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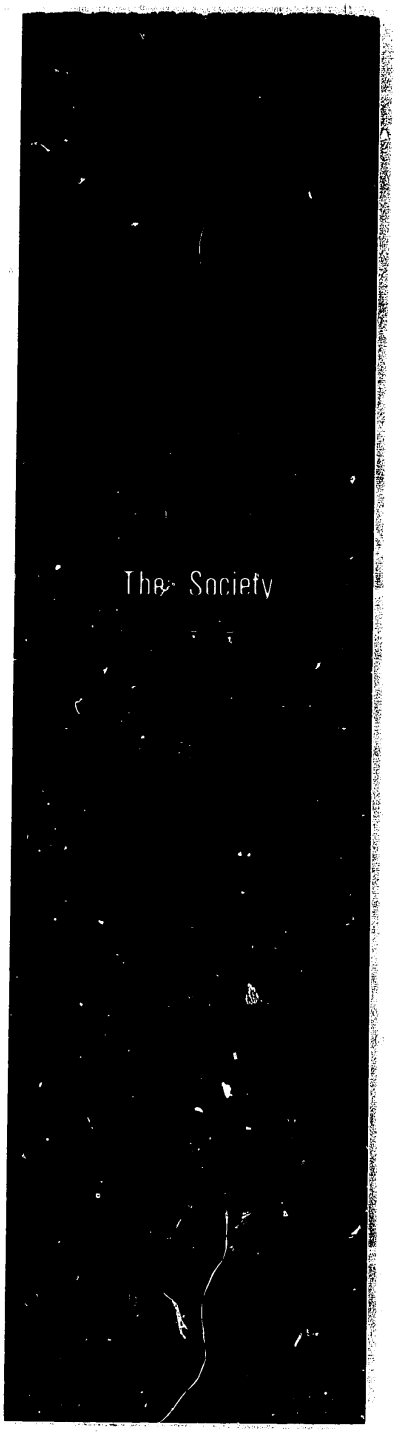

Honduras

August 1973

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

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Honduras

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The Society

A. Introduction (U/OU)

Honduras is one of the poorest, most underdeveloped countries of the Western Hemisphere; its society is characterized by widespread poverty, poor health, substandard living conditions, and inadequate educational facilities. Most Hondurans live in rural areas or small country villages and are dependent (directly or indirectly) upon agriculture and forestry for a living. Although most Hondurans cultivate small plots of land on a subsistence or near-subsistence basis, some of them work on the United Fruit and Standard Fruit plantations in the northern part of the country. The more prosperous raise coffee, cattle, and other commercial crops on individual plantations or homesteads. Although population pressure on available land has not become as great a problem as in many other countries, there is a high internal migration trend, indicating a search for greater opportunity. Industry has not developed sufficiently to provide this opportunity, resulting in a large number of unemployed and underemployed in the urban areas. This is especially true in the case of unskilled workers, who are plentiful and poorly paid.

There is a small landowning upper class whose status is partially based on family background, but this group is not as wealthy as the upper class in most other Latin American countries, nor is it as socially exclusive. Because of the homogeneous character of Honduran society—mostly mestizo and Roman Catholic—the class structure has developed along economic rather than racial or religious lines. Except for small Asian and Negro minorities, which are not considered socially equal to others of similar wealth and education, there is little discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities. A fairly high degree of potential social mobility exists, therefore, based on an individual's economic advancement. The country's narrow economic base, poor health conditions, and limited educational opportunities, however, prevent all but a few from realizing this potential.

B. Structure and characteristics of the society

The homogeneous character of society and the absence of large, unassimilated minority groups have spared Honduras the strains and instability that frequently accompany poverty and a high degree of internal mobility. Also favoring stability in the shortrun period is a high degree of apathy. Most Hondurans see little possibility of improving their lot and seem instinctively to dismiss as political rhetoric promises to the contrary. The degree of apathy, however, also inhibits change, and Honduran society has changed little in decades. (U/OU)

1. Racial composition (U/OU)

Racially, Honduras is a mestizo country. Over 90% of the total population is of mixed white—generally Spanish—and Indian descent in varying degrees. The Indian element is derived mostly from one of the several Mayan subgroups. Hondurans tend to be short in stature with general body types ranging from the slender build of the Spanish to the stocky Mayan appearance. Complexion shades range from olive to dark brown; hair is mostly dark brown or black and smooth in texture. In the northern part of the country, some Negro mixture is occasionally evident in the mestizo element, manifested generally in the coarser, curlier texture of the hair. The mestizo majority dominates political, economic, and social life; in 1945, when the last census ascertaining racial composition was taken, mestizos predominated numerically in all but two of the 18 departments, and the mestizo portion of the total population is increasing.

The Indians, mostly Jicaque (Xicaques) and Lenca, constitute the second largest racial group, which totals about 7% of the population. They are found throughout the country and, for the most part, live as part of Honduran society. Indians predominate numerically in the Department of Intibuca, where 30% of the Indian population is located, and constitute a large minority of the population of the Department of La Paz. Indian groups in the

Department of Olancho tend to live apart from the rest of the Honduran community, but this is believed to be because of their own preference and not the result of social or economic discrimination against them. A small group of primitive Miskito (Mosquito) Indians lives in the northeastern lowlands along the Caribbean coast.

Negroes make up about 2% of the total population and are located mostly along the north coast in the banana-growing region and in the Islas de la Bahia[1] (also known as the Bay Islands), where they comprise the numerically dominant group. The majority of the Bay Island Negroes are of British West Indian descent, a fact which explains the presence of a number of English names in that region.

White persons make up about 1% of the total population. The largest concentration of whites, many of foreign nationality, coincides with the location of mining and plantation operations. About 22% of this small white minority are Bay Islanders of English extraction.

2. Language (U/OU)

Spanish is the official language throughout Honduras. Several small Indian tribal groups, however, speak their own aboriginal tongues. In most such cases, the head of the family has a working knowledge of Spanish. Most of the Negroes along the north coast and in the Islas de la Bahia, as well as some of the whites in those areas, speak English as their native language. Also, most well-educated Hondurans, especially those in professional and technical fields, speak English, since many of them were educated in the United States.

3. Social structure (C)

The class structure in Honduras is based almost entirely on economic factors and therefore is not nearly as rigid as that of many other Latin American countries. The society is basically rural and relatively primitive. Most Hondurans share a heritage of poverty, for even the upper class is much less wealthy than its counterpart in other Central American countries. A study in 1968 indicates the following class structure based on family income:

	Percent
Upper (over $6,000 yearly)	1
Middle ($1,000 to $6,000 yearly)	19
Lower (less than $1,000 yearly)	80

No estimate was made as to what urban and rural percentages existed within each class.

[1]U.S. Government and U.N. statisticians believe this represents an undercount of about 5.3%. All projections are adjusted accordingly.

The upper class is largely urban; other than a few resident owners of large plantations, it consists mainly of top government and military officials, well-to-do professionals, especially in the medical and legal fields, and the more successful merchants and industrialists. Except for a few very luxurious, expensive homes, upper class families generally have homes similar to those of the middle or upper middle class in the United States. These families generally have at least one full-time servant and several other part-time employees to perform specific tasks, such as gardening and ironing.

The middle class, also mainly urban, consists of lower level government and military officials, white-collar workers, teachers, and professionals. In urban areas, middle class families generally have electricity, running water, and indoor toilet facilities in their modest residences. Some employ a domestic servant either full or part time. The rural portion of the middle class includes teachers, merchants, and farmers with holdings large enough to raise commercial crops. Houses of this group are usually more substantial than the majority of rural residences, frequently of sandstone with tile roofs. Furniture is usually reasonably comfortable, but the rural middle class rarely has a piped water supply or indoor sanitary facilities. Farmers in this class may employ additional labor to help with the farm work, but domestic servants are rare.

The lower class, which includes most of the population, is largely rural. Members of this class usually are subsistence farmers who extract a slim existence from 5 acres or less using agricultural methods that have changed little since colonial times. Houses are typically of mud and wood with thatched roofs and are illuminated by pine torches or kerosene lamps. Furniture is sparse, and mats placed on the floor or ground serve as beds. On the large plantations of United Fruit and Standard Fruit companies, workers and their families are housed in wooden, generally two-family, buildings raised on stilts above the flood level. Each family has its own two-room unit, with kitchen and washing space in the rear. Toilet and bathing facilities are separate and shared with other families. Lower class urban dwellers are, in one respect, more poorly housed because of the overcrowding of urban slum areas. Many recent arrivals from rural areas live under makeshift shelters of packing crates, discarded lumber, and scrap tin.

Honduran society is characterized by a fairly high degree of geographic mobility; in some areas as many as half of the people were born outside the municipality in which they reside. Most of the

migration is from farms to urban areas by persons searching for greater economic opportunity. Because of limited industrial development and inadequate educational facilities, few are able to better their standard of living substantially.

Those who are able to advance upward on the economic scale find that within Honduran society there are few social attitudes blocking vertical mobility. Aside from the prestige derived from being a member of one of the older, wealthier families, social status appears to depend for the most part on the individual's own accomplishments, regardless of race, membership in a minority group, or previous economic condition.

4. Values and attitudes

a. Race, minority groups, and foreigners (C)

Racial characteristics count for relatively little in determining the individual's position in Honduran society. There are no institutional or social restraints which prohibit members of minority groups from participating in all branches and levels of government, and all enjoy the same public accommodations.

White persons do not appear to enjoy any special position because of their race. Many whites are found in the upper social and economic strata, but they have not controlled political life since the early 19th century.

Although Negroes have generally been represented in government far out of proportion to their actual numbers, there seems to be subtle discrimination against them. Most Negroes belong to the servant or common laborer class. A few are taxi drivers or mechanics, but hardly any are merchants or white-collar workers. Despite the generally low economic position of the Negro, the literacy rate, according to the 1961 census, in the predominantly Negro Bay Islands was the highest of any department in Honduras (93%), while the average for the entire country was only 47.3%. Negroes along the north coast also place a high value on education.

There is some evidence of discrimination against the small Levantine (primarily Lebanese and Palestinians known locally as *Turcos*) and Chinese minorities. They constitute a very small fraction of 1% of the population, but are generally prominent in the business community. They are rarely offered (nor do they seek) government employment and are only slowly being recognized socially to a degree commensurate with their economic status. Resentment against them is related to their rapid economic success and their tendency toward clannishness. Other Hondurans also fear that their strong financial position may give them political power which Hondurans would rather retain for "Hondurans," notwithstanding the fact that many *Turcos* are second-generation Hondurans.

Divisions among Hondurans, even though slight, are more cultural than racial. Mainland Hondurans generally think of the predominantly Protestant, English-speaking Bay Islanders as a group apart from other Hondurans. Bay Islanders consider themselves somewhat superior to the "Span-yards" (as mainland Hondurans are called by Bay Islanders), at least insofar as education is concerned.

The only other foreign group against which some discrimination is practiced consists of immigrants from El Salvador. Hondurans believe that Salvadoran immigrants are more highly skilled in their respective trades and more ambitious than the Hondurans among whom they settle. Consequently, Salvadoran immigrants engender a degree of resentment which exceeds the true economic significance of their presence. In 1969 Hondurans refused to renew the bilateral migration agreement between El Salvador and Honduras, and in July of that year the two countries briefly went to war over alleged mistreatment of one another's nationals. Relations have not yet been restored. Although the Agrarian Reform Law restricts the distribution of government land to native-born Hondurans, and a provision of the Labor Code limits the percentage of non-Honduran employees in any given firm, these provisions are applied no more strictly to Salvadorans than to any other foreigners.

b. Status (U/OU)

As in most Latin American countries, several factors either lend or indicate social status. A person may acquire social status through the amount and type of education he has; professional degrees, such as those in law and medicine, are preferred. Urban residence is more desirable than rural, but land ownership lends status whether the person lives on the land or is an absentee landlord. The kind of work a person does and the way he dresses also are indicators of social status; most middle and upper class Hondurans, therefore, avoid manual labor and tend to dress more formally.

c. Family and the role of women (U/OU)

In Honduras, the nuclear and the extended family traditionally have been the basic units of the social structure. Although the habitual cohesiveness of the wider kin group has lessened over the past three decades, family ties in Honduras remain stronger than

in the United States. Kin group identification generally extends to aunts, uncles, and second or third cousins, and involves a loyalty that transcends the abstract notion of civic responsibility. The result is that a high degree of nepotism is tacitly accepted in public life.

Paralleling the kinship structure based on blood is the *compadrazgo*, or godparent system which is derived from the bonds formed between godparents (*padrinos*) and godchildren (*ahijados*) at baptism. Although in some circles *compadrazgo* has become more ceremonial than functional, large numbers of Hondurans still consider it important. The godparents assume a protective responsibility for the godchild. Well-to-do Hondurans of high standing in the community are frequently preferred as godparents in the hope that their wealth and prestige will be advantageous to the child. A leading citizen of a community may in time sponsor dozens of children in baptism.

Although legal marriage requires a civil ceremony, which may be followed by a religious ceremony if the couple chooses, it is only among the upper and middle classes that legal marriage is the norm. In the lower class, consensual unions are more prevalent than formal matrimony. Many of these common law marriages are as lasting and stable as legal ones and entail the same level of responsibility on the part of the husband. Others, however, are of short duration. Officially, the government recognizes consensual unions as valid if both parties are legally free to marry. Because of the prevalence of common law unions, illigitimacy—about 60% of all births—does not carry the stigma that it does in more developed, industrialized countries. The widespread occurrence of consensual unions, furthermore, causes Honduras to have one of the lowest rates for legal marriage in Latin America. There are normally three to four legal marriages per 1,000 persons age 14 and over—about one-third the usual rate for the United States.

Divorce is legal in Honduras, but the divorce rate—0.15 per 1,000 persons in 1966—is insignificant. Social and religious pressures against it are very strong, and at least among the upper class, marriages are almost never dissolved, although separation sometimes occurs.

Honduran families, like those elsewhere in Latin America, are generally dominated by the husband. The double standard exists; men generally feel no obligation to remain faithful to their wives, and those who can afford it frequently keep one or more mistresses. The wife, on the other hand, is not only expected to remain faithful and subservient but to accept the situation without complaint. In upper class households the wife usually leads a sheltered life of leisure. Middle class women frequently continue employment outside the home after marriage, and for lower class women employment is nearly always an economic necessity, as they may be the only steadily employed wage earner in the family.

Women have political, civil, and property rights equal to those of men. Women were permitted to vote for the first time in 1957; at that time only one-third as many women voted as did men. The number of women who registered for the 1965 election, however, increased to approximately 90% of the number of men registered. Three percent of the country's doctors and 13% of its university professors are women. In government employment there is no discrimination against women with good education or technical training, and most government clerical jobs are held by women. The proportion of women adequately prepared for positions of responsibility, however, is low. To speak exclusively of legal equality for women leaves a distorted picture of Honduran society. There is a high proportion of unmarried women with illegitimate children; they usually receive no financial or moral assistance from the fathers of their children. This unequal distribution of responsibility within the society has resulted in the development within the lower classes of strong family ties centered almost exclusively on the mother.

C. Population (U/OU)

1. Size and growth

According to the most recent census for Honduras, taken in April 1961, the total population was 1,884,765.[2] A projection based on this figure estimates the total population as of 1 January 1973 to be 2,813,000.

Honduras' population grew at the rate of approximately 3.4% per year during the 1965-70 period, a rate of growth higher than that in any other Central American country, except Costa Rica. Moreover, projections of trends in births, deaths, and migration indicate that the growth rate will increase, rising to 3.5% per year in the 1975-80 period before leveling off and subsequently declining somewhat in 1985-90. The Latin American Center of Demography has projected a population of about 3 million by 1975, 3.7 million by 1980, 4.4 million by 1985, and 5.2 million by 1990. Population growth in Honduras is

[2]For diacritics on place names see the list of names at the end of the chapter.

primarily a result of the excess of births over deaths. Births and deaths have been registered in Honduras since 1926, but the reporting of these events has been deficient. While there has been continuing improvement in the registration process, the system still suffers from incompleteness of reporting and from a practice that permits births and deaths in one year to be recorded in any subsequent year.

The reported birth rate increased from 39.9 per 1,000 in 1950 to 44.0 per 1,000 in 1967, while the reported death rate decreased from 11.8 per 1,000 to 8.4 per 1,000 during the same period. A significant decrease in the infant mortality rate is indicated by the reported statistics. In 1950, infant deaths during the first year of life per 1,000 live births amounted to 85.6. By 1967 the infant mortality rate had decreased to 35.5 per 1,000. Since the Honduran Government has not been able to enforce the requirement that all births and deaths be reported promptly, especially in rural areas, it is possible that the true figure is still somewhat higher. Figure 1 gives this information in tabular form. The Honduran Government estimates life expectancy for persons born in 1960 to be 52.6 years for males and 55.6 years for females.

2. Age-sex structure and distribution

The population is one of the youngest in the world. In 1970 an estimated 20% of the population was below the age of 5 years, and 46.8% was below 15 years of age; the median age was 16.4. Figure 2 shows the estimated age-sex distribution in 1970 compared to

FIGURE 1. Registered vital rates (U/OU)
(Rate per 1,000 population)

YEAR	BIRTH	DEATH	NATURAL INCREASE	INFANT MORTALITY RATE*
1926-29	33.4	16.4	17.0	101.2
1930-34	33.5	14.9	18.6	91.8
1935-39	35.5	16.1	19.4	98.6
1940-44	36.7	17.3	19.4	108.5
1945-49	38.5	14.3	24.2	92.4
1950-54	40.8	11.6	29.2	65.7
1955-59	42.4	10.5	31.9	57.1
1960	44.4	9.7	34.7	52.0
1961	44.9	9.4	35.5	49.9
1962	46.7	9.5	37.2	43.6
1963	45.9	9.6	36.3	47.0
1964	47.7	9.7	38.0	45.4
1965	45.8	9.0	36.8	41.2
1966	44.4	9.4	35.3	37.8
1967	44.0	8.4	35.6	35.5

*Deaths of persons under age 1 per 1,000 live births.

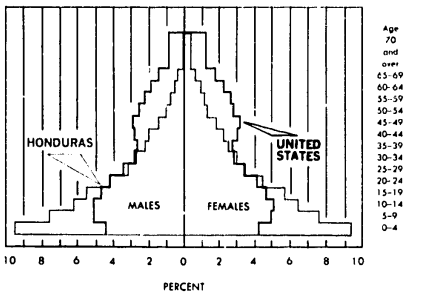


FIGURE 2. Age-sex structure, Honduras and the United States, 1970 (U/OU)

that of the United States. The working age population (usually defined as 15-64) constituted 50.8% of the total, and those over 65 about 2.4%. Thus there were 970 persons in the dependent ages for every 1,000 of working age. A dependency ratio based on age groups alone, however, seriously understates the degree of dependency in Honduras. With a labor force of about 900,000 in July 1972—roughly 32% of the total population—it is apparent that every employed person is supporting an average of two others. Furthermore, some of those employed are not heads of households but youngsters, some under 15, who are working to supplement the family income. This situation is about average for most of Central America.

The population has maintained a fairly even distribution between the sexes; in 1950 for instance, there were 100.5 males per 100 females, and in 1961 there were 99.3 males per 100 females. The estimated distribution in 1970 was 100 males per 100 females.

Honduras has an overall average density of roughly 63.9 persons per square mile, slightly higher than the United States, but about half that of Guatemala and one-seventh that of El Salvador (Figure 3). More than 60% of the land area, however, is mountainous, reducing the potential to support additional population. Figure 4 shows the density per square mile by department according to the 1961 census. The most densely populated departments are Cortes on the north coast and Valle in the south. The most sparsely populated department is Gracias a Dios in the eastern part of the country.

The Government of Honduras defines an urban area as one having a population of 1,000 or more persons and the following services: 1) a complete

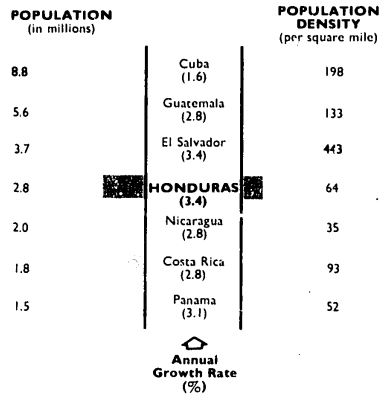


FIGURE 3. Population data, selected countries, 1972 (U/OU)

primary school of six grades, 2) postal, telephone, or telegraph service, 3) regular bus, railroad, airline, or maritime transportation service, 4) public water supply, and 5) electric power. On this basis the 1961 census listed 23.2% of the population as urban and 76.8% as rural. The two major urban areas, Tegucigalpa (the capital and its environs, with 256,000 inhabitants), and San Pedro Sula (with 116,000), are growing at over twice the national rate, indicating rural-to-urban migration as well as movement from smaller towns to the two major cities. Between the two census years of 1950 and 1961 the total population increased by 37.6%. During those same years the population of Tegucigalpa increased by 85.2% and that of San Pedro Sula increased by 177.3%. Between 1961 and 1971, they increased by 86.5% and 70%, respectively. The urban population is expected to reach 43.1% by 1985.

3. Population policy

With support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), the Honduran Government has supported a family planning program since November 1965. At that time, family planning services were inaugurated in the maternal and child care program operated by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance. Support for family planning activities has also come from a private, local entity—the Honduran Association of Family Planning—which is affiliated with the International Planned Parenthood Federation. Other assistance has been provided by the Population Council, the Pathfinder Fund, and CARE.

In a reorganization of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance in 1969, a special section was created to promote family planning, maternal and child health, and nutrition. In 1972, some 26 family planning clinics were in operation throughout the

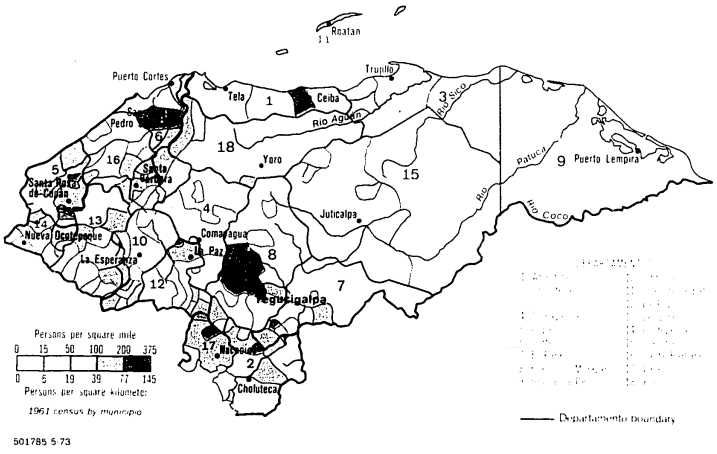


FIGURE 4. Population and administrative divisions (U/OU)

country, staffed with trained physicians, nurses, social workers, health educators, and paramedical personnel.

Despite an extensive campaign of indoctrination involving talks before civic groups, professional associations, and labor unions, and lectures to mothers in maternity clinics, the family planning program has been hampered in its operations by a general lack of popular enthusiasm for or understanding of its objectives. Moreover, the Roman Catholic Church in Honduras is categorically opposed to the program. Until such time as the government is willing or able to generate more popular interest and support for it, the program seems destined to be of only marginal value in curbing population growth.

D. The role of labor

1. Employment opportunities and main occupations (U/OU)

Job opportunities for the Honduran worker—as well as his chances for advancement—are restricted by the small dimensions of the national economy and by limited opportunities for acquiring skills. The labor force is heavily engaged in agriculture, predominantly male, relatively young, largely unskilled, barely literate if at all, and subject to a high degree of unemployment and underemployment.

The rural, agricultural nature of the society is reflected in the work force, about two-thirds of which is engaged in agriculture. While this may represent a few percentage points less dependence on agriculture than reflected in the 1961 census, the proportion of Honduran workers employed in agriculture is still larger than that of any other country in Latin America other than Haiti. A majority of these workers are subsistence farmers who cultivate small parcels of land which they either rent or occupy illegally. The soil is generally poor from overuse and lack of fertilization, and the methods of cultivation are primitive. The yield is, therefore, hardly enough in either quantity or quality to sustain the family. Many other rural laborers are migrant workers. Except for the planting and harvesting seasons, large numbers from both groups are idle and migrate to urban areas, swelling the ranks of the urban unemployed. Some stay in the towns and cities hoping for a better opportunity, but being barely literate, if at all, their chances are very limited.

The small industrial base is inadequate to absorb and train large numbers of unskilled; there is, however, a shortage of skilled workers, and almost anyone who knows a trade can find employment. Vocational training in Honduras is of recent origin and is largely confined to the secondary school level. There are a few small apprenticeship programs being run by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, but they can accommodate only about 1,000 trainees. The best that many of the unskilled can expect is a hand-to-mouth existence in a service job. Women in general have less education than men; according to the 1961 census over half of the females in the labor force were employed in service jobs, generally as domestic servants.

Of the approximately 900,000 Hondurans in the labor market, some 8% of them are unable to find work. While statistics on underemployment are inadequate, it is estimated that 25% to 50% of the workers are either not working up to capacity or are seasonally unemployed.

The young age of the Honduran labor force is striking; in 1961, the census reported that 53% of the economically active were below the age of 30, and 73% were below 40. Furthermore, one-fifth of the population in the 10-14 age group were economically active, illustrating not only the limited opportunities for schooling but the general poverty of the country. Youngsters in many families, especially in rural areas, are forced to work because of economic necessity. Many persons past the age of 65 are compelled to continue working for the same reason.

The labor force like the population as a whole is predominantly mestizo. Although the few small minority groups are not confined to a certain range of economic activity, some occupations do predominate. For instance, Indian communities are engaged primarily in agriculture. Many Negroes are domestic servants or plantation workers. Persons of purely European descent are usually employed in a management capacity in mining or plantation operations. Levantine and Chinese minorities are usually found in commerce and are often prominant in the business community.

2. Labor and management organizations (C)

Although only 7% to 10% of the approximately 900,000-man labor force is organized, the unions have done more for the Honduran worker than all other forces—government, sympathetic political parties, or the church—combined. The Honduran labor movement is recognized throughout the hemisphere for its strength, independence, cohesiveness, and community leadership. Practically nonexistent prior to 1954, the labor movement grew out of a prolonged strike by unorganized workers against the U.S.-owned

banana companies. Banana workers are still the backbone of the Honduran movement, accounting for about one-third of the regular union membership (i.e., excluding teacher and campesino associations). There are approximately 80 unions affiliated with either the one large confederation, the Confederation of Honduran Workers (CTH), or the very small Social Christian General Workers' Central (CGT), plus a handful of independent unions. In addition, some 30,000 small farmers belong to the National Association of Honduran Campesinos (ANACH), an affiliate of the CTH, and approximately 14,000 teachers beleng to one of four associations called *colegios*.

The CTH is composed of two federations with a combined membership of about 36,000 and the 30,000-member ANACH. The larger of the federations is the National Workers Trade Union Federation of Honduras (FESITRANH) with about 27,000 members in its 33 affiliated unions. FESITRANH, based in San Pedro Sula, includes the two large banana company unions, the 10,000-member Tela Railroad Company Workers' Union (SITRATERCO), which is the United Fruit Company union, and the 4,500-member United Union of Standard Fruit Company Workers (SUTRASFCO). Led by the calm and sagacious Oscar Gale, SITRATERCO pioneered in bettering the lives of its members and improving the surrounding community by concentrating more on fringe benefits than on wages and by moving into such activities as savings and loan associations, consumer cooperatives, nutrition, and family planning. SUTRASFCO was formed in the early 1960's by uniting three separate unions after a stormy history of factional and company-union strife, including periods of Communist control. Other strong FESITRANH unions are the "El Mochito" Mine Workers' Union (SOEM) with over 1,000 members and the National Railroad Workers' Union (SITRAFENAL) with about 400 members. FESITRANH's former president is Honduras' other truly outstanding labor leader, the eloquent, mercurial, and painstakingly honest Celeo Gonzalez, who preceded Oscar Gale as president of SITRATERCO. Gonzalez is now one of the Liberal Party deputies to the National Congress.

The smaller CTH federation is the Tegucigalpa-based Central Federation of Unions of Free Workers of Honduras (FECESITLIH), whose 34 unions total about 9,000 members. Formed in the late 1950's, FECESITLIH was Communist-led until 1965 when it changed leadership and joined FESITRANH in forming the CTH. FECESITLIH's three strongest unions have no more than 500 to 800 members each; one of these unions, the Beverage Industry Workers, is still Communist-led as are a few of the smaller unions.

The Social Christian, CLAT-affiliated CGT is composed of the Authentic Trade Union Federation of Honduras (FASH), the Southern Trade Union Federation (FESISUR—formerly part of FASH), and the National Campesino Union (UNC). The CGT has about 11 or 12 unions with somewhat less than 2,000 members and about 5,000 members in the UNC.

Independent unions account for about 1,600 members, the largest of which is the 500-member Central Bank Workers' Union.

Teachers are required by law to belong to at least one of the four *colegios*, the largest of which is the Honduran Professional Association for Teaching Excellence (COLPROSUMAH) with about 9,000 members. The predominant influences within COLPROSUMAH are Social Christian, Communist, and Liberal Party. Its rival organization, the First Honduran Professional Teachers' Association (PRICPHMA) with perhaps 4,000 members is largely dominated by the National Party and is frequently accused of being government-dominated or even subsidized. Third in size is the Honduran Professional Association of Secondary Education (COPEMH); an organization for licensed secondary teachers only, it has a limited and select potential membership, currently totaling about 2,000. The smallest group is the Teachers' Union with 500 members. Its members, however, tend to be older and more distinguished and include a large proportion of school directors. In addition to the *colegios*, the Honduran Association of Workers in Secondary Education (AHTEM) is available to secondary school teachers who do not have degrees in education but may have degrees in other subjects. All of the *colegios* give lip service to unifying the diverse groups, a popular idea with most teachers since it would increase their bargaining power with the government, but rivalries are fierce, especially between the two largest organizations. Many leaders believe the government is using the "divide and conquer" technique. With a few strikes and many threats of strikes the *colegios* have, nevertheless, obtained salary increases and a partial pension plan.

The labor movement, especially that portion affiliated with the CTH, is one of the most promising forces in the country. In a decade it has gained maturity as well as political muscle, and its leadership probably includes some of the most honest, conscientious men in Honduras. The CTH affiliates, which have received considerable assistance and training from the American Institute of Free Labor Development (AIFLD), an AFL-CIO subsidiary, have

shown skill and responsibility in their collective bargaining. There are over 50 collective bargaining contracts in effect covering some 42,500 workers. Most of these were negotiated by CTH organizations. In 1971 the CTH joined businessmen in cosponsoring the "national unity pact"—a coalition explained in more detail under Government and Politics—in an effort to preserve a constitutional form of government.

Management associations are not numerous, but have considerable weight. The most important employer and business organizations are the Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP), the Chambers of Commerce, the National Association of Industrialists (ANDI), and the National Federation of Farmers and Cattlemen of Honduras (FENAGH). Both COHEP and ANDI represent more enlightenment in management attempts to deal with labor. COHEP has been especially active in initiating meetings with labor and government and in responding to initiatives of the other two. These meetings have helped maintain a generally cordial relationship between labor and management.

3. Labor legislation (U/OU)

For all practical purposes, modern labor legislation began during the Juan Manuel Galvez administration (1949-54). The laws were updated and augmented in 1959 and consolidated into the present labor code. The code specifies an 8-hour day (44 hours per week), 6 hours for a night shift (36 hours per week), and 7 hours for a mixed day and night shift (42 hours per week). Exempted from the maximum-hours provision are 1) workers who hold administrative or management positions or positions of trust; 2) domestic servants; 3) workers who perform discontinuous or intermittent activities, such as barbers, hotel workers, and private chauffeurs; 4) the self-employed or those in agriculture, and others whose work cannot be limited to a specific workday; and 5) workers paid on a commission basis. The code specifies differentials to be paid for overtime and for Sunday and holiday work. Regular and overtime hours are not to exceed 12 per day; overtime, at least in industry, is not extensive. Paid sick leave and vacations, the length of which depends on years of service, as well as holiday and maternity leave are also stipulated. Health and safety regulations provide for medical, hygienic, and sanitary facilities and protection against gases, smoke, and dangerous parts of machines, but are applicable primarily to workers in large establishments. The labor code also establishes more stringent standards of working conditions for women and minors than apply to adult males.

On the whole, the Labor Code is not administered or enforced effectively. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security lacks both the funds and manpower to do an adequate job. Enforcement is confined largely to the Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula areas and even in those areas to larger business establishments (especially those which are foreign owned) and to establishments whose employees are organized. Some provisions of the code, such as those relating to separation pay, are rather strictly enforced, while others, such as those dealing with minimum wages, have not even been implemented, although the enabling legislation was passed in June 1971. Penalties for some kinds of violation are too small to be effective deterrents.

The provisions applicable to trade union activities are somewhat restrictive in that the code imposes considerable red tape and delays to limit the right to strike, outlaws union security clauses, and provides only limited protection against reprisals for organizing activity. Otherwise it does permit free and independent unionism.

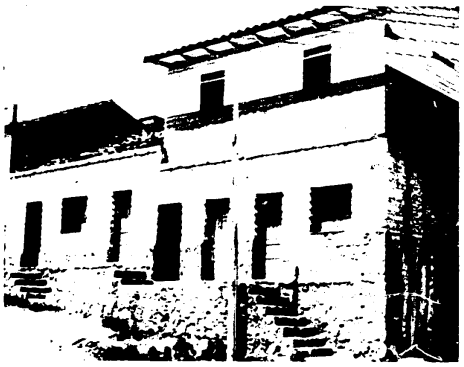
E. Living conditions and social problems

1. Material welfare (U/OU)

Honduras is frequently referred to as the "poor brother" of Central America. The majority of Hondurans live in extreme poverty; in 1971 the per capita GDP was only $260—the lowest in Central America and far below the Latin American average of $530. Most Hondurans are ill-fed, ill-clad, and ill-housed; even worse, most have little hope of raising their standard of living because they are either illiterate or inadequately educated and because the underdevelopment of the country provides little opportunity for economic advancement. These conditions are particularly acute in the rural area, where most people live at little more than a subsistence level.

There have been few studies to indicate how Hondurans spend their meager incomes, but those that are available show food as the major item in the budget, averaging over 40% of the family income. Those who have money to spend on clothing, furniture, appliances, and other durables find these items in limited supply in Honduras, and the wealthy travel to the United States for shopping. Inflation has not been the problem in Honduras as in some other Latin American countries; the average annual increase in prices was about 2% for the years 1960-69. The majority of the rural population is largely outside the

FIGURE 5. Upper class home, San Pedro Sula (U OU)



Dwelling built of stone and wood, Tegucigalpa. Windows have shutters rather than glass panes.

Dwelling of modern design, Tegucigalpa

FIGURE 6. Middle class dwellings (C)

money economy, however, and eke out an existence on a small plot of land, using primitive methods of cultivation. These families raise only a few items, which provide them with an inadequate, monotonous diet and little, if anything, left over for the commercial market.

One of the most acute problems the country faces is overcrowded and unsanitary housing, a major cause of poor health. The Honduran Government defines as substandard those dwellings that have no piped-in water or those that are located more than 200 meters from a public water tap; those with no sanitary facilities (in rural areas some types of latrines are considered acceptable); dwellings of only one room; dwellings with earth floors; or those constructed with scrap materials. On this basis—and including those which were structurally inadequate because of age—almost 300,000 (over 60% of the total) housing units were considered substandard in 1970. Furthermore, with the population growth outstripping construction, it is estimated that the housing deficit will reach 466,000 by 1980. To eliminate this deficit in 20 years an average of over 34,000 units per year would have to be constructed, or almost six times the yearly average since 1964. There is, therefore, little hope for improvement for the majority of inadequately housed Hondurans.

Makeshift slum dwelling, Tegucigalpa

Housing for banana plantation workers, La Lima, Cortes Department. Shed in front is for laundry and cooking.

Rural home near the Guatemalan–Honduran border. Cane stalks or poles are tied together with rope or rawhide to form the walls.

Rural residence built of wood, near San Pedro Sula. Sheetmetal roofs preaominate in this area of Honduras.

FIGURE 7. Substandard housing (C)

Urban residents are better housed than the rural population. Most of the relatively luxurious upper class dwellings are in urban areas (Figure 5); these, however, as well as most reasonably comfortable but modest middle class structures (Figure 6), constitute a small portion of the housing units. Many urban dwellings are essentially shacks made of every available scrap material (Figure 7). They provide only a minimum of shelter and are often built on land to which the occupants have only squatters' rights, thus causing legal as well as welfare problems. Certain areas of urban centers have become notorious for their appalling slum conditions and are breeding grounds for disease and crime. Some of the urban poor have slightly more substantial houses of either wood frame or adobe, but most of these are substandard because of the lack of sanitary facilities and water.

Typical rural houses are made of readily available materials such as corn or cane stalks, mud, and thatch; these houses are generally built by the family with the help of relatives and friends. The walls are frequently cane stalks or poles lashed together with rawhide or rope; floors are of packed earth, and roofs are of thatch. Another popular type of wall construction is

FIGURE 8. Bahareque house under construction in a rural area of Copan Department. Walls are filled with mud wattle. Roof material is locally baked tile. (C)

bahareque, formed by a double row of poles or stalks and plastered with a mixture of mud and chopped straw (Figure 8). Although less durable than adobe, *bahareque* does protect fairly well against the elements. Thatch or baked tile is used for roofing material. In the north coast area and in the Bay Islands wood-frame structures with sheet metal roofs are seen frequently.

2. Government programs (C)

Government action to improve the lot of the impoverished majority of Hondurans has been minimal. The general underdevelopment of the country places severe financial limitations on welfare programs, as do a scarcity of technically trained personnel and the lack of a cadre of career civil servants. Nevertheless, other countries with the same handicaps have managed to outperform Honduras. The real element lacking in Honduras is not know-how but the will. Honduran politicians with few exceptions look on public office as an opportunity to line their own pockets rather than as one of service to their country and fellow Hondurans. Graft and corruption are so prevalent, and appointment so dependent on whom one knows rather than on training and competence, that sizable portions of the funds appropriated for welfare programs find their way into personal bank accounts or are diluted by inefficiency and incompetence.

A limited social security program is administered by the Honduran Institute of Social Security (HISS) under the general supervision of the Minister of Labor and Social Security. Except for special pension systems covering communications workers, schoolteachers, and public employees, the social insurance programs are limited to those providing sickness and maternity benefits or work injury compensation. There is no general old age or invalidity program, no unemployment insurance, and no family allowance system. Moreover, the sickness and maternity and the work injury programs are restricted in coverage. Both apply only to employees in government and to employees of industrial and commercial firms with five or more workers, and both exclude agricultural, domestic, and temporary workers. Furthermore, early in 1971 the programs were in effect only in the Tegucigalpa–Comayaguela area and in San Pedro Sula, although plans called for the gradual extension of the programs to other areas. The number of workers covered by these programs, however, has risen from 23,000 in 1962 to 38,000 in 1969. Despite this increase, the limited coverage of the two programs is obvious in that those covered in 1969 represented no more than 5% of the total labor force.

In order to improve housing for low income families, the National Housing Institute (INV) was created in 1957. Because of frequent changes of directors and poor administration, its record of accomplishment has been poor. It managed to construct an average of about 50 or 60 houses a year during its first 6 years of existence; the yearly average since 1963 has been about 250 units, even though the National Plan for Economic and Social Development (1965-69) called for 4,000 or more units per year. The activities of the INV have been confined to urban areas, with rural construction, of which there has been very little, largely left to the National Agrarian Institute (INA).

The INA, created in 1962, is responsible for clearing land, conducting land surveys to establish titles, resettling rural families on land of their own, providing technical assistance to these families, building access roads, and constructing rural houses similar to those built by INV in the urban areas. Like the INV, it has been hampered by frequent changes in personnel at the top level. Its achievements, therefore, have not been outstanding. In 1971, INA resettled 2,500 families on plots of approximately 25 acres and expected to resettle an additional 1,000 in 1972. In addition, two large colonization projects, the Valle del Aguan and Valle de Lean (the valleys of Rio Aguan and Rio Lean), are being undertaken. Most of the resettlement program involves parceling out of government land. The accomplishments are only a small portion of what needs to be done; in 1971 there were an estimated 140,700 landless campesino families

and an additional 136,800 families trying to scratch out an existence on 5 acres or less.

3. Private action and foreign assistance (U/OU)

In the absence of effective government action to improve living conditions, especially housing, some lower and lower-middle income housing has been constructed by the private sector through AID and Inter-American Development Bank loans to labor unions on the north coast. SITRATERCO, the United Fruit Company union, completed a 103-home project in early 1966 near La Lima (Figure 9). It was so successful that FESITRANH immediately embarked on a similar project of 900 to 1,000 homes near San Pedro Sula. The type of house built under these programs is concrete construction with three bedrooms, bath, and kitchen; houses have screened windows, electricity, and piped water from the project water system. These houses can be built for about US$2,000, but the purchaser actually pays $3,000, part of which goes into the union fund to start other similar projects. Payments are arranged so that they do not exceed 25% of the purchaser's monthly salary and so that the house is paid for by the time the husband retires at age 65.

Honduras receives considerable assistance from the United States and international agencies, both official and private, in dealing with health and welfare problems. In numbers of personnel involved and amounts of money expended, the largest source of technical assistance is the U.S. Government. The second largest amount of assistance has come from the various U.N. agencies. Often several agencies and governments work together on a single project. For instance, 140 of the water supply systems were constructed by the Inter-American Cooperative Public Health Service (SCISP), until 1964 a U.S.-assisted division of the Honduran Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance. The activities of SCISP in connection with water supply systems have now been taken over by the National Autonomous Water and Sewerage Agency (SANAA), an agency of the Honduran Government which U.S. funds helped launch. Before being absorbed by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, SCISP developed 182 projects in Honduras, one of the most important of which is the National Malaria Eradication Service. The U.S. and Honduran Governments are assisted in this effort by the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

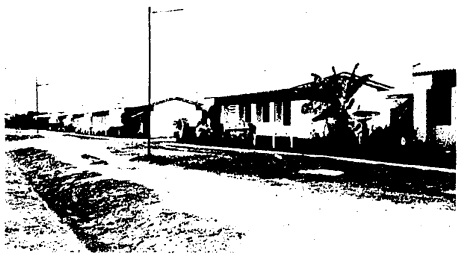


FIGURE 9. Workers' housing built by the United Fruit Company labor union, with assistance from the American Institute for Free Labor Development and the Agency for International Development. Houses are purchased at payments not exceeding 25% of the worker's salary. (C)

In addition to government and international agencies which are assisting public health efforts, a number of religious missions provide medical care. These include the Moravian, Episcopal, Mennonite, Seventh-day Adventist, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran denominations. There are also five private Honduran philanthropic organizations in the welfare field. These are the National Committee for Social Welfare, which works through several community centers in helping the poor solve their social, psychological, and economic problems; the Children's National Welfare Foundation, which controls the national lottery for the support of charitable projects, mostly in the field of maternal and child care; the Honduran Red Cross; the Honduran League Against Tuberculosis; and the National Organization for the Rehabilitation of Invalids.

4. Social problems (U/OU)

The lack of statistics on the number of crimes committed makes assessment of social tensions difficult, but the crime rate is high, especially for crimes of violence. Almost three-fourths of the cases brought to court involve acts of violence against persons or property. Alcoholism and gambling are known to be among the social problems, and many labor unions have undertaken educational campaigns to reduce the prevalence of these vices. The use of narcotics is not a problem in Honduras. Small amounts of marijuana are grown and used by campesinos and a few university students, but none is exported. Hard drugs seldom enter the country, and none is manufactured locally.

F. Health (U/OU)

Levels of health and sanitation in Honduras are extremely low, even by Latin American standards. Inadequate personal and environmental sanitation,

substandard diets, insufficient potable water, faulty waste disposal systems, low levels of education, poverty, inadequate transportation and storage facilities, and the lack of a satisfactory public health program all contribute to a large number of deaths from preventable diseases. As a result, the average Honduran has a life expectancy at birth lower than that in any other country of Latin America except Haiti and Bolivia. Although poor health and sanitation problems exist throughout the country, they are more severe in rural areas.

Some progress toward improvement of the general health level was made during the presidency of the late Dr. Ramon Villeda Morales (1957-63), a physician who was much interested in public health work. Since the coup of 3 October 1963, however, the general lack of accomplishment of the Oswaldo Lopez regime (1963-71) and the chaos under President Ramon Ernesto Cruz (1971-72) have been reflected in the lack of progress in public health as well. During the past decade less than 5% of the national budget has been alloted to the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance.

1. Environmental factors affecting health

Unhealthful living conditions account for much of the disease rate, and in 1970 over 60% of the population was housed in unsanitary, substandard structures. Furthermore, there is a national average of more than five persons per dwelling, many of which have only one room, a proximity that favors the spread of communicable diseases.

In urban areas many of the substandard houses are multifamily tenements or mere shelters built of scrap materials. By 1970, 61.5% of the urban houses met the requirement of either having piped-in water or being within 200 meters of a public water tap. Most urban families, however, were still dependent upon shared toilet facilities. Half of the urban dwellings were not served by, or connected to, sewerage systems. No community has a wholly safe and adequate water supply, and none of the public water systems is properly chlorinated.

The most prevalent rural housing is the one room hut with mud-on-lattice or adobe walls, earth floor, and thatched roof, which frequently harbors insects and snakes. Piped water is available to less than 7% of the rural population. Few rural houses have sewerage facilities, although some have acceptable latrines. For the most part, a single source of water is used for drinking, bathing, laundering, and waste disposal.

Diet varies according to region and family income. In general, however, it is poorly balanced, consisting mostly of starch, and is deficient in proteins. Meat, fish, cheese, milk, and eggs account for only about 6% of the calories consumed, while grains, especially corn, supply about two-thirds of the calories. Corn, rice, red kidney beans, and sugarcane are staple foods. Although Hondurans generally eat more green vegetables than other Central Americans do and prefer *panela* (brown sugar) to the less nutritious refined sugar, vitamin deficiencies are nationwide, especially vitamin A. The high prevalence of endemic goiter and dental caries indicates widespread deficiencies in iodine and calcium, also. In some areas diet is also low in iron. The average daily caloric intake, 1,850 in 1969, is lower than any other Central American country except El Salvador. Rural residents generally consume at least 200 calories more a day than urban residents, but the more prosperous urban residents consume more wheat, rice, vegetable oils, and animal protein than the poor in either area. The level of nutrition is especially low in the densely populated highlands along the Salvadoran and Guatemalan borders, and among children in most regions. The low animal protein content of most diets is due, at least in part, to a lack of transportation and refrigeration facilities. This probably accounts for the low nutritional level among children, since milk is not available to most children on a regular basis.

Despite numerous regulations designed to cover the handling, processing, and inspection of foodstuffs, food sanitation and storage are inadequate. No effective control exists because inspectors, often politically appointed, are limited in number and training. Few food stores or butcher shops have modern equipment or refrigeration. Most foodstuffs are sold in open-air markets, exposed to dust, insects, and handling by customers. As a result, fresh fruits and vegetables need to be washed thoroughly in treated water and either peeled or cooked. Meat, other than that for export to the United States, is not inspected regularly; it should be cooked thoroughly and consumed on the day of purchase. Pasteurization of milk and cheese is not always reliable, although the Sula Dairy in San Pedro Sula, which supplies about one-third of the country's dairy products, is very clean and modern. Restaurants are not adequately inspected, and most are unsanitary.

As a result of these conditions most of the population suffers from a high incidence of infectious and parasitic diseases. Respiratory (tuberculosis, influenza, pneumonia, and colds) and diarrheal illnesses are endemic. Other prevalent diseases are dietary deficiency diseases (goiter and anemias), diseases of early infancy, venereal diseases, measles,

and whooping cough. The most frequent causes of death in 1970 were gastroenteritis and dysentery, vascular and cardiac lesions, pneumonia and bronchial pneumonia, and infectious and parasitic diseases.

Immunization programs have drastically reduced the incidence of such diseases as poliomyelitis, tetanus, smallpox, and diphtheria, and the government has initiated a program for vaccination against measles. Compulsory immunization against typhoid fever, whooping cough, and diphtheria are required for all children. Malaria, once a serious problem on the north coast, has been brought partially under control.

A number of traditional practices not only hinder the proper diagnosis and treatment of diseases but often adversely affect the patient's recovery. A large portion of the population rarely consults a physician except as a last resort after traditional folk remedies have failed. There is a common belief that periodic use of laxatives is necessary to good health and particularly beneficial in the treatment of diarrhea. This treatment, combined with the prevalent use of a liquid diet for the ill, may weaken an already malnourished patient. Liquid diets are frequently used in the convalescence from childhood diseases, with severe malnutrition as a result. A superstition which sometimes obstructs diagnosis of venereal disease is the belief that the extraction of blood for tests weakens the patient.

The most important diseases to which foreigners may be exposed are helminthic and parasitic diseases; acute enteric infections, such as amebic and bacillary dysenteries, salmonellosis, and nonspecified diarrheas; malaria, which is prevalent in the coastal areas; respiratory tuberculosis and other acute respiratory diseases; and venereal diseases. In addition, poliomyelitis is potentially dangerous should control measures be neglected.

Livestock health is poor. Regular veterinary supervision is given only to a few purebred herds, and control measures for most diseases are generally lacking. There were only 15 veterinarians in Honduras in 1967. Animal diseases transmittable to man are mainly rabies, anthrax, brucellosis, and hydatidosis. Of these, rabies is the most serious threat.

2. Medical care

For administrative purposes the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance divides the country into seven health districts. The quantity and quality of health services are unequally distributed throughout the country. The public health program is handicapped by inadequacy of facilities and equipment, by a lack of administrative and technical personnel, and by political influence in the appointment of personnel. The Ministry is financially and technically unable to provide countrywide services either in curative or preventive medicine.

In 1969 there were only 39 hospitals (32 general, three maternity, one mental institution, one tuberculosis sanitarium, and two others of undetermined type) and approximately 1.7 beds per 1,000 population. Only Haiti has a lower hospital bed to population ratio in Latin America. Most hospitals are small—less than 50 beds capacity. Only 10 have more than 100 beds, the largest being the 999-bed *Hospital General y Asilo de Invalidos* in Tegucigalpa. The government operates 11 other hospitals including most of the remaining larger ones.

Hospitals in Honduras are unevenly distributed throughout the country; approximately half of all facilities are located in the three areas of Tegucigalpa–Comayaguela, San Pedro Sula, and La Ceiba. There are no hospitals in Intibuca, Islas de la Bahia, La Paz, Lempira, Ocotepeque, and Valle Departments, and the single facilities in El Paraiso, Gracias a Dios, and Yoro Departments have 15, six, and 24 beds, respectively. Almost all hospitals are overcrowded, sparsely equipped, and understaffed, especially in nursing personnel. For example, the National Neuropsychiatric Hospital, opened in 1960 in Tegucigalpa as the country's only mental institution, was designed for 224 patients but was accommodating 514 in 1966.

In order to reach the smaller towns and rural areas with medical care, the government has established about 129 clinics devoted mostly to outpatient treatment, although a few have one or two beds for temporary emergency care. These clinics are of three types: health centers (of which there are eight or 10), health subcenters (about 70), and health posts (about 50). A health center normally is staffed by two or more full-time physicians, plus part-time specialists, a graduate nurse, and several nurses aides. It usually is supplied with equipment for clinics, wards, and laboratories, including instruments for diagnosis and treatment, X-ray equipment, and special drugs. A subcenter, commonly administered by a graduate nurse or an intern, is equipped with supplies similar to those of the health center, except for X-ray machinery. Most often found in villages, the health post, little more than a first-aid station, is in the charge of a trained nurse or more likely, a nurse's aide. All of the public health clinics offer maternal and child care; in 1968, approximately 24 also provided dental care, and two had special facilities for dealing with problems of mental health.

In addition to the regular public health centers, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance operates 10 mobile units which provide health services in rural areas. The mobile health unit program was begun with assistance from AID in 1962. For persons in remote areas, the armed forces under a civic action program have sometimes helped by airlifting medical supplies and personnel. This airlift procedure and the mobile units could be used for disaster relief in case of emergency.

In 1969 Honduras had 611 doctors, roughly 2.3 per 10,000 inhabitants, a per capita figure lower than any other Latin American country except Guatemala and Haiti. Medical training is given by the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the National University, granting the degree of Doctor of Medicine and Surgery. A candidate for this degree must attend classes for 7 years, after which he must serve as a medical officer in rural areas for 6 months. He must then pass written, oral, practical, and clinical examinations and present a thesis to the Board of Examiners dealing with some problem he studied while serving as a medical officer. Despite these requirements, most Honduran physicians are of mediocre competence. Even the more competent, however, are seriously handicapped by overwork, lack of nursing assistance, and inadequacy of laboratory facilities.

Dentists, even more than doctors, are concentrated in urban areas, and their numbers are extremely small. In 1969 there were only 138 dentists in the country, and fewer than 50 dental students were enrolled in the National University. The degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery is awarded by the Faculty of Odontology after 6 years of study.

The most serious lack of public health personnel is the shortage of nurses. In 1969 Honduras had 318 graduate nurses, or 1.2 per 10,000 population. A 3-year course in nursing is offered at the National University. Small numbers of nurses have also been trained in other countries and at the private nursing school in La Ceiba operated by the Standard Fruit Co. hospital, Vicente d'Antoni, and at the Evangelical Hospital nursing school in Siguatepeque. Auxiliary or practical nurses numbered 1,300, a ratio of 5.0 per 10,000 population. An 18-month training course is offered by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, and some private hospitals train their own practical nurses.

There is an acute shortage of qualified technicians in the fields of health education, laboratory services, sanitary engineering, water management, and veterinary service.

G. Religion

Honduras is a predominantly Catholic country, with perhaps 97% of the population professing at least nominal adherence to the Catholic faith. Although outward manifestations of the faith abound, it is generally agreed that the church has had less influence in shaping national life than in most other Latin American countries. Moreover, the average Honduran Catholic is generally unaware of and little concerned with the precepts of his church. Women are generally close to the church, but men, if not openly anticlerical, are at least indifferent to religion and seldom participate. (U/OU)

The present (1965) Constitution guarantees the free exercise of all religions provided they are not disruptive to public order or harmful to public morals. Clergymen may not run for public office, and their involvement in politics is somewhat restricted. The only financial assistance given any religion by the state is a small subsidy to the Catholic Church to help support its educational activities. (U/OU)

1. Roman Catholic Church (C)

Formerly subordinate to the archbishop of Guatemala, Honduras became an ecclesiastical province in its own right in 1916. There is one archdiocese (Tegucigalpa), three dioceses (Comayagua, San Pedro Sula, and Santa Rosa de Copan), and two prelatures (Choluteca and Olancho). The Archbishop of Tegucigalpa is the highest church official in Honduras; he is assisted by an auxiliary bishop. The other five jurisdictions are headed by bishops. The country is further subdivided into 109 parishes.

Because the church is poor and because Hondurans generally try to improve their economic standing, most families encourage their sons to go into business or a profession and actively discourage them from entering the priesthood. For this reason there is a severe shortage of priests in the country—only 229 for some 2.6 million nominal Catholics, or an average of about 11,518 per priest. This is less than one-tenth the ratio in the United States and at least four to five times the number a priest can adequately serve. Furthermore, only 65 of the priests are diocesan priests; the other 164 are members of religious orders, but many of these are assigned parish responsibilities. Around the capital city the ratio of priests to parishioners is more favorable, perhaps half the average number of parishioners, but in rural areas parishes of over 15,000 are not uncommon. Honduras must, therefore, depend heavily on the services of foreign clergy. About 75% of

the clergy are foreign—mostly from Spain, the United States, Germany, and Canada. Only two of the seven prelates (the Archbishop of Tegucigalpa and the Bishop of Santa Rosa de Copan) are native Hondurans.

Priests of religious orders not assigned to parish work are engaged in education, social action, and missionary work. In addition, there are 217 brothers and 291 nuns, many of them engaged in teaching in the 53 schools operated by the Catholic Church—enrolling about 6% of the nation's students.

The Honduran church is basically conservative, although not reactionary. Since 1962 it has been outspokenly anti-Communist, and demonstrations led by the church were instrumental in causing the government to break relations with the Castro regime in Cuba. During the late 1960's the church began to show increasing concern for social welfare and a willingness to listen to liberal trends within the clergy. In 1969 Archbishop Hector Enrique Santos Hernandez established a Senate of Priests so that differing opinions could be discussed. He and other members of the hierarchy have encouraged some lay participation in church affairs and have publicly endorsed land reform. One of the most successful social projects has been the radio schools. These were started by the church and later taken over by a lay group called Honduran Popular Cultural Action (ACPH). They still receive financial support from the church, and much of the leadership is clerical. Broadcasting through the facilities of *Radio Catolica*, the radio schools have taught thousands of Honduran campesinos to read and write, instructed them in the basics of nutrition and hygiene, upgraded agricultural practices, and assisted in the formation of rural cooperatives.

As minimal as church activities have been in the social field, the church has found that it must pursue its projects with a degree of caution in order not to antagonize the government. Thus far, no official anger has been directed at the church, but individual priests, generally foreign born, have been subjected to harassment if their activities in any way smack of political opposition.

2. Protestant denominations (U/OU)

Although nearly two dozen Protestant groups are active in Honduras, the total Protestant community is small, accounting for no more than 2.5% of the population. The largest is the Methodist Church with approximately 14,000 adherents, located mostly in the Bay Islands and along the north coast. Eleven other denominations have congregations totaling 1,000 or more (Figure 10). Except for the Methodists, who maintain ties with the British Methodist Missionary Society, Protestant endeavors are at least partly supported by the parent church in the United States. Nearly 200 U.S. Protestant missionaries, including 75 ordained ministers are active in Honduras. Many churches, however, are training Hondurans to assume leadership roles in church affairs and are gradually moving toward self-supporting "national" churches under indigenous leadership. Hondurans now outnumber foreigners almost four to one among ordained ministers, but no group has yet relinquished financial and staff assistance from abroad.

Most denominations are engaged in some kind of health, educational, or welfare activity. Noteworthy in such endeavors are the Central American Mission which operates a school, a clinic, and the *Hospital Evangelica* which includes one of the country's two nursing schools; the Evangelical and Reformed Church which operates two hospitals, three clinics, and five schools; and the Evangelical Mennonite Church which operates two clinics and a school. Protestant activity is directed primarily toward groups outside the dominant mestizo portion of the population, such as the Negro communities in the Bay Islands and along the north coast and remote Indian communities.

3. Other religions (U/OU)

Orthodox Christianity is represented by the Syrian Orthodox Church. San Pedro Sula is the seat of the church's Central American Diocese, which is subordinate to the Metropolitan See of North America headquartered in Toledo, Ohio. The 300 or more members, most located in San Pedro Sula, are nearly all of Lebanese extraction.

Although there has been a small Jewish community in Honduras since the 1920's, most Jews in the country arrived shortly after World War II. In 1969, three-fourths of the Jewish community, estimated at 150 members, lived in Tegucigalpa. Informal services are held periodically in the homes of various individuals, because there is no synagogue or rabbi in the country.

H. Education

1. Role of education in society (U/OU)

Honduras has one of the least effective school systems in Latin America. The attitude toward education has its roots in a colonial society in which formal education was the exclusive preserve of upper class males. While the ratio of males to females in the

FIGURE 10. Data on Protestant denominations and missions, 1968 (U/OU)

DENOMINATION OR MISSION	YEAR ACTIVITY BEGUN	PLACES OF REGULAR WORSHIP	COMMUNICANT MEMBERS	TOTAL COMMUNITY	COMMENT
Assemblies of God	1940	94	1,243	4,956	Activity centered in the areas of Santa Rosa de Copan and San Marcos de Colon. Operates a Bible school in Santa Rosa de Copan.
Baptist Mid-Missions	1955	4	17	126	Works among English-speaking persons on the Bay Islands and northern coast.
Central American Mission (nondenominational).	1896	76	1,417	4,868	Centered in the western and central highlands. Operates a school, a clinic, and the *Hospital Evangelica* in Siguatepeque.
Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.)	*na*	48	2,050	6,675	
Church of the United Brethern in Christ.	1921	13	287	927	Active along the Caribbean coast in the eastern part of Gracias a Dios Department.
Conservative Baptist Church	1951	10	161	1,330	Works among English-speaking Negroes in La Ceiba and in the Islas de la Bahia
Episcopal Church	1956	7	323	619	Supported in part by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. Operates one clinic.
Evangelical and Reformed Church	1921	20	1,000	2,000	A national church supported in part by the U.S. United Church of Christ. Centered in San Pedro Sula. Operates two hospitals, three clinics, and five schools.
Evangelical Lutheran Church	1954	1	88	*na*	In Tegucigalpa.
Evangelical Mennonite Church	1950	23	150	650	Active in Gualaco, Guanaja, La Ceiba, Tegucigalpa, Tocoa, and Trujillo. Operates two clinics and one school.
Friends Church	1909	22	1,068	3,000	Sponsored by California Yearly Meeting, Friends Church.
International Church of the Four-square Gospel.	1952	7	310	1,000	Runs a Bible school.
Methodist Church	*1883	35	2,326	13,959	Outgrowth of the British Methodist Missionary Society work. Centered in the Islas de la Bahia and along the northern coast.
Moravian Church	1930	25	1,722	2,483	Active among the Misquito Indians in Gracias a Dios Department.
Seventh-day Adventist Church	1918	24	2,471	6,381	
Southern Baptist Convention	1954	32	381	1,747	Sponsors a Bible school and one clinic.
Wesleyan Methodist Mission	1957	6	105	300	
World Gospel Mission	1943	55	300	1,000	Centered in Tegucigalpa. Operates two schools.

NOTE—Other religious groups active in Honduras include the Campus Crusade for Christ, Congregational Methodist Church, Missionary Aviation Fellowship, World Baptist Fellowship, and World Wide Missions.

na Data not available.

*Established in the Islas de la Bahia in 1859.

lower grades is coming into balance and basic education is reaching more people, the system, especially at the upper levels, retains an elitist character. Even at the university level, however, Honduran education has the lowest standards in Central America.

Despite an increase since 1950 in the percentage of literates in the population 10 years of age and over, Honduras continues to be one of the least literate nations of the hemisphere. Literacy is officially defined in Honduras as the ability of a person to read and write simple sentences in any language. On this basis the estimated rate for Honduras increased from 35.2% in 1950 to 47.3% in 1961 and to the estimated 57.4% in 1970. In 1970 only Bolivia, Guatemala, and Haiti had lower literacy rates. These rates do not

reflect functional literacy—frequently considered the equivalent of 4 years of schooling; functional literacy in 1961 was about 30% and probably had not increased beyond 35% by 1970. In general, the areas around the capital city, in the departments along the north coast, and in the Bay Islands recorded literacy rates higher than the national average. Urban literacy percentages consistently run about twice that of rural areas because of the disparity in educational facilities.

Education is free and theoretically compulsory for all persons ages 7 to 15 inclusive. The educational system is administered by the Ministry of Public Education, for which purpose the Ministry receives between 20% and 25% of the national budget. Public schools are under the direct supervision of the Ministry; private schools must maintain a specified standard to retain accreditation and are inspected regularly by ministry officials. The academic curriculum is emphasized through the 9th grade, giving the student the basic cultural tools with which to study a specialty or undertake a university preparatory course during the remaining 2 or 3 years of secondary school. Spanish is the official language of instruction throughout the country, and, although between 1% and 2% of the population speaks English as the native language, most of this group are fluent enough in Spanish by the time they reach school age so that language is no great handicap.

2. Educational system (U/OU)

The school system comprises four levels: pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher (Figure 11).

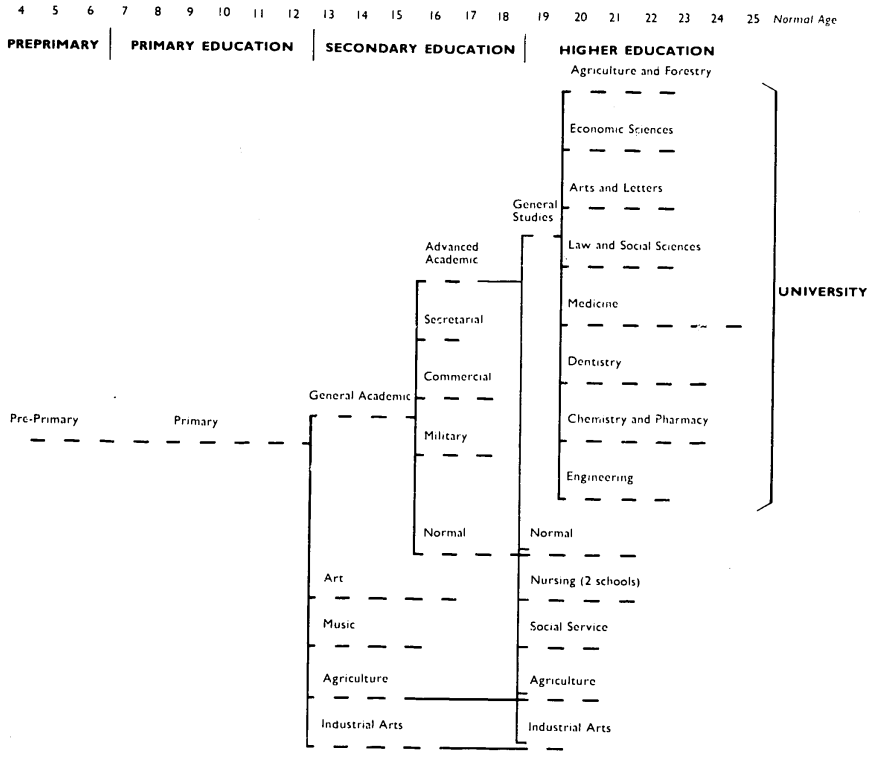


FIGURE 11. Educational system, 1970 (U/OU)

Extending over a 3-year period, preprimary schools accommodate a limited number of children age 4 to 6. These schools are of a nursery or kindergarten-type, are not compulsory, and in general are confined to the larger urban areas. Primary school spans 6 years and is generally entered at age 7. Secondary school, beginning at about age 13, encompasses either 5 or 6 years depending on the curriculum. Higher education is available at the National University and six other postsecondary institutions.

Nine years of free, compulsory schooling—6 primary and 3 secondary—are theoretically available to all Honduran children. In practice, few receive even half this number because of incomplete schools, late entry of many students, and a high dropout rate. Only 16% of the primary schools offered a full 6 years of instruction in 1965, and two-thirds of the schools offered only 3 years or less. Most of these incomplete schools are in rural areas. Furthermore, many students do not enter school at age 7, but enroll for the first time at age 10 or over. During the mid-1960's over half of all primary students were 2 or more years older than the normal age for their grade. The dropout rate is extremely high in the first two grades—about 65%, and only about 12% ever reach the 6th grade. Even though the educational system is inadequate to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population, improvement has been made since 1950 in reaching children of compulsory school age (7 to 15 years). The 1950 census indicated that 39.8% of this age group were enrolled; in 1972 it was estimated that 62.5% were enrolled. During the same years the number of primary schools has more than doubled, but much of the improvement is undoubtedly due to the government's efforts to upgrade incomplete schools to a full 6 years. Figure 12 shows the number of students, schools, and teachers at various levels for 1969.

FIGURE 12. Number of schools, students, and teachers in 1969 (U/OU)

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	ENROLLMENT	TEACHERS
Preprimary	*83	7,102	167
Primary	4,100	392,674	10,573
Academic Secondary	109	28,524	
Technical and Vocational Secondary	66	6,134	2,244
Normal	50	4,572	
Adult Education	**97	11,750	*na*
University	1	3,080	*na*

na Data not available.
*Figure for 1967.
**Including literacy centers run by Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance.

Honduran education is also deficient in quality. The object of the primary schools is to teach basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Many students, however, reportedly never learn to read and write, regardless of the length of time they spend in school. The quality of teacher training is partly responsible for this. In 1967, only 63% of all primary teachers had attended (but not necessarily completed) normal schools, which are secondary level schools devoted to training primary school teachers; the remaining 37% had no formal career preparation. In rural primary schools 85% were uncertified in 1965. In addition, a high pupil-to-teacher ratio in primary schools in many areas prevents effective instruction. The average in 1969 was 37 pupils to each teacher. Ironically, since 1950 Honduras has trained more teachers than any other Central American country, but many have left teaching for occupations which pay higher salaries or have decided to teach in neighboring countries where salaries are better.

Honduras has two training schools for the handicapped; one a 6-year school for the blind and the other a 3-year school for deaf-mutes. The latter also accepts a few students who are mentally retarded. In addition, there were in 1969 about 97 adult literacy centers teaching over 11,000 persons. These centers were distributed throughout 16 of the 18 departments. The armed forces assist with staffing these centers as part of their civic action program, as do many of the labor unions. Literacy instruction is also broadcast by radio by both the Ministry of Public Education and the Catholic Church.

Secondary education is divided into two cycles—the common cycle of 3 years, which is roughly equivalent to junior high school, and the diversified cycle of either 2 or 3 years, depending upon the curriculum followed. The academic course in the diversified cycle is called "sciences and letters" and encompasses 2 years of study preparing the student for entrance into the National University or one of the other five specialized institutions of higher education. Reflecting the traditional preference for a classical education, about three-fourths of all students at this level pursue academic studies. There are 3-year courses for primary school teachers (normal school) and for those going into commercial studies, and a 2-year secretarial course. A 3-year course was begun in 1966 leading to a *bachillerato* (secondary school diploma) of technical or agricultural science for those students who had completed the common cycle. Nearly all of the secondary schools offered the common cycle curriculum in 1969; most also offered one or more of the diversified cycle curriculums. Little information is available concerning the quality of secondary

education in Honduras. It is known that effective instruction is impaired by outdated curriculums and teaching methods and scarcity of supplementary reading materials and teaching aids. However, the quality of instruction, particularly in the private institutions, is regarded as better than that in the primary education, despite the fact that a high proportion of secondary teachers also are uncertified. The quality may drop somewhat in the future, since the primary schools are already graduating more students than can be comfortably accommodated by existing secondary schools. The pupil-to-teacher ratio had already risen from 8.6 to 1 in 1963 to 17 to 1 in 1969.

Beyond the secondary level there are six specialized institutions and one university. The six include a nursing school operated by the Standard Fruit Company's Vicente d'Antoni Hospital in La Ceiba; a nursing school operated by the Evangelical Hospital at Siguatepeque; the Pan American Agricultural School at El Zamorano a few miles southeast of Tegucigalpa; the School of Social Services run by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance to train social workers; the Francisco Morazan Technical Institute; and the Francisco Morazan Superior Teachers' College, which trains secondary school teachers. These schools have a small enrollment. The oldest of the six, the Pan American Agricultural School, was founded in 1943 and subsidized by AID and the United Fruit Company. It normally has an enrollment of about 180 per year from all countries of Latin America, but only 10% to 25% of its enrollment is made up of Hondurans. The hospitals at La Ceiba and Siguatepeque are able to train only a small number of nurses. The School of Social Service trains secondary graduates as social workers and community development leaders. The Francisco Morazan Technical Institute offers 2 years of training in a variety of technical fields to a limited number of students. The Francisco Morazan Superior Teachers' College trains secondary school teachers. The graduating class usually numbers 30 to 40.

The National Autonomous University of Honduras, founded in 1847, is the country's only university and consists of the Center for General Studies and eight faculties: 1) Medicine, 2) Dentistry, 3) Chemistry and Pharmacy, 4) Engineering, 5) Law and Social Studies, 6) Economics (Tegucigalpa), 7) Economics (San Pedro Sula), and 8) Agriculture and Forestry (La Ceiba). All freshmen belong to the Center for General Studies, which has divisions in both Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. In addition, those who continue in arts and letters curriculums remain in General Studies. The Center for General Studies, therefore, comprises over half of the entire enrollment. Law and Medicine have traditionally been the most popular faculties, but these have dropped to second and third place to the Faculty of Economic Sciences since the addition of the business administration program in the mid-1960's.

As an academic institution, the National University is third rate, even by Latin American standards, and most students would prefer to study abroad if finances permitted. Contributing to this are shortages of funds and equipment and a poorly prepared faculty. Many members of the faculties as well as students are part time. Student parity (equal representation for students and teachers in the university administrative bodies) is also responsible for low academic standards; students are able to block measures to reform the curriculums and raise the achievement level. Competition within the eight faculties for the student seats on the *Claustro Pleno* (23) and the *Consejo Universitario* (10) is keen and causes many students to be involved constantly in political activity.

3. Noncurricular student activities (S)

Latin American students are involved in political activities to a high degree, but hardly any spend less time in serious study than those at the National University of Honduras. Demonstrations and strikes, or the planning of them, seem almost constant and are undertaken for a variety of causes. Some activities are instigated in support of purely university matters, such as curriculum reform (or opposition to it), improvement of faculties, or budgetary matters. Others involve the students in national or international politics, usually in the form of demonstrations to make known the position of the students on a wide variety of issues, including support of campesino land occupations, solidarity with labor unions, opposition to certain U.S. AID programs, and expression of general anti-U.S. feeling. At times these demonstrations become quite violent, such as the student rampage in early June 1972 when considerable damage was done to the Bi-National Center, the USIS building, the U.S. Military Group offices, and the Bank of America building.

Most student "parties" are either leftist or willing to cooperate with leftist groups to achieve certain aims; none are above using violent tactics to make their weight felt. Four student organizations annually compete for control of the Federation of Honduran University Students (FEUH)—the organization to which all university students nominally belong—and for the student seats on the administrative councils. The United University Democratic Front (FUUD), an

anti-Communist group sponsored by the National Party, controlled the FEUH from about 1960 to 1969. Because of ineffective leadership it has been declining in strength since 1962 and has become discredited because it has been subsidized by the government and used as a means of controlling university politics. In April 1969 it lost the election to the University Reform Front (FRU). FRU has been gaining in strength—mostly by default—as the FUUD has declined. While the FRU previously had controlled the FEUH during only one other school year (1958-59), it had consistently held a sizable portion—frequently a majority—of the student seats on the administrative councils. The FRU is a front group of the Communist Party of Honduras/China (PCH/C), but includes some Liberal Party members, as well as anarchist elements. A third group, the Social Christian Student Revolutionary Front (FRESC), was formed in 1964 and has grown somewhat during the past several years. It does not yet, however, have the support of more than about 25% of the students. The newest group is the Social Student Front (FES), a front group of the Communist Party of Honduras/Soviet (PCH/S). In the May 1972 election for rector, the FES, although not as strong as the FRU, managed to have its candidate elected. With the financial backing of master politician Ricardo Zuniga, who controls the National Party, the FES and the FUUD were able to buy the votes of enough student representatives to reelect Cecilio Zelaya Lozano and defeat the more militant FRU candidate, Jorge Arturo Reina Idiaquez. Reina was also supported by FRESC. While the results of the election will not affect the anti-American, pro-Communist atmosphere at the university, Zelaya may allow somewhat more ideological liberty than Reina would have.

The Honduran public has a high tolerance for unrest, including the disruptive tactics of the university students. Furthermore, in a country where the educational level is low, university students are accorded deference by the largely illiterate public out of proportion to their real merit. Student groups have not, however, become strong enough to influence government policy significantly. Indeed, they frequently find themselves used as pawns by the major parties in the game of national politics.

I. Artistic and cultural expression (U/OU)

Political instability, economic retardation, a low degree of educational achievement, and a lack of energy resulting from poor health are responsible for the indifferent attitude of most Hondurans toward cultural pursuits. Honduras has produced few writers, painters, scientists, scholars, or performing artists of international stature. This situation has in turn caused outsiders to have little cultural interest in Honduras and has contributed to the cultural isolation of Hondurans.

In pre-Columbian times, the city of Copan in western Honduras was a center of Mayan learning and scientific achievement. Discovered in 1939, Copan covers 12 acres containing temples, pyramids, terraces, and commemorative sculptures, the most famous of which is the hieroglyphic stairway. About 20 feet wide and 100 feet high, it is inscribed with approximately 2,500 glyphs, the longest Mayan inscription yet uncovered. Evidence also indicates that the remarkably accurate Mayan calendar system was developed in Copan. The cultural achievements of the Mayas, however, have had little effect on their present-day descendents, only a few of whom retain any cultural or linguistic characteristics of their famous ancestors.

During the colonial period, the Spaniards did not establish important cultural centers in the territory that became Honduras. No major seats of governmental or ecclesiastical authority were located there, and, except for silver mining in the Tegucigalpa area, economic ventures did not attract large numbers of people. Consequently, few Spanish aristocrats settled in the region, and cultural activities did not develop as fully as in other colonial territories.

Political independence from Spain in 1821 was accompanied by an abrupt severance of cultural ties with the Crown and a sharp reduction in the number of art patrons among the aristocracy and the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. Consequently, finding life difficult in 19th century Honduras, most local artists chose to live in the United States or in Europe, and cultural stagnation prevailed in Honduras until the first decades of the 20th century.

1. Painting and sculpture

Although Honduran artists have employed a variety of themes and styles, the most predominant mode has been realism. During the colonial period, religious subjects held sway. Both painting and sculpture were heavily influenced by Spanish artists, such as Francisco Zurburan, the master of religious painting whose influence can be seen in two paintings of Jose Miguel Gomez *El Nazareno* (The Nazarene) and *San Jose de Calasanz* (St. Joseph of Calasanz). Much of the sculpture of that era was undoubtedly of Spanish origin, but several anonymous works such of *El Cristo Negro* (The Black Christ) show indigenous influences.

Religious subjects were abandoned in the late 19th century in favor of historical themes, primarily national heroes. Following the Mexican revolution in 1910 and the example set by Mexican artists such as Diego Rivera and David Siquieros, Honduran painters developed a degree of independence from European themes and a growing interest in their own environment. One artist, Pablo Zelaya Sierra, is particularly outstanding. Although he lived in Europe during his entire adult life and the bulk of his paintings have Spanish themes, his greatest achievements include a number of works based on Honduran subjects. The most notable of these are *La Muchacha del Huacal* (Girl on an Orange Crate), *Dos Campesinos* (Two Campesinos), and *Destruccion* (Destruction), which reflects the political and civil turmoil of Honduras in the early 1930's.

During the World War II period, two schools of art were established in Honduras: the School of Arts and Crafts, founded in 1938 by the Spanish painter Alfredo Ruis Barrera, and the National School of Fine Arts, organized in 1940 by the Honduran artist Arturo Lopez Rodezno. The latter artist is also credited with encouraging the use of authentic Honduran themes based on Mayan and other indigenous cultures. In addition, Rodezno achieved renown for his work in enamel on copper, and his painting *Tropicana*, depicting his native village, is the country's first modern mural.

Most artists of the present generation began their training at the National School of Fine Arts but completed their study abroad, usually in Italy or France. Best known are Mario Castillo, director of the school, who paints in a contemporary mode, Roberto M. Sanchez, whose works depict Honduran life during the early independence period, and Miguel Angel Ruiz, who uses themes of social protest and the macabre, and particularly favors vivid orange and blue colors. He is credited with inspiring more young artists than any other painter.

Surrealists Ricardo Aguilar and Moises Becerra are among a small but growing number of artists employing geometric design, striking color, and symbolism. Notable examples of this style are Aguilar's *Ritmo de Color* (Rhythm of Color) and Becerra's *Las Animas* (The Souls). The major primitivist painter is Antonio Velasquez, an Indian whose works have been exhibited in several cities in the United States, as well as in other countries. His success as an artist derives largely from his intimate contact with campesinos, his spontaneity, and his total lack of formal artistic training. Most of his paintings are landscapes or scenes of rural life in highland Honduras.

Twentieth century Honduran sculpture consists largely of monuments depicting civil themes. Prominent contemporary sculptors, most of whom studied in Honduran art schools and received additional training abroad, include the following: Samuel Salgado, a specialist in monuments, who later became director of the National School of Fine Arts in Honduras; Mario Zamora, best known for his bronze relief work at the National Autonomous University of Honduras; Roberto M. Sanchez, also a painter and journalist, who specializes in marble busts of public figures; and Salvador Posadas, whose religious images in wood can be seen in churches in western Honduras and El Salvador.

2. Literature

According to critics, most Honduran literature is mediocre, especially prose works, and few outstanding literary figures have yet emerged. Because of widespread poverty and illiteracy, there is little market for, or interest in, literary works, and the intellectual preparation of authors and poets is generally weak. In writing of campesino life, moreover, educated Honduran authors often do not have intimate knowledge of their subject matter and must rely on cursory information and distant observation. Consequently, their narratives lack feeling and understanding, and do not express the true sentiments of the campesino. Perhaps reflecting the mediocrity of most Honduran literature is the lack of clearly delineated schools of writing. Although romantic and nostalgic strains are common, little of the literature can be categorized.

During the colonial period, prose was largely written in the form of adventure stories, usually by descendants of conquistadors. In these tales, Europeans were heroes and Indians were villains. Among 19th century writers deserving mention are Jose Cecilio de Valle, a major political figure during the struggle for independence and the principal author of the declaration of independence for Central America; Marco Aurelio Soto, President of Honduras from 1876 to 1883 and author of *Cabanistas;* Ramon Rosa, Minister of State in the Soto administration, who wrote numerous political works, as well as *La Maestra Escolastica* (The Schoolteacher); and Carlos F. Gutierrez, author of *Angelina*, the first Honduran novel, published in 1898.

Honduran prose is largely a product of the 20th century. A number of authors have written novels and short stories on such topics as conflicts between landowner and laborer, struggles between man and a hostile nature, revolution and dictatorship, exploita-

tion by foreign capitalists, and problems of city life. A common weakness in these works is the use of objective, as opposed to subjective, development, in which circumstances rather than individuals are emphasized.

Four novelists are recognized as the most outstanding 20th century Honduran authors. Lucila Gamero de Medina is best known for *Blanca Olmeda* (White Elm Grove), a story of the conflict between love and convention, and for *Aida*, published in 1912. Argentina Diaz Lozano is highly regarded in Honduras, as well as in other countries, particularly for her autobiographical novel, *Peregrinaje* (Pilgrimage), which describes her life as a teacher in a simple, straightforward style. Her other notable works include *Luz en la Senda* (Light on the Path), concerning the historic struggle of Honduran workers, and the short stories *Topacios* (Topazes) and *Cuentos* (Stories). Another novelist whose themes relate to the oppression of workers is the leftist, Ramon Amaya Amador. His best known work, *Prision Verde* (Green Prison), depicts the abuses suffered by the employees of the large fruit companies. Arturo Mejia Nieto is an expatriate author whose novels include *El Solteron* (The Old Bachelor) and *A la Deriva* (Adrift).

Honduran poetry is predominantly romantic. Symbolism is used occasionally, but most verse is written in a straightforward manner and does not stimulate the imagination. Although Honduran poets usually express faith in their country, their poetry is replete with descriptions of violence, suffering, and injustice.

The first major Honduran poet was Father Jose Trinidad Reyes, who in 1845 founded a literary academy which later became the National Autonomous University of Honduras. Using political and pastoral themes, he emphasized moral issues, such as good against evil, knowledge instead of ignorance, and humility rather than conceit. His poetry includes *Cuando* (When), a collection of political satires, and *Pastorelas* (Pastorals), considered his best work.

At the turn of the 19th century, the most notable Honduran poet was Juan Ramon Molina, who came under the influence of the respected Nicaraguan modernist, Ruben Dario. Molina strove for realism in poetry that was pessimistic to the point of bitterness. Among his works are the lyrical *Pesca de Sirenas* (Fishing for Mermaids), the eloquent *El Aguila* (The Eagle), and the anguished *Madre Melancolia* (Mother Melancholy).

Alfonso Guillen Zelaya, the principal poet of the first half of the 20th century, was a philosophic neomodernist who incorporated in his verse the idealism of Reyes and the realism of Molina by stressing the good and the bad in both man and nature. His best known works are *La Casita de Pablo* (Pablo's Little House), *El Quinto Silencio* (The Fifth Silence), and *Echame a la Senda* (Show Me the Way).

Other outstanding poets of the 20th century include Froilan Turcios, a realist like Molina; Rafael Heliodoro Valle, also a noted journalist and bibliophile; Daniel Lainez and Jacobo Carcamo, writers of humorous satires; and Vicente Aleman, whose pen name is Claudio Barrera, a political crusader.

Little drama has been written in Honduras, only a few playwrights having emerged in the 20th century. Luis Andres Zuniga, also a poet and writer of fables, wrote the first Honduran drama. He has been followed by J. M. Tobias Rosas, author of *Teatro Hondureno* (Honduran Theater); Alonso A. Brito, who wrote *La Tristeza de las Cumbres* (The Sorrow of the Summits) and *Un Caballero de Industria* (A Gentleman of Industry); and, most recently, Victor F. Ardon, whose works include a series of humorous dramatic sketches.

3. Music and dance

Contemporary popular music in Honduras is largely derived from a combination of Spanish, Indian, and Negro elements. According to Honduran musicologists, the Spanish element predominates, while Indian melodies and Negro rhythms contribute enriching variations. Virtually all classical music today reflects a strong Spanish influence, as it has since colonial times. In general, it is considered mediocre.

Purely Indian music, which still exists only in isolated communities in the Departments of Intibuca and Lempira, retains many characteristics of Mayan and other American Indian musical forms. Melodies are based on the pentatonic, or "gapped," scale in which the fourth and seventh intervals of a regular octave are omitted. This scale produces lyrical but somewhat melancholic tones. A number of wind and percussion instruments are used, most often in conjunction with religious rituals and festivals.

In the 20th century, Honduran popular music has retained its Spanish emphasis. In recent years, however, to the chagrin of musicologists, regional folk music is becoming less popular than modern "pop" music. This development results from the increasing availability of inexpensive transistor radios which bring recorded music from Central American countries, Mexico, and the Caribbean area to thousands of urban and rural Hondurans.

Classical music, largely religious, was first played in Honduras during the colonial period. In 1561, Bishop Jeronimo de Corella introduced the Gregorian chant in the Cathedral of Comayagua and later installed an organ to accompany the singing of hymns. Bishop Antonio de Guadealupe established a choral society in 1738 for the study and performance of liturgical music at the cathedral. All composers of classical Honduran music have been of Spanish extraction. During the 19th century the noted poet, Father Jose Trinidad Reyes, composed several Masses, including *El Trancredo*, *La Misa Sabatina* (The Sabbath Mass), and *La Misa de Requiem* (The Requiem Mass). Father Reyes was also an accomplished flutist, a professor of voice and composition, and a choir master.

Martial music performed by military bands became the predominant form of musical expression during the 19th century, reflecting the patriotic mood of the early independence period and the turbulent political conditions that followed during much of that century. Bands frequently gave concerts in public squares on important civic occasions, one of their most popular selections being *La Granada*, sometimes called the first national hymn of Honduras. In 1876, President Soto organized the National Military Band of Honduras, which was directed by two successive German bandmasters, one of whom wrote the music to the national anthem. After 1915, the band was directed by Hondurans.

The most outstanding Honduran musician of the 20th century in the field of classical music was Manuel de Adalid y Gamero, who died in 1947. A professor of music theory and composition at the National School of Music in Tegucigalpa and a conductor of the National Military Band, Adalid y Gamero was also the first modern composer of classical music in Honduras to use folk melodies in his works. Among his compositions, some of which have been performed elsewhere in Central America and in the United States, are *Suite Tropical* (Tropical Suite), a symphonic poem; *Una Noche en Honduras* (A Night in Honduras), an intermezzo; *Remembranzas Hondurenas* (Honduran Remembrances), a work for the piano; and *La Novia del Torero* (The Bullfighter's Girlfriend), a spirted march.

Honduras has produced a number of other classical musicians in the 20th century. Ignacio Villanueva Galeano, who died in 1954, composed the symphony *Las Americas* and the overture *La Isla del Tigre* (Tigre Island). Another composer, Francisco Diaz Zelaya, wrote *Himmno a Morazan* (Hymn to Morazan) and *Misa en Do Mayor* (Mass in D Major); he also organized the now defunct National Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Wagner Orchestra, and edited the journal *Musica*. Rafael Coello Ramos founded the Verdi Orchestra and composed both religious and secular music.

In 1968 the principal musical organizations in Honduras included a choral ensemble of the National School of Music, the *Coro Polifonico de la Escuela Nacional de Musica*, and two chamber music groups, *Cuarteto de Cuerda* and *Orquesta de Camara*. In addition to the National School of Music, the Victoriana Lopez School of Music, located in San Pedro Sula, was providing instruction to students.

In remote areas some Indian groups have retained their traditional dances, primarily for ceremonial purposes during religious rituals. The *toncontin*, for example, is performed by 40 men in white robes trimmed with feathers and is accompanied by the *tum*. Another Indian dance, called *el sique*, is popular throughout present-day Honduras and is considered the country's national dance. Although modified by some elements of Spanish dance added during the colonial period, it still retains its original meter of one strong beat followed by two weak beats and its lively polkalike tempo.

European dance forms, particularly those of Spain, were introduced during the colonial period and the early 19th century. Among the upper class, popular dances were the minuet and the waltz. In addition to *el sique*, the dances of the lower class included polkas, muzurkas, waltzes, and Spanish tap dances.

J. Public information (U/OU)

Although Honduras has the basic elements of a public information system, the system is underdeveloped. Prevailing low levels of income have adversely affected all of the formal media. Furthermore, topography has served to limit the audience capable of receiving television broadcasts, and the low rate of literacy has acted as a brake on the development of newspaper, periodical, and book publishing. Radio is the most fully developed of the existing media, and it is also the most effective. Newspapers are influential mainly in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula.

The mass media are largely privately owned and operated, and governmental interference is not extensive. As of late 1972, the public information media were operating with almost complete freedom, within the restrictions imposed by civil law in such matters as libel and slander. Even in instances of libel or slander, the author of the offending item is

considered legally responsible, not the medium through which the item has been disseminated.

Article 85 of the Constitution of 1965 guarantees freedom of thought and expression "through any means of dissemination, without previous censorship." At the same time, it restricts "the control of newspapers and of radio or television newscasts, and the intellectual, political, and administrative orientation thereof" to Hondurans and prohibits any of the media from receiving "subsidies from foreign governments or political parties." The Honduran Government, under terms of the Publishing Law of 1958, did reserve the right to censor material "contrary to national sovereignty, defaming or insulting, designed to fool the public for commercial gain, capriciously directed against business for vengeance, or devoted to blackmail or pornography." In 1966, the Publishing Law was amended to provide protection to government officials from criticism by the media, to discourage disclosure of confidential information, and to facilitate the prosecution of journalists and publishers who expressed antigovernment views. Newsmen strongly objected to this amendment, describing it as a "gag" law on the media. In part, recognizing the objections to the amendment, the government sponsored its repeal in 1967. The episode had the effect, however, of making newsmen somewhat more circumspect in their opposition to the government.

1. Radio and television

Because many Hondurans are illiterate and because of the physical difficulties in circulating newspapers outside of the major population centers, the medium that reaches the most people fastest is radio. The Honduran radio audience has been growing spectacularly during the past decade as the importation of inexpensive transistor sets has enabled an increasing number of persons, even those in areas of the country without electricity, to own radios. There are over 300,000 radio receivers in Honduras, roughly half of which are transistors.

In June 1972 there were 102 AM broadcasting stations and 10 FM stations. More than half of the former and all of the latter are located either in Tegucigalpa or San Pedro Sula. Of the AM stations, 30 were in Tegucigalpa and 25 in San Pedro Sula. Five stations in Tegucigalpa and two in San Pedro Sula have transmitters with a power of 10 kilowatts, but most stations broadcast with from one or less kilowatts, serving a local area primarily. To overcome the geographic barriers of mountainous terrain, about one-third of all AM stations broadcast on both medium-wave and shortwave frequencies, and three operate regularly on shortwave alone. Although several stations may be owned by the same person or company, networks as known in the United States do not exist.

All radio stations in Honduras are licensed by the government, and all are operated by private interests, including religious and labor groups. The Honduran Government does not own or operate any station. Most radio stations, however, carry the government-sponsored *La Hora Nacional*, which is broadcast each Sunday to inform the public of government activities, and all are required to relay government programs during times of emergency.

The commercial broadcasting stations present programs consisting primarily of popular music, news, commentary, and advertising. News programs of 5 to 30 minutes' duration are broadcast several times a day. Although news summaries emphasize local and national topics, some stations include items of regional (i.e., Central American) or international interest that are received from international wire services.

Hondurans living near the country's borders are able to pick up broadcasts emanating from stations in neighboring countries. In addition, medium-wave transmissions from Cuba can be received all along the northern coast, and the reception of these broadcasts on shortwave is excellent in most parts of the country. Only the more powerful shortwave sets, however, are able to pick up programs from the British Broadcasting Corporation, *Radio Moscow*, *Radio Peking*, or other foreign stations. By contrast, the Voice of America is heard throughout the country, but reception is not always good in some areas.

Despite growth since 1959, television in Honduras has not become widely influential in molding public opinion. Television reception is limited to areas surrounding Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and Siguatepeque, and the audience is further restricted by the expense involved in purchasing a television set. Moreover, television in Honduras has served primarily as a medium for entertainment rather than as one for the dissemination of news.

Television was introduced in September 1959 when HRTG-TV, channel 5, first went on the air in Tegucigalpa. The station is owned by the *Compañía Televisora Hondurena S.A.*, which also owns stations in San Pedro Sula (HRYA-TV, channel 13) and Siguatepeque (HRSU-TV, channel 9) that relay the programs originating in Tegucigalpa. Subsequent to 1959, *Radio Centro y la Voz de Honduras* inaugurated television stations in Tegucigalpa (channel 3) and San

Pedro Sula (channel 7), and these were followed by a third Tegucigalpa station known as *Tele Once* (channel 11). The two "networks" and the independent station are privately owned and derive their income solely from commercial advertising.

Although the cost of a television set remains far beyond the means of the average Honduran, the number of sets in use has grown rapidly. Whereas an estimated 2,000 receivers were in use in 1960, the number had risen to about 35,000 in 1972.

Normally about 9 hours of programing are offered daily, usually from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and again from 5:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. Presentations consist principally of situation comedies, soap operas, adventure features, motion pictures, and other fare of an entertainment nature. Most offerings are imported from such countries as Argentina, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Television films or video tapes originating in the United Kingdom or the United States are customarily provided with Spanish-language sound tracks in Mexico before being imported into Honduras. Because entertainment programs are emphasized on Honduran television, newscasts have not received a high priority. Newscasts usually are brief (5 minutes or less), are often sketchy, and do not always report the latest news. Sometimes they carry still photos, but they almost never have a film version of the event being covered. Other than newscasts, few programs are transmitted live, although HRTG-TV presents some educational and special interest programs, the latter including religious services and sports events.

2. Newspapers, magazines, books, and films

The press, although limited in its circulation, is influential because its audience consists primarily of the articulate members of society—especially the officeholders and professional classes residing in the two major population centers. Although the literacy rate is rising, the small number of newspapers circulated per day is a reflection of the low educational level. There are five major daily newspapers (Figure 13) and about a dozen weeklies that publish regularly. Circulation of the dailies totals about 115,000 copies, roughly 42 copies per 1,000 population which is one of the lowest ratios in Latin America.

Three of the five leading papers are published in the capital city and two in the north coast industrial center of San Pedro Sula. Tegucigalpa's *El Cronista*, founded in 1912, is the country's oldest. Its editorial policy has gone through several changes in order to keep the paper going. In the early 1960's it pursued a pro-Castro, anti-U.S. line but altered its stance around 1966 because of financial difficulties resulting from the loss of advertising from businessmen who objected to its views. Today *El Cronista* occasionally makes favorable comment on U.S. policies. Its principal capital city competitor, *El Dia*, is conservative, firmly anti-Communist, and generally favors the National Party. It carries more straight news coverage than any other Honduran daily. The two newspapers published in San Pedro Sula are *La Prensa* and *El Tiempo*, both relatively new. The former was consistently antigovernment in tone until the summer of 1968 when the government, in a rare move, closed it for 2 months. Since *La Prensa* reopened it is noticeably less antigovernment, giving credibility to rumors of intimidation and payoffs by the powerful National Party boss, Ricardo Zuniga.

No Honduran newspaper can be rated as "good." Journalistic standards are low, and reporters admit that they often fail to cover assigned stories, relying instead on news handouts from government offices and other sources. In part the prevailing quality of

FIGURE 13. Leading daily newspapers, 1971 (U/OU)

NAME	DATE FOUNDED	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	ESTIMATED DAILY CIRCULATION	COMMENT
El Cronista (The Chronicler)	1912	Tegucigalpa	25,000	Sensationalist, opportunistic, erratic editorial policy; frequently takes National Party line and probably payoffs.
El Dia (The Day)	1948	do	20,000	Independent newspaper; conservative.
La Prensa (The Press)	1964	San Pedro Sula	48,000	Independent newspaper; slightly conservative; pro-U.S.; favors north coast businessmen; some bias in favor of the Liberal Party.
El Tiempo (The Times)	1970	do	12,000	Leftist-oriented; uses lively format, including headlines in color; contains numerous feature stories.

journalism reflects the low status and low income of newspapermen, many of whom are forced to work at additional jobs, which limit the amount of time that they can devote to their newspaper activities. Publishers are faced with high production costs and a limited reading audience that make it difficult to operate at a profit. As a result, most papers in the country lead a precarious existence.

Among the best known periodicals being published in Honduras in 1970 were *Honduras Ilustrada* (Honduras Illustrated), a literary magazine published since 1965; *Sucesos* (Events), a monthly newsmagazine; *El Comercio* (Commerce), a weekly devoted to commercial and industrial news; and *El Sindicalista* (Trade Unionist), a bimonthly devoted to labor news. Except for *El Sindicalista*, which is published in La Lima, all are issued in Tegucigalpa. Other periodicals include *Honduras Rotaria* (Honduras Rotary), *Letras* (Letters), and *La Revista del Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales* (Review of the National Archives and Library).

Foreign periodicals are not widely available, although they can be purchased in Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and other large urban centers. They include *Life en Espanol*, *Selecciones* (Spanish-language edition of *Reader's Digest*), *Time*, and *Newsweek* from the United States, *Bohemia Libre* from Venezuela, and *Vision* from Mexico.

Honduran book publishing is limited by the same difficulties that affect newspaper and magazine enterprises. Low levels of literacy, high production costs, distribution problems, and few interested readers are the reasons why Honduras annually publishes fewer books than most other Latin American countries. Probably about 125 to 135 titles are published annually, about half of which deal with the social sciences and include government publications of various types. Publishing firms are concentrated in the Tegucigalpa–Comayaguela area, where in 1970 some 10 publishing houses were in operation. These included the publishing arms of the National Library and of the National Autonomous University of Honduras. Locally published and imported books, as well as other printed material, are sold in bookstores—four in Tegucigalpa, two in Comayaguela, and one each in San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba.

Films are a very popular form of entertainment. Little use has been made of this medium for propaganda or educational purposes. In 1969 Honduras had 132 movie houses, most of them equipped for 35-mm films.

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Glossary (u/ou)

Abbreviation	Spanish	English
ACPH	*Accion Cultural Popular Hondurena.*	Honduran Popular Cultural Action
AHTEM	*Asociacion Hondurena de Trabajadores de Educacion Media.*	Honduran Association of Workers in Secondary Education
AIFLD	.....	American Institute of Free Labor Development
ANACH	*Asociacion Nacional de Campesinos Hondurenos*	National Association of Honduran Compesinos
ANDI	*Asociacion Nacional de Industriales*	National Association of Industrialists
CGT	*Central General de Trabajadores*	General Workers' Central
CLAT	*Central Latinoamericano de Trabajadores*	Latin American Workers' Central
COHEP	*Consejo Hondureno de la Empresa Privada*	Honduran Council of Private Enterprise
COLPROSUMAH	*Colegio Profesional Superacion Magisterial de Honduras*	Honduran Professional Association for Teaching Excellence
COPEMH	*Colegio Profesional de Education Media de Honduras*	Honduran Professional Association of Secondary Education
CTH	*Confederacion de Trabajadores Hondurenos*	Confederation of Honduran Workers
FASH	*Federacion Autentica Sindical de Honduras*	Authentic Trade Union Federation of Honduras
FECESITLIH	*Federacion Central de Sindicatos de Trabajadores Libres de Honduras*	Central Federation of Unions of Free Workers of Honduras
FENAGH	*Federacion Nacional de Agricultores y Ganaderos de Honduras*	National Federation of Farmers and Cattlemen of Honduras
FES	*Frente Estudiantil Social*	Social Student Front
FESISUR	*Federacion Sindical del Sur*	Southern Trade Union Federation
FESITRANH	*Feiracion Sindical de Trabajadores Nacional de Honduras*	National Workers' Trade Union Federation of Honduras
FEUH	*Federacion de Estudiantes Universiarios de Honduras*	Federation of Honduran University Students
FRESC	*Frente Revolucionario Estudiantil Social Cristiano*	Social Christian Student Revolutionary Front
FRU	*Frente de Reforma Universitaria*	University Reform Front
FUUD	*Frente Unido Universitario Democratico*	United University Democratic Front
IHSS	*Instituto Hondureno de Seguridad Social*	Honduran Institute of Social Security
INA	*Instituto Nacional Agrario*	National Agrarian Institute
INV	*Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda*	National Housing Institute
PCH C	*Partido Comunista de Honduras China*	Communist Party of Honduras China
PCH S	*Partido Comunista de Honduras Soviet*	Communist Party of Honduras Soviet
PRICPHMA	*Primer Colegio Profesional Hondureno del Magisterio*	First Honduran Professional Teachers' Association
SANAA	*Servicio Autonomo Nacional de Acueductos y Alcantarillados*	National Autonomous Water and Sewerage Agency
SCISP	*Servicio Cooperativo Interamericano de Salud Publica*	Inter-American Cooperative Public Health Service
SITRATERCO	*Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Tela Railroad Company*	Tela Railroad Company Workers' Union
SITRAFENAL	*Sindicato de Trabajadores del Ferrocarril Nacional*	National Railroad Workers' Union
SOEM	*Sindicato de Obreros de "El Mochito".*	"El Mochito" Mine Workers' Union
SUTRASFCO	*Sindicato Unificado de Trabajadores de la Standard Fruit Company*	United Union of Standard Fruit Company Workers
UNC	*Union Nacional de Campesinos*	National Campesino Union

Places and features referred to in this chapter (u/ou)

	COORDINATES	
	° ′N.	° ′W.
Agua Salada	14 02	87 12
Choluteca	13 18	87 12
Comayagua	14 25	87 37
Comayagua	15 38	88 17
Comayagüela	14 05	87 13
Copán (*department*)	14 50	89 00
Cortés (*department*)	15 30	88 00
El Ojo de Agua	14 03	86 53
El Paraíso (*department*)	14 10	86 38
El Socorro	14 12	87 50
El Zamorano	14 00	87 02
Gracias a Dios (*department*)	15 10	84 20
Gualaco	15 06	86 07
Guanaja	16 27	85 54
Intibucá (*department*)	14 20	88 15
Islas de la Bahía (*department*)	16 20	86 30
Islas de la Bahía (*islands*)	16 20	86 30
Jimilile	14 34	88 52
La Ceiba	15 47	86 50
La Lima	15 24	87 56
La Paz (*department*)	14 15	87 50
Lempira (*department*)	14 20	88 40
Ocótepeque (*department*)	14 30	89 00
Olancho (*department*)	14 45	86 00
Río Aguán (*stream*)	15 57	85 44
Río León (*stream*)	15 47	87 20
San Marcos de Colón	13 26	86 48
San Pedro Sula	15 27	88 02
Santa Rosa de Copán	14 47	88 46
Siguatepeque	14 32	87 49
Tegucigalpa	14 06	87 13
Tocoa	15 41	86 03
Trujillo	15 55	86 00
Valle (*department*)	15 15	87 15
Valle del Aguán (*valley*)	15 28	86 36
Valle de León (*valley*)	15 46	87 16
Yoro (*department*)	15 15	87 15