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TELEGRAM NUMBER 3387 OF 14 NOVEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK,

INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, UKDEL NATO, SAN JOSE, TEGUCHIGALPA, HAVANA,  
MEXICO CITY.

MY TELNO 3376: U.S. POLICY ON NICARAGUA

## SUMMARY

1. ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN DENY ANY U.S. INTENTION TO INVADE NICARAGUA, BUT STRESS BUILD-UP OF SANDINISTA WEAPONRY. MUCH TALK OF THREAT TO NICARAGUA'S NEIGHBOURS: AND PUBLICITY FOR U.S. EXERCISES IN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR. D.O.D. CONFIRM LIKELIHOOD THAT MIGS, IF DELIVERED, WOULD BE ATTACKED.

## DETAIL

2. PENTAGON, STATE AND WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMEN CONTINUE TO DENY THAT THERE IS ANY U.S. INTENTION TO INVADE NICARAGUA, AND TO CRITICISE THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT FOR QUOTE NEEDLESSLY STIRRING UP THEIR OWN POPULATION UNQUOTE. SPOKESMEN HOWEVER ALSO FOLLOW WEINBERGER IN DRAWING ATTENTION TO INCREASES IN NICARAGUAN MILITARY STRENGTH: AND THE PENTAGON SPOKESMAN HAS SPOKEN OF NICARAGUAN QUOTE DESIGNS UNQUOTE ON HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR, AND HAS STATED THAT THE U.S. WOULD QUOTE RESPOND WITH WHATEVER ASSISTANCE WAS NECESSARY IF NICARAGUA ATTACKED ITS NEIGHBOURS UNQUOTE.

3. MY DEFENCE ATTACHE'S PENTAGON CONTACTS CONFIRMED THAT THEY SEE NO RISK OF AN EARLY LAND WAR AGAINST NICARAGUA. THE PENTAGON WOULD NOT OF COURSE RELISH SUCH A WAR. THEY ALSO CONFIRM OUR ASSUMPTION THAT PLANS FOR AIR STRIKES AGAINST MIGS, IF AND WHEN ANY ARRIVE, WOULD PROBABLY BE IMPLEMENTED. BUT THEY POINT OUT - AS WE HAVE IN EARLIER REPORTING - THAT MIGS WOULD IN FACT BE LESS USEFUL IN COUNTER-INTERSURGENCY OPERATIONS AGAINST THE CONTRAS THAN THE SOVIET MI 24 (HIND) HELICOPTERS WHICH ARE BEING DELIVERED. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE CHIEFS OF STAFF HAVE YET TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION ON WHETHER, AND IF SO HOW, THE U.S. SHOULD RESPOND TO SUCH DELIVERIES.

4. OUR STATE DEPARTMENT CONTACTS DENY THAT SHULTZ'S REMARKS IN BRASILIA (PARA 5 OF TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE) ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF A POLICY OF CONTAINING NICARAGUA. THEY SEE THEM AS NO MORE THAN A WARNING TO THE SANDINISTAS NOT TO MEDDLE IN THEIR NEIGHBOUR'S AFFAIRS.

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5. THE U.S. PRESS TODAY CARRIES DETAILS OF U.S. EXERCISES IN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR, FOUR OF WHICH BEGAN LAST WEEK. THE PENTAGON HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THERE ARE NOW ABOUT 1,000 U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN HONDURAS. THESE EXERCISES ARE DUE TO RUN UNTIL ABOUT 20 NOVEMBER. THE PENTAGON CONFIRMED THAT THE SCALE OF THE PRESENT EXERCISE EFFORT IS THE LARGEST SINCE MAY; AND THAT IT IS DESIGNED IN PART TO WARN NICARAGUA NOT TO HAVE DESIGNS ON HER NEIGHBOURS.

WRIGHT

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