

#24

USA  
A

~~SECRET~~

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: MAY 20 2019

30 DEC 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: U.S. Military Presence in Central America (U)

15) Reference is made to recent message traffic proposing various levels of continued U.S. military presence in Honduras after Ahuas Tara II (USCINCSO message 072330Z Oct 83 (Tab A); USCINCSO message 061500Z Dec 83 (Tab B); USCINCSO message 062230Z Dec 83 (Tab C); USCINCSO message 232200Z Dec 83 (Tab D)). Further reference is made to NSDD 100, in which Presidential guidance was provided with regard to enhanced U.S. military activity and assistance for the Central American region.

16) Ahuas Tara II has been a successful exercise to date, both as a training vehicle for U.S. and host country forces, and as a demonstration of our commitment to support democratic states in the region. With its termination in early February 1984, other exercises will follow in due course. However, I want to clarify what the scope of continued U.S. military activity and presence in Central America should be as we respond to objectives set forth in NSDD 100:

- Military exercises will be continued in the region, but with a clearly defined interval between them. As an example, the commencement of exercise Ahuas Tara III/Granadero I in Honduras at mid-year 1984 will provide the desired interval. Moreover, spreading exercises out will avoid overburdening the meager resources of the host country involved.
- Naval exercises will continue to be conducted in the region, particularly during periods between field exercises, as a means of maximizing the effect of U.S. presence.
- Humanitarian activities conducted in conjunction with military exercises are encouraged.
- Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercises (EDRE's) may be conducted in the region during periods between exercises.
- U.S. military presence in Honduras, or any other Central American country, will be related to U.S. exercises only. Except for support of MILGP security assistance functions, there should be no continuous activity which gives the appearance of permanent presence.

30 - 66 - 6047, 5x41, Central America (Am - Feb)

CLASSIFIED BY: ~~142/WH~~  
DECLASSIFY ON: ~~142/WH~~

18-M-2223

X28678

SEC DEF CONTR No. ....

~~SECRET~~



OSD 3.3(b)(1)(6)

- U.S. training functions at the Regional Military Training Center in Honduras may continue so long as the host country requests our support.

- Any facility established at Puerto Castilla will be a Honduran activity, with provisions for U.S. access. I await your recommendations concerning possible U.S. military construction funding.

45) We have briefed Congress frequently regarding the level of U.S. military activity in Central America. It is essential that we not jeopardize our position vis-a-vis Congress by giving the impression we are attempting to use military exercises as a vehicle for increasing our permanent military presence, particularly in the next few months when the support of Congress is crucial in obtaining supplemental funding for FY84 and increased funding for FY85 for key countries in the region.

Attachment  
a/s

DECLASSIFIED IN PART  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: MAY 20 2019

Office of the Secretary of Defense  
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS  
Date: 20 May 2019 Authority: EO 13526 + 5 U.S.C § 552  
Declassify: \_\_\_\_\_ Deny in Full: \_\_\_\_\_  
Declassify in Part: X  
Reason: 3.3(b)(1)(6)  
MDR: 18 -M- 2223