

CIA/NICARAGUA

RATHER: Congress is not the only group in Washington that is split over covert action against Nicaragua's Sandinista government so, apparently is the Central Intelligence Agency, the group that is in charge of this covert activity. Robert Schakne explains.

SCHAKNE: There are deep divisions within the CIA's clandestine operations directorate over plans to expand covert paramilitary operations against Nicaragua. Senior career officers are warning that the plans pose a major danger of escalating the conflict. According to very reliable sources, CIA director William Casey proposed expanding the covert operation over the objections of a number of his senior advisers. These CIA officials say that rather than pressuring the Santinistas into making concessions, Casey's expanded covert operation is just as likely to provoke a dangerous military response, including deployment of Cuban combat troops into Nicaragua. The protesting CIA officers complain that Casey has drawn up no contingency plans for such an eventuality. The CIA dissidents say that intelligence professionals are being asked to run an operation that is not working very effectively now and has a high probability of failure in the future. Robert Schakne, CBS News, Washington.