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Letters

Washington's Grievance Against Managua

To the Editor:

In an Oct. 5 letter ("Grist for a U.S. Campaign Against Nicaragua"), Nicaragua's permanent representative at the United Nations, Javier Chamorro Mora, spoke of "the Reagan Administration's desperate attempts to establish in the minds of the people of the United States some kind of causal link between Nicaragua and the Salvadoran guerrillas."

A staff report, "U.S. Intelligence Performance on Central America: Achievements and Selected Instances of Concern," issued Sept. 22 by the Subcommittee on Oversight and Evaluation of the U.S. House of Representatives' Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, makes clear that such a link has been established.

The report — not one of undiluted praise for the U.S. intelligence community — notes on page 6 that "over the last two years perhaps its greatest achievement lies in determining with considerable accuracy the organization and activities of the Salvadoran guerrillas, and in detecting the assistance given to them by Cuba and other Communist countries." "Intelligence," the report continues, "has been able to establish beyond doubt

the involvement of Communist countries in the insurgency."

On the same page, the chairman of the committee, Representative Edward P. Boland, is quoted as saying that "the intelligence supporting these judgments . . . is convincing," that "there is further persuasive evidence that the Sandinista Government of Nicaragua is helping to train insurgents and is transferring arms and support from and through Nicaragua to the insurgents" and that the Sandinista Government is "providing the insurgents with bases of operation in Nicaragua."

The issues in Central America are complex and subject to debate. And the evidential basis of this Administration's policies is, like those of previous Administrations, frequently dependent on data that cannot be made public. As the staff report indicates, however, on the issue of a causal link between the current policies of Nicaragua and the guerrillas in El Salvador, the case has been made.

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