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FROM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA		CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL	R
E.O. 11652X	12356: DECL: 10/4/88	CN: 8636	
TAGS:	PEPR, SHUM, PINR, HO, NU	7	
SUBJECT:	CONVERSATION WITH HONDURAN AMBASSADOR TO NICARAGUA, OCTOBER 2		
ACTION:	SECSTATE WASHDC		
INFO:	AMEMBASSY BELIZE AMEMBASSY BOGOTA AMEMBASSY CARACAS AMEMBASSY BONN AMEMBASSY LONDON AMEMBASSY MANAGUA AMEMBASSY MEXICO AMEMBASSY PANAMA AMEMBASSY PARIS AMEMBASSY ROME AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN USMISSION USUN NY CONFIDENTIAL TEGUCIGALPA 8636		
AMB	1. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT		
DCM	2. Ambassador met with Roberto Martinez, Honduran Ambassador		
POL-2	to Nicaragua, for one-hour conversation in Tegucigalpa		
DAO	morning October 2. Martinez described in some detail recent		
MILGP	contacts between himself and Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry.		
	Until recently, he said, Nicaraguans had been insisting on		
	high level bilateral meetings (e.g., Heads of State or		
DRAFTED BY:	DRAFTING DATE	TEL. EXT.	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY:
AMB:JDNegroponete:kjl	10-4-82	211	AMB:JDNegroponete
CLEARANCES:			

50153-101

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

Dept of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.
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Date 6/2/98 Exemption _____

[Foreign Ministers); but at the same time had refused to deal with a number of bilateral irritants which could obviously be handled at lower level. Martinez cited fact of large number of notes sent by his Embassy to Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry on consular protection matters which latter had simply not acknowledged. Martinez mentioned example of a Honduran national with heart condition who had been detained for more than five months by Nicaraguan authorities without apparent cause.

3. Martinez said that somewhat of a minor breakthrough had occurred during week of September 28 when, in meeting with head of Central America affairs at GON Foreign Ministry, latter had agreed to review of all such pending Honduran complaints and provide clear-cut answers, if not solutions, as soon as possible.

4. In related development, Martinez said it had also been agreed to hold informal bilateral talks at his level to review respective Honduran and Nicaraguan peace proposals. Martinez said he would be accompanied in these discussions by Foreign Officer Advisor Policarpo Callejas. On Nicaraguan side, he expected Nicaraguan Ambassador to Honduras and Foreign Office Central America Chief to participate.

5. Martinez indicated that these discussions could begin as early as next week; but he made clear his view that

this was only beginning of what he visualized as a long, drawn out process. First, he imagined both sides laying out their peace plans in full detail; then he saw the two sides drawing up analysis of points of similarity and difference; and then an effort to reach agreement on minor points of disagreement. Then, depending on progress achieved, talks would either be abandoned or referred to next higher level, i.e., Foreign Ministers.

6. Martinez was emphatic in his view that time is not ripe for talks at higher level. He believes Nicaraguan insistence on high-level meetings coupled with unwillingness until now to resolve even most minor bilateral irritants is reflection of Nicaraguan lack of seriousness and desire to use talks merely as a public affairs instrument. ~~Martinez~~ ^{Martinez} reserves judgment as to whether this latest move reflects a serious shift on Nicaragua's part. He is obviously skeptical although willing to work towards improvement in bilateral relations to extent possible.

7. On other subjects, Martinez believes Comandantes are seeking to emulate Cuban model for Nicaragua. He believes ~~this~~ their policies can be changed but only through a combination of internal and external political pressures. In this connection, he sees political change in West Germany as a significant development and a serious

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setback in Sandinista efforts to retain Western European credibility. Martinez also feels French enthusiasm for the regime may be weakening.

8. Interestingly, Martinez attributed more than just residual influence to various political parties in Nicaragua besides Sandinistas. He thought Independent Liberal Party still to be influential; but then in same breath said that one of its more prominent members, Ambassador to Honduras Guillermo Suarez Rivas, is fed up, has tried to quit four times and, if he does leave his post, will probably settle in Honduras. Martinez admitted that his insights into Nicaraguan political scene were limited by fact of his relatively restricted access to top Sandinista leadership.

9. Though critical of Sandinista regime and politics, Martinez said he thought one area of achievement had been in field of adult education and anti-illiteracy effort. We agreed that was certainly an area that could use improvement in Honduras.

10. COMMENT: Of his various remarks, I take most seriously Martinez' report that informal talks at his level may soon begin with counterparts in Nicaragua.

If true, this may represent most constructive alternative to high-level parleys which Sandinistas have been calling for and which at this point would probably get absolutely nowhere.

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