

TALKING POINTS  
NPSG on CENTRAL AMERICA  
31 May 1983

We [redacted] indicating increased Soviet, 25X1  
East bloc and Cuban supply to Nicaragua. We also have confirmed a Libyan  
commitment and efforts to ship weapons to Nicaragua.

Nicaragua has three main harbors. Most shipments come into Corinto on  
the Pacific side where there is mechanized unloading and proximity to population  
centers. Puerto Cabezo on the north Atlantic coast is far away and presently  
out of commission by virtue of Miskito Indian destruction of its pier. The  
other Atlantic port is El Bluff and goods are usually transferred to one of  
two Nicaraguan lighters and brought 30 to 40 miles inland up the Rio Escondido  
to Roma and then trucked over to the Pacific side.

As far as we know, all Soviet ships have gone to Corinto, where unloading  
is easier and more inconspicuous. About 40 Soviet ships a year, including  
commercial and passenger ships, dock at Corinto.

Most of the ships classified as military will also carry commercial  
shipments [redacted]

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So far in 1983, there have been ten confirmed sea shipments of arms and  
military support equipment - five from the Soviet Union, two from Cuba, two  
from France and one from East Germany. This compares with 14 deliveries in  
all of 1982 - five from the Soviet Union, four from Libya, two from East  
Germany, a single delivery from France and single deliveries from Bulgaria  
and Algeria, carrying transshipments from the Soviet Union.

This month, two ships arrived at Corinto with predominantly military cargoes. [redacted]

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[redacted] Libya is persisting in its efforts to make deliveries to Nicaragua.

The value of known deliveries during 1982 is estimated at about \$100 million from Communist suppliers. Deliveries so far this year are preliminarily estimated at more than \$35 million. The delivery last year of expensive tanks and multiple rocket launchers accounts for most of the difference in the two estimates.

We have reports of increased Cuban activity in support and in preparation to support Nicaragua.

- Thirty Nicaraguan MIG-21 fighter aircraft are already in Cuba, prepared to deploy to Managua on short notice if necessary.
- Cuban MIG-21s and MIG-23s also have been practicing the types of flight operations necessary to deploy to Nicaragua.
- A Soviet ship recently delivered seven more MIG-21s to Cuba.

- During the week of 16 May, a substantial shipment of modern arms was delivered to Cuba from the Soviet Union. The ultimate destination of the arms shipment was Nicaragua. The shipment included heavy weapons. This shipment of arms is being used for training of Nicaraguan military personnel in Cuba and is destined to be shipped to Nicaragua for use by the Sandinistas.

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We have varying reports about Cuban and Soviet concerns and intentions.

-- Castro is variously reported as saying that he will give Nicaragua all the assistance it needs and as being anxious not to be seen doing anything that will provoke the United States.

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He has indicated concern that the Soviets would not come to his rescue if he provoked U.S. action.

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We have reports that Ortega, the Nicaraguan junta leader, was told this when he visited Moscow earlier this year and to have given Castro the same warning on previous occasions. One reason for stepped up Soviet military shipments and advisors to Managua may be to build up Nicaraguan capability to take care of itself, thus avoid facing that issue.