

RADIO TV REPORTS, II

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PROGRAM	MacNeil/Lehrer Report	STATION	WETA-TV PBS Network
DATE	March 29, 1983	7:30 PM	CITY Washington, DC
SUBJECT	Full Text: Nicaragua		

ROBERT MacNEIL: The fighting in Nicaragua -- is it counter-revolution? Civil war? Or a clandestine plot by the United States?

[Up theme music].

Good evening.

The United Nations Security Council held its fifth day of debate on the fighting in Nicaragua today, leaving no one much wiser about what's really going on. Nicaragua's government continued to charge that the United States is backing the rebel attacks launched from bases in neighboring Honduras. Honduras denies that, but says Nicaragua is using Honduran territory to smuggle arms to rebels in El Salvador.

The Nicaraguans claim that the Reagan Administration is plotting to destabilize and overthrow their left-wing Sandinista government. U.S. spokesmen have not commented directly on this, but say the Nicaraguans are trying to cover-up the unpopularity of their own regime.

Behind all this welter of complicated charges, there is fighting between Nicaragua's 22,000-man army and the rebel force estimated to number anywhere from 1,500 to 5,000 strong. And, in the last week, that fighting has intensified, prompting Nicaragua to appeal to the Security Council.