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ED 11652: N/A
TAGS: OREP PREL PROP CASC NU
SUBJ: U.S. CITIZENS WISH TO MEET CODELS

1. FOUR MEMBERS OF "COMMITTEE OF U.S. CITIZENS RESIDENT IN NICARAGUA" CALLED ON AMBASSADOR AND CONSUL MARCH 8. COMMITTEE IS A PRO-SANDINISTA ORGANIZATION OF SOME 100 AMERICANS LIVING IN NICARAGUA. IT ARRANGES VISITS FOR INTERESTED AMERICANS, ACTS AS LIAISON WITH INTEREST GROUPS IN THE U.S., ISSUES STATEMENTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN US-NICARAGUAN RELATIONS AND ORGANIZES A WEEKLY DEMONSTRATION OF AMERICANS IN FRONT OF EMBASSY TO PROTEST U.S. POLICY TOWARDS NICARAGUA. AFTER A DISCUSSION OF U.S. POLICY REV. JAMES GOFF, HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE, ASKED THAT THE EMBASSY TAKE THEIR VIEWS AND PRESENCE INTO GREATER CONSIDERATION.

SOME MEMBERS HAVE BEEN IN THE COUNTRY FOR 25 YEARS, GOFF SAID, AND COULD BE A RICH SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF NICARAGUA AND ITS REVOLUTION. GOFF CLAIMED THAT COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE NEVER INVITED TO THE EMBASSY TO SHARE THEIR VIEWS NOR TO EXPRESS THEIR THOUGHTS, FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN THE ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT IS BEING PREPARED.

2. AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WERE ALWAYS WELCOME TO COME TO THE EMBASSY AND TO HIM PERSONALLY TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS. THE EMBASSY, HE POINTED OUT, WAS CONSTANTLY TALKING WITH A WIDE RANGE OF GROUPS, BOTH PRO-AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT, IN ORDER TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE REALITY OF CONTEMPORARY NICARAGUA. MANY COMMITTEE MEMBERS, FOR A VARIETY OF PERSONAL REASONS, WERE HESITANT TO MAKE THEIR PRESENCE IN NICARAGUA KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY, AND SOME COMMITTEE MEMBERS HAVE NOT ACCEPTED INVITATIONS TO EMBASSY FUNCTIONS.

ON VARIOUS OCCASSIONS WHEN THE AMBASSADOR HAD ASKED COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO SHOW HIM THEIR WORK IN THE FIELDS OF AGRICULTURE, SOCIAL WELFARE, ETC., THEY HAD BEEN RELUCTANT TO DO SO.

3. GOFF SAID THAT THE COMMITTEE WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH VISITING CODELS, BUT THAT OVER PAST TWO YEARS, ONLY ONE (CONG. ASPIN, WISC.) HAD MET WITH THEM. GOFF ASKED THAT THE EMBASSY ASSIST THEM IN MEETING MORE CONGRESSMEN. AMBASSADOR AGREED TO INFORM DEPT OF THIS INTEREST, AND TO HAVE THE PRESENCE OF THE COMMITTEE KNOWN TO THOSE WHO HELP ARRANGE CONGRESSIONAL VISITS TO NICARAGUA.

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AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT CODEL VISITS WERE FREQUENTLY BRIEF, THAT CONGRESSMEN USUALLY CAME WITH A FAIRLY GOOD IDEA OF WHOM THEY WANTED TO SEE, AND THAT USUALLY THEY WISHED TO SEE NICARAGUANS IN ORDER TO LEARN HOW THEY FELT ABOUT THEIR COUNTRY'S REVOLUTION.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST THAT H AND ARA NOTE EXISTENCE OF THIS GROUP IN CASE OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN MEETING WITH U.S. CITIZENS RESIDENT IN NICARAGUA. THERE IS ALSO A SECOND GROUP OF AMERICANS, THE AMERICAN SOCIETY, DATING BACK SEVERAL DECADES WHICH COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED PRO-SANDINISTA. IF ANY CONGRESSMAN WISHES TO MEET WITH EITHER GROUP OR WITH THEIR CONSTITUENTS HERE (IF ANY), EMBASSY WOULD BE PLEASED TO ARRANGE.

QUINTON
END OF MESSAGE

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