

11 August 1987

SUBJECT: Comments from San Jose on Resistance Leadership

1. On 8 August, [redacted] were met separately in an effort to obtain a better assessment of the Nicaraguan Resistance (NR) reaction and response re the peace plan signed by the Central American presidents in Guatemala. Salient points follow.

a. Immediate reaction by the NR directors is that they felt sold out by the Core Four presidents. Without a copy of what had been signed available to them until 1500 hours on 7 August, a mood of panic existed. Alfredo Calero and Aristides Sanchez favored cancellation of the scheuled press conference. [redacted] Alfredo Cesar Aguirre most strongly argued that the NR needed to face the presidents' decision to sign the peace plan. [redacted] Aguirre's position prevailed and [redacted] the press conference with over 50 members of the media went exceptionally well. The NR communique was released and served as the point of guidance for the NR reaction.

b. Although obvious uncertainty exists among the NR leadership re the peace plan, [redacted] all agreed that the immediate course of NR action must be to carefully analyze the plan by placing everything in an NR versus Government of Nicaragua (GON) perspective. The NR will then be able to mount an offensive by topic; i.e., amnesty, ceasefire, end to military assistance, etc. Already the NR's Commission for International Relations has been tasked with this effort as has [redacted] and the NR Office of Propaganda and Public Relations. [redacted] that one key instrument to mount the pressure on the FSLN within the peace plan context is by having Radio Liberacion immediately become insurrectional (calling for protests against the FSLN over holding of political prisoners; violation of basic liberties; calling for strikes; etc.) Radio Liberacion was encouraged to immediately take the offensive in pushing the GON to meet the terms of the peace initiative.) [redacted] intend to aggressively proceed with looking into reestablishment of their press rights in Nicaragua. We will be meeting [redacted] to explore specific ideas. As another aside [redacted] the matter was discussed with [redacted] late afternoon 8 August.

[redacted] and originate letters to [redacted]



Central American presidents advising of intentions to open "La Prensa" immediately without toleration of FSLN censorship. Barrios would then return ASAP to Managua for implementation. [redacted] has been promised financial support for Barrios' trip. Separately, Leon Nunez will place pending full-page ad in San Jose "La Nacion" highlighting FSLN human rights violations that have not been investigated.

c. Move to make the ties between Coordinadora and the NR overt. The directorate met with internal opposition Social Christian Adan Fletes night of 7 August. Fletes endorsed having Coordinadora move immediately to put the CON to the test by calling together a large public assembly of the political parties, demand the release of political prisoners (some 10,000), etc. [redacted] an idea to have joint Coordinadora-NR meeting outside Nicaragua public, as well as their intentions to coordinate their activities.

d. Concerning possible personal action by NR leaders, [redacted] Maria Azupena Ferrey and Cesar would consider returning to Managua to agitate if and when the amnesty conditions permit. Sanchez and Pedro Joaquin Chamorro expressed their desire to join the NR troops during a possible ceasefire. Calero abstained from making his preferences known.

e. The area which will require most careful analysis for the NR is naturally in the military area. Specifically, [redacted] believes that the NR must either move forcefully ahead with military actions or begin stockpiling for possible eventual needs given that 7 November is the de facto date used to determine outcome of the peace initiative.

2. [redacted]
[redacted] Ortega had found himself forced to sign the (altered) Arias peace plan realizing that the U.S. bipartisan peace plan was worse for the CON. [redacted] Arias had admitted [redacted] that Arias went to Guatemala with a greater resolve to have his peace plan signed knowing that the U.S. peace initiative had bipartisan support. The other side is that [redacted] believes the FSLN realizes that by at least signing one of the least threatening of the two peace initiatives, it is very unlikely that the U.S. Congress will supply new military funding.

3. [redacted] concern that Calero and to a lesser extent Sanchez will underestimate the political force of what the Central American presidents signed. [redacted] noted that perhaps the renewed emphasis on a political process will have the effect of threatening Calero and be a source of friction within the directorate.

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4. Although fairly upbeat over the work at hand represented by the peace plan, [redacted] realizes that the NR troops cannot be overlooked in any (in fact or perception) in the potential reconciliation effort. As such, [redacted] believes it important to travel to Honduras on 12 August, probably with Ferrer (after planned meeting with Arias on 10 or 11 August), even if for just a few hours. [redacted]

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