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Nicaragua: Notes On Continuing Contra Attacks

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On Aug. 26, a group of about 30 contras attacked the El Achiote refugee settlement, located near Rio Blanco. Three campesinos were killed and two kidnapped. On Aug. 31, approximately 30 contras stopped a vehicle traveling near Sarayal (outside Jinotega) carrying 60 campesinos and singled out civilian Marcos Castro, 40, one of the campesino leaders at the Abisinia refugee settlement. The contras took him away, and before killing him, subjected him to a series of torture, including removal of eyes, tongue and genitals. About 3,000 contras are expected to infiltrate from Honduras for purposes of preventing people from voting next year. On Sept. 22, the Nicaraguan Defense Ministry reported contra attacks between Sept. 16 and Sept. 20 resulted in the deaths of 11 contras and two soldiers. On Sept. 18-20, eight contras and two government troops were killed during clashes in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region, and in Rio San Juan department (bordering on Costa Rica). Next, three contras died Sept. 16 in Nueva Segovia department. According to Nicaraguan officials, contra attacks against civilians and soldiers have increased since the Aug. 7 regional summit agreement endorsing the demobilization, repatriation and relocation of the contra army camped in Honduras. [Basic data from 09/16/89 report by Nicaline (Berkeley, CA); Xinhua, 09/22/89]

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