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EO 12356: DECL OADR
 TAGS: OREP (SOLARZ, STEPHEN). NU
 SUBJECT: WRAP-UP OF VISIT OF CODEL SOLARZ

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1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: DURING THEIR VISIT TO MANAGUA JANUAR 23 AND 24, CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN SOLARZ AND STAFF ASSISTANT RICHARD BUSH MET WITH A NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT AND THE CIVIC OPPOSITION. MORNING MEETINGS WERE HELD WITH THE EMBASSY COUNTRY TEAM, CO-DIRECTOR OF LA PRENSA PDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO, AND ARCHBISHOP MIGUEL OBANDO Y BRAVO. AFTER A LUNCH AT THE RESIDENCE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF COSEP AND THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, THE DELEGATION PROCEEDED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR A MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER D'ESCOTO. THE CODEL THEN MET WITH COMANDANTE CARLOS NUNEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE, AND HAD A MILITARY BRIEFING BY THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER OF THE SANDINISTA ARMY. IN THE EVENING, THE DELEGATION ATTENDED A DINNER HOSTED BY FOREIGN MINISTRY NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR SAUL ARANA, ATTENDED BY OFFICIALS OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE FSLN. DESPITE THEIR SHORT STAY, THE CODEL MEMBERS WERE ABLE TO HEAR A WIDE RANGE OF VIEWS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA. MOST OF THE DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON THE CONTADORA PROCESS, PARTICULARLY THE SECURITY AND DEMOCRACY PROVISIONS. REGIME OPPONENTS EXPRESSED SCEPTICISM THAT THE GRN WOULD AGREE TO HOLD GENUINELY FREE ELECTIONS. WHILE THE GRN OFFICIALS STRESSED THEIR REASONABLENESS AND DESIRE TO ACHIEVE PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF CENTRAL AMERICA. (END SUMMARY)

3. THE FIRST MEETING FOR CODEL SOLARZ UPON ARRIVAL JANUARY 23 WAS WITH PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO (PJC) AT THE OFFICES OF LA PRENSA. PJC SAID THAT CENSORSHIP HAD BEEN RELAXED IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, BUT HAD NOT ENDED. WHILE THERE WAS MUCH MORE FREEDOM TO PRINT POLITICAL ARTICLES, CENSORSHIP OF OTHER ITEMS (FOR EXAMPLE, REPORTS OF ACCIDENTS INVOLVING FIREARMS) CONTINUED. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ ASKED PJC WHETHER, AFTER THE GRN SIGNED THE CONTADORA STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES IN PANAMA, TRUE DEMOCRACY COULD BE EXPECTED TO DEVELOP. PJC SAID THA

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"DEMOCRACY" TO THE SANDINISTAS DID NOT MEAN THE SAME THING THAT IT DID TO US, AND THAT NECESSARY PRECONDITIONS FOR TRULY FREE ELECTIONS WOULD NOT BE MET. THE GRN, HE SAID, WOULD NEVER PERMIT THE SEPARATION OF THE NICARAGUAN ARMY FROM THE FSLN PARTY, AND WOULD NOT STOP USING ITS DOMINATION OF THE STATE FOR ITS OWN POLITICAL ENDS. PJC MENTIONED AS EXAMPLES THE GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF TELEVISION NETWORKS, AND THE USE OF OFFICIAL VEHICLES TO TRANSPORT PEOPLE TO FSLN POLITICAL RALLIES. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE RETURN OF EXILED OPPOSITION LEADERS SUCH AS ROBELO AND RASTORA WOULD NEVER BE PERMITTED, BUT WITHOUT THESE LEADERS THE ELECTION COULD NOT BE FREE. THE SANDINISTAS WOULD NEVER AGREE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VERIFIABLE ELECTION PROCEDURES, AND WOULD NOT ALLOW OUTSIDERS TO SERVE AS GUARANTORS.

4. SOLARZ ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF A TRULY FREE ELECTION, INCLUDING THE EXILED OPPOSITION, WERE TO BE HELD. PJC SAID THE SANDINISTAS WOULD LOSE, AND WOULD GET ONLY ABOUT 25 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. HE HAD A FRIEND IN THE FSLN WHO TOLD HIM THE GRN ESTIMATE OF ITS OWN POPULARITY RANGED FROM 40 TO 60 PERCENT. THIS INDICATED, HE SAID, THAT THE TRUE FIGURE MUST BE ABOUT A QUARTER OF THE POPULATION. SOLARZ MENTIONED A NEW DECREE WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED WHICH ONLY ALLOWED PARTIES NOT OPPOSED TO THE REVOLUTION TO PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS. PJC SAID THAT THE DECREE REQUIRED THE PARTIES TO "ACCEPT" THE REVOLUTION, AND THAT IT COULD BE USED TO STOP ANY OPPOSING PARTY WHICH BECAME TOO POPULAR.

5. SOLARZ ASKED PJC WHETHER THE SANDINISTAS WERE PREPARED TO MAKE AGREEMENTS UNDER CONTADORA REGARDING FOREIGN ADVISORS, BASES, AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES. CHAMORRO REPLIED THAT CUBAN ADVISORS COULD EASILY BE HIDDEN IN NICARAGUA WITHOUT DETECTION. EVEN IF WORKABLE VERIFICATION PROCEDURES WERE SET UP, THERE WOULD NOT BE PEACE BECAUSE THERE WERE 30,000 EXILED NICARAGUANS WILLING TO GIVE THEIR LIVES TO STOP THE SANDINISTAS. FDN AND ARDE WOULD CONTINUE FIGHTING AND WOULD EVENTUALLY ACHIEVE THE OVERTHROW OF THE SANDINISTAS. ASKED ABOUT POPULAR ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CONTRAS, PJC SAID THE PEOPLE WERE UNHAPPY OVER ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND POLITICAL CONTROLS, BUT WERE NOT YET READY TO REVOLT. THE FDN WAS TO SOME EXTENT TAINTED BY THE SOMOZA LABEL.

BECAUSE IT HAD A FEW FORMER SOMOZA MILITARY WITH BAD REPUTATIONS AMONG ITS MEMBERS. PJC THOUGHT A MOVE WAS UNDERWAY WITHIN THE FDN TO GET RID OF THESE PEOPLE. THE FDN LEADERSHIP ITSELF WAS NOT SOMOCISTA. PASTORA WAS POPULAR IN THE COUNTRY BUT HIS FORCES WERE NOT HAVING MUCH EFFECT BECAUSE THEY WERE OPERATING IN AN UNPOPULATED ZONE. REFERRING TO THE DEBATE IN THE U.S. OVER THE CONTRAS, SOLARZ ASKED WHETHER THE CONTRAS ALLOWED THE SANDINISTAS TO JUSTIFY THEIR INTERNAL REPRESSION. PJC SAID THAT WAS TRUE TO SOME EXTENT, BUT THE REPRESSION AND ANTI-U.S. RHETORIC HAD BEGUN WELL BEFORE CONTRA ACTIVITY. THE PRESENCE OF THE CONTRA GAVE THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE SOME HOPE THAT THE SANDINISTAS WOULD BE EVENTUALLY OVERTHROWN, AND ALSO MADE THE GRN MORE FLEXIBLE IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS IN CONTADORA. THE GRENADA ACTION AND THE FLEET EXERCISES HAD AN EVEN BIGGER EFFECT ON THE GRN, AND WERE THE SOURCE OF THE CURRENT INTERNAL RELAXATION.

6. THE CODEL THEN PROCEEDED TO THE EMBASSY WHERE THEY DISCUSSED CONTADORA AND THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION WITH COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS. THEN THEY WENT TO A MEETING WITH ARCHBISHOP MIGUEL OBANDO Y BRAVO, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN FATHER BISMARCK CARBALLO. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ ASKED THE ARCHBISHOP TO COMPARE THE

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PRESSURE ON THE CHURCH WITH ITS LEVEL OF A YEAR AGO. OBANDO SAID THAT TENSION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND STATE HAD INCREASED DURING THE YEAR, REACHING A PEAK IN OCTOBER WHEN SANDINISTA MOBS ("TURBAS") ATTACKED 21 CHURCHES THROUGHOUT MANAGUA. SINCE THAT TIME, THERE HAD BEEN SOME EASING OF TENSION. MEETINGS HAD BEEN HELD WITH THE GOVERNMENT, BUT NO REAL PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE. THERE WAS NO RELAXATION OF PRIOR CENSORSHIP OF RAIO CATOLICA, AND SANDINISTA PRESSURE ON THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS CONTINUED. ASKED TO COMPARE THE SITUATION OF THE CHURCH COMPARED TO THE DAYS OF SOMOZA, THE ARCHBISHOP RESPONDED THAT HE HAD BEEN A STRONG OPPONENT OF THE SOMOZA DICTATORSHIP, BUT THAT THE CHURCH UNDER SOMOZA DID NOT SUFFER DIRECT PERSECUTION AS IT BEGAN TO AFTER THE REVOLUTON. OBANDO SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE FREE ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD UNDER THE SANDINISTAS. THE FSLN WAS NOT TERRIBLY POPULAR, BUT IT DID ENJOY TREMENDOUS ORGANIZATIONAL ADVANTAGES. THE CONTRAS ENJOYED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF POPULAR SUPPORT AMONG THE PEOPLE. BUT THESE PEOPLE WERE AFRAID OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF EXPRESSING THIS SUPPORT. REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF CONTADORA, HE SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE AN END TO THE FIGHTING COULD TAKE PLACE UNTIL THERE WAS A "CLIMATE OF TRUST AND PEACE" WITHIN NICARAGUA.

7. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ ASKED THE ARCHBISHOP WHAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD DO ABOUT THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA. OBANDO RESPONDED THAT HE HAD JUST COME FROM THE UNITED STATES, WHERE HE HAD SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS IN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON. HIS NORMAL VIEW WAS THAT EACH COUNTRY SHOULD BE MASTER OF ITS OWN DESTINY, BUT IN NICARAGUA TODAY THERE WERE MANY "INTERNATIONALISTAS" FROM CUBA, THE PLO, THE TUPAMAROS, ETC., AND OTHER OUTSIDERS HELPING TO GUIDE THIS DESTINY. HE SAID THE U.S. SHOULD SHAPE ITS POLICY WITH THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE (UNDERLINED) OF NICARAGUA FOREMOST IN MIND. THE CONGRESSMAN ASKED THE ARCHBISHOP ABOUT THE QUESTION OF CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE CONTRAS. OBANDO REPLIED THAT IT WAS ANALOGOUS TO THE DISARMAMENT QUESTION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE USSR. OBVIOUSLY IT WAS PREFERABLE TO GET RID OF THE WEAPONS, BUT NOT FAIR FOR ONLY ONE SIDE TO BE ASKED TO DISARM.

8. FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH THE ARCHBISHOP, THE CODEL ATTENDED A LUNCH AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WITH RAMIRO GURDIAN, PRESIDENT OF THE PRIVATE AGRICULTURALISTS ASSOCIATION UPANIC, AND EMILIO ALVAREZ OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY. THE LUNCH WAS DOMINATED BY GURDIAN, WHO WENT OVER WITH THE CODEL THE DETAILS OF THE DEMOCRATIC COORDINADORA'S ELECTORAL PROPOSALS. SOLARZ FRANKLY TOLD GURDIAN THAT SOME OF THE DEMANDS (SUCH AS FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND AN END TO HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES) WERE VALUABLE IN AND OF THEMSELVES, BUT PROBABLY SHOULD NOT BE LINKED TO SPECIFIC CONDITIONS DESIGNED TO MAKE THE ELECTIONS FREE. DR. ALVAREZ SAID HE THOUGHT THE SANDINISTAS WERE SEEKING A KIND OF MEXICAN SYSTEM IN WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE PERMANENT CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT. IN HIS VIEW, ONLY CONTINUED PRESSURE WOULD MOVE THE FSLN TOWARDS A MORE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

9. AFTER LUNCH, THE CODEL WENT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR A MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MIGUEL D'ESCOTO, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR SAUL ARANA. SOLARZ TOLD D'ESCOTO THAT HE WAS TRAVELLING THROUGH THE REGION TO LEARN ABOUT THE SITUATION, AND WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN EXPLORING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONTADORA AGREEMENT SIGNED IN PANAMA TWO WEEKS AGO. D'ESCOTO SAID THE CONTENT OF THE AGREEMENT WAS QUITE SIGNIFICANT, BUT THE GRN WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT IT DID NOT INCLUDE SEVERAL THINGS DESIRED BY THE CONTADORA FOUR. AN IMMEDIATE

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MORATORIUM ON ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE REGION WAS OPPOSED BY HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR. THE DOCUMENT DID NOT PROVIDE FOR AN END TO MILITARY MANEUVERS IN THE REGION, AND ALSO PROVIDED FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE GRADUAL RATHER THAN IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS. D'ESCOTO SAID THE SUCCESS OF THE CONTADORA PROCESS DEPENDS ON THE POLITICA WILL OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO GIVE NEGOTIATIONS A TRUE CHANCE. THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAD EXPECTED THE GRN TO "ACT LIKE HOTHEADS" IN THE CONTADORA TALKS, AND IN THAT RESPECT HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED. AN ENCOURAGING SIGN FOR CONTADORA WAS THAT HONDURAS HAD ALREADY APPOINTED THE MEMBERS FOR THE VARIOUS CONTADORA COMMISSIONS. HE UNDERSTOOD EL SALVADOR WAS HAVING TROUBLE FILLING ITS COMMISSION MEMBERS, BUT SAID IF THE NEXT MEETING IN FACT TAKES PLACE IT WOULD BE ENCOURAGING.

10. SOLARZ TOLD D'ESCOTO THAT A COMMON VIEW IN THE REGION WAS THAT WHILE THE PANAMA MEETING WAS CONSTRUCTIVE, SO MUCH REMAINED TO DO ON PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION THAT THERE WAS LITTLE ROOM FOR OPTIMISM. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT THE PANAMA MEETING DID MOVE A BIT CLOSER TO THE IMPLEMENTATION STAGE, BUT THAT SUCCESS WAS NOT IMMINENT. THE REAL OBSTACLE TO AN AGREEMENT WAS THE RELUCTANCE OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO ACCEPT THE FACT OF THE "SANDINISTA POPULAR REVOLUTION," AND ITS DESIRE TO REVERSE THAT REVOLUTION. IT STRATEGY IN CENTRAL AMERICA WAS TO "DIVIDE AND CONQUER," USING THE SPECTER OF THE SOVIET EMNACE TO LINE UP THE OTHER COUNTRIES AGAINST THE GRN. THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF THE REGION GAVE THE U.S. LEVERAGE TO CARRY OUT THIS STRATEGY. THE CONTADORA PROCESS DID NOT ADDRESS THE "FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM" OF HOW TO GET THE U.S. TO LAY OUT CLEARLY ITS SECURITY AGENDA. IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THROUGH CONTADORA THE GRN COULD ADDRESS U.S. FEARS IN THAT REGARD.

11. SOLARZ THEN SAID HE WANTED TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC ISSUES AT DISPUTE. HE NOTED THAT THE GRN PROPOSALS TABLED IN THE FALL CALLED FOR AN END TO ALL ARMS SHIPMENTS TO EL SALVADOR, AND ASKED IF THIS MEANT THAT U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO EL SALVADOR WOULD BE PROHIBITED. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT YES, UNDER THE NICARAGUAN PROPOSALS THIS ASSISTANCE WOULD BE PROHIBITED. SOLARZ ASKED IF THE PROPOSALS ALSO CALLED FOR AN END TO ARMS SHIPMENTS TO NICARAGUA, AND D'ESCOTO SAID NO. SOLARZ THEN ASKED HOW THE U.S. COULD BE EXPECTED TO STOP SENDING ARMS TO A SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT IN EL SALVADOR WHILE NICARAGUA WOULD CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THEM. D'ESCOTO SAID THE DIFFERENCE WAS THAT EL SALVADOR AND NICARAGUA WERE NOT AT WAR, AND THE NICARAGUAN GOAL WAS TO STOP THE CIVIL WAR IN EL SALVADOR, WHICH HAD SECURITY CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ENTIRE REGION. ARMS SHIPMENTS TO NICARAGUA, HE SAID, WERE TO BE NEGOTIATED AS PART OF AN OVERALL "EQUILIBRIUM OF FORCES" IN THE REGION, WHICH WOULD CONTAIN VERIFICATION PROVISIONS. SOLARZ THEN POINTED OUT THAT NICARAGUA HAD SIGNED THE CONTADORA PROPOSALS IN PANAMA, WHICH WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE NICARAGUAN PROPOSALS. HE ASKED IF, IN THE GRN VIEW, THE PANAMA AGREEMENT WOULD PROHIBIT U.S. ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE GOES AS LONG AS THOSE ARMS WERE WITHIN LIMITS SET FORTH BY THE BALANCE OF FORCES AGREEMENT. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT UNDER THE CONTADORA AGREEMENT SUCH ARMS SHIPMENTS COULD CONTINUE, WHILE NICARAGUAN ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE FMLN WOULD BE PROHIBITED. HOWEVER, THE GRN VIEW WAS THAT THE BEST SOLUTION WAS FOR EVERYONE TO "KEEP THEIR HANDS OFF" EL SALVADOR.

12. SOLARZ THEN ASKED D'ESCOTO FOR HIS VIEW OF WHAT WOULD CONSTITUTE AN EQUILIBRIUM OF FORCES IN CENTRAL AMERICA. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT NICARAGUA WOULD HAVE TO HAVE

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ENOUGH FORCE TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST A COALITION OF ITS THREE NORTHERN NEIGHBORS. THE CONGRESSMAN THEN POINTED OUT THAT IN THAT CASE HONDURAS MIGHT SAY ITS PRIMARY PROBLEM WAS NICARGUA, AND THAT SUCH FORCE LEVELS WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO IT. THIS WAS A GENUINE DILEMMA. D'ESCOTO SAID THIS IDEA TO RESOLVE THIS WAS TO ACHIEVE REGIONAL AGREEMENTS WHICH PRECLUDED MILITARY PACTS NOT INCLUDING ALL CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES. THAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE GRN TO BE FLEXIBLE ON THE QUESTION OF BALANCE OF FORCES. ASKED ABOUT THE CONTADORA AGREEMENTS ON MILITARY ADVISORS AND THE REGIONAL ARMS RACE, D'ESCOTO SAID THAT THE GRN FAVORED AN IMMEDIATE

WITHDRAWAL OF ADVISORS, BUT THE AGREEMENT SPECIFIED A GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL, AND THAT THE NICARGUAN PROPOSAL FOR A MORATORIUM ON ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE REGION WAS NOT ACCEPTED. MILITARY MANEUVERS, ALTHOUGH NOT DIRECTLY ADDRESSED, "VIOLATED THE SPIRIT" OF THE CONTADORA AGREEMENT. SOLARZ THEN ASKED WHETHER ALL SANDINISTA SUPPORT, INCLUDING POLITICAL STATEMENTS, FOR THE FMLN WOULD BE PROHIBITED UNDER THE PANAMA DOCUMENT. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT WOULD DEPEND ON THE EXACT LANGUAGE EVENTUALLY WORKED OUT BUT SAID THE NICARGUAN PROPOSALS HAD PROHIBITED SUPPORT " OF ANY KIND."

13. SOLARZ ASKED WHETHER THE GRN VIEWED AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND NICARAGUA AS AN ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE TO A CONTADORA AGREEMENT. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT WHILE CHARACTERIZING SUCH A BILATERAL ACCORD AS A SINA QUA NON FOR CONTADORA SUCCESS WOULD OVERESTIMATE THE STRENGTH OF THE GRN POSITION. THE GRN BELIEVED SUCCESS IN CONTADORA WOULD BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT WITHOUT IT. WITHOUT U.S. ASSURANCES, THE GRN WOULD DEMAND FORCES SUFFICIENT TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST A U.S. ATTACK. BECAUSE SUCH FORCE LEVELS WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE OTHER COUNTRIES, AN AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. WAS NECESSARY IN PRACTICE. SOLARZ SAID HE BELIEVED THAT IF THERE WERE A FINAL CONTADORA AGREEMENT, IT WOULD BE EASY TO OBTAIN A U.S. PLEDGE OF NON-AGGRESSION AGAINST NICARAGUA. (HE MADE CLEAR HE WAS NOT SPEAKING FOR THE USG ON THIS.) D'ESCOTO SAID IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE PLEDGE TO COME FIRST, AND THEN SOLARZ SUGGESTED THE PLEDGE COULD COME SIMULTANEOUSLY, TO WHICH D'ESCOTO AGREED.

14. THE CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO THE DEMOCRACY PROVISIONS OF CONTADORA, AND D'ESCOTO SAID THE GRN UNDERSTOOD IT HAD COMMITTED ITSELF TO TAKING STEPS TO ENHANCE POPULAR PARTICIPATION AND ACCELERATE DEMOCRATIZATION. SOLARZ, REFERRING TO STATEMENTS IN THE PAST BY SANDINISTA LEADERS THAT ELECTIONS IN NICARAGUA WOULD NOT BE LIKE THOSE IN COSTA RICA, THE U.S., OR VENEZUELA, ASKED HOW THE NICARAGUAN ELECTION WOULD DIFFER FROM THOSE COUNTRIES. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT THE GRN DID NOT LOOK ON THOSE COUNTRIES AS ELECTORAL MODELS. WHAT THE GRN WANTED, HE SAID, WAS TO MAXIMIZE PARTICIPATION, WITH VOTING BY 100 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE AS THE GOAL. HE SAID IN THE LAST U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ONLY HALF OF THE ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS HAD CAST VOTES, AND NICARAGUA WANTED TO AVOID THIS. SOLARZ POINTED OUT THAT IN THE SOVIET UNION, FOR EXAMPLE, VOTING RATES OVER 90 PERCENT WERE NOT UNCOMMON, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THEY WERE NOT TRULY DEMOCRATIC. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT THE GRN HAD NOT EVEN EXAMINED THE SOVIET PRACTICE AS A GUIDE TO THEIR OWN ELECTION, AND THAT OPPOSITION PARTIES (OTHER THAN SOMOZA PARTIES) WOULD BE FREE TO PARTICIPATE, AND WOULD BE GRANTED ACCESS TO THE MEDIA. FDN AND ARDE LEADERS WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO PARTICIPATE, AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH THEM WOULD NOT BE HELD. THIS WAS BECAUSE THE GRN VIEWED THEM AS LITTLE MORE THAN MERCENARIES

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15. SOLARZ THEN ASKED FOR D'ESCOTO'S VIEWS ON POSSIBLE "SYMMETRY" AMENDMENT, WHEREBY THE U.S. WOULD CUT OFF AID TO THE CONTRAS ONCE IT WAS CLEAR THAT NICARAGUA HAD CUT OFF ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE FMLN. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT WHILE PASSAGE OF SUCH AN AMENDMENT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE, IF THE MAIN PROBLEM WAS VERIFICATION PROCEDURES, THESE WERE ALREADY CONTEMPLATED UNDER CONTADORA. SOLARZ ASKED IF THE SYMMETRY PROVISIONS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED AS A PRAGMATIC WAY OF GETTING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE BOLAND AMENDMENT PASSED. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY PERHAPS WOULD INDICATE THAT THEY SHOULD BE, ALTHOUGH THE MORAL ARGUMENT WAS AGAINST IT. WHATEVER ACTIONS THE GRN MAY BE COMMITTING, HE SAID, THE U.S. DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW TO SEND ARMED GROUPS INTO NICARAGUA. THE GOVERNMENT OF EL SALVADOR SHOULD MAKE ITS OWN CASE AGAINST NICARAGUA, IF THERE WAS ONE. SOLARZ REPLIED THAT HE HAD ARGUED THE SAME POSITION HIMSELF, BUT THE BOLAND AMENDMENT HAD NOT PASSED. IN HIS FINAL QUESTION, SOLARZ ASKED WHETHER THE GRN WAS WORRIED THAT CONDECA WOULD GO TO NICARAGUA WHAT THE DECS HAD DONE TO GRENADA. D'ESCOTO SAID THAT THE GRN WAS "VERY CONCERNED," BUT NOT AS CONCERNED AS A FEW MONTHS BACK. THIS WAS BECAUSE OF THE DECISION OF GUATEMALA TO STAND OFF FROM THE CONDECA REVIVAL. BUT THE GRN COULD NOT TRUST GUATEMALA TO CONTINUE ALONG THAT LINE. D'ESCOTO HAD HEARD TALK OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER COUP IN GUATEMALA. PERHAPS INSPIRED BY THE UNITED STATES.

16. AFTER THE MEETING WITH D'ESCOTO, CODEL WENT TO THE COUNCIL OF STATE FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH COMANDANTE CARLOS NUNEZ. DETAILS OF THIS CONVERSATION ARE BEING REPORTED SEPTEL. AFTER THE NUNEZ MEETING, THE CODEL RECEIVED A MILITARY BRIEFING BY SUB-COMANDANTE ROBERTO SANCHEZ, THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR FOR THE SANDINISTA ARMY. SOLARZ REPEATEDLY QUESTIONED SANCHEZ ABOUT WHETHER UNDER CONTADORA, NICARAGUA WOULD NEED ENOUGH MILITARY FORCES TO WITHSTAND A COMBINED ATTACK BY HONDURAS, EL SALVADOR, AND GUATEMALA. SANCHEZ NEVER ANSWERED HIS QUESTION DIRECTLY, BUT INSTEAD DESCRIBED THE PROBLEM OF THE CONTRAS AND THE COMPLICITY OF THE U.S. AND HONDURAS. CALLING THE CONTRAS VERY COSTLY TO THE ECONOMY, HE SAID TWO SANDINISTA SOLDIERS HAD TO BE SENT NORTH FOR EVERY CONTRA THAT ENTERED NICARAGUA. IF THE U.S. WERE TO STOP AIDING THEM, IF HONDURAS WOULD STOP ALLOWING THEM TO USE ITS TERRITORY, AND IF THE HONDURAN ARMY STOPPED HELPING THEM, THEN NICARAGUA WOULD BEGIN TO DEMOBILIZE AND DISARM. THE SIZE OF THE GRN MILITARY WAS DETERMINED BY THE SHORT-TERM CONTRA THREAT, NOT LONG-TERM POSSIBILITIES, HE SAID.

17 THE CONGRESSMAN ASKED SANCHEZ WHETHER THE BIGGEST THREAT TO NICARAGUA WAS THE CONTRA ACTIVITY, OR THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ATTACK BY THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO THE NORTH. SANCHEZ RESPONDED THAT THE BIGGEST THREAT WAS THE UNITED STATES, AND THAT THE CONTRAS DID NOT PRESENT ANY DANGER UNTIL THE U.S. BEGAN SUPPORTING THEM. SANCHEZ COMPLAINED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO START MEANINGFUL TALKS WITH THE U.S. BECAUSE EACH TIME THE U.S. RAISED THE ANTE. SOLARZ SAID HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND NICARAGUA, AND HE HAD BEEN URGING THAT COURSE FOR OVER A YEAR. REFERRING TO THE LACK OF TRUST IN THE REGION, SOLARZ ASKED WHAT PRECISE VERIFICATION METHODS THE GRN ENVISIONED FOR THE SECURITY ASPECTS OF CONTADORA. SANCHEZ REPLIED THAT THE CIA KNEW THE GRN WAS NOT SENDING ARMS TO THE FMLN, AND THAT IT COULD NOT DO SO EVEN IF IT WANTED TO. THERE WERE SOPHISTICATED CONTROL SYSTEMS IN PLACE IN THE GULF OF FONSECA AND HONDURAS TO DETECT ANY SUCH MOVEMENT. THE

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PROMARY SOURCE OF ARMS TO THE FMLN, HE SAID, WAS THE SALVADORAN ARMY. SOLARZ RESPONDED THAT THE PEOPLE HE TAKED TO IN WASHINGTON WHO WERE RESPONDIBLE FOR ASSESSING CENTRAL AMERICA WERE CONVINCED THAT NICARAGUA WAS IN FACT DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THESE ARMS SHIPMENTS. THE ASSESSMENTS MIGHT BE WRONG, BUT SOLARZ DID NOT DOUBT THE SINCERITY OF THESE ANALYSTS. THIS RAISED AGAIN THE ISSUE OF VERIFICATION PROCEDURES. SANCHEZ THEN SAID THAT CONTROLS WOULD HAVE TO BE ESTABLISHED WHICH APPLIED EQUALLY TO EVERYONE, AND WHICH WERE EFFECTIVE. 5#3 DETAILS COULD BE WORKED OUT IN NEGOTIATIONS, BUT AS LONG AS CONGRESS CONTINUED AID TO THE CONTRAS, THERE WAS LITTLE POINT TO SUCH DISCUSSIONS. SANCHEZ ENDED BY SAYING THE GRN WOULD AGREE TO RECIPROCAL CONTROLS OVER AID TO THE FMLN AND AID TO THE CONTRAS.

18 AFTER THE MILITARY BRIEFING, CODEL MEMBERS ATTENDED A DINNER AT A LOCAL RESTUARANT HOSTED BY FOREIGN MINISTRY NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR SAUL ARANA. ALSO PRESENT WERE BARRICADA EDITOR CARLOS FERNANDO CHAMORRO; THE JESUIT DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES, FATHER XABIER GOROSTIAGA, AND RAMON MENESES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE FSLN.

19. COMMENT: CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ' INITIAL FOCUS WAS ON THE CONTADORA PROCESS AND ITS CHANCES OF SUCCESS. HOWEVER, AS THE DAY ADVANCED, HE INCREASNGLY DISCUSSED THE PROSPECTS OF GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS. NOTWITHSTANDING THE SKEPTICISM OF LA PRENSA AND THE OPPOSITION, HE WAS IMPRESSED BY GRN PRESENTATIONS AND LEFT WITH A SOMEWHAT HOPEFUL VIEW ABOUT THE FUTURE.

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