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TO: Peter Sullivan
Select Committee on Intelligence
U.S. Senate

Peter:

Attached is additional information on the Socialist International. If you have further questions the analysts will be able to discuss any more recent developments with you directly.

[Redacted]

Liaison Division

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The Socialist International

The Socialist International continues to take an interest in Central American developments despite some waning of enthusiasm for active involvement over the past year. SI leaders have adopted a more cautious approach because of the negative reaction of many Latin American governments to the Franco-Mexican initiative of 1981 (which the SI supported) and to SI offers to mediate, and because of the divisive effect of Central American issues within the SI itself. Moreover, partly due to argumentation provided by the United States, the SI as a whole has developed a more realistic understanding of the barriers to a settlement in Central America. During the past year, the organization has even reduced the number of "fact-finding" groups sent to the region. Nevertheless, the SI's declarations still show strong disapproval of US policy and a resistance to the idea of breaking completely with leftist forces. This is the case despite a growing concern among West European members about the radical tendencies of some of their Latin American colleagues within the SI, and a more critical attitude among some of the Latin American members toward the Sandinistas, the Salvadoran insurgents, and Grenada's New Jewel Movement.

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Key Players on Latin American Issues

Since their admission to the SI during the late 1970s, Latin American parties such as the Venezuelan Democratic Action, the Dominican Revolutionary Party, and the Jamaican People's National Party have played a key role in shaping SI positions on regional issues. In addition to those parties holding membership, moreover, other parties (including the Sandinistas from Nicaragua) attend SI gatherings as observers. In practice there is little difference between the rights of observers and of members, since both are allowed to participate in meetings.*

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The typical SI declaration on Latin America is a collage of contributions supplied by the regional parties, each of which concentrates on its own narrow interests. There are some leaders, however, whose interests and influence transcend their own countries. These include Jose Francisco Pena Gomez of the Dominican Republic (chairman of the SI's Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean), Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela, Daniel Oduber of Costa Rica, Michael Manley of Jamaica, and Anselmo Sule of Chile. In addition, the Sandinistas and Guillermo Ungo's National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) continue to influence directly the SI's views of US policy.

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Among West European leaders, the most active on Latin American issues has been ~~SECRET~~ Felipe Gonzalez, who has often

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attended socialist gatherings in the Western Hemisphere and is on a first name basis with most regional representatives. Gonzalez also chairs the Committee for the Defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution, a body formed in the afterglow of the Sandinista victory that has fallen progressively into disuse. After the Spaniards, the French Socialists and the West German Social Democrats are the most active. SI President Willy Brandt's personal interest in Central America has been sporadic and aimed mostly at papering over divisions within the SI. [redacted]

Formulation of Positions

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West European socialist leaders, in our view, are painfully aware of the fact that although they are the mainstays of the SI, they have been so preoccupied with other matters that they have been unable to control declarations on Latin America. Despite the disclaimers of Latin American parties, it is these parties that continue to shape resolutions pertaining to the region, largely by writing them in advance at meetings of the SI's Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean, chaired by Pena Gomez. Subsequent meetings of all the SI parties -- which have never been known for their thoroughness or procedural correctness -- allow little time for a West European contribution. Debate about Central America often begins (and sometimes ends) with statements by Sandinista representatives and Salvadoran leftist Guillermo Ungo who recently became one of the many vice presidents of the SI. [redacted]

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The West Europeans have tried to correct these problems by creating a new position at SI headquarters in London to coordinate Latin American matters. Luis Ayala of the Chilean Radical Party has already been appointed to this post, although his duties are still unclear. Since Ayala's party has on occasion displayed sympathy for the revolutionary left in Central America, he seems a doubtful candidate to play a moderating role. West European members have also told US officials frequently in private that they want the SI to stop admitting new members from the Third World -- yet at last year's Congress four parties from Latin America and the Caribbean were admitted, including the Puerto Rican Independence Party. [redacted]

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Relations Among Leaders

SI member parties still have differences about Central America, but they probably are closer to a consensus now than at any time since 1979. On Nicaragua, for example, none of the West European parties and few of the Latin American parties now take an avidly pro-Sandinista position. Reports from US diplomats in West European capitals indicate that most leaders have abandoned the earlier image of the Sandinistas as "new wave" socialist

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heroes and now see them as exasperating individuals who nevertheless must be dealt with to prevent their further radicalization. A cross-section of SI leaders from Western Europe and Latin America -- including Willy Brandt, Felipe Gonzalez, Carlos Andres Perez, and Daniel Oduber -- now seem to share this analysis. Even the French Socialists, erstwhile defenders of the Sandinistas, took a critical attitude during SI meetings this winter. Although the recent announcement by Managua scheduling elections for November has created a positive impression, the honeymoon period of 1979 is unlikely to be recreated completely.

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Among the West European SI parties, the Scandinavians (particularly the Swedes) and the Dutch probably still retain vestiges of the old romantic view of the FSLN. At the other end of the spectrum, the vigor of attacks by the Italian Social Democrats and the Portuguese Socialists against the Sandinistas has diminished somewhat in recent months. Mario Soares' preoccupation with his duties as Prime Minister may help explain this trend. On the other hand, both the Portuguese and the Italian PSDI may believe that they have already made their point. Gonzalez and Willy Brandt currently represent the middle-of-the-road position in the SI on Nicaragua.

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Last summer, Brandt, Gonzalez, Perez, and Oduber labored mightily over a letter advising the Sandinistas to implement their promises regarding democracy, political pluralism, and non-alignment. The letter was sent to Managua, but it was phrased as advice rather than as an ultimatum. The contents of the letter leaked despite efforts to keep it a secret, and it provoked considerable criticism from other SI parties, which had not been consulted.

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Later, during the fall, SI leaders became convinced that the United States was about to invade Nicaragua. They called media attention to the "danger" and even warned US officials against military action. The fact that the invasion did not occur prompted some leaders to declare later that they had prevented it.

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These two episodes during a period when many socialists were becoming more critical of the Sandinistas suggest the probable limits of SI action regarding Nicaragua. They indicate that despite concerns about Managua's policies, the SI is still unlikely to criticize the Sandinistas publicly; indeed, the acrimony surrounding the "ultimatum that never was" -- and the inability of the leaders to agree on a tough message -- may discourage further attempts in the SI context to jawbone the Sandinistas. Private bilateral talks between the FSLN and

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Individual parties rather than the SI seem more likely to produce the kind of tough warnings that proponents of Nicaraguan democracy desire. [redacted]

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The invasion scare, on the other hand, shows that the SI's growing disenchantment with the Sandinistas is not incompatible with a strong aversion to the perceived military pressure applied by the United States against Managua. [redacted]

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On El Salvador, the SI recently has avoided statements supporting a military victory by the insurgents, but almost all members continue to back a "negotiated settlement" that presumably would give some power to the extreme left. There have even been signs recently that the West German SPD has become impatient with Ungo and the MNR for their lack of influence on the FMLN and unwillingness to participate in elections. Italian diplomats have noted that, privately at least, the SPD may now look with some favor on Christian Democrat Jose Napoleon Duarte. The attraction of Duarte for the socialists, however, is that in their view he might be willing to engineer a peace settlement with the extreme left. The SI as a whole would find it difficult if not impossible -- particularly with Ungo still a major figure in the organization -- to abandon him and adopt its earlier villain, Duarte. Moreover, few SI parties seem likely to oppose resolutions calling on the US to cease military aid to the Salvadoran government. Even Mario Soares, the Sandinistas' nemesis within the SI, has told US officials that he opposes the military aspects of US policy in El Salvador. [redacted]

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Relations with Communists

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During the "Brandt era" (post-1976), meetings between SI officials and Communists to discuss world problems have become routine. SI leaders stress that they are opposed to Communism as a system, but they insist on the pragmatic necessity of dialogue to promote peace. In our judgment, many SI leaders have trouble taking Communism seriously in a Third World context. They especially tend to place Latin American Marxist-Leninists in a different category from the Soviet variety, seeing the former primarily as anti-colonialist nationalists who in the long run will be open to persuasion from more "sophisticated" social democrats like themselves. [redacted]

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Many of the socialists' recent efforts toward a Central American settlement have been focused on Fidel Castro. The discussions Castro has had over the past year with Pena Gomez, Oduer, French government representatives, and delegations of

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West German Social Democrats -- as well as with Felipe Gonzalez in Madrid last month -- support the judgment that most SI members envision Cuba playing a role in a regional settlement. [redacted]

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The willingness to carry on a dialogue with Communists and other extreme left forces, however, does not extend to allowing them membership in the SI. The SI's major faux pas in that direction -- admittance of Grenada's New Jewel Movement -- is a move that is unlikely to be replicated because of the negative fallout that it brought on the organization. In our judgment, it is unlikely that the SI will admit the Sandinistas as members, for example, unless Managua unequivocally changes course toward non-alignment and democracy. [redacted]

Positions on Elections

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As avowed supporters of social democracy, SI members favor free and fair elections, but the simultaneous emergence of the issue in El Salvador and Nicaragua places these parties in a delicate position. We believe that most SI leaders will welcome enthusiastically Managua's recent announcement that it is scheduling elections for November. They will undoubtedly claim that the decision vindicates their attitude toward the Sandinistas of public friendliness and private urgings toward liberalization. Recent statements by a French Socialist Party functionary (to US officials) and by an aide to a prominent West German Social Democrat (in the press) suggest that some parties may be leaning toward providing observers for the Nicaraguan balloting. US diplomats also report that the SI has encouraged a Nicaraguan opposition group to participate in the election. We suspect, however, that the socialists are seeking primarily to bolster the legitimacy of the election rather than to promote the cause of the opposition. [redacted]

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The elections in El Salvador pose a different kind of problem for the SI. The organization criticized the 1982 election, arguing that the influence of a rightwing government and the hostilities in the country prevented a fair result. Under the circumstances, no one in the SI really expected Ungo's party to participate, and the absence of the left reinforced the socialists' impression that the election was meaningless. Although the heavy turnout in El Salvador probably caused a few doubts in SI circles about the organization's position, the argument that the election would not end the war predominated. Most party leaders still maintain that only direct negotiations between the Salvadoran government and the FDR/FMLN can do that. [redacted]

We suspect that many SI leaders would prefer to present a uniform position supporting elections in both countries, but

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believe they are unable to do so unless Ungo and his associates participate in the Salvadoran balloting. A recent conversation between an Austrian Socialist and a US official indicates that some SI members have urged Ungo and his party to take part.

[redacted] In our view, however, this behind-the-scenes pressure -- though significant in itself -- probably does not foreshadow a new public stance supporting the Salvadoran electoral process. The FDR/FMLN apparently has no intention of letting the SI off the hook, and we doubt that in the final analysis SI leaders will challenge Ungo's old argument that MNR candidates would be murdered if they campaigned.

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Although the SI almost certainly will refuse to reverse its well-publicized attitudes toward Salvadoran elections, the organization's relatively low profile so far does suggest that its pre-election rhetoric could remain relatively muted this time. Once the election is over, chances are slim that the SI will take a positive position on the process unless Ungo sees a possibility of compromise with the government that ensues. Still, some of the more influential SI leaders might make an effort to abstain from negative comment if the Christian Democrats win and the SI's bete noir, the ARENA party, is excluded from the government.

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In sum, SI attitudes on the electoral processes in these countries are by no means uniform or free of bias. It seems likely at this point that at least some of the major SI parties will send observers to the Nicaraguan election, while most if not all will refuse to do the same for El Salvador. It is even conceivable, if SI leaders continue to perceive political "progress" in Managua, that they will send observers there under the SI's aegis. We believe that parties contemplating such a dual policy realize their vulnerability to charges of inconsistency. In order to avoid the many possible awkward questions about Salvadoran versus Nicaraguan democracy, civil liberties, pluralism, wartime conditions, etc. they probably will try to let the question of the Salvadoran elections die down before taking positions on Nicaragua. Rather than link the two cases themselves, we believe they will try to treat them as separately and unobtrusively as possible.

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Funding

The SI's annual budget of around \$600,000 is made up of contributions from member parties. The biggest contributors traditionally have been the West Germans, the Swedes, and the Austrians.

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[redacted] we have no reason to believe the situation has changed. As a result, the SI in many ways still displays a Central European orientation. [redacted]

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Publications

The SI publishes two periodicals, Socialist Affairs and the Socialist International Women Bulletin. The former, which is the SI's main media outlet, appears quarterly. The publication schedule for Socialist International Women Bulletin seems to vary. Both publications devote substantial attention to Latin American affairs through feature articles and news of regional parties. Articles in these publications are not restricted exclusively to the "orthodox" socialist view and some have presented the views of socialists who are critical of groups like the Sandinistas. [redacted]

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Assistance to Latin American Members

[redacted] We believe that current budget allocations are used almost exclusively for necessities such as running SI headquarters, paying the small staff, organizing meetings, and publishing SI periodicals. [redacted]

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SI leaders are quick to point out that organizations affiliated with individual West European parties that do fund travel and training-- such as the West German SPD's Friedrich Ebert Foundation -- have no direct connection with the SI. We suspect, however, that in some cases advice from party leaders who participate in the SI would have some influence with the foundations if those leaders decided to weigh in for or against specific projects. [redacted]

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