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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

NIC 05608-84
28 September 1984

National Intelligence Council

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Chairman, National Intelligence Council *S*

FROM: [redacted]
National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT: Potential Decline of US Military
Presence/Influence in Central America

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1. Several actions over the past few months point to a potential sharp decline in the US military presence and influence in Central America:

- In Panama, the US is being forced to close the School of the Americas on 1 October, ending at least temporarily a long-standing program of training for Latin American officers. Plans are now to move the school to Puerto Rico or Florida.
- In Costa Rica, the Monge government [redacted] [redacted] has been pushing ahead with a bilateral peace treaty with Nicaragua that would create a neutral zone along their common border patrolled by a multi-lateral Latin America/European force. An earlier proposal to send US military engineers to Costa Rica's northern border area to improve access to the region appears to be a dead issue.
- In Honduras, the government is asking for a complete review of its security relationship with the United States. It will halt training of Salvadoran troops by US advisers at the RMTC as well as several US military construction projects in the interim.
- In El Salvador, President Duarte has said he is prepared to send US military advisers home in the context of a CONTADORA peace treaty as long as Nicaragua does likewise with the Soviets and Cubans. Meanwhile, he has been promised military aid and training assistance by Venezuela and Colombia.

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- In Guatemala, the government appears to have come under the increasing influence [redacted] in its regional outlook, and may no longer support a strong US military presence in Central America.

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2. The Central American countries may all be influenced by the CONTADORA process. The current draft treaty would reduce US military influence in the region considerably.

- It would prohibit any US military bases or schools in Central America.
- It would require all military advisers to leave except for technical maintenance personnel.
- It would prohibit any international military maneuvers in the region.
- It would end the supply of new US weaponry to Central America.

3. Although the US is attempting to get the Core Four to modify or change these provisions, there is some danger that we may not succeed satisfactorily.

- The draft treaty probably strikes a basic sentiment in the region against past and potential future US interference in their internal affairs. This sentiment is shared by many regional liberals and conservatives alike, especially the extremists on both ends of the spectrum.
- Even the Core Four countries may believe that if they somehow can get the US-Soviet confrontation removed as a major factor in the region, they can contend with the Sandinistas on their own and limit Nicaraguan interference in their internal affairs.
- All the Core Four would still want US economic aid, and they presumably would still see the Rio Treaty as a safety net against any direct aggression by Cuba or Nicaragua.

4. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union, Cuba and Nicaragua have all leaped to support the current draft of the CONTADORA Treaty. Their intention is to put the US and the Core Four on the defensive about asking for further changes.

- Nicaragua has said it will sign the Treaty if there are no further changes to the text and the US signs the supporting protocol.

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-- Nicaragua and Mexico also have pushed for endorsement of the current draft by the EC countries and by the United Nations.

5. Nicaragua may use the draft Treaty as an excuse to obtain MIG-21's. The draft would prohibit the import of new armaments within thirty days of its signing, but Managua has said it would not need the MIG's if the US signs.

-- Thus a US refusal to sign the current draft could be used to justify the acquisition of the MIG's.

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