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12065: GDS 11/25/87 (NEGROPONTE, John D.) OR-M

CN: 8802

TAGS: SUBJECT: PINT, MILI, HO, NU

Conversation with Honduran Minister of Defense

ACTION:

SecState WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO:

RODXXHASHDKX IMMEDIAXE

Amembassy GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE Amembassy MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

Amembassy SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE Amembassy SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE Amembassy PANAMA IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN IMMEDIATE DIA WASHDC//DB-3E1/DB-3C2/JS1-4B/DN-3C/DN-2D2/ IMMEDIATE

TEGUCIGALPA 8802

1. Commidential Entire Text.

AMB DCM POL DAO MILGP 2. During course of November 25 courtesy call on Honduran Minister of Defense, Col. Mario Flores Theresin, by Ambassador and DATT, Defense Minister made following points of interest:

3. First, President Paz will go on television at 8 p.m. local time evening of November 25 to state that Armed Forces will guarantee electoral process very much along same lines as Paz' speech just prior to April, 1980 Constituent Assembly

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CLASSIFICATION

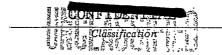
OPTIONAL FORM 153 (Formerly FS-413) January 1975 Dept. of State

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elections. This news has been confirmed by local press sources as well as by direct phonecall from GOH Foreign Minister to Ambassador.

- 4. Second: Minister of Defense stated that Armed Forces will be on state of alert starting midday Saturday with instructions to do their utmost to maintain public order. They will be deployed in such a fashion that they can readily come to the assistance of an electoral tribumal in various constituencies should their assistance be required. In the absence of any incidents and in the absence of any requests from any electoral tribumal, military have instructions to remain inconspicuous as possible from polling places. Flores added that, although incidents could not be ruled out, he was hopeful that ballotings would proceed smoothly and weekend would bass quietly. The one factor which creates somewhat higher risk of incidents this time as opposed to the April 1980 elections is fact that so much more is at stake politically.
- 5. Finally, Flores discussed situation in Nicaragua. He noted that Nicaraguan charges to effect that Honduran forces are deployed aggressively toward that country are absolutely preposterous and, if anything, the reverse is true. At most, two Honduran battalions are currently



deployed in immediate vicinity of Nicaraguan border whereas Nicaragua has many times that number deployed on its side. (EMBASSY COMMENT: To best of our knowledge there are approximately ten Nicaraguan regular and border battalions which can be considered as stationed within immediate vicinity of Honduran border, not counting whatever additional militia forces may be so deployed.)

NEGROPONTE

