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NICARAGUA/
REBEL LEADER

BROKAW: In Central America, the Sandinista government of Nicaragua is concerned that what happened in Grenada may happen in Nicaragua, and this man, Commandante Zero, is one of the reasons for that concern. He is the leader of one of the groups of rebels fighting the Sandinistas, and right now he's in the United States trying to drum up financial support. Fred Francis has been following it.

FRANCIS: Eden Pastora has been waging a guerrilla war for six months in the southern jungles of Nicaragua, he says, without CIA money, to overthrow a Marxist regime which he helped bring to power. Ten days ago he left the bush to come here, to win public support for a war in which opinion polls say few Americans want to become involved. Pastora wants to show that he is a guerrilla commander with political skills, that he can move comfortably in the bright lights of congressional corridors and meet with congressmen who want no part of them. To Democrat Barnes of Maryland he said, 'I'm ready for dialogue, to use that gift of God, the spoken word.' It was the first time the 46-year-old Commandante had ever lobbied in Washington, and he clearly enjoyed it. He is not campaigning for CIA money, which makes him unique among revolutionaries who come here. PASTORA (Commandante from Nicaragua through translator): If we were getting CIA money, and I am aware of the fact that the CIA doesn't just give away pennies, we would now be surrounding Managua.

FRANCIS: Pastora is here for recognition. To declare that he's independent of East and West and he is campaigning against this man, Adolfo *Calerro, the guerilla commander from northern Nicaragua who is supported by the CIA. Last night Pastora snubbed *Calerro on a television show, because he said *Calerro's men are former soldiers of the dictator Somoza. It makes a big difference in the politics of war. While Pastora is received warmly by the foreign editor of the Washington Post, *Calerro is a favorite of White House officials. *Calerro has an easy way in Washington, winning support for his rebel army of more than 6,000 men. Next week Pastora will return to the Nicaraguan jungle, having declared his independence and tested his political talents, but without the new weapons which his own supporters say are needed more than a commandante who is recognized on American television. Fred Francis, NBC News, Washington.