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31 January 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR:



FROM:



SUBJECT:

HWG Questions

REFERENCE:

Your Memo dated 31 January

I. [redacted] Any information I have on the Olancho operation is based on our investigation/[redacted] in 1995, in response to headquarters concerns.

A. My understanding of the Olancho operation is that Reyes Mata did participate in the confrontation with the Special Forces. [redacted] Mata was captured and shot in the head. To my knowledge, following the 1983 event, the Honduran Armed Forces (HOAF) stated that Father Carney died of starvation after he was left behind by the group. The HOAF claim, and common belief throughout the 1980's was, that he did not participate in the Olancho operation. The Embassy officer who was responsible for the 1983 investigation was [redacted]. At the time, he worked for the [redacted] as of last summer, he was in Honduras working for USAID. [redacted] also concluded that Father Carney had died of starvation. I am not aware of how his investigation was conducted or how he reached his conclusions, nor have I read his reporting from the early 1980's. When this incident resurfaced in 1995, some military officers stated publicly that Father Carney had died of malaria, not starvation. In 1995, we questioned [redacted] about Father Carney's fate. [redacted] had provided any evidence or any suggestion grater than rumor, that Father Carney was with the group when it confronted the Special Forces.

B. I have no information.

C. I do not know.

D. In 1995, we tasked [redacted] with reporting on the 1983 incident. The most complete response was provided by [redacted]

[redacted] spoke to [redacted] several times to obtain as much detail as possible [redacted] was very nervous when speaking about the operation. [redacted] also reported on the incident. [redacted] information came from [redacted] who clearly biased and did not have any role in the 1983 incident. [redacted] learned [redacted] information from people who were with the group that confronted the Special Forces. I do not believe that anyone who may have witnessed the killings of Reyes Mata or Father Carney by the Special Forces would have lived to tell about it. I do not consider this report to be accurate information [redacted] We disseminated other reporting on the incident, but I do not recall the details.

E. As noted above, the [redacted] investigated the incident. [redacted] was the responsible officer. I do not have any information on [redacted] the coordination process. I have never heard that there were any CIA officers in Olancho at the time. I will note, however, that the Honduran military has often accused [redacted] of being CIA. He is not, but this could account for some confusion.

II. A. [redacted] a foreign service officer of the political section of the Embassy was responsible for all human rights issues. Usually this was a more senior officer. [redacted] always provided input to the annual human rights report, and [redacted] fully involved in coordination on this, [redacted]

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B. I do not know who took the lead in preparing the report in 1983 or any information [redacted] provided.

C. N/A

D. [redacted] I always read the report in draft and in final form. I think the human rights situation was accurately described. In the 1990's, there was no evidence of pressure to downplay human rights violations. If anything, there was pressure to emphasize human rights abuses. This may have been different in the 1980's.

III. [redacted]

A. As of June 1996, the only mention of possible human rights abuses [redacted]

[redacted] the Olancho incident. It stated that the confrontation "was a complete success," the guerillas were "annihilated." At the time, this operation was viewed (at least by the HOAF) as a success against a guerrilla group and not a human rights abuse. There was no other mention of [redacted]

the Olancho incident, generally not aware of [redacted]

I was not aware of his role in [redacted]

The [redacted] office is [redacted] so their views would not have been solicited. I do not know if they had reported independently [redacted] or if any reporting was considered [redacted]

[redacted] I kept good files [redacted] that would have included [redacted] reporting; we would review these holdings. This is common [redacted] but I cannot comment on what happened at the time [redacted]

Olancho incident. [redacted]

Frankly, I was surprised to learn of his role in the [redacted]

[redacted] can tell us what really happened to Father Carney, it is [redacted]

I believe that if anyone [redacted]

B. I have no information on these questions.

C. I have no information.

IV.

A. [redacted] I am not aware of any information on human rights abuses that was not passed to HQS.

B. I am not aware of any politicization of reporting or finished analysis on Honduras; however, I did not work this account during the Cold War. I will say that [redacted] often tried to portray [redacted] in a fairly favorable light [redacted] This did not extend so far as to omit information or alter it significantly; it was merely a softening of how messages were relayed to HQS.

V.

A. [redacted]

B. I believe that elements of the former 316th battalion still participated in political assassinations at the time [redacted] This includes the former DNI and possibly members of the CI battalion. I have no evidence to support this claim other than the fact that the type of operation often paralleled that conducted by the 316th in the mid-1980's.

C. I am not aware of any action [redacted] to resolve accusations of human rights abuses [redacted]

D. As far as I know, we reported cases we were aware of and the Embassy human rights report included all cases that occurred during the year or remained unresolved. We did not report on assassinations or human rights abuses that were covered by the press unless we had [redacted]

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more to add or we knew that [redacted] was involved.

E. I was aware of ELACH's existence in the 1980's and the possibility of its involvement in human rights abuses. I do not have any other information about the group.

[redacted]

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