

# CONVERGENCE

*The Christic Institute*

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## Hull faces murder indictment

INSIDE



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### *Prosecutors' report in Costa Rica confirms Christic charges*

By RICK EMRICH and ANDY LANG

The Costa Rican state prosecutor's office has requested murder indictments against North American rancher John Hull and Cuban-American mercenary Felipe Vidal, two key defendants in the Christic Institute's La Penca lawsuit.

Costa Rican prosecutors say the two men, who worked for Oliver North's illegal operation to equip the *contras*, planned the 1984 terrorist bombing in La Penca, Nicaragua, which killed United States journalist Linda Frazier and several others. The prosecutors' 54-page report, released in early January, is the most dramatic confirmation to date of the basic charges outlined by the Christic Institute when the La Penca lawsuit was filed in Miami Federal court in May 1986 on behalf of journalist Martha Honey and her husband, Tony Avirgan. Avirgan was one of the reporters wounded in the explosion.

The report says that the bombing was organized by a network operating inside Costa Rica with links to the Central Intelligence Agency and former Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega. In addition to Hull and Vidal, it recommends the indictment of 28 Costa Rican and United States citizens for a number of crimes, including murder, violations of Costa Rican neutrality, dereliction of duty and graft.

Seven of the 28 are defendants in the La Penca lawsuit.

Hull, who owns a sprawling ranch in northern Costa Rica near the border with Nicaragua, is now a fugitive from Costa Rican justice. He fled the country last year after a judge released him from prison where he was awaiting trial on charges that he trafficked drugs and violated Costa Rican neutrality. A Costa Rican court later dropped the drug charges on technical grounds, but authorities are now moving to extradite Hull from the United States on the neutrality indictment.

Hull's ranch was both a supply depot for the *contras* and a staging area for cocaine flights to the United States.

Hull says the murder allegations against him are the result of a communist plot. "I think the same thing I've always thought," he told the *Bay Guardian* newspaper in January. "The government down there is infiltrated and manipulated by communists led by the Christic

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