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On March 17, the Nicaraguan government released from prison and issued formal pardon to nearly 1,900 former members of Somoza's National Guard. Thirty-nine Guardia remain in prison, result of what the government has described as substantial evidence of participation in atrocities. Summarized below are issues and problems that have emerged since March 17. * An unknown number of the former prisoners traveled to Honduras to join up with the contra army. Others are seeking to regain control over property they owned prior to their arrest in 1979. The case of a former prisoner who laid claim to his prior home received extensive media coverage. The building currently serves as a health center in a Managua neighborhood. In a court proceeding, the former prisoner was denied ownership of the building. In response to the debate surrounding the above case, during a speech April 16 in Leon, President Daniel Ortega said, "It's one thing that they [the ex-Guardsmen] are pardoned so that they can enjoy their freedom, and it's quite another that they now want to recover the power they had before." Ortega announced that he would propose a law to freeze all proceedings for restitution of property to former owners excepting rentals while procedures are developed to guarantee that the former Guardsmen's property remains available for use by current inhabitants or users. * Certain sectors of the domestic opposition continue to pressure the government to provide amnesty for all "political prisoners," particularly the 39 former Guardia denied pardons. La Prensa, the principal rallying point for this campaign, argues that the continued incarceration of "the 39" constitutes a violation of their human rights. In its April 17 issue, La Prensa general director Violeta Chamorro was quoted as follows: "It was the Sandinistas themselves with their policy of inconceivable attacks and repression against the National Guard prisoners that transformed them into a symbol of [the FSLN's] political vengeance..." La Prensa regularly reports alleged abuses committed against former Guardia prisoners. An organization in Managua, established in mid-April to provide assistance to former "political prisoners," issues unsubstantiated reports on incidents of "persecution, psychological harassment, death threats, acts of violence, jailings, and murders" perpetrated against the former Guardia released from prison in March. The same organization has issued requests for aid from the "national and international community" to help the former prisoners obtain "food, clothing, footwear, employment, transportation, medicines, passports, airline tickets, etc." * An April 17 report by the Interamerican Human Rights Commission (CIDH), an affiliate of the Organization of American States (OAS), criticized the Nicaraguan government's procedures in granting pardons to the former Guardsmen. A similar critique appeared in an earlier report by Americas Watch. The CIDH said that Nicaraguan officials had ignored its recommendations on procedures for granting pardons which appeared in a May 1988 report. The latter report was not made public, result of the breakdown in talks between Nicaraguan government and contra leaders last June. * On April 20, the Nicaraguan government issued a communique stating that the cases of "the 39" will be reviewed once again. (Basic data from 04/17/89 report by Regional Coordination for Economic and Social Research of Central America and the Caribbean-CRIES, Managua)