

DDI-1935-82

8 March 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Suggestions for the Unclassified Briefing on Nicaragua

1. The briefing on Nicaragua which we attended last Friday in my view, generally, was very good. However, I have a few suggestions which I think would make an improvement. I shall group each of these under various headings with items in quotation marks constituting a proposal for direct inclusion in the text.

Introduce the briefing with an overall account of the political context.

(Page 1, insert new paragraph 1 as follows:)

"The Somoza regime was overthrown by a coalition of Marxist/Leninist guerrillas and genuinely democratic groups. In June 1979, the OAS recognized a provisional government based upon explicit promises of free elections, free trade unions, political parties, and press. The Sandinistas gave written assurance that they would carry out early free elections and permit all political freedoms. However, after taking power in July 1979, the Sandinistas began a subtle but nevertheless systematic and thorough campaign to exclude the genuine democratic groups from political power and worked with Cuban and other foreign communist groups to build a coercive apparatus of control, including new police and military forces. At the same time, within weeks of taking power, the Sandinistas began to export subversion to El Salvador and other neighboring countries by providing increasing amounts of military and other support to extreme left guerrillas in the region. This briefing will focus on providing specific information about the Nicaraguan military buildup and the export of subversion."

In discussing the Nicaraguan military buildup, make clear that it began in 1979 and 1980 (i.e. before the current Administration).

I suggest quoting Nicaraguan public announcements of their military purposes, including from late 1979 and 1980 (FBIS would be good sources). It is especially important to make clear that the Nicaraguan military buildup began immediately while the previous US Administration and many other democratic countries were providing significant economic help and maintaining a cordial political posture. In addition, as part of this chronological background, it might be worth mentioning

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State Dept. review completed

Introduce the discussion of Miskito repression with a brief paragraph indicating the sequence of events since autumn 1979.

"Beginning in the fall of 1979, Cuban and other Marxist/Leninist 'teachers' were sent to the Atlantic Coast region for the purpose of indoctrinating the Protestant, English-speaking Indians who live there in settled communities with strong family ties. The Indians resisted passively--staging a large series of peaceful demonstrations in the summer of 1980, and this was met with a combination of temporary conciliation and the arrest of key leaders. Toward the end of 1981, several thousand Indians had fled Sandinista repression and gone to live in Honduras. In late December 1981, Sandinista repression of the Indians in the northeastern part of the country, especially along the Rio Coco, began to increase sharply (see map 2)."

Nicaraguan export of subversion -- reinforce our case both by quoting President Carter and his officials and by quoting the Sandinistas themselves.

In my view, we do not need to release [redacted] other information to present a very accurate and credible case on this point. With a little bit of staff work, we can provide a chronological listing of public quotes to make this point.

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Carter Administration statements:

- On 17 January 1981 in approving lethal military aid for El Salvador the Carter Administration stated that its purpose was to "support the Salvadoran government in its struggle against left-wing terrorism supported covertly with arms, ammunition and training and political and military advice by Cuba and other communist nations."
- 13 January 1981, then US Ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White, was quoted as making the same accusation in the Washington Post.
- March 1980, unclassified testimony of the Defense Department to the House of Representatives also stated that Cuban support for the extreme left in El Salvador and Guatemala includes "advice, propaganda, safe haven, training, arms" and "men and material which transit Honduras, aircraft landings at remote haciendas" with weapons from Cuba.

Sandinista statements:

- Washington Post, 8 March 1982, Rosenfeld column (page A13) - indicates Foreign Minister of Nicaragua D'Escoto admitted "on the record" that Nicaragua is giving help to the guerrillas. "All he denied was that there is a substantial flow and that it is authorized."

- In a speech on 14 September 1981, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega declared that "our leaders, our National Directorate, and our revolutionary government are anti-imperialistic; being anti-imperialistic means being internationalist. Our flags will never be pushed aside to say no to the 'moral' support that peoples such as those of El Salvador and Guatemala require. . . "
- On 16 September 1981 Sandinista Directorate member Bayardo Arce first denied that Nicaragua is helping the guerrillas in El Salvador and Guatemala. But then when a US Embassy official expressed doubt, Arce told him, "When will you Americans ever understand that nothing and no one will prevent us from helping our fellow guerrillas in Central America?" (US Embassy cable, Managua, 17 Sept. 1981)
- At a meeting of Latin American and Caribbean youth held in Managua on 25 and 26 September 1981, Carlos Nunez--a member of the FSLN National Directorate--told his audience that Nicaragua would continue to support "the people of Guatemala and El Salvador".
- In a speech at a large anti-US rally in Managua on 13 October 1981, Humberto Ortega tried to prepare the public for increased efforts on behalf of the Salvadoran insurgents by evoking the "internationalist" spirit of Che Guevara as a moral example for all Nicaraguans. At a similar rally in the city of Leon the same day, Bayardo Arce declared that Nicaragua has never hidden the fact that it is united with the "struggle of the Salvadoran people".
- On 12 October 1981, the FSLN organ Barricada quoted Bayardo Arce as saying that US demands to the Sandinistas about stopping aid to the Salvadoran insurgents "will never be accepted by Nicaragua".

2. Other unclassified quotations from 1979 and 1980 doubtless will be available from FBIS, and we are now trying to obtain examples.

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