Weather

Today: Sunny. High 50. Low 34-36. Winds west 10-15 mph. Tuesday: Partly sunny. High around 50. Winds light. Yesterday: Temperature range 21-39. Details on Page B2.

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Nicaragua Holding American as Spy

Prisoner Said to Be Congressman's Brother

By Edward Cody Washington Post Foreign Service

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Dec. 14—The Nicaraguan government has arrested as a suspected spy an American who is believed to be an Ohio congressmen's brother.

The American, whose U.S. passport identified him as Sam Nesley Hall, 49, was arrested Friday morning near the Punta Huete military airfield, about 12 miles north of Managua, Sandinista officials announced Saturday night.

A spokesman for Rep. Tony P. Hall (D-Ohio) said today he believes the captive is Hall's brother, a self-styled counterterrorism expert who the aide said has been a mercenary in Angola and Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

Hall, who has yet to be charged formally, joined Eugene Hasenfus as a prisoner of the Sandinistas, accused of illegal activities in Nicaragua in support of Reagan administration policy against the Managua government. Hasenfus, from Marinette, Wis., was sentenced Nov. 15 to a 30-year prison term for his ac-

knowledged role in delivering arms to U.S.-financed anti-Sandinista forces.

The Reagan administration denies any connection to the rebel supply operation.

State Department spokesman. Bruce Ammerman, said it is impossible to identify the detainee or his job because the Sandinista government has refused to permit the U.S. consul general in Managua to visit, him. Ammerman said he had no information on whether a Sam Hall worked for any part of the U.S. government.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto told reporters Saturday night that Hall admitted spying on Sandinista targets for a previously unheard-of private U.S. group called the Phoenix Battalion. There was no description of this group or its leadership, nor whether Hall's claim about it was being taken seriously by Sandinista authorities.

D'Escoto said Hall was captured with sketches and maps hidden in his socks. Hall first claimed to be a writer, the minister related, but lat-



TEO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Sam Hall, brother of Rep. Tony P. Hall (D-Ohio) and thought to be captive, in 1985 photo.

er admitted that he was gathering intelligence for the private group.

According to D'Escoto, Hall said the Phoenix Battalion specializes in military espionage in consonance with U.S. policy.

The Punta Huete airfield was constructed during the past two

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icaragua Says American Caught at Air Base



united press miterational, recording the Copy of Sam Hall's passport, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister d'Escoto shows a copy of Sam Hall's passport, INTERNATIONAL/REU

NICARAGUA, From A1

was prepared to handle MiG figh airbase. U.S. officials have said est aircraft in the Soviet fleet, Bu ers and also could service the larg years as Nicaragua's main militar ing the facility. military planes are known to be us ouilt MiG jets and no large Sovie known to have acquired any Soviet the Sandinista government is no

predictions, he told Mutual Broad airports ... only helped confirm casting System. the seriousness" of the Nicaraguan tered by this man, like bridges and nformation that was being regis gan administration is planning ar demonstrated the truth of frequen attack on Nicaragua. "The type o Sandinista assertions that the Rea D'Escoto said Hall's objectives

commercial flight and took a taxi to quoted here as saying he came on a main rebel group. D'Escoto was came to Managua on Wednesday said Hall's passport showed he surrection. Sandinista authorities els fighting the Sandinista gover Honduras and headquarters for the from Tegucigalpa, the capital of ment as part of a U.S.-backed in nas helped train Miskito Indian reb told an interviewer last year that he egislator and Olympic diving star Sam Hall, a former Ohio state

> from Israel, El Salvador and South Africa, officials said. The passport also carried visas

ciated Press, Sam Hall said he was interview last year with The Assoopposed U.S. aid to the rebels. In an working with Civilian Military Assued by Rep. Hall, who has strongly my brother, but I love him and pray U.S. policy in Central America as sistance, or his safety," said a statement is-"I do not share the same views or

ger to work with the guerrillas. aid for the Nicaraguan rebel organzations and coordinated travel named Tom Posey, has organized Central America by volunteers eaneaded by an Alabama veteran The U.S.-based private group,

to the rebels, denied any connection between her organization and the provides food and medical supplies tor of the U.S. Council for World caraguan contras said in interviews Officials of private American groups known to support the Nifreedom, in Phoenix, Ariz., which Hall or the Phoenix Battalion. hat they had never heard of Sam Joyce Downey, executive direc-

Staff writer Michael Weisskopf, in Washington, contributed to this report.

