

23 April 1987

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Brooklyn Rivera's 22 April Press Conference on Autonomy

1.

2. At a press conference in San Jose on 22 April 1987, Brooklyn Rivera offered to return to Managua "immediately" to present a peace proposal to the Government of Nicaragua (GON). Entitled "Yapti Tasba" ("Free Land"), the proposal calls for the GON to grant the Miskitos, Ramas and the Sumus an autonomous part of Nicaragua determined by the traditional territories belonging to the Miskito, Sumu, Rama, and areas presently inhabited by creoles, Garifuno, and Ladinos (along the Atlantic Coast). The autonomous area is to be governed under its own constitution and have its own police and security apparatus. The indigenous people will have the right to determine use and development of all its own national resources. In addition, the languages of the Miskitos, Ramas, and Sumus would be recognized by Managua as official languages. In exchange, Misurasata will recognize the central government of the Sandinistas, and accept the power of Managua to rule in order to provide for the "defense of the autonomous region from external aggression."

3. The central government will also have responsibility for international relations, jurisdiction in certain cases of civil and criminal prosecution, control of money (i.e., recognition of the cordoba as the national coin), and the right to grant or revoke citizenship for all Nicaraguans. GON military bases will be granted permission to exist in Yapti Tasba only upon agreement with the autonomous regional leaders. Misurasata will immediately recognize the Sandinista Popular Army (EPS) as the national army. However, the residents of the autonomous region will be exempt from military service.

4. Rivera proposes to set up a judiciary board with representatives of the FSLN and Misurasata, to work out the legalities of the autonomy plan. The GON is to provide economic assistance for establishing the autonomous region, and undertake repatriation of indigenous peoples wishing to reside in Yapti Tasba. Rivera also proposes to set up a provisional government, with himself at the head, until such time as the communities of the autonomous region can elect their leaders. ■

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