Approved For Release 2008/10/21 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000201290002-4

U.S./USSR/
NICARAGUA

RATHER: The Reagan administration has put on paper, plans that represent a new and stronger warning to the Soviet Union about its involvement in Central America. David Martin has learned the details.

MARTIN: Sources tell CBS News the Pentagon has drawn up new contingency plans for air strikes against Nicaraguan air fields in the event the Sandinistas acquire Soviet-built MiG jets, an event Reagan officials claim would tip the balance of power in Central America. Sources cited the June visit to Moscow by Nicaraguan Defense Minister Daniel Ortega, along with public statements that he wanted to buy high-performance aircraft as justification for the plans. U.S. intelligence also has picked up reports that the Sandinistas are speeding up construction of this military airfield so it can handle jet aircraft by October. Sources stress that the air strikes are strictly a last resort, and that the contingency plans first call for intercepting the MiGs en route to Nicaragua if American intelligence can provide sufficient warning. Last year, these Libyan planes carrying jet trainers to Nicaragua were intercepted in Brazil. If the MiGs were delivered by ship, the plans call for the U.S. Navy to turn them back, such as occurred during the Cuban missile crisis. The U.S. hopes to discourage the Sandinistas by demonstrating its ability to intervene. Today the aircraft carrier Kennedy arrived off Central America in what officials say is a deliberate show of force. David Martin, CBS News, the Pentagon.

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