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INFO RUEHLL / CONTADORA COLLECTIVE
BT

CLASS: CONFIDENTIAL
CHRG: PROG 09/7/84
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DISTR: AMB DCM POL3
ECON MILGP DAO
CHRON

TEGUCIGALPA 11174

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, XK, HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND ADVISORS BRIEF
- DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON STATUS OF CONTADORA
- NEGOTIATIONS.

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: HONDURAN FOREIGN MINISTER SUMMONED ENTIRE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, MINUS CENTRAL AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES, TO BRIEF ACCREDITED AMBASSADORS ON STATUS OF CONTADORA NEGOTIATIONS. PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS CLEARLY TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HONDURAS HAD BEEN RESPONSIVE TO CONTADORA PROCESS AND THAT NICARAGUA WAS THE INTRANSIGENT PARTY IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR AFTER FORMAL PORTION OF BRIEFING, ONE FOREIGN OFFICE ADVISOR SAID THAT BRIEFING WAS DIRECTED PRINCIPALLY AT CONTADORA COUNTRIES THEMSELVES WHICH GOH BELIEVES HAS BEEN MISREPRESENTING HONDURAN POSITION. GOH BRIEFING WAS ALSO DESIGNED TO PREEMPT ANY CRITICISM OF ITS PERFORMANCE WHICH MIGHT ARISE AT UPCOMING FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETINGS IN PANAMA. END SUMMARY.

3. IN AN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE, FOREIGN MINISTER PAZ BARNICA CONVOKED RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON SEPTEMBER 6 TO PRESENT HONDURAN PERSPECTIVE ON LATEST CONTADORA DEVELOPMENTS. PAZ WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS FOUR KEY FOREIGN OFFICE ADVISORS. CENTRAL AMERICAN AMBASSADORS WERE NOT INVITED.

4. HONDURAN PRESENTATION WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS. FIRST A DESCRIPTION OF THE HONDURAN POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE ACTA DE CONTADORA. HONDURANS POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD BEEN FIRST TO ACCEPT THE ACTA AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS; THAT THEY HAD SUBMITTED WRITTEN OBSERVATIONS IN THE FORM OF A LETTER DATED JUNE 27 FROM PRESIDENT SUAZO TO THE FOUR CONTADORA PRESIDENTS; AND THAT THEY HAD ALWAYS FAVORED CONTADORA AS THE APPROPRIATE FORUM FOR DEALING WITH THE CENTRAL AMERICAN CRISIS.

5. IN THE SECOND PART OF THE BRIEFING, HONDURANS DESCRIBED THE TENOR OF THE AUGUST 24-27 MEETING IN PANAMA, OUTLINING BRIEFLY THE BASIC POSITION ADOPTED BY EACH CENTRAL AMERICAN DELEGATION. COSTA RICA HAD INSISTED PRINCIPALLY ON THE POLITICAL ASPECTS. EL SALVADOR HAD EMPHASIZED ITS PREOCCUPATION WITH THE ISSUE OF VERIFICATION, ARMS TRAFFICKING, AND THE MILITARY EQUILIBRIUM.

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.
() Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Date 6/2/98 Exemption

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GUATEMALA HAD FOCUSED ON A NUMBER OF FORMAL AND LEGAL ISSUES. IT HAD ALSO INSISTED ON MILITARY EQUILIBRIUM. HONDURAS HAD EXPRESSED PARTICULAR INTEREST IN FULLY VERIFIABLE LEGAL OBLIGATIONS IN THE AREA OF SECURITY, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO SETTING MAXIMUM LIMITS FOR AND A CALENDAR OF REDUCTION OF TROOP LEVELS, ARMAMENT, AND FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS.

6. ACCORDING TO THE BRIEFING, THE NICARAGUANS TOOK A VERY HARD LINE. VICE FOREIGN MINISTER TINOCO SAID, "THE ACTA IS VERY FAR FROM THE REAL POSSIBILITIES OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES." THE NICARAGUANS REFUSED TO CONTEMPLATE ANY BINDING OBLIGATIONS IN THE POLITICAL AREA AND THEY ALSO RAISED A SERIES OF PRECONDITIONS (MANY OF THEM OBNOXIOUS) BEFORE EVEN CONSIDERING NEGOTIATIONS ON MANY SECURITY QUESTIONS. GOH VIEW IS THAT THE NICARAGUAN POSITION HAS HARDENED AND PRACTICALLY REJECTS THE ACTA IN ITS POLITICAL AND SECURITY ASPECTS.

7. GOH PRESENTED ITS OWN SUGGESTED FORMULATION OF A SECURITY CHAPTER IN PANAMA MEETING AND REMAINS PREPARED TO DEAL WITH ALL SECURITY ASPECTS AFFECTING CENTRAL AMERICAN CRISIS. HOWEVER, GOH INSISTS ON NON-DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF ITS POSITION. HONDURAS CANNOT ACCEPT NICARAGUA'S INSISTENCE THAT THEIR PROBLEMS BE ADDRESSED FIRST AND EVERYBODY ELSE BE ADDRESSED AFTERWARDS. THE GOH WISHES TO MAKE CLEAR THAT IT CONTINUES TO FAVOR A STRENGTHENING OF CONTADORA PROCESS WHICH IT SEES AS THE ONLY WAY TO REACH NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO CENTRAL AMERICAN PROBLEMS.

8. AFTER THE MEETING, ONE FOREIGN OFFICE ADVISOR INFORMED AMBASSADOR THAT GOH BRIEFING WAS PROMPTED BY CONCERN THAT AT SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING IN PANAMA CONTADORA FOUR MAY BE CRITICAL OF HONDURAN POSITION. ALSO GOH BELIEVES THAT SOME MEMBERS OF CONTADORA FOUR HAVE MISREPRESENTED HONDURAN POSITION TO THE PRESS AND ELSEWHERE. FOREIGN OFFICE ADVISOR CHARACTERIZED THE BRIEFING AS PREEMPTIVE MOVE DESIGNED TO FORESTALL OR OFFSET POTENTIAL NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN PANAMA. NEGROPONTE

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