

**SECRET**NICARAGUA UNDER THE SANDINISTAS: A BILL OF PARTICULARS

- Before it assumed power in July 1979, the Sandinistas (FSLN) promised the OAS that they would establish a pluralistic regime, encourage a mixed economy, pursue a non-aligned foreign policy, and hold "free and fair elections."
- Nonetheless, between August and September 1979, the Sandinistas moved aggressively to consolidate all labor unions under Sandinista umbrella organizations. Nicaraguan support to the Salvadoran insurgents began as early as August 1979 with the building of guerrilla training camps in Nicaragua, and the establishment in 1980 of a general command center near Managua which is the focal point for the guerrillas' military and political activities.
- Despite its differences with the FSLN, in July 1979 the U.S. began disbursing what was to be a \$130 million aid program for Nicaragua. By January 1981 the US had provided more aid than any other government, and it also cooperated in multilateral loans of \$262 million--80% of all aid to the Sandinistas from western governments.
- In April 1980, the Sandinistas arbitrarily enlarged and packed the membership of the quasi-legislative body--the Council of State--from 33 to 47. This caused Junta member Alfonso Robelo to resign.
- Also in April 1980, the Sandinistas orchestrated a strike against La Prensa, the country's only independent newspaper. The strike caused the newspaper to close for several days.
- In July 1980, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega announced that elections would be postponed until no later than 1985. Ortega stated that the Nicaraguan people had already "voted" during the revolution. Power, he said, would not be raffled off in a "bourgeois" manner.
- In November 1980, Sandinista security forces murdered private sector leader Jorge Salazar, who was unarmed, in a transparent setup. The private sector organization, COSEP, and the independent political parties withdrew from the Council of State in protest.
- In mid-January 1981, during the final days of a guerrilla offensive in El Salvador, the State Department announced that captured documents and weapons confirmed that the guerrillas had received a substantial supply of arms from abroad.

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-- In February 1981, Sandinista agents exercising government power took over Nicaragua's independent human rights commission, imprisoned its director, Jose Esteban Gonzalez, and seized the commission's files on human rights abuses.

-- In March 1981, Sandinista-directed mobs--the infamous "turbas divinas"-- prevented the holding of an outdoor opposition rally near Nandaime by followers of Alfonso Robelo. Sandinista mobs stoned and defaced the houses of Robelo and other opposition leaders.

-- In April 1981, the U.S. suspended economic aid to Nicaragua after determining that its Sandinista government was providing arms, training, safehaven, and command and control facilities to the guerrillas in neighboring El Salvador as part of its doctrine of "internationalism" and revolution without frontiers."

-- In July 1981, the government banned Managua's popular archbishop, Miguel Obando y Bravo, from offering mass on television, a Sunday tradition in Nicaragua that even Somoza had not dared to prohibit.

-- In August 1981, Assistant Secretary of State Enders went to Managua and proposed to the Comandantes a five point peace plan to the government that would reduce regional tensions. The Nicaraguan government responded with rhetoric and nothing more.

-- In September 1981, the government announced new "emergency" laws that outlawed strikes and threatened to punish those disseminating "false economic news."

-- In September 1981 the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), was formed from several exile insurgent groups and stepped up operations along the border.

-- In September and October 1981, the government shut down La Prensa on five separate occasions.

-- In October 1981, the government arrested private sector leaders for violation of the emergency laws. They spent five months in prison.

-- In January 1982, the government again shut down La Prensa.

-- In early 1982, the Sandinista government systematically and forcibly removed almost ten thousand Miskito indians from their ancestral homes in northeastern Nicaragua, and sent them to camps in other parts of the country. About eleven to fourteen thousand Miskitos fled to Honduras to escape this tyranny.

-- In March 1982, the government imposed a state of "emergency" that established prior censorship of the media, banned political activity, and suspended individual legal guarantees. This state of emergency continues.

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- Also in March 1982, approximately 1.7 million Salvadorans-- better than 80% of the eligible voters--defied guerrilla threats and attacks to vote for a Constituent Assembly.
- In April 1982, our Ambassador in Managua delivered an eight point peace proposal to the Nicaraguan government. The government again made no substantive reply.
- In April 1982, the well-known democratic opposition leader Alfonso Robelo decided to go into exile with the leadership of his party, the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN).
- In April 1982, after nine months underground, former FSLN commander Eden Pastora ("Commander Zero") denounced the Sandinista regime's ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union, and announced that his own exile organization, ARDE, would challenge FSLN control of Nicaragua.
- In April 1982, a Honduran terrorist group linked with the Sandinistas at Cuban urging hijacked a Honduran aircraft en route to Tegucigalpa and demanded the release of political prisoners.
- In June 1982, Pope John Paul II wrote a letter to the Nicaraguan bishops expressing his opposition to the idea of a "popular church"--a Sandinista attempt to wrest away the power of the Catholic hierarchy and to promote certain pro-FSLN clergy. The government barred publication of the Pope's letter for one month.
- In July 1982, a bomb exploded in an airline office in San Jose, Costa Rica. The government of Costa Rica expelled three Nicaraguan diplomats for their role in the affair.
- In July 1982, Sandinista-supported terrorists bombed a power station in Honduras
- In August 1982, Sandinista organizations occupied more than 20 temples belonging to various Protestant sects on charges of involvement in "counterrevolutionary activity." Some temples remain in the regime's hands and members of these sects were expelled from the country.
- In August 1982, a pro-Catholic Church demonstration and a counter-demonstration by Sandinista groups in the city of Masaya led to several deaths. The government took over a Catholic school and expelled a priest from the country.
- In September 1982 a Honduran terrorist group with strong backing from Salvadoran insurgents kidnapped and held hostage over 100 Honduran businessmen in San Pedro Sula, seeking to force the government to release a captured Salvadoran guerrilla leader.

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-- In October 1982, Nicaragua refused the San Jose declaration as a basis for talks on reducing tensions with other countries in the area.

-- In November 1982, the Sandinistas cut off a \$5.1 million U.S. aid program for the Nicaraguan private sector.

-- In January 1983, Sandinista border authorities refused Conservative leader Miriam Arguello permission to return to Nicaragua from Costa Rica.

-- In January 1983, the Nicaraguan government rejected an invitation from its neighbor to observe the joint Honduran - U.S. military exercises known as "Ahuas Tara."

-- In January 1983, political leaders of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) outlined a 12-point peace plan to establish democratic freedoms in Nicaragua, giving Sandinista leaders two weeks to respond.

-- In February 1983, the Sandinista leaders turned the visit of Pope John Paul II into a political circus that was the shame of Central America. Sandinista police jailed Social Christian Party members that led people to see the Pope.

-- On February 18, 1983, the Honduran government invited the Sandinista Foreign Minister to inspect exile camps allegedly located in southern Honduras. On February 23, the Sandinista regime rejected the offer.

-- In March 1983, the FDN, noting that the Sandinistas had refused to respond to its January offer, outlined a 13-point philosophy and program to achieve democracy.

-- In April 1983, Eden Pastora released a letter announcing that he was in Nicaragua to begin military operations against the Nicaraguan government, and warning Cuban personnel that they will be subject to attack.

-- Every sector of Nicaraguan society joined the Nicaraguan revolution in 1979. Their goal was a pluralist, democratic society. The Sandinista leadership clique's betrayal of that revolution has forced the church, free labor, the press, and the private sector to live in an increasingly totalitarian and tyrannical society. It is no wonder that many Nicaraguans, including those who worked in, led, or fought for the revolution have fled the country or joined insurgent groups that now fight within Nicaragua.

-- In bringing its spurious and contrived allegations to the UN, the Sandinista government is only confirming to the world the failure of its leadership and the extent of the independent and nationalist opposition to its despotism.

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