(Photographically reproduced)

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Weather: Partly cloudy and cold today, a mixture of rain and snow; clear tonight. Sunny, strong winds tomorrow. Temperatures: today 38-42, tonight 23-27; yesterday 35-50. Details, page C24.

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50 cents beyond 75 miles from New York City, except on Long Island.

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Reagan Steps Up His Drive to Give $100 Million to Nicaragua Rebels

By BERNARD WEINRAUB
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 5 — President Reagan appealed again to Congress today to endorse his request for $100 million in aid to Nicaraguan rebels, saying it was needed so that the United States would not have to send American troops there.

"American troops have not been asked for and are not needed," Mr. Reagan told about 100 representatives of the umbrella group of leading Jewish organizations. "We must make sure they never are needed. We send money and material now so we'll never have to send our own American boys."

Even as Mr. Reagan stepped up his campaign for the $100 million proposal, the White House suffered a setback when two House panels rejected the aid measure. White House aides concede that the aid package will face serious trouble when it reaches the floor, perhaps next week. [Page A9.]

Comment From Weinberger

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger told the House Armed Services Committee that failure to grant the aid request could eventually lead to the introduction of American troops in Central America. Asked if American troops would be necessary to halt the spread of communism in the region, Mr. Weinberger replied:

"Ultimately, that would indeed be the case."

Although Mr. Reagan discussed the issue of aid to the Nicaraguan "contra" forces at his morning meeting with a group of Washington reporters and columnists, his bluntest comments to date on the issue came this afternoon in remarks to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations at a White House meeting.

Saying that Congress faced "a historic decision" on the Administration's assistance package for the Nicaraguan contras, Mr. Reagan said that a potential legislative defeat on the issue would prove disastrous.

"But if the members of Congress hide their heads in the sand and pretend the strategic threat in Nicaragua will go away, they are courting disaster

on Page A8

The New York Times / Jose R. Lopez

Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger at House hearing on aid to Nicaraguan rebels.

Associated Press

President Corazon C. Aquino meeting yesterday in Manila with two of the Communist leaders who were freed from prison by her Government. Jose Maria Sison, right, founded the Communist Party of the Philippines; Bernabe Buscayno is said to have been leader of the Communist rebel force, the New People's Army.

4 KEY COMMUNISTS FREED BY MANILA; MILITARY OBJECTS

PARTY FOUNDER RELEASED

He'd Back 'Positive Aspects of Aquino Government — Force Not Renounced

By SETH MYDANS
Special to The New York Times

MANILA, March 5 — The founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines and three other men said to be key Communist figures were freed today, despite objections from the military.

The step was part of a mass release of inmates who had been imprisoned by President Ferdinard E. Marcos's Government for what the new administration regards as political crimes.

The Communist Party's founder, Jose Maria Sison, who is 47 years old, said after his release that he was prepared to support the "positive aspects" of the Government of President Corazon C. Aquino. But he declined to renounce the possibility of using armed force in a Communist revolution.

Supreme Court Justices Quit

Also today, the resignations of most of the justices on the 13-member Supreme Court were reported. Reports said two or three justices had not complied with Mrs. Aquino's request to step down and allow her to form her own court.

Released today [illegible] Sison

Broker Guilty in Wife's Slaying; Jury in Jersey Orders Execution

By DONALD JANSON
Special to The New York Times

MAYS LANDING, N.J., March 5 — A New Jersey insurance broker, Robert O. Marshall, was convicted and sentenced [illegible] today for plotting the [illegible]fe.

before sentencing, Mr. Marshall responded, in a voice so low it could hardly be heard, "Only that I am innocent of these charges."

F[illegible] the verdic[illegible]

U.S. SETS STRATEGY ON MARCOS'S CASH

Court May Rule on Disposing of Documents in Baggage