

Washington Hotline

by Congressman Ron Wyden



Q. Stories about continued violence in El Salvador have been a major news item in recent weeks. Given the current situation, do you think the administration is justified in continuing to provide military aid to the ruling junta?

A. No, I do not. In fact, I think the Administration's insistence on using U.S. dollars to prop up the military junta in El Salvador is reprehensible.

As a leader in the Western Hemisphere, the United States should be seen in Latin America as an agent of change, not a minister of death. We should be giving its people cause for

hope, not guns for war.

Our support for a military dictatorship that continues to brutalize its own people has not brought stability to El Salvador. If anything, the situation there has deteriorated to the point that it has destabilized neighboring Guatemala, too.

If we persist in these policies, matters will get even worse. Either both sides will continue to ram heads to no avail—or one side will gain a military victory, which would be a victory for extremists.

In a speech at Reed College this week, I called for an abrupt change in U.S. policy in El Salvador, moving from support of the ruling mili-

tary junta to working for a cooling-off period and talks between the warring factions.

Leftist Coalition leader Guillermo Ungo has expressed a willingness to participate in such talks, without preconditions. The United States should move quickly to take him up on his offer. Because of our earlier arms shipments to the junta, we should have the leverage to persuade El Salvadoran government officials to negotiate as well.

The goal of these talks would be:
 •To win a cease-fire—a real cease-fire, not a timeout during which both sides take a breather to

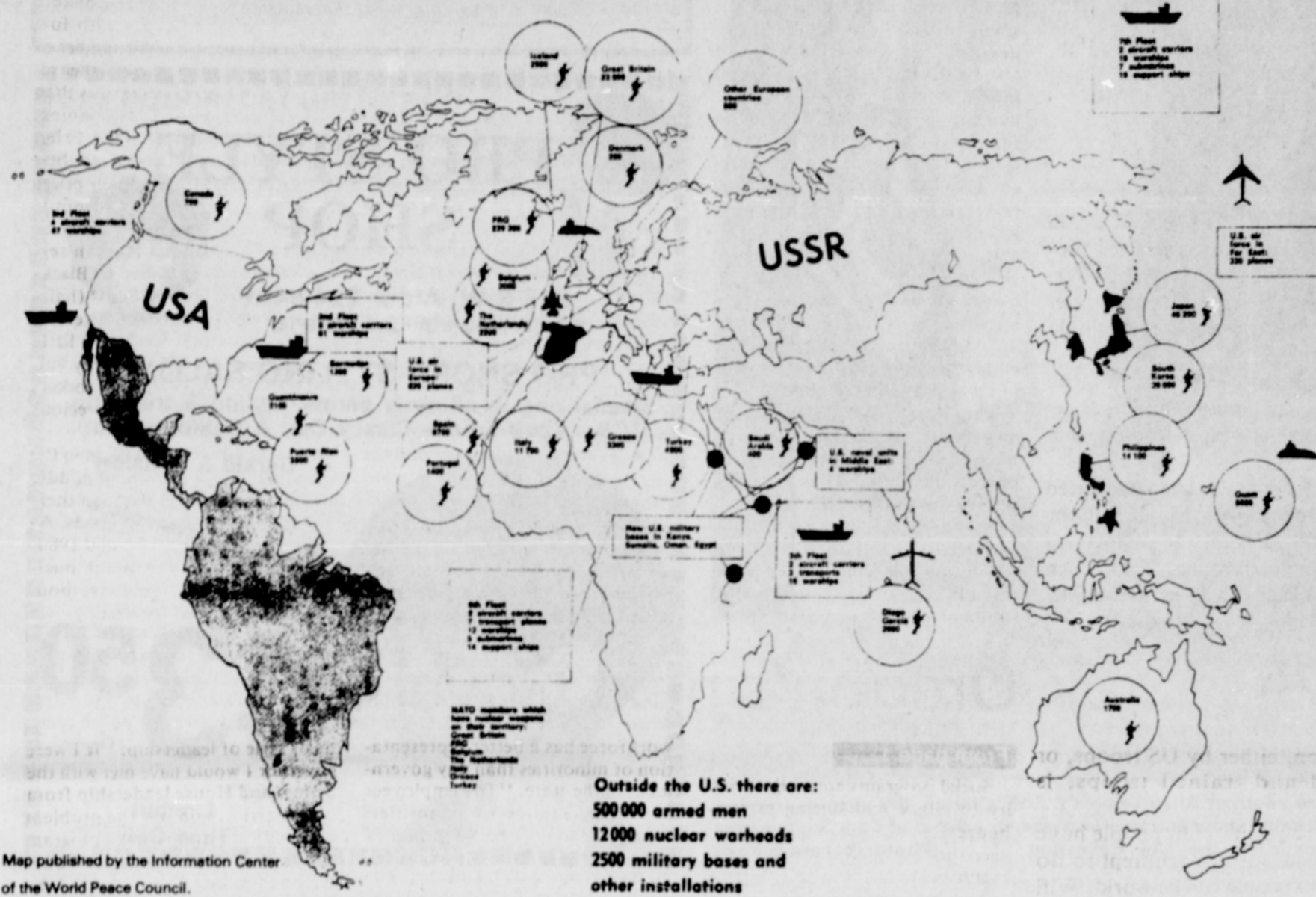
build up their arms caches.

•To call for an immediate end to human rights violations by government security forces, in return for a cessation of guerilla attacks by the rebels.

•To press, once a cease-fire is firmly established, for a legitimate national election and for multi-party talks on land reform—the crux of political instability and unrest in El Salvador.

Taking these steps would effectively rewrite the 150-year-old Monroe Doctrine and bring U.S. policy in Latin America into the 20th Century—in the nick of time.

U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE AROUND THE WORLD



Reagan budget expands military budget

The Reagan Administration has asked Congress for \$1,640 billion to spend during the next five years to build U.S. military power around the world.

The largest increase will be for equipment, supplies, military construction and airlift and sealift capacity for the Rapid Deployment Force. The philosophy is that the U.S. must be ready to respond to a

Soviet attack wherever it should occur and to strike back at areas of Soviet weakness.

Specifically, the Pentagon says that if Soviet forces were to invade Middle East countries the U.S. should have the capacity to strike Cuba, Vietnam, Asia, Libya or the Soviet Union itself.

The new budget proposes an increase in weapons purchases from \$41.2 billion this year to \$55.1

billion next year. The budget calls for increased spending on strategic nuclear forces to \$23 billion. The large items are the new B-1 B long-range bomber, a new submarine-launched ballistic missile, Trident 2, new cruise missiles, a vast expansion of communications and control systems, and the MX land-based missiles.

The Army will receive more money for the new M-1 tank, fighting vehi-

cles and helicopters. The Air Force will buy more Awacs radar surveillance planes and tactical aircraft such as the F-15, F-16 and the A-10, 16 and the A-10.

Also scheduled are large increases in cargo ships and planes for the Rapid Deployment Force. Also planned are more cargo planes.

The Navy benefits most with the number of ships increased from 513 to 600 by 1990.

What do military expenditures represent for mankind?

- Half the resources at present allocated to military expenditures in one day would suffice to finance a program for the total eradication of malaria.
- In five hours, the world's military expenditures are the equivalent of the overall UNICEF yearly budget for child care programs.
- The number of people working in the military sphere, including armed forces staff, is today twice the total number of teachers, physicians and nurses in the world.
- Approximately 25 per cent of the world's scientific personnel is engaged in military activities. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the overall scientific research expenditures is absorbed by military programs. The volume of such research projects is five times greater than that of the projects devoted to health protection.
- The countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America allocate 5.9 per cent of their Gross National Product to weapons and military expenditures, whereas they devote only one per cent to public health and 2.8 per cent to

education.

- One per cent of the developed countries' military budgets would overcome the existing deficit in international assistance for financing an increase in food production and creating emergency reserves.
- The cost of a modern tank would pay for the construction of 1,000 classrooms for 30,000 children in underdeveloped countries.
- The price of a Trident nuclear submarine—the United States is planning to build 13 of them before 1990—equals the cost of keeping 16 million children from the underdeveloped world in school for a year; the construction of 400,000 dwellings for 2 million people; or more than the total value of grains imported by Africa in a year.
- The expenditures for military activities in a year during the mid-'70s would have financed, among many other things, a vaccination program against infectious diseases for all the children in the world, a program for the eradication of adult illiteracy. In the entire world before the year 2000, a supplementary food program for 60 million pregnant women, and a classroom increase for over 100 million pupils.

U.S. moves against Nicaragua

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 troops from Argentina, Chile and Venezuela. The MPL said the Honduran government intends to heighten tensions along the border with Nicaragua, claiming there has been an occupation of its territory by Nicaragua. They noted that 150 U.S. military personnel have been in Honduras for some time.

Dissident groups in Honduras charged Tuesday that Honduras is building a gigantic military base, financed by the U.S. for staging operations against Nicaragua, El Salvador and possibly Cuba.

Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo issued a call on February 21

for firm international action to prevent a world disaster should the U.S. carry out its threats to invade Central America or Caribbean nations. He said the consequences of a failure to achieve peace and detente in Central America and the Caribbean are "unthinkable." He repeated his belief that U.S. intervention would be a "huge historical error that would cause a wide upheaval throughout the hemisphere."

"I can assure my good friends in the United States that what is happening here in Nicaragua, what is happening in El Salvador, that the wind of change blowing through the whole region does not constitute an

intolerable danger to the basic national security interests of the United States."

Portillo said there are three focal points of conflict in the area: Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba.

Regarding Nicaragua, he noted that his recommendations coincide with those of the Nicaraguan government:

- 1) The U.S. should discontinue threats against Nicaragua.
- 2) Ex-National Guardsmen operating along the Honduras border should be disarmed and their training and aid by the U.S. discontinued.

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