

Chapter 2, Footnote 44
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

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March 13, 1985

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	
REVIEWED BY <u>F. Smith</u>	DATE <u>9-10</u>
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TO: Mr. Pat Buchanan
Assistant to the President
Director of Communications
The White House

FROM: S/LPD - Johnathan S. Miller

SUBJECT: "White Propaganda" Operation

Five illustrative examples of the Reich "White Propaganda" operation:

- Attached is a copy of an op-ed piece that ran two days ago in The Wall Street Journal. Professor Guilmartin has been a consultant to our office and collaborated with our staff in the writing of this piece. It is devastating in its analysis of the Nicaraguan arms build-up. Officially, this office had no role in its preparation.
- In case you missed last night's NBC News with Tom Brokaw, you might ask WHCA to call up the Fred Francis story on the "Contras." This piece was prepared by Francis after he consulted two of our contractors who recently had made a clandestine trip to the freedom fighter camp along the Nicaragua/Honduras border (the purpose of this trip was to serve as a pre-advance for many selected journalists to visit the area and get a true flavor of what the freedom fighters are doing; i.e., not baby killing). Although I wasn't wild about the cog line, it was a positive piece.
- Two op-ed pieces, one for The Washington Post and one for The New York Times, are being prepared for the signatures of opposition leaders Alphonso Rubello,

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 in letter pro. to / E.O. 12958
 by B. A. 207, National Security Council

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Adelpho Callero and Arturo Cruz. These two op-ed pieces are being prepared by one of our consultants and will serve as a reply to the outrageous op-ed piece by Daniel Ortega in today's New York Times.

- Through a cut-out, we are having the opposition leader Alphonso Rubello visit the following news organizations while he is in Washington this week: Hearst Newspapers, Newsweek Magazine, Scripps Howard Newspapers, The Washington Post (Editorial Board), and USA Today. In addition, the CNN "Freeman Report," the "McNeil-Lehrer Report," the "Today Show" and CBS Morning News have been contacted about the availability of Mr. Rubello.
- Attached is a copy of a cable that we received today from Managua. The cable states that Congressman Lagomarsino took up Daniel Ortega's offer to visit any place in Nicaragua. You may remember that Ortega received a good deal of publicity on his "peace" proposal when he stated that he welcomed visits by Members of Congress, stating that they would be free to go anywhere they wished. As the cable notes, the Congressman's request to visit an airfield was denied. Do not be surprised if this cable somehow hits the evening news.

I will not attempt in the future to keep you posted on all activities since we have too many balls in the air at any one time and since the work of our operation is ensured by our office's keeping a low profile. I merely wanted to give you a flavor of some of the activities that hit our office on any one day and ask that, as you formulate ideas and plans of attack, you give us a heads-up since our office has been crafted to handle the concerns that you have in getting the President's program for freedom fighters enacted.

Attachments:

1. Op-ed piece by Professor Guilmartin.
2. 85 Managua 1523.

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The Wall Street Journal
March 11, 1985
Editorial Section, Page 28

Nicaragua Is Armed for Trouble

By Jason P. COWLEY JR.

Remember last year's controversy over the alleged delivery of MiG fighters to Nicaragua? Once it was established that what actually had been delivered were helicopters and not MiGs, almost no one bothered to ask what if that, sophisticated, well-armed, long-range helicopter gunships could do to the armed forces of Central America or what their arrival might represent in terms of Sandinista strategy.

Shortly before the U.S. election, media reports surfaced of a Soviet freighter bound from the Black Sea with a cargo of large boxes that, according to reconnaissance satellites, included those of a type used to ship jet fighter aircraft. Though reports were equivocal, concern mounted about the cargo and its destination. The most likely candidate was supersonic MiG-21s: high-technology warplane tails west of a U.S. news source.

As the ship neared Nicaragua's Pacific port of Corinto (and as the U.S. election neared) speculation ran at fever pitch.

The bubble of fevered speculation burst with an anticlimactic "pop" when Sandinista Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto announced, in a statement more or less confirmed by official U.S. spokesmen, that the crates contained not MiGs, but other arms including helicopters. The news was all the more anticlimactic because an earlier shipment of Soviet helicopters apparently had been unboxed, all but unreported, on Nicaragua's Atlantic coast the previous week. The helicopters were Mi-14 "Hinds," the world's most heavily armed, sophisticated and fastest gunship. It is likely the second shipment of crates contained additional Hinds. The crates received scant attention, as did the possibility that the crates might also contain Czech L-29 jet trainers. The U.S. intelligence community in the Reagan administration saw an almost audible sigh of relief.

They Looked Foolish.

their power and rear blades of 18, making helicopter operations a marginal proposition, particularly in summer. Forced by limited power to fly low along valleys, helicopters are vulnerable to plunging fire from the peaks and ridgesides above. Afghanistan is not a fair test for the Hind.

But over rolling jungle terrain at low altitudes, the Hind is in its element. Its impressive underwing ordnance (it can carry in excess of 2,000 pounds of 57-mm rockets, bombs and precision-guided antitank missiles) and its sophisticated turret-mounted rotary (2.7-mm) gun make it a flexible and thoroughly capable weapons system. Its fire-control system is both sophisticated and reliable. Unlike Western gunships, it can carry from six to eight troops.

Fitted against the flexible and maneuverable aircraft defenses of the non-communist Central American powers, the Hind repre-

sents an armed vehicle spearheading an army larger than that of any of its neighbors, equipped by a sophisticated ground-based anti-aircraft system, including SAM-7s, radio-directed 57-mm guns and highly mobile ZSU 23-4s, the implications of their arrival in Nicaragua are chilling. With the delivery of high-performance MiGs for top cover and deep interdiction strikes, the classic Soviet-style attacking package will be complete.

In all of this, we have missed something important. It is not that acceptance by the U.S. media, if not the Reagan administration, of the delivery of jet trainers and helicopters to Nicaragua had established a precedent for the subsequent delivery of MiGs. That is valid as far as it goes. The real point is revealed: The L-29s and Mi-14s, particularly the latter, represent a major threat to themselves. Second, their arrival must be viewed as one more piece of a greater puzzle, the formation in Central America of a classic Soviet-style offensive combined arms team. And make no mistake: The Soviet doctrinal model, which the Sandinistas are clearly following, is inherently offensive in nature.

The initial MiG statement by U.S. aides came on Nov. 1. By Nov. 12, the Sandinista ambassador to Spain, Orlando Chirino, told reporters his government's position: No, Nicaragua did not have MiGs—yet. Yes, it had every intention of obtaining some as soon as it could—for self-defense. Then the impending arrival of the last piece of the puzzle was announced.

Effective for October

Now, four months later, as we wait for the other shoe to drop, we are confronted by the release of a report last week by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs asserting that the Sandinista buildup is intended only to counter a feared U.S. invasion and—as essential corollary—that it is of

The media have focused on the icing—the MiGs—and missed the fact that a Soviet-style offensive arms cake has been baked beneath our noses.

sents an awesome capability, with or without top cover from MiGs. Flying low beneath the thin radar net and hugging the terrain, it can slip into neighboring countries with impunity. It can attack patrols and border posts with surgical precision, going as slow as necessary to do the job.

In the down and dirty game of slipping across a border, hugging a Honduras or Salvadoran C-47, and slipping back, all overhead radar coverage and hence undetected, the Mi-14 would be supreme. Distances are short in Central America and

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