

Further detail on the requirements of the likely verification tasks is needed and these jobs will be taken one by one for (necessarily) brief exposition. Firstly, then, insofar as cease-fires are concerned, there is of course great uncertainty as no cease-fire has yet been negotiated in Guatemala or El Salvador and the Nicaraguan March 1988 example is far from settled. Nonetheless, at a minimum the provisions of any cease-fire would require the capability to investigate complaints and pass them on for action to higher peacekeeping, national government, or armed opposition group headquarters. If, as under the Sapoá agreement, the verification of security aspects would extend over not only the cease-fire but also over concentrations of insurgents and the receipt of aid in the concentration zones, either a de-militarized zone with a resident peacekeeping force, or at least a significant observer mission would probably be necessary to ensure compliance in areas where discipline may be rather lax and where sentiment runs high.

Verification of provisions forbidding the use of national territories as bases for actions against neighbouring states would also be taxing, to say the least. As mentioned, in what has come to be called the "Ethell paper," the "actual control of borders should remain the responsibility of the host countries."⁵ However, as will be seen, just spot-checking borders in any meaningful way could be exhausting and take up the efforts of a great many personnel and other resources, particularly vehicles and helicopters. The borders, however, are far from the whole problem. Contra presence in Honduras, for example, is pervasive throughout much of the east of the country and even in the capital. Links with the government and elements of the high command and the army are frequently close; "turning a blind eye" to contra activity is almost a tradition. Under such circumstances, meaningful verification would possibly involve a real investigative role requiring time, expertise, knowledge of the language, flexibility and mobility. All of these require personnel, vehicle and probably helicopter resources. Furthermore, investigating complaints could be a lengthy and potentially delicate operation.

Related closely to this indirect support is the actual support for the contras coming from Honduras and elsewhere, and that for the FMLN coming from Nicaragua. Such support is often logistical, frequently financial, and again often of the merely "turning a blind eye" variety. Verification of agreements dealing with this problem area would involve many of the same activities as for the improper use of territory. However, the search for banned weapons traffic as well as other supplies will further stretch the verifying force's resources. Several borders would be involved as would the Gulf of Fonseca, Lake Nicaragua, substantial lengths of coastline, and the air access routes to at least El Salvador and Honduras if not Guatemala as well.

Compared to these large responsibilities over vast air, land and sea spaces, ensuring the agreed departure of, or reduction in, foreign forces could prove relatively easy. U.S. forces in the region are well-publicized and fairly centralized as are their training installations and personnel. In addition, neither the Soviet Union nor Cuba is likely to risk discovery that it is "cheating" on an accord from which it feels it has much to gain. Thus, there would be pressures forcing good behaviour on the outside powers and this should ease what might otherwise be a