



[4.12.89]

EMBASSY OF NICARAGUA

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS) REPORT ON WHAT HAPPENED IN MASATEPE DURING THE UNO DEMONSTRATION

After witnessing the demonstration of the Union of National Opposition (UNO) in Masatepe, the Observers' Mission of the Organization of American States (OAS) issued a report describing what happened. The report concluded as follows:

1. At this time it is impossible to determine who was responsible for initiating the disturbances. Nevertheless, because of their nature, it is impossible not to believe that provocation was deliberate.
2. There were wounded among partisans of the UNO and the FSLN. The observers themselves verified the wounds of eight of the injured. The man who died of his wounds supposedly was a participant of the UNO demonstration. Nevertheless, the members of his family assured the observers that they are FSLN supporters.
3. According to information available thus far, there were at least two people wounded by bullets, five by knives or machetes others suffered contusions.
4. The Police and other security forces were not present throughout the time the violence was building up.
5. The political leaders were incapable of controlling the situation or achieving a conciliatory dialogue among those who took part in the violence.
6. The OAS Observers took on an active role in trying to find a way to control the most violent acts and to get those who entered the fracas to come to an understanding. Furthermore, they considered themselves virtually forced to assume the responsibility of providing emergency transportation for some of the wounded.
7. The Observers believe it is imperative to make sure that agreement be reached among the political parties so that incidents like this will not recur. They found it profoundly disturbing that acts of such seriousness have taken place so early in the campaign and in a Region generally considered to be peaceful.
8. It was not possible to detect the presence of hostages in the FSLN Campaign Headquarters.
9. It is again apparent that electoral authorities at both the municipal and regional levels face severe limitations in predicting acts of violence and in coordinating actions to deflect them. The political leaders and the electoral authorities are faced with the very grave responsibility of guaranteeing by every means at their command the peaceful development of political activities, particularly at demonstrations and electioneering events.
10. If authorities cannot guarantee security, the observers envision themselves as exposed to extremely dangerous situations that threaten their physical well-being.

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE REPORT;

1. The appropriate authorities should immediately launch an investigation to get to the bottom of the matter so as to pinpoint responsibility and proceed with the full force of the law against those responsible.
2. It is essential to put into place practical mechanisms to assure the participation of responsible authorities to maintain order and security during the political campaign.
3. Political dialogue should be stimulated to promote and reach agreement among all the political parties to anticipate and avoid actions and situations that could disturb public order or affect public safety during the electoral campaign.

Managua, December 11, 1989