

Israeli arms sales to Latin America

In 1973 the Israeli Ministry of Defence began actively to encourage arms sales abroad. Latin America became its best customer. Israel seems to have specialized in supplying countries involved in territorial disputes and right wing dictatorships. Those countries which refused or were refused US military supplies as a result of Carter's human rights policy were thus able to continue to purchase the arms they needed.

Somoza's Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras are amongst Israel's best clients. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Israel supplied Somoza with 98% of his arms imports until the Sandinista victory. Between 1972 and 1977 El Salvador purchased 81 % of its arms from Israel, making up nearly 15% of total Israeli sales. One of the most popular Israeli exports is the Arava short take-off-and-landing military transport aircraft used in counter-insurgency. Between 1972 and 1977, 25 of these aircraft were sold to El Salvador. Guatemala has bought 15 of these aircraft in recent years in addition to 50,000 Ghalil rifles, 5 Asimo helicopters and 1,000 machine guns. Israel has also supplied technicians and experts in counter-insurgency and security to all these countries. There are reports that Israeli mercenary pilots fly for Guatemala's armed forces. [1]

References:

[1] Under the eagle :U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean /Jenny Pearce ; foreword by Richard Gott ; [maps by Michael Green]. ,0896081524 (pbk.) :, page 120