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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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Meeting of the NSC Deputies Committee

DATE: December 20, 1989
LOCATION: Video Conference
TIME: 5:30-6:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: Minutes of DC Meeting on Panama (S)



PARTICIPANTS:

The Vice President's Office:

Carnes Lord

CIA:

Richard Kerr
Richard Stolz
1.4(c); 1.4(d); (b)(3)

State:

Robert M. Kimmitt
Bernard Aronson
Richard Clark
Michael G. Kozak

JCS:

Robert Herres
Michael Carns

Treasury:

Ede Holiday
John Robson

White House:

Andrew Card
Robert Gates

Justice:

William Barr
Robert Mueller

NSC:

William Pyrce
Nicholas Rostow

DOD:

Paul Wolfowitz
Henry Rowen
Richard Brown

Minutes

Robert Herres: There is still some fighting and some PDF will slip off to the countryside. There is more PDF resistance than expected. The PDF still has an operating command and control network. Noriega's whereabouts are unknown. The Panama Canal is closed and will reopen tomorrow. A Liberian-flagged freighter was boarded by 20 PDF -- one was one of Noriega's close collaborators. There were reports of hostages, some of which are unconfirmed. The hotel area is vulnerable. There are still people there. We have 11 KIA, 59 wounded and one missing. All MPs will be in country tomorrow. Three thousand five hundred additional troops will be sent and Davis is en route. We are developing support plans for Endara and a temporary seat of

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government at the Legislative Place. We hope to have the Legislative building secure by tomorrow morning. Special forces will take out four radio antennas. One thousand people are in the Balboa High School. There is not much room there. (S)

Richard Kerr: Noriega's G-2 was captured. We hear Justine is trying to call Herrera Hassan. (S) (14(c); 14(d); 3.3(b)(1); 3.3(b)(6); (b)(3); 14(b); 14(d); 3.3(b)(1); 3.3(b)(6); (b)(3)) There are a lot of looters. (S)

Michael Kozak: Endara wants some security. He is asking for Herrera Hassan and a small group of officers. (S)

Robert Gates: (14(c); 14(d); 3.3(b)(1); 3.3(b)(6); (b)(3))

Robert Herres: The reports of looters are bad. (S)

Robert Gates: We are falling down on the job. We need a place for Endara to work. We need communications. We need to engage in government building. Endara needs to name a successor to head the PDF. (S)

Michael Kozak: Endara is holed-up for security reasons. (S)

Robert Gates: We need to get him on TV and talking to government leaders. He needs to lean forward to show he is the new government of Panama and is dynamic. Bushnell and Thurman have to be the sparkplugs. Military success has to be followed by political success. (S)

Michael Kozak: The ministries are not secure and a military base is not good. (S)

Robert Gates: Getting a place from where Endara can work is very important. The Embassy and SOUTHCOM have to work together. The United States is in the role of a coach. We do not want a puppet. (S)

Robert Herres: Our priorities are to get the radio off the air, secure the Marriott Hotel, and secure Endara working space. Endara might consider establishing a Minister of Information. The Embassy has to lead on this. (S)

Michael Kozak: We need to put a good face on a disastrous logjam. TV2 is still in Noriega's hands and we broadcast by override. (S)

Robert Herres: We need material to broadcast. (S)

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Michael Kozak: We are pushing Justine to be the head of the PDF, but we need contact with him. He could be a transitional commander. (S)

Robert Gates: (S)

Michael Kozak: The problem is that there aren't any good candidates. (S)

Robert Gates: What about the coup plotters. (S)

Michael Kozak: Wong is the best, but may be physically broken and is not from the PDF structure. (S)

Robert Gates: Did Endara have political consultants? (S)

Michael Kozak: Yes. (U)

Robert Gates: We have to get off the dime. The military side is going well, the civilian side is lagging behind. Bushnell needs to be a sparkplug. If there are disconnects between this group and the working group, let me know. Tonight and tomorrow we must work fast. Endara has appointed a U.N. Ambassador. (S)

Richard Clark: Thurman has approved a POLAD and three new people are on the ground. (S)

Robert Gates: By this time tomorrow, we need evidence that the government is up and running. We need video and radio communications. The communications people should work with the PSYOPS people. (S)

Richard Kerr: (S)

Robert Gates: The congressional leadership is unhappy. The briefers had to cut the meeting short and the leadership is concerned about where we are going next. We have offered a second briefing at a time and place of their choice. (S)

Richard Kerr: We should consider a reward for Noriega. (S)

Robert Gates: The PCC should consider it as well as a program for purchasing weapons from people who turn them in. To summarize, Kozak will chair a working group to focus on getting Endara on the radio and TV, making appointments, getting political advice, and bounties for weapons. (S)

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