

## Contra Victims, 1987

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Here are a few cases from the WFP account:

"Bocana de Paiwas, Zelaya (province), Nicaragua — At 7 am, on May 25, a milk truck on its daily run from Rio Blanco to Bocana de Paiwas was stopped by a group of 15 contras. The truck was carrying 20 civilian passengers in addition to milk picked up from local farms for delivery to Matiguas . . .

"(After the contras shot Julian Flores Amador in the back), Geronimo Narvi Jarquin, 20, also demobilized from military service in January 1987 and also wearing military boots, was taken away with his hands tied behind his back. The contras also forced Alonzo Gonzalez Hernandez, 35, to go with them . . .

"Five days later, a farmer found the mutilated bodies of Geronimo and Alonzo four miles off the road from where the milk truck had been ambushed . . . Family members who saw the bodies said there were visible signs of torture. Both bodies had been stabbed repeatedly and Alonzo's fingernails were pulled out and his tongue cut out . . .

"Geronimo is survived by his wife, Valentina Gonzalez Miranda, and two daughters ages two and four. Alonzo had seven children ages two to twelve from a first marriage as well as an infant by his second wife."

Or there is this:

"Mulukuku, Zelaya — At 5 pm on May 21, a group of contras ambushed three unarmed construction workers driving a water truck . . . Guillermo Mendoza, 21, and Gilberto Espinoza, 30, a co-worker, were wounded in the ambush but managed to escape. (Truck driver Francisco Javier Martinez Lopez, 27, wounded in the foot,) was taken from the truck and tortured. A health worker who saw the body told WFP that he had been bayoneted five times and both legs broken in addition to being shot several times.

"The letters F and D and a third, indiscernible letter were carved on one arm. Mendoza, hiding on the side of the road, heard Martinez's cries for mercy . . ." Although the WFP account does not point this out, it is clear the third letter carved on Martinez's arm was an N

— for FDN, the contra force set up in 1981 by the CIA, according to the account given to the International Court of Justice in The Hague by Edgar Chamorro, one of its founding members. Chamorro quit the FDN in 1984, disgusted by its bestial atrocities.

Women, children, the sick and wounded, medical personnel and the clergy, are accorded special protection under international law and the military laws of all civilized countries. The WFP account and all previous accounts indicate the contras practice indiscriminate terror against all civilians, including these protected persons.

For example, the WFP account states that on May 5, near Kurinwasito, in central Zelaya province, a group of contras surrounded the house of Daisy Luquez Jarquin, 18, and her widowed mother. "Residents of Kurinwasito speculate that Daisy Luquez was kidnapped because someone in the contra group had a sexual interest in her. 'She had nothing to do with the government; they only wanted her because she was young and pretty,' sources claimed."

At dawn on May 18, a large group of contras attacked a small farm cooperative 40 miles northeast of Boaco. "Maria Cristina Varela Hernandez, 20, who had been grinding corn for tortillas, ran into the bedroom to round up her brothers and sisters to flee. She told WFP that her 6 year-old brother, Guillermo Jose, was shot to death as he stepped outside the house. (Her father) was also killed as he tried to cover the escape of the children. As Maria Cristina ran, she too was shot in the shoulder (and) forced to drop the baby . . . two contras entered

the house, ransacked it, stole 300,000 cordobas, found some gasoline and set it on fire . . ."

The WFP report adds to what we know from an account in Reed Brody's *Contra Terror in Nicaragua: Report of a Fact-finding Mission September 1984-January 1985*. Brody, former Assistant Attorney General for the state of New York, had his report independently confirmed by Americas Watch, the New York Times and CBS.

Mirna Cunningham, a nurse of African and Miskito Indian ancestry, has since been named Nicaraguan Minister for Special Zone 1 in northern Zelaya. She told Brody that contras kidnapped her and several other nurses: "At this house, they had us there for seven hours. During those hours we were raped for the first time. While they were raping us they were chanting slogans . . .

"(Later) they also said they had Americans who came in and trained them for these camps that were deeper in Honduras . . . They offered us Camel cigarettes for example, as proof they were smoking good cigarettes. And they said they were getting canned food, good clothes and things like that as a way to tell us why they were fighting.

"They made us walk to the river again and cross the river, on our way back we were raped again, by all the ones who were taking us to the village . . ." This is what President Reagan's "humanitarian aid" really means.

The latest WFP document, Brody's study and numerous other verified accounts all indicate that we are not dealing with individual acts of criminality, such as might occur in any war, but with a systematic campaign of terror aimed primarily against civilians. It is a campaign initiated, organized and maintained by the U.S.

government.

**The Nicaraguan contras are following a policy of systematic terror against civilians which violates international law. Since the largest contra force, the misnamed, Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), was admittedly set up by the CIA in 1981, it is the U.S. government that bears the ultimate responsibility. The people of the U.S. have a right to the final say in the matter.**



**Friends and family of 32 civilians killed when their civilian truck was hit by a contra-planted mine. Twelve children, twelve women and eight men were killed.**

The International Court of Justice in The Hague, the legal authority of the United Nations and the world's highest body defining international law, ruled June 27, 1986, that this U.S. terror campaign is an "unlawful use of force" which violates the UN Charter. On November 3, 1986, the UN General Assembly, by a 94-3 vote, called for "full and immediate compliance" with the World Court's ruling. The fact that the lawless Reagan Administration decided to boycott the World Court in no way alters or affects its ruling.

The terror campaign against Nicaragua violates all four Geneva Conventions of 1949. It also violates U.S. military law: any military officer or enlisted man found guilty of the crimes described above would be severely punished by a court-martial. What about the military commander-in-chief who laid down the policy under which these crimes are committed?

Paragraph 498 of the U.S. Army Field Manual 27-10, The Law of Land Warfare, states that any person who carries out an act that is a crime under international law is liable to punishment and (Para. 500) conspiracy, direct incitement and attempts to commit war crimes are in themselves war crimes.

President Reagan, reportedly asked what he would do if contra funding were cut off, replied that "we can't let them starve to death." One feels the majority of people in the U.S. will emphatically disagree once they know the truth. The contras are the tools used by a conspiracy that is counter-humanity as well as counter-revolutionary. The WFP documents this.

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*Tom Foley is on the staff of the People's Daily World.*