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In its May 1 edition, released April 22, US News and World Report said that in February President Bush signed a secret order to provide $10 million in covert aid to opponents of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega in Panama's May 7 general elections. Citing government sources, the magazine said that Bush personally lobbied congressional intelligence committees to approve the CIA funding destined to defray printing, advertising, transportation and communication costs for the opposition. The report added that the US government is also considering a menu of non-violent options, including a total trade embargo and suspension of US visas to all Panamanians. Next, according to the Report's sources, other options including a previous plan to foment a coup or to kidnap Gen. Noriega, are also under consideration. Unidentified administration officials told the New York Times on April 23 that last year the Senate Intelligence Committee rejected a covert plan approved by President Reagan that called for a US-supported coup of dissident exiled military officers to oust Noriega on the ground the general might be assassinated. Senators Bill Bradley (D-NJ), and William S. Cohen (R-Maine) were among those who insisted that the presidential order prohibiting US participation in assassinations applied to both US intelligence officers and persons acting under their direction. The coup, considered an option after other non-violent measures had failed, was to be led by former Col. Eduardo Herrera, a Panamanian exile residing in Miami. Herrera and his followers have remained in Miami on the CIA payroll. The Panamanians have been told by the CIA to refrain from any aggressive actions, according to an unidentified opposition figure cited by the Times. One of the unnamed officials told the Times that he recalled the meeting as having taken place in July. The Reagan administration's covert plan was cut back to actions such as clandestine radio broadcasts. [Earlier this month, the Panamanian government announced it had arrested Kurt Frederick Muse and confiscated radio and television transmitting equipment in Panama City apartments. According to Reuters, Muse has signed a statement admitting that he ran an underground network called "The Voice of Liberty," and had received equipment and taped programs at a building on the US military base. On April 24, the government forced Panama's RPC Television Corp. to stop broadcasting the coalition's nightly 10-minute program. Officials of the opposition party coalition, ADOC, indicated that they had used some of the US money to buy the 10 minutes of prime-time.] At an April 21 news conference, Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Indiana) complained that there was "no particular direction" in the Bush administration's policies toward the elections. Lugar said that along with threatening new sanctions, the administration should demonstrate its resolve by sending Defense Secretary Richard Cheney to the US Southern Command in Panama. According to Lugar, "The American people need to be prepared or the administration, the Congress and others will not have the support for policies" that will become necessary in dealing with Noriega after the election. He declined to rule out the possibility of military action. (Basic data from AFP, Washington Post, 04/22/89; New York Times, 04/24/89, 04/25/89)