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'Covert' War On Sandinistas Changing Hands

The death of two Americans in Nicaragua, killed in a helicopter crash during an attack on a Sandinista training camp, is evidence that the CIA-directed "covert" war against the Managua regime has been taken over by the private sector since Congress voted to halt aid to Nicaragua "contra" guerrillas.

Supplies for the anti-Sandinista forces and their families come from a variety of sources in this country ranging from the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church to U.S. politicians, evangelical groups and former military officers.

My associates Jon Lee Anderson in Central America and John Dillon in Washington have pieced together what's going on:

- The aid is being channeled through private foundations, councils and commissions, with the cooperation of influential friends in the Reagan administration and its "new right" supporters.

The goal is to replace the CIA's controversial undercover operation with a permanent, privately funded support program for Latin America's various anti-communist efforts.

- At least one shipment of medical supplies to Central America, airlifted from a Michigan military base, was paid for by the CIA, according to government sources. But the Defense Department has balked at requests from the private groups for airlifts of their supplies.

Despite a confidential National Security Council memo authorizing transport of private groups' supplies in U.S. planes on a "space available" basis, Pentagon lawyers hesitate to approve such flights because military airlifts of relief supplies are illegal except in cases of severe national disasters.

Sen. Jeremiah Denton (R-Ala.) has introduced an amendment to the defense authorization bill that would get around this obstacle by ordering the Pentagon to institute "such procedures as are necessary" for the airlifts.

- Key contra leaders identified the principal sources of supplies—and cash—since the CIA cutoff was ordered as CAUSA, a political front group for Moon's church, and an organization called Friends of the Americas Foundation.

The driving force behind the new foundation is Louisiana state Rep. Louis Jenkins. He has been hitching rides for his supplies on U.S. military transport planes. The first big load was flown to Honduras in May on a Mississippi Air National Guard flight arranged by Denton and Con-

servative Caucus director Andy Messing.

- Jenkins' effort is intended to provide nonmilitary supplies to families of two CIA-backed contra groups established in Honduras near the Nicaraguan border.

Officers of Misura, an Indian guerrilla group, said they got 2 tons of foodstuff by airlift in early July.

- CAUSA also has been sending relief supplies to the Indians, through Moon's Refugee Relief Freedom Foundation, Misura leaders said.

- Soldier of Fortune magazine has been providing medical supplies as well as military training to the contras. Another donor to refugees and families of contra fighters is evangelist Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network and its "700 Club" TV program.

- Sources in World Relief, which handles U.N. refugee aid programs in the area, said that the new relief supplies from the private sector are going to the several thousand contra refugees living near the Nicaraguan border outside U.N. camps.

World Relief limits its aid to refugees who live 25 miles from an international border, to avoid charges that it is taking sides in a political conflict. But Jenkins hinted that the international agencies provide assistance mainly to pro-Marxist refugees.