FREE (DONATIONS WELCOME)

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Chamorro's World Court Testimony

Former Contra Leader Condemns US Policy

In 1984, the Nicaraguan Government filed charges against the United States with the International Court of Justice (the World Court), charging that the US is waging a war of aggression against its people. Although the U.S. has refused to recognize the Court's jurisdiction in this case, a ruling is expected sometime in late February. The following is taken from an affidavit by Edgar Chamorro, formerly one of the seven directors of the FDN. The affidavit was submitted as evidence in its case by Nicaragua.

Chamorro is a former Jesuit priest who was a professor and Dean of the School of Humanities at the Central American University in Managua. He later left the priesthood and began a career in advertising. In 1977 the Somoza government appointed Chamorro to the Nicaraguan Mission to the United Nations. He left Nicaragua during the Sandinista Revolution in 1979 because of the violence, and did not return afterwards because he felt that the new government was too radical.

Chamorro is still opposed to the Sandinistas and would like to see them removed. His submission of this affidavit should not be interpreted as an act of support for the current Nicaraguan government, but simply as testimony about his experiences with the FDN.

5. Toward the end of 1979 I began to work with a group of Nicaraguan exiles living in Miami who, like me, opposed the policies of the new government. In 1980 we constituted ourselves as the Union Democratica Nicaraguense (Nicaraguan Democratic Union), or "U.D.N." Our principal activity was to write letters to members of the United States Congress urging them to vote against financial assistance for the Nicaraguan Government. We also held political meetings and rallies with other like-minded Nicaraguan exiles in Miami, and we set up regional committees in other cities of the United States where substantial numbers of Nicaraguans were residing. The

leader of our organization, with whom I worked closely, was Jose Francisco Cardenal. Cardenal had served briefly as Vice President of the Council of State, the legislature of the new Nicaraguan Government, but had resigned his post and left Nicaragua because of his disagreements with the new government's policies.

6. In 1981, the UDN underwent a transformation. During the first half of the year, Cardenal was contacted by representatives of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, and he began to receive monetary payments from these people. He was told that the U.S. Government was prepared to help us remove the FSLN from power in Nicaragua, but that, as a condition for receiving this help, we had to join forces with the ex-National Guardsmen who had fled to Honduras when the Somoza Government fell and had been conducting sporadic raids on Nicaraguan border positions ever since. Cardenal was taken to Honduras by his CIA contacts on several occasions to meet with these Guardsmen. The UDN, including Cardenal, initially opposed any linkage with the Guardsmen. Lt. General Vernon Walters, then a special assistant to the U.S. Secretary of State (and formerly Deputy Director of the CIA) met with Cardenal to encourage him to accept the CIA's proposal. We were well aware of the crimes the Guardsmen had committed against the Nicaraguan people while in the service of President Somoza, and we wanted nothing to do with them. However, we recognized that without help from the U.S. Government we had no chance of removing the Sandinistas from power, so we eventually acceded to the CIA's, and General Walters', insistence that we join forces with the Guardsmen. Some UDN members resigned because they would not associate themselves with the National Guard under any circumstances, but Cardenal and I and others believed the CIA's assurances that we, the civilians, would control the Guardsmen in the new organization that was to be created.

7. At that time, the ex-National Guardsmen were divided into several small bands operating along the Nicaragua-Honduras border. The largest of the bands, headed by Enrique Bermudez, a former Colonel, was called the 15th of September Legion. The bands were poorly armed and equipped, and thoroughly disorganized. They were not an effective military force and represented no more than a minor irritant to the Nicaraguan Government. Prior to the UDN's merger with these people, General Walters himself himself arranged for all of the bands to be incorporated within the 15th of September Legion, and for the military government of Argentina to send several army officers to serve as advisers and trainers. The merger of the UDN with the 15th of September Legion was accomplished in August 1981 at a meeting in Guatemala City, Guatemala, where formal documents were signed. The meeting was arranged and documents were prepared by the CIA. The new organization was called the Fuerza Democratica Nicaraguense (Nicaraguan Democratic Force) or, by its Spanish acronym, FDN. It was to be headed by a political junta, consisting of Cardenal, Aristides Sanchez (a politician loyal to General Somoza and closely associated with Bermudez) and Mariano Mendoza, formerly a labor leader in Nicaragua; the political junta soon established itself in Tegucigalpa,

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Honduras, taking up residence in a house rented for it by the CIA. Bermudez was assigned to head the military general staff, and it, too, was based in Honduras. The name of the organization, the members of the political junta, and the members of the general staff were all chosen or approved by the CIA.

8. Soon after the merger, the FDN began to receive a substantial and steady flow of financial, military and other assistance from the CIA. Former National Guardsmen who had sought exile in El Salvador, Guatemala and the United States after the fall of the Somoza Government were recruited to enlarge the military component of the organization. They were offered regular salaries, the funds for which were supplied by the CIA. Training was provided by Argentine military officers, two of whom — Col. Oswaldo Rivero and Col. Santiago Villejas — I got to know quite well; the Argentines were also paid by the CIA. A special unit was created for sabotage, especially demolitions; it was trained directly by CIA personnel at Lepaterique, near Tegucigalpa. Arms, ammunition, equipment and food were supplied by the CIA. Our first combat units were sent into Nicaraguan territory in December 1981, principally to conduct hit-and-run raids. The first military successes of the organization came in March 1982, when CIA-trained saboteurs blew up two vital bridges in northern Nicaraguan — at Rio Negro and Ocotal.

9. 1982 was a year of transition for the FDN. From a collection of small, disorganized and ineffectual bands of ex-National Guardsmen, the FDN grew into a well-organized, well-armed, well-equipped and well-trained fighting force of approximately 4,000 men capable of inflicting great harm on Nicaragua. This was due entirely to the CIA, which organized, armed, equipped, trained and supplied us. After the initial recruitment of ex-Guardsmen from throughout the region (to serve as officers or commanders of military units), efforts were made to recruit "foot soldiers" for the force from inside Nicaragua. Some Nicaraguans joined the force voluntarily, either because of dissatisfaction with the Nicaraguan Government, family ties with leaders of the force, promises of food, clothing, boots, and weapons, or a combination of these reasons. Many other members of the force were recruited forcibly. FDN units would arrive at an undefended village, assemble all the residents in the town square and then proceed to kill — in full view of the others — all persons suspected of working for the Nicaraguan Government or the FSLN, including police, local militia members, party members, health workers, teachers, and farmers from government-sponsored cooperatives. In the atmosphere, it was not difficult to persuade those able-bodied men left alive to

Edgar Chamorro

return with the FDN units to their base camps in Honduras and enlist in the force. This was, unfortunately, a widespread practice that accounted for many recruits. The FDN received all of its weapons from the CIA. In 1982, the CIA provided FAL rifles to all FDN combatants. These were acquired used from the Honduran army, which found these rifles expendable after the U.S. Government re-equipped the Honduran army with American-made M-16 rifles, thus enabling the CIA to purchase the FALs for the FDN. (Later, in 1983, the CIA acquired AK-47 assault rifles for the FDN.)

Training continued under the direction of Argentine military officers, although gradu-

ally the Argentines were replaced and CIA personnel performed all military training themselves. By the end of 1982, we were ready to launch our first major military offensive designed to take and hold Nicaraguan territory, which the CIA was urging us to do. Our principal objective was the town of Jalapa, in northern Nicaragua. More than 1,000 of our fighters were involved, and we used light artillery (mortars, supplied by the CIA) in combat for the first time. Although we inflicted casualties on the Sandinistas and caused substantial destruction in Jalapa and other neighboring towns, our offensive was repulsed and we were forced to retreat to Honduras and regroup without having accomplished our objective.

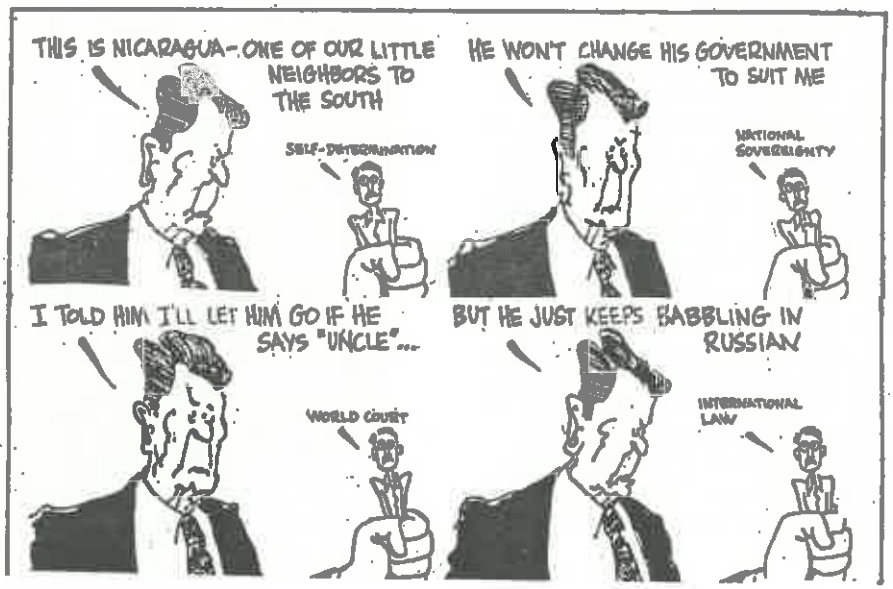
10. My specific job during the first year after the creation of the FDN was to serve as staff person to the political junta. I was based in Miami, where I did political propaganda work, wrote letters, organized rallies, set up committees in various parts of the United States and generally worked at building support for our cause within the United States. During this period Cardenal grew increasingly unhappy over his lack of influence within the FDN. He had frequent conflicts with the CIA personnel who were supervising and directing the FDN's political and military activities and found that he had no control over Bermudez or the other members of the FDN general staff, who answered only to the CIA. Eventually he quit the organization, returned to Miami and entered the insurance business.

11. In November 1982 I was approached by a CIA agent using the name "Steve Davis" and asked to become a member of the "political directorate" of the FDN, which the CIA had decided to created as a substitute for the "political junta". I had lunch with "Davis" at a restaurant near my home in Florida. "Davis" told me he was speaking in the name of the President of the United States, who wanted "to get rid of the Sandinistas." "Davis" explained to me that the FDN had a bad image in the U.S., and particularly among members of the Congress, because it was perceived as an organization of ex-National Guardsmen. He told me that in order to maintain the support of the Congress for the CIA's activities it was necessary to replace the political junta with a group of prominent Nicaraguan civilians who had no ties with the National Guard or the Somoza Government. "Davis" left without asking me to make a commitment. He told me I would be contacted again in the near future.

12. Later that month, "Davis" telephoned me and asked me to have dinner with him in his hotel suite at the Holiday Inn in Miami. When I arrived, "Davis" introduced me to another CIA man, who used the name "Tony Feldman". "Feldman" was introduced as "Davis" superior from Washington, and he acted as though "Davis" worked for him. "Feldman" told me that the CIA had decided on a seven-member political directorate for the FDN, because any larger group would be unmanageable. He said that I had been selected as one of the seven, and he asked me to accept. He told me that the U.S. Government was prepared to give its full backing to the FDN so that, by the end of 1983, we would be marching into Managua to take over the Nicaraguan Government. I was glad to see that the U.S. Government was committed enough to our cause to be taking such an active role, and I agreed to join the directorate they were creating. Over the next several days "Feldman" took control of the operation and moved the headquarters to the Four Ambassadors Hotel, also in Miami, where we met constantly. "Feldman" and his assistants discussed with me possible candidates for the directorate, but it was obvious that they had already decided who they wanted. The most important thing, "Feldman" emphasized, was that the directorate be formed immediately. He told me that the CIA was worried that the Congress might enact legislation to prohibit the use of U.S. funds for the purpose of overthrowing the Nicaraguan Government, and that the creation of a political directorate composed of prominent, respectable civilians

might persuade Congress not to enact such legislation.

14. The press conference was held the next day, December 8, 1982, at the Hilton Conference Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. We filed in and introduced ourselves as the directorate of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), and I read our statement of principles and goals. A CIA officer named "George" had rewritten our original version of the statement, and I had to read his words. In January 1983, at the instruction of CIA agent "Thomal Castillo," we put out a 12-point "peace initiative" drafted by the CIA, which essentially demanded the surrender of the Sandinista government. I thought this was premature, but "Castillo" insisted that it be done to get the FDN favorable publicity. Also at this time, another Nicaraguan civilian — Adolfo Calero — who had just left Nicaragua, was added to the directorate. Calero had been working for the CIA in Nicaragua for a long time. He served as, among other things, a conduit of funds from the U.S. Embassy to various student and labor organizations. "Feldman" had told me that the CIA was bringing him out of Nicaragua, where he had run the local Coca-Cola distributorship, to serve on the FDN's political directorate. Despite these public relations efforts, the U.S. Congress enacted a prohibition on CIA efforts to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government, although it appropriated millions of dollars to the CIA for clandestine military and paramilitary activities against the Nicaraguan Government. Before this prohibition was enacted, the CIA agents we worked with spoke openly and confidently about replacing the government in Managua. Thereafter, the CIA instructed us that, if asked, we should say that our objective was to interdict arms supposedly being smuggle from Nicaragua to El Salvador. If any of us ever said anything publicly about overthrowing the Nicaraguan Government, we would be visited immediately by a CIA official who would say, "That's not the language we want you to use." But our goal, and that of the CIA as well (as we were repeatedly assured in private), was to overthrow the Government of Nicaragua, and to replace the Sandinistas as a government. It was never our objective to stop the supposed flow of arms, of which we never saw any evidence in the first place. The public statements by U.S. Government officials about the arms flow, we were told by the CIA agents with whom we worked, were necessary to maintain the support of the Congress and should not be taken seriously by us.



15. From January 1983 through June 1984, I worked for the FDN full time and remained a member of the political directorate until November 1984. The CIA paid me a salary of $2,000 a month to support myself and my family, plus expenses. Similar arrangements were made with the other FDN "directors". I was put in charge of public relations for the FDN. We wanted to set up highly visible headquarters in a shopping center or office building, but the CIA did not like the idea. They said it would become a target for demonstrations or violence. They insisted that we take an elegant suite at the David Williams Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida which the CIA paid for.

16. At the end of January of 1983, I was instructed to relocate to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to establish and manage the FDN's communications office. The CIA station in Tegucigalpa, which at that time included about 20 agents working directly with the FDN, gave me money, in cash, to hire several writers, reporters, and technicians to prepare a monthly bulletin called "Comandos," to run a clandestine radio station, and to write press releases. I was also given money by the CIA to rent a house, office space and automobiles and to obtain office supplies and communications equipment. I also received money from the CIA to bribe Honduran journalists and broadcasters to write and speak favorably about the FDN and to attack the Government of Nicaragua and call for its overthrow. Approximately 15 Honduran journalists and broadcasters were on the CIA's payroll, and our influence was thereby extended to every major Honduran newspaper and radio and television station. (I learned from my CIA colleagues that the same tactic was employed in Costa Rica in an effort to turn the newspapers and radio and television stations of that country against the Nicaraguan Government). I worked very closely in all of these matters with several CIA agents based in Tegucigalpa, but most closely with one of the deputy station chiefs, named "George", who had drafted the FDN's first press statement in Miami and was than transferred to Tegucigalpa to continue working with us. Together with "George," and subject to his approval, I planned all the activities of my communications office and prepared a budget. The budget was reviewed by the CIA station in Tegucigalpa and, if approved, sent to Washington to obtain the necessary funds, which were always provided to me in cash.

17. I was not the only member of the directorate to prepare a budget in this fashion. Indalecio Rodriguez, who was put in charge of "civilian affairs", which meant assistance for Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras or family members of our combatants, worked with his CIA "adviser" in the same manner in which I worked with "George". Adolfo Calero and Enrique Bermudez worked on the military and logistics budget. This budget was not as large as one might suppose. The FDN never received money to purchase arms, ammunition or military equipment. These were acquired for us and delivered directly to us by the CIA. One of the senior agents at the CIA's Tegucigalpa station, known to us as "the Colonel", was an

expert in these matters, and he, together with his assistants, determined what we needed and obtained it for us, including: arms, ammunition, uniforms, boots, radio equipment, etc. As long as I was in Honduras (until June 1984), the FDN never acquired its own arms, ammunition or other military equipment. We were just the end receivers. The main items in the military and logistics budget that Calero and Bermudez worked on were things that could be acquired locally, such as food for our men, for which money had to be obtained from the CIA. Calero and Bermudez were our main links with the CIA. They met constantly with the CIA station chief and his principal deputies.

18. Most of the CIA operatives who worked with us in Honduras were military trainers and advisers. Our troops were trained in guerrilla warfare, sabotage, demolitions, and in the use of a variety of weapons, including assault rifles, machine guns, mortars, grenade launchers and explosives, such as Claymore mines. We were also trained in field communications, and the CIA taught us how to use certain sophisticated codes that the Nicaraguan Government forces would not be able to decipher. This was critical to our military operations because it enable various units, or task forces, to communicate with each other, and to coordinate their activities, without being detected by the Sandinistas. Without this communications capacity, our forces inside Nicaragua would not have been able to coordinate their activities with one another and they would have been unable to launch effective strikes at the designated targets. Even more critical to our military activities was the intelligence that the CIA provided to us. The CIA, working with U.S. military personnel, operated various electronic interception stations in Honduras for the purpose of intercepting radio and telephonic communications among Nicaraguan Government military units. By means of these interception activities, and by breaking the Nicaraguan Government codes, the CIA was able to determine -- and to advise us of -- the precise locations of all Nicaraguan Government military units. The information obtained by the CIA in this manner was ordinarily corroborated by overflights of Nicaraguan territory by U.S. satellites and sophisticated surveillance aircraft. With this information, our own forces knew the areas in which they could safely operate free of government troops. If our units were instructed to do battle with the government troops, they knew where to set up ambushes, because the CIA informed them of the precise routes the government troops would take. This type of intelligence was invaluable to us. Without it, our forces would not have been able to operate with any degree of effectiveness inside Nicaragua. The U.S. Government also made it possible for us to resupply our troops inside Nicaragua, thus permitting them to remain longer inside the country. Under cover of military maneuvers in Honduras during 1983, U.S. armed forces personnel constructed airstrips, including the one at Aguacate, that, after the CIA provided us with airplanes, were instrumental in resupplying our troops.

19. The CIA was also directly involved in our military tactics. The agency repeatedly ordered us to move our troops inside Nicaragua and to keep them there as long as possible. After our offensive at the end of 1982 was turned back, almost all of our troops were in Honduras and our own officers believed that they needed more training and more time before they would be ready to return to Nicaragua. The FDN officers were overruled by the CIA, however. The agency told us that we had to move our men back into Nicaragua and keep fighting. We had no choice but to obey. In 1983, the CIA instructed us not to destroy farms or crops because that would be politically counterproductive. In 1984, however, we were instructed to destroy export crops (especially coffee and tobacco), and to attack farms and cooperatives. Accordingly, we changed our tactics in 1984.

20. In July 1983, we were visited in Tegucigalpa by Duane Clarridge, the CIA official, based in Washington, who was in charge of the agency's military and paramilitary activities against Nicaragua. At that time we were introduced to Clarridge as "Maroni". During a meeting with the political directorate, Clarridge told us that the CIA had decided that something must be done to cut off Nicaragua's oil supplies, because without oil the Nicaraguan military would be immobilized and its capacity to resist our forces would be drastically reduced. Clarridge spoke of various alternatives. He said the Agency was considering a plan "to sink ships" bringing oil to Nicaragua, but that one problem with this plan was that if a ship belonging to the Soviet Union were sunk it could trigger a serious international incident. Clarridge said that the CIA was also considering an attack on Nicaragua's sole oil refinery, located near Managua. According to Clarridge, however, the refinery was located in a densely populated area, and the civilian casualties resulting from such an attack would be politically counterproductive. Finally, Clarridge said that the Agency had decided on a plan to attack the oil pipeline at Puerto Sandino, on Nicaragua's Pacific Coast, where the oil tankers delivering oil to Nicaragua discharge their cargo.

21. In September 1983, the CIA blew up the pipeline at Puerto Sandino, just as Clarridge had advised us it would. The actual operatives were Agency employees of Hispanic descent, referred to within the Agency as "Unilaterally Controlled Latino Assets" or UCLAs. These UCLAs, specially trained underwater demolition experts, were despatched from a CIA "mother ship" that took them to within striking distance of their target. Although the FDN had nothing whatsoever to do with this operation, we were instructed by the CIA to publicly claim responsibility in order to cover the CIA's involvement. We did. In October, CIA UCLAs attacked Nicaragua's oil storage tanks at Corinto, also on the Pacific Coast. This was a combined sea and air attack involving the use of rockets. It was a complete success; all of the tanks were destroyed and enormous quantities of oil were consumed by fire. Again, the CIA instructed us to publicly claim responsibility, and we did. Later in October, there was another UCLA attack on Puerto Sandino, which again resulted in the demolition of the oil pipeline. We again claimed responsibility per instructions from the CIA. Subsequently, the UCLAs attacked Nicaraguan Government military facilities at Potosi and radio antennas at Las Casitas. We again were told to claim responsibility and we did.

22. We had a second visit from Clarrridge in October 1983. Clarridge told us that the Agency had decided that the FDN needed a single spokesman in order to more effectively persuade the Congress to continue supporting the CIA's activities against Nicaragua, and that Calero should be the one. He asked us to make Calero the head of the political directorate and we did so without objection. Clarridge also told us the the Agency wanted us to launch another major offensive with the objective of seizing and holding Nicaraguan territory, no matter how small. He said that as soon as our hold on that territory was secured, we should establish a provisional government, which the United States and its Central American allies would promptly recognize as the legitimate Government of Nicaragua.

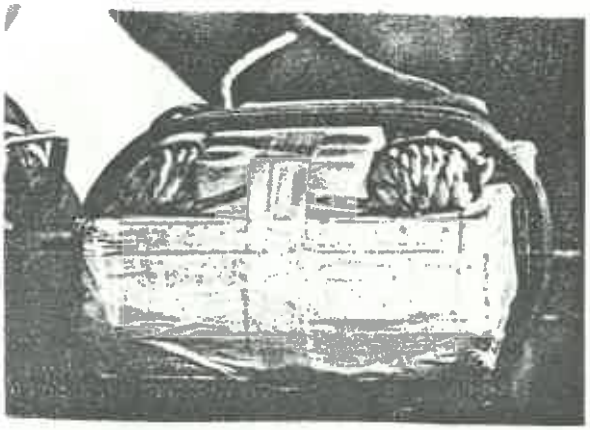
23. The offensive was launched at the end of 1983, after the Congress had appropriated — openly for the first time — $24,000,0000 to the CIA for military and paramilitary activities in and against Nicaragua. While our forces inflicted greater casualties on the government's troops and on civilians, and destroyed more property than in previous attacks, we nevertheless failed to take or hold any Nicaraguan territory and the majority of our troops were forced to return to their bases in Honduras.

24. On January 5, 1984, at 2:00am, the CIA deputy station chief of Tegucigalpa, the agent I knew as "George", woke me up at my house in Tegucigalpa and handed me a press release in excellent Spanish. -I was surprised to read that we — the FDN — were taking credit for having mined several Nicaraguan harbors. "George" told me to rush to our clandestine radio station and read this announcement before the Sandinistas broke the news. The truth is that we played no role in the mining of the harbors. But we did as instructed and broadcast the communique about the mining of the harbors. Ironically, approximately two months later, after a Soviet ship struck one of the mines, the same agent instructed us to deny that one of "our" mines had damaged the ship to avoid an international incident.

25. In May 1984 the U.S. Congress voted not to provide more assistance to the CIA for military and paramilitary activities against Nicaragua. Many of us became worried about receiving continued support from the U.S. Government and we expressed these concerns to our CIA colleagues in Tegucigalpa. We were repeatedly assured by the station chief and his deputies, in the strongest possible terms, that we would not be abandoned and that the U.S. Government would find a way to continue its support. At around this time we were visited by Ronald F Lehman II, a Special Assistant to the President of the United States who was serving then on the National Security Council. Mr. Lehman assured us that President Reagan remained committed to removing the Sandinistas from power. He told us that President Reagan was unable at that time to publicly express the full extent of his commitment to us because of the upcoming presidential elections in the United States. But, Mr. Lehman told us, as soon as the elections were over, President Reagan would publicly endorse our effort to remove the Sandinistas from power and see to it that we received all the support that was necessary for that purpose. We received a similar assurance of continued U.S. Government support, notwithstanding the refusal of the Congress to appropriate more funds, from Lt. Col. Oliver North, another official of the National Security Council.

26. It was still important to these officials, and to the CIA, to obtain additional appropriations of funds from the Congress, and they had not abandoned hope that the Congress could be persuaded to resume funding our activities. Our CIA colleagues enlisted us in a effort to "lobby" the Congress to resume these appropriations. I attended meetings at which CIA officials told us that we could change the votes of many members of the Congress if we knew how to "sell" our case and place them in a position of "looking soft on Communism". They told us exactly what to say and which members of the Congress to say it to. They also instructed us to contact certain prominent individuals in the home districts of various members of Congress as a means of bringing pressure on these members to change their votes. At various times Calero, Callejas, Zeledon, Salazar, Rodriguez and I participated in these "lobbying" activities.

27. A major part of my job as communications officer was to work to improve the image of the FDN forces. This was challenging, because it was standard FDN practice to



Bill Schaap

Underwater explosives used by CIA to sabotage Nicaraguan ports.

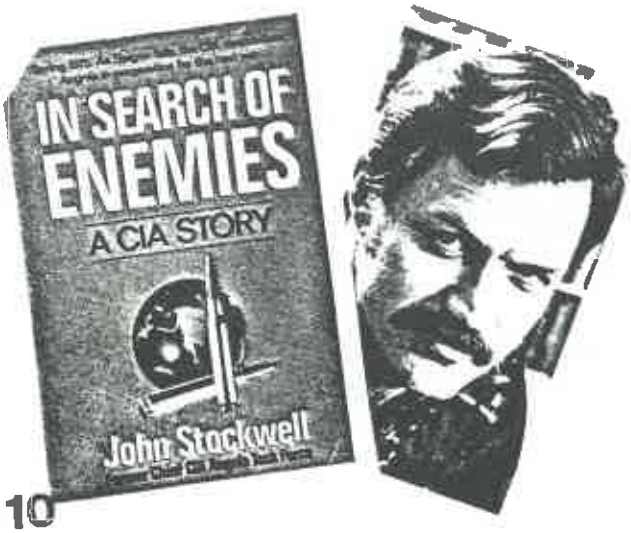
(Cont. P. 17)

Book Review: In Search of Enemies by John Stockwell

After working in its clandestine operations for 13 years, John Stockwell left the CIA in 1977. When he resigned, Stockwell testified before Senate subcommittees for five days, supplying information about the agency's activities, especially the Angola operation. Knowing that Senate intelligence committees could never discipline the CIA, Stockwell had little hope that any measures would be taken to correct or curb the agency. He wrote *In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story* (New York, 1978) to inform the US public about CIA violations and abuses.

In Search of Enemies covers primarily the CIA covert war in Angola, from July 1975 to April 1976. Stockwell was then chief of the Angola task force, spending most of his time at CIA headquarters, but also traveling in Angola. He relates how he became involved in the operation and how the CIA managed to squander $31.7 million of US taxpayers' money in a futile and destructive venture in a country of no strategic importance for the US.

Stockwell has a phenomenal memory and took copious notes. His descriptions of the running of the operation are full of details about meetings and conversations, information about the structure and functioning of the CIA bureaucracy, and anecdotes of his Washington and Angolan experiences. He also provides enough historical background to give a rough idea of Angola's political situation at the time.



After hundreds of years of Portuguese colonial subjugation, Angola was to become independent in November 1975. The three main nationalist movements of the country were the FNLA (National Front), the MPLA (Popular Movement), and UNITA. The three parties had agreed to compete in elections in October 1975, a month before independence. But in February 1975 the FNLA attacked the MPLA in the capital Luanda and in Northern Angola. The FNLA had been encouraged by the US and neighboring Zaire, and helped by $300,000 in CIA money.

The CIA gave money and arms to UNITA and the FNLA because the MPLA had at one time been allied with the Soviet Union and because its leaders were Marxists. It did not matter that the MPLA was not considered hostile to the US, that the US Consul-General of Angola judged the MPLA to be the most capable of governing, nor that Soviet influence was minimal, mainly moral support. The CIA's job was "to prevent an easy victory by communist-backed forces." To do this it eventually recruited mercenaries from France and Brazil, and mobilized the South African military as an ally. In the end, it failed.

The CIA's party line was not to be challenged. Stockwell describes an early options paper of July 1975. Options ranged from giving some financial support for political activity, to supplying the FNLA and UNITA for a year (with $40 million). No mention was made of staying out of the conflict or of pushing for a negotiated settlement. Those few within the agency who, like Stockwell, pointed out the flaws in the operation were told to keep silent.

Stockwell shows that the CIA was not only inept at making the right decision, but also unable to act effectively. The program was doomed from the beginning: its goal was not to "win", but to keep others from an "easy victory". And in doing the wrong thing, the CIA did it badly. For instance, it delivered into Angola hundreds of mortar rockets and machine guns, thousands of anti-tank rockets and almost 21,000 rifles, mostly obsolete, for UNITA and FNLA forces which never amounted to more than 10,000.

How did the CIA manage to keep its paramilitary action in Angola secret? This was a major effort of the agency, especially since the Church Senate committee investigations were going on at the time. Stockwell explains how all arms were funneled to Angola through Zaire, so that the US would not be implicated. Also, propaganda experts spread lies by planting articles in Zairian newspapers; these were recopied on agency cables, and secretly passed on to recruited journalists in major news services who then got them into the world press.

Senators on influential committees who might have challenged or exposed the program were given incomplete and inaccurate briefings by Director William Colby, with the understanding that they would not expose the information they had received. Speaking out would be seen as a serious breach and threaten their standing with their colleagues. Thus Colby managed to mislead and muzzle Congress at the same time. After one hearing, during which Representative Pike proposed an investigation into the Angolan operation, Colby and African Division Chief Potts answered that it would be dangerous to have hearings during an ongoing operation — "Better not jiggle the hand of the surgeon during an operation," they had said, proud of their metaphor.

Potts also spent hours rewriting reports, finally putting them into memoranda without headings or addresses. These "soft" files, the real records of the war, could not be disclosed through the Freedom of Information Act or Congressional investigations; they could be legally destroyed at any time.

In Search of Enemies provides an inside look at how a CIA covert action operates. Stockwell points out that it is these covert actions which are the main activity of the agency. Intelligence gathering is secondary and often inaccurate. We see the people who blithely make decisions which lead to untold suffering halfway around the world, buzzing around their bureaucratic honeycomb making arrangements for arms shipments and bribes, and constantly lying, even to each other. Stockwell comments:

Habitually, case officers lie to all non-CIA acquaintances as they live their cover stories: they lie to agents they are recruiting; to State Department colleagues and ambassadors about controversial operations; and at a certain level to the US Congress, to cover up those operations ... In fact there were several levels of untruth functioning simultaneously, different stories for different aspects of our activities ... By this point in our careers, after years of role-playing cover stories, we would not falter as we switched from one story to the next ... Significantly, we did not think of these things as lying. Potts did not think of himself as lying when he was giving the working group a "party line", and Colby might have passed a lie-detector test while he was giving the Senate essentially false briefings. (178-179)

Neil Golder

The CIA's "Freedom Fighters" from Angola to Nicaragua
a talk by
John Stockwell
Wednesday, Feb 12, at 8 pm
Baker 200

Attack on Guazapa

A Personal Account by a US Journalist in El Salvador

Wendy Shaull, a photographer and writer, spent 11 months of 1984 interviewing and photographing civilians and combatants living in the guerrilla-controlled zones in El Salvador. The following account was part of a presentation she gave at the Unitarian Church in Ithaca on Dec. 16, 1985.

August 28, 1984

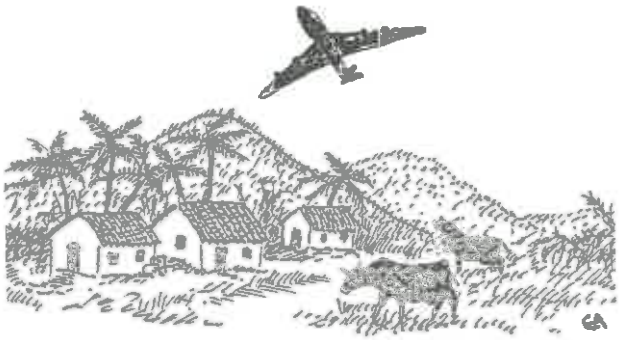
It is 6:30 am, I am having my breakfast of coffee and cigarettes as the Salvadoran family I spent the night with is having theirs: cold beans and tortillas. Suddenly mortars begin to fall. This time they are falling on us not near us - an important distinction in this warring country. We dash out of the little adobe house (two of the women with us have babies in their arms) and run through bombed out houses to a wooded area with a rocky hill behind us. The women and children lie on the ground close to the hill, and the rest of us crouch when the mortars fall nearby.

An hour later, after the mortars stop, we return to the house and a young boy comes to report on the damage and casualties. All he knows is that the town, of about 350 people, has been heavily mortared and that a 26-day old baby has been hit and taken to the "hospital" - an adobe house like all the rest. I have been living in this zone for several months, photographing and documenting the people who live here so I go to the hospital to photograph the baby. She is so tiny I think of her as being a doll and it's only stuffing that I see. Part of her arm is missing, she is bleeding from head and abdominal wounds. She will not live much longer.

Later on I go to a nearby house where the mother is dressing her baby for the funeral. The mother will die tomorrow along with 50 others, but that is tomorrow.

I return to the house where I've been staying. It is deserted. I pack my hammock and sheet in my knapsack and listen to the sounds of battle getting closer. I decide that I'd better get out of this place and walk through what is now a nearly deserted village. One person still there tells me that we are being invaded by the government forces, they are just over the hill coming in this direction, the masses have left in another direction and I should join them. It all seems too disorganized to me so I decide to walk two hours to another locale where I hope the people will be better organized.

There is a CESSNA 0-2A* airplane overhead slowly circling the village. When I reach the mountain pass I meet several militias. One of them has a high powered radio and we overhear the government forces' command asking for an A-37, a jet fighter-bomber, to come bomb the village. We hear someone on the other end say, "OK... But I can't seem to locate one." The other responds angrily, "What do you mean you can't find an A-37? I want one immediately!" We wait. I wait because I want to photograph if they bomb the town. Almost an hour and a half later an A-37 appears. We hear the order to bomb the hospital (they knew of it) and then another voice interrupts saying, "No, don't bomb anything - our troops are too close." I decide that I'd better get going to that other locale.



When I arrive at the locale everyone is making last minute preparations for an evacuation. Leading the evacuation is Maria, president of the region. She explains that the Atlacatl soldiers, the most elite battalion of the Salvadoran army, have taken over the village where I had just been, have entered an area north of us and we are going to go in another direction, hopefully away from the Atlacatl.

By 9:00 pm a group of 45 have formed a column preparing for a long march. There is a one and a half year old baby, seven other children between the ages of 4 and 10, two very old people, and the rest of us in between. Two-pound bags of sugar are rationed out to several in the group. We form smaller units within the group for better organization and security and off we go. Our column moves slowly, we cannot use our flashlights, the path is rugged and covered with stones and mud (it is the rainy season), we move silently up and down the mountains, cross knee-high rivers with our boots on, it rains, we hold onto the knapsack in front of us. We inch our way across a terrain we cannot see until we reach the Sumpul River at 3:00 am.

The river is full and flowing fast; dangling high above us is a hanging bridge called The Hammock. It is suspended by thin cables wound around trees on either side, only the cable on the right is not as tight as the one on the left, the wooden boards on which you step here and there leave gaping holes of blackness and the roar of the river below. It is frightening to cross it in daytime, at night it is terrifying. It takes us an hour to cross the river.

At 5:30 am we arrive in a little abandoned town and we rest while someone goes to explore the area. Two others go back to the bridge to see what has happened to the larger group. Within the hour an A-37 comes screeching low over our heads. We jump up and run to the closest ditch; the bombs are falling just down the hill. We go back to our knapsacks wondering anxiously whether the attack was a back up for a military movement or just an unrelated bombing. Silence. Our scout does not return. We eat a handful of sugar and relax a little.

Suddenly the burst of M-16 rifles on automatic breaks through the silence. Some of us grab our things and we run like crazy. Knapsacks and clothes hanging under trees to dry have been left behind. Maria manages to keep us together and leads us running while the bullets fly behind our backs.

I have lost track of time. We crawl through open areas, pull ourselves up hills with the help of branches and roots. The guns stop. There is silence again. We don't know where the soldiers are, but we know that they are somewhere nearby. We crawl and climb. The little baby cries and a woman bordering on hysteria screams, "Shut her up, shut her up!" The sun is out; it is very hot. We have no water but that doesn't matter; all that matters is getting away, not getting caught by the soldiers. We keep moving.

We are now moving through tall dry grass on the side of a mountain. The sound of helicopters erupts through the silence. They approach. They are coming in our direction. We scramble like animals trying to dig our way under the grass. I look at the faces around me, they are terrified. I am afraid of looking up into the sky pretending that if I don't see the helicopters they won't see me. Minutes pass, we have to move, get out, do something. Maria tells us to start moving, hunched over, in a column. We come to a low rock wall. The tall grass is everywhere and there is nowhere to hide.

The helicopters circle just to the other side. We hear screaming, bullets flying, automatic weapons, grenades, and the helicopters circling and circling. There is nowhere to go. "Sit down", Maria whispers, "and don't move!" We sit, our backs to the wall. I decide that this is where I'm going to die. The thought of death itself is not so bad, really. If I'm going to die, I'm going to die, there is nothing I can do about it. But then that nothing-I-can-do-about-it begins to anger me. The thought of dying defenseless, of being killed like an animal, a trapped animal, infuriates me. Here we are trapped on the side of this mountain and men, women and children are being gunned down like animals by the most professional of the US-trained Salvadoran troops and their American made helicopters. Those men firing and throwing out the grenades know we are unarmed, know we are civilians, know there are children. They can see us. We sit waiting and listening. The helicopters continue to circle; each time their circle grows a little and we know it is a matter of minutes before they find us.

Off the horizon we see big black clouds moving in our direction. We begin to whisper to them, "move clouds, come goddam it, get over here!" Others are praying to God to bring the clouds, praying for rain because we know that helicopters don't fly in bad weather, will not fly in rain storms. The clouds move faster in our direction, the roar of helicopters gets nearer and then the sky is black and a torrential rain falls. The helicopters go, the guns stop, and I kiss each drop that falls on my lips. It pours and we lick the rain giggling madly as it bathes us. Maria whispers, "OK, let's go! Everybody as low to the ground as possible." We slither and run through the wet grass, over the hill and down we go. That night we stop in some woods, lie down in the rain and sleep.

Thus ended the second day of that invasion. We had ten more yet to live through - ten more days of walking and running

through streams (so as not to leave footprints), crouching in thick vegetation, hands and arms scraped and punctured by thorned branches that we'd clung to so as not to fall or slide in the mud, sleeping in cornfields with the rain falling on us, licking sugar out of our hands until it ran out, sitting in the damp undergrowth staring in to nothing, and listening, always listening. We were living like hunted animals.

On the 12th day we were found by two men who had been searching for us to tell us that the invasion was over. We yelled and laughed and pranced down the mountain. At the first village we put all our money together, bought a pig and had a feast. We bathed, washed our clothes and slept in dry places. Then began the long march back. Two hours before we got to the hanging bridge we came upon the remnants of those who had not survived - a hand holding onto a rock, bones, just bones. Ten days of sun, rain and vultures. This must be a child's cranium, it's so small; the others, men or women, who knows? We stared with glazed eyes, our feelings numbed by the last 12 days. Bones in flight I thought as I passed them by. The vultures were still flying overhead, we ignored them and walked on.

graphics by Eleanor Alexander

Guazapa Update

On January 10, 1986, the Salvadoran Government began a counterinsurgency program in the guerrilla-controlled zone of Guazapa. 1000 civilian women and men who were on their way to a meeting with ArchBishop Rivera y Damas in Central Guazapa were surrounded by the Salvadoran army. 60 people have disappeared, and 30 were killed as a result of government bombing. 50 arrived safely at the Cathedral and asked for refuge, and 46 were detained at the San Francisco Sugar Refinery. Neither the Press nor the Red Cross have been allowed into the area. Although the story came out over the AP and UPI wires, it has not been covered in the New York Times or the Washington Post.

Please call McHugh's office (273-1388) to urge him to join other members of Congress in pressuring both the Salvadoran Embassy in the US and the US Embassy in El Salvador to do something to guarantee the safety of the civilians in Guazapa. Local media should also be contacted and urged to cover the story.

Argentina Update

The 25th of October, 1985, President Raul Alfonsin declared a State of Siege in Argentina. This dramatic action appeared to be necessary to counteract right-wing extremists who had begun a campaign of bombings and threats. For once, a state of siege was used in defense of democracy.

Under Alfonsin, Argentina's new democratic Government decided, possibly for the first time in the history of the continent, to prosecute the state criminals responsible for seven years of abuses during the military regime.

From March 1976 to September 1983, three military juntas governed Argentina (each one composed of three generals representing the Army, Navy and Air-force, Videla/Agosti/Massera, Viola/Graffigna/Lambruschini, Galtieri/Dozo/Amaya). In a trial that began last April, these leaders of the previous military regime answered to the charges against them in the Palace of Justice in Buenos Aires.

Since the beginning of its mandate in December 1983, President Raul Alfonsin has declared that the legitimacy of his government is based on punishment of those responsible for the abuses of the past regime. One of the first acts of his Government was the abolition of the so called self-amnesty law, issued by the military during its last days in power. The President, however, put some precise limits on judicial action. The position of the Government is that only those who are ultimately responsible have to be prosecuted. Lower ranking military personnel can be tried only if they "over-executed" the orders issued to them, or if they executed orders that implied obviously atrocious or aberrant crimes.

The leaders of the guerilla groups active in the 70's were also considered penally responsible. Seven persons considered leaders of radical organizations stood trial. Ricardo Obregon Cano, former constitutional governor of the city of Cordoba recently was condemned to 10 years in jail for his activities in the Montoneros.

It is now clear that Alfonsin did not seek a radical purge of the military, but favored a very gradual and cautious restructuring. This political realism prompted violent polemics in Argentina, and met the opposition of Human Rights organizations, in particular of the "Mothers of Plaza de Mayo".

The 9 generals were under trial by presidential decree, and responded to accusations of murder, illegal arrest, torture and other very serious crimes. A presidential commission working on the problem of the disappeared persons has collected an enormous amount of information in preparing dossiers about 8960 "desaparecidos" (the real number could be considerably higher). Of these, 709 particularly well documented cases were selected to be used as evidence in the trial. (the work of the commission has been published in Argentina in a remarkable book called "Nunca mas" or "Never Again").

The nine generals were supposed to be tried by the supreme Council of the Armed Forces (this decision also prompted opposition), but in September 1984, the military acquitted itself, declaring that all decrees, directives and operational orders of the three Military Juntas were to be considered "flawless".

The Argentinian Government had then to take the matter to a civil court. The Trial started in April. For months over 800 witnesses testified during public sessions. Enormous shock has been created in the country by the exposure of "the greatest and most savage tragedy in the history of Argentina".

On Wednesday, September 18, Prosecutor Julio Strassera concluded a summation of the State's case against the nine officers with a ringing "Never again!" The packed courtroom burst into applause and was ordered cleared by the presiding judge. On Monday, December 9, the court found five of the nine defendants guilty. The six-member Federal appeals court sentenced two former junta members (including former president Gen. Jorge Videla) to life terms, while three former officers were given sentences ranging from four and one half to seventeen years. This trial represented a critical test for the capacity of the Argentinian Democracy to create a real "State of Right", and give to its citizens confidence in the legal instruments of the Republic. It was not a test without risks, as the recent campaign of bombings and the resulting state of siege demonstrated. of siege demonstrated.

Emilio Massera

Jorge Videla

It is doubtful that the trial has provided any sort of "national catharsis" or that it has satisfied the thirst for justice of the majority of Argentinians. Human Rights groups were angered by the acquitals, and Strassera was studying the possibility of appealing the light sentences. Given the enormity of the crimes committed, and the limited scope of judicial action, the outcome of the trial must be seen as less than satisfactory. Human rights advocates, however, applauded the court's decision to continue processing the more than 1,700 cases pending against 200 to 400 lower ranking officers.

- P.L.

(Cont. from P. 9)
kill prisoners and suspected Sandinista collaborators. In talking with officers in the FDN camps along the Honduran border, I frequently heard offhand remarks like, "Oh, I cut his throat." The CIA did not discourage these tactics. To the contrary, the Agency severly criticized me when I admitted to the press that the FDN had regularly kidnapped and executed agrarian reform workers and civilians. We were told that the only way to defeat the Sandinistas was to use the tactics the Agency attributed to "communist" insurgencies elsewhere: kill, kidnap, rob and torture.

28. These tactics were reflected in an operations manual prepared for our forces by a CIA agent who used the name "John Kirkpatrick." I assisted "Kirkpatrick" in translating certain parts of the manual, and the manuscript was typed by my secretary. The manual was entitled: "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare." It advocated "explicit and implicit terror" against the civilian population, including assassination of government employees and sympathizers. Before the manual was distributed, I attempted to excise two passages that I thought were immoral and dangerous, at pages 70 and 71. One recommended hiring professional criminals. The other advocated killing some of our own colleagues to create martyrs for the cause. I did not particularly want to be "martyred" by the CIA. So I locked up all the copied of the manual and hired two youths to cut out the offending pages and glue in expurgated pages. About 2,000 copies of the manual, with only those two passages changed, were then distributed to FDN troops. Upon reflection, I found many of the tactics advocated in the manual to be offensive, and I complained to the CIA station chief in Tegucigalpa. The station chief defended "Kirkpatrick" and the manual, and no action was ever taken in response to my complaints. In fact, the practices advocated in the manual were employed by FDN troops. Many civilians were killed in cold blood. Many others were tortured, mutilated, raped, robbed or otherwise abused.

29. As time went on, I became more and more troubled by the frequent reports I received of atrocities committed by our troops against civilians and against Sandinista prisoners. Calero and Bermudez refused to discuss the subject with me, so I went straight to our unit commanders as they returned from combat missions inside Nicaragua and asked them about their activities. I was saddened by what I was told. The atrocities I had heard about were not isolated incidents, but reflected a consistent pattern of behavior by our troops. There were unit commanders who openly bragged about their murders, mutilations, etc. When I questioned them about the propriety or wisdom of doing those things they told me it was the only way to win this war, that the best way to win the loyalty of the civilian population was to intimidate it and make it fearful of us. I complained to Calero and Bermudez, and to the CIA station chief about these activities, but nothing was done to stop them. In June 1984, Clarridge visited us again. Although he was well aware of the terrorist tactics the FDN troops were employing, he spoke warmly to Bermudez: "Well done, Colonel," I remember him saying, "Keep it up. Your boys are doing fine." It was the last time I saw him. Shortly thereafter, I acknowledged to a newspaper reporter that our troops had killed some civilians and executed some prisoners, though I tried to explain these practices as best I could. Calero told me I could no longer work in Honduras and I was reassigned to the local FDN committee in Miami. I was given nothing to do and I no longer had much interest in working for the FDN, or to be more accurate, for the CIA.

30. When I agreed to join the FDN in 1981, I had hoped it would be an organization of Nicaraguans, controlled by Nicaraguans, and dedicated to our own objectives which we ourselves would determine. I joined on the understanding that the U.S. Government would supply us the means necessary to defeat the Sandinsitas and replace them as a government, but I believed that we would be our own masters. I turned out to be mistaken.

The FDN turned out to be an instrument of the U.S. Government and, specifically, of the CIA. It was created by the CIA, it was supplied, equipped, armed and trained by the CIA and its activities -- both political and military -- were directed and controlled by the CIA. Those Nicaraguans who were chosen (by the CIA) for leadership positions within the organization -- namely, Calero and Bermudez -- were those who best demonstrated their willingness to unquestioningly follow the instructions of the CIA. They, like the organization itself, became nothing more that executioners of the CIA's orders. The organization became so thoroughly dependent on the U.S. Government and its continued support that, if that support were terminated, the organization would not only be incapable of conducting any military or paramilitary activities against Nicaragua, but it would immediately begin to disintegrate. It could not exist without the support and direction of the U.S. Government.

31. I became more and more distanced from the FDN in the second half of 1984. I had, for all intents and purposes, ceased to be a part of the organization. Finally, on November 20, 1984, I received a letter stating that the political directorate had decided to relieve me of my duties. I made no protest.

Edgar Chamorro, Sept. 5, 1985

Protest Contra Aid

The $27 million in "humanitarian" aid to the contras approved by Congress last June will run out on March 31. President Reagan has announced that he plans to ask Congress for $100 million for another year, 60% of which would be military aid. The formal request can be expected anytime in the next few weeks, in order to keep the aid coming continuously. In an effort to stop such aid before it can begin, the next few weeks should also be a time for writing letters to Congressional representatives and Senators to tell them that US tax money should not be used to wage this war against the Nicaraguan people.

Senator Daniel Moynihan
442 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-4451

Rep. Matt McHugh
336 Cannon Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-6335

Rep. Stanley Lundine
2427 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-3161

Senator Alphonse D'Amato
432 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-6542

Rep. Sherwood Boehlert
1641 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-3665

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
(202) 456-7639

Pledge of Resistance

On the Saturday following the Reagan Administration's formal request to Congress for contra aid, all concerned people from the Ithaca area are asked to meet at noon in front of the IRS office at the Babcock Building (Terrace Hill, South Aurora St.). From there, we will proceed through the Commons to the Post Office, where we will mail postcards to our Congressional Representatives. Please bring signs or banners.

Calendar

Feb. 6 8:00 pm	"Simplemente Jenny": a film about women in Latin America. Uris Auditorium
Feb. 10 5:00 pm	CUSLAR Introductory Meeting One World Room, Anabel Taylor Hall
Feb. 12 8:00 pm	John Stockwell; Author and Ex-CIA member will speak. 200 Baker Auditorium
Feb. 13 8:00 pm	Video - Protest in Chile Uris L04
Feb. 20 8:00 pm	"Nicaragua: The Dirty War" and "Retratos": a film about Puerto Rico. Uris Auditorium
Feb. 22 10:30 am and Noon	Moosewood Brunch: Great food and entertainment with Puerto Rican singer and guitarist, Luis Rojas. Tickets at CUSLAR and Moosewood, $7:50 and up.
March 1 8:00 pm	Andean Music Concert with Jach'alaya Anabel Taylor Auditorium
March 5 7:30 pm	"Foreign Debt, Human Rights, and Democracy": a talk by Perez Esquivel, Argentinian 1980 Nobel Prize Laureate Kaufman Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall
March 6 8:00 pm	"Hour of the Furnaces, Part I": a historical film about Argentina, Uris Auditorium
March 13 8:00 pm	"The US, Nicaragua, and the World Court: The Legal Issues": a talk by Harvard Law Professor Abram Chyes, who is representing Nicaragua in its World Court case, Anabel Taylor Auditorium
March 17 5:00 pm	"The US, Nicaragua, and the World Court: The Ethical Issues": a talk by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Anabel Taylor Auditorium

The Committee on U.S./Latin American Relations (CUSLAR) is a Cornell University-based group which works in Ithaca and the sur- rounding area to promote a greater understanding of Latin America and the Caribbean. We are particularly concerned with the role of the United States in influencing the social, political, and economic conditions of the region.

The CUSLAR office is in G-29 Anabel Taylor Hall at Cornell. (256 7293) The office is open to the community on weekdays. Weekly meetings are held on Mondays at 5pm in Anabel Taylor.

Andean Music Performance
by Jach'alaya
Saturday, March 1, at 8pm
Anabel Taylor Auditorium

Jach'alaya is formed by five musicians of Andean music currently living in Ithaca. The first part of their program consists of traditional ritual music. In the second part of the evening, the group will perform from its repertoire of Creole contemporary and secular songs. The wide range of wind and percussion instruments of pre-Colombian origin played by Jach'alaya include the family of panflutes, notch-hole flutes, and transverse flutes. These traditional instruments are used together with string instruments: guitars and charangos. Members of the group perform in indigeneous Andean costumes, and their performance is accompanied by a slide show of the various festivals and dances reflected through the music.

Jach'alaya take their name from a sacred mountain in the Lake Titicaca region. For those who attended their last appearance in the Ithaca area, the spiritual power and artistic excellence of the performance were inescapable.

CRESP
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Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14853

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