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Nicaragua: Excavation Of Common Grave Site

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On Jan. 16, daily newspaper La Prensa reported that the remains of 75 contras and contra civilian sympathizers were exhumed from a common grave site near Bijagua, Boaco department. The exhumation was carried out in the presence of members of the Permanent Human Rights Commission (CPDH), the Nicaraguan Human Rights Association (ANPDH), and forensic specialist Humberto Matus. According to La Prensa, the victims were executed on Nov. 5, 1984, by a special Interior Ministry unit under the command of then-telecommunications minister Enrique Schmidt. The newspaper cited local witnesses who said the troops arrived in the area disguised as contra rebels seeking new recruits. The soldiers then took the 75 individuals to a nearby farm where Schmidt ordered them executed. One of the 75, who had been left for dead, reportedly shot and killed Schmidt. (Basic data from Spanish news service EFE, Agence France-Presse, Associated Press, 01/16/92)

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