

TELEGRAM

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FROM Amembassy TEGUCIGALPA		CLASSIFICATION [REDACTED]
E.O. 11652X	XXXXXX 1/5/89	
TAGS:	12065: GDS XXXXXX /(NEGROPONTE, John D.) OR-M	CN: 0053
SUBJECT:	PINT, NU, HO, PEPR	
	MOSQUITIA BORDER INCIDENT	
ACTION:	SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE	
INFO:	Amembassy GUATEMALA Amembassy MANAGUA Amembassy PANAMA Amembassy SAN JOSE Amembassy SAN SALVADOR USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PANAMA	
	[REDACTED] TEGUCIGALPA 0053	
REF:	TEGUCIGALPA 06 AND PREVIOUS	
	1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT	
	2. <u>SUMMARY</u> : Thus far, Embassy has not developed any evidence of a major Nicaraguan incursion across the Coco River border into Honduras. There are indications, however, that an unknown number of Miskito Indians were killed by Sandinista forces between December 26 and December 31 while navigating up the river. It is not known whether this group of Miskitos were engaged in innocent and traditional civilian pursuits or whether they might have been involved in anti-Sandinista	

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DRAFTED BY: AMB:JDNegroponte:kjl	DRAFTING DATE 1-4-82	TEL. EXT. 211	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: CHARGE:WGWalker
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CLEARANCES:
POL: DShaw (draft)

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CLASSIFICATION

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

50153-101

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.
() Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Date 6/1/98 Exemption _____

activities within Nicaragua and were shot in the process of escaping across the border. GOH investigation is tending towards the former interpretation and Foreign Minister informed Ambassador January 4 that protest might be lodged with Inter-American Human Rights Commission, pegging protest to Nicaraguan mistreatment of Miskito population. Ambassador assured Foreign Minister of USG support/^{if} ~~fax~~ final results of GOH investigation warrant this course of action. END SUMMARY.

3. Mission team consisting of DATP, ARMA, PolOff and EconOff visited Puerto Lempira January 3 in DAO aircraft and from there helicoptered to two villages reportedly attacked by Sandinista air and/or ground forces.

4. Embassy team found no physical evidence of any incursion across the border. Two sources interviewed, however, stated they had seen eight bodies of Miskitos floating down the river, two of which washed up onto the Honduran shore.

5. According to various accounts, a group of Miskitos were navigating up the river when attacked by Sandinista forces. Accounts varied, however, as to the nature of the Miskito Indian group in question. Some said that they were innocent Miskitos engaged in normal and traditional civilian pursuits along the river. Others said that they may have been anti-Sandinista elements

chased from Nicaragua to the river border and then gunned down while trying to cross.

6. The GOH has not yet completed its investigation. Preliminary official account related to Embassy officers and subsequently repeated to the Ambassador by GOH Foreign Minister tends towards the first hypothesis, namely that these were innocent Miskitos. In discussion January 4, Foreign Minister told Ambassador that a "grave" incident had occurred and once all facts were in GOH would consider OAS action, possibly before Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Foreign Minister expected final investigative report within matter of days.

7. In a related matter Foreign Minister said GOH had already replied to the two Nicaraguan notes accusing Honduran military of complicity with "counter-revolutionary" Miskitos because of fact that Miskito leader Steadman Fagoth was on routine Honduran military flight from Puerto Lempira to Tegucigalpa which crashed on December 28. Foreign Minister Elvir pointed out that flight was typical holiday mission transporting Puerto Lempira residents and military personnel on occasion of holidays and that GOH position in light of sparse civilian transport in the region was to make such transport as widely available as possible. In final comment on this subject Elvir pointed out that Puerto Lempira is a considerable

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distance from the border and the destination of the flight was hardly supportive of the outlandish charges of the Nicaraguan Government.

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