

TELEGRAM

INDICATE
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 CHARGE TO

NOV 10 1982

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FROM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

CLASSIFICATION
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UNCLASSIFIED

EXCISE
EXCISE

CN: 9849

E.O. ~~XXXX~~ 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, SHUM, HO, XK
SUBJECT: NOVEMBER 6 MEETING WITH MINISTER OF PRESIDENCE: NEWSWEEK
STORY AND AFTERMATH
ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO: AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

1.5(b)

~~SECRET~~ TEGUCIGALPA 9849

EXDIS

DECAPTIONED

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT

2. SUMMARY: Minister of Presidency Flores is deeply preoccupied by impact of NEWSWEEK, NYT and other stories on domestic and international credibility of GOH.

He 1.5(b)

advocates a number of steps to improve international image, including a more active diplomacy. Flores also asserts that Doctor Suazo is personally very distressed that President Reagan has not accepted his invitation to visit Honduras; and he urged once again ~~that~~ that President Reagan consider possibility of stopping for one hour in Honduras en route back to United States from Costa Rica.

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END SUMMARY.

DRAFTED BY: AMB:JDNegroponete:kjl	DRAFTING DATE 11-8-82	TEL. EXT. 211	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: AMB:JDNegroponete
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CLEARANCES:

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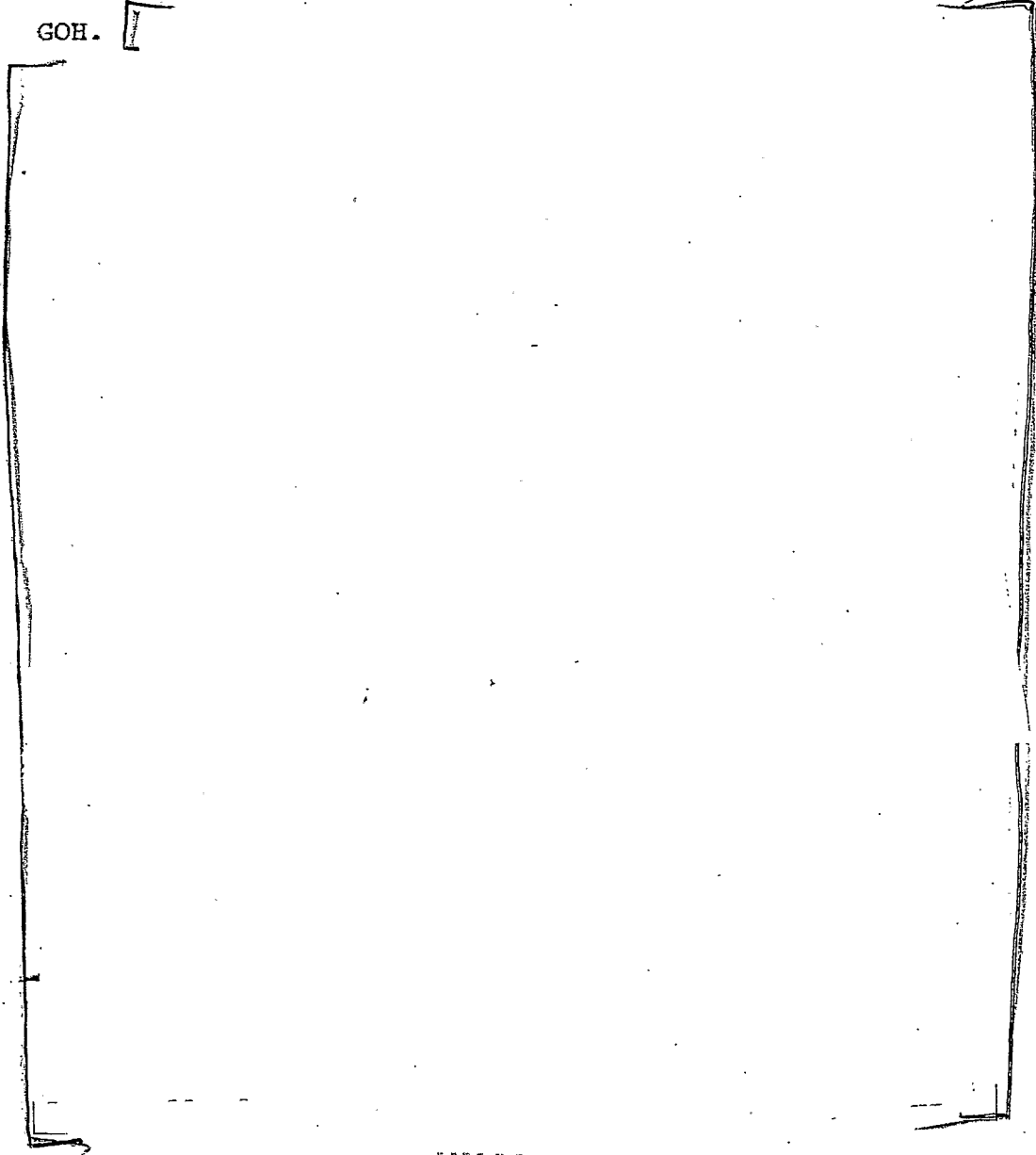
CLASSIFICATION

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

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Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir
() Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Date 11/2/98 Exemption 1.5(b)(d)

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Classification

3. Ambassador had two-hour private session with Minister of Presidency Carlos Flores morning November 6. As customary, Flores did most of the talking and foremost on his mind was impact of recent Newsweek, NYT and other storées on domestic and international credibility of the GOH. []



1.5(6)

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1.5(b)

5. Ambassador observed that recent press stories inevitably ~~ke~~ put some strains on various relationships but that we must not allow such reports to have the very effect our adversaries ~~would~~ ^{would} so very much like them to have. We also needed to remember that these types of press reports were not new and their significance should not be blown out of proportion. Despite some shortcomings, GOH continues to have an extremely credible record for honesty, sound economic policies and a credible regional peace plan. Ambassador agreed that human rights abuses are a problem and suggested that GOH consider coming up with urgent action plan to improve Honduran judicial system. This requires joint effort of executive, judicial, legislative branches as well as National Police. Ambassador also suggested that, without such an action plan, creation of a Congressional Committee could turn out to be another pressure point without any corresponding remedy.

1.5(d)

6. On question of Honduras' image, Flores said he had momentarily abandoned his idea of promoting a regional Foreign Ministers ~~meeting~~ meeting but he nonetheless continued to feel that Honduras needed to pursue a more vigorous diplomacy of its own in addition to San Jose forum. One area they were looking into was hiring a lobbyist in Washington. Funds had now been approved for this by President Suazo and GOH was looking for reputable Washington firm to help them, especially in congressional relations. He asked for any suggestions we might have on the matter. Ambassador said this was something GOH ~~it~~ itself would have to decide but promised to report Flores' inquiry. Ambassador also observed that forthcoming visit to U.S. by former San Pedro hostages sponsored by San Pedro Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club could be a very positive development. This was type of private sector initiative which GOH should encourage. After all, Honduras has an interesting and basically very positive story to tell which many Americans will be interested in hearing. It is a matter which cannot be left to lobbyists alone. The basic story must be told by Hondurans themselves.

7. Finally, Flores raised question of Doctor Suazo's invitation to President Reagan to visit Honduras. In present context, Flores felt a brief stop by President Reagan in Honduras would be an enormous boost here. Ambassador told Flores we had already gone over that ground and had done best we could, even to the point that someone had completely incorrectly described me as "personally hurt" by President's decision not to come to Honduras.

[Redacted]

1.5(b)

Flores renewed his appeal for a brief Presidential stopover in Honduras. In addition to being helpful here, he thought it would correct any ~~incorrect~~ impression to the effect that we consider Costa Rica the only democracy in the area.

8. COMMENT:

[Redacted]

1.5(d)

We can certainly expect more such stories and, if Flores' reaction is any

measure, these repeatedly negative reports could have the effect of aggravating traditional ~~pra~~ fracture lines in this society. It is in this context that Doctor Suazo's own leadership qualities will be put more severely to test in weeks and months ahead. It is also in this context that a brief stopover by President Reagan on December 4 would have even greater significance now than before the Newsweek piece.

JAN
NEGROPONTE