

〈SUMMARY〉

**International Relations and National Consciousness in
the Context of the Presidential Proclamation of
Neutrality in Costa Rica: with Special Attention
to Policies of President Monge**

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The United States' political interventions in Nicaragua (supported by the USSR and Cuba) caused a proxy war between the East and the West in Central America in the 1980's. Under this situation, Costa Rica opposed Nicaragua and strengthened friendly relations with the US, because historically the US had been the most important investor and a model of "Democracy" for Costa Rican people. But Costa Rica's US-oriented policy was criticized sharply not only by the pacifists within the country but also by the Contadora Group and the EEC countries. Moreover, the national identity of Costa Rican people reached at a crisis of breakdown.

Therefore, the President of Costa Rica, Luis Alberto Monge, officially proclaimed the neutrality of the State in 1983 to reject the criticism against him, to consolidate his political power, and to recover the international prestige and national identity at the same time. Two outstanding characteristics of neutrality of Costa Rica were "positiveness" and "demilitarization". "Positiveness" meant that Costa Rica was neutral to any military actions but was not neutral to political and ideological disputes; and "demilitarization" meant that Costa Rica would not have any kind of military forces. The

latter was particularly praised by many countries of the world.

In additon, President Monge elaborated the “National” image of neutrality through skillful public speechs and nationalistic descriptions of an exaggerated “National History” in many books and newspapers. As a result, the majority of Costa Rican people changed to the supporters of its neutrality. That is to say, Monge’s realistic neutral policy became an integral part of popular consciousness as if it were a tradition of Costa Rica.