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30 JUN 1987

SUBJECT: Talking Points for Morris Busby to Use with SecState

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-- An ex-political prisoner who had been subjected to years of torture in Nicaragua has escaped to Honduras. He is being debriefed and evaluated for suitability for use in the campaign against Sandinista human rights abuses.

(b) (1)
(b) (3)

-- [redacted] accompanied by a State Department officer, met with five of the six Resistance directors for two hours in Miami. They were given an update briefing on the military situation and were exhorted to:

- concentrate on refining the Resistance propaganda mechanisms so that the war news flows more freely,
- crank up the aggressiveness level of Resistance propaganda organs, including Radio Liberacion,
- take the initiative in contacting the Indians, who are currently weighing their potential entrance into the Resistance,
- sort out the political problems among the Southern front commanders and step up activity in the South, and
- ensure that the appropriate directors are in Honduras as much as possible to support the insurgents.

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-- On 19 June, Resistance forces shot down a Sandinista MI-25 helicopter gunship. It was downed near Mulukuku, with the loss of all three crewmen. The pilot was reported [redacted] to have been the Air Force's best. On 25 June, [redacted] helicopter [redacted] was shot down near Lake Apanas with three officers [redacted] reported dead. The two actions underscore the significant vulnerability of the Sandinista helicopter fleet; that is, the Sandinistas will have an easier time replacing destroyed airframes than they will trained and experienced air crews.

-- [redacted] the Resistance tactics of striking at economic and infrastructure targets have worsened Nicaragua's economic situation and are putting great pressure on the Sandinista government.

-- The PDN reports that the Sandinistas have, once again, withdrawn from the San Andres de Bocay area. Resistance commanders reported that, as of 22 June, the Sandinistas were withdrawing from the area and Resistance elements were moving back into the region.

-- The pace of fighting in the northwest has stepped up in the past week. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] The city of Quilali was reported to be without electrical power and communications. [redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] Sandinista units throughout Nicaragua are increasingly reporting shortages of military-related supplies. Forces in the northwest appear especially hard hit by fuel and equipment shortages. Local police forces are being used to protect electrical and telephone lines, probably because regular troops are preoccupied with counterinsurgency operations.

-- The Nicaraguan Air Force evidently has based helicopters at La Pinuela in central Nicaragua. [redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] The basing of helicopters at La Pinuela is consistent with Sandinista efforts to lessen reaction time in response to Resistance attacks and generally improve operational capabilities in the forward areas.

-- The leader [redacted] in Jinotega department reported [redacted] on 21 June his belief that Air Force pilots were dropping their ordnance over safe, unpopulated areas before returning to base to report their mission accomplished. If true, this would suggest a deterioration in the fighting spirit of the pilots and air crews, perhaps as a result of the recent Resistance successes in shooting down helicopters.

-- During the period, three aerial resupply missions were flown, delivering 15,152 pounds of combat supplies and equipment to Contra forces in Nicaragua. Totals since the resumption of United States' assistance are 147 missions flown and 734,186 pounds (367.1 tons) of supplies delivered.

-- A C-130 aircraft departed [redacted] on 29 June carrying 29,550 pounds of Tranche III ammunition.

-- On 30 June a C-5A aircraft departed [redacted] carrying 199,770 pounds of ordnance, quartermaster supplies and parts for fresh water distillation machinery.

-- Additionally, we are planning two C-130 airdrops to deliver defense supplies to [redacted]

-- Arrangements are being made to send the maritime branch ship back to [redacted] on 27/29 July. The ship will carry fourteen 20-foot containers of ammunition and weapons.
[redacted]