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CENTRAL AMERICA  
/NICARAGUA

RATHER: The House of Representatives votes tomorrow on a bill to cut off covert U.S. aid to rebels fighting Nicaragua's Sandinista government. And there were predictions the vote may reaffirm last July's House decision to halt those funds. But because the Senate never passed the bill, covert aid to the Nicaraguan rebels continues. Evidence of the rebels' activity as seen in this exclusive footage shot by CBS News. Richard Wagner reports from Nicaragua.

WAGNER: The CIA-supported attack on the port city of Corinto, by far Nicaragua's most important link with the outside world, destroyed more than two million gallons of fuel. But fire fighters were able to contain the blaze, and most of Nicaragua's major oil storage facility escaped damage, as these pictures of the tank farm and adjacent cargo handling area show. Although oil deliveries have been suspended temporarily, other goods continue to move freely into Corinto--goods which Washington sources say sometimes include military hardware. Clearly consumer products are being supplied to Nicaragua by Soviet bloc nations. In the capital city of Managua, there are some shortages, but the essentials are available. If anything, the food situation here is better now than we observed it to be at mid-summer. Managua shoppers no longer have to stand in lengthy lines for meat and bread. And in the countryside the markets have more than enough food and clothing to sell. In the capital of this leftist revolutionary nation there are even a few touches of the good life Western style. Nicaraguan's wheels are still turning despite the CIA's intention to disrupt this country's economy. But Nicaragua's economic future is another matter. At best, it's shaky. There's perhaps a month's supply of oil on hand here--and the ongoing threat by anti-government forces to attack tankers which might resume oil deliveries. And from the all-important harbor of Corinto, site of more than 90 percent of Nicaragua's non-petroleum imports, there's just one bridge goods can pass over on their way to the mainland. The counter-revolutionaries have already tried and failed to destroy it. Should they ever succeed in cutting this critical connection, it would almost certainly spell economic disaster for Nicaragua. Richard Wagner, CBS News, Managua.