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HQDA Ltr 525-74-13

DAAG-PAP-A (M) 16 March 1974) DAMO-ODU

21 March 1974

Expires 21 March 1975

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SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: Colonel Kenneth E. Murphy,
Commander, COMUSMILGP, Nicaragua, 20 July 1971 - 20 December 1973

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Reference: AR 525-14, Senior Officer Debriefing Report (U),
2 July 1971.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of Colonel Kenneth E. Murphy,
subject as above.
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized
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4. Information of actions initiated under provisions of AR 525-14, as
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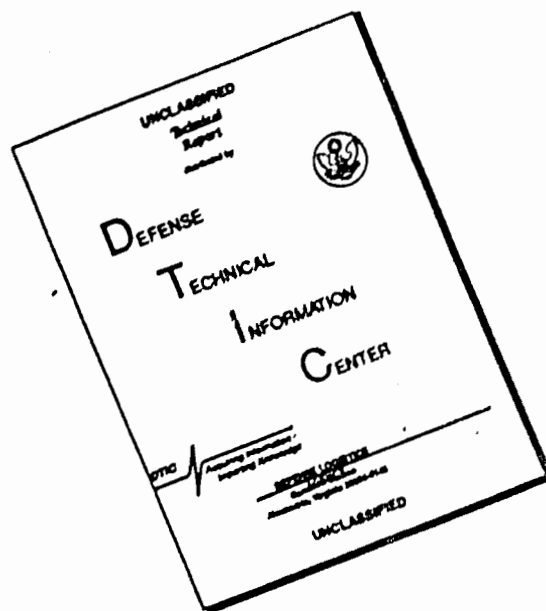
(Continued on page 2)

Verne L. Bowers
VERNE L. BOWERS
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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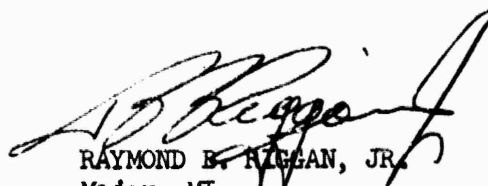
21 December 1973

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report (RCS-CSFOR-74)

Commanding General
United States Army Forces Southern Command
ATTN: G-2
Fort Amador, Canal Zone

1. Reference USARSO Regulation 600-101 12 April 1967 and AR 1-26 4 November 1966.
2. In compliance with above references the enclosed Debriefing Report prepared by COL Kenneth E. Murphy, COMUSMILGP Nicaragua, is submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


RAYMOND B. HAGAN, JR.
Major, MI
Assistant Adjutant

CLASSIFIED BY: Kenneth E. Murphy, Colonel
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
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(RCS-CSFOR-74)

Country: Nicaragua

Debrief Report by: Kenneth E. MURPHY, Colonel, GS, 327-22-6693

Duty Assignment: COMUSMILGP - Nicaragua

Inclusive Dates: 20 July 1971 - 20 December 1973

Date of Report: 20 December 1973

Reference: Senior Officer Debriefing Program, AR 1-26,
4 November 1966

I. (C) Causative Factors of Insurgency in Nicaragua. At present Nicaragua has little or no insurgency problems. If insurgency does become a problem, however, factors which could contribute to this threat are as follows:

A. Political. There is a small segment of the population concerned and uneasy about the continued presence of the Somoza family in Nicaragua's politics and that family's control of Government. There is an obvious dominance of General Somoza in all of the country's functions. It is also quite evident that he is grooming his sons for the future control of the country. The eldest son Anastasio Jr, recently graduated from Harvard University, was given the rank of Captain in the Guardia Nacional in the aftermath of the earthquake disaster of 23 December 1972. He is presently attending military school at Sandhurst in England with other advanced military schooling programmed in the United States upon his graduation from that basic officer school. His future leadership role in the Guardia Nacional and politics is evident. His younger brother, Julio, is now in his freshman year at West Point.

B. Military. The misuse of authority by some Guardia Nacional officers in the past helped to project a poor image of the military. During the reconstruction effort, along with an improved military civic action program, there has been substantial improvement.

C. Economics and Social. Following the earthquake disaster, the economy has shown rapid growth. Presently, economic and social causes for insurgency seem to be minimal. One sore point is the control of good jobs and contract opportunities by the ruling party.

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D. Ideological. Although the number of insurgency sympathizers is very small which reduces the ideological impact, there is a pool of potential insurgent candidates among the students at the universities and construction laborers. The appeal of insurgency to these two groups of candidates lies with their feeling that only a small group of persons are benefiting from the fruits of labor in the country.

E. Personal Motivation. Personal dislike by some individuals for the Somoza family has kept the insurgency flame faintly flickering. However, the lack of leadership and indecisiveness within the insurgent effort has been a primary cause for the failure and weakness of the insurgent effort.

II. (C) The Insurgent.

A. Organization. No clear-cut organization. The only significant insurgent group is the FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional). The group is very very small and at present lacks leadership. The recent incident in Nandaime (a small town south of Granada) in which members of the group attacked members of the Guardia Nacional who stumbled upon them accidentally, left the leadership in tatters in the aftermath of the skirmish.

B. Command and Control. Limited due to lack of leadership.

C. Strategy and Tactics. To embarrass the Government and the Guardia Nacional. This has been very ineffective due to the Government's intelligence network which has tab on the insurgents' actions almost continually.

D. Armament. Nothing of significance.

E. Logistics. Nothing of significance. Little evidence of continuous outside support.

F. Transportation. Extremely limited.

G. Communications. Extremely limited or nonexistent.

H. Communist Involvement. Insignificant.

I. Other Outside Support. In this very small movement no outside support is evident.

J. Intelligence and Counterintelligence Organization, Activity and Capability. No knowledge.

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K. Psychological Aspects: Insignificant.

III. (C) Local Government Counterinsurgency Actions,

A. International Relationships. Mutual agreement and cooperation exist between Nicaragua and other Central American countries. This cooperation and respect was evidenced during the past coup d'etat in El Salvador when the Government of Honduras was cautioned by Somoza not to take advantage of El Salvador's strife and launch an attack. Such cooperation and understanding is primarily due to the influence General Somoza has with his other Central American neighbors. Illegal border crossings are also controlled by cooperation of Honduras and Costa Rica with Nicaragua.

B. Government Organization,

1. National Level:

a. Since General Somoza was unable to succeed himself as President of the Republic under the old Constitution, he has now taken full charge of the Guardia Nacional as Commander-in-Chief. All intelligence, police, counterinsurgency and conventional military forces are concentrated at the national level under direct control of the Commander-in-Chief of the Guardia Nacional.

b. Civil authority surrounds a Triumvirate of 2 liberals and 1 conservative appointees to run governmental matters until the general election in 1974. General Somoza, as President of the Liberal Party and President of the National Emergency Committee (formed after the earthquake of December 1972) still makes all important decisions for the country. Although civil authorities may be used for intelligence purposes, they have no responsibility in counterintelligence operations.

c. Coordination. Coordination is effected between the military and civilian portion of the Government by General Somoza. Many positions in the Government are filled by retired military officers loyal to Somoza. Coordination within the military centers around the National Security Office, the 1st Presidential Battalion and other units within the Guardia Nacional. The Office of National Security depends on the units for information and on the Presidential Battalion for repression force. The 1st Presidential Battalion controls all major counterinsurgency actions.

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d. Effectiveness. The Guardia Nacional is highly effective as evidenced by minimum insurgency actions and the rapid capture or destruction of insurgents when such actions arise. Control of other civil disturbances pose no problems. The only problem that could arise is wide scale invasion on all fronts or the simultaneous uprising of the populace in all major cities. However, the excellent intelligence activities of the Guardia would probably preclude such an occurrence.

e. Major Weaknesses. The force size of the Guardia Nacional is not sufficient to adequately safeguard its borders or protect its cities against a major external threat.

2. Subordinate Levels.

a. Since there is centralized control within the Guardia Nacional, the military organization, authority and responsibility at subordinate levels is significant only in local matters. In the outlying 16 Departmental Companies the commanders exercise authority in local affairs in the form of a police unit. The small units, ranging in strength from 60-150 men, are the law and security for the Departments. The commanders answer directly to the Commander-in-Chief of the Guardia Nacional.

b. Civil organization, authority and responsibility at the Departmental level is minimal. The Jefe Politico of each city and the city mayors are normally from the Liberal Party and coordinate with the military commander. However, military commanders retain most authority and responsibility.

c. Coordination within civil organization and with military. In most Departments civil/military coordination is excellent.

d. Effectiveness. Departmental Companies effectiveness in their areas of operation is sufficient to accomplish normal mission. When their efforts are supplemented by other units of the Guardia from Managua, their effectiveness is greatly increased.

e. Major Problem Areas. Centralized control tends to be the major problem. The inability of subordinate commanders to make other than minor decisions hinders or frustrate operations in some instances. The lack of initiative in performing some essential duties and overenthusiasm to supplement their meager income has weakened some units effectiveness. Junior officers, fresh from US schooling are normally eager to demonstrate their skills and learning once they arrive at the units. In many instances, this eagerness is often frustrated when they get in the way of their commanders.

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C. Forces.

1. Military Forces.

a. Combat tactics used and effectiveness thereof. U.S. tactics and training doctrine are used since the Guardia Nacional receives and prefers U.S. training. Additionally, the Guardia has developed certain local tactics to deal with the occasional criminal threat in the area. Small teams of reconnaissance and ambush patrols are sent out occasionally to frustrate criminal movements. These tactics, assisted by a very effective intelligence network, have proven very successful and resulted in minimum Guardia casualties and complete frustration of would-be guerrilla efforts.

b. Intelligence tactics used and effectiveness thereof. One of the high priorities of Guardia training is intelligence and counterinsurgency training. Many Guardia personnel have received this training. The Guardia applies this intelligence training loosely and as a support for their own local intelligence efforts. Key intelligence representatives in the police and other major units of the Guardia plus its many information sources at all levels throughout the country makes the OSN (Guardia Intelligence Organization) very effective. This organization knows where practically all potential insurgents are at a given time.

c. Identity and adequacy of counterintelligence training. Counterintelligence is in its basic stages and is secondary to the offensive action by the Guardia.

2. Paramilitary Forces/Police. The Police Force is part of the Guardia Nacional.

D. Intelligence and Counterintelligence.

1. Organization, Activity and Capability. The GN-2, who is also the Director of the National Security Office is responsible for and directs all intelligence and counterintelligence operations. He is in charge of General Somoza's bodyguards and has a direct line of communication with General Somoza. Although not sophisticated, the intelligence set up is very effective in detecting anti-government activities. The system of informants at all levels of society keeps track and reports all unusual activities to the OSN through designated representatives at various levels.

2. Current information reveals that guerrilla remnants are in the Matagalpa and Chinandega mountain areas. Operations are tentatively at a standstill but could pick up with the coming election in September 1974. These

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guerrilla activities would be an effort to embarrass the Liberal Party and the Guardia Nacional. Although guerrilla presence was evident recently in the Nandaimé (Department of Granada) area, no indication of wide scale guerrilla operation in that area is evident.

3. In the intelligence area, the civil populace is periodically employed as informers as indicated above.

4. Communications. Guardia communications are excellent. The Guardia Nacional has contact with the Departmental Companies by Deskmate and single side band radios. The telephone, although unreliable, is a secondary means of communication. Communication facilities include UHF/FM, HF/FM, HF/SSB, HF/TT, RTT, telegraph and commercial telephone service.

5. Classified Documents Security. Appears to be adequate for their needs.

E. Civic Action and its Effectiveness. The recently established Engineer Battalion will assist greatly in enlarged civic action activities of building roads, wells, constructing desks for schools and constructing portable school buildings. Within the last year and a half civic action emphasis by Guardia Nacional has increased significantly.

F. Political Action.

1. Propaganda. A Government newspaper, Novedades, and several government magazines along with government radio station feed the populace with pro governmental information. Newsreel with pro Government ventures is also shown in some theaters.

2. Isolation techniques to deny guerrillas support not required.

IV. U.S. Role in Support of Local Government.

A. U.S. Country Team. Rapport and coordination of Country Team with host Government is excellent. The effectiveness of the Country Team's combined efforts was evident following the recent earthquake disaster.

B. U.S. Military Forces. The only involvement of U.S. military forces, other than the USMILGP, is during disaster relief operations and MTTs. In the recent disaster relief operation in December 72, U.S. forces performed magnificently.

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C. Not applicable.

D. Not applicable.

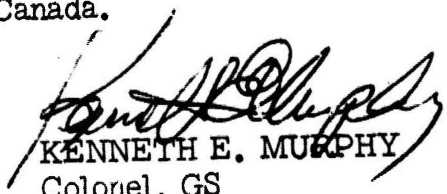
E. Other U.S. Activities.

1. CAS advises the Office of National Security in organization, training and operation.

2. Techniques. Standard CAS advisory techniques.

3. Actual U.S. Influence. Strong and effective in increasing efficiency.

V. Third Country Support to Local Government. Most of the support Nicaragua receives from third countries is training support. However, the amount of training provided by foreign sources has been limited and currently does not appear to be in direct competition with U.S. training. The GON prefers U.S. training. Most in-country equipment is from the United States, thus necessitating U.S. training. Countries having provided training in the past are West Germany, Argentina, Brazil, Belgium, Colombia, Spain, France, Guatemala, El Salvador, England, Italy, Peru, Mexico, Japan and Canada.


KENNETH E. MURPHY
Colonel, GS
Commanding

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8 JAN 1974

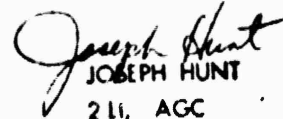
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FOR THE COMMANDER:


JOSEPH HUNT
2 LI, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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