



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-2400

4 MAY 1992

INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY AFFAIRS

Mr. Dick Best
Analyst in National Defense
Congressional Research Service
The Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20540

Dear Mr. Best:

This is the follow up to our letter of 27 March 1992 containing information on Defense Department support to El Salvador. I also understand that the project officer, LTC Patrick St.Clair, discussed the issue telephonically with Mr. Larry Storrs, a colleague of yours, on 28 April 1992.

As was pointed out in MG Harding's initial response, the breadth of your request makes the information difficult to identify within larger overall programs. It is not possible to define how much of a U.S. Navy ship's operating expenses could be attributable as support to El Salvador unless that was the sole and specific mission of the platform. Likewise, military personnel in Honduras support a variety of missions in Central America, particularly in Honduras. It is similarly difficult to identify the exact costs that might logically be charged to support for El Salvador. The U.S. Southern Command Liaison Office was asked to provide the information requested on naval operations, military personnel in Panama and Palmerola Air Base, and the Southern Command budget. The response was limited to information already available through documents related to U.S. military assistance to El Salvador. U.S. military personnel in Panama and Palmerola (now Soto Cano) Air Base, as well as U.S. naval operations in general, perform a variety of missions that support overall regional programs. It is simply not possible to sort out what percentage of those efforts could be "accountable" as support to El Salvador. We would be happy to work further with you to try and answer your questions by narrowing their scope to reach the information that you require.

Thank you for your interest in the region. The primary point of contact for this action remains LTC Patrick St.Clair, Inter-American Region, who can be reached at (703) 697-9302.

Sincerely,

Carl W. Truitt
for James R. Lilley