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Reports On Weapons Shipments To Nicaraguan Recontras From Honduras

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Sept. 23, Nicaraguan Radio Primerisima cited unidentified military sources as saying that weapons were being air dropped from Honduras to recontra bands in northern Nicaragua. In a Sept. 24 statement, the Nicaraguan Defense Ministry released a statement indicating that investigations of such reports were underway. According to a Sept. 24 report by ACAN-EFE, Gen. Victor Suanzes Pardo, regional commander of the UN observer mission for Central America (ONUCA), said he found no evidence of such weapons supply operations. The general had visited the area to investigate claims of weapons shipments from Honduras. Nicaraguan army Lt.Col. Rodrigo Gonzalez, who is stationed in the region, told reporters he had found no evidence of a trans-border recontra weapons supply network. Manuel Calderon, Interior Ministry chief inspector for Matagalpa department said, "One hears of incursions into Nicaraguan airspace by small aircraft, but I believe that these are drug related." In its Sept. 24 issue, daily newspaper Barricada cited unidentified agricultural workers sympathetic to the recontras as saying that about 20 weapons drops for recontras located in the northern and central regions of the country had thus far taken place. The sources said several former contras had remained in the Palestina border area to participate in the supply operation. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, 09/23/91, 09/24/91)

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