STATE 261568

1. ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR HAS CARRIED OUT INSTRUCTIONS REPEL WITH HONDURAN CINC LOPEZ. GOB PLANS NSC MEETING AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 24 TO DISCUSS RMTC AND OTHER SUBJECT.

3. IN BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER OF PRESIDENCY EVENING SEPTEMBER 21 AND IN CALL ON GENERAL LOPEZ MORN.

4. LOPEZ EXPLAINED THAT GOB WOULD BE HOLDING NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 24 AT WHICH RMTC ISSUE WOULD BE RAISED. (IT IS NOT, HOWEVER, PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF MEETING WHICH IS TO DISCUSS ELECTRICITY WORKERS STRIKE.)

5. AMBASSADOR IS CONVINCED THAT LOPEZ AND CHIEF OF STAFF COLONEL GONZALEZ (WHO WAS ALSO AT SEPTEMBER 24 MEETING) UNDERSTAND THE CHOICES THEY MUST MAKE AND THE DIFFICULTIES WE FACE IF FRESH SALVADORAN BATTALION IS NOT PERMITTED TO BEGIN TRAINING ON SEPTEMBER 26.

6. LOPEZ PROMISED TO BE BACK IN TOUCH MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 25 TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING. LOPEZ WAS SKEPTICAL THAT PRESIDENT SUAZO WOULD ALTER HIS OPPOSITION TO FURTHER TRAINING OF SALVADORANS AT RMTC AT THIS TIME.

7. ONE POINT GONZALEZ MADE DURING CONVERSATION WAS THAT "CONTINUITY AND PROGRESS" IN BORDER NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOES WOULD HELP GOB JUSTIFY "CONTINUITY" OF PRESENT
TRAINING PATTERN AT RMTC PENDING FINAL AGREEMENT ON PERMANENT INSTALLATION. AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT PRESIDENT DUARTE WAS AMENABLE TO VISITING ECUDURAS AND NAMING A "PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE" TO PURSU A NEGOTIATED OUTCOME.

8. COMMENT: WE NEED TO FOCUS ON FALL-BACK POSITION IN EVENT GOP REFUSES REFUSAL TO TRAIN ANY FURTHER SALVADORAN FORCES AT THIS TIME. EMBASSY BELIEVES BEST FALL-BACK, THOUGH FAR FROM IDEAL, WOULD BE ALONG LINES PARAS 4 AND 5 TEGUCIGALPA 11542 (DTG 15O12Z SEPTEMBER 84). NAMELY, WE WOULD AGREE TO KEEP OPERATING RMTC FOR HONDURAN FORCES BETWEEN NOW AND END OF THE YEAR WHILE CONTINUING TO PURSUE NEGOTIATIONS FOR LONG-TERM RMTC. EXPENDITURE OF ANY FY-85 FUNDS WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE CONTINGENT ON SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF PENDING PROBLEMS AND ASSUMEDLY APPROPRIATE PORTION OF FY-84 FUND WOULD HAVE TO BE DIVERTED FOR TRAINING OF SALVADORANS ELSEWHERE. ONE VARIANT ON PROPOSAL CONTAINED IN TEGUCIGALPA 11542 IS THAT WE WOULD RECOMMEND ATTRIBUTING THE ABSENCE OF SALVADORAN TROOPS AT RMTC TO INCONCLUSIVE US/GOH NEGOTIATIONS RATHER THAN TO ANTICIPATION OF UPCOMING OFFENSIVE IN EL SALVADOR, IN LIGHT OF OBJECTIONS RAISED TO THIS LATTER LINE OF ARGUMENT BY AMBASSADOR PICKERING. NEGROPONTE ET AL #1893

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