

# TELEGRAM

Dec 1 01-47 82

INDICATE  
 COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

A226

FROM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ R

E.O. ~~11652~~  
TAGS:  
SUBJECT:

12356: DECL: OADR  
MILI, PINT, HO  
CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL ALVAREZ

CN: 10601

ACTION:

SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO:

AMEMBASSY BELIZE  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN

AMB  
DCM  
POL  
MILGP  
DAO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ TEGU CIGALPA 10601

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - ENTIRE TEXT
2. SUMMARY: Honduran Armed Forces Commander assures Ambassador that constitutional changes affecting armed forces titles are purely formal in nature and imply no change in constitutional relationship between President and armed forces. Alvarez reiterates commitment to civilian rule. END SUMMARY.
3. Ambassador called on Honduran Armed Forces Commander, General Gustavo Alvarez, November 30 to discuss certain

DRAFTED BY: AMB:JDNegroponete:kjl	DRAFTING DATE 11-30-82	TEL. EXT. 211	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: AMB:JDNegroponete
--------------------------------------	---------------------------	------------------	---

CLEARANCES:

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
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 6/2/98 Exemption \_\_\_\_\_

aspects of arrangements for President Reagan's visit. In addition two other subjects were discussed.

4. First, in reply to question, Alvarez assured Ambassador that recent constitutional changes with respect to military titles have absolutely no practical effect on relationships between armed forces and civilian government; nor do changes in any way represent <sup>alteration</sup> ~~authorization~~ of armed forces commitment to civilian constitutional rule. Changes as approved by Congress, Alvarez explained, would leave President Suazo as "Comandante General" of the armed forces. (Constitutional amendment initially proposed by the Honduran Defense Ministry was that President's title be changed to "Jefe Supremo", but Congress turned down this proposed change.) Alvarez' title would change from Commander of the Armed Forces to Commander in Chief; but none of the respective ~~authorities~~ authorities of the President and Alvarez would change in any way. Finally, the rank of "General de Division" would be changed to a more straightforward "General". In other words, there would continue to exist <sup>general</sup> two /officer ranks in the armed forces, with the highest being the rank of Full General rather than "General de Division" as it had previously been called.

5. Asked the reason for these formal changes, Alvarez explained that the basic intent had been protocolary and designed to bring general officer ranks in Honduras more

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Classification

in line with those elsewhere in the Hemisphere and to ensure commensurate courtesies when travelling to other countries.

6. Alvarez took occasion to ask Ambassador what we thought of his November 26 interview in which he had reaffirmed his strong commitment to civilian rule here (see FBIS Panama 261604Z NOV 82). Ambassador responded that he viewed Alvarez' interview as one of his most significant to date.

*JW*  
NEGROPONTE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classification