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U.S./HONDURAS/
EXERCISE

RATHER: There'll be no football games or home cooking, either, for the 5,000 U.S. servicemen who'll spend Thanksgiving in Honduras as part of the Big Pine 2 joint maneuvers there. It's been widely reported that some of these U.S. troops are actively advising the contra rebels in Nicaragua. But Jane Wallace has discovered that the U.S. involvement goes deeper.

WALLACE: When the Nicaraguan port of Corinto was bombed in October, it was the contras who took the credit. But CBS News has learned it was Americans who led the raid. Military sources

confirm it was Americans who took two boatloads of Honduran commandos from the Salvadoran coast to Corinto to place time bombs in the port--Americans from the CIA and Americans from regular military service. The American military buildup in this

country means there's thousands of American men and tons of American machinery brought here for the Big Pine 2 maneuvers that make an easy mask for other military actions. Publicly, the Pentagon won't talk about those actions, and privately the American military just keeps doing them. This is the airstrip at *Aguacate, commonly used to train contra pilots and, according to military sources, the place the contra pilot took off from when he bombed the Managua airport in September. Now the Americans have moved in military equipment and men to make Aguacate a better airstrip. CBS News has also learned that Americans are using C-130s like this, brought in for the maneuvers, to make supply drops to the contras as often as twice

a week. Those drops are made inside the Hondruan border. But military and diplomatic sources confirm the C-130s also extend the trips into frequent spy flights over Nicaragua. For more than a year, the United States has funded the contras not-so-secret missions into Nicaragua. It's the act of

American military involvement that's new. And it may be one of the reasons the Americans are so anxious to keep the maneuvers going here. Jane Wallace, CBS News, Tegulcigalpa, Honduras.