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## **Nicaragua: Government Troops Attack 500 Contras In Chontales**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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In its Nov. 3 issue, the Sandinista party newspaper *Barricada* reported that government troops supported by helicopter gunships attacked about 500 contras in La Pinuela and La Cusuca areas of Chontales department. Defense Ministry sources who spoke on condition of anonymity said the army was fighting contra units in the mountains that run from the northern border with Honduras to the southeast. On Nov. 2 the Defense Ministry reported that three contras were killed in El Guapote, 120 miles northeast of the capital in Matagalpa department, and that seven soldiers were wounded during combat in Pantasma and Plan de Grama, Jinotega department. On the same day, Radio Sandino reported that 400 contras who had recently infiltrated into the Quilali area and two other northern districts were "assassinating and kidnapping civilians and making propaganda for the rightist National Opposition Union coalition." (Basic data from AP, 11/03/89)

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