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Nicaragua: On Modifications To Agrarian Reform Program

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Feb. 3, the Nicaraguan government reiterated its decision to halt confiscation of agricultural lands, which has been a component of its agrarian reform program since 1979. According to program director Commander Alonso Porras, only six confiscations took place in 1988. One of the six involved the takeover of the San Antonio sugar mill. Porras said that in 1986 and 1987, confiscation affected 460 and 150 landowners, respectively. Another part of the reform program, government assistance to increase agricultural productivity, Porras said, will continue. The technical assistance component, he added, affects 120,000 families farming 3 million manzanas (equivalent to about 2.1 million ha.). Porras said that about 400,000 manzanas (280,000 ha.) of cultivable land have been abandoned due to the war. According to official statistics, the government is the direct owner of 13% of the country's agricultural acreage. The remainder is controlled by private farmers, whether individually, or as members of Nicaragua's 3,500 cooperatives. (Basic data from Xinhua, 02/03/89)

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