CAH study guide # 4

Lesson # 1 Alliance for Progress

- THE Cold War: In the 1950s to 1990s the western powers grouped in organizations to compete against the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

- The USA in central America: The USA supported dictatorships seeking to eradicate communism but when Vice-President Nixon visited riots broke out throughout Central America.

- The USA changed its policy to focus on raising the standard of living in 1960 John F Kennedy proposed the Alliance for Progress. The Alliance for progress was a 10-year program of governmental aid to raise the standard of living in Central American nations and promote democracy. ******

- The USA established the School of Americas: U.S. military advisers were sent to train and assist the local military and police in counterinsurgency tactics in other nations. It was also known as a “School of Assassins” in Panama.

- The Alliance for Progress was a failure the guerrillas waged wars against the dictators and dictators were ruthless. 17 coups occurred between 1960 to 1970.

Lesson # 2 Liberation Theology

- Church’s change of policy: In the 1960s the Church focused on their Social Mission the lay persons committed themselves to work among the poor and charismatic bishops and priests encouraged the calls for progress and national modernization. The church focused on the Improvement of standards of living. ******************

- Priests were sympathetic of Guerilla movements and Lliberationist priests believed that a restructuring of society was necessary to eliminate institutionalized violence against the poor.

- Oligarchies were upset with priests: In El Salvador they created a slogan “Be A Patriot, Kill A Priest”

- The USA supported dictators: USA supported dictator’s killings of priests. However, in 1977-81 the USA attempted to cut off military support to countries with records of human rights violations

- In the 1980s Ronald Reagan was elected and he replaced the respect for human right with militarization. When US citizens were killed in El Salvador and Guatemala US- funded bombing missions and the world reacted by going into the areas to witness the “injustices”.

- Priests spread the news about injustices and they were important to negotiate peace in each country.

Lesson # 3 Introduction to the Nicaraguan Revolution

- USA occupied Nicaragua: The USA Supervised the election in Nicaragua in 1925 and a Conservative (Solorzano) became president. However, Solorzano was removed by a Coup but liberals resisted and a civil war started and the USA offered a third candidate as a solution.

- The US feared the influence of Mexico in Nicaragua: Mexico turned to liberal/leftist policies in 1924 and supported Nicaraguan liberals.

- The US also faced Nicaraguan resistance: Augusto Cesar Sandino, a NATIONALIST, opposed USA’s solution to the civil war. He opposed foreign intervention and to the concentration of land in the hands of a small elite group.

- USA reacted to the resistance by sending 4000 US marines to fight against guerrillas. Nicaraguans and other central Americans reacted negatively to US intervention. Therefore, the USA pulled their forces but created the NATIONAL GUARD.

- The National Guard: The USA withdrew in 1933 leaving Anastacio Somoza as the leader (who became president). His sons became president as well= dynasty of 43 year rule.
-When the USA withdrew Sandino stopped his hostilities then in 1934 he was killed by Somoza.

Lesson # 4 A dictatorship made in the USA

-In 1936 Somoza initiated the most corrupt and brutal dictatorships in Latin America. He was sustained by the National Guard.

-Economic Causes of the revolution: the Cotton and Coffee cultivation flourished but it was controlled by a group of people (Somoza’s friends) and large numbers of small farmers became peasant workers. 

-Natural causes of the revolution: In 1972 an earthquake destroyed Nicaragua’s capital (Managua). The earthquake stimulated the economy and international, public, private funds and insurance created financing for new developments. BUT Somoza enriched himself by organizing his own banks, insurance company, construction firms and financial firms and he borrowed large sums from international banks.

-Opposition to Somoza: The Liberal party and conservative formed a solid bloc to resist the dictatorship in 1956 a Young poet and patriot killed Anastacio Somoza and Civil war ensued but the USA came to support Luis Somoza’s candidature.

Lesson # 5 Armed Movements

-Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) Operated isolated in the wilderness and in 1974 launched a commando raid in Managua. However, Somoza reacted by declaring martial law, and military and press censorship.

-Unions created to fight Somoza: Democratic Liberation Union[DLU] was led by Pedro Chamorro and the FSLN continued resisting by kidnapping high ranking official’s family. BUT Somoza attacked with brutality: student protests were suppressed and started the goal of annihilating the FSLN.

-FSLN attacks: In 1977, the FSLN launched a series of assaults on the National Guard barracks in Ocotal and San Carlos. When Chamorro (the leader of DLU) was killed by Samosa in 1978, the FSLN attacked again although they failed they gained respect.

-Somoza tried to appease the people by providing annual bonuses to workers, raising the minimum wage, providing social security and promoting national dialogue with opponents. BUT PEOPLE WERE NOT SATISFIED The FSLN Terceristas on July 20th 1978 fired rockets to the National Guard Headquarters. On August 22, the Guerilla took control of the National palace and kidnapped high ranking officials who were later traded for 5 million dollars, the publication of a magazine and the release of FSLN prisoners.

-Somoza reacted by bombarding insurgent towns, FSLN leaders were tortured, any persons suspected of supporting FSLN was tortured and assassinated.

Lesson # 6 FSLN Victory

-In July 1979 resumed its military activity. They studied the events in Vietnam to create a new strategy.

-NEW STRATEGIES: 1. They (FSLN) knew they were militarily weak. 2. They planned to spread the National Guard. 3. Their tactic focused on established many operational zones throughout Nicaragua. 4. Sandinistas created Civil Defence Committees (CDC) in various towns and villages. The CDCs organized protests, riots and demonstrations in towns controlled by Somoza. They managed to spread the National guard and defeated them.

-USA Could not support Somoza: The Organization of American States blocked all US intentions to support Somoza and the USA feared to become unpopular.

-Somoza’s end: People who did not support FSLN still joined their forces because they feared the National Guard. On July 16th 1979 Anastasio Somoza Debyle fled Nicaragua.