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Executive Registry

82-1093/2

DDI-4053-82

14 May 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT : NSC Central America Core Group Meeting of 13 May 1982\*

1. This note provides a brief overview of main topics discussed at the Core Group meeting. A tentative date for the NSC meeting on Central America remains Tuesday, 18 May 1982, with the State draft of 23 April (sent to you with my note of that date) as the presumed basis for the NSC discussion. Participants in yesterday's meeting were:

State: Stephen Bosworth (Chairman); Craig Johnstone (Director of Central American Affairs)

DOD: Nestor Sanchez, General Paul Gorman

NSC: Richard Childress, Roger Fontaine

CIA: Duane Clarridge, [REDACTED] Constantine Menges 25X1

2. Cuban/Nicaraguan Actions

CIA stated that it would modify State's more optimistic assumption in the draft's likely case to state that "Cuba and Nicaragua will do whatever they believe is necessary short of major conventional attack to help the extreme left take power in El Salvador and Guatemala". Clarridge pointed to the 180 tons of weapons for the Salvadoran guerrillas flown from Havana in April 1982 and other evidence of the continuing, high level of support from Cuba and Nicaragua.

3. Guatemala

State indicated it has taken the first steps toward restoring economic aid this month and that it will gradually move toward some minor military assistance later. [REDACTED] said there was an immense opportunity in Guatemala now, and there should be some immediate steps to help before the chance passes. Clarridge commented that after October 1982, there might be more funds for interdiction and other help. Menges urged an immediate look at what political/intelligence/military support is needed and an NSC decision on that so that time would not be lost. Defense agreed and State seemed open to the idea of more special activities/interdiction but reluctant about visible military help until the US congressional view changes more. The net results were: (1) Clarridge said he would assess available additional resources (he spoke of roughly \$2M as needed) and indicate whether more were needed. He agreed that waiting till October could result in lost opportunities. (2) State mentioned a small mission to assess needs "in about six weeks" but acceded to DOD/CIA views that this happen as soon as possible.

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\*Mr. Clarridge and [REDACTED] have read this memo and concur.

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#### 4. El Salvador

DOD mentioned that only \$2-4M in military aid remains, and they agreed with Ambassador Hinton's assessment (11 May) that military operations could be adversely affected unless more aid is available soon. State said there is no congressional action on the military aid FY 1982 supplemental, but there is some progress on the CBI economic supplemental and that, perhaps, El Salvador could use some of those "fundible" ESF funds when they arrive. CIA pointed to the continuing high-level of military casualties (projected at 440 for April compared with 450 in the pre-elections high period) as a sign of the continuing danger.

5. Discussing interdiction, several participants (DOD, NSC) mentioned the possible need for more effort to cope with the shift to sea and air supply routes. Clarridge mentioned successes but also a continuing flow. NSC asked about progress on General Gorman's idea (first mentioned in early March) of a ship with COMINT capabilities and helicopter gunships which could conduct a variety of special operations. The reply was that JCS had spent hardly any time on Central America since the Falklands crisis began and there was no DOD movement on this idea. NSC suggested this, and additional interdiction activities might be highlighted in the NSC draft and discussion or added to implementing language under existing Presidential directives, which have not yet been fully implemented.

#### 5. Mexico/Socialist International/Political Communications

Menges brought up the opportunity and need to persuade the new Mexican administration to terminate its support for the extreme left. There was general agreement. [redacted] said the time to start was now; State mentioned the Mexican economic crisis; and Menges again raised the issue of using increased oil purchase for the SPR as an incentive.

6. On the Socialist International and other political communications efforts, DOD said not enough was being done; State said more efforts were being made; but CIA/DOD argued that these were not yet enough.

#### 7. CBI

State mentioned that there were congressional objections to various Caribbean imports and to the investment guarantee which State will probably drop. State hoped for congressional approval of the overall among and for a lifting of the \$75M cap on El Salvador (compared to the intended \$128M).

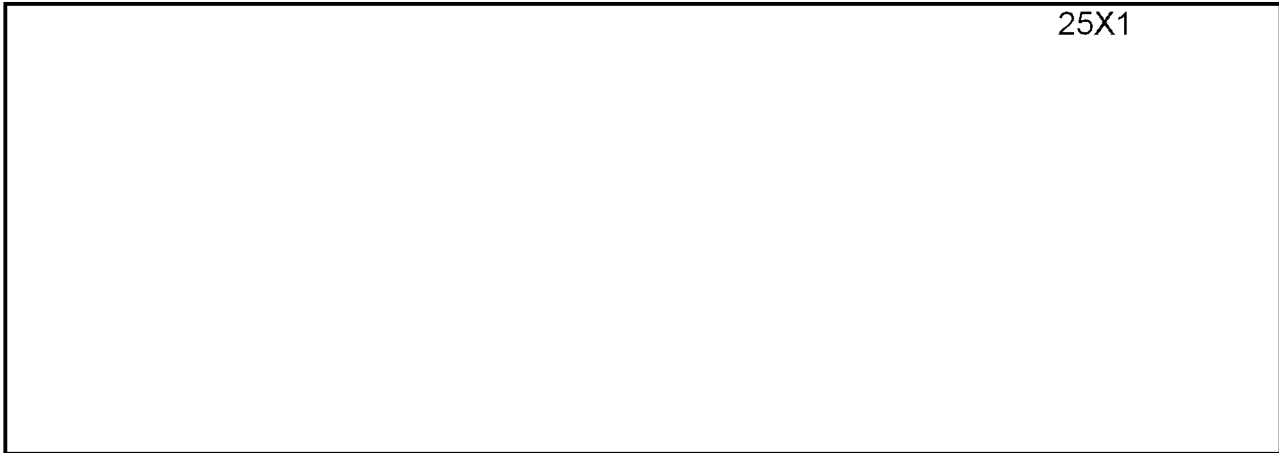
#### 8. Implications for DCI Action

The good news is that there seemed to be substantial consensus among the Core Group members about what to do; the bad news is that there seemed to be no real agenda or timetable of additional actions that taken soon could build on the positive momentum in Central America. Therefore, responding to your request today for a list of specific implications for action by you, I would suggest:

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a. your reinforcing Judge Clark's view that there should be an NSC meeting and strategy paper soon.

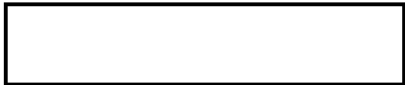
b. your discussing with Judge Clark and other NSC principals the need for a clear and comprehensive listing of actions and timetable to include NSC decisions on negotiating objectives and timing.



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d. your suggestion for periodic (at least bi-monthly) NSC review and monitoring of progress/problems in Central America.

e. your stating the intelligence case (threat and opportunity) for more White House involvement and support in obtaining the FY 82 supplemental military and economic aid for El Salvador.

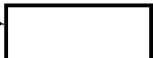


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Constantine C. Menges

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- VC/NIC
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