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16 FEB 1991
CI-087-90

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Operations

VIA: Chief, Latin America Division

FROM: Jeanne R. Vertefeuille
Deputy Chief, Security Group
Counterintelligence Center

(b)(3) CIAAct
(b)(6)

[Redacted]

Assistant General Counsel,
Latin America Division

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(b)(3) NatSecAct
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[Redacted]

Chief, [Redacted]

[Redacted] Operations Group
Latin America Division

SUBJECT: Human Rights Investigation - the Joya
Martinez Allegations

Background

1. Cesar Vielman Joya Martinez is a former enlisted man in the intelligence section (S-II) of the First Infantry Brigade of the El Salvadoran Armed Forces who deserted on 23 July 1989. He is now in the United States and has been telling the story of his military service, alleging the existence of death squads in the First Brigade who tortured and murdered prisoners, and admitting his own participation in these atrocities. His story has evolved over time, but in recent interviews he has repeatedly stated that the US advisors to the First Brigade must have been aware of these activities, even though they tried to ignore them, and that funds and equipment provided by the US advisors helped to support death squad operations. Joya Martinez has never alleged that US advisors ordered any such activities or participated in them.

2.

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[Redacted]

Thus, you directed that an investigation (b)(1) made of Joya Martinez's allegations insofar as they relate to (b)(3) CIAAct

WARNING NOTICE
INTELLIGENCE SOURCES
OR METHODS INVOLVED

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(b)(3) NatSecAct

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3. A [] task force was chosen to conduct the investigation. Although there is a certain amount of overlap in our experience, we represent three different disciplines: counterintelligence, operations, and the law.

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4. Our task force was appointed on 2 February 1989. We began by reading available official documents and media reports. On 5 February we started conducting interviews at Headquarters, and on 8 February we went to [] to continue our investigation.

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In addition, [] asking any individual who had any knowledge related to Joya Martinez's allegations to get in touch with us. Furthermore, we visited the First Brigade Headquarters to familiarize ourselves with the lay of the land.

Conclusions

5. All of the people we interviewed were cooperative, and seemingly open in their remarks. Their accounts coincided on the main points, but there are enough minor discrepancies to make us feel that we were not being fed some prepared line. We found absolutely no evidence that [] were aware of any human rights violations at the First Brigade, or condoned such actions by turning their backs on them. [] did indeed know Joya Martinez and had periodic conversations [] but these conversations were mostly limited to routine business; the subject of human rights never arose.

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6. While we are confident that there was no [redacted] involvement in human rights violations by members of the First Brigade, this does not mean that such violations did not take place. Some of the allegations by Joya Martinez - in particular those relating to the beating up of six or seven prisoners in July 1989, which resulted in two deaths - have been independently confirmed. Our investigation leads us to conclude that other abuses could have taken place without our knowing about them.

[redacted] never overnights at Brigade Headquarters during the period in question, and they did not go there on Sundays; furthermore, the Brigade operates in areas which are off-limits for Embassy personnel [redacted]). We do tend to doubt, however, that institutionalized atrocities on the scale mentioned by Joya Martinez (more than seventy deaths in a seven-month period) could have taken place without coming to the attention of the media, the human rights group (b)(1) present in El Salvador, [redacted] (b)(3) NatSecAct

7. Because of severe time constraints we still have not finished some aspects of our investigation. However, the work still to be done will not affect our conclusions as to the non-culpability [redacted] All it will do is shed additional light on the general veracity and reportorial accuracy of Joya Martinez. (b)(1)

Documentation

(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(1)
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(b)(3) NatSecAct

8. We have drawn up full statements from all [redacted] whom we interviewed, and compiled an informal chronology of events. We have also pulled together all relevant [redacted] [redacted] correspondence, plus media releases. [redacted] (b)(1)

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Jeanne Vertefeulle

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