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Nicaraguan National Assembly Approves Pardon For 457 Political Prisoners

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Sept. 27, the local press reported that the Nicaraguan National Assembly approved a decree pardoning 457 civilians incarcerated for violating public security legislation. Included were over 200 prisoners released a month ago in northern Nicaragua by President Daniel Ortega. National Assembly president Carlos Nunez said 39 former National Guardsmen would not be released from prison until the contra army complies with a regional peace accord by dismantling their camps in Honduras. The guardsmen remained jailed after the government freed 1,894 others in March. Next, Nunez reiterated that a general amnesty was not possible until "concrete, clear signals" are available that the contras in Honduras are demobilizing, and relocating to Nicaragua or other countries by Dec. 8. The International Red Cross has reported that some 1,306 people are currently in Nicaraguan prisons on charges of violating public security and order laws (e.g., collaborating with the contras). (Basic data from Notimex, AP, 09/27/89)

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