

# TELEGRAM

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A. J. Negroponte

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FROM  
Ambassy TEGUCIGALPA

E.O. 12852  
TAGS:  
SUBJECT:  
ACTION:

12065: CDS 12/29/87 (NEGROPONTE, John D.) CR-11  
MASS  
MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO HONDURAS  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PANAMA IMMEDIATE

9577

SECRET TEGUCICALPA 9577

FOR GENERAL NUTTING FROM NEGROPONTE

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret R. Grafeld, Dir.  
Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny ( ) Declassify  
Date 6/6/00 Exemption

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT
2. Look forward to our rescheduled meetings together January 5-6.
3. We understand that a Section 506 action may be under consideration for Honduras. One of my principal objectives during visit with you next week would be to see if we can reach a common position on what a reasonable set of GOH military priorities should be under current circumstances. To facilitate our discussion, outlined below are my preliminary thoughts based on personal observation and discussion with relevant Country Team elements.
4. Assumptions: Salvador situation and Nicaragua build-up require improvement in Honduran counter-insurgency,

AMB  
DCM  
DAO  
MILGRP  
POL

DRAFTED BY: AMB:JDNegroponte:kjl	DRAFTING DATE 12-29-81	TEL. EXT. 211	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: AMB:JDNegroponte
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CLEARANCES:  
DAO:Col.VBollert (draft)  
MILGRP:Col.WGoodwin (draft)  
POL:DShaw (draft)

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OPTIONAL FORM 15  
(Formerly FS -41)  
January 1977  
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anti-infiltration and conventional capabilities.

Priority should be on qualitative improvements rather than quantitative increase in size of forces, although modest increase in size of forces may be called for.

5. Priorities: Four principal priorities are (A) an integrated command and control communications system, including radar; (B) increased troop mobility; (C) combat air and naval augmentation; (D) intensified training.

6. Specific Needs: A Tri-Service strategic communication survey team is due during second quarter FY-82 to examine priority A and identify equipment needs. We have requested acceleration of this survey.

7. On mobility, among needs we have identified are ten additional helicopters, one hundred two-and-one-half ton trucks, four light transport aircraft to replace C-47 and one C-130.

8. Concerning combat air and naval needs, Hondurans need twelve additional A-37's. In addition, I personally believe groundwork should begin to be laid for acquisition of F-5E's in out years. This is based on conviction that only way to keep Hondurans from wishing to engage in costly man-for-man increases in ground forces to match Nicaraguan build-up is to retain their combat air edge. Also, if Hondurans knew they were scheduled for

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F-5E's, even in out years such as 83 or 84, it would give strong psychological boost to their most elite service. We should also discuss accompanying need for a rudimentary air defense system. Hondurans also need six 105-foot patrol boats, in addition to upgrading of existing fleet.

9. Increased training will be important part of all of foregoing.

10. Finally, MilGroup supports reinforcement of artillery and engineering capability and possible increase of three infantry battalions. Strengthening reserve capability is also very important. I would also like to review desirability of these additions in context of overall priorities.

11. Foregoing is only a rough cut; but I think the subject is very timely in light of obviously increased priority Washington now seems prepared to give to Central America. Also, Honduran military, with some justification, are now eagerly awaiting our response to their equipment needs in light of their successful cooperation with and completion of transition to constitutional government. I see enhancement of their armed forces and improvement of their professionalism as one way of holding them to their principal mission and reducing unnecessary involvement in pure politics.

I am convinced of the urgency of responding to their legitimate defense needs and not allowing matters to drag inconclusively for months.

12. One final thought is possible desirability of an all-service comprehensive survey team to visit Honduras in early 1982 along lines of Salvador survey. This may, however, be unnecessary or just complicate matters.

Would like to discuss this possibility as well.

13. My hope is that we could reach agreement on a package which this Embassy could then present to Washington followed by your endorsement. Or vice-versa. Main thing is to get ball rolling and take advantage of current Washington focus on our needs.

14. Regards.

  
NEGROPONTE