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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 24, 1990

NATIONAL SECURITY DIRECTIVE 33

MEMORANDUM FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRESIDENT
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY
AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT


SUBJECT: U.S. Policy Towards Panama: Post-Noriega (U)

The policy of the United States towards Panama following the departure of General Noriega from power continues to be vigorous support for the reconstitution of democratic government under the administration of President Endara. To that end, I direct that:
(S)

1. The Secretary of State should initiate the necessary actions for me to make the determinations under Section 481(h) (2) (A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, and Sections 802-803 of the Trade Act of 1974, and seek the waivers available under Section 614 of the Foreign Assistance Act to enable the United States to provide assistance to Panama which would otherwise be prohibited. (U)
2. The ceiling on U.S. Mission staff in Panama announced in May 1989 is hereby lifted. Mission positions should be allocated as quickly as possible in accordance with NSDD 38 procedures. (e)
3. The order issued in May 1989 directing dependents of U.S. Mission employees to depart Panama is hereby rescinded. The Secretary of State should permit the return of dependents in accordance with normal procedures, which include preparation of appropriate threat assessments and recommendations by the Embassy's Emergency Action Committee. (U)

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on 5/29/02 by NARA on the recommendation
of the NSC under provisions of E.O. 12958
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- 4. Effective immediately, all U.S. agencies will honor routine procedures affecting the temporary travel of U.S. Government personnel to Panama (e.g., no temporary duty travel is permitted without prior Embassy clearance). (U)
- 5. The Secretary of State should ease the existing travel advisory to reflect the improved security situation in Panama. (U)
- 6. The Secretary of State should issue early instructions to our Ambassador in Panama, in his capacity as chairman of the Panama Review Committee (PRC), to reactivate promptly the PRC and its supporting committees. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs should issue appropriate instructions reaffirming the PRC as the primary instrument for effecting necessary coordination among U.S. agencies in Panama. ~~(S)~~
- 7. The Secretary of State will promptly submit recommendations and take other actions looking to the early reconstitution and subsequent resumption of activities of the various bilateral or trilateral committees and commissions whose work has been interrupted by the now-ended crisis in U.S.-Panama relations. These include the Panama Canal Consultative Committee, the U.S.-Japan-Panama Commission for the Study of Alternatives to the Panama Canal, and the Joint Commission on the Environment. ~~(S)~~
- 8. Effective immediately, the U.S. Ambassador in Panama is to exercise overall policy control of each U.S. Government agency's activities and relationships with the government of Panama in country, as is customary within other countries with which we conduct friendly diplomatic relations. ~~(S)~~
- 9. The Panama Policy Coordinating Committee should prepare recommendations  based on the altered relationship with Panama and the changes in that country. ~~(S)~~
- 10. The U.S. Government will continue to support the Government of Panama's efforts to break up the structure of the former Panama Defense Forces as much as possible into a number of small institutions assigned to various ministries and to separate off entirely non-security functions, especially those relating to economic matters. ~~(S)~~

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11. The U.S. Government should defer to the wishes of the Government of Panama regarding combat forces, but continue to support actions that would help to avoid re-creation of the Panama Defense Forces under another name. The United States should continue to encourage planning within the Endara Government to create tactical elements, organized on police lines under civilian authority, which would be trained for crowd control and maintain a minimal capability to deal with threats which cannot be handled by lightly armed police. U.S. training should be provided by civilian law enforcement personnel initially through the Administration of Justice program. ~~(S)~~
12. Studies by the Policy Coordinating Committee of possible emergent security threats in Panama should continue. It is not intended that support of tactical police elements at this time would preclude supporting the development of a proportional Panamanian military capability in the future in response to emergent threats. ~~(C)~~
13. The unified direction of all U.S. Government efforts to assist the Government of Panama in reforming its law enforcement structure and in providing logistical and training assistance should be established within the U.S. Embassy in Panama, under the policy supervision and direction of the Department of State. The capabilities of the Department of Justice should be fully utilized, consistent with the Administration of Justice program. ~~(C)~~
14. Discussions should be initiated with the Government of Panama to reach an arrangement on practical procedures for the boarding of Panamanian flag vessels to enforce U.S. narcotics laws. Such an understanding should be consistent with similar procedures agreed with other Western Hemisphere nations and fully respect Panamanian sovereignty. We should seek Panamanian permission to enter Panamanian territorial waters and airspace for narcotics enforcement purposes. ~~(C)~~
15. The cooperation of the Government of Panama should be sought in identifying additional Cuban front companies operating in Panama for purposes of black listing under the Cuban trade embargo. Such cooperation will be essential in eliminating Cuban influence during the rebuilding of the Panamanian economy. ~~(S)~~
16. The drawdown of U.S. forces present in Panama as a result of "Operation Just Cause" should proceed as quickly as possible. The drawdown schedule will depend on the security situation and the backfill of U.S. military forces by other U.S. agencies, and Panamanian security forces and agencies. ~~(C)~~

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