

3-10-1989

G.a.o. Criticizes Eight Years Of U.S. Policy Toward Central America

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen>

Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "G.a.o. Criticizes Eight Years Of U.S. Policy Toward Central America." (1989). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen/2829>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiCen by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.

G.a.o. Criticizes Eight Years Of U.S. Policy Toward Central America

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, March 10, 1989

On request by Claiborne Pell (D-RI), chairperson of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the General Accounting Office prepared a report on US policy toward Central America. In its recently completed report, the GAO calls for changes, concluding that Washington's policy of the last eight years has not produced stable democracies or economic growth in the region. The report states that large-scale poverty and economic inequality are "worse than a decade ago," and the US has "done little" to promote the success of a regional plan established by the five Central American presidents. The GAO recommends that Congress should place conditions on further aid to El Salvador, such as requiring action by the government to reduce human rights violations, implement democratic reforms, and enhance controls over US aid toward reducing the possibility of corruption. US military aid to El Salvador this year totals \$85 million. The Bush administration has requested \$98.6 million for FY1990. US policy toward Nicaragua, said the GAO, "has been generally ineffective" and "has had negative effects on the region as a whole." Regarding policy recommendations toward the region as a whole, the report said US officials should "lower the US profile," and "concentrate on supporting Central American peace efforts rather than military solutions." For the GAO, US policies in the region "appear to have been driven largely by a need to counter the threat of Soviet bloc expansionism." However, said the report, by providing large amounts of military aid to countries in the region, the US has enhanced the power of the local armed forces, "thereby increasing concerns about the stability of civilian democratic governments." The GAO stated that Central America experts believed the US should have paid more attention to the region's other problems, including "drug-trafficking, official corruption, pervasive poverty, social inequities and injustice, and growing numbers of refugees." According to the New York Times, the report's contents were to be discussed March 9 by Frank C. Conahan, an Assistant Comptroller General of the US, at a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Latin America, headed by Rep. George Crockett Jr. (D-Mich). The GAO is an investigative arm of Congress. (Basic data from New York Times, 03/09/89)

-- End --