

TELEGRAM

Jan 18

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 CHARGE TO

E.O. 11652 TAGS: SUBJECT: ACTION:	FROM	AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA	CLASSIFICATION	CONFIDENTIAL
		12065: GDS-1/18/88 (NEGROPONTE, JOHN D.)	OR-M	
		SHUM PTER SREF		
		ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT FOR HONDURAS	CN: 405	
		SECSTATE WASHDC - IMMEDIATE		

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ TEGUCIGALPA 405

FOR HA ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS AND ARA BOSWORTH FROM NEGROPONTE

- ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - Entire text.
- Embassy has just received draft human rights report for Honduras which was brought to us by Department officers last week. We have the following suggested changes/additions which we would hope you are able to take into account. I invite your attention especially to our suggestion that a section be included on terrorism and our comments on disappearances and refugees.
- Suggest changing Section 1c., Disappearances, to read as follows QUOTE There have been allegations of a number of mysterious disappearances during 1981. In the majority of instances these allegations have involved nationals of other Central American countries who may have entered Honduras

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CLEARANCES:
POL:DCShaw (draft)

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OPTIONAL FORM 153
(Formerly FS -413)
January 1975
Dept. of State

50153-101

Dept of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.
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 Date 6/1/98 Exemption _____

illegally or may have been engaged in illegal activities resulting in their deportation. In the few cases of allegations of disappearance of Honduran nationals, the government has consistently denied any involvement by security services END QUOTE.

4. Under Section 1d., Arbitrary Arrest and Imprisonment, we would suggest following additional sentence: QUOTE

Indeed, there is growing sentiment amongst government and legal experts that bail provisions and penalties for certain offenses such as hijacking, drug trafficking and kidnapping are too lenient; and that provisions for dealing with such crimes should be urgently revised in the context of modernizing Honduras' penal code END QUOTE.

5. Under Section 1f., Invasion of Home, delete second sentence.

6. Then, in same Section, we would recommend addition of a paragraph g, entitled Terrorism to read as follows:

QUOTE Although not as severe as in some neighboring countries, Honduras experienced an increase in internationally-sponsored terrorism in 1981, mostly in the form of kidnappings and bank robberies aimed at financing violent revolutionary activities. In the two most prominent kidnapping cases, the Honduran businessmen in question were released after payment of ransom. An avowedly Marxist group also took credit for the attempted assassination in September

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[of 1981 of a group of unarmed United States military
 personnel driving to work in Tegucigalpa. ~~Finally in~~
~~November and December of 1981~~
~~the government uncovered three major arms caches and~~
~~an underground "People's Prison" which, according to~~
~~information from captured terrorists who were former~~
~~Sandinista army members, formed part of a plan to increase~~
~~revolutionary violence in Honduras~~ END QUOTE.

7. Under Section 2a., Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion and Assembly, we would strongly recommend deleting final three sentences of last paragraph starting with "Although unions....."

8. Under Section 2b., Freedom of movement, etc., we would revise paragraph to read as follows: QUOTE These rights are respected in Honduras. Previously existing restrictions on travel to and from El Salvador were lifted in the aftermath of a peace treaty, signed in December 1980. Starting in 1980, Salvadorans began seeking refuge in Honduras from the conflict in Salvador. By the end of 1981, the number of such refugees receiving UNHCR assistance in Honduras had levelled off at about 18,000. Because of a number of incidents on the Salvador/Honduras border affecting the safety of the refugees, the Honduran government is

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giving full support to plans by the UNHCR to move all Salvadoran refugees to a secure location further inland where refugees will be easier to protect and care for. At year's end, 3000 Salvadoran refugees had been moved to this new site, with the expectation that all of them shall have been transferred early in 1982. Honduran authorities have responded well and generously to these refugees' needs, despite the remoteness and poverty of the region, and they have facilitated the work of local and international relief agencies. In another refugee area, as the year ended, there was a sharp surge in Miskito Indians seeking refuge from Nicaragua's Atlantic coast, raising the number of these refugees under UN assistance in Honduras from 250 to ³²⁰⁰ ~~1200~~ in a ^{three-} ~~two-~~ week ~~beginning in~~ ~~mid-December 1981,~~ ~~period/in~~ ~~December~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ This rising trend appeared likely to continue. According to an official Honduran report, verified by independent interviews, the upsurge in Miskito refugees can be attributed to their deliberate and systematic mistreatment by Nicaraguan authorities, including a tragic killing of possibly as many as 70 Miskitos seeking to flee from Nicaragua across the Honduran border during Christmas week. The sudden increase in these refugee numbers has placed a temporary strain on the facilities provided by the UN and relief agencies in the Mosquitia region END QUOTE. Department will note that

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we propose deletion of reference to refugees from 78-79 civil strife in Nicaragua since those events were amply covered in earlier reports. Also we have proposed deleting reference to Guatemalan refugees since we would not agree that numbers are yet "significant". Number has leveled off at about ⁵⁰⁰~~450~~ and rising trend which was foreseen when this section was drafted has simply not materialized. Mosquitia problem, in our view, needed some amplification; and, finally, acknowledgement of Honduran generosity in receiving refugees appeared called for in light of recent unwarranted negative publicity.

9. In Section 4, Economic and Social Circumstances, first sentence ~~sentences~~ of final paragraph, recommended substituting words "Efforts to increase agricultural productivity..." for words "Land reform efforts..."

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