

Nicaraguan Leader Denies U.S. Drugs Charges

By John Lantigua
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MANAGUA, Nicaragua, July 10—Head of state Daniel Ortega today denied allegations by a U.S. narcotics officer and Reagan administration sources that Sandinista officials are helping smuggle cocaine into the United States. He accused President Reagan of trying to "fool" U.S. voters into backing military action against the Sandinista government.

Ortega, named this week the Sandinista presidential candidate in Nov. 4 elections, said allegations against his brother, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega, Interior Minister Tomas Borge and one other official were false.

The allegations were first made in an affidavit filed this week in U.S. District Court in Miami by a federal Drug Enforcement agent. According to that affidavit, Federico Vaughn, an aide to Borge, was involved extensively in the trafficking of thousands of pounds of cocaine from South America through Nicaragua and into the United States.

The affidavit said the Sandinista government had agreed to improve a 6,000-foot airstrip for smuggling purposes and that Sandinista military personnel had assisted in unloading cocaine.

Reagan administration sources also said earlier this week that the CIA and other intelligence agencies had information linking Borge and Humberto Ortega directly to the drug trafficking, but no evidence regarding their involvement was disclosed.

Daniel Ortega told journalists the charges of drug trafficking were an attempt "to fool the honest sentiments and naivete of some sectors



Associated Press

Junta chief Daniel Ortega listens to brother Humberto, defense minister.

of the American public" and an attempt "to create the conditions that will give more force and better justification to the escalating of military actions against Nicaragua."

"This is nothing more than an infamy on the part of the [Reagan] administration to try to discredit the Nicaraguan revolution before the American public and to justify in this way all the warlike measures it is taking on all sides of Nicaragua at this moment," said Ortega.

He said the aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy and other warships were 50 to 70 miles from Bluefields on Nicaragua's east coast, that the U.S. military was planning more maneuvers in Honduras and that anti-Sandinista rebels were continuing attacks on his country.

"The act of murdering is as im-

moral, more immoral than drug trafficking," said Ortega in reference to the U.S. funding of the rebels. He then accused the CIA of giving drugs to some rebel forces, who he said then had tried to break through military lines "blindly and brutally" against prohibitive odds when surrounded. He offered no proof that the CIA had provided drugs to those rebels.

Ortega also repeated the intention of his government to acquire combat planes to fight rebel air supply flights and possible direct intervention by the United States. He has said in the past that the Sandinistas might acquire Soviet MiGs or French Mirage jets.

"Nicaragua has the right and the duty to have airplanes and Nicaragua will have those airplanes to de-

fend itself against the aggression it is suffering," he said. But Ortega did not answer when asked for details.

Ortega answered vaguely when pressed about the amount of freedom that opposition candidates will be given to criticize Sandinista economic policies during the election campaign that begins Aug. 1.

Yesterday, during the celebration of the fifth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution, Ortega announced that a state-of-emergency clause providing for press censorship had been lifted except for "information that affects the defense of the nation."

Opposition leaders have said that with the right to criticize the government on the issues of food rationing and shortages, they could win the elections. Ortega criticized opposition leaders for what he called unjust criticism of Sandinista economic policies in the past but did not specify how much freedom they would have to criticize in the future.

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