

## LATIN AMERICA

# U.S. moves toward Nicaragua invasion

*Carter, from Tokyo, confirms intervention is administration policy*

Following a rout at the special Organization of American States meeting where Latin American nations lined up solidly against the U.S. proposal for an OAS military intervention into Nicaragua to prop up the rule of Anastasio Somoza's National Guard, the Carter administration has begun laying the diplomatic groundwork for unilateral U.S. military intervention into Nicaragua.

The pretext for unilateral U.S. intervention, as in the Dominican Republic in 1965, will apparently be a request for "aid" by a non-existent U.S.-backed front. This was the policy indicated by President Carter's statement, upon his arrival in Tokyo on Monday, that

***The Somoza family and its personal military machine is and has been nothing other than the enforcer for the Central American branch of what is known internationally as Dope, Incorporated.***

while the "U.S. doesn't want to impose a peace on Nicaragua," if the "government of national reconciliation calls for a peacekeeping force, it would be necessary to establish one."

The "government" Carter was referring to was not the Sandinista-backed Reconstruction Government which has the backing of every major Nicaraguan political tendency opposed to the Somoza regime. It is a nonexistent entity proposed by Secretary Vance days earlier at the OAS meeting. Administration officials have stated they have no plans to recognize the already formed Reconstruction Government since its failure to include elements of the Somoza regime—representatives

of the dictator's Liberal Party or the hated, mercenary National Guard—deprives it of a "broad base."

Through its tactic of forcing Somoza to "hand over" power to a "legitimate" successor, the U.S. is moving rapidly to create such a front, to head off snowballing support among Latin American regimes for the Reconstruction Government. Sandinista forces are pushing forward from the south and north toward Somoza's capital, Managua, and fighting rages in the city itself. With Somoza's forces "virtually defeated," in the words of one spokesman, six Latin American governments have already broken relations with Somoza, and Panama, Cuba, and Grenada have granted recognition to the new government. Thus, what U.S. officials refer to as the "danger" of a chain reaction of recognitions of the new government is growing.

### **Intervention signals**

With U.S. policy being guided by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, an old hand at U.S. military interventions (including the Dominican Republic operation and the 1967 coup in Greece), the signals are clear that the Carter administration is determined on a course of a military bail-out of Somoza's machine, though not of the dictator himself.

On Thursday, June 21, Secretary of State Vance went before the OAS to ask for OAS aid in the creation of a government of national "reconciliation," and an "interamerican peace-keeping force to help restore order." Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda responded immediately to Vance. Defending the Nicaraguan population's right to overthrow tyranny, Castañeda described the rampages of Somoza's forces as reminiscent of the "last days of Nazi fury." Mexico is "categorically opposed" to any OAS intervention of any kind; Castañeda said, and presented a counter-resolution stressing the need for "scrupulously respecting the principle of non-intervention" into internal affairs.

In three days of the session following Castañeda's speech, not one Latin American stood to support Vance's proposed resolution.

On Saturday, the Mexican proposal with minor modifications was passed by the body. Vance's proposals were quietly withdrawn without a vote.

Undeterred, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown appeared on NBC's Issues and Answers the next day repeating that an interamerican peace-keeping force in Nicaragua "is still conceivable."

On Monday, Carter "volunteered" U.S. aid.

On Tuesday morning, Brown, CIA Director Stansfield Turner, National Security Council Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, Vice President Walter Mondale and Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher met to decide a course of action on Nicaragua following the OAS defeat. The decision: Somoza must go.

That afternoon, Undersecretary of State for Latin America Viron Vaky testified before a House committee that "no possible negotiation, mediation, or solution" exists while "he [Somoza] remains in power."

By Wednesday, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Calderón Fournier announced Somoza could possibly resign within "hours," and a new government named. Two likely candidates to replace Somoza are reported in the Mexican press, both from Somoza's Liberal Party and the Nicaraguan "Congress."

—Gretchen Small

## United Brands: drug runners behind Somoza

In a gruesome scene brought vividly into millions of American homes by television cameras last week, a Nicaraguan National

ABC reporter Bill Stewart, casually lifted his semi-automatic rifle, and opened fire at point-blank range. Sickening as this spectacle was, it was merely another "incident" among countless others like it that have occurred daily in Nicaragua during recent months. The sight of an unarmed man having his skull blasted open by National Guard executioners has been witnessed by untold thousands of Nicaraguans. What happened to Bill Stewart has also happened to thousands of Nicaraguans.

In the city of Esteli two months ago, when the National Guard recaptured it from the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), wounded Sandinistas as well as civilians were dragged from their beds in the local hospital and shot in the street. Those unable to walk were shot in their beds or on the operating table.

Then the hospital's doctors were herded into the street and machine-gunned.

What happened to Bill Stewart also occurred in Chinandega, Masaya, Leon, Rivas, and the *barrios* of Managua during the past few days and weeks. Wherever the National Guard of Anastasio Somoza has passed, in cities and hundreds of smaller villages, there are almost no males between the ages of 16 and 25. Those that did not join the FSLN have been executed as rebel "suspects." "We do not take prisoners," one National Guard officer told reporters earlier this month.

In some areas, civilians remaining in towns recaptured by the Guard were simply rounded up at gunpoint and shot, under the rationale that they must be Sandinista "sympathizers." In other villages, Somoza's troops entered chanting anti-Somoza slogans—anyone who came out to greet them was gunned down. In yet another case, a town's professionals—lawyers, doctors, business—were lined up for inspection. Those with dirt under their fingernails were charged with having collaborated with the Sandinistas, and shot.

Entire villages have been wiped off the map with napalm. Thousands of women and children have been slaughtered during National Guard saturation bombings and artillery barrages using nerve gas, 500-pound bombs, and antipersonnel shrapnel shells known as "pac-pac" bombs. In the capital of Managua, most of which the FSLN controls, three-quarters of the population has been deliberately left without water, food, electricity, and over 60,000 have been left homeless as the National Guard has razed entire neighborhoods. The Sandinista-held eastern portion of Managua has been under incessant shelling for almost a week. Epidemics of gastroenteritis and polio are now spreading through the city.

As Mexican Foreign Minister, Jorge Castañeda, asserted at last week's OAS meeting, Somoza reminds the world of the worst days of the "Nazi fury."

All told, since the FSLN began its latest campaign almost one month ago to rid their country of the Somoza dictatorship, at least 25,000 civilians have died, and 150,000 have been left homeless.

Yet this devastation is only the most recent in *decades* of similar Somoza actions against Nicaragua. Since it was installed in power 46 years ago with the help of a U.S. Marine occupation force, the oligarchic Somoza family has brutally enforced the most backward social and economic underdevelopment imaginable on this country of little more than two million inhabitants. In 1933, Gen. Anastasio Somoza, the late father of the current dictator, minced no words in describing the lengths his regime would go to in order to maintain its feudal order: "I will pacify this country," he said, "even if I have to kill every other Nicaraguan to do it." His son is now attempting to fulfill that promise.

These atrocities are committed with the full complicity of the Carter administration. They have nothing to do with making Central America "safe for democ-