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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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OLIVER NORTH. [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: MEETING OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S DELEGATION WITH
HONDURAN PRESIDENT AND MILITARY LEADERS

1. SUMMARY: ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS AND PARTY MET FOR AN
HOUR AND A HALF WITH PRESIDENT AZCONA, FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ,
ARMED FORCES COMMANDER GENERAL REGALADO, THE CHIEF OF THE JOINT
STAFF AND NAVY AND AIR FORCE CHIEFS ON 21 MARCH TO REVIEW STEPS
TO BE TAKEN AFTER THE NEGATIVE 20 MARCH VOTE ON AID FOR DEMOCRATIC
RESISTANCE. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY DELIVERED A PRESIDENTIAL
LETTER TO PRESIDENT AZCONA, AND EXPLAINED BOTH ADMINISTRATION
LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY AND PLANS FOR ACCELERATING/INCREASING
DELIVERIES OF ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO HONDURAS, IN
ORDER TO INSURE STABILITY IN A CRITICAL MOMENT IN BOTH HONDURAS
AND THE REGION AS A WHOLE. IN RESPONSE, PRESIDENT AZCONA

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INDICATED APPRECIATION FOR ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS, SAID THAT HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH VARIOUS SECTORS OF HONDURAN OPINION AFTER THE VOTE HAD INDICATED A GENERAL FEELING THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE FROM THE HONDURAN PERSPECTIVE HAD THE BILL PASSED, WHICH HE CONSIDERED AN IMPORTANT FACT, AND SAID THAT PROVIDED THE U.S. ASSISTED HONDURAS IN ACHIEVING ITS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL AND SECURITY GOALS, THE U.S. COULD COUNT ON HONDURAN ASSISTANCE IN ACHIEVING U.S. REGIONAL GOALS. SPEAKING FOR THE MILITARY, HOWEVER, GENERAL REGALADO INDICATED THAT HE WAS LESS THAN IMPRESSED WITH THE OFFERED INCREASE IN MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH AIR FORCE COMMANDER MEJIA, DECLINED AS INADEQUATE OR INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE THREAT SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO HAVE THE DEFENSE SECURITY ASSISTANCE AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE IN THE PARTY REMAIN TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS IN GREATER DETAIL, BUT GENERAL REGALADO NEVERTHELESS FELT COMPELLED TO REVIEW THE UNSATISFACTORY HISTORY OF THE BILATERAL MILITARY RELATIONSHIP FROM THE OUTSET, INCLUDING THE SEA HUTS THE HONDURANS HAD TO PAY FOR.

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FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ

REMAINED SILENT DURING MOST OF THE MEETING BUT DID MAKE ONE APPEAL FOR A HONDURAN MILITARY FORCE CAPABLE OF AUTONOMOUS DETERRENCE OF NICARAGUAN AGGRESSION AS AN ELEMENT THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE CREDIBILITY OF HONDURAS IN THE CONTADORA CONTEXT, WHERE IT WAS NOW OFTEN REGARDED AS AN AMERICAN DEPENDENCY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND HIS PARTY MET WITH THE HONDURAN LEADERSHIP AT HONDURAN AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS FROM 1100 TO 1230 ON 21 MARCH. AFTER A PRESIDENTIAL LETTER WAS DELIVERED TO PRESIDENT AZCONA THE HONDURANS ATTENDING--PRESIDENT AZCONA, FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ, ARMED FORCES COMMANDER GENERAL REGALADO, JOINT STAFF CHIEF COLONEL CASTILLO, NAVY CHIEF COLONEL MARTINEZ AND AIR FORCE CHIEF COLONEL MEJIA--WERE TOLD THAT

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IN MEETINGS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE 20 OCTOBER HOUSE VOTE AGAINST ASSISTANCE TO THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE, THE PRESIDENT HAD INDICATED HIS DETERMINATION TO MOVE AHEAD WITH ASSISTANCE TO THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE AND HAD DIRECTED THAT THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY TRAVEL IMMEDIATELY TO HONDURAS TO DELIVER A PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO PRESIDENT AZCONA AND TO BRIEF THE LEADERSHIP ON ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY AND OTHER MEASURES THE ADMINISTRATION WAS PREPARED TO TAKE TO INSURE STABILITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE EFFORT WHILE THE LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY UNFOLDED. THE HONDURANS WERE TOLD THAT A SENATE VOTE ON THE PROPOSAL WAS EXPECTED ON 1 APRIL, AND THAT THE BILL AS APPROVED BY THE SENATE WOULD BE RESUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE, WITH THE ONLY QUESTION REMAINING TO BE CLARIFIED BEING THE TIMING OF THE SECOND HOUSE VOTE. IT COULD BE AS EARLY AS THE SAME WEEK AS THE SENATE VOTE, BUT AT THE WORST IT COULD BE ONE OR TWO MONTHS AWAY. THE HONDURANS WERE TOLD THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION AS TO THE FAVORABLE OUTCOME OF THE SECOND VOTE, ONLY AS TO ITS TIMING.

3. IN THE MEANTIME, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY CONTINUED, IT WAS OF CONCERN TO THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA REMAIN STABLE DURING THE ONE TO EIGHT WEEK DELAY IN THE PROGRAM BEING CAUSED BY THE U.S. LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR, PARTICULARLY SINCE CONTINUING SANDINISTA INCURSIONS INTO HONDURAS AND THE UNCERTAINTIES CREATED BY THE HOUSE VOTE MIGHT PROMPT HONDURAS TO TAKE ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIVE MEASURES WITH REGARD TO THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE, WHICH THE U.S. HOPES CAN BE AVOIDED.

4. ECONOMIC STEPS THAT THE U.S. WAS PREPARED TO TAKE WERE DISCUSSED FIRST. CONTINGENT UPON AGREEMENT ON AN ECONOMIC

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STABILIZATION PROGRAM AT THE JOINT ECONOMIC WORKING GROUP MEETING THE WEEK OF APRIL 1, THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO ACCELERATE DELIVERY OF THE \$4 MILLION STILL AVAILABLE, WHICH IT HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN INTENDED TO DISBURSE AT A STEADY RATE THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY. WHILE THE WORKING GROUP WOULD GO INTO THE DETAILS, THE PRESIDENT HAD FELT THAT THE FUNDS WOULD BE MORE USEFUL TO HONDURAS IF THE DISBURSEMENT WERE ACCELERATED.

5. MILITARY STEPS BEING PROPOSED WERE INTENDED TO DEAL WITH THE SANDINISTA BORDER INCURSIONS AS WELL AS TO PRECLUDE THE SANDINISTAS FROM GETTING THE IDEA THAT THE VOTE INDICATED THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT IN THE END WIN APPROVAL OF HIS PLAN TO

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PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE, OR THAT THE VOTE HAD LED TO A FAILURE OF NERVE OF EITHER THE U.S. OR THE HONDURANS. THE STEPS WHICH HAD BEEN CONSIDERED, WHICH COULD BE WORKED OUT IN DETAIL AT THE EXPERT LEVEL, INCLUDED:

- PROVISION OF AC-47 GUNSHIPS, TIME FRAME FOR DELIVERY SIX MONTHS.
- PROVISION OF HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS, WHICH COULD BE DONE MORE QUICKLY, IN A MATTER OF A FEW WEEKS.
- PROVISION OF WATER TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT, PROBABLY LCM'S
- ASSISTANCE IN THE ACQUISITION OF ROCKET LAUNCHERS, PROBABLY A BRAZILIAN MODEL WHICH IS QUITE GOOD
- PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL ARMORED VEHICLES
- IF L-39'S DELIVERED TO NICARAGUA, USE OF PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY POWERS TO IMMEDIATELY DELIVER F-5'S TO HONDURAS AT NO COST TO HONDURAS.

6. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS NEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ABOVE CURRENTLY APPROVED LEVELS, AND IS INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE THE PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION THAT THE USSR WILL NOT BECOME THE DOMINANT POWER IN CENTRAL AMERICA. AS PART OF THIS, THE PRESIDENT REMAINS DETERMINED TO MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP OF PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE. WHILE THIS IS DELAYED BY THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR, HE WISHED TO DEMONSTRATE CONCRETELY U.S. SOLIDARITY WITH HONDURAS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE NOT LOSE MOMENTUM DURING THE INTERVAL, AND IN THIS, HONDURAN COOPERATION IS ESSENTIAL. THE PRESIDENT WISHED THAT HIS GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION FOR THE STEPS ALREADY TAKEN IN THIS REGARD BY HONDURAS BE EXPRESSED, AND THAT HIS SOLIDARITY WITH HONDURAS IN THE PRESENT SITUATION OF BORDER PRESSURES BY THE SANDINISTAS AND UNCERTAINTIES INDUCED BY THE U.S. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS ALSO BE EXPRESSED.

7. IN REPLY, PRESIDENT AZCONA SAID THAT SINCE THE HOUSE VOTE, HE HAD CONSULTED NUMEROUS SECTORS OF HONDURAN SOCIETY, AND HAD FOUND

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THAT THEY WERE ALL OF THE VIEW THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE FROM THE HONDURAN STANDPOINT FOR THE ASSISTANCE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE TO BE APPROVED, RATHER THAN FOR IT NOT TO BE APPROVED. PRESIDENT AZCONA EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS, IN HIS VIEW, A SIGNIFICANT EXPRESSION OF OPINION, BUT THAT AT THE SAME TIME THE U. S. GOVERNMENT SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THE SITUATION WAS BEING EXPLOITED BY THE LEFT IN HONDURAS AND THAT THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT WAS BEING ATTACKED FOR NOT ADDRESSING HONDURAN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. FOR THAT REASON, PRESIDENT AZCONA SAID HE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE INFORMATION THAT ECONOMIC AID WOULD BE ACCELERATED, AND AFTER HOLY WEEK THE JOINT ECONOMIC WORKING GROUP WOULD ATTEND TO THE DETAILS. HE ALSO SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE INABILITY OF THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT TO SATISFY ALL THE LEGITIMATE REQUIREMENTS OF THE HONDURAN ARMED FORCES, WHICH WERE INCREASED BY THE HEAVY ARMS BUILDUP IN NICARAGUA, HE WAS VERY PLEASED THAT ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE, BEYOND THE CURRENT PROGRAMMED LEVEL WAS TO BE PROVIDED TO THE ARMED FORCES.

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8. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ARMED FORCES, THEY HAD AGREED NOT TO PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON DELIVERY OF ASSISTANCE TO THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE, BUT THAT ONE THING THEY DID ASK WAS THAT THE ASSISTANCE BE AS COVERT AS POSSIBLE. THE GOVERNMENT HAD AGREED TO THE DIRECT AIR DELIVERY OF MATERIAL TO AGUACATE, WITH SUBSEQUENT DELIVERY BY LAND, BUT AGAIN, THEY INSISTED THAT IT BE AS COVERT AS POSSIBLE. THIS HAD APPARENTLY BEEN ACHIEVED, IN THAT DELIVERIES HAVE BEEN GOING ON SINCE THE FIRST OF MARCH AND THERE HAS BEEN NO PRESS DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT.

9 PRESIDENT AZCONA WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT HONDURAN SUPPORT FOR NEW FUNDS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE

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HAD TO BE USED AS A LEVER IN U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DEBATES ON THE SUBJECT. BU> SAID THAT HE ASKED U.S. UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACT THAT IT IS A VERY SENSITIVE SUBJECT IN HONDURAS. PRESIDENT AZCONA THEN RE-EMPHASIZED HIS REQUEST FOR U.S. HELP IN KEEPING DISCUSSION OF HONDURAN SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM OUT OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN BY CITING THE AIDS AND YELLOW RAIN DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGNS AS EXAMPLES OF HOW THE COMMUNISTS EXPLOIT SUCH SUBJECTS, NOTING THAT THERE WOULD BE MORE SUCH CAMPAIGNS AND THAT THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT WAS ILL-EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH THEM. THE PRESIDENT ALSO CITED A LIST OF AREAS WHERE THE GOVERNMENT WAS ATTEMPTING TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES, PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURE, CONCLUDING THAT IF HIS GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE, WITH U.S. HELP, TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL PEACE IN HONDURAS AND TO SEIZE BANNERS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM FROM THE LEFT, THEN THE U.S. COULD COUNT ON HONDURAN SUPPORT IN ITS REGIONAL EFFORTS, AND THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT COULD IN TURN COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF ITS OWN PEOPLE FOR ITS PROGRAMS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS AN ATTITUDE OF EXPECTATION IN HONDURAS, BROUGHT ABOUT BY A NUMBER OF THINGS, AMONG THEM THE CONGRESSIONAL VOTE, AND THAT IS ONE REASON WHY IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT BE IN A POSITION TO SATISFY THE LEGITIMATE REQUESTS OF TEACHERS AND UNIONS, AMONG OTHERS. PRESIDENT AZCONA CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT IF THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT HAS SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO MAKE IT THROUGH THIS MINE FIELD, THERE WILL BE NO PROBLEMS IN HONDURAS, AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE AND THE ARMED FORCES IN PURSUING ITS POLICIES, WHICH IS FURTHER REASON TO BE PLEASED BY THE INFORMATION ABOUT NEW U.S. ASSISTANCE EFFORTS. HE THEN TURNED THE FLOOR OVER TO GENERAL REGALADO TO COMMENT ON THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE MILITARY PROPOSALS.

18. GENERAL REGALADO INDICATED IN HIS REMARKS, SUPPORTED BY COLONEL MEJIA, THE AIR FORCE COMMANDER, THAT THE AC-47 WAS NOT SUITABLE FOR HONDURAN REQUIREMENTS FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS. THEY CITED THE OBSOLETE AIRFRAME, ONE WHICH THE HONDURAN AIR FORCE WAS ATTEMPTING TO DISPOSE OF IN ITS TRANSPORT FLEET, AND

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THE CONSEQUENT HIGH AND EXPENSIVE MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS. THEY ALSO INDICATED THAT WHILE THEY WERE WELL AWARE OF ITS CAPABILITIES AGAINST MASSED FORCES, IT WAS ESSENTIALLY A COUNTERINSURGENCY WEAPON, AND WOULD NOT BE SURVIVABLE IN THE CONVENTIONAL CONTEXT OF THE NICARAGUAN BORDER SITUATION, WHERE THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENVIRONMENT INCLUDED HEAVY CONCENTRATIONS OF 23MM AND SA-7 ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS, TO WHICH THE AC-47 WAS VERY VULNERABLE.

11. GENERAL REGALADO ALSO REITERATED THE POINTS WHICH THE HONDURAN SIDE HAD MADE ABOUT THE F-5 A AND B MODELS IN THEIR RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY TAFT, WHICH WERE SUMMED UP BY COLONEL MEJIA WITH THE STATEMENT THAT WITH REGARD TO BOTH THE AC-47 AND THE F-5 A OR B MODEL, THANK YOU VERY MUCH BUT WE DO NOT NEED THEM. IN RESPONSE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS SAID THAT HE WAS WELL AWARE OF THE HONDURAN ARGUMENT REGARDING THEIR PREFERENCE FOR THE F-5 E OR F MODELS, BUT THAT IN THE 26 HOURS SINCE HE HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO UNDERTAKE HIS CURRENT MISSION IT HAD NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE THAT ISSUE, ALTHOUGH THE U.S. SIDE WOULD CONTINUE EFFORTS TO DO SO. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THERE WAS NO INTENT TO SUGGEST

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THAT THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT WOULD RECEIVE F-5'S ONLY IF
NICARAGUAN RECEIVED L-39'S, BUT INSTEAD, NORMAL PROCUREMENT OF
F-5'S WOULD CONTINUE, BUT WITH THE PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY POWERS
TO DELIVER THE AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATELY AND AT NO COST TO HONDURAS
TO BE TRIGGERED BY THE DELIVERY OF L 39'S TO NICARAGUA.

12. IN EARLIER QUESTIONS, GENERAL REGALADO HAD ALSO INDICATED
DISATISFACTION WITH THE OFFER OF LCM'S TO ADDRESS THE NAVY'S
COASTAL TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM, POINTING OUT THAT THE HONDURAN
REQUIREMENT WAS FOR A CRAFT CAPABLE OF NAVIGATING THE 300-MILE
NORTH COAST FROM A BASE AT ONE END OF THE COAST - I.E. FOR
THE LCU. THE RESPONSE TO ALL THE DETAILED OBJECTIONS TO THE OFFER

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OF INCREASED MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS THAT THE SUGGESTIONS WERE JUST THAT--SUGGESTIONS--AND THAT MORE COMPLETE DISCUSSION COULD BE UNDERTAKEN WITH THE DEFENSE SECURITY ASSISTANCE AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE, WHO REMAINED IN HONDURAS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THESE POINTS.

13. GENERAL REGALADO WENT ON TO CITE A NUMBER OF OTHER AREAS OF DISSATISFACTION, AMONG THEM STATEMENTS IN WASHINGTON BY BOTH ADMINISTRATION LEADERS AND DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE LEADERS (REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO STATEMENTS ABOUT HONDURAN ASSISTANCE ALLEGEDLY MADE AT THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION BY ENRIQUE BERMUDEZ, THE FDN MILITARY COMMANDER, WHICH BERMUDEZ DENIES HAVING MADE); TO WHICH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY REPLIED BY AGREEING THAT MUCH TOO MUCH HAD BEEN SAID IN WASHINGTON, THAT ALL INVOLVED WERE AWARE THAT THIS WAS DAMAGING, AND STEPS WERE BEING TAKEN TO CONTROL THE SITUATION. REGALADO ALSO MENTIONED THE LACK OF HONDURAN KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT OBJECTIVES THE U.S. SIDE HOPED TO ACHIEVE WITH THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE, REITERATING THE FREQUENT HONDURAN COMPLAINT ABOUT THE LACK OF A CONCRETE PLAN, WITH TIMETABLES, AGAINST WHICH TO MEASURE THE PROGRESS OF THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE EFFORT. A MEMBER OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S DELEGATION RESPONDED THAT PRELIMINARY PLANNING WAS UNDERWAY IN ANTICIPATION OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION, AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN WITH THE HONDURANS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO A DETAILED MILITARY PLAN FOR UTILIZATION OF THE CONGRESSIONALLY APPROVED ASSISTANCE. GENERAL REGALADO ALSO INDICATED DISSATISFACTION WITH WHAT HE PERCEIVED AS DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE EFFORTS TO STRETCH THE HONDURAN WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE, AND NOTED PROBLEM AREAS WITH PRIVATELY OWNED MATERIAL ALREADY IN STORAGE IN HONDURAS ON BEHALF OF THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE.

14. GENERAL REGALADO CLOSED HIS REMARKS BY NOTING THAT THROUGHOUT THE RECENT HISTORY OF THE BILATERAL MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, THERE

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HAD BEEN INSTANCES OF HONDURAS RECEIVING WHAT THEY HAD INTERPRETED AS U.S. COMMITMENTS WHICH WERE NOT FULLFILLED. CITING EXAMPLES FROM AHUAS TARA 1 UNTIL THE PRESENT, INCLUDING THE ISSUE OF THE SEA HUTS WHICH THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT WAS REQUIRED TO PURCHASE.

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IN REPLY, GENERAL GALVIN NOTED THAT GENERAL REGALADO HAD MENTIONED THAT CONCERN TO HIM TWO WEEKS PREVIOUSLY, AND WHILE HE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO INVESTIGATE ALL THE EXAMPLES CITED, THOSE THAT HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO LOOK INTO WERE CASES OF A LEGITIMATE INABILITY TO CARRY OUT OFFERED ACTIONS BECAUSE OF CHANGES IN POLITICAL SITUATIONS. GENERAL GALVIN NOTED THAT IN A PERFECT WORLD, THESE SITUATIONS WOULD NOT ARISE, BUT ALL MILITARY REQUIREMENTS ARE CONTAINED IN A POLITICAL CONTEXT, AND NEITHER THE U.S. NOR THE HONDURAN MILITARY IS EVER GOING TO GET ALL THEY WANT OR NEED.

15. -GENERAL REGALADO ADDED ONE MORE QUESTION, AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN PRESIDENTS SUAZO AND REAGAN, CONTAINING USC SECURITY ASSURANCES, REMAINED VALID UNDER THE AZCONA ADMINISTRATION. HE WAS ASSURED THAT IT DID.

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1E. FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ THEN INTERJECTED HIS VIEW THAT THE POLITICAL COMPLEXITIES OF A U.S. RESPONSE TO A NICARAGUAN ATTACK ON HONDURAS, AS WELL AS THE NEED IN THE CONTADORA CONTEXT FOR HONDURAS TO HAVE THE CREDIBILITY OF AN AUTONOMOUS CAPABILITY TO DETER NICARAGUAN AGGRESSION, MADE IT IMPORTANT THAT THE HONDURAN MILITARY BE STRENGTHENED TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY RESPONDED THAT WHILE THIS WAS CONSISTENT WITH U.S. OBJECTIVES, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THE PROBLEM IN CENTRAL AMERICA WAS ONE OF SOVIET INTERVENTION, AND THE U.S. WAS THE ONLY POWER CAPABLE OF AN ADEQUATE RESPONSE ON THIS LEVEL.

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17. THE MEETING CLOSED WITH A NUMBER OF COMMENTS FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS ON THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL VOTE, AND THE EFFECT OF INDICATIONS OF SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION BY A NUMBER OF LATIN AMERICAN LEADERS. PRESIDENT AZCONA INDICATED THAT EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT BY POLITICAL PARTIES WERE POLITICALLY MORE FEASIBLE THAN STATEMENTS BY GOVERNMENTS.

18. COMMENT: DESPITE THE RECITATION BY GENERAL REGALADO OF ASPECTS OF THE BILATERAL MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WHICH THE HONDURANS PERCEIVED AS UNSATISFACTORY--WHICH IS A TRAIT NOT UNCOMMON HERE--HE OMITTED ONE ASPECT WHICH WE KNOW [REDACTED] TO BE ON THEIR MINDS. THE HONDURANS ARE QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT PRESS REPORTING INDICATING THAT THERE ARE PLANS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE TO RECEIVE SYSTEMS NOT AVAILABLE TO THE HONDURANS, PARTICULARLY ANTI-AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS, AND WILL VERY LIKELY INSIST THAT ANY SUCH SYSTEMS BE SUPPLIED TO THEM AS WELL.
END COMMENT.