

cc: Melanne
file Honduras

PRESIDENCIA DE LA REPÚBLICA

Primera Dama de la Nación

Tegucigalpa, M.D.C.
December 18, 1998

**Mrs. Clinton
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500**

Dear Hillary:

Your trip to Honduras last month meant so much to the Honduran people as well as to the President and myself. We especially appreciate that you included Honduras in your busy agenda. It was extremely inspiring and comforting to know the solidarity and commitment the United States has for its fellow countries of the Americas.

November was so desolate; however, the future looks more promising. Your country's positive and generous response has been crucial in renewing our hope at a time when so much seemed lost. This has been essential in our continued struggle to overcome the obstacles we continue to face upon our path towards reconstruction. So much comes as a result of the interest and compassion of leaders like yourself.

May God bless you, the President, and Chelsea this Christmas, and my best wishes for a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Mary de Flores
MARY DE FLORES

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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PRT: FIRSTLADY SIT

SIT: ARMSTRONG CROWLEY DOBBINS GALLUCCI LEAVY MILLER ORFINI PICCONE SUM2

SIT: NSC

<PREC> ROUTINE <CLAS> UNCLASSIFIED <DTG> 190022Z NOV 98

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0152
INFO RUEHZA/ALCA COLLECTIVE
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0007
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC 3105
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL//SCJ-4/POLAD//
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAHND/COMJTF-B SOTO CANO AB HO
UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 004553

STATE PLEASE PASS AID FOR LAC AND OFDA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, EAID, PREL, OVIP, HO, US

SUBJECT: MRS. CLINTON'S NOVEMBER 16 STOP IN TEGUCIGALPA

1. SUMMARY: FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON VISITED THE U.S. JOINT TASK FORCE-BRAVO AT SOTO CANO AB IN CENTRAL HONDURAS AND THEN MET WITH PRESIDENT FLORES DURING A BRIEF STOP AT TEGUCIGALPA'S AIRPORT ON NOVEMBER 16. PRESIDENT FLORES EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE FIRST LADY'S VISIT AND FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (EXCERPTS AT PARA. 5). THE FIRST LADY'S OWN STATEMENT ANNOUNCED INCREASED U.S. ASSISTANCE TO CENTRAL AMERICA. THE WARM RECEPTION FOR THE FIRST LADY REFLECTS GROWING HONDURAN APPRECIATION FOR THE SCALE AND VALUE OF U.S. SUPPORT AS THE GOVERNMENT STRUGGLES TO RESTORE BASIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE. END SUMMARY.

2. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, FIRST LADY OF THE U.S., MADE A BRIEF BUT VALUABLE STOP NOVEMBER 16 IN HURRICANE-DEVASTATED HONDURAS DURING HER VISIT TO SEVERAL CENTRAL AMERICAN NATIONS. SHE TOUCHED DOWN AT SOTO CANO AB, IN CENTRAL HONDURAS, TO RECOGNIZE THE CONTRIBUTION OF U.S. TROOPS AND OTHER PERSONNEL TO JOINT TASK FORCE-BRAVO'S SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO CARRY OUT RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS IN HONDURAS. ARMY SECRETARY LUIS CALDERA INTRODUCED HER TO THE TROOPS. AFTER THE CEREMONY, AMB. CREAGAN ESCORTED HER TO TEGUCIGALPA, WHERE SHE LANDED AT THE MILITARY SIDE OF THE AIRPORT.

3. MRS. CLINTON WAS MET BY MRS. MARY FLORES, FIRST LADY OF

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HONDURAS; VICE PRESIDENT GLADYS CABALLERO DE AREVALO; PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER AND RECONSTRUCTION COORDINATOR TOMAS LOZANO; AND CHIEF OF PRESIDENTIAL PROTOCOL JOHANNA PADGETT. THE GROUP, INCLUDING AMB. CREAGAN, MRS. CREAGAN, FLOTUS CHIEF OF STAFF MELANNE VERVEER, ARA PDAS JOHN HAMILTON, USAID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR MARK SCHNEIDER, AND NSC AIDE THEODORE PICCONE, MET IN THE FORMER AIR FORCE ACADEMY BUILDING AT THE AIRPORT (NSC TO PROVIDE MEMCONS FOR THAT MEETING AND THE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FLORES).

4. PRESIDENT FLORES ARRIVED ABOUT AN HOUR LATER, HAVING JUST BID FAREWELL TO FRENCH PRESIDENT CHIRAC AT THE CIVILIAN SIDE. AFTER AN APPROXIMATELY 20-MINUTE MEETING, THE FIRST LADY, PRESIDENT FLORES, MRS. FLORES, AMB. CREAGAN, MRS. CREAGAN AND THE REMAINDER OF THE PARTIES ON EACH SIDE WALKED ACROSS THE TARMAC TO THE U.S. MILITARY GROUP HQS GRAVEL PARKING LOT TO MAKE SEPARATE PRESS STATEMENTS BEFORE A GROUP OF U.S. EMBASSY STAFF, U.S. AND HONDURAN MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERS. THE PODIUM WAS SET ON METAL PALLETS, WITH PALLETIZED RELIEF SUPPLIES IN THE BACKGROUND FRAMING SCENES OF AIRPORT ACTIVITY AND THE CITY OF TEGUCIGALPA.

5. AMB. CREAGAN INTRODUCED PRESIDENT FLORES, WHO DELIVERED AN EMOTIONAL THANKS IN ENGLISH TO MRS. CLINTON FOR VISITING AND TO THE U.S.G. FOR ITS ASSISTANCE TO HONDURAS. EXCERPTS FOLLOW BELOW:

"IT'S A GRATITUDE THAT GOES BEYOND WHAT THESE WORDS CAN SAY, FOR THE PRESENCE IN HONDURAS OF HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, THE FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES... MORE THAN WHAT SHE WILL ANNOUNCE AND MORE THAN WHAT WE HAVE HEARD, BEYOND THOSE THINGS, IT'S HER PRESENCE HERE TODAY, TELLING US THAT SHE CARES, THAT THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON HAS A PERMANENT COMMITMENT WITH HONDURAS, AND WITH CENTRAL AMERICA IN TERMS OF THE RECONSTRUCTION. SAYING JUST WITH HER PRESENCE, THAT YOU ARE WITH US, THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS WITH US, THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE AND THAT WE APPRECIATE FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.

THANK YOU, HILLARY, FOR BEING HERE. WE WILL WANT HER TO COME BACK. WE WILL WANT HER TO COME BACK WHEN WE HAVE DONE A LITTLE BIT IN TERMS OF WHAT WE HAVE TO DO IN TERMS OF THE RECONSTRUCTION OF HONDURAS. WE ARE BONDED TO THE REST OF THE WORLD AND TO THE UNITED STATES A LOT MORE THAN WE WERE BEFORE...OUR MESSAGE IS THAT WE ARE UNITED, THAT WE WANT TO GO AHEAD, THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE, AND WE ARE APPRECIATIVE OF WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED AND WILL MAKE GOOD USE OF WHAT OTHERS HAVE GIVEN US FROM THEIR HEARTS AND THEIR WILLS."

6. MRS. CLINTON THEN ANNOUNCED THAT THE U.S. WILL INCREASE

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ITS ASSISTANCE TO THE STRICKEN CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION, ESPECIALLY HONDURAS, BOTH IN DOLLAR TERMS AND IN NUMBERS OF TROOPS ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO RELIEF EFFORTS, BRINGING THE TOTAL U.S. COMMITMENT SO FAR TO MORE THAN USD 250.0 MILLION. SHE ANNOUNCED THAT THE U.S.G. WILL PROVIDE DEBT RELIEF OF UP TO USD 54.0 MILLION FOR HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA. MRS. CLINTON CONFIRMED THAT PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PEACE CORPS CRISIS CORPS WILL BE RETURNING TO HONDURAS.

SHE STATED:

"I AM HONORED TO BE HERE ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO CONGRATULATE ALL OF YOU, NOT ONLY THE HONDURAN CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN SO BRAVE, BUT MANY OF YOU WHO HAVE COME FROM OTHER PLACES TO LEND A HAND AND HOLD OUT THAT HAND IN FRIENDSHIP."

AFTER THE FORMAL PROGRAM, MRS. CLINTON GREETED THE AUDIENCE MEMBERS AND THANKED U.S. MISSION PERSONNEL FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE WITH HER VISIT BEFORE RETURNING TO A C-130 AIRCRAFT TO TRAVEL TO MANAGUA.

7. COMMENT: MRS. CLINTON'S VISIT RECEIVED FRONT-PAGE PLAY, INCLUDING PICTURES, NOVEMBER 17 IN THE FIVE MAJOR DAILIES IN HONDURAS, AS WELL AS EXTENSIVE ADDITIONAL COVERAGE ON SUCCEEDING PAGES. ALL TV CHANNELS CARRIED SIMULTANEOUSLY MRS. CLINTON'S AND PRESIDENT FLORES' REMARKS TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 18, IN TEGUCIGALPA. A NOVEMBER 18 EDITORIAL IN "EL NUEVO DIA" THAT HAILED U.S. ASSISTANCE ALSO WELCOMED HER VISIT AS "SHORT BUT EXCELLENT." MRS. CLINTON EFFECTIVELY CONVEYED THE MESSAGE THAT THE U.S.G. IS COMMITTED TO HELPING HONDURAS RECOVER FROM THE WORST NATURAL DISASTER TO HIT THIS COUNTRY IN MODERN HISTORY. PRESIDENT FLORES GRACIOUSLY EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THAT HELP AND HIS HOPE THAT THE FIRST LADY WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN. THE WARM RECEPTION FOR HER REFLECTS GROWING HONDURAN APPRECIATION FOR THE SCALE AND VALUE OF U.S. SUPPORT AS THE GOVERNMENT STRUGGLES TO RESTORE BASIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE. END COMMENT.

CREAGAN

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PRT: FIRSTLADY

SIT: ARMSTRONG DOBBINS FICKLIN GALLUCCI HASMAN MILLER ORFINI

SIT: NSC

<PREC> IMMEDIATE <CLAS> UNCLASSIFIED <DTG> 251617Z NOV 98

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE 9193

INFO /////

UNCLAS STATE 218906

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPDC, HO

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON TO
FIRST LADY MARY DE FLORES OF HONDURAS

1. THE SIGNED ORIGINAL OF THE FOLLOWING WAS SENT BY THE
WHITE HOUSE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF HONDURAS. THIS IS
PROVIDED FOR POST'S INFORMATION ONLY.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

NOVEMBER 6, 1998

DEAR MRS. FLORES,

THE PRESIDENT AND I, AND ALL AMERICANS, EXTEND OUR THOUGHTS
AND PRAYERS TO YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF HONDURAS AS YOU COPE
WITH THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE MITCH. WE ALSO WANT TO
SUPPORT YOU AND PRESIDENT FLORES IN ANY WAY THAT WE CAN AS
YOU TRY TO BRING YOUR COUNTRY BACK FROM THE RAVAGES OF THE
STORM.

IN RESPONSE TO YOUR SPECIFIC REQUEST, I AM PLEASED TO
REPORT THAT A U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS EMERGENCY
ASSESSMENT BEGAN ON NOVEMBER 5. THE ASSESSMENT WILL COVER

WATER SUPPLIES, DAMS AND TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS, INCLUDING
BRIDGES. THE RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT WILL PROVIDE VITAL
INFORMATION SO THAT WE CAN BEGIN TO HELP HONDURANS
REESTABLISH THE COUNTRY'S INFRASTRUCTURE. WE ARE ALREADY
MOBILIZING SPECIALIZED UNITS IN ANTICIPATION OF RAPID
DEPLOYMENT TO HONDURAS AS PRECISE REQUIREMENTS (E.G. BRIDGE
SPAN LENGTHS, ETC) ARE IDENTIFIED. AMBASSADOR CREAGAN WILL
BE SHARING WITH YOU THE RESULTS OF THE ENGINEERS'
ASSESSMENT AS SOON AS IT IS COMPLETED.

I WAS PLEASED TO LEARN THAT THE U.S. MILITARY WAS ABLE TO
ASSIST YOU AND PRESIDENT FLORES WHEN YOU WERE CAUGHT IN THE
STORM. I UNDERSTAND FROM AMBASSADOR CREAGAN THAT OUR

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MILITARY MEMBERS AT SOTO CANO HAVE ALSO BEEN HEAVILY ENGAGED IN RELIEF EFFORTS AND HAVE SECURED HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE. STILL, WE KNOW THAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE. WE ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO EXPANDING OUR RELIEF EFFORTS. WE HAVE JUST ANNOUNCED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE OF \$40 MILLION FROM THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING SUPPLIES AND SERVICES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND FOOD AID FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

I HOPE I WILL BE ABLE TO SEE YOU WHEN I STOP IN HONDURAS ON NOVEMBER 16. UNTIL THEN, OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU IN THIS VERY DIFFICULT TIME.

SINCERELY,
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

SRA. MARY DE FLORES
PRIMERA DAMA DE LA NACION
PRESIDENT' S RESIDENCE
TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

END TEXT.

ALBRIGHT

<^SECT>SECTION: 01 OF 01

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