passes through the Caribbean Basin. In a crisis, half of U.S. supplies for NATO would pass through the region.
- o The region is the largest source of legal and illegal immigration to the U.S. Instability in the region would increase the flow.
- o The victory of a Cuban-like totalitarian state would require the U.S. to devote greater military resources to hemispheric defense.
- o U.S. Central American policy is rooted in vital U.S. interests and is implementing the recommendations of the 1984 National Bipartisan Commission on Central America.

U.S. Objectives

- o Our policy centers on four interrelated objectives;
 - Support for democracy, reform, and human freedom in each country:
 - Renewal of economic development and growth to address the root cause of turmoil and conflict:
 - Security for the democratic governments in Central America: and
 - Support for a political solution to the conflicts in Central America, via peaceful dialogue within and among the countries of the region ;and for a comprehensive, and verifiable regional settlement as outlined in the Contadora Document of Objectives.
- o In Nicaragua we are seeking:
 - Withdrawal of foreign military personnel;
 - Establishment of a military balance with its neighbors;
 - An end to support for insurgency in neighboring countries; and
 - Democratic pluralism.

This policy is working. The political center is gaining at the expense of extremes of both left and rights. Democratic governments have been elected in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and Costa Rican continues its long democratic tradition.

THE NEED FOR MILITARY PRESSURE

To succeed in its efforts to force the Sandinistas to negotiate a democratic opening, the Nicaraguan democratic resistance needs help to counter the continuing massive flow of weapons, equipment, and training the Sandinistas have received from the Soviet bloc.

- o The President's request would permit him to use \$70 million for any kind of assistance he deems appropriate.
- o While the resistance has received humanitarian assistance from the U.S., the Sandinistas have been receiving tanks, helicopters, and ammunition from the Soviet bloc. They also have some 3,000 Cuban advisors to provide training in the sophisticated equipment they continue to receive.
- o The Sandinistas have received about \$500 million in military aid since 1979 from the Soviet bloc and Cuba. This aid has included tanks, artillery pieces, Mi-24 Hind attack helicopters, Mi-8 transport helicopters, and patrol boats.
- o The Cubans have been playing an increasing operational role. They are particularly active in the employment of air assets.
- o A steady flow of support from the Soviet bloc and Cuban advice and operational assistance have greatly contributed to the improved effectiveness of the Sandinista forces.
- o The Sandinistas have demonstrated over six and a half years that they will not willingly take meaningful steps toward national reconciliation.
- o With increased U.S. assistance the resistance would be better able to conduct sustained operations and to expand their area of operations. The resistance would also be able to incorporate more of the thousands of volunteers waiting to join their forces who cannot be accepted for lack of supplies.
- o With a strong presence by the democratic resistance among broader segments of the Nicaraguan population, the Sandinistas will be under increased pressure to enter into dialogue with all opposition elements, and to negotiate seriously within Contadora.

SANDINISTA ARMS BUILD-UP

The Sandinistas' military build-up and dependence upon Soviet bloc/Cuban security advisors predate the advent of guerrilla military operations.

- o The Sandinista military build-up began right after the ouster of Somoza in July 1979.
- o The first Cuban military advisers arrived in 1979; Nicaraguan pilots were sent to Bulgaria for MiG training in 1980; and the first Soviet tanks arrived in 1981.
- o The Sandinista Army grew to 16,625 by December 1979, and to 23,750 by 1982. Nicaragua now has an active duty force of over 60,000, with about 60,000 more in the reserves and the militia.
- o Somoza's National Guard never had more than 14,000 men; neighboring Honduras has 21,000 troops in its armed forces; and Costa Rica has no army.
- o The Sandinistas have received sophisticated Soviet military hardware, including T-55 medium-battle tanks, PT-76 light-amphibious tanks, artillery pieces, Hind helicopter gunships, and patrol boats.
- o Since 1979, the Sandinistas have received at least \$500 million in military assistance from Cuba and the Soviet bloc.
- o There are 2,500 to 3,500 Cuban military advisers in Nicaragua, along with 3,500 to 4,000 Cuban civilian advisers, and 300 other advisers from the Soviet bloc, Libya, and the PLO.
- o Cuban military advisors are found down to company level and are playing an increasing operational role. They pilot aircraft, particularly the Hind helicopter gunship, and provide needed assistance in coordinating air support.
- o Cuban advisors are found in numerous ministries--notably the Ministry of Interior--at all levels, and often exercise authority in addition to giving advice.

NICARAGUA'S SOVIET TIES

The radicalization of Nicaragua and the pro-Soviet policies of the Sandinistas reflect their ideological orientation and are not reactions to U.S. policy toward Nicaragua, as they pre-date any deterioration in bilateral relations.

- o The Sandinistas began a military build-up, close ties with Cuban and the Soviet bloc, export of subversion, and repression of the opposition while the United States was providing Nicaragua \$117 million in aid.
- o Their Marxist-Leninist orientation was made clear as early as 1979 in the "72-Hour Document," and was reaffirmed by Bayardo Arce in his 1984 "Secret Speech."
- o In 1979 the Sandinistas began to order military equipment from the Soviet bloc; the same year 200 Cuban military advisers arrived, a number which increased to 600 in 1980 and reached 2,000 in 1981; in 1980 Nicaraguan pilots went to Bulgaria for MiG training, and the following year the first 25 Soviet T-55 tanks arrived in Nicaragua.
- o Approximately 200 Soviet and eastern European advisers are serving in Nicaragua along with about 50 from Libya and the PLO; Cuban military and security advisers number some 3,000 and play a key role down to company level units.
- o The USSR and its allies have provided almost \$500 million in arms since 1979.
- o As early as 1980 the Sandinistas joined Cuba in aligning themselves closely with the Soviet Union on international issues.
- o Trade had shifted from the West to the Soviet bloc before U.S. economic sanctions were imposed on May 1985.
- o The USSR supplies about 90% of Nicaragua's oil needs.

SANDINISTA TIES TO LIBYA

Sandinista ties to Libya date to the 1970s. Libya has provided training, military supplies, and political support to the Sandinistas.

- o Sandinista militants trained in Libya during the 1970s.
- o In 1979, Qadhafi pledged political and financial aid to the Sandinistas and other Latin American guerrillas groups at a conference in Benghazi, Libya.
- o The Sandinistas purchased arms from Vietnam and North Korea with Libyan funds.

After the Sandinistas came to power, their ties with Libya expanded. In June 1981, at a celebration commemorating Qadhafi's closing of U.S. bases in 1970, Junta member Sergio Ramirez (now Vice President) remarked, "The ties between the Libyan people and the Nicaraguan people are not new, but were consolidated when the Sandinista Front struggled in the field of battle to win the liberty of our homeland." He added, "The solidarity of the Libyan people, of the Libyan government and comrade Muammar Qadhafi was always patently manifest. This solidarity has been made real, has been made effective, has been made more fraternal since the triumph of our revolution."

The Sandinistas and Libya have made agreements for military equipment, loans, and trade:

- o In 1980, Interior Minister Tomas Borge, went to Libya to discuss joint agricultural ventures and loan arrangements. Libya gave the Sandinistas a \$100 million loan the next year and has never sought repayment.
- o In April 1983, Brazilian authorities seized four planeloads of arms from Libya, intended for Nicaragua. The cargo, labeled "medical supplies for Colombia," was found to be 84 tons of military equipment. The contents included: two dismantled fighter planes, wire-guided missiles, machine guns, rifles, mortars, bazookas, 90mm cannons, eight multiple rocket launchers, eight anti-aircraft guns, 600 light artillery rockets, and five tons of bombs.
- o Qadhafi has sent the Sandinistas military personnel, including several dozen trainers, advisers, and pilots. "Libyan fighters, arms, and backing to the Nicaraguan people have reached them because they fight with us," said Qadhafi in September 1984, "They fight America on its own ground."
- o In 1985, Libya and the Sandinistas signed a trade agreement, exchanging Nicaraguan bananas and coffee for Libyan oil.
- o Libya has provided some support to the Salvadoran guerrillas, the Colombian M-19 and Guatemalan guerrilla groups through its "People's Bureau" in Managua.

SANDINISTA SUPPORT FOR SUBVERSION AND TERROR IN LATIN AMERICA

The Sandinista policy of "revolutionary internationalism" -- support for Marxist revolutionaries and guerrillas in other countries -- dates to the 1960s when the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) developed its ideology¹ and forged ties to radical regimes and terrorist groups, such as Cuba and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Sandinista leaders have spoken repeatedly of their expansionist policy as Interior Minister Tomas Borge did in 1981 when he proclaimed "This [Sandinista] revolution goes beyond our borders." The Sandinistas' dedication to "revolutionary internationalism" has led to:

- o Nicaragua's emergence as a haven and a base for Marxist revolutionaries and terrorists in Latin America and Europe;
- o Nicaragua's active support for guerrilla groups throughout Central America;
- o The expansion of Sandinista military power.

Support for Foreign Guerrillas: The Sandinista government supports Marxist guerrilla movements in El Salvador and Honduras, and trains Costa Rican revolutionaries in guerrilla warfare.²

El Salvador: Former Salvadoran guerrilla commanders, captured documents, physical evidence, and intelligence reports indicate that Nicaragua operates a military supply pipeline to the Salvadoran guerrillas providing arms, ammunition, explosives, training, food, and communications equipment. Shipments reach El Salvador by land, via Honduras and Guatemala, and by sea and air directly from Nicaragua. Since 1979, all or part of the Salvadoran guerrilla command has been based in Managua, communicating with units in El Salvador by radio, and receiving advice from the Sandinista government and from Cubans based in Nicaragua. Salvadoran guerrillas receive training in Nicaragua and the Sandinistas facilitate the travel of Salvadoran and other guerrillas to Cuba and the Soviet bloc for training and strategy conferences. Evidence of Nicaraguan support for the Salvadoran guerrillas from 1980 to 1985 include:

- o Honduran police caught two members of the Marxist Costa Rican Popular Vanguard Party (PVP) smuggling military supplies to the Salvadoran guerrillas on December 7, 1985. Inside a Soviet-made car, fitted with concealed compartments in Managua, were 450 pounds of ammunition, grenades, grenade fuses, and electric detonating caps wrapped in pages of Barricada, the Sandinista party newspaper, code books, radios labeled for specific Salvadoran guerrilla commanders, medical supplies, and \$27,400 in cash. The driver told Honduran authorities that his cargo had been loaded in Managua.

- o The Salvadoran military, acting on information from a captured guerrilla, captured an arms reception camp in the Montecristo area of the Lempa River delta on May 25, 1984, capturing 34 large canoes used for transporting arms and supplies from Nicaragua across the Gulf of Fonseca, as well as arms and documents.
- o Honduran officials captured a group of Salvadoran guerrillas in March 1983 as they were crossing Honduras with arms from Nicaragua. Among the captured items was a map tracing an arms shipment route from Managua through Honduras to El Salvador.
- o During 1982-83, Honduran authorities discovered a number of safehouses in Honduras used by Honduran and Salvadoran guerrillas involved in transporting arms from Nicaragua. Salvadorans and Nicaraguans were captured during these raids.
- o Small aircraft were used extensively to transport weapons shipments from Nicaragua until the Salvadorans developed the capacity to intercept them. Two small planes were captured in 1980 and 1981. One of the pilots was among prisoners exchanged for President Duarte's daughter and 22 mayors kidnapped by the Salvadoran guerrillas. Air shipments continue, but with less frequency than in the past.
- o 1983 was a high point for arms deliveries from Nicaragua to El Salvador. Since then the size of the guerrilla force has declined as have arms deliveries. This trend is reflected in the number of unidentified aircraft sightings (UAS) in El Salvador. Since March 1, 1983 Salvadoran authorities have kept a log of UAS which shows 109 sightings during the period March 1 to December 31, 1983; 46 sightings during 1984; and 53 sightings during 1985.
- o In 1981, Honduran officials intercepted a trailer-truck carrying weapons and ammunition, including 100 M-16/AR-15 rifles and 100,000 rounds of ammunition, bound for Salvadoran guerrillas.
- o In December 1980, the Salvadoran Army, in a raid on a safehouse of the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES) discovered documents including diaries of the top party leaders which described arrangements made in June 1980 by PCES Secretary General Shafik Handal with the Soviet Union, Vietnam, other Communist bloc countries, and Ethiopia for large arms shipments to the Salvadoran guerrilla organization via Cuba and Nicaragua. The documents recorded the arrival of the arms in Nicaragua, and their subsequent transshipment to El Salvador. The Sandinista government's role was clear, and as a result, the Carter Administration suspended disbursement of economic aid to Nicaragua.

Honduras: By 1981, the Sandinistas were working closely with factions of Honduran Marxist parties committed to achieving power through armed struggle. The Sandinistas gave military supplies and training, and helped launch military operations by Honduran guerrillas to establish bases in the Honduran provinces of Olancho in 1983 and El Paraiso in 1984.

- o Guerrilla documents and statements obtained in a 1981 raid on a safehouse in Honduras indicated that the Honduran Front for Popular Liberation (FHLP) was formed in Nicaragua at the instigation of Sandinista leaders, the group's chief of operations lived in Managua, and members of the group received military training in Nicaragua and Cuba.
- o In 1982, Jose Maria Reyes Mata, a Honduran revolutionary who spent the early 1980s in Managua as a fugitive, recruited Hondurans for guerrilla warfare under the Honduran branch of the Central American Revolutionary Workers' Party (PRTC). Recruits trained first in Cuba, and then gained battle experience fighting with Sandinista troops against the Nicaraguan armed resistance. In July 1983, Reyes Mata and a 96-man force armed by the Sandinistas entered the Olancho Department to establish a base of guerrilla operations. The campaign failed when the guerrillas were captured by Honduran security forces.
- o In July 1984, Honduran guerrillas trained in Cuba and Nicaragua attempted to establish a base for rural insurgency in El Paraiso Department along the Nicaraguan border. The operation failed, and captured rebels led Honduran authorities to arms caches and subversive groups in the area.

Costa Rica:

- o In March 1982, Costa Rican police announced the seizure of a large cache of arms, explosives, uniforms, documents, passports, forged immigration stamps from more than 30 countries, and 13 vehicles outfitted with concealed compartments. Nine people were arrested: Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, an Argentine, a Chilean and a Costa Rican. One of those arrested told police the supplies were to have been delivered to the Salvadoran guerrillas for an offensive timed to disrupt the March 1982 elections.
- o The Sandinistas have trained members of the Costa Rican Popular Vanguard Party (PVP) in guerrilla warfare on the property of the African Oil Palm Cultivation Project near El Castillo in southern Nicaragua. Members of the PVP were driving the automobile caught by Honduran authorities on December 7, 1985, carrying arms and supplies to the Salvadoran guerrillas.

Sandinista Admissions: High-level Sandinista officials have admitted their support for foreign revolutionaries.

- o Humberto Ortega, the Sandinista Minister of Defense, was quoted in New York magazine on September 12, 1983, boasting: "Of course we are not ashamed to be helping El Salvador. We would like to help all revolutions."
- o Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto admitted Nicaraguan support for Salvadoran guerrillas before a meeting of the Contadora peace process negotiators in April 1983.
- o A former official in the Ministry of Interior (MINT) was told by an aide to Interior Minister Tomas Borge that profits from narcotics confiscated by MINT would be used to finance the Ministry's international espionage and propaganda activities.³
- o Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega hinted increased support to Sandinista-backed guerrillas in El Salvador after anti-Sandinista rebels shot down a Sandinista attack helicopter piloted by Cubans in November 1985.⁴

Sandinista Intervention in South America: In addition to supporting guerrillas in Central America, the Sandinistas have provided training facilities to revolutionaries from Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia. Groups and individuals from revolutionary groups elsewhere in Latin America also maintain a presence, and may be receiving training, in Nicaragua. M-19 guerrillas have an office in Managua and train with FSLN troops. Weapons used by Colombian M-19 guerrillas in the takeover and massacre at the Palace of Justice in Bogota in November 1985 have been traced to Nicaragua.

Support for Terrorist Activities: Nicaraguan officials, and persons linked to the government of Nicaragua have participated directly, or as accomplices, in terrorist acts against neighboring countries.

- o Costa Rica expelled Nicaraguan diplomats in July 1982 for their involvement in a July 4 bombing of the office of the Honduran national airline in San Jose.
- o Nicaragua provided Salvadoran terrorists with false identity papers for entering Costa Rica to kidnap a Salvadoran businessman in January 1982.
- o Six armed persons, including Nicaraguans linked to the Sandinistas, were arrested in July 1981 during a mission to seize the Guatemalan embassy in San Jose and demand the release of convicted terrorists.

Background and Early Activities: Sandinista ties to terrorist organizations and radical regimes were formed in the 1960s. Before the FSLN came to power, Sandinistas trained in guerrilla

warfare in Cuba and at PLO camps in Lebanon and Libya. In return for training and material assistance (see below), the FSLN participated in some PLO terrorist operations in the Middle East.

- o More than 100 Sandinistas trained in PLO camps in the late 1960s and early 1970s.
- o FSLN units fought in the PLO's 1970 "Black September" coup attempt against King Hussein of Jordan.
- o Sandinista Patricio Arguello died in an attempted hijacking of an Israeli jet in 1970. The Sandinistas named a dam in his honor.
- o In a show of "solidarity" with the PLO, FSLN militants fire-bombed Managua's synagogue during a Friday night service in 1978. After the Sandinistas came to power, the government adorned the synagogue with pro-PLO and anti-Zionist propaganda posters.

Assistance from Terrorists and Radical Regimes: Once in power, the FSLN openly expanded its relationships with Cuba and the PLO, and established contact with Libya and Iran.

Cuba: The most recent public evidence of Cuban involvement in Nicaraguan military affairs came in December 1985, when the Nicaraguan armed resistance shot down a Soviet-built Mi8 attack helicopter piloted by two Cuban soldiers. The Cuban presence in Nicaragua is not new. It goes back to July 1979.

- o Cuban military advisers began arriving within days of the Sandinista victory. Their numbers have kept pace with the expansion of the Sandinista military and are now placed at between 2,500 and 3,500. This number includes some of the highest ranking Cuban military, for example:
- o Cuban general Arnaldo Ochoa, former head of Cuban counterinsurgency forces in Angola, has been stationed in Nicaragua since 1983.
- o Cuban generals Roberto Escalante and Renan Montero have served as a key adviser to Interior Minister Tomas Borge.
- o Cuban civilians, about 5,000 permeate the government, especially the Ministries of Education, and Health and the propaganda organs of the government. Antonio Farach, a 10-year veteran of the FSLN said he left Nicaragua partly because "I felt that we had sold our sovereignty to a foreign nation."

Palestine Liberation Organization: Shortly after the Sandinistas took power, Tomas Borge said "We say to our brother Arafat that Nicaragua is his land and the PLO cause is the cause of the Sandinistas."

- o The Sandinistas granted the PLO full diplomatic privileges, in 1979, becoming the only other government in the hemisphere, besides Cuba, with a PLO embassy.
- o Yasser Arafat, PLO chairman, sent military technicians and a \$12 million loan in 1981.
- o PLO pilots went to Nicaragua in 1981 to fly transport planes and helicopters. Some PLO pilots and aircraft mechanics are still in Nicaragua.
- o By 1982, the PLO assisted in guerrilla training in Nicaragua.

Libya: Col. Muammar Qadhafi pledged financial and political support to the Sandinistas and to other Central American guerrilla groups in 1979. Since then, Libya has provided:

- o a \$100 million loan to the Sandinistas in 1981, planes and helicopters, military advisers and trainers.

Qadhafi claims Libyan troops serve with the FSLN army, and, in an advertisement in the FSLN party organ Barricada (September 11, 1985), recruited Nicaraguans for a detachment of the Green Guard to accompany him to the 40th Anniversary of the United Nations.

During a visit to Nicaragua for President Daniel Ortega's inauguration in January 1985, Iranian Prime Minister Mirhussein Musavi told Ortega, "we consider your revolutionary country as our own home." Musavi is believed to direct Iran's terrorist operations.

- o During Musavi's visit, Iran and Nicaragua concluded oil and, it is reported, arms deals for Nicaragua.
- o Two shiploads of weapons were en route to Nicaragua from Iran in January 1985, according to ABC news.
- o ABC also reported that Iran may help underwrite the presence of international terrorists in Nicaragua.

"Solidarity" with International Terrorist Network: The Sandinistas extend courtesies to terrorists operating out of or residing in Nicaragua to show "revolutionary solidarity." Terrorists from more than a dozen countries live in Nicaragua. The list of groups with a presence in Nicaragua includes: the Italian Red Brigades, Uruguayan Tupamaros, Peruvian Shining Path, Colombian M-19, Basque ETA, and radicals from Guatemala, Honduras, Chile, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Libya, and El Salvador, and members of the former Baader-Meinhoff Gang (West Germany).

- o The Salvadoran guerrilla leadership operates command and control functions from Nicaragua.

- The government issues Nicaraguan passports to terrorists and radicals enabling them to travel under false identities.
- Many terrorists whose fugitive status prevents them from working in their own countries work for the FSLN government.

Comment: The Sandinistas have made Nicaragua a key part of a regional network of support for guerrilla groups and terrorists from Central and South America. Elements of European terrorist groups, such as the Italian Red Brigades and the Basque Homeland and Liberty (ETA) organization, find support and refuge in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas' closest international relationships are with Cuba, the Soviet Union, Libya, and Iran. Although the Sandinista leaders try to hide the extent of their relations with Communist and other radical regimes, these relationships have become obvious even to superficial observers.

Although El Salvador is the principal target of the Sandinistas and their Cuban and Soviet backers, the Sandinistas are also working to strengthen radical parties and guerrilla movements in other Central American nations. Radicals from several other countries, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador also benefit from the Sandinista policy of "revolutionary internationalism," by receiving guerrilla training in Nicaragua.

1. The 1969 FSLN program vowed to unite Central Americans within one country by "support[ing] national liberation movements in neighboring states."

2. For more information see "Revolution Beyond Our Borders: Sandinista Intervention in Central America," U.S. Department of State, September 1985.

3. Inside the Sandinista Regime: A Special Investigator's Perspective, U.S. Department of State, December 1985.

4. Edward Cody, Washington Post, December 7, 1985, p. 1.

THE NICARAGUAN DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE

The Sandinista Government

The current government of Nicaragua came to power in 1979 when a broad-based coalition pledging genuine democracy, respect for human rights, a mixed economy, and a nonaligned foreign policy overthrew the Somoza regime. The leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) have consistently failed to honor these pledges to the Organization of American States and the Nicaraguan people.

The FSLN quickly took over the coalition government, systematically pushing aside its democratic members. The Sandinistas have institutionalized violations of human rights, including arbitrary detention and summary executions. They have placed an ever larger share of the economy under state control, crippling private enterprise and causing severe economic deterioration. Since August 1979, they have shipped arms and ammunition to the Communist guerrillas in El Salvador and operated bases for training Salvadorans and others in guerrilla warfare, sabotage, and terrorist tactics--cooperating fully with Soviet-bloc armed subversion against Central America and other Latin American countries.

Growth of Opposition

In response to Sandinista betrayal of the revolution, many Nicaraguans who supported the revolution against Somoza are now in opposition. Within Nicaragua, democratic political parties, much of the private sector, and free trade unions are carrying on a political struggle to implement the original democratic goals despite continuing Sandinista repression.

Hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans have gone into exile to escape Sandinista repression. Separate from the unarmed political opposition, but sharing the same democratic objectives, more than 20,000 Nicaraguans have made the difficult decision to take up arms against the Communist Sandinista dictatorship. These are Nicaraguans from all walks of life and differing elements of the political spectrum. Beginning in September 1985, the Sandinistas sharply intensified the campaign of repression against internal groups such as the Catholic Church, Evangelical groups, political parties, and the private sector. Sandinista repression is driving more people into the armed opposition.

Sandinista Efforts to Discredit the Resistances Forces

The Sandinistas have launched a campaign to discredit their armed opposition. This has included both active measures and propaganda. The Sandinistas have sought to depict the Nicaraguan armed resistance as being composed of, or led by,

supporters of the late dictator, Anastasio Somoza. This theme was repeated in a report by the Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus, titled "Who are the Contras?," released on April 18, 1985. (This report has since been cited repeatedly by many who oppose the United States policy of support for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance.)

The Sandinistas have also charged the armed resistance with committing gross violations of human rights. As part of this campaign, the Sandinista secret police fabricates stories of alleged human rights violations by the opposition and regularly blames the opposition for abuses committed by government forces. The Sandinista Ministry of Interior has formed special clandestine units which carry out assassinations, infiltrate the opposition, and sometimes pose as opposition armed units to create confusion and discredit the opposition groups. Remarkably, Minister of Defense Humberto Ortega acknowledged the existence of such groups in an October 1985 interview with a Washington Post reporter (Barricada, Special Supplement, October 10, 1985).

An examination of the composition of the leadership and rank and file of the resistance groups and their human rights performance shows that the charges against the resistance forces are not supported by the facts.

The Goal of the Opposition

The goal of the armed democratic resistance is the same as that of the internal political opposition: to bring about the implementation of genuine democracy in Nicaragua.

In February 1985, the internal unarmed opposition called for a national dialogue involving all parties in the conflict--including the armed opposition--to be mediated by the Catholic Church.

On March 1, 1985, the principal groups of the armed resistance joined the call for a national dialogue, declaring that they would accept a cease-fire and agreeing to the Sandinistas' remaining in power until open elections could be held. The Catholic bishops of Nicaragua declared their willingness to mediate talks. But the Sandinistas scoffed at any suggestion that they seek peace through dialogue with their opposition.

Leadership of the Armed Resistance

In June 1985, the principal groups of the democratic resistance formed the United Nicaraguan Opposition, Unidad Nicaraguense Opositora (UNO). Signing the unity agreement were:

Adolfo Calero, a prominent businessman and Conservative Party leader who had been jailed for opposing the Somoza regime. He now heads the largest armed resistance group, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN).

Arturo Cruz, an expert in international finance who served the Sandinistas first as head of the Central Bank, then as a member of the ruling junta, and finally as ambassador to Washington. He was the democratic opposition's presidential candidate in 1984 and sought for months to campaign, but then refused to participate in a false election when the Sandinistas would not permit freedom of speech, press, and assembly.

Alfonso Robelo, leader of the now exiled Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, belonged to the original coalition junta until he resigned and was forced into exile where he helped to found the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE).

The political orientation and objectives of UNO's leaders are more democratic than those of either Somoza or the Sandinistas.

Groups of the Armed Resistance

Nicaraguan Democratic Force: The FDN, largest of the armed opposition groups, was founded in 1982. A focal point for armed resistance to the Sandinistas, it attracted many who had become disaffected with the FSLN and is, therefore, drawn from all sectors of Nicaraguan society. The FDN's policy-making Directorate, reorganized in 1983, is composed of six persons. Five (including its president, Adolfo Calero) are civilians who opposed Somoza.

Democratic Revolutionary Alliance: ARDE is a coalition created in 1982 by individuals who were active during the revolution, including many who were initially officials in the Sandinista government. From its beginning, its leaders sought to restore the original course of the revolution through political means. In the spring of 1983, after peaceful efforts had proved futile, ARDE began military operations in southern Nicaragua.

Nicaraguan Coast Indian Unity: KISAN is an alliance of Miskitos and other indigenous peoples from the Atlantic Coast who are resisting such Sandinista efforts to destroy their culture as the forced relocation of thousands since December 1981. KISAN was formed in September 1985 with the merger of two armed resistance groups, MISURA in the north and MISURASATA in the south. The coordinator of its directorate is Wycliffe Diego, who was an active opponent of Somoza. KISAN is affiliated with UNO. A faction of MISURASATA remains independent.

Sandino Revolutionary Front: The FRS was created in 1982 by disillusioned Sandinista militants including Eden Pastora,

"Commander Zero." The FRS was a founding member of ARDE, but severed its ties with the other groups in 1984. The FRS operates in southern Nicaragua. It has not joined UNO.

The Composition of the Armed Resistance

The actual fighters of the FDN are overwhelmingly rural youths. Most are between 18 and 22 years old; when Somoza fell in 1979, they were in their early teens. They fight today in response to Sandinista attempts to control their farming, their churches, and in some cases their indigenous cultures. Many joined the resistance in preference to being drafted to fight for the Sandinistas against their friends and neighbors. In defending their families and communities, these young Nicaraguans are fighting for self-determination above all else. Their struggle is not on behalf of the old dictatorship--it is against the new dictatorship armed by Cuba and the Soviet Union.

The military commanders of these resistance armies come from all walks of life, but most come from the very groups the Sandinistas claim to represent: Nicaraguan peasants, small farmers, urban professionals and students, opponents of Somoza, even former Sandinista fighters. The commanders differ from their troops in being older (most are 25-35) and in that almost half come from urban rather than rural backgrounds. Less than half have prior military experience. Those who do acquired their military skills in more or less equal numbers in the pre-revolutionary National Guard and in the post revolutionary Sandinista army.

In November 1985, the FDN had 52 task forces or equivalent commands (task forces range in size from 60 to 700 members). Of the 47 commanders on whom background information is available, 19 were peasants or small farmers; 14 were members of the Guard (5 officers and 9 enlisted); 13 were Sandinistas (4 officers and 9 enlisted), and one was a medical student. In short, barely one quarter (14) of the task force commanders had prior Guard service; the great majority (33) had never served in the Guard in any capacity.

The FDN had 14 regional commands (each had 2 to 4 task forces totalling roughly 800 combatants). The 14 regional commanders included 6 ex-Sandinistas soldiers, 3 ex-Guardsmen (1 officer and 2 enlisted), 2 peasants or small farmers, 1 civilian medical doctor, 1 evangelical pastor, and 1 student.

At the FDN headquarters, a total of 12 out of 21 operational commanders, chiefs of support services, and members of the strategic and the civil-military commands were former Guardsmen. A former Sandinista army officer and 8 civilians from professional or technical backgrounds held the other key positions.

Enrique Bermudez, the FDN's military commander, was a colonel in the National Guard. He was not a backer of Somoza, however. In fact, Somoza had Bermudez posted out of Nicaragua during the last three years of his regime. In 1979, Somoza rejected a Carter Administration suggestion that Bermudez assume command of the National Guard after Somoza's departure. Not even the Sandinistas accused Bermudez of human rights abuses under Somoza. (The Sandinistas themselves use former Guardsmen as well as many foreigners--including Soviets, Cuban, Chileans and Argentine leftists, PLO members, and Libyans--to maintain the biggest military organization in the history of Central America.)

The April 1985 Caucus Report provides a grossly distorted portrayal of the FDN. It names only three sources for its information: an academic expert who denies he discussed the task force commanders with the authors of the report; and two persons who broke with the FDN after serving in non-military positions. While accepting that the FDN has a peasant army, the Caucus Report claimed that the FDN "army is organized and commanded by former National Guardsmen." It erroneously claimed that "46 of the 48 positions in the FDN military leadership are held by ex-National Guardsmen." Guardsmen were said to hold "All but one of the 12 top central staff" positions, including the strategic commander, "five out of six regional commanders, and all 30 task force commanders."

The Caucus staff is correct in describing the FDN's regional and task force commanders as "the key military field leaders." But in fact only 14 of the 52 task forces are commanded by former Guardsmen. Only 3 of 14 regional commanders--rather than 5 of 6 as the Caucus report claims--were former Guard members. The Caucus count of 11 former Guardsmen out of the 12 top positions arbitrarily counted some specialized support services (air, counter-intelligence, psychological warfare, training, MISURA liaison) but not others (navy, medical, legal, finance, logistics and communications). The result was to exclude persons who were not former Guardsmen.

Efforts to focus on the presence of former Guardsmen in the resistance serve to shift attention from other critical issues:

- o The nature of the military forces of the Government of Nicaragua. The Sandinista active duty armed forces are six to ten times larger than those of Somoza. They are trained and sometimes operationally supported in combat by foreigners. When Daniel Ortega on February 5, 1986, spoke in Havana to the Congress of the Cuban Communist Party of "the blood of Cuban internationalists fallen on Nicaraguan soil," he was talking about Cubans killed fighting Nicaraguans inside Nicaragua.

- o The relationships among the resistance commanders.
Individual FDN regional commands are frequently led by men of common background (a frequent pattern is all peasants and small farmers from a particular area). Four of the regional commands, however, have a mix of former Guard and former Sandinista military personnel in their command structure. In three of the four, former Sandinista military personnel outrank (and hence give orders to) former Guardsmen.

The Human Rights Practices of the Democratic Resistance

The armed resistance has consistently sought to conduct its military operations only against military or strategic targets, seeking to avoid civilian casualties. Arturo Cruz has been assigned special responsibilities for human rights for UNO forces, and Ismael Reyes, the former President of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, has been named head of the UNO Human Rights Commission. Each UNO member receives one hour of instruction daily on human rights during his basic training. He also is given a booklet, called "The Blue and White Book," presenting UNO's democratic political objectives and its required code of conduct, including "absolute respect for prisoners" and respect for the well-being of innocent civilians. Where there have been instances of human rights violations, the UNO/FDN leadership has conducted trials; individuals convicted of abuses are punished.

Conclusion

To continue to associate resistance forces with Somoza and accuse them of systematic human rights abuses is patently misleading.

Somoza is dead. The Central American dictatorships associated with Somoza have all given way to elected governments committed to democracy. Today, the only Central American President who wears a military uniform is the Sandinista president of Nicaragua.

The Sandinista regime has systematically violated the rights of the Nicaraguan people as it has labored to consolidate its power and construct a Marxist-Leninist state. Resistance to Sandinista abuses is submerging differences between Nicaraguans and forging a new national coalition similar to the one that rose up against Somoza. The decision last month of five southern front ARDE/FRS commanders (associated with Eden Pastora) to coordinate their military operations with UNO is a good example.

As of today, the armed resistance is more representative of the Nicaraguan people than is the Sandinista regime.

SUMMARY OF UNO STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

On January 22, 1986, in Caracas, Venezuela, Arturo Cruz, Alfonso Robelo, and Adolfo Calero, on behalf of the Directorate of the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO), issued a statement of the principles and objectives of a Provisional Government of National Reconciliation.

The preamble:

- o notes that the Somoza dictatorship has been replaced by Soviet-directed tyrants;
- o acknowledges the sacrifices of the armed resistance and the courage of the internal opposition groups;
- o concludes that the Nicaraguan people have expressed their desire to be free;
- o expresses UNO's commitment to peace, democracy, observance of human rights, and promotion of social justice;
- o proposes a Provisional Government of National Reconciliation.

The stated political objectives of the provisional government include:

- o democratization of Nicaragua
- o establishment of a political system with separate powers of government
- o establishment of the rule of law
- o respect for human rights
- o guarantees of basic freedoms
- o abolition of capital punishment and special tribunals
- o recognition of the autonomy of indigenous peoples
- o creation of a national army subject to civilian authority.

The socio-economic goals of the provisional government are:

- o provision of basic human needs (employment, food, housing)
- o agrarian reform
- o promotion of the return of Nicaraguan exiles
- o reactivation of the economy through the private sector.

Foreign policy will be based on commitments to peace, independence, the inter-American system, and good relations with other democracies.

The UNO plan of action includes:

- o submission of a government program to a consultative body composed of representatives of various sectors
- o establishment of procedures for constituent assembly elections after eight months and for general elections after eighteen months.

ALLEGATIONS OF ARMED OPPOSITION ATROCITIES
AND TIES TO SOMOZA

The democratic resistance is led by long-time opponents of Somoza who have published their political goals. Many allegations of human rights abuse by the resistance have not been substantiated.

- o UNO is led by longtime opponents of Somoza. One (Calero) was jailed by Somoza, and two (Cruz and Robelo) served on the original revolutionary junta until they became disillusioned with the direction of Sandinista policy.
- o The United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO) established a human rights office in 1985 to monitor proper conduct by its forces. UNO promulgated a code of conduct and offenders are prosecuted and punished for violations.
- o On January 22, 1986, UNO issued its Statement of Principles and Objectives. It called for free elections, democratic reform, respect for human rights, a mixed economy, and a nonaligned foreign policy.
- o The armed resistance draws its support from large segments of the Nicaraguan population. An estimated 2% of the forces had some ties to the Somoza regime.
- o Of an estimated 153 key leadership positions, 41 are held by people with former ties to the Guard, while 30 are former Sandinistas.
- o Of 47 task force commanders, 14 were former Guardsmen and 13 were Sandinistas. Of 14 regional commanders, 3 were former Guardsmen and 6 were former Sandinistas.
- o Of the headquarters staff, separate operational commanders, support service commanders, and the strategic and civil-military commands, there are 12 Guardsmen out of a total of 21 officers. The higher proportion of Guardsmen in these positions derives from the need for technical military skills at this level.

CONSOLIDATION OF A TOTALITARIAN STATE

The Sandinistas allow some opposition activity to continue, but have been unwilling to put their power at risk.

- o The Sandinistas came to power with broad popular support for their professed goals of political pluralism, honest elections, a mixed economy, and a non-aligned foreign policy. They have lost this support.
- o In April 1980 the Sandinistas increased FSLN representation in the Council of State, leading the two non-Sandinista members to leave the Junta. By the end of 1980 they had begun to restrict freedom of expression.
- o The Sandinistas instituted censorship, arbitrary confiscation of property, arbitrary detentions, the outlawing of strikes, and the creation of "special tribunals" outside the established legal system.
- o The Sandinistas refused to allow conditions for free elections in 1984. Opposition candidates were harassed by Sandinista mobs and press censorship continued throughout the campaign.
- o Sandinista candidates had access to the resources and facilities of the government. Consequently, the major opposition groups refused to participate in the November 1984 elections.
- o Bayardo Arce's "Secret Speech" in 1984 explained the Sandinista's view of elections as a facade and not a means of gaining political power.
- o On October 15, 1985, when the Sandinistas suspended civil liberties, the Church, political parties, labor unions, and the press were faced with increased censorship, and opposition figures were interrogated, harassed, and threatened. This intimidation included Nicaraguan employees of the U.S. Embassy in Managua.
- o The government closed Radio Catolica, shut down the Church newspaper, Iglesia, and ended a long-standing policy of not drafting seminarians. Priests were arrested and interrogated, and efforts made to interfere with Cardinal Obando y Bravo's Masses outside of Managua.

SUSPENSION OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN NICARAGUA

On October 15, 1985, the Sandinistas extended restrictions on fundamental civil rights guaranteed in the Statute of Rights and Guarantees of Nicaraguans, approved by the Government of National Reconstruction on August 21, 1979. The October crackdown formalizes de facto Sandinista restrictions on civil liberties that have been imposed with varying severity since the Sandinistas came to power in 1979. The rights and freedoms suspended included:

- o Right of individual liberties, personal security, and habeas corpus (later restored except for security crimes);
- o Right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, right to appeal (later restored except for security crimes);
- o Right to trial;
- o Freedom of movement;
- o Freedom of arbitrary interference in personal life, family, home, and correspondence;
- o Freedom of information;
- o Freedom of expression;
- o Right of peaceful assembly;
- o Freedom of association;
- o Right to organize unions;
- o Right to strike.

The Sandinista government originally suspended the majority of civil rights in 1982, claiming the country was in a state of emergency due to attacks by the Nicaraguan armed resistance. The government announced that it was lifting some of the restrictions during the period before the 1984 elections. In reality, the restrictions remained in effect.

In 1985, President Ortega told the international public that the "threat" from the U.S.-backed contras necessitated the state of emergency. However, only a week before the decree, Deputy Minister of Defense Joaquin Cuadra announced that the contras had been "strategically defeated," and for the domestic Nicaraguan audience, the Sandinistas left no doubt that the real intent of the measures was to intimidate the domestic opposition:

- o In a radio broadcast to Nicaraguans on October 17, Agriculture Minister Jaime Wheelock said the measures were aimed at "large landowners and false prophets" (the private sector and the churches).
- o On October 20, Interior Vice Minister Luis Carrion also identified the civic opposition as the target, stating that what the armed opposition had not accomplished, the unarmed opposition was trying to do "through open, cynical and insolent political activity."

SANDINISTA REPRESSION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Despite repeated public assurances of political freedom, the Sandinista regime has repressed the activities of opposition political parties in Nicaragua. Sandinista domination of the Government of National Reconstruction and governmental bodies, including the Council of State, has ensured virtual Sandinista control of all political activity in Nicaragua, and prevents non-FSLN political activity from operating freely.

Intimidation and Harassment:

- o The Sandinistas have detained and jailed party leaders and ordinary party members. Although the leaders are generally released with a warning, many of the rank and file remain in prison.
- o Sandinista turbas (organized mobs) threaten party officials and vandalize their homes and offices. Arturo Cruz was attacked by these mobs repeatedly when he was running for president.
- o Sandinista neighborhood "block committees" and other "mass organizations" pressure members of political parties to leave parties and end activism. For example, Virgilio Godoy of the Independent Liberal Party said of the CDS activity, "People worry that if they do anything, the army will take their son, or their business will be closed or some import will be confiscated. We cannot get people out of their houses to a rally because we cannot give them a guarantee that nothing will happen to them afterwards."
- o Political rallies and meetings are routinely banned or broken up by Sandinista mobs.
- o Dissemination of political materials is prevented by Sandinista censorship of both independent media and non-Sandinista party organs.

Elections: The Sandinista-dominated Government of National Reconstruction promised the Nicaraguan people prompt elections. In 1980, the Sandinistas reneged on this promise, announcing instead that elections would not take place until 1985, with electoral activities banned until 1984.

The Sandinistas used their domination of the Council of State and the Supreme Electoral Council to enact laws ensuring their control of the electoral process. In early 1984, the Sandinistas called elections for November 1984. However, the Sandinistas made it clear they regarded the elections as a formality, important only to satisfy international opinion. As early as August 1980, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega warned in Barricada, the FSLN party newspaper, that "elections are to consolidate revolutionary power, not to place it at stake."

THE CHURCH-STATE CONFRONTATION IN NICARAGUA

Since the Sandinista takeover in 1979, the Catholic Church has been the target of persecution, including harassment and humiliation of the clergy, censorship and closings of church media organs, and attempts to supplant the traditional church and its teachings with the Sandinista "popular church."

The Catholic Church was an important moral force behind the Sandinista revolution in 1979. During the 1970s, under the leadership of then Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo, the church became increasingly outspoken in its criticism of the Somoza regime. It called for political, economic, and social reforms leading to democracy, social justice, and human rights.

The Sandinistas applauded the church's position and called upon Obando to mediate during a major hostage-taking incident in 1974, and again during the Sandinista seizure of the National Palace in 1978. Obando personally intervened to protect to protect Sandinista leaders captured by Somoza, and some Sandinista comandantes owe their lives to the archbishop's intercession. As the situation in Nicaragua deteriorated in 1978-79, the church sided openly with the cause of the revolution.

However, the Sandinistas never intended to allow the traditional church to continue to play an important role in Nicaraguan society. An internal FSLN document of September 1979 (the "72-hour Document") outlined Sandinista policy to

neutralize as much as possible conservative positions and to strengthen our ties with the priests sympathetic to the revolution, while at the same time we are stimulating the revolutionary sectors of the Church.

In order to undermine the church's traditional influence in Nicaraguan society, the Sandinistas have

- o censored Radio Catolica's programs, including Masses and other religious events, and temporarily shut down the station on several occasions, finally ordering it closed on January 1, 1986;
- o banned the church newspaper, Iglesia;
- o interfered with Obando y Bravo's televised masses to such an extent that the church decided to stop them;
- o directed turba (mob) violence against church members and clergy, and heckled the Pope as he celebrated Mass in Managua in March 1983;
- o attempted to entrap Father Bismarck Carballo, the Archbishop's spokesman, in a sex scandal;
- o expelled foreign priests and nuns;
- o conscripted seminarians;
- o seized COPROSA, the church's social services agency;
- o arrested, interrogated, and mistreated clergymen.

SANDINISTA REPRESSION OF PROTESTANTS

The Sandinistas have harassed many Protestant churches that do not align themselves with the FSLN's Marxist revolution.

As part of its campaign to subjugate the Indian people, the Sandinistas struck out at the Moravian Church, which has many followers among the Miskitos and Creoles (Nicaraguan blacks).

- o In 1982 at least 50 Moravian churches were burned when the Sandinistas forced 10,000 Miskitos into relocation camps, which have no facilities for formal worship. The Sandinistas closed the only Moravian seminary in Nicaragua, at Bluefields.
- o Moravian clergy were accused of starting a counter-revolution. Many Moravian clergymen were arrested, and some were held for up to two years without trial. Sandinista military officials interfered in Moravian Provincial Board elections, warning against election of certain persons.

Other Protestant denominations have also come under Sandinista attack.

- o In 1982, turbas (Sandinista mobs) seized 20 churches and worship centers from Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Mennonites, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Some of these properties remain in Sandinista custody.
- o The umbrella organization for Protestant churches, the National Council of Evangelical Pastors (CNPEN), has been repeatedly harassed. Its members were warned not to criticize the misuse of foreign aid by the pro-Sandinista Protestant organization CEPAD.
- o In 1985, after receiving permission from the Nicaraguan government, the Reverend Larry Jones, an American evangelist, went to Nicaragua. The food, Bibles, and religious brochures he brought were confiscated and he was denied the promised facilities to preach.
- o The Protestant station "Radio Waves of Light" has been forced to submit to prior censorship and some of its religious programs have been banned. Religious films such as "How To Study the Bible," "How To Pray," and "Faith That Works" have been censored or banned. Films arriving from outside the country have been seized at the airport.
- o After the October 15, 1985, State of Emergency decree, many Protestant leaders were arrested and interrogated. Jimmy Hassan, leader of the Campus Crusade for Christ, current and former presidents of CNPEN, several CNPEN pastors, the director of the Bible Society, and Boanerges Mendoza, pastor of the First Evangelical Church, were all mistreated. Mendoza was later rearrested for revealing his mistreatment, and held for over a week.

SANDINISTA PERSECUTION OF JEWS

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

- o Oscar Kellermann, a former vice president of the Nicaraguan Jewish community, suffered repeated harassment and three attempts on his life before finally being forced into exile just before the Sandinista takeover.
- o Sarita Kellermann, Oscar's wife, returned to Nicaragua after the revolution, and received threatening phone calls-- (One caller said, "What Hitler started, we'll finish."), repeated house searches without cause or warrant, vandalism, and looting.
- o Abraham Gorn, the 70-year-old former president of the Jewish community, was imprisoned and forced to sweep the streets. Later his textile factory was confiscated and he was threatened with death unless he left the country.
- o Announcing their friendship with the PLO, Sandinista militants firebombed Managua's synagogue during a Friday night service in 1978. They later confiscated the synagogue and turned it over to the Sandinista Children's Association.

Since the 1960s the FSLN has had ties to the Palestine Liberation Organization:

- o Sandinista militants trained in guerrilla warfare at PLO camps in Libya in the 1960s and 1970s.
- o Sandinista Patricio Arguello died while participating in and unsuccessful PLO hijacking of an Israeli El Al jet in 1970.
- o Sandinista officials and PLO leader Yasir Arafat have voiced their sympathy for each other and their common cause, as Comandante Tomas Borge did in 1980, saying, "We say to our brother Arafat that Nicaragua is his land and the PLO cause is the cause of the Sandinistas."

REPRESSION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The Sandinistas named the private sector as one of the major "enemies of the Revolution" and have intimidated, harassed its leaders, and confiscated property for political reasons. In an October 1979 internal FSLN policy paper (the "72-hour Document") the Sandinistas identified the isolation of the "traitorous bourgeoisie" as one of their primary goals. The most dramatic early incident in the attack on the private sector was the November 17, 1980, assassination by Sandinista secret police of Jorge Salazar, a coffee grower and vice-president of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), an organization representing business owners, merchants, farmers, ranchers, and professionals. The Sandinistas considered Salazar's rising popularity a threat to their regime.

Other attacks on the private sector followed, including imprisonment of business leaders and confiscation of their property.

- o In October 1981, several COSEP leaders were imprisoned for five months after they protested the turning of the government toward Marxism and abandonment of the original goals of the revolution.
- o Ismael Reyes, Red Cross president and a prominent industrialist, was sent by the Sandinistas to the 1983 International Labor Organization meeting in Geneva. As soon as he left for Geneva, the Sandinistas confiscated his businesses and arrested his son.
- o The Sandinistas confiscated the land of Ramiro Gurdian, a COSEP leader and agriculturist, for failure to criticize U.S. reduction of Nicaragua's sugar quota.
- o Sandinista-controlled workers disrupted operations at COSEP president Enrique Bolanos's cotton plant. In 1985, the Sandinistas confiscated his land.

The government controls the private sector, regulating wages, prices, and markets. Profits are highly taxed; lack of profit is cited as grounds for confiscation; credit is controlled by the state; basic items are rationed. Enforcement of the rationing system led to two vendors' attacking price inspectors in January 1986.

According to Frank Tourniel Amador, a farmer:

"Before [the Sandinista takeover], you could sell what you grew to whomever you wanted, and buy your supplies from whomever you wanted. Now you must sell your corn or beans or whatever to the State Agricultural Cooperative--at a very low price--and you can only buy sugar, salt, flour, and other things you need from the State as well--and at a very high price."