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30 June 1987

SUBJECT: Talking Points for Morris Busby Use with SecState

-- Three members of the Nicaraguan Resistance (NR) directorate spent the week with the NR armed forces at their military headquarters in Honduras. The visit helped establish good rapport and further coordination between the political and military NR effort.

-- The meeting between President Reagan and the NR directorate has been postponed until late July.

-- [redacted] the Costa Rican government recently ordered a massive crackdown on all support mechanisms for the Nicaraguan Resistance Army/South (ERN/South).

-- In order to highlight the June 26 anniversary of the Sandinista-enforced closing of La Prensa, a number [redacted] arranged for the placement of special [redacted] the event. Pertinent articles and editorials were widely placed throughout Latin America and Europe.

-- We estimate that total Resistance strength is 19,783 combatants, 15,963 of whom are deployed inside Nicaragua. These figures are broken down as follows:

	<u>In-Country</u>	<u>Total</u>
ERN/North	11,732	15,756
King	946(7)	946
ERN/South	3,042	3,142

-- In the first six months of this year, NDR forces have carried out 402 confirmed attacks against Sandinista infrastructure targets - 19 in January, 37 in February, 66 in March, 106 in April, 83 in May, and 91 in June. (May and June's figures are incomplete, and these numbers will increase.)

-- Most recently, the intensity and scope of combat inside Nicaragua has continued at a brisk pace.

-- Fighting was especially heavy in the Quilali area in late June, where [redacted] the Sandinistas suffered an estimated 40 killed in a single day's fighting. Reporting is incomplete, [redacted]

[redacted]

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-- Resistance forces continued to strike at soft infrastructure targets, attacking a power pylon north of Managua and disrupting electric service in Corinto while a Soviet oil tanker was being unloaded.

-- [redacted] at least two small groups of resistance fighters (some 20-30) had blown up an electrical tower in southern Military Region 2. The Sandinistas evidently were concerned that one or both of the groups were heading toward Punta Huete, and probably feared that the airfield there could come under some sort of threat.

-- [redacted] some Nicaraguan Resistance Army/North (ERN/North) units have been successful in disrupting road traffic in Nicaragua while others have not. Supreme commander Bermudez reportedly stressed that ERN/North had to demonstrate its ability to carry out simultaneous and well-coordinated operations inside Nicaragua.

-- Recent reporting indicates that Resistance attacks against infrastructure targets are having an impact on the Nicaraguan economy and that the Sandinistas are instituting some draconian measures to deal with the situation. In late June, [redacted]

[redacted] the Nicaraguan economy was suffering significantly from the civil war and [redacted] the Nicaraguan people increasingly were voicing their displeasure. Much of this [redacted] was due to the effectiveness of the Resistance in destroying economic targets.

-- [redacted] Sandinista Defense Minister Humberto Ortega indicated recently that the Nicaraguan military has been under orders since May 1987 not to take prisoners in confrontations with Resistance forces. One of the reasons cited for this policy [redacted] is Managua's desire not to have to sustain the added economic burden of feeding and tending prisoners.

-- [redacted] some 100 desertions occurred in the 1st Military Region during the mid-to-late June period. This apparently has been causing great consternation among units in the military region, and prompted one of the local brigades to issue harsh orders that the deserters be hunted down and captured.

-- [redacted] the Sandinistas have been targeting the communications of unspecified U.S. units since at least 25 June 1987. [redacted]

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-- [redacted] six MI-17 helicopter crates delivered by [redacted] to the port of Corinto have been moved to an airfield near Managua, probably for assembly and checkout. When assembled, they will raise Nicaragua's inventory of MI-17 armed transports to 30.

-- During the period, nine aerial resupply missions were flown, delivering 11,737 pounds of combat supplies and equipment to Contra forces in Nicaragua. Since the resumption of United States' assistance, 156 missions have been flown and 765,923 pounds (383 tons) of supplies delivered.

-- The draft Military Budget Proposal for FY88 has been submitted to State for consideration.

-- [redacted] two Resistance students were injured during unrelated training accidents.

-- The first injured trainee lacerated his eye on a piece of barbed wire. The injury was so severe that the eye could not be saved. It has been removed and the patient is recuperating in isolation.

-- Later in the day, the second injury occurred when a trainee, contrary to pre-exercise instructions, picked up a grenade simulator that had failed to detonate. The device detonated in his hand, almost completely severing the thumb. The thumb has been reattached, but it is too soon to know whether the thumb can be saved. This patient is also recuperating [redacted]

-- Currently, there are 1.5 million pounds of cargo at [redacted] awaiting movement to Honduras. We are looking at ways to transport this cargo enmasse [redacted]

-- A C-5A carrying approximately 200,000 pounds of ordnance was successfully offloaded in one and one half hours at Palmerola Airbase. A C-130 was utilized to shuttle this cargo to Aguacate on 1 and 2 July.

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