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## **Nicaragua: Notes On Suspension Of State Of Emergency**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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The sudden end to the state of emergency in Nicaragua on Jan. 19 is perceived as a major concession by government officials and some human rights groups that have monitored Nicaragua for several years. Vice chairman of Americas Watch, Aryeh Neier, cited by the Washington Post (01/23/88), said, "This was a very important move...Unfortunately in almost every country where there is a political relaxation, it is accompanied by some repressive nasty business. The government wants to signal the opposition it shouldn't go too far." According to the Nicaraguan government's figures, 716 Nicaraguans were in custody awaiting trial in the Popular Anti-Somocista Tribunals, special courts for suspected contra collaborators which were also abolished last week. Under Nicaragua's regular judicial system, if prisoners' relatives seek to free them through habeas corpus they will have to be tried within 20 days or released. Some of the 716 have been in prison for more than a year. Next, under the suspended state of emergency, state security police will not be able to hold anyone for questioning more than 72 hours.

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