

Contras: U.S. aid gives new hope

By GEORGE GEDDA
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A top Nicaraguan resistance leader said yesterday the expected renewal of U.S. assistance to the rebels will tilt the political balance in his homeland, leading to a popular insurrection against the Sandinistas and a massive increase in the insurgent ranks.

Flanked at a news conference by members of the political and military leadership of the resistance, Alfonso Robelo, a member of the original Sandinista junta, also predicted "massive defections" from the Sandinista cause and rebellions within the Nicaraguan army.

Robelo's colleague in the United Nicaraguan Opposition, Adolfo Calero, said he is placing high-priority on using the U.S. aid money to acquire shoulder-fired missiles capable of bringing down Soviet helicopter gunships that were introduced into the conflict last summer.

He said the gunships have "changed the war" in the Sandinistas' favor. The Contras also will seek light anti-tank weapons, grenade launchers and light machine guns once, as expected, the U.S. arms flow to the rebels resumes on Sept. 1, Calero said.

Robelo said, "The weapons will balance the present situation, where we are suffering from sophisticated

weapons that the Soviets have given the Sandinistas."

The long-held view of the insurgents is that they require reliable, consistent support from the United States in order to rally public opinion in Nicaragua behind them.

Robelo suggested that Wednesday night's 221-209 House vote in support of President Reagan's \$100 million aid proposal will enable the rebels to turn the corner in their struggle against the Sandinistas. Until now, Robelo said, the United States had been engaging in a "yo-yo" policy, with Congress approving some of Reagan's requests and rejecting others.

The aid will involve \$70 million in military aid and \$30 million in non-lethal assistance. The rebels have received no military aid in more than two years.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said the House reversal of its anti-Contra vote in March was a "long time coming" and predicted the Senate will follow suit and approve the aid package.

Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., said he was surprised by the vote, particularly in view of polls showing public opinion running against the president's proposal by more than 2-1.

House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill said he was fearful that the House vote was a prelude to the eventual

introduction of American troops in Nicaragua.

Reflecting O'Neill's concern was the approval Wednesday night of an amendment that would bar any U.S. personnel — civilian or military — from providing aid or training to the Contras in areas within 20 miles of the Nicaraguan border.

The aid would be provided in installments of \$40 million, \$20 million and \$40 million, with the first to be made available on enactment of the bill and the last on Feb. 15, 1987.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto said the House action will "cost many more deaths," and could prompt his government to expand its military arsenal.

"President Reagan has been saying for a long time that he would not desist from his intent to crush Nicaragua until we cried 'uncle,'" D'Escoto said in a television interview from London. "Well, what he did finally, he got the Congress of the United States to cry 'uncle.'"

The No. 1 one priority of the country "is going to continue to be the defense of our sovereignty and territorial integrity," he said.

D'Escoto refused to say whether Nicaragua would seek additional military aid from the Soviet Union, but said, "We won't reject any aid that comes from Latin America, Europe or from any country."

Pentagon spokesman Robert Sims

said Thursday that the Soviet Union has shipped Nicaragua 10 more H1P MI-8 helicopters, bringing the Sandinista fleet to about 25.

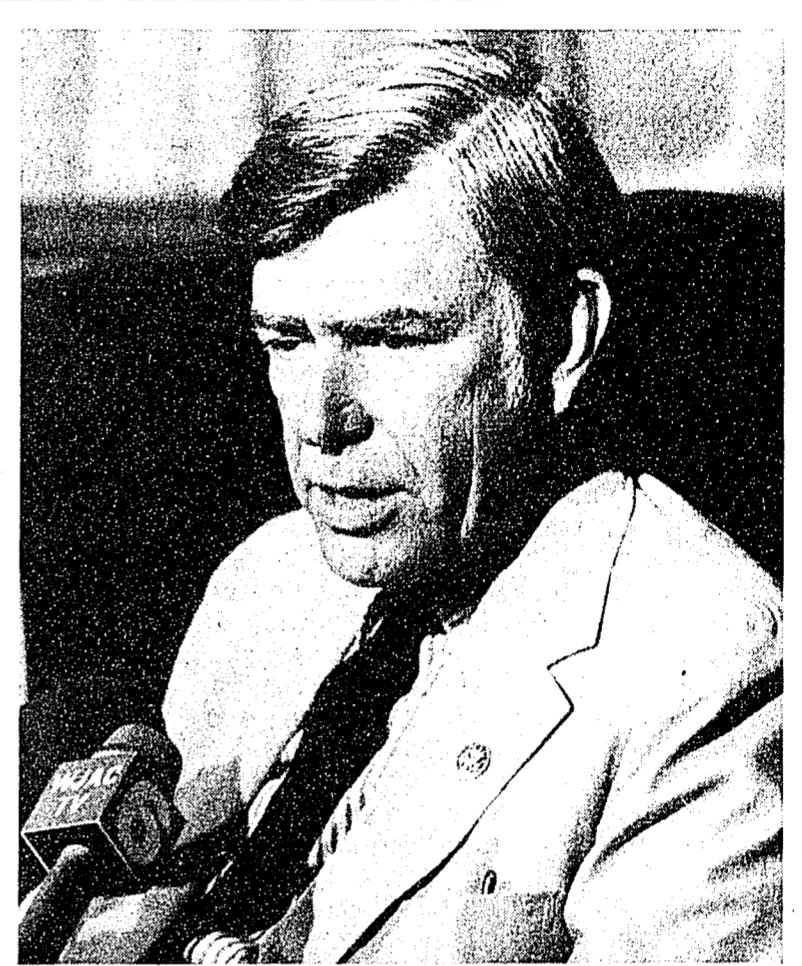
The administration says the Soviet Union has provided Nicaragua arms worth \$650 million this year, and a total of \$2 billion since the Sandinistas came to power in 1979.

At his news conference, Robelo pledged that the rebels, who have been accused of widespread human rights violations, misusing previous aid allocations and engaging in drug smuggling, will put the assistance to good use.

Noting that the aid will be withheld at least until Sept. 1, he said the delay will give the Contadora peace mediation group more than 60 days to achieve the negotiated settlement it has been seeking for more than three years.

But he gave contradictory answers when asked what the long-term impact of the aid will be. At one point, he predicted the aid will lead to "cracks in the Sandinista structure" within a year but later he spoke of the outright defeat of the Sandinistas.

Arturo Cruz, a third member of the opposition's civilian leadership, called on the Sandinistas to move toward peace by allowing all political exiles to return home without punishment as a start toward national reconciliation.



Rep. Bill Clinger (R-Warren)

Contra aid is the way to peace, Clinger says

By JILL A. BEDFORD
Collegian Staff Writer

Explaining his approval of the Contra aid bill Wednesday, Rep. Bill Clinger (R-Warren) said he reversed his vote of last March because he is convinced giving aid to the contra rebels is the most hopeful outlook for America.

"The decision comes down to what is most important," he said. "Giving aid to the contras is the best way to keep America out of a war."

Congress voted Wednesday to give \$100 million in aid to the contras — counter-revolutionary guerilla forces fighting to overthrow the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua. Thirty million dollars is targeted for humanitarian aid and \$70 million is targeted for military aid.

Bill Wachob, Clinger's Democratic opponent for the 23rd Congressional District, said if Clinger thought voting for the bill was a peaceful solution, he was wrong.

"(This bill) will get (America) in deeper and deeper," Wachob said. "Clinger will have to take the responsibility for the American-contra role in Nicaragua."

Clinger said the Sandinistas have established censorship in the country, but more importantly have been unwilling to negotiate a settlement in order to stop the fighting.

He also noted that the Soviets have stepped up their supply of arms to the Sandinistas and that there are critical sea lanes on the East Coast of Nicaragua that would be governed by the Soviets.

Wachob criticized Clinger for rejecting a "crucial amendment" to the bill which would have frozen the \$100 million in aid until the \$27 million the U.S. has already given the Contras can be accounted for.

"(Clinger's vote) was just one more example of Clinger telling his constituents one thing and voting another," Wachob said. He cited Clinger's vote against a nuclear freeze after he had pledged his support for it as another example.

Clinger said he knows of no evidence that suggests the U.S. money isn't going where it should, stating that those allegations came from opponents of the bill.

"If we don't stop this (war) now," he said, "where do we?... Mexico?"



Collegian Photo / John Holtzer

Gov. Dick Thornburgh addresses the 56th Annual Convention of Disabled Veterans at the Penn State Sheraton yesterday. Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Philadelphia) and Rep. Bill Clinger (R-Warren) also spoke at the convention, which was attended by about 1,000 veterans. The conference ends today.

Governor bids farewell to veterans

By JILL A. BEDFORD
Collegian Staff Writer

Calling it his farewell address, Gov. Dick Thornburgh told members of the Disabled American Veterans organization yesterday that he was proud to have worked with veterans organizations during his 7½ years as governor.

Thornburgh (R), Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Philadelphia) and Rep. Bill Clinger (R-Warren) were keynote speakers yesterday at the Department of Pennsylvania's 56th Annual Convention of Disabled Veterans at the Penn State Sheraton, 240 S. Pugh St.

The governor, arriving a little late to the convention, called his work with disabled veterans during his two terms as governor an "inspirational experience."

"I'm proud to have been invited to (the veterans' conventions) over the years. I hope (the veterans) will ask me back even after I'm no longer governor," he said.

Thornburgh has already served two terms as the governor of Pennsylvania.

Specter, a member of the Veteran Affairs Committee, said he had "very deep feelings for the Disabled American Veterans organization."

"My father... was a (disabled) World War I vet, and my brother was a World War II vet, and I was a Korean vet," Specter said. "... and I've always opposed the administration on budget cuts (in veterans' organizations) because there is no higher priority than the veterans."

He added that although he is in favor of arms reduction, he supports a strong defense because "the Soviets only understand strength."

The senator said he is now working on legislation that would make terrorism an international offense which would require an international jury for trial, similar to the jury during the Nuremberg trials.

He is also working on a bill that would make killing an American anywhere outside the continental United States an offense requiring a trial in the United States.

"I wanted to come and pay my respects to you men and women (of the DAV)," Specter said. "No matter how much money (the legislators) give you, it won't bring back your limbs, and it won't bring back the dead."

"As long as I'm in Washington, I'll be fighting for you," Specter added.

After arriving in State College yesterday morning following a late-night Congress vote

Wednesday on the Contra Aid Bill, Clinger told the conventioners he thought the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Law was good because it made Congress think about what a serious problem the deficit is. But he added that one reason he opposed the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Law overall was because it would cut back on veterans' programs he thinks must be preserved.

Comparing the law to a hammer, he said "the point is, the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings hammer should never fall, never come into effect... (because) it cuts back on all programs equally, whether they are good or bad."

"Every one of us (congressmen) should be voted out of office," if the Gramm-Rudman Hollings Law goes through, Clinger added.

He said after visiting one of the state's veterans' hospitals earlier in the year, he was so impressed that he knew any cuts in veterans programs would be "disastrous."

"The current freedoms and unsurpassed living arrangements (enjoyed by Americans today) would not be possible without veterans," he said.

Clinger said he would probably return to Washington, D.C., later in the day because the budget was scheduled to be voted on soon.

Disabled veterans end 56th convention today

By JILL A. BEDFORD
Collegian Staff Writer

Some men and women lost arms, legs and eyes while proudly serving the United States in wartime. And close to 1,000 of those individuals assembled in State College on Wednesday to prove they are just as proud today as they were years ago of the sacrifices they made to protect their country.

Pennsylvania members of the Disabled American Veterans organization will close their 56th annual convention today at the Penn State Sheraton, 240 S. Pugh St.

The DAV is a non-profit organization designed to provide services to veterans and the widows and children of veterans, according to Albert H. Linder Jr., the national commander of the DAV. It currently boasts a membership of almost one million veterans — three percent of which are women, Linden said.

To qualify for membership in the organization, veterans must have been injured during wartime service. The DAV is currently offering mem-

berships to anyone wounded in Grenada or Lebanon, since both areas were considered war zones, Linden said.

Linden, an amputee who served in the Vietnam War, was the first leg amputee in the Army's history to return to flight status.

He is on a year's absence from his position as Deputy Administrator for the Energy Department's Energy Information Administration while he serves a one-year term as the national commander of the DAV.

Keynote speakers during yesterday's session were Gov. Dick Thornburgh, and former veterans U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter, (R-Philadelphia), and U.S. Rep. Bill Clinger, (R-Warren).

Bill Wachob, Democratic candidate for the 23rd Congressional seat, was also scheduled to speak yesterday. However, he could not attend the conference. Bob Edgar, Democratic candidate for the Senate, is scheduled to speak this morning, according to Stanley Adams, director for the Centre County Office of Veterans Affairs.

friday

weather

This afternoon, it will be muggy and warm with the chance of an afternoon shower or thundershower. The high will be a sultry 86. Tonight, it will remain humid with the chance of a shower or evening thundershower. Low 67. Tomorrow, the muggies continue with some hazy sunshine and there is a chance of a shower or thundershower throughout the day. High 85.....Heidi Sonen