

DCI Notes  
31 October 78

## CENTRAL AMERICA

## I. Nicaragua

(Nicaragua  
Map)

- A. FSLN Prognosis - not doing well, but
1. Threat of more attacks still high
  2. Disarray doesn't mean pressure will go off - feel must not let Somoza regroup
  3. There are units large enough to initiate major attacks
    - Then others will jump on bandwagon
  4. Still the National Guard will be able to defeat them militarily so long as general populace doesn't join in.

## B. Mediation - some disarray

(Group of  
Twelve Chart)

1. Opposition plan has been tabled
2. Withdrawal of Group of Twelve creates potential problems
  - Inhibits remaining groups &
  - Spotlights question of Somoza's early departure
3. Somoza's side initially very unreceptive to opposition plan

(El Salvador  
Map)

## II. Impact on nearby El Salvador

A. Central American basket case - Deep seated problems may be triggered off big events in Nic(Economic  
Chart)

1. Too many people
  - 210 km<sup>2</sup> equals India
  - 3.2% population growth last 15 yrs
2. Rigid society & economy
  - Coffee predominates plus sugar, cotton
  - Little social mobility
  - Uneven income distribution
3. Safety valve migration shut off '69
  - 25,000 illegally enter US/year
4. Insular, extremely conservative military

*repression  
long history with losses*

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SECRET

TAB B

- Vivid memory of 1932 peasant uprising (14,000 dead)
  - Progressive elements too few, too scattered
5. President (ex-general) Romero
    - a. 16 mos. record disappointing
    - b. Most believe initial promising rhetoric sham
      - Let dialogue with opposition and Church die
      - Has aggressively attacked Church
      - Lifted state of siege
      - But passed Law of Public Order-broad detention power
- B. Political violence, terrorism up post 75
1. Largest guerrilla organization, FPL now 600 militants - 2500 supporters (larger than was FSLN a year ago)
    - May be encouraged events Nic - or imminence in problems might trigger Gov't to send help - in turn incite & encourage opposition at home
    - FPL controls 60,000 member front organization
  2. FPL - \$9 million ransom last year-kidnapped/killed foreign minister last year
    - No member FPL terrorist action element apprehended
  3. FPL cooperates with Guatemalan terrorists, has reached agreement with Cuba for military/ideological training
- C. Further signs unrest
1. Rural clashes with security forces earlier this year-- continued recruitment by pro and anti-government groups
  2. More demonstrations, more weaponry available
- D. El Salvador could
1. May limp along-sporadically violent
    - Government has men, weaponry, brutality on its side
    - Violence could be met by repression-possible right wing coup
  2. But possibility of spiraling violence-situation could provide martyr and leader extremists now lack
  3. Not confident we'll be able to give "tactical" warning

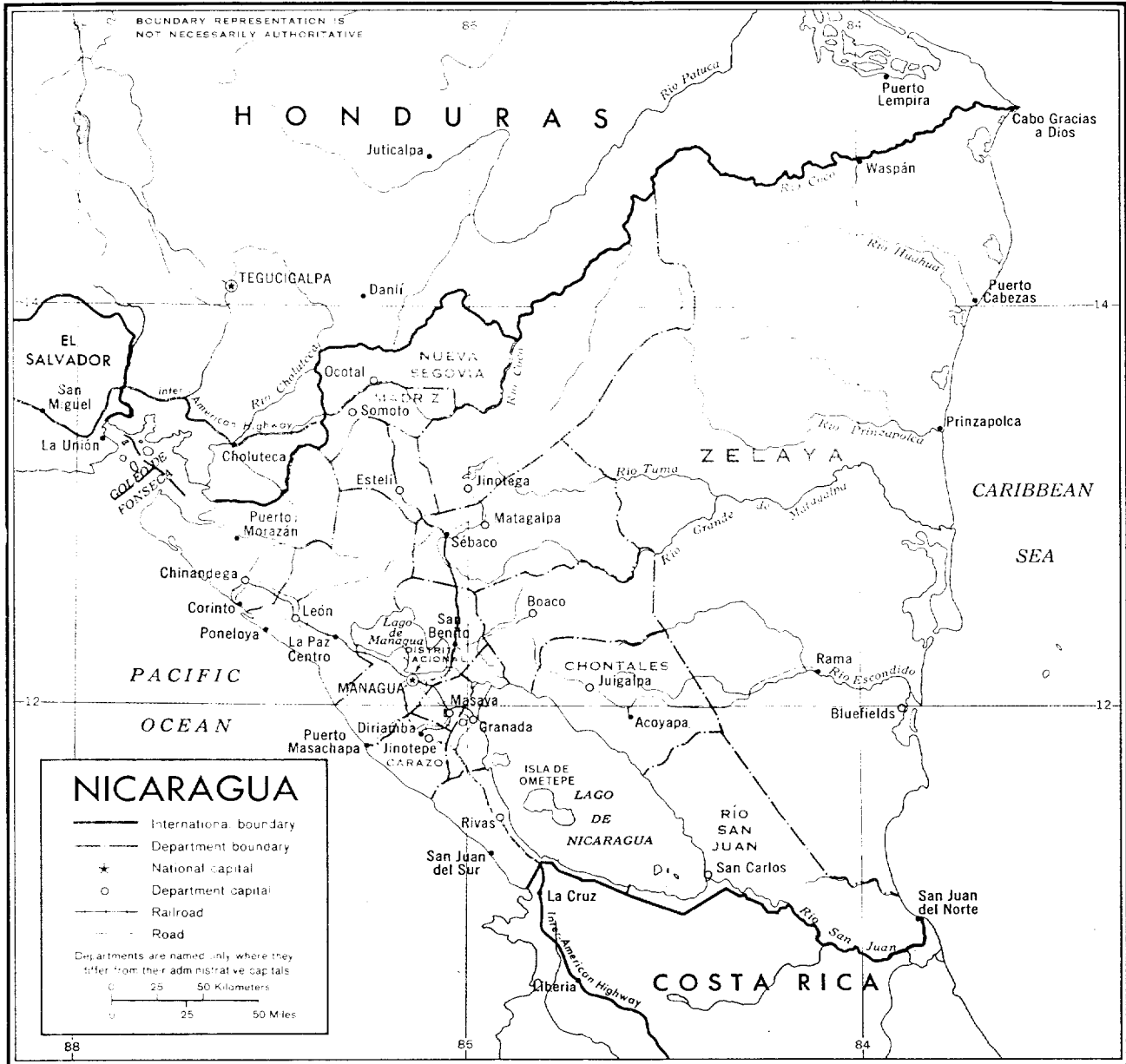
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E. As always in Central America, US would be expected to pick up the pieces

- We are providing State with detailed assessments to assist their contingency planning

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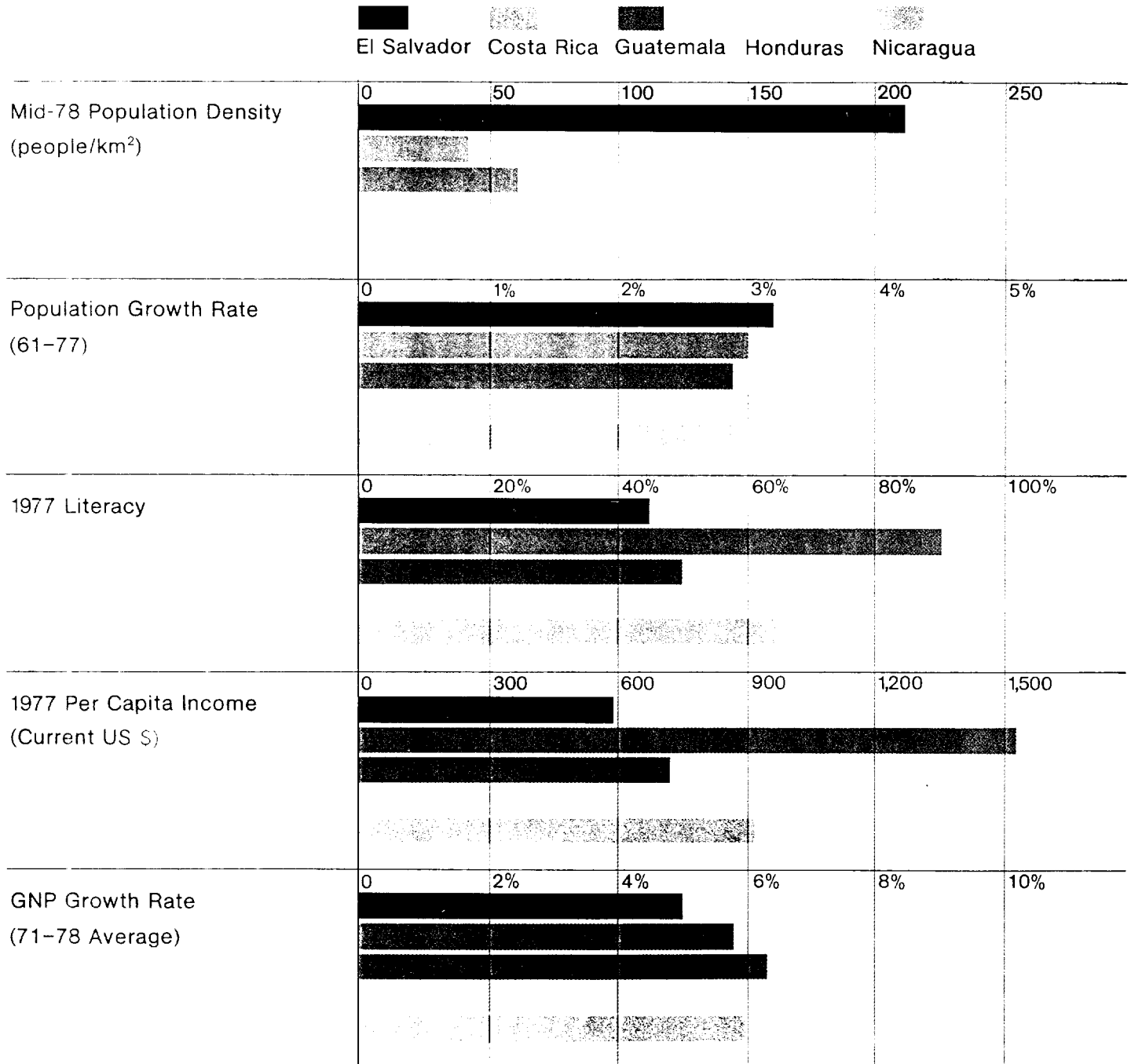
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# El Salvador



## El Salvador and Central America Selected Indicators

Note change in scales



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