

# Navy memo confirms arms shipments

NOV 20  
1987  
CCFIMES

by Andy Ronningen

WASHINGTON — The Navy confirmed the maiming of Brian Willson on the Concord Naval Weapons Station confirms what protesters have said all along: The station ships weapons to Central America. Shipments to Central America totaled 2 percent of the station's overall tonnage, according to a memo included in the report.

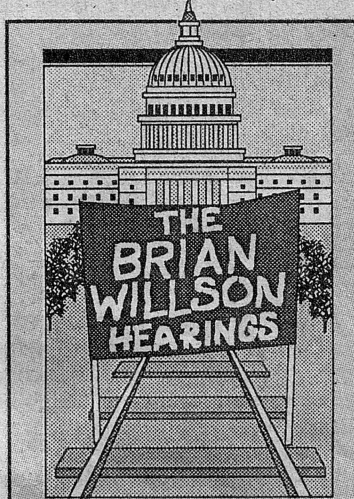
For the past four years, weapons station officials have refused to comment on whether weapons are shipped from Concord to Central America.

But a May 1987 memo from the station to the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, D.C., details some of the shipments that have been made in the past four years. The memo was included in the 3½-inch Navy report presented Wednesday to the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Investigations.

The memo does not say where in Central America the shipments were delivered or what types of weapons were included.

Navy officials would not confirm the existence of the memo or say who sent it or who received it.

"It sounds like (it could be)



- Willson says the hearing proves the Navy lied
- Eleven protesters are arrested on the train tracks
- A councilman says an overpass is needed for weapons station traffic

13A

something from my office, but I'm not going to comment on it," said weapons station spokesman Dan Tikalsky.

Please see **WEAPONS**,  
Page 2A

# WEAPONS

From Page 1A

"As far as I'm concerned, it's a memorandum from me to a senior commander or the senior command on something. Just because something is not secret doesn't mean it's public information."

Shipments included 928 measurement tons in February 1987; 1,777 measurement tons in December 1986; and 1,177 in March 1986, according to the three-page memo.

A measurement ton, used in shipping, is 40 cubic feet or about 1 cubic meter in volume. It does not measure weight.

In 1984, there were seven shipments totaling 5,691 measurement tons; and in 1983, four shipments totaling 3,954, according to the message.

"Actually, (that) is not a lot," compared with the 100,000 tons shipped during peacetime in an average year, according to the memo.

The average shipment is less

than 1,000 tons, equal to less than 10 percent of an average shipload, the memo states.

"I think that's completely irrelevant," said Dave Raymond of the Pledge of Resistance. "We know it's a small percentage. The majority of what they're shipping is going to the South Pacific or our allies."

Raymond said the amount is irrelevant because it's known the bombs and ammunition are being used in what he calls "brutal fashion" against civilians in El Salvador.

The memo was written to tell the Naval Sea Systems Command about the then-upcoming protests that occurred on June 12 and 13.

It predicts — accurately — a minimum of 200 arrests for blocking traffic and other non-violent acts. More than 300 were arrested during that demonstration.

The memo also predicts heavy Bay Area news media attention, and proposes giving out the information

about the tonnage shipped to Central America. The report gives no indication of the Naval Sea Systems Command response.

Dave Hatcher, public affairs officer at the command, said the Navy sometimes proposes answers to possible questions on a subject. The answers may be changed, he said, if an error is found or it's decided the information shouldn't be released because it's sensitive or creates a security risk.

Although Navy spokesman Tikalsky has said he cannot comment on the issue, during a 1983 demonstration he said the weapons station had shipped 16 tons of ammunition and weapons to El Salvador in the

previous 16 months.

The Pledge of Resistance, a peace group with an office in Oakland, has obtained shipping records through the Freedom of Information Act that detail shipments from Concord to Acajutla, El Salvador.

An April 1985 shipment cost \$5.7 million, and included 2,800 rounds of white phosphorus, a napalm-like substance; 4 million rounds of ammunition; and 1,900 fuse extenders, said Ken Butigan, a coordinator with the Pledge of Resistance.

Raymond said the group also obtained a shipping record from Nov. 19, 1984, in which 1,033 measurement tons of bombs and ammunition were sent from Concord to El

Salvador and a shipping order from June 10, 1985, which sent 3,164 measurement tons from Concord to El Salvador.

Both shipments contained poisonous white phosphorus, fragmentation bombs, fuse extenders and machine gun bullets, Raymond said.

He said the Navy memo shows the information the Pledge received was incomplete.

"I find it completely ludicrous that they're neither confirming or denying, when they're in fact preparing documents like this and keeping them from the press," Raymond said. "This document confirms they are still shipping to Central America."

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