



# One Man's Patriot is Another Man's Bandit: Sandino's Image and the Debate Over the U.S. Occupation of Nicaragua

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## ABSTRACT

In the late 1920s, the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua was challenged in an insurgency led by Augusto César Sandino. While U.S. Marines conducted military operations in Nicaragua, the U.S. government and its supporters engaged in a battle for public opinion over the war against domestic anti-imperialist activists, politicians and journalists. A major part of this battle was the debate over Sandino's image. The U.S. government sought to portray Sandino as a bandit, a depiction which de-legitimized his rebellion and bolstered support for the U.S. occupation. In this article, I discuss how the U.S. government developed this characterization of Sandino, and how anti-imperialists were able to successfully argue against it. I argue that several key characteristics of the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua fatally undermined the U.S. government's depiction and provided anti-imperialists with multiple avenues to criticize U.S. policy in Nicaragua.

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## INTRODUCTION

The history of relations between the United States and Nicaragua is long and turbulent. The U.S. has intervened in Nicaraguan affairs or attempted to exert influence over Nicaragua at several points in its history. Arguably, the most infamous of these episodes was the U.S. Occupation of Nicaragua. The occupation began in 1912, when the U.S. intervened in a civil war between rival political factions in Nicaragua to install a government amenable to American interests. U.S. forces withdrew in 1925, but they returned in 1927 after a new civil war began. This second phase of the occupation was opposed by an insurgency led by Augusto César Sandino, which eventually resulted in a U.S. withdrawal in 1933. Before the United States ended the occupation, it carried out a protracted series of military and political operations to bring the insurgency to an end.

A key part of this effort was the U.S. government's characterization of Sandino as a bandit. The U.S. had a history of describing insurgents against American occupations as bandits, and it served an important political purpose. Designating the rebel leader as such delegitimized his insurgency and justified continued U.S. occupation to the American public. Despite the best efforts of the U.S. government, this characterization did not go unchallenged. In order to challenge the legitimacy of the American occupation, a strong anti-imperialist movement within the United States disputed the government's depiction of Sandino. The anti-imperialists made their case in the battle over Sandino's image because of the realities of the U.S. occupation. The fundamentally economic motivations behind the occupation, the political character of Sandino's insurgency, and the U.S. military's conduct during the conflict with Sandino allowed American anti-imperialists to challenge the U.S. government's depiction of him as a bandit.

## HISTORIOGRAPHY

Many historical works in the English-speaking world analyze the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua within the context of other U.S. interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, historian Lester Langley's influential book *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898–1934* covers the war against Sandino over the course of two chapters. Langley places the conflict with Sandino firmly within the context of previous U.S. interventions in the Caribbean and Central America, so much so that his second chapter on the conflict is titled, "The Last Banana War."<sup>1</sup> In a similar book, *The Banana Men: American*

*Mercenaries and Entrepreneurs in Central America, 1880–1930*, which Langley co-wrote with Thomas Schoonover, the entire U.S. occupation of Nicaragua is described as one of several American campaigns in the region.<sup>2</sup> Because the emphasis is placed on analyzing how the war with Sandino compared to other U.S. interventions, these books and other broad histories of American involvement in the region do not focus primarily on public opinion of the war in the United States. As a result, they often neglect the debate over Sandino's image, which represented a major part of the battle for public opinion.

One of the few works to focus specifically on Sandino's conduct during the conflict is historian Joseph Baylen's 1951 article, "Sandino: Patriot or Bandit?" Although the question of Sandino's status as a patriot or a bandit was a major part of the debate over Sandino's image in the U.S., that is not the focus of Baylen's research. The author instead focuses on Sandino himself, analyzing his background, his personality, and his conduct over the course of the war in order to demonstrate why the U.S. government's characterization of him as a bandit was inaccurate.<sup>3</sup> Baylen does briefly discuss public opinion of the war in the U.S., and he provides a few insights into why the U.S. government could never win the battle for public opinion. However, Baylen's article is quite old, and his close proximity to the events he analyzes limits the pool of sources he can draw on. When Baylen discusses the American public's opinion of the war, he draws almost exclusively from *The New York Times* and a few other major newspapers.<sup>4</sup> His analysis thus neglects the numerous other newspapers that actively supported Sandino during the war, such as many of the papers of the African American press.

Several other historical works touch on the debate over Sandino's image, but only indirectly as part of their analysis of another aspect of the conflict. For example, in his 1985 article "The Harlem to Bluefields Connection: Sandino's Aid from the Black American Press," historian Ted Vincent analyzes several African American newspapers' support for Sandino during the occupation. Although he describes several instances of Black press' support for Sandino in the battle for public opinion, Vincent's analysis focuses primarily on the ideological and political motivations that led many Black newspapers to rally around Sandino.<sup>5</sup> In another example, Alan McPherson's 2014 article, "Lid Sitters and Prestige Seekers: The U.S. Navy versus the State Department and the End of U.S. Occupations," the author once again discusses the debate over the war and Sandino's image in the U.S. in passing while making another argument. McPherson argues that the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua and several other American military occupations in Latin America and the Caribbean were prolonged by a power struggle between the State Department and the U.S. Navy.<sup>6</sup>

One article that comes close to providing a thorough analysis of the debate over Sandino's image in the U.S. during the occupation is historian Richard Grossman's 2009 work "Solidarity with Sandino: The Anti-Intervention and Solidarity Movements in the United States, 1927–1933." Grossman's article provides a comprehensive history of the anti-imperialist movement in the United States during the war with Sandino and analyzes the clashes between that movement and the U.S. government during the war. The author focuses his analysis on the origins and ideological backgrounds of various anti-imperialist organizations in the United States that opposed the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua.<sup>7</sup> As a consequence of this focus, he provides significantly less analysis of the U.S. government's characterization of Sandino, how it served to justify continued occupation, and how anti-imperialist activists challenged the government's depiction.

A key part of the battle for public opinion during the war with Sandino was the U.S. government's characterization of him as a bandit. A comprehensive analysis of the arguments used by the government to justify that characterization, and the myriad ways in which anti-imperialists countered those arguments, is absent from many historical works on the conflict with Sandino. This paper aims to provide just such an analysis of the debate over Sandino's image, a debate which represented an important part of the larger battle for public opinion during the occupation.

## THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S DEPICTION OF SANDINO

In 1927, the United States resumed its intervention in Nicaragua in response to the outbreak of a civil war between Nicaragua's Liberal and Conservative parties following a Conservative coup d'état. In May of that year, Henry L. Stimson, negotiating on behalf of the U.S. government, arranged for the appointment of the Conservative Adolfo Díaz as interim president and signed a peace agreement with the Liberals. The agreement, signed by Stimson and Liberal General José María Moncada in the town of Tipitapa, required the Nicaraguans to lay down their arms while an American occupation force restored order and supervised a new presidential election to be held in 1928.<sup>8</sup> However, one general fighting for the Liberals, Augusto César Sandino, refused to surrender his arms. Instead, Sandino gathered his forces in the Nueva Segovia, an area in northern Nicaragua on the border with Honduras and launched a revolt against the U.S. occupation.<sup>9</sup>

From the beginning of Sandino's insurgency, U.S. officials portrayed him in starkly negative terms. In an initial report on Sandino in July 1927 the U.S. Minister

in Nicaragua, Charles C. Eberhardt, wrote, "Sandino is reported to be an erratic Nicaraguan about 30 years of age with wild Communist ideas," who, after "Refusing to lay down arms ... returned to northern Nicaragua where he has since roamed at will ... committing most every known depredation and acts of outlawry."<sup>10</sup> Taken in isolation, the mention of communism might seem to indicate that Minister Eberhardt ascribed some ideological motivation to Sandino's actions. However, subsequent reports reveal that U.S. policymakers did not believe Sandino was motivated by anything other than the profits of his insurgency, which often involved raids on American-owned properties. In another telegram later that July, Minister Eberhardt reported that Sandino and his men, whom he referred to as "marauders," continued to fight because they profited and "have... grown to prefer this life to any peaceful pursuit."<sup>11</sup> As Sandino continued to attack U.S. marine detachments and raid American-owned mines and plantations, a distinct characterization of him emerged among U.S. officials. This characterization was stated succinctly when Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg, in a telegram from January 1928, referred to Sandino as a "mere bandit."<sup>12</sup>

The U.S. government worked to spread its depiction of Sandino beyond the U.S. military and State Department through numerous statements to the American public and news media. An article in *The New York Times* from January 6, 1928 quoted marine Major General Lejeune referring to Sandino as a "bandit," and a "small time Caesar."<sup>13</sup> Major General Lejeune spread several outright lies about Sandino, claiming that Sandino "Served with [Pancho] Villa," in his infamous raid on Columbus, New Mexico.<sup>14</sup> U.S. politicians outside of the military and the State Department echoed the government's description of Sandino as a bandit. In the same edition of *The New York Times*, Hiram Bingham III, Republican Senator from Connecticut, reportedly said, "Sandino has been elevated by a misinformed group who picture him as a Liberal hero striking at the Conservatives, but he is a bandit."<sup>15</sup> These remarks show how U.S. officials construed being a bandit as mutually exclusive from being a legitimate political actor.

In spreading their characterization of Sandino, U.S. officials and politicians were aided by numerous journalists who supported the government and its policy in Nicaragua. For example, an article in *The Washington Post* from January 3, 1928, titled, "GET SANDINO!" referred to the Nicaraguan general as a "bandit chieftain," who engages in "the piecemeal killing of Marines."<sup>16</sup> Six days later, an article in the *Wall Street Journal* expressed similar sentiments, describing Sandino as a "murderous outlaw masquerading as a political liberal."<sup>17</sup> Within a year, the U.S. government had developed its characterization of him as a vicious bandit and propagated that image to the American public.

## THE FINANCIAL MOTIVATIONS OF THE OCCUPATION AND THE SOURCES OF ANTI-WAR CRITICISM

Although U.S. officials accused Sandino of pursuing only profit, American actions in Nicaragua had strong financial motivations as well. The occupation served to protect American properties and business interests in Nicaragua, a fact that U.S. officials made explicit through their actions and statements. The obvious financial interests at stake in the occupation would leave U.S. policy vulnerable to criticism from domestic anti-imperialists. These anti-imperialist critics used the financial motivations behind the U.S. occupation to wage the next round in the battle for public opinion over the war in Nicaragua.

The official objective of the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua, as stated by Rear Admiral David F. Sellers in January 1928, was “to protect the lives and property of both American and foreign citizens and to preserve order in Nicaragua.”<sup>18</sup> However, the relative importance of protecting the lives of American citizens was dubious because the community of Americans living in Nicaragua was not very large. In a Senate hearing concerning the U.S. military’s conduct in Nicaragua in February 1928, Rear Admiral Julian L. Latimer was asked about the number of Americans living in Nicaragua, which he speculated was no more than 300.<sup>19</sup> Although few Americans lived in Nicaragua, American companies had a large stake in several sectors of the Nicaraguan economy, and the Nicaraguan government received loans from American banks. In September 1927, U.S. Chargé in Nicaragua Dana G. Munro reported to the Secretary of State on an approximately one million dollar loan to the Nicaraguan government from New York banks negotiated earlier that year. Munro explained that “The Government [of Nicaragua] is seriously inconvenienced financially by the fact that so large a part of its income goes to amortize this loan.”<sup>20</sup> Among the stated goals of the U.S. occupation, the protection of American property and business interests seemed to be the foremost concern for U.S. officials.

The conduct of U.S. officials during the occupation frequently showed that American financiers and property owners had tremendous influence over U.S. policy. When Sandino raided a mine owned by the Delaware-based La Luz Mining Company in April 1928, the company was the first to inform the State Department. In response, Secretary of State Kellogg cabled the minister in Nicaragua asking for more information about it.<sup>21</sup> Just three days later, Minister Eberhardt announced that over a hundred marines were deployed to the area.<sup>22</sup> Several American businesses also collaborated with U.S. officials to combat Sandino and maintain the occupation. In October 1928, when advising

the State Department about a Sandinista general who fled to Costa Rica, Minister Eberhardt suggested that “The United Fruit Company could perhaps furnish information regarding his whereabouts.”<sup>23</sup> The United Fruit Company subsequently launched an investigation of this general in cooperation with the State Department.<sup>24</sup> The conduct of U.S. officials clearly showed that protecting U.S. investments in Nicaragua was of paramount importance during the occupation.

The obvious financial motivations behind the U.S. occupation provided an opening for anti-imperialist activists to challenge the U.S. government’s characterization of Sandino. The anti-imperialist movement in the United States contained a broad spectrum of Americans from various backgrounds and with differing opinions. According to historian Richard Grossman, more moderate groups “opposed U.S. policies in Nicaragua without supporting Sandino,” and other, more radical groups “while opposing the intervention, also actively supported Sandino.”<sup>25</sup> Although divided on whether or not to support Sandino, both moderate and radical anti-imperialists were united in condemning the financial motivations behind the occupation.

The ranks of the moderate anti-imperialists contained influential figures, including prominent American politicians. In late 1927, Senator James Thomas Heflin, a Democrat from Alabama, introduced a resolution to withdraw U.S. Marines from Nicaragua, the first of several such resolutions introduced over the course of the war. Although this resolution was ultimately not passed, during the debate Senator Heflin and other anti-imperialists in the Senate harshly criticized the government and the occupation. An article from *The New York Times* on January 6, 1928, reported that Heflin and other senators “charge that the Administration sent the marines to protect American financial investments and is conducting an unjust “war” against that country [Nicaragua].”<sup>26</sup> This criticism, espoused by an incumbent senator and published in one of the nation’s foremost newspapers, posed a serious challenge to the government’s characterization of the war.

The debate over U.S. occupation of Nicaragua swept through the American public, as many criticized military intervention on behalf of wealthy corporations. Another article in the same edition of *The New York Times* recorded the remarks of Harold Leavey Jr., a milkman and father of one of the marines recently dispatched to fight Sandino. Harold Leavey Jr. called the decision to send his son to Nicaragua “nothing else but plain murder,” and said, “the boys are being sent to fight for the Wall Street brokers, not Uncle Sam.”<sup>27</sup> This father’s passionate condemnation of the war also represented a serious challenge to the U.S. government’s portrayal of the war. Both Senator Heflin

and Harold Leavy Jr.'s remarks portrayed the occupation as an unjust foreign adventure designed to benefit only the businessmen who owned Nicaraguan properties. Although Senator Heflin and Harold Leavey Jr. strongly condemned the war, they both represented the perspective of moderate anti-imperialists who opposed U.S. policy but also opposed Sandino. Radical anti-imperialist activists who openly supported Sandino were often much more explicit in their condemnations of the ties between American businesses and the U.S. occupation.

African American presses widely opposed the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua and formed a key component of Sandino's support in the U.S.. The NAACP's *The Crisis*, edited by W.E.B. Du Bois, viewed the occupation of Nicaragua as the latest example of American imperialism.<sup>28</sup> The most notable criticisms came from the *Negro World*, the newspaper of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). *Negro World* often carried the most pro-Sandino articles of any Black paper, and it was also the only pro-Sandino American paper to have a readership in Nicaragua.<sup>29</sup> English-speaking Caribbean Black people who migrated to Nicaragua's east coast to work for American plantations and extractive industries imported copies of the paper as part of a broader movement to organize local UNIA branches. These workers had their own grievances against American businesses like the United Fruit Company, and they would become a significant source of support for Sandino during the war. In his article on African American presses' support for Sandino, historian Ted Vincent explains that this conflict is often called a "banana war" because much of the fighting centered around the east coast and other regions containing banana plantations.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps unsurprisingly given its readership, *Negro World* carried many articles condemning the connections between U.S. business interests and policy in Nicaragua. The March 17, 1928 issue of *Negro World* contained an editorial which criticized U.S. policy in Nicaragua under the headline, "Uncle Sam Must Change Policy in Nicaragua, if Capitalist Group Will Let Him – When Sandino is Called Bad Names Even Wall Street Can't Refrain from Tittering."<sup>31</sup> The description of Wall Street "tittering" at criticism of Sandino framed the U.S. government's characterization of Sandino as an obvious lie perpetrated by wealthy financiers to justify a foreign intervention for their own benefit.

The Communist Party of the United States (then called the Workers' (Communist) Party of America) provided another source of support for Sandino. Communist opposition to foreign interventions was so ardent that the party helped to organize the All-American Anti-Imperialist League (named after an earlier organization formed during the Spanish-American War) in 1925 to oppose all forms of American imperialism.<sup>32</sup> The League openly supported

Sandino and his cause, in addition to criticizing the role American businesses played in the occupation. An edition of *The Daily Worker*, the Communist Party's newspaper, published on April 2, 1928, contained an editorial written anonymously by a U.S. Marine opposed to the occupation just before his deployment to Nicaragua. In the editorial, the marine said he knew he was "going to Nicaragua to fight against the people of this little country in order to protect Wall Street's profits."<sup>33</sup> Like the papers of African American presses, communist papers portrayed the war against Sandino as an effort by Wall Street brokers to protect their own interests at the expense of Nicaraguans.

Although anti-imperialists' condemnations of the occupation focus more on Wall Street than Sandino, they implicitly challenge to the U.S. government's depiction of him. Since the government described Sandino as a bandit motivated only by profit, highlighting the U.S. government's economic motivations suggested at least a moral equivalency between the two. Occasionally, anti-imperialist activists challenged the government's characterization of Sandino by making this comparison explicitly. An article in *The New York Times* on April 15, 1928, reporting on an All-American Anti-Imperialist League protest outside the White House, mentioned that one of the demonstrators carried a picket sign that said, "Wall Street and not Sandino is the real bandit."<sup>34</sup>

In their challenges to the U.S. government's characterization of Sandino, anti-imperialist activists were aided by Sandino himself. Throughout the war, Sandino published proclamations, manifestos, and open letters laying out his political beliefs and demands. Several of these publications sought to justify his attacks on American property and to denounce the role U.S. businesses played in the occupation. For example, after his raid on the La Luz Mine in April 1928, Sandino wrote a letter to the mine owners which read, "your mine has been reduced to ashes by disposition of this command to make more tangible our protests against the warlike invasion that your Government has made in our territory."<sup>35</sup> In the letter Sandino explained that "the pretext advanced by Mr. Coolidge for his intervention in Nicaragua is to protect life and property of North Americans ... which is tremendous hypocrisy ... such happenings as have presently occurred ... [are] the harvest reaped by the insensate policy of your Government in our country."<sup>36</sup> Sandino likely intended for the letter to be read by more than just the mine owners, and the following month a copy of it reached the U.S. Minister in Nicaragua.<sup>37</sup>

Sandino was keenly aware of the public debate over his image in the United States, and on several occasions, he sent statements directly to his supporters. In a letter to the All-American Anti-Imperialist League in May 1928, Sandino wrote, "We well know the situation of the working class in

your country ... exploited by the same interests that are now fighting to enslave the peoples of Latin America.”<sup>38</sup> This letter not only denounces the role of U.S. financial interests in Nicaragua, but also connects that issue to criticisms of capitalist excesses in the United States. Such a critique was likely well-received by the communist-affiliated Anti-Imperialist League, showing the skill with which Sandino appealed to his American supporters.

## THE QUESTION OF SANDINO'S POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

The U.S. government also characterized Sandino as an illegitimate political actor. This portrayal of Sandino emerged very early in the conflict. On July 19, 1927, *The New York Times* reported on the public statements of Secretary of State Kellogg in the aftermath of the Battle of Ocotal, the first major battle of the war. Kellogg reportedly said of Sandino, “His activities cannot be considered to have had any political significance whatsoever.”<sup>39</sup> Throughout the war, U.S. officials frequently insisted that Sandino did not have a sincere political platform and lacked the support of the Nicaraguan populace. During the Senate hearing on U.S. military conduct in Nicaragua in February 1928, Brigadier General Rufus H. Lane said dissent in Nicaragua “is entirely confined to Sandino and his men... There is no organization of any kind supporting him in the rest of the country.”<sup>40</sup> Similar assertions were made in internal communications between U.S. State Department officials. In a report on the course of the war to the Secretary of State on September 20, 1928, U.S. Minister in Nicaragua Charles Eberhardt reported that, “So far as Nicaraguan internal politics are concerned, in fact, the Sandinista movement has lost practically all of its significance.”<sup>41</sup>

In addition to claiming Sandino lacked popular support, U.S. officials actively worked to take political legitimacy away from Sandino whenever they could. In a cable to the Secretary of State on January 11, 1928, U.S. Chargé in Nicaragua Dana G. Munro urged “that the Department give further consideration immediately to the question of declaring a state of war in Nueva Segovia” in order to give the U.S. Marines and Nicaraguan forces the legal power to detain insurgents without trial.<sup>42</sup> Two days later, Secretary of State Kellogg responded, “a formal declaration of a state of war by the Nicaraguan Congress would probably have the effect of converting Sandino’s status from that of mere bandit to that of leader of an organized rebellion ... the present state of affairs, as far as this question is concerned, for the present will have to be maintained in spite of its inconveniences.”<sup>43</sup> This incident shows that the U.S. government was deeply concerned with delegitimizing

Sandino and his insurgency. The struggle over legitimacy was so important that the State Department chose to deny a request from the U.S. military rather than risk potentially increasing Sandino’s status.

Unfortunately for U.S. officials, the realities of the war in Nicaragua undermined many of their efforts to delegitimize Sandino. Many reports showed that Sandino enjoyed some measure of popular support in Nicaragua, a fact which the State Department itself acknowledged in internal documents. In January of 1929 Minister Eberhardt, who just four months earlier claimed Sandino’s movement had lost all significance, reported that Sandino had plenty of willing “spies who now come and go freely, obtaining information about troop movements and maintaining contact with sympathizers in the interior.”<sup>44</sup> However, the largest obstacle to the U.S. government’s efforts was Sandino’s counter-effort to promote his insurgency.

The proclamations and declarations Sandino published throughout the war outlined an ideological platform and clear, achievable political demands, which challenged the U.S. government’s characterization of him as an insincere political actor. In February 1928, Sandino stated his demands in a letter to Rear Admiral David F. Sellers. Sandino wrote, “the only way this struggle can come to an end is through the immediate withdrawal of the invading forces from our territory, at the same time replacing the current president by a Nicaraguan citizen who has not made himself a candidate for the presidency, the forthcoming elections to be supervised by representatives from Latin America instead of the U.S. Marines.”<sup>45</sup> Sandino repeated these demands publicly many times during the war. By demanding a new president and new election supervisors in addition to the withdrawal of U.S. forces, Sandino called into question the legitimacy of elections supervised by the United States.

Sandino also attacked the legitimacy of Nicaraguan politicians who collaborated with the American occupation. On several occasions he derided President Adolfo Díaz, whose appointment had been arranged by the U.S. when the occupation resumed in 1927. For example, in March 1929 Sandino wrote an open letter to the recently elected President Herbert Hoover, claiming that before the American occupation, “the spurious Adolfo Díaz was a simple fourth-class employee ... [at a] North American mining company... From that mine Adolfo Díaz was taken to be the instrument in Nicaragua of the Wall Street bankers.”<sup>46</sup> The U.S. State Department realized that President Díaz had a legitimacy deficit, and U.S. officials considered holding an election for a new president as a top priority. In a telegram from February 1928, Minister Eberhardt informed Secretary of State Kellogg that “a free election is the only hope of avoiding a complete break-down of public order.”<sup>47</sup> The

election occurred in November 1928 under the supervision of U. S. Marines, and Liberal general Jose Maria Moncada, a signer of the Tipitapa Agreements with Henry Stimson in 1927, won.

However, the transition from a Conservative American ally to a Liberal one mattered little to Sandino, who immediately began attacking the legitimacy of the new president. In a public statement in February 1929, the month after the new president took office, Sandino described Moncada as the “current agent of the Wall Street bankers in Nicaragua, imposed by Yankee bayonets,” and claimed that recent attacks ordered by the new president showed “the inhumanity of the cruel underling Moncada and the buccaneers whom he serves.”<sup>48</sup> Sandino’s public statements portrayed the Nicaraguan presidents who chose to cooperate with the American occupiers, rather than the Nicaraguans who resisted the occupation, as illegitimate political actors.

Sandino’s public statements also portrayed his insurgency as a struggle for national liberation. In a famous interview with American journalist Carleton Beals in March 1928, Sandino said, “we have taken up arms from the love of our country... We, in our own house, are fighting for our inalienable rights. What right have foreign troops to call us outlaws and bandits and to say that we are the aggressors? ... We declare that we will never live in cowardly peace under a government installed by a foreign Power.”<sup>49</sup> Sandino returned to the themes of national liberation throughout the war, and he often directed his statements towards U.S. officials or the American public. In his open letter to the newly elected President Hoover in March 1929, Sandino wrote that “the ex-leader of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, and his secretary of state, Frank B. Kellogg ... brazenly ordered the massacre of my countrymen, desolating our fields with fire, violating our women, and pretending to deny us our sacred rights and freedoms.” Sandino continued, “As always our army of liberation is firm and victorious and eagerly awaits the orientation that you will give to the macabre and conspiratorial policy that Coolidge and Kellogg left behind them in Nicaragua.”<sup>50</sup> By depicting his fight as a struggle for national liberation from a foreign occupier, Sandino directly countered the U.S. characterization of him as illegitimate and instead made the U.S. occupation out to be an unjust and illegitimate imperialist venture.

Sandino’s remarks found a sympathetic audience among many American anti-imperialist activists. Even moderate anti-imperialists who did not support Sandino sometimes expressed sympathy or understanding for the cause of Nicaraguan national liberation. In an article for *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in July 1931, titled “Changes in Our Latin American

Policy,” Dr. Raymond Leslie Buell, a research director at the Foreign Policy Association in New York, wrote “Sandino has been called a bandit. He may well be. I do not know. But I do know that whenever a foreign power comes in and imposes a settlement upon a local community ... that policy will create Sandinos wherever it is applied.”<sup>51</sup> More radical anti-imperialists embraced Sandino’s calls for national liberation. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1928, the All-American Anti-Imperialist league held a rally in New York City attended by over 1,000 people, at which the main speaker was Socrates Sandino, Augusto César’s half-brother who was then living in Brooklyn. The following day, *The New York Times* reported that Socrates said “that his brother was no bandit, but rather a Nicaraguan George Washington, Simon Bolivar, San Martin and Juarez.”<sup>52</sup> The explicit comparison to George Washington, especially when addressing an American audience, implied that the U.S. government’s war against Sandino was a betrayal of the founding principles of the United States.

The narrative of national liberation was also well-received in many papers of the African American press, such as the NAACP’s *The Crisis* and UNIA’s *Negro World*. *Negro World* was likely to be especially sympathetic to narratives of national liberation, since the UNIA had been banned throughout most of Africa because of its denunciations of European imperialism.<sup>53</sup> The February 25, 1928 issues of *Negro World* contained an article which sympathetically covered another meeting hosted by the Anti-Imperialist League. Socrates Sandino also spoke at this event, and when he was asked why he was not “in Nicaragua fighting for such a noble cause,” he reportedly replied, “I am not sure that I am as brave as my brother.”<sup>54</sup> This article was published alongside a list of Sandino’s demands for a U.S. withdrawal, a new president and elections supervised by Latin Americans.<sup>55</sup> As these excerpts show, anti-imperial activists used the public statements of Augusto César Sandino to portray him as a patriot fighting for national liberation.

## THE QUESTION OF U.S. MILITARY CONDUCT

A third component of the U.S. government’s characterization of Sandino was the description of him as exceptionally and unnecessarily violent. Characterizations of Sandino in this manner also emerged in the early stages of the war. Minister Eberhardt’s initial report on Sandino emphasized that he was “committing most every known depredation and acts of outlawry.”<sup>56</sup> These claims were spread publicly, as in the aforementioned article in the January 9, 1928 edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, which described Sandino

as a “murderous outlaw.”<sup>57</sup> Descriptions of Sandino in these terms continued throughout the war, especially in the aftermath of battles in which U.S. Marines were killed. In response to one of Sandino’s attacks, in April 1931 President Herbert Hoover said in a statement, “Sandino has placed himself and his band outside the civilized pale by the cold-blooded murder of eight or nine American civilians” as reported by an article in *The New York Times*.<sup>58</sup> Henry L. Stimson, the newly appointed Secretary of State, echoed the president’s remarks. More strikingly, the article also covered a report by Rear Admiral Arthur St. Clair Smith, which described the desecration of corpses by Sandinistas, including “a bandit cutting the head from a prostrate dead marine.”<sup>59</sup> President Hoover’s intense denunciation, combined with Rear Admiral Smith’s decision to share gruesome details of the attack with the public, show that U.S. officials portrayed Sandino and his forces as uncivilized, violent, and cruel. This stark, villainous characterization sought to further discredit Sandino and his insurgency and to convince Americans of the necessity of continuing the occupation.

Unfortunately for U.S. officials, Sandino’s army was not the only force in Nicaragua accused of causing unnecessary loss of life. The U.S. military’s conduct also spawned several controversies over the course of the war. U.S. operations against Sandino, like most counterinsurgency operations, resulted in both combatant and noncombatant casualties. The U.S. government fervently denied accusations that the marines were involved in any misconduct against the Nicaraguan population. However, the firsthand accounts of U.S. marines in Nicaragua show they had a very disparaging view of the Nicaraguans they encountered. In a letter to his fiancée in the U.S. written in April 1928, Private First Class Emil “Porter” Thomas referred to Nicaraguans using various racial slurs and then described the Nicaraguan people by writing, “They are a mixture of Spanish and Indian. I don’t like them though and they hadn’t better give me any reason at all to kill them cause I clean and oil my pistol every morning and I need Half breed hide to make a good suit case.”<sup>60</sup> Later in the letter, Private Thomas wrote that “There is nothing in this country that I want except Sandino’s scalp.”<sup>61</sup> Although his disdain for Nicaraguans seems especially pronounced, Private Thomas’s attitude towards the Nicaraguan people was not unique. In a diary entry written in January 1928, while on an expedition against Sandino’s forces, Lieutenant T. J. Kilcourse wrote, “If the American people really ... knew what a bunch of grafting scoundrels the politicians of this country are, they would give them all the arms they want and let them kill each other off – the world would be better off.”<sup>62</sup> Admittedly, these quotes do not prove that U.S. Marines killed civilians, nor do they excuse any offenses that might

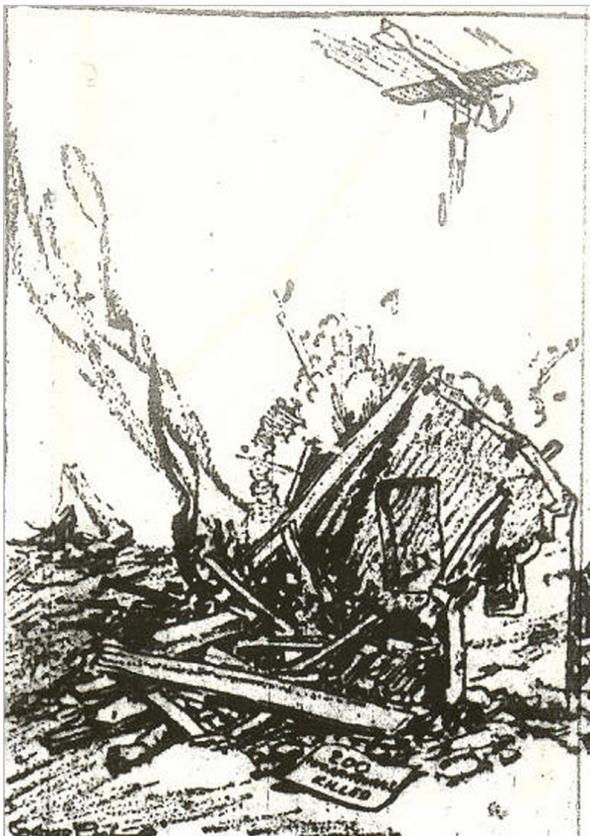
have been committed by Sandino’s forces. However, given the racialized, dehumanizing language the marines used to describe the Nicaraguan population, it is hard to accept the U.S. government’s claim that abuses never occurred.

In order to avoid criticism of marine conduct or bad optics for U.S. servicemen, U.S. officials conducted most military operations using loyal Nicaraguan forces. The most prominent Nicaraguan force that fought alongside the U.S. Marines was the Guardia Nacional, a force assembled, trained, and led by U.S. Marines. The Guardia was intended to take the marines’ place when the occupation came to an end. The drive to minimize the U.S. role began early in the conflict. In a report to the State Department on new operations against the insurgents in October 1927, the first year of the war, U.S. Chargé Dana G. Munro wrote, “To avoid possible criticism, the operations will be carried on largely by the guardia.”<sup>63</sup> Although increasing the role of the Guardia Nacional and other Nicaraguan forces in the conflict limited criticism of the U.S. Marines, it did not prevent accusations of misconduct. On March 12, 1929 Secretary of State Kellogg requested a report about a new volunteer force raised to supplement the Guardia Nacional because, in his words, “The Department has been somewhat concerned to learn from the press that a leader [of the volunteers] ... is ordering executions.”<sup>64</sup> In a response written four days later, Minister Eberhardt downplayed the reports of extrajudicial executions and wrote, “These groups of volunteers are administered by the Guardia Nacional ... these forces have operated in a most efficient and aggressive manner, and ... their services have been extremely valuable in the outlaw-infested regions.”<sup>65</sup> Eberhardt’s reply shows that U.S. officials were willing to overlook cases of misconduct so long as the Nicaraguan auxiliaries continued to fight effectively.

By far the most contentious aspect of the U.S. war effort in Nicaragua was the use of airplanes for military operations. When Sandino led an attack on the marine garrison in the town of Ocotal in July 1927, the marines called in airplanes to bomb Sandino’s lines, which decisively turned the tide of battle.<sup>66</sup> Air power became indispensable to the operations of the U.S. Marines, and planes continued to conduct bombing raids and scouting runs until the end of the war. In another diary entry written in January 1928, Lieutenant T. J. Kilcourse commented on the importance of air power: “planes will work with us every inch of the way – we sure need them if we are to get away safely.”<sup>67</sup> The U.S. Marines’ use of air power immediately became the subject of constant criticism because it frequently produced large, disproportionate numbers of casualties. At the Battle of Ocotal, bombs dropped from U.S. planes killed over 200 of Sandino’s men, while the battle resulted in only 1 U.S. marine casualty.<sup>68</sup> One bomb alone killed an estimated 30

Sandinistas.<sup>69</sup> A report on the battle in *The New York Times* on July 20, 1927, quoted Dr. T. S. Vaca, a representative of Nicaraguan Liberals living in Washington, as saying “if this is not wholesale murder I do not know the meaning of such a word.”<sup>70</sup> American bombing raids also reportedly caused civilian casualties. During the February 1928 Senate hearings on the U.S. military’s conduct in Nicaragua, the question of whether or not the bombing at Ocotal killed civilians came up. Claude A. Swanson, Democratic Senator from Virginia, asked Secretary of the Navy Curtis D. Wilbur, “Were any instructions there given with reference to the airplanes – as to the bombing of where civilians were and women and children? Were any instructions given to avoid that?” Secretary Wilbur replied, “I could not say. No instructions emanated from us on that subject.”<sup>71</sup> These accusations, along with others leveled against U.S. conduct during the war, left the U.S. military vulnerable to criticism from anti-imperialists.

Such criticisms were frequent throughout the war with Sandino. Anti-imperialist activists in the United States stressed the brutality and cruelty of the U.S. military, a description very similar to the one applied to Sandino by U.S. officials. At the All-American Anti-Imperialist League



“Another American Aviation Achievement”  
*Louisville Courier-Journal*, 21 July 1927.<sup>73</sup>

rally on January 15, 1928, Robert W. Dunn, an author and member of the Communist Party, said President Calvin Coolidge was “not a big brother, but a big bully, if not a big butcher.”<sup>72</sup>

Some of the most evocative criticisms of the military’s conduct came in the form of political cartoons. The July 21, 1927 issue of the *Louisville Courier Journal* contained a cartoon titled, “Another American Aviation Achievement.” The title calls the bombing “another” achievement in reference to Charles Lindberg’s famous transatlantic flight earlier that year. The cartoon depicts a building reduced to rubble, with an American airplane dropping bombs as it flies away. A sign on the ground reads “200 Nicaraguans killed.”

Although this depiction of U.S. military conduct from the traditionally moderate *Louisville Courier-Journal* seems uncharacteristically critical, radical anti-imperialist papers were much more explicit in their criticism. The August 3, 1927 edition of *The Daily Worker* contained a political cartoon titled “The Pacification of Nicaragua.” The cartoon depicts a brutish, monstrous U.S. marine standing over a field of corpses, holding an American flag while a fleet of planes flies in the background.

The grotesque depiction of violence in the cartoon strongly condemns the U.S. military and its behavior in Nicaragua. The cartoon’s title also challenges the U.S. government’s description of the occupation, as the word “pacification” suggests a violent, nakedly imperialist mission. These criticisms of U.S. military conduct represented a serious challenge to the U.S. government’s characterization of Sandino as exceptionally violent, because they depicted



“The Pacification of Nicaragua.”  
*The Daily Worker*, 3 August 1927.<sup>74</sup>

the U.S. military as the most aggressive and violent force in Nicaragua.

## THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO COMBAT CRITICISM

U.S. government officials were fully aware of the various anti-imperialist attacks on U.S. policy in Nicaragua and did what they could to combat these critiques of the war and any support for Sandino.<sup>75</sup> However, they never effectively defeated the anti-imperialist challenge in the battle for public opinion. One major reason for this failure was that U.S. officials were often the last to hear about new developments in Nicaragua, despite the sizeable American diplomatic and military presence in the country. On July 27, 1927, Secretary of State Kellogg telegraphed Minister Eberhardt to complain that "The Department is ... greatly embarrassed by the fact that ... reports [of engagements] almost always appear in the newspapers prior to the receipt of any information whatever from you." Kellogg wrote, "As the Legation must know, the Department's information regarding actual conditions affecting the restoration of tranquility and order in Nicaragua has on many occasions been found to be grossly inaccurate and misleading."<sup>76</sup> The Secretary's striking admission of embarrassment and aggressive tone reveals how inhibiting the lack of accurate information was to the State Department's operations.

Minister Eberhardt sent a response on July 31, defending his conduct and arguing that "Neither I nor General Feland can prevent publication articles in the American press in advance of the receipt of our own information," and further saying reports took time to be confirmed before being sent because "we dislike to send anything from mere rumor."<sup>77</sup> Despite this reasoning, Secretary Kellogg's charge that information sent by the Legation was "grossly inaccurate and misleading" often proven true. For example, in May 1929 Secretary Stimson demanded a new report on a conference between Honduran and U.S. officials along the border because the State Department had discovered that Eberhardt's report on the conference the previous month was completely inaccurate.<sup>78</sup> As this incident shows, U.S. officials often worked with inaccurate information and faced significant delays when receiving reports, which made it difficult for them to combat anti-imperialist accusations and criticisms based on recent developments.

The battle for public opinion escalated when the U.S. government took more forceful action against the anti-imperialist movement. At the All-American Anti-Imperialist League rally on January 15, 1928, the organizers collected donations to buy medical supplies for Sandino's troops. The

article in *The New York Times* covering the event reported that, "A question as to whether this constituted treason or not was answered by those on the platform who pointed out that the United States had not declared war on Nicaragua, or any army in Nicaragua."<sup>79</sup> Although this reasoning satisfied the event's attendants, the U.S. State Department explored whether this constituted a prosecutable offense. In a telegram to the Secretary of State on March 28, 1928 Minister Eberhardt claimed that the funds raised by the League were being used to purchase weapons for Sandino and questioned "whether it would not be possible to prosecute those persons in New York and elsewhere who are openly encouraging and furnishing material support to the revolutionary activities now being conducted by Sandino."<sup>80</sup> In response to Eberhardt's request, the State Department issued secret orders to U.S. officials in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, instructing them to find evidence that the League's money was being used to purchase arms for Sandino.<sup>81</sup> Although all of these officials launched investigations, none of them found any evidence of arms purchases. By July 1928 Minister Eberhardt was forced to admit that "it was impossible to obtain any evidence indicating that funds collected by anti-imperialist organizations in the United States are being used for the purchase of munitions and war supplies for the outlaws in Nicaragua."<sup>82</sup> Eberhardt would have found no support for his accusations against the League in Sandino's personal records or correspondence. In a letter sent to the Anti-Imperialist League after the rally in May 1928, Sandino wrote, "I am glad to inform you that I have received ... a package containing cotton, bandages, and other medicines" and did not mention any arms or other supplies of any kind.<sup>83</sup>

Although this attempt to expose and prosecute the Anti-Imperialist League failed, other efforts by the U.S. government successfully disrupted its activities. In order to raise funds, the League printed stickers with the text "Protest Against Marine Rule in Nicaragua," and encouraged their supporters to buy them to put them on their letters.<sup>84</sup> U.S. postal officials refused to deliver letters bearing these stickers, and in response the Anti-Imperialist League filed a lawsuit. In May 1928, Federal Judge Thomas D. Thacher ruled in favor of the government. On May 17, 1928, *The New York Times* reported on the judge's ruling. Thacher claimed that the League's stickers were a "perpetration of falsehood," because an "affidavit of the Secretary of State," said the U.S. Marines did not rule Nicaragua.<sup>85</sup> This ruling curtailed civil liberties protections in the name of preventing criticism of the government's policy in Nicaragua. As Richard Grossman writes in his article on the anti-imperialist movement, "U.S. courts were apparently willing to limit freedom of speech to stop opposition to

American foreign policy.”<sup>86</sup> This court case was not the only instance of the U.S. government challenging civil liberties protections to prevent criticism of its characterization of Sandino and the war in Nicaragua. In February 1928 the Bureau of Immigration moved to deport Socrates Sandino, Augusto César Sandino’s half-brother and member of the Anti-Imperialist League, because of his political activism and denunciations of the war.<sup>87</sup>

## THE END OF THE OCCUPATION AND CONCLUSION

In his article on history of the U.S. war against Sandino, Joseph O. Baylen claims that the U.S. State Department was never able to “convince a hostile section of the American press which hailed Sandino as a harassed patriot, or the American public, that Sandino was a treacherous “bandit.”<sup>88</sup> Although Baylen’s article focuses on the character of Sandino himself, rather than the debate over his image in the U.S., his analysis of the State Department’s failure to convince the public is largely correct. The inability of U.S. officials to win the war for public opinion left support for continuing the occupation shallow and vulnerable to change. Major change came on December 31, 1930, when a group of ten marines repairing a telephone wire near Achuapa were ambushed by Sandinistas, and eight marines were killed.<sup>89</sup> Public outcry was immediate and immense. In response, Republican Senator William Borah, the Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations who had previously supported continued occupation, endorsed a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Nicaragua.<sup>90</sup> When the senate passed this resolution President Herbert Hoover, who had inherited the war in Nicaragua from his predecessor, began a gradual withdrawal of the U.S. Marines. By June of 1931, U.S. forces in Nicaragua, which had been over 2,000 strong, were reduced to a force of just over 500.<sup>91</sup> The last U.S. forces in Nicaragua were withdrawn in 1933. Public opinion proved to be a major contributor to the end of the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua. After the U.S. withdrawal, a new Nicaraguan President, Liberal politician Juan Bautista Sacasa, granted amnesty to Sandino and his men, and Sandino agreed to lay down his arms.<sup>92</sup>

Overall, the U.S. characterization of Sandino, and thus the entire U.S. war effort in Nicaragua, were vulnerable to criticism because of the inherent characteristics of the U.S. occupation. The financial motivations behind U.S. intervention, Sandino’s concrete demands and political platform, and the controversies surrounding U.S. military conduct seriously damaged the occupation’s legitimacy. These factors also resulted in anti-imperialist

activists having ample avenues of attack to combat the U.S. characterization of Sandino and delegitimize the U.S. occupation. The anti-imperialists challenges to the U.S. government’s characterization of Sandino were a major part of the battle for American public opinion during the occupation. U.S. officials’ inability to win that battle ultimately contributed to the end of the U.S. occupation. The anti-imperialists proved powerful allies to Sandino’s insurgency, as they helped expose U.S. financial motivations and the legitimacy of Sandino’s fight for national liberation. Although the U.S. State Department faced several disadvantages in combating anti-imperialist critiques of the war, the innate realities of the occupation allowed anti-imperial activists to broadly and successfully critique U.S. policy. Thus, the realities of the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua made the occupation unsustainable, and eventually brought an end to a controversial chapter in the history of U.S.-Nicaragua relations.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898–1934*, Rev. ed. (University Press of Kentucky, 1985), 199.
- <sup>2</sup> Lester D. Langley, and Thomas David Schoonover, *The Banana Men : American Mercenaries and Entrepreneurs in Central America, 1880–1930* (University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 91.
- <sup>3</sup> Joseph O. Baylen, “Sandino: Patriot or Bandit?” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 31, no. 3 (1951): 405.
- <sup>4</sup> Baylen, “Sandino: Patriot or Bandit?” 406.
- <sup>5</sup> Ted Vincent, “The Harlem to Bluefields Connection: Sandino’s Aid from the Black American Press,” *The Black Scholar* 16, no. 3 (1985): 37.
- <sup>6</sup> Alan McPherson, “Lid Sitters and Prestige Seekers: The U.S. Navy versus the State Department and the End of U.S. Occupations,” *Journal of Military History* 78, no. 1 (2014) : 75.
- <sup>7</sup> Richard Grossman, “Solidarity with Sandino: The Anti-Intervention and Solidarity Movements in the United States, 1927–1933,” *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 6 (2009): 68–69.
- <sup>8</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars*, 192–193.
- <sup>9</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars*, 195.
- <sup>10</sup> The Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt) to the Secretary of State, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1927*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), Document 456.
- <sup>11</sup> The Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt) to the Secretary

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- <sup>12</sup> The Secretary of State to the Chargé in Nicaragua (Munro), in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1928*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), Document 496.
- <sup>13</sup> “Says Sandino Served with Villa in Mexico: General Lejeune Calls Him ‘Small Time Caesar’—He Was In Columbus (N.M.) Raid,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1928, 3.
- <sup>14</sup> Pancho Villa was an influential general and politician during the Mexican Revolution. He had also been characterized as a bandit by the U.S. government. “Says Sandino Served With Villa in Mexico,” 3.
- <sup>15</sup> “Senate Sidetracks Motions Attacking Policy in Nicaragua: Adjournment Blocks Heflin’s Effort to Get Vote on Withdrawing Marines,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1928, 1.
- <sup>16</sup> “Get Sandino!” *The Washington Post*, January 3, 1928, 6.
- <sup>17</sup> “Cleaning Up in Nicaragua,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 9, 1928, 1.
- <sup>18</sup> The Commander of the U.S. Special Service Squadron (Sellers) to General Sandino, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1928*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), Document 497.
- <sup>19</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Use of the U.S. Navy in Nicaragua*, 70th Congress, 1st session, 1928, 41.
- <sup>20</sup> The Chargé in Nicaragua (Munro) to the Secretary of State, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1927*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), Document 417.
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- <sup>23</sup> The Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt) to the Secretary of State, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1928*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), Document 543.
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- <sup>26</sup> “Senate Sidetracks Motions Attacking Policy in Nicaragua,” 1.
- <sup>27</sup> “Marine Contingent Goes from Brooklyn: Twenty-Six Sail for Nicaragua via Norfolk—Father of One Assails Fighting,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1928, 3.
- <sup>28</sup> Vincent, “The Harlem to Bluefields Connection,” 39.
- <sup>29</sup> Vincent, “The Harlem to Bluefields Connection,” 36.
- <sup>30</sup> Vincent, “The Harlem to Bluefields Connection,” 37.
- <sup>31</sup> “Uncle Sam Must Change Policy in Nicaragua, if Capitalist Group Will Let Him – When Sandino is Called Bad Names Even Wall Street Can’t Refrain from Tittering,” *Negro World*, March 17, 1928, 2.
- <sup>32</sup> Grossman, “Solidarity with Sandino,” 71.
- <sup>33</sup> “Going to Nicaragua to Fight Not to Watch Elections,” *The Daily Worker*, April 2, 1928.
- <sup>34</sup> “Arrest 107 Pickets at the White House: Washington Police Break Up Anti-Imperialistic League Protest on Nicaragua,” *New York Times*, April 15, 1928, 21.
- <sup>35</sup> Augusto C. Sandino, “A Protest Against U.S. Intervention: Letter to H. J. Amphlett,” in *Sandino, the testimony of a Nicaraguan patriot: 1921–1934*, trans. Sergio Ramirez and Robert Edgar Conrad (Princeton University Press: 1990), 192.
- <sup>36</sup> Sandino, “A Protest Against U.S. Intervention,” 192.
- <sup>37</sup> The Consul at Bluefields (Fletcher) to the Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt), in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1928*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), Document 518.
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- <sup>39</sup> “Kellogg Justifies Defense: Calls Sandino an Outlaw and Battle of No Political Significance,” *New York Times*, July 19, 1927, 10.
- <sup>40</sup> Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Use of the U.S. Navy in Nicaragua*, 29.
- <sup>41</sup> The Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt) to the Secretary of State, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1928*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States

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- <sup>47</sup> The Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt) to the Secretary of State, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1928*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office: 1943), Document 499.
- <sup>48</sup> Augusto C. Sandino, "A Denial," in *Sandino, the testimony of a Nicaraguan patriot: 1921-1934*, trans. Sergio Ramirez and Robert Edgar Conrad (Princeton University Press: 1990), 234.
- <sup>49</sup> Augusto C. Sandino, interviewed by Carleton Beals, "Sandino in the Journal Articles of Carleton Beals," in *Sandino, the testimony of a Nicaraguan patriot: 1921-1934*, trans. Sergio Ramirez and Robert Edgar Conrad (Princeton University Press: 1990), 174.
- <sup>50</sup> Sandino, "An Open Letter to President Herbert Hoover," 239.
- <sup>51</sup> Raymond Leslie Buell, "Changes in Our Latin American Policy." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 156 (1931): 131.
- <sup>52</sup> "Sandino a Patriot, Says Brother Here: Brooklyn Mechanic Likens Rebel General to Washington at Protest Meeting of 1,000. Fund Raised for His Band, Name of Coolidge Booed and That of Sandino Cheered as Speakers Attack "War in Nicaragua," *New York Times*, January 16, 1928, 44.
- <sup>53</sup> Vincent, "The Harlem to Bluefields Connection," 38.
- <sup>54</sup> "Sandino's Brother Scores Imperialism: Brother of Nicaraguan Patriot Is Chief Speaker at Community Church Meeting," *Negro World*, February 25, 1928, 2.
- <sup>55</sup> "Sandino's Demands," *Negro World*, February 25, 1928, 2.
- <sup>56</sup> The Minister in Nicaragua (Eberhardt) to the Secretary of State, in *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1927*, Volume III, eds. Joseph V. Fuller and Tyler Dennett (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), Document 456.
- <sup>57</sup> "Cleaning Up in Nicaragua," *Wall Street Journal*, January 9, 1928, 1.
- <sup>58</sup> Richard V. Oulahan, "Hoover Denounces Sandino as Outlaw; Expects Capture: President Says Bandit's "Coldblooded Murder" Puts Him "Outside Civilized Pale," *New York Times*, April 22, 1931, 1.
- <sup>59</sup> Oulahan, "Hoover Denounces Sandino," 1.
- <sup>60</sup> Personal Letters of Private First-Class Emil "Porter" Thomas of Ohio to Fiancée Beatrice, 1925-1929, USMC-DOCS, The Sandino Rebellion, accessed May 15, 2021, <http://www.sandinorebellion.com/USMC-Docs/USMC-docs-Thomas1.html>.
- <sup>61</sup> Thomas, "Personal Letters."
- <sup>62</sup> Personal Diary of LT. T. J. Kilcourse, Special Expedition against El Chipote, Dec. 1927-Jan. 1928, USMC-DOCS, The Sandino Rebellion, accessed May 15, 2021, <http://www.sandinorebellion.com/PCDocs/1928a/PC280105-Kilcourse.html>.
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- <sup>68</sup> Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Use of the U.S. Navy in Nicaragua*, 21.
- <sup>69</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars*, 197.
- <sup>70</sup> "Chief Praises Marines: Admiral Sellers Reports on

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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