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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT ROUTING SLIP

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FYI: In phone call, the NSC Executive Secretary underscores importance of disseminating this information to all appropriate components.

Executive Secretary

22 July 88

Date

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON, D.C. 20608

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IC STAFF

July 22, 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MELVYN LEVITSKY
Executive Secretary
Department of State

MR. ROBERT B. ZOELLICK Executive Secretary Department of Treasury

COL WILLIAM M. MATZ Executive Secretary Department of Defense

MR. MARK R. LEVIN Chief of Staff Department of Justice

MR. H. LAWRENCE SANDALL Executive Secretary Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT:

GAO Request on Noriega

GAO has sent letters to a number of departments and agencies concerning a study it is conducting into the activities of Manuel Noriega. Following interagency meetings, it was determined that GAO's request raises a number of legal issues requiring in-depth analysis. GAO has been so informed (Tab A), and that analysis is underway, and should be completed shortly.

In order to ensure that the Executive branch deals with this GAO request in a consistent manner, there should be no meetings with GAO, and no documents or other information should be provided to GAO, in connection with this request until the legal analysis is completed and a decision is made on how to respond.

Any questions concerning this matter should be addressed to Nicholas Rostow, Legal Adviser to the National Security Council (456-6538), or his Deputy, Dan Levin (395-3854).

Paul Schott Stevens
Executive Secretary

Attachment

Tab A - Letter from Nicholas Rostow to Nancy Kingsbury

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

July 13, 1988

Dear Ms. Kingsbury:

V

I am writing in response to your request concerning a study of the alleged drug activities of Manuel Noriega, and the role information about such activities played in decisions about U.S. foreign policy (Study #472165).

As described in Mr. Kelly's May 13, 1988, letter to Paul Stevens and your June 23, 1988, letter to me, your request seeks access to sensitive law enforcement and intelligence files covering a substantial period of time. In our meeting, your staff confirmed that your three areas of interest were intelligence files, law enforcement files, and the deliberative process of the Executive branch, including internal communications and deliberations leading to Executive branch actions taken pursuant to the President's constitutional authority. I was disappointed that your letter did not contain any narrowing of the request. The request raises important statutory and constitutional issues. The Administration is analyzing them now, and when its deliberation is complete, I shall reply further to your letter of June 23, 1988.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Rostow

Special Assistant to the President and Legal Adviser

Ms. Nancy R. Kingsbury
Associate Director
National Security and
International Affairs Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548