

TELEGRAM

JUN 8 1982

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INDICATE
 COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

FROM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

CN: 4764

E.O. ~~12958~~
TAGS:
SUBJECT:
ACTION:
INFO:

12065: GDS 6/7/88 (NEGROPONTE, John D.) OR-M
MASS, PEPR, HO
HONDURAN AIR FORCE NEEDS: CONVERSATION WITH CHIEF OF
HONDURAN AIR FORCE

SECSTATE WASHDC

AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
SECDEF WASHDC
USSOUTHCOM QUARRY NTS PN

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ TEGUCIGALPA 4764

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - ENTIRE TEXT
2. In conversation with Ambassador June 7, Honduran Air Force Chief, Col. Walter Lopez, said that representatives of Havilland Corporation were in Tegucigalpa to discuss terms for sale of eight Buffalo transport aircraft. Lopez said he expected terms to be something on the order of twenty years to pay, seven and one-half percent interest and no ~~downpayment~~ downpayment. Lopez agreed with Ambassador that purchase of C-123 aircraft would be considerably less expensive; but Lopez feared major engine maintenance difficulties with C-123.

AMB
DCM
POL-2
DAO
MILGP

DRAFTED BY: AMB:JDNegroponte:kjl	DRAFTING DATE 6-7-88	TEL. EXT. 211	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: AMB:JDNegroponte
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CLEARANCES:
MILGP: Col. WGoodwin
DAO: Col. DBollert
POL: MFarmer

50153-101

Dept of State, RPS/IPS, ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
() Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Date 6/1/98 Exemption _____

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

3. If GOH goes through with Buffado purchase, Lopez added, then only remaining air transport requirement for GOH is purchase of one C-130 to meet long-distance and heavy transport requirements. Some of the funds needed for C-130 purchase could come from sale of Honduran Air Force Electra.

4. Lopez was very pleased at prospect of acquiring six more A-37's. This acquisition would bring A-37 fleet within six planes of HAF desired level.

5. Lopez also explained that HAF now seriously negotiating for purchase of six Spanish/^{CAZA}~~CAZA~~ jet trainer aircraft. Also, Lopez said he had obtained two scholarships for Honduran Air Force pilots to train in F-5's in Chile. He was also hoping Venezuela ~~scholarship~~ might offer similar scholarships. Lopez said his goal is to train at least a dozen pilots in F-5's irrespective of USG ability to make them available to Honduras. Lopez' reasoning is that HAF will have to graduate to the next generation of jet fighters within the next two years and any training acquired in more advanced aircraft will represent that much of an advantage. Lopez said he would be very interested in F-5 training for some of his pilots in the United States.

6. Finally, Lopez expressed strong interest in training for additional twenty-five Honduran helicopter pilots.

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HAF is experiencing serious shortage of chopper pilots in relation to available aircraft. So this is another area where our assistance would be most welcome.

XXX 7. COMMENT: Compared to his boss, General Alvarez, Lopez was in a relatively relaxed mood about USG response to Honduran defense needs. He seemed willing to be patient, especially if we could assist him with training needs in the near term. Nonetheless, Lopez made clear his sentiment that he believes his most serious long-term problem is the acquisition of a new generation of fighter aircraft; and this issue, he believes, must be addressed in the next twelve-twenty four months. HAF foresees serious problems in obtaining replacement parts for Super Mysteres starting in 1984.

8. Lopez was also considerably less emotional than Alvarez on subject of Falklands conflict and willing to assign Argentina heavy share of blame for course of events. Lopez did not rpt not think that Falklands crisis would affect basic anti-Communist stance of Argentina with respect to Central America.

9. Lopez' thinking is probably not characteristic of Honduran officer corps generally, which is considerably more downbeat about current levels of United States military assistance.

NEGROPONTE

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