

February 27, 1987

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National Security Decision  
Directive Number 264

CENTRAL AMERICA (U)

At the February 20, 1987 NSPG Meeting, I expressed my determination to see democracy prevail in Central America. It is already the policy of the U.S. Government to promote democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere. The recent rapid growth of democratic governments in Latin America indicates that this is also the preference of the people of the region. This is nowhere clearer than in Central America. In 1980 there were four dictatorships and one democracy in Central America. Today those numbers are reversed and only one dictatorship remains in the midst of four democracies. The Sandinista dictatorship in Nicaragua is a Marxist-Leninist regime dedicated to the subversion and destabilization of its democratic neighbors. Its presence and actions have led the presidents of the neighboring countries to the conviction that their respective democracies will not long survive the subversion which will certainly emanate from a consolidated Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. (S)

In order, therefore, to protect U.S. security interests, and those of our democratic friends in the region, and to preserve and strengthen the impressive democratic gains already achieved in Central America, Nicaragua must abide by the democratic commitments made by the Sandinistas in 1979. (S)

As discussed at the NSPG, I am directing that the following reviews be undertaken and that reports in each of these areas be submitted to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs by March 10.

1. Under the chairmanship of the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs the Planning Review Group (PRG) will be convened to review U.S. goals and objectives for Nicaragua and report the result of its deliberations. Utilizing the full range of political and diplomatic measures, the PRG will

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Declassify on: OADR

Declassified/Retired on 3-26-96  
under provisions of E.O. 12958  
by D. Van Tassel, National Security Council  
F89-609

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develop a political strategy for working with the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance towards the establishment of a democracy in Nicaragua. The PRG shall also draw on the recommendations of the SIG/N in its review. (S)

2. Under the co-chairmanship of the Chief of Staff and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, a task force will be formed to engage the Administration's resources in a campaign of public diplomacy regarding the situation in Central America, the threat to U.S. security and U.S. objectives for the region. (S)
3. The Secretary of the Treasury will develop a plan to expand and tighten further the economic embargo against Nicaragua. (S)
4. Under the direction of the Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs, a comprehensive action plan to gain sustained Congressional support for the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance will be developed. (S)

Ronald Reagan