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PRESIDENT CALLEJAS / DIPLOMATIC ENTRANCE
APRIL 17, 1990 / 1:05 P.M.

Bob

MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF THE HONDURAN DELEGATION -- LET ME AGAIN THANK YOU FOR COMING TO THE WHITE HOUSE. WE ARE VERY PLEASED AND HONORED THAT YOU ARE HERE. \\\

IT HAS BEEN A GREAT AND PERSONAL PLEASURE TO MEET PRESIDENT CALLEJAS [[CAH-YAY-HAAS]] IN HIS FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

THE PRESIDENT IS A LONGTIME FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES, DATING BACK TO HIS UNIVERSITY DAYS IN MISSISSIPPI. AND VICE PRESIDENT QUAYLE CARRIED OUR WARMEST REGARDS IN JANUARY WHEN HE ATTENDED PRESIDENT CALLEJAS' HISTORIC INAUGURATION -- THE FIRST PEACEFUL TRANSFER OF POWER TO AN OPPOSITION PARTY IN NEARLY 60 YEARS -- AND AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROMISE TODAY SPREADING THROUGHOUT THE AMERICAS.

I REMEMBER WITH GREAT FONDNESS THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF HONDURAS, AND THE HOSPITALITY OF THE HONDURAN PEOPLE, WHEN I VISITED TEGUCIGALPA [[TAY-GOO-SEE-GAL-PA]] SOME YEARS AGO FOR THE INAUGURATION OF HIS DISTINGUISHED PREDECESSOR.

PRESIDENT CALLEJAS AND I SHARED VERY FRIENDLY AND USEFUL TALKS TODAY ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS. WE BOTH EXPRESSED OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE STABLE AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONS SHARED BY OUR TWO NATIONS.

THE UNITED STATES APPLAUDS HONDURAS' PRODUCTIVE ROLE IN ACHIEVING A MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON THE PEACEFUL DEMOBILIZATION AND REPATRIATION OF THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE IN CONDITIONS OF SAFETY FOR ALL CONCERNED. WE SUPPORT THIS PROCESS AND WILL WORK TO ENSURE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THOSE IN NEED IN BOTH NICARAGUA AND HONDURAS AS THEY RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR JOBS, AND PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN HELPING NICARAGUA ESTABLISH LASTING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

THE PRESIDENT AND I EXPLORED OUR MUTUAL GOALS FOR CENTRAL AMERICA AND FOR OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. WE AGREED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING OUR CLOSE COOPERATION IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SCOURGE OF COCAINE IN OUR HEMISPHERE. THE UNITED STATES REMAINS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO HELPING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HONDURAS, AND WE FULLY SUPPORT PRESIDENT CALLEJAS' BOLD ECONOMIC REFORMS.

AND WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP ARRANGE NEW FINANCING OF HONDURAS' INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.

MR. PRESIDENT, IN YOUR INAUGURAL ADDRESS YOU PROCLAIMED THAT "BURNING IN THE HEART OF THE PEOPLES OF CENTRAL AMERICA IS A FLAME OF HOPE AND FAITH IN...THE DEMOCRATIC PATH." AND MR. PRESIDENT, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES SHARE YOUR HOPE, WE SHARE YOUR FAITH.

IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT, IN SPANISH, THE WORD "HONDURAS" MEANS "GREAT DEPTHS."

BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE "DEMOCRATIC PATH" OF WHICH YOU SPOKE IN JANUARY WILL LEAD TO GREAT HEIGHTS FOR HONDURAS, AND FOR ALL OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

THANK YOU FOR COMING. WE WISH YOU GODSPEED, AND SUCCESS IN YOUR CONTINUING TALKS HERE OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS.

# # #

McNally/Simon
April 11, 1990
Draft Two (B:HONDURAS.DEP)

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: DEPARTURE STATEMENT: PRESIDENT CALLEJAS
DIPLOMATIC ENTRANCE, SOUTH PORTICO
TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1990, 1:15 P.M.

Mr. President, Members of the Honduran delegation -- let me again thank you for coming to the White House. We are very pleased and honored that you are here. \\\

Chris Sandvoll 647-4980 State draft

It has been a great and personal pleasure to meet President Callejas [[cah-YAY-haas]] in his first official visit to Washington. The President is a longtime friend of the United States, dating back to his university days in Mississippi. And Vice President Quayle carried our warmest regards in January when he attended President Callejas' historic Inauguration -- the first peaceful transfer of power to an opposition party in nearly 60 years -- and an inspiring example of the democratic promise today spreading throughout the Americas.

Callejas inaugural UPI 1-27-90 see file

I remember with great fondness the natural beauty of Honduras, and the hospitality of the Honduran people, when I visited Tegucigalpa [[TAY-goo-see-GAL-pa]] some years ago for the inauguration of his distinguished predecessor.

1-27-86 VP schedule

President Callejas and I shared some very friendly and useful talks today on several subjects. We both expressed our appreciation for the stable and constructive relations shared by our two nations.

State/NSC draft

The United States applauds Honduras' productive role in achieving a multilateral agreement on the peaceful demobilization and repatriation of the Nicaraguan Resistance in conditions of

safety for all concerned. In Honduras, the demobilization has now been completed. We support this process and will work to ensure humanitarian assistance to those in need in both Nicaragua and Honduras as they return to their homes, their families and their jobs, and play a vital role in helping to shape Nicaragua's emerging democratic institutions.

The President and I explored our mutual goals for Central America and for our bilateral relationship. We agreed on the importance of continuing our close cooperation in the struggle against the scourge of cocaine in our hemisphere. The United States remains firmly committed to helping economic development in Honduras, and we fully support President Callejas' bold economic reforms. And we are working together to help arrange new financing of Honduras' international obligations.

Mr. President, in your inaugural address you proclaimed that "Burning in the heart of the peoples of Central America is a flame of hope and faith in...the democratic path." And Mr. President, the people of the United States share your hope, we share your faith.

It is well known that, in Spanish, the word "Honduras" means "great depths." But we believe that the "democratic path" of which you spoke in January will lead to great heights for Honduras, and for all of Central America.

Thank you for coming. We wish you Godspeed, and ~~the best of~~ success luck in your continuing talks here over the next two days.

# # #

THE OFFICIAL WORKING VISIT
TO
WASHINGTON, D.C.
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY
RAFAEL LEONARDO CALLEJAS
PRESIDENT
OF
THE REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS
AND
MRS. CALLEJAS

APRIL 17 TO 19, 1990

SUMMARY SCHEDULE

TUESDAY
APRIL 17

6:40 am- 6:50 am	Greeted by Assistant Chief of Protocol Black, Miami International Airport, Miami, Florida.
6:50 am- 9:00 am	United States Presidential Aircraft to Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, D.C.
9:00 am- 9:05 am	Greeted by Deputy Chief of Protocol Fitzgerald, Ambassador Hernandez-Alcerro, and Welcoming Committee.
9:05 am- 9:15 am	United States Presidential Helicopters to Washington Monument Grounds, Reflecting Pool.

SUMMARY SCHEDULE

TUESDAY
APRIL 17
(Continued)

9:15 am- 9:20 am	Greeted by Secretary of State Baker and Chief of Protocol Reed.
9:25 am	Arrive Blair House.
11:00 am- 11:15 am	Meeting with President Bush, Oval Office, The White House.*
11:15 am- 12:00 pm	Expanded Meeting with President Bush, Cabinet Room, The White House.*
12:00 pm- 1:00 pm	Working Luncheon with President Bush, Old Family Dining Room, The White House.*
1:05 pm- 1:15 pm	Departure Statements by President Bush and President Callejas, Diplomatic Entrance, The White House.*
1:40 pm- 2:00 pm	Wreath-Laying Ceremony, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington National Cemetery.
2:30 pm- 3:00 pm	Meeting with Secretary of State Baker and Assistant Secretary of State Aronson, Blair House.*

*Mrs. Callejas does not attend.

SUMMARY SCHEDULE

TUESDAY
APRIL 17
(Continued)

3:00 pm- 4:45 pm	Mrs. Callejas tours the National Gallery of Art.

3:15 pm- 3:45 pm — Meeting with Secretary of the Treasury Brady, Blair House.*

4:00 pm- 4:30 pm — Meeting with Secretary of Defense Cheney, Blair House.*

4:30 pm- 5:00 pm — Meeting with Assistant Secretary of State Levitsky, Blair House.*

7:00 pm- 8:30 pm — Reception offered by President and Mrs. Callejas, Intelsat Building.

8:45 pm- 10:00 pm — Private Dinner at Blair House.

*Mrs. Callejas does not attend.

Overnight: Blair House.

SUMMARY SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 18

9:00 am- 10:00 am	Working Breakfast with The Vice President, Room 272, Old Executive Office Building.*
10:30 am- 10:50 am	Meeting with House Appropriations Subcommittee for Foreign Operations Chairman Obey, Room H-307, United States Capitol.
11:00 am- 12:00 pm	Meeting with Senate Majority Leader Mitchell and Senate Minority Leader Dole, Room S-221, United States Capitol.*
12:30 pm- 1:00 pm	Meeting with President Iglesias, President's Office, Inter-American Development Bank.*
1:00 pm- 2:15 pm	Luncheon offered by President Iglesias in honor of President Callejas, Andres Bello Auditorium, Inter-American Development Bank.*
2:30 pm- 3:20 pm	Meeting with House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Facell, Room H-139, United States Capitol.*
3:30 pm- 4:20 pm	Meeting with House Minority Leader Michel, Room H-232, United States Capitol.*
4:30 pm- 5:20 pm	Coffee offered by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Pell in honor of President Callejas, Room S-116, United States Capitol.*

*Mrs. Callejas does not attend.

SUMMARY SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 18
(Continued)

6:30 pm- Reception offered by Caribbean Central American
8:00 pm Action Committee in honor of President and Mrs. Callejas, Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building.

Private evening.

Overnight: Blair House

SUMMARY SCHEDULE

THURSDAY
APRIL 19

9:00 am- 10:00 am	Morning Newsmaker, National Press Club.*
10:30 am- 11:20 pm	Protocolary Session in honor of President Callejas, to be followed by Address before Permanent Council, Hall of the Americas, Organization of the American States.
11:35 am- 12:00 pm	Meeting with Director Castellanos, Director's Office, Pan-Americn Health Organization.*
12:30 pm- 1:00 pm	Working Luncheon with International Monetary Fund Alternate Director General Erb, Blair House.*
1:30 pm- 2:00 pm	Meeting with World Bank President Conable, Blair House.*
3:00 pm- 3:05 pm	Farewell Ceremony with Acting Secretary of State Eagleburger, Deputy Chief of Protocol Fitzgerald, and Farewell Committee, Washington Monument Grounds, Reflecting Pool.
3:05 pm- 3:15 pm	United States Presidential Helicopters to Andrews Air Force Base.
3:20 pm- 4:10 pm	United States Presidential Aircraft to La Guardia Airport, New York, New York.
4:15 pm	Resume private schedule upon arrival.

*Mrs. Callejas does not attend.

April 12, 1990

PLANNING MEETING
OFFICIAL WORKING VISIT
President Callejas, Honduras
10 a.m., Situation Room

Participants:

Bill Sittmann
David Pacelli

PRESS: Bill Harlow
SOCIAL: Cathy Fenton
MIL OFFICE: Sean Byrne
COMM: Bob Simon

STATE:

Protocol:	Jennifer Fitsgerald
	Bill Black
	Dan Growney
Desk:	Chris Sandrolini
Area:	Jerome Hoganson
ExSec:	Denise Burgess

Departure Statement
Visit of President Callejas
April 17-19, 1990

It has been a great pleasure to meet President Rafael Callejas in his first official visit to Washington. President Callejas is a longtime friend of the United States, dating back to his university days in Mississippi, and Vice President Quayle carried our warmest regards in January when he attended President Callejas' inauguration. The President and I had a very friendly and useful talk on several subjects. The United States applauds Honduras' constructive role in achieving a multilateral agreement on the peaceful demobilization and repatriation of the Nicaraguan Resistance in conditions of safety for all concerned. The demobilization has now been completed in Honduras. We support this process and will work to ensure humanitarian assistance to those in need in both Nicaragua and Honduras as they return home and reintegrate into Nicaraguan society.

The President and I explored our mutual goals in the coming years for Central America and for our bilateral relationship. We agreed on the importance of continuing our close cooperation in the fight against drugs in our hemisphere. The United States remains firmly committed to helping economic development in Honduras, and we fully support President Callejas' bold reform program. We are working together to help arrange new financing of Honduras' international obligations.

We may do Castro or Environment insert. any Earth Day events in Honduras. Call their embassy

McNally/Simon
April 10, 1990
Draft One (B:HONDURAS.DEP)

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: DEPARTURE STATEMENT: PRESIDENT CALLEJAS
DIPLOMATIC ENTRANCE, SOUTH PORTICO
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Mr. President, Members of the Honduran delegation -- let me again thank you for coming to the White House. We are very pleased and honored that you are here. \\\

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And I remember with great fondness the natural beauty of your country, and the natural hospitality of the your people, when I visited Tegucigalpa some years ago, for the inauguration of your distinguished predecessor.

1-27-86 VP schedule

President Callejas and I shared some very friendly and useful talks today on several subjects. We both expressed our appreciation for the stable and constructive relations shared by our two nations.

Mr. President, in your inaugural address you proclaimed that "Burning in the heart of the peoples of Central America is a flame of hope and faith in...the democratic path." And Mr.

Assoc. Honduran De ecologica
SO4-32-90-18

President, the people of the United States share your hope, we share your faith.

The United States applauds Honduras' productive role in achieving a multilateral agreement on the peaceful demobilization and repatriation of the Nicaraguan Resistance in conditions of safety for all concerned. In Honduras, the demobilization has now been completed. We support this process and will work to ensure humanitarian assistance to those in need in both Nicaragua and Honduras as they return to their homes, their families and their jobs, and play a vital role in helping to shape Nicaragua's emerging democratic institutions.

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Thank you for coming. We wish you Godspeed, and the best of luck in your continuing talks here over the next two days.

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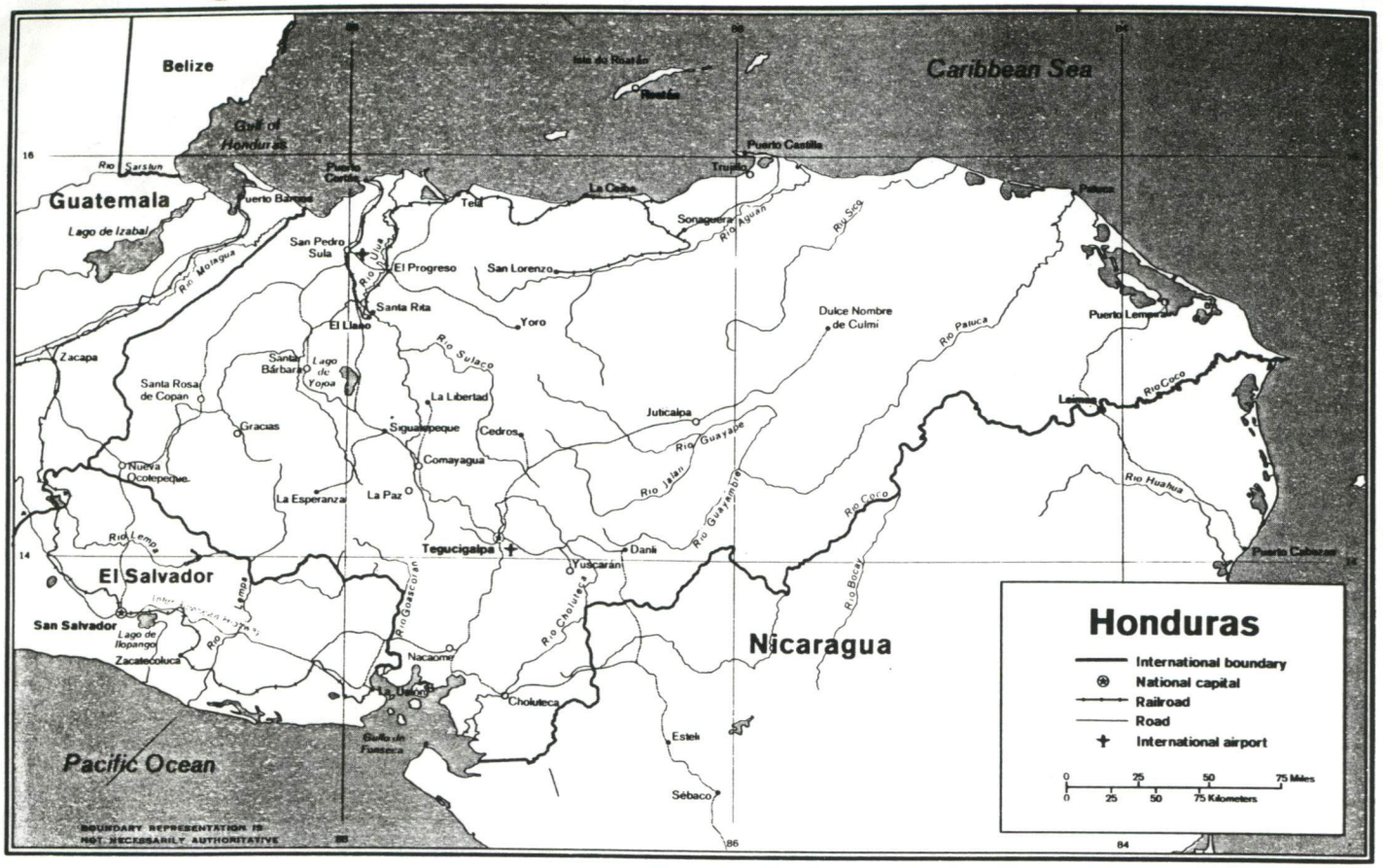
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# # #

State Dept. 9/89



GEOGRAPHY

Honduras is bordered by Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Two major mountain ranges run through Honduras from north to south, and tropical lowlands lie along both coasts.

The climate ranges from temperate in the mountainous interior to tropical in the lowlands. The dry season lasts from November to May and seriously affects the southern, western, and interior areas of the country.

PEOPLE

About 90% of the population is mestizo. There also are small minorities of European, African, oriental, and American Indian descent. Most Hondurans are Roman Catholic. Spanish is the predominant language, although some English is spoken along the northern coast and on the Bay Islands in the Caribbean.

Cultural Achievements

Honduras offers some of the most impressive examples of Mayan culture, especially at Copan and the collection of artifacts in the Parque de la Concordia in Tegucigalpa.

Several Honduran authors achieved international prominence in the early 20th century, notably the modernist, Juan Ramon Molina, a journalist and lyric poet, and Roberto Sosa and Daniel Lainez. Recent years have seen notable achievement in the plastic arts. The painter, Jose Antonio Velasquez, is famous for his brightly colored scenes of Honduran villages.

Today, there is a small but active cultural community that sponsors poetry readings, art exhibits, and musical events at the National University and at the Manuel Bonilla National Theater.

HISTORY

Honduras has obvious similarities in language, culture, customs, and religion with its Central American neighbors. However, its historical and evolutionary pattern of development has been quite different. Since the Spanish colonists based their empire in Central America on the Meso-American Indian civilizations and their trading partners to the south, they neglected Honduras.

This neglect caused difficulties long after the five Central American Republics gained independence from Spain on September 15, 1821. The disparity between the sociopolitical and economic development of Honduras and its regional neighbors exacerbated harsh partisan battles among provincial leaders, resulting in the collapse of the Central American Federation in 1838. The Honduran national hero, Gen. Francisco Morazan, was a leader in unsuccessful efforts to maintain this federation. Until 1922, the chief aim of Honduran foreign policy was to restore Central American unity.

Honduras has had difficulty establishing a stable government. Since independence, the country has been plagued with nearly 300 internal rebellions, civil wars, and changes of government, more than half occurring during this century. Moreover, with a severe lack of economic infrastructure and sociopolitical integration, Honduras did not enjoy the social or economic advantages of nationalism, central decision-making, or substantial private investment.

During the relatively stable but austere years of the Great Depression, Honduras was controlled by a harsh authoritarian, Gen. Tiburcio Carias Andino, whose ties to dictators in neighboring countries and to foreign companies on the north coast enabled him to maintain power until renewed turbulence began in 1948. By then, provincial military leaders had begun to gain control of the two major parties, the Nationals and the Liberals. After two more authoritarian civilian administrations controlled by the National Party and a general strike by radical labor unions on the north coast in 1954, young military reformists staged a palace coup in October 1955 that installed a provisional junta and paved the way for constituent assembly elections in 1957. This assembly, led by the opposition Liberal Party, appointed Dr. Ramon Villeda Morales as president and transformed itself into a national legislature for a 6-year term.

Liberalism flourished during this time, as did the military. The newly created military academy, graduated its first class in 1960. The armed forces began to professionalize its leadership alongside the civilian establishment, particularly the economic establishment. These changes were particularly striking during the civilian presidency of Ramon Villeda Morales (1957–63). But in October 1963, conservative military officers preempted constitutional elections by deposing Villeda in a bloody coup. They exiled Liberal Party members and took control of the national police, which they organized into special security forces.

The armed forces, led chiefly by Gen. Lopez Arrellano and his proteges in the National Party, governed until 1982. Civilian President, Ramon Cruz, (National Party) was in power for less than 1 year following elections in 1970, but he was unable to manage the government. Popular discontent had continued to rise after the 1969 border war with El Salvador, and in December 1972, Lopez staged another coup. Lopez now adopted more progressive policies, including land reform. His regime was finally brought down in the mid-1970s by successive scandals. His government had misused international emergency aid after Hurricane Fifi ravaged the north coast in 1974 and accepted large bribes in 1975 from the United Brands Company to reduce taxes on banana exports. His proteges continued modernization programs in



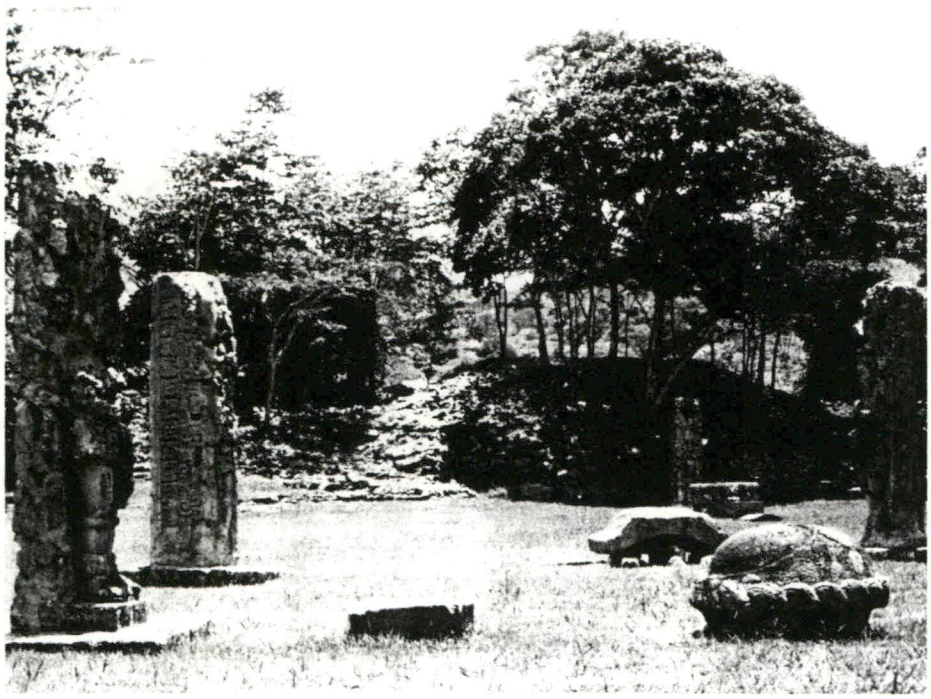
the ensuing years, building army and security forces comparable to those of the Central American neighbors, and an air force superior to all of them. The successive regimes of Gen. Melgar Castro (1975–78) and Gen. Paz Garcia (three-man junta 1978–82), largely built the current physical infrastructure and telecommunications system of Honduras. The country also enjoyed its most rapid economic growth during this period.

During this time, the military slowly prepared to turn the country back to civilian rule. A constituent assembly was popularly elected in April 1980, and general elections were held in November 1981. A constitution was finally approved in 1982, and the government of President Roberto Suazo Cordoba, of the Liberal Party, assumed power. Faced with severe economic recession, the threat posed by the new revolutionary Marxist government in Nicaragua, and civil war in El Salvador, Suazo was a strong supporter of U.S. policy in Central America. Close cooperation on political and military issues with the United States was complemented by ambitious social and economic development projects sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). Honduras became host to the largest Peace Corps mission in the world, and nongovernmental and international voluntary agencies proliferated.

Most important, with strong endorsement and support from the Honduran military, the Suazo administration ushered in the first peaceful transfer of power between civilian presidents in more than 30 years when in January 1986, newly elected Jose Azcona Hoyo (Liberal Party) assumed the presidency. The Liberal Party gained power through an idiosyncracy of the electoral law, which gives the presidency to the candidate with the most votes from the party with the collective majority, rather than the candidate with the greatest plurality. Thus, National Party candidate Rafael Callejas (with 42% of the vote) peacefully conceded defeat to Azcona, whose Liberal Party won more than 50% of the vote with several candidates running. Azcona won only 27% of the national vote.

The Azcona administration has faced numerous difficulties. The country's economy has endured severe pressures caused by an overvalued exchange rate, large fiscal and balance-of-payments deficits, and major structural barriers to investment and development of new exports. Nevertheless, Honduras has managed to maintain relatively lower rates of inflation, and relatively higher economic growth, than its more developed neighbors in the region. The government also is attempting macroeconomic reforms that should help to improve conditions in the future.

Politically, the Azcona administration has maintained relatively good relations with the armed forces, still the most powerful institution in Honduras. Meanwhile, the National Congress has for the first time in modern history become a truly separate branch of government, expressing views on both domestic and external policy. Freedom of press and speech has continued to strengthen. There are no known political prisoners, and the privately owned media frequently exercises its right to criticism (even of the most sensational sort) without fear of reprisals. Reinforced by the media and several political watchdog organizations, human rights and civil liberties are reasonably well protected in Honduras, notwithstanding occasional highly publicized cases of abuses committed by security forces in both rural and urban areas. Compared to other countries in the region, Honduras' record on human rights is quite good.



Pre-Columbian Mayan ruins, Copan.

GOVERNMENT

The 1982 constitution continues the Honduran tradition of a strong executive, a unicameral legislature (the National Congress), and a judiciary appointed by the National Congress. The president is elected directly by popular vote. Congressional seats are assigned proportionally to the parties' candidates according to the number of votes each party received. The judiciary includes a Supreme Court of Justice, courts of appeal, and several courts of original jurisdiction, such as labor, tax, and criminal courts.

For administrative purposes, Honduras is divided into 18 departments, with departmental and municipal officials elected for 2-year terms. The president, members of Congress, mayors, and other municipal officials are elected to 4-year terms.

Principal Government Officials

President—Jose Simon Azcona Hoyo
Commander of the Armed Forces—Gen. Humberto Regalado Hernandez

Ministers
Government and Justice—Enrique Ortez Colindres
Presidency—Celeo Arias Moncada
Foreign Relations—Carlos Lopez Contreras
Economy and Commerce—Reginaldo Panting Penalba
Finance and Public Credit—Carlos Falck
Defense and Public Security—Col. Wilfredo Sanchez
Education—Elisa Valle de Martinez
Labor—Adalberto Discua Rodriguez

Ambassador to the United States—Jorge Hernandez Alcerro
Ambassador to the United Nations—Roberto Martinez Ordonez
Ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS)—Leon Paredes Lardizabal

Honduras maintains an embassy in the United States at 4301 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20008 (tel. 202–966–7700).

POLITICAL CONDITION

General elections for the presidency, the legislature, and municipalities will be held in November 1989. This has raised the level of domestic tension, caused by uncertainty over the future course of U.S. policy, nagging socioeconomic problems, unemployment, and the continuing concerns about Marxist Nicaragua. Much popular dissatisfaction with the Azcona administration springs from a perception of lack of progress in many developmental areas, chronic corruption, inefficiency in the civilian bureaucracy, a decline in the level of basic public sector services, and a rise since 1986 in the level of violent street crime and politically inspired extremist acts.

The two major parties (Liberal and the National), are running active campaigns throughout the country. Their ideologies, primarily are centrist, particularly regarding national security issues and foreign policy. On domestic policy, the diverse factions within the Liberal Party tend to pull the party leftward from the center-right Nationals, offering more populist rhetoric—if not concrete programs—than their conservative opponents. The coalition-style Liberal/National government pact of 1986 has since disappeared in the politics of this election year. Nevertheless, the parties in the legislature continue to cooperate on many national issues.

The two smaller registered parties, the Christian Democrats and the Innovation and Unity Party, remain marginal left-of-center groupings with few campaign resources and little organization. They probably command no more than the 5% of the 1985 vote and may have lost ground. Despite significant progress in training cadre and installing more skillful advisers at the top of each party ladder, electoral politics in Honduras remain traditionalist and paternalistic.

ECONOMY

Honduras is one of the poorest and the least developed countries in Latin America. The economy is based primarily on agriculture, but there are extensive forest, marine, and mineral resources. Although unemployment officially is estimated at 10%–15%, underemployment is much higher, perhaps as high as 40% of the work force. The literacy rate is only about 60%. The life expectancy at birth is 63 years, while infant mortality is 60 per thousand. Honduras has one of the highest birth rates in Latin America at 5.6 per thousand. After the severe recession of the early 1980s, Honduras has achieved moderate but steady economic growth, partly due to sizable U.S. economic assistance. During 1988, the economy grew about 3.8%, sparked by strong growth in the mining, construction, and service sectors. The year 1988 was the

second consecutive year in which Honduras claimed an increase in real per capita gross domestic product (GDP), accompanied by a rate of inflation that the Honduran Government calculated at 4.5%. While official statistics understate actual inflation rates for various reasons, Honduras continues to have one of the lowest rates in Latin America.

The United States is Honduras' chief trading partner, supplying about 38% of its imports and purchasing about half of its exports. Leading Honduran exports to the United States include coffee, bananas, other fruits and vegetables, seafood, and beef. The United States accounts for about 85% of total direct foreign investment in Honduras, worth about $230 million. The largest U.S. investments in Honduras are in fruit (particularly banana and citrus) production, petroleum refining/marketing, and mining. In addition, U.S. corporations have invested in tobacco, shrimp culture, beef, poultry and animal feed production, insurance, leasing, food processing, brewing, and furniture manufacturing.

Honduras suffers from serious structural problems and must undertake major economic reforms if it is to achieve long-term, sustained rates of growth above the rate of population increase. These problems include large fiscal and balance-of-payments deficits, a bloated public sector, inefficient state enterprises, and an overvalued exchange rate. As a result, it is having increasing difficulty in servicing its official and private debt and is becoming overly dependent upon external economic assistance, particularly from the United States. During 1984–87, Honduras received about $900 million in U.S. economic and military assistance. Of this total, $605 million was in direct economic aid, including $347 million in economic support funds (ESF), which provide balance-of-payments support. Economic assistance for FY 1989 was $138 million, including $85 million in economic support funds. The Government of Honduras signed a structural adjustment loan agreement with the World Bank in September 1988, which will require strict macroeconomic reforms.

Travel Notes

Climate and clothing: Tegucigalpa's climate is fresh and springlike—tropical during the day and cool at night—except from mid-November to February, when the days are chilly. March, April, and May are hot and dry. The rainy season begins in mid-May and continues through mid-December. Heavy showers fall once or twice a day with heavy rains ending in mid-September. Bring lightweight clothes, a sweater or light coat, and rainwear.

Customs: Americans must have a passport. Tourist visas are strongly recommended but not required. The Honduran Embassy or consulates issue visas and answer queries regarding tourism in Honduras. In general, no immunizations are required for entry.

Health: Water is not potable, must be boiled and filtered, and often is in short supply during the dry season. Clean fruits and vegetables carefully, and cook meats until well done. The main health hazards include rabies and various intestinal diseases, including typhoid, hepatitis, parasites, and dysentery. Take a malaria suppressant if traveling outside Tegucigalpa.

Telecommunications: Local telephone service is adequate. Long-distance calls within the country and to the United States can be dialed directly. Worldwide service is available, and connections are usually good. Tegucigalpa is one standard time zone behind eastern standard time and does not observe daylight saving time.

Transportation: Eastern, Continental, TACA, and the Honduran national airline, Tan Sahsa, serve Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and La Ceiba from Miami, New Orleans, and Houston, as well as cities throughout Mexico and Central America. LACSA serves San Pedro Sula from San Jose, Costa Rica, and Cancun, Mexico. Limited rail service is confined to the Caribbean coast. In the cities, crowded buses, microbuses, and taxis are available. Taxis are not metered, so check the fare first.

Tourist attractions: Honduras offers pre-Columbian Mayan ruins at Copan, pristine beaches on the north shore, rolling scenery with volcanoes and mountains, and sailing and diving off the Bay Islands.

Local holidays: Businesses and shops may be closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Holy Thursday*	
Good Friday*	
Day of the Americas	April 14
Labor Day	May 1
Independence Day	September 15
Birthday of Francisco Morazan	October 3
Columbus Day	October 12
Armed Forces Day	October 21
Christmas Day	December 25

*Date varies

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Honduras and El Salvador signed a treaty in 1980 ending the state of war that had existed since the 1969 "Soccer War." The two countries have agreed to litigation in the International Court of Justice at The Hague over the final boundary between their countries and have agreed to accept the Court's decision as binding.

In the face of continued regional uncertainty, Honduras is embarked on several diplomatic fronts to achieve its principal security goals. It faces a difficult suit by Nicaragua in the World Court, problems with a massive influx of Nicaraguan refugees, spillover of the insurgency in El Salvador, and serious economic problems related to international market and credit trends. Honduras also is seeking ways through multilateral mechanisms to reduce geopolitical tensions in the region and to address the high degree of militarization in neighboring Nicaragua.

Central America is no closer to peace now than it was in 1987. Although still alive, the original plan of Nobel laureate President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, has not been viable in the face of lack of genuine commitment to the democratic process by the Sandinistas. It remains to be seen whether the Central Americans will be able to develop a workable diplomatic strategy to resolve the regional crisis largely brought about by the Sandinistas' subversive foreign policy, repressive domestic policy, and massive military aid provided by communist countries.

Honduras has acted to protect its interests by proposing a border verification program on the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran frontiers. The proposal calls on the United Nations and the Organization of American States to set up a mechanism whereby other countries (Spain, Canada, and West Germany) could lend technical advisers or even peacekeeping troops to ensure the security of the two borders. Honduras hopes to reduce the unimpeded traffic of guerrilla irregular forces across its frontiers while stemming the tide of refugees into Honduras.

DEFENSE

Honduras traditionally has sought to protect itself by maintaining a strong air force. The dramatic increase in the size and capability of the Nicaraguan military resulted in increasing Honduran concern with security on its southern border. Honduras' opposition to radical leftist forces in the area has made the country a target for subversive and terrorist attacks. In response to these threats, Honduras has concentrated on developing a mobile deterrent force with a strong counterterrorism capability.

U.S.-HONDURAN RELATIONS

The United States and Honduras traditionally have maintained close and cordial relations. Both countries have expressed a desire to maintain these ties of friendship and common purpose.

The United States cooperates with Honduras in efforts to achieve sustained economic, political, and social development. It encourages the responsible participation of U.S. investment that contributes to Honduran development and bilateral trade. The United States favors stable, peaceful relations between Honduras and its Central American neighbors. Facing mounting regional political pressures, increased economic needs, and growing security concerns, Honduras attaches significant importance to U.S. material assistance and political support—the most visible manifestation being the conduct of major joint military exercises and significant increases in the levels of bilateral economic aid.

Further Information

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Available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402:

American University. *Area Handbook for Honduras.* 1984.

For information on foreign economic trends, commercial development, production, trade regulations, and tariff rates, contact the International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230, or any Commerce Department district office.

AID and the U.S. Information Agency are active in Honduras. The Peace Corps has some 340 volunteers there, with programs primarily in health, education, and forestry.

Principal U.S. Officials
Ambassador—vacant
Deputy Chief of Mission—John Penfold
Aid Director—John Sanbrailo
Consul General—Richard Laroche

The U.S. Embassy in Honduras is located on Avenida La Paz, Tegucigalpa (tel. 32–31–20). ■

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Remarks Following Discussions With President Roberto Suazo Córdova of Honduras

May 21, 1985

President Reagan. It's been a privilege to have President Suazo of Honduras, a friend of the United States and a friend of democracy, here for a visit.

We've had very useful discussions during which both of us expressed our satisfaction with the positive relationship that our two countries enjoy. We're in full agreement that the growth of democracy and economic opportunity is essential to peace and security in Central America.

We reviewed the accomplishments of the U.S.-Honduran joint commission established last year to promote the closest possible cooperation between our two governments. The joint commission is an excellent example of how friends can work together in a framework of mutual respect and cooperation.

I expressed to President Suazo my personal appreciation for his government's strong support for our policies in Central America. Our two governments share serious concern over the threat to the entire region posed by the Communist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua and its Cuban and Soviet supporters. President Suazo and I renewed our commitment to face this challenge together and to counter aggression and subversion.

I also expressed today my continued support for peace efforts through the Contadora process. Honduras and the United States both back a comprehensive solution based on full, verifiable implementation of the Contadora document of objectives, including dialog to achieve national reconciliation through democratic elections.

President Suazo and I are today issuing a joint statement that sums up the state of relations between our two countries. In it, the American commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Honduras is restated in clear and firm terms.

Honduras is a friendly nation facing a serious threat of Communist aggression and subversion. There should be no doubt that we will fulfill our mutual defense obligation under the Rio treaty and the OAS Charter.

Finally, it was a great personal pleasure to meet again with President Suazo. Honduras is on the path to democracy—a course which will in the long run ensure its people the fruits of freedom and prosperity.

I and the people of the United States look forward to continued close friendship and cooperation with President Suazo and the people of Honduras.

President Suazo. Mr. President, this is the fourth meeting between us since I became President of my country as a result of the freely expressed will of the Honduran people.

This visit takes place a scant 6 months prior to general elections in Honduras. And for the first time in 50 years, a civilian will have the great privilege of handing over the reins of government to another civilian elected in free and honest elections.

Our emerging democracy has been subjected to the worst economic crisis of the century and exposed to the most severe international threats. These circumstances have made our task more difficult. Not everything I would have liked to have done has been possible. However, I will hand over to my legitimate successor a nation enjoying complete freedom, ready to face the challenges of the future with faith in its capacity for progress and with a deep-rooted conviction of justice.

Honduras, which has honored friendship and solidarity with other democracies, also needs it friends. It requires a clear expression of support in order to continue its development in peace, security, and with justice and liberty for all.

My visit to this beautiful country underlines the beginning of a new relationship between Honduras and the United States, a new relationship which is based on mutual respect and cooperation with interdependency. A new relationship takes into account our differences and our common interests, our needs, and our potential.

As a result of high-level negotiations be-

tween our countries over the past 6 months, President Reagan and I have today committed ourselves to a more solid friendship and to closer cooperation based on mutual respect of our own dignity.

Thus, we have reaffirmed the general principles of a new relationship in economic as well as security matters. We have decided to continue to maintain on a permanent basis the high-level commissions which have been meeting to deal with these matters and to have systematic consultations between the Secretary of State and the Foreign Minister of Honduras.

President Reagan, with great sensitivity, has understood the urgent need to cooperate with the Honduran people in order to stabilize and reactivate our economy. We have reached a mutually satisfactory agreement for the disbursement of aid programs for this year. And talks have been initiated to project economic and technical cooperation over the coming years. This dialog will allow us to give proper attention to the renewed efforts which will have to be made in order to speed up a process of economic, social, and administrative reform. The success of democracy in Honduras will depend on carrying out these efforts.

Even though social justice, the sustained development of our economy, and political participation should be the basis of our national security, President Reagan and I have evaluated the international dangers faced by Honduras, the Central American region, and the United States itself. Our countries will not fail to provide assistance to each other in order to face these threats. In the case of Honduras, we have received security guarantees from the United States.

Honduras does not have aggressive designs on any country. In the crisis faced by Central America, we shall continue our efforts to reach a negotiated agreement within the Contadora peace initiative. We look forward to a full and verifiable regional peace and cooperation agreement based on the 21 objectives set forth by the five Central American states.

Mr. President, our talks have proven to be very helpful in promoting excellent links of friendship and cooperation between our peoples and governments, as well as for the peace and security of the Central American region. I shall return to Honduras having reaffirmed my admiration for the American people, my faith in the understanding of its legislators, and my confidence that the leadership, which you undoubtedly exert, will always be present to serve the ideals that make this nation great, ideals which were shared by the founding fathers of our respective nations when they were searching for independence, democracy, and liberty.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, we understand you've pounded the table in frustration over Nicaragua. Is that right, sir?

President Reagan. I was slapping a fly. [*Laughter*]

Q. Are you going to get aid to the *contras* through now, sir?

President Reagan. Well, we'll see. We are going to try.

Q. Are you optimistic about it?

President Reagan. I'm always optimistic.

Q. Did you really pound the table, though?

President Reagan. I killed a fly.

Q. Does it have to go through the CIA to be acceptable to you?

President Reagan. I am not going to give any details.

Q. Would you like to disband Congress? Be truthful, now.

Note: President Reagan spoke to reporters at 1:34 p.m. at the South Portico of the White House. President Suazo spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Earlier, the two Presidents met in the Oval Office and then attended a luncheon in the Residence.

Joint Honduras-
May 21, 1985

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Remarks Following Discussions With President José Simeon Azcona Hoyo of Honduras

May 27, 1986

President Reagan. It's been my honor to welcome to Washington and to confer with President Azcona of Honduras. And we've had extremely useful discussions today. We both expressed our appreciation for the positive and solid relationship that our two countries enjoy. We reviewed recent developments in Central America, including the summit meeting this past weekend.

President Azcona and I are in full agreement on the necessity of working for greater economic growth in Central America and the importance of democratic institutions to the cause of peace in the region. I reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to cooperate closely with Honduras, both in helping to build its economy and in bolstering its democracy. I expressed to President Azcona my personal thanks and that of the American people for his government's responsible stand on regional issues.

Our two governments share a serious concern over the threat to peace, stability, and freedom posed by the Communist regime in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan Communists, with extensive Soviet and Cuban support, persist in repressing their own population and in backing the subversion of their democratic neighbors. This endangers all of Latin America and ultimately the United States as well. In this regard, I underscored to the President our promise to stand by Honduras in defense of its national sovereignty and territorial integrity, as is in accordance with our reciprocal international rights and obligations. A joint communique will be issued today reiterating this mutual commitment. President Azcona and I agree that our countries and the other democracies in the region must act together to end the conflict that plagues Central America, but it's not just up to us.

Securing regional peace will require an end to Communist aggression as well as national reconciliation and democratization within Nicaragua. Honduras has been diligent and persistent in its pursuit of a comprehensive and verifiable solution within the framework of the Contadora negotiations, and, Mr. President, you have our support in these efforts. The United States continues to believe that a realistic and enforceable agreement, based on the full implementation of the Contadora Document of Objectives, is one way to bring peace to Central America.

And finally, it was a great personal pleasure to meet President Azcona. I look forward to continuing our work in the same spirit of friendship and respect that was so evident in our meeting today. So, Mr. President, we thank you for coming. Godspeed on your way home.

President Azcona. It has been a great pleasure to talk with President Reagan. I believe that these exchanges of views, held in a climate of great cordiality and frankness, are always beneficial, because they lead to greater understanding and a better relationship between our governments and peoples.

With President Reagan, we have reviewed the various aspects of the harmonious bilateral relations between our two countries. I am happy to say that in the economic field he was receptive to the points I made to him. So, I am certain that his great country will give broad support to the measures which my government is taking to reactivate the Honduran economy and reduce our present high unemployment levels, as a complement to Honduran short- and medium-term efforts, all without neglecting our security needs.

I have told President Reagan about the efforts we are making in Honduras to develop our country. In this context, I reiterated the fact that our government assigns the highest priority to foreign investment, while at the same time recognizing that at present we also require the participation of government and the cooperation of friendly countries, among which the United States is one of the closest. Because of the fact that we believe in the necessity of offering the foreign investor a climate of tranquillity,

encouraging his participation in the effort being made by Hondurans to develop our country, and of offering him guarantees which ensure the protection of his legitimate rights, I have authorized the Foreign Minister to sign during this visit the treaty on the settlement of investment disputes between states and nationals of other states. This treaty will provide the foreign investor in Honduras with access to international legal mechanisms of recognized impartiality and competence, which together with those offered by Honduran law will guarantee to him the full enjoyment of his rights. In the political field, we reaffirmed our identity as a regime governed by rule of law and based on the effective exercise of democracy and on respect for human rights.

When we examined the situation in Central America, we noted with concern that conditions jeopardizing peace and security still exist. We agreed that major new efforts must be made to find a negotiated solution to the crisis, based on concrete actions for national reconciliation, on free and honest elections, on disarmament, and in general, on the creation of a climate in which freedom and security for all can guarantee the economic and social development of the peoples of Central America. To that end, it is necessary to conclude fully verifiable, juridical arrangements among the Central American States. President Reagan reiterated to me that, in accordance with the special security relationship which exists between our two countries, as long as grave threats to Honduras security and to the stability of our institutions persist, the Government of the United States will be prepared, in the case of armed aggression against Honduras, to render it any necessary assistance which the Honduran Government may request.

Finally, I would like to say how very gratified I am that in the course of this visit, the relations of friendship and cooperation which exist between Honduras and the United States have been strengthened within a framework of trust and mutual respect. Thank you very much.

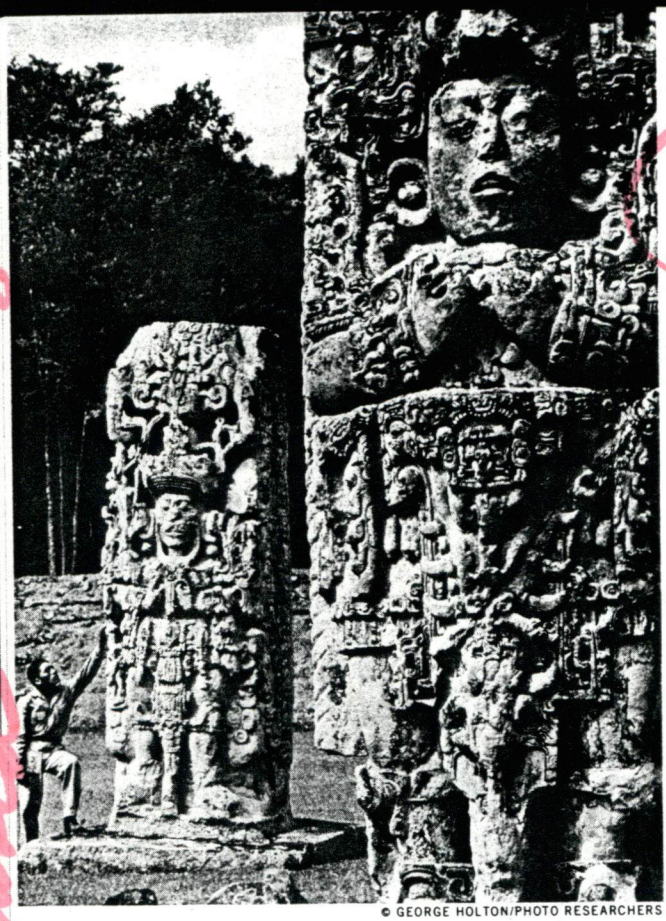
Note: President Reagan spoke at 1:26 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. President Azcona spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Earlier, the two Presidents met privately in the Oval Office and then with U.S. and Honduran officials in the Cabinet Room. Following their meetings, they had lunch in the Residence.

Honduras-United States Joint Communique
May 27, 1986

The Presidents of the United States of America and The Republic of Honduras, meeting in Washington, D.C., on May 27, 1986, recognizing the continuing seriousness of the Central American crisis and the need to take appropriate measures to protect the mutual security of their respective countries, issue the following communique:

The Presidents reaffirmed the joint communique issued in Washington, D.C., on May 21, 1985, with particular reference to the review of the security relationship. The two Presidents reiterated their governments' intention to continue to work closely together in the face of the serious threats to the peace and security of both countries through mutual assistance and the development of defensive capabilities. To this end, the Government of the United States will continue to cooperate, as necessary and appropriate, in the strengthening of Honduras' defenses and the modernization of its armed forces.

The Government of the United States further reiterated its firm and unwavering commitment to cooperate in the defense of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Honduras in accordance with the reciprocal rights and obligations relating to legitimate individual and collective self-defense and the use of armed force, as expressed in the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assist-



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Classic Maya sculpture of the 8th century adorns commemorative stone slabs (steles) at Copán in Honduras.

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HONDURAS, hon-dŏŏr′əs (Spanish, ōn-dōō′räs), a country in Latin America. Honduras drives like a wedge through the wide northeastern end of the Central American isthmus between Guatemala and El Salvador to the west and Nicaragua to the southeast. It is the second-largest country in Central America behind Nicaragua and was, until after the mid-20th century, thinly populated. Steep mountains and fever-ridden coastlines traditionally insulated Hondurans from one another and the outside and hindered its people from developing economically and culturally.

Spanish soldiers conquered Honduras early in the 16th century and imposed Roman Catholicism and the Spanish language on the natives. Although early gold and silver strikes whetted Spanish greed, the colonists were unable to find a steady, profitable export. The colony quickly lapsed into rural seclusion and poverty. Formal separation from Spain in the early 19th century afforded Hondurans political independence but left them poorer and more isolated.

At the beginning of the 20th century the cultivation of bananas on large foreign-owned estates brought economic growth and integrated Honduras with the world economy. Since then the increasing tempo of change has catapulted Honduras into the modern age, with all its advantages and dangers.

1. The Land

Honduras, which means "great depths" in Spanish, is a rugged land of steep ravines and occasional broad valleys etched into high mountain ranges. The mountains march irregularly across the country, generally from east to west.

Physiography. The Central American Cordillera climbs across the country from the northeastern Caribbean shore to the Guatemala–El Salvador border. In the south the Volcanic Highlands rise steeply from the Gulf of Fonseca, but the Pacific slope is no longer actively volcanic.

Narrow plains fringe the long Caribbean coast and the short Pacific shoreline. Wide floodplains extend inland between mountain spurs along some rivers. Within the Central Highlands are numerous basins, a few of which have wide, level floors; the largest and most important of these is the Comayagua Valley. The most extensive area of lowland is the northeastern corner of the country.

All but two of the major rivers drain in a series of roughly parallel systems into the Caribbean Sea: the Ulúa-Chamelecón complex, the Aguán, the Patuca, and the Coco along the Nicaraguan border. The two that flow into the Pacific are the Lempa, which transects El Salvador but has several tributaries in Honduras, and the Choluteca, which enters the Gulf of Fonseca.

Climate. The prevailing wind currents and the configuration of the mountain ranges interact to determine Honduran climate. Seasonal wind shifts set off the hot rainy season (May-November) from the cooler dry season (December–April). As the northeast trade winds lift over the mainland, they deposit moisture picked up from the warm Caribbean. Between 70 and 100 inches (1,775–2,500 mm) of rain drench the tropical evergreen forest that covers the Caribbean coastal region. Here the "dry" season is only a less rainy season and is shorter in duration. In the Central Highlands pine-and-oak forests alternate with grassy savannas. The highlands receive 30 to 60 inches (750–1,500 mm) of rain. At elevations above 7,000 feet (2,100 meters) permanent cloud cover propagates dense forests called *montañas*. The sharper wet-dry seasonality of the Pacific slope gives rise to semideciduous forests on the southern mountainsides.

Mountain elevation and bearing determine local weather, which varies enormously over short distances: generally, temperatures cool and rainfall increases with elevation. Valleys and southwest-facing slopes lying in the "rain shadow" of the mountains are comparatively dry because as the air masses descend they warm up, retaining their moisture.

INFORMATION HIGHLIGHTS

Total Area (land and inland water): 43,277 square miles (112,088 sq km).
Boundaries: *North,* Caribbean Sea; *southeast,* Nicaragua; *south* and *southwest,* Gulf of Fonseca (Pacific Ocean) and El Salvador; *west,* Guatemala.
Elevations: *Highest*—Cerro Las Minas (9,400 feet, or 2,865 meters); *lowest*—sea level.
Population: (1988) 4,800,000.
Capital and Largest City: Tegucigalpa.
Major Language: Spanish (official).
Major Religious Group: Roman Catholics.
Monetary Unit: Lempira (= 100 centavos).

For the flag of Honduras, see under FLAG, both illustrations and text.

Honduras contains five natu-
The Central Highlands, the most
lated section, constitute 80% of the
Honduras. Since 1900 both the
and the Fonseca Gulf Coast have
ped rapidly. The low, very hot and
quitia region, which straddles the
Nicaragua border in the northeast, is
ulated and undeveloped. Finally,
ossesses small islands such as Ama-
re) in the Gulf of Fonseca and the
off the Caribbean coast.

Resources. The mountains largely de-
Honduran resource base. Both the
Cordillera and the Volcanic Highlands
Pacific are highly mineralized, bearing
lead, zinc, opals, and iron. Al-
country has neither coal nor oil, hy-
potential is considerable. Honduras
heavily forested of the Central Amer-
bies, but good farmland is scarce. Ex-
tal and river plains, the soil typically
ly eroded, and not fertile.

Economy

Honduran economy is divided into sub-
and export sectors. The subsistence
tant agriculture and petty manufactur-
ining) employs the bulk of the popula-
the export sector is the driving force of
economic life.

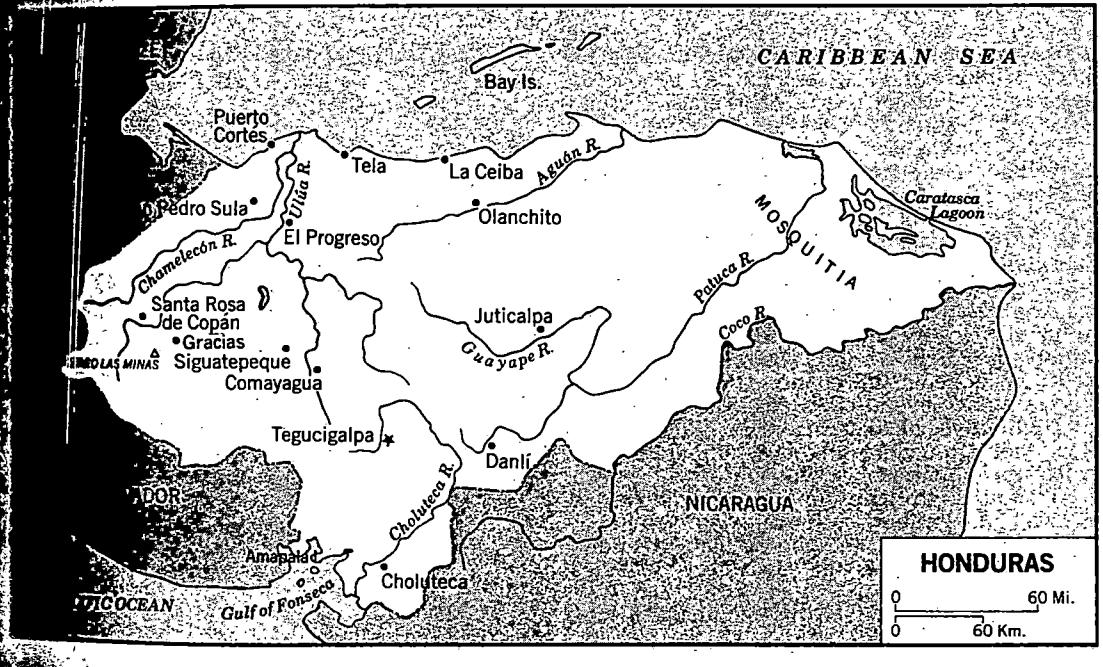
Agriculture. Despite generally infertile soil
ed terrain, agriculture has always been
activity of both economic sectors. More
of the country's labor force are *campe-*
peasants) engaged in subsistence cultiva-
maize (corn) and beans, using machetes,
occasionally ox-drawn wooden plows.
clear their small plots by cutting and burn-
natural vegetation, but because the soil is
austed and not improved with fertilizers
cinos move on to new ground every
. Cattle ranchers initially monopolized
relatively fertile valleys to produce beef
for local consumption.

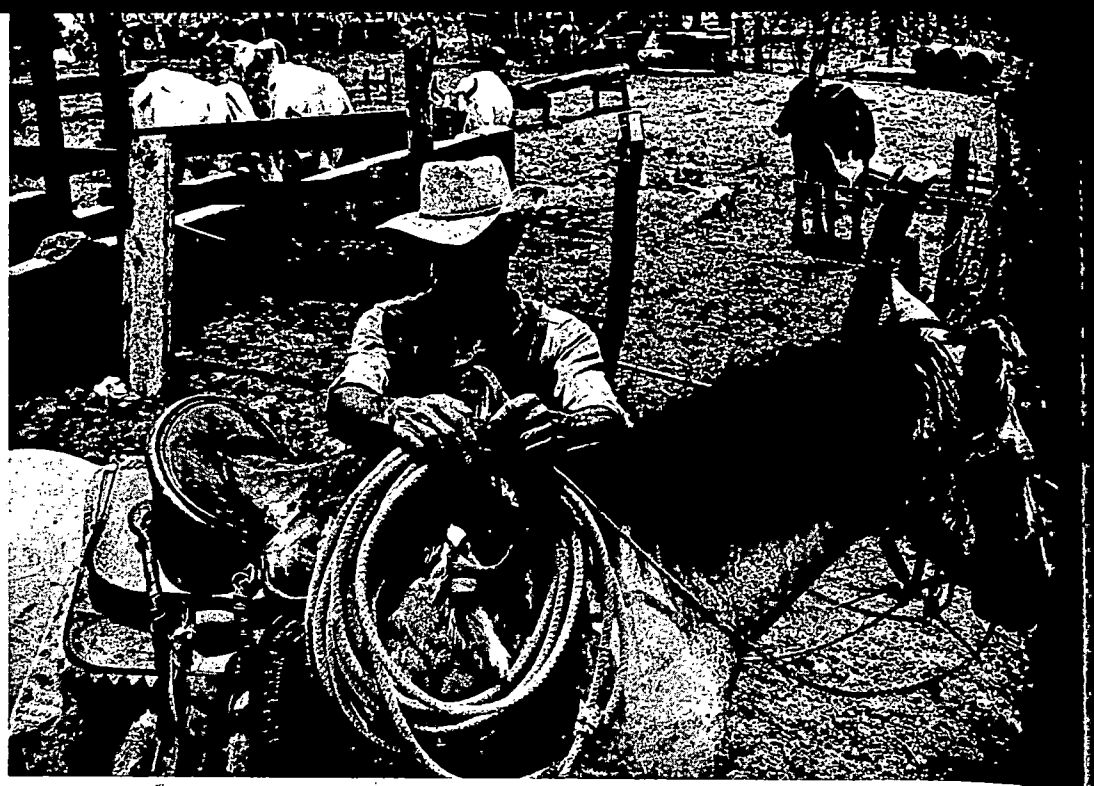
Early in the 20th century the control of tropical fevers, the rapidly expanding food market in the United States, and refrigerated shipping made tropical-fruit production on the ideally suited coastal and river plains of Honduras attractive to American capitalists. Honduras quickly became the world leader in banana production. For many decades afterward, bananas consistently led the list of Honduran exports despite their vulnerability to hurricanes, diseases, transportation disruptions, labor unrest, and fluctuating world prices.

After 1950 other export commodities—notably coffee, cotton, tobacco, and beef—rose in volume and value. Nevertheless, food production and agricultural exports have not kept pace with the burgeoning population to be fed; nor have agricultural exports sufficed to earn enough foreign exchange for the imports needed to modernize the economy and raise the standard of living.

Forestry and Fishing. Fast-growing pine covers more than half of Honduras, and hardwoods are relatively abundant, but difficulties in providing adequate transportation and port facilities have kept lumber exports below potential. The lack of meaningful reforestation, fire prevention, and pine beetle controls threatens the future expansion of timber production. Although inhibited by primitive equipment, commercial fishing and shrimping expanded rapidly after the mid-20th century to supply the insatiable North American market. The most valuable fishing grounds are off the North Coast around the Bay Islands.

Mining and Energy. Gold, later silver, strikes brought the Spaniards to the Central Highlands. However, colonial and subsequent mining never amounted to much, the one exception being the operations of the New York and Honduras Rosario Mining Company for almost a century after 1882. Contemporary mineral production accounts for only a tiny percentage of the gross domestic product but makes a modest contribution to export earnings from shipments of lead, zinc, and silver.





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A Honduran cattle rancher prepares his horse for herding cattle. Much of the country's beef is exported.

Virtually all of Honduras' electrical energy derives from imported petroleum and from hydropower. A refinery was built at Puerto Cortés to process imported crude for domestic consumption. Major hydroelectric installations at Río Lindo, El Níspero, and El Cajón began to tap the vast hydroelectric capacity. Wood, used widely by poor Hondurans to cook their food and heat their homes, is a renewable energy source if managed properly.

Manufacturing. Small manufacturers and subsidiaries of the foreign fruit companies, many of which are located in San Pedro Sula, have reduced the need to import nondurable consumer goods such as detergents, pharmaceuticals, bottled and canned goods, textiles, and furniture. Most manufacturing is highly dependent on imports of raw materials, semifinished goods, and equipment and spare parts. This constraint hinders industrial autonomy.

Transportation and Trade. The mountainous terrain long limited transportation to mules and horses. Despite the best efforts of the government, railroads never reached beyond the North Coast banana plantations, and highway construction and maintenance proved difficult. Honduras early took the lead in Central American air transport with international airports at Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. Although the Inter-American Highway just barely catches the southern edge of the country, the North-South highway and several of its offshoots such as the route from Tegucigalpa northeast to Juticalpa have done much to improve automobile and truck transportation.

Honduras struggles to export sufficient bananas, coffee, minerals, seafood, and wood to afford imports. From the United States, Europe, and Japan it obtains the machinery, vehicles, petroleum, industrial raw materials, consumer durables, and even food that it needs to raise economic standards.

Bananas for overseas shipment are hauled by an overhead cable. The north coast is ideally suited to this crop.



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the country's beef is exported.

s shipment are hauled by an overhead
oast is ideally suited to this crop.

© WALTER HODGE/PETER ARNOLD



3. The People

The brutal Spanish conquest of native Lenca, Maya, Jicaque, and other peoples set demographic and social forces in motion that still shape Honduran society.

Ethnic Groups. Some 90% of Hondurans are acculturated *mestizos* (persons of mixed Indian and European ancestry), the result of five centuries of genetic and cultural mingling. Indians contributed such elements of everyday Honduran life as maize, building materials and styles, and place-names (Tegucigalpa means "mountain of silver"). Spaniards provided the language, religious base, political institutions, and general cultural ethos of the nation. Later immigrants—African slaves, Black Caribs, North American adventurers and banana plantation managers, and Palestinian Arab merchants—supplemented the Spanish-Indian mélange without disturbing the essential homogeneity of the Honduran population. Immigrants and refugees from neighboring Central American states usually were *mestizos* themselves.

Two factors account for Honduras' homogeneous society. The rugged topography cut local villages and farmsteads off from one another and the outside world. The resulting isolation intensified racial mixing and cultural uniformity. Although one community might differ from the next in proportion of Spanish genetic and Indian cultural attributes, the final result of isolation was in the formation of a blended, *mestizo* society. Generalized poverty, a second factor, not only heightened the rural seclusion but kept ranchers and other local elites from being able to afford a luxurious standard of living necessary to set themselves up as a class apart from their poorer neighbors, a situation that occurred next door in El Salvador and Guatemala.

Several small pockets of unassimilated peoples remain in Honduras but account for less than 10% of the population. Descendants of the Lenca and related natives in the extreme western part of the country still partly retain their Indian languages, communal landholding patterns, and certain religious practices. The Miskito, a people of mixed Indian, African, and European stock, live along the margins of the Mosquitia region, which was named for them; they speak an Indian language. English-speaking Black Caribs—a blend of blacks and Carib Indians, of West Indian origin—share the Bay Islands with descendants of British colonists; both groups follow old ways. Jamaican blacks who came to work the banana stands and the North Americans who arrived as plantation managers congregated in the North Coast region.

Religious Groups. The overwhelming majority of Hondurans—upward of 90%—are at least nominal Roman Catholics. Since first established early in the 16th century, the church in Honduras has been constantly hampered in its mission by the country's poverty. Just to maintain a visible presence among the widely dispersed population, it has had to depend heavily on foreign-born priests. Various Protestant denominations, the earliest being the Methodists (1859), have made modest inroads in urban areas by establishing schools and hospitals, and Moravian missionaries long have labored among the Miskito. After the mid-20th century, Pentecostals began holding irregular but highly visible revival meetings. The Protestant challenge triggered a rededication of the Catholic Church to its evangelical mission, while at the same time the church evinced renewed concern for promoting the improvement of life among the poor.

Social Structure. Although Honduran society features a typical three-tier Latin American structure, it remains unusually open. The traditional rancher oligarchy, sometimes called *La Primera* ("the first"), were joined in the 20th century by agrobusiness, professional, commercial, financial, military, and industrial elites. The divergent origins and interests of these groups have prevented them from coalescing into an intransigent aristocracy as occurred in neighboring Central America. However, concentrated in the urban areas, they monopolized political power, educational opportunities, medical care, and other amenities. Only after mid-century with the growth of commerce, industry, and government bureaucracy has a small middle sector emerged.

The vast majority of Hondurans still are peasants, and as such they remain outside the political, economic, and even religious mainstream. Nevertheless, the intrusions of new roads and telecommunications media have begun to integrate them into the national society. So, too, has growing population pressure on the limited arable land, by fostering migration to towns and cities from which the newcomers maintain contact with their peasant villages. The small urban working class is surprisingly well organized, given the country's minute industrial base.

4. Education and Culture

Learning and the arts in Honduras long were restricted to the elites. The sunup-to-sundown demands of cultivating maize and bean patches put literacy and cultural attainment outside the reach of the peasantry. And yet, despite poverty and isolation, individual genius and personal tenacity have produced an ample cultural heritage and a voracious hunger for education among Hondurans.

Education. Although many of the larger towns had primary schools, the elites hired tutors for their children. Such duties often fell to a local priest, as it did, for example, to José Trinidad Reyes. Father Reyes founded the Academia Literaria de Tegucigalpa in 1845 to provide his students with a place to continue their studies. Even after his academy had been raised to university status two years later, most students went abroad to Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and even to Paris or New York to finish their education.

Not until the 1950's could Honduras afford to build a nationwide education system. Unfortunately, a population explosion that began in that decade released a flood of students into the schools, swamping the government's best efforts to provide basic education for all its citizens. Meanwhile, Catholic and Protestant boarding schools, together with French, German, and North American schools, supplemented public instruction and that provided by large corporations for their workers' dependents.

Culture. Neither colonial nor modern Honduras had been able to duplicate the splendor of the ancient Maya culture, still visible amid the ruins at Copán in northwestern Honduras. Nonetheless, over the years Hondurans have added to the cultural heritage of their native country. For example, José Cecilio del Valle, author of the Central American Declaration of Independence,



Increasing numbers of women are attending the National University in Tegucigalpa. An autonomous institution, the university was founded in 1845 by Father José Trinidad Reyes as the Literary Academy of Tegucigalpa.

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broke free from his impoverished surroundings to garner an international reputation among the philosophers and scientists influenced by the 18th century Enlightenment. In the 20th century, Rafael Heliodoro Valle's histories elicited attention beyond the borders of Honduras, as did the "primitive" paintings of José Antonio Velásquez.

5. History and Government

The historical evolution of Honduras has proceded in six stages: pre-Columbian Indian societies (8000 B.C.–1520 A.D.); the Spanish conquest (1520–1540); colonial consolidation (1540–1700); the assertion of independence (1700–1870); Neo-Liberal reforms (1870–1950); and the contemporary crises.

The Pre-Columbian Period. For thousands of years small bands roamed across Honduras hunting small game and gathering fruits, seeds, and nuts. When game and wild plants became scarce, some groups were forced to invent agriculture. By the 5th century A.D. the highly civilized Guatemalan Maya had colonized the western highlands around Copán. Although the Maya theocracy abruptly collapsed in the 9th century and Copán was abandoned, three distinct cultural levels remained—progressively less sophisticated from west to east.

The Conquest Period. Columbus briefly touched Honduras in 1502 on his last voyage to the New World. In 1524, Spanish soldiers marching south from Mexico and north from Panama converged on Honduras. For the next decade and a half rival bands of Spaniards butchered each other and fought the Indians, most notably the Lenca chief Lempira, who was defeated in 1538. The Indian population diminished sharply as a result of battle casualties, famine, and epidemics. Spaniards sold other Indians into slavery outside Honduras. A large number of those who remained died of ill-treatment and overwork, especially after the governor of Guatemala, Pedro de Alvarado, discovered placer gold in western Honduras in 1536. By the 1540's discovery of the fabled Guayape River goldfields in the eastern highlands made equidistant Comayagua the leading town in Honduras.

The Period of Imperial Consolidation. In 1539 the 15,000 or so remaining Indians were put under the care of Spanish colonists, who were to provide religious indoctrination for the natives, collect tribute for the king, and keep the Indians working. This *encomienda* system merely legalized abuses. Soon Guatemalan Indians and African slaves had to be imported to supplement Indian labor.

Just as the placer mines began to play out in the 1560's, silver was discovered farther south. The silver boom made Tegucigalpa more important than its more northerly rival, Comayagua. The subsequent jockeying for dominance between these two towns continued until the late 19th century, when Tegucigalpa finally prevailed. This rivalry prevented urban concentration in just one primary city as typically occurred in Spanish colonies.

During the colonial period Honduras was a province of the Kingdom of Guatemala, which was attached to the Viceroyalty of New Spain. Provincial affairs were administered by royal officers in a chain of command that ran from Honduras up to the captain general in Guatemala City. From there the line of authority ran both to the viceroy of New Spain in Mexico City and the Spanish king in Madrid.

Although these officials were interested most in the mining industry, the majority of the colonists scattered thinly across the Central Highlands practiced agriculture. Ranching flourished to supply mining camps with leather and meat. Ranchers also drove herds to market in Guatemala and El Salvador. Peasants, on the other hand, eked out an existence tending small plots of maize and beans in basins tucked among the steep mountains.

By the 1580's the mining boom had collapsed, a victim of poor roads and ports, inadequate capital, inappropriate technology, and dispersed deposits. The increasingly acute labor shortage and lack of mercury to separate silver from its ore also helped shut down the mines.

For the next 175 years Honduras languished. Whole regions remained unsettled and some settled regions reverted to Indian control. Nothing of sufficient export value could be found to justi-

Increasing numbers of wo... attending the National Un... in Tegucigalpa. An auton... institution, the university ... founded in 1845 by Father ... Trinidad Reyes as the Li... Academy of Tegucigalpa.

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...d of Imperial Consolidation. In 1539 ...o remaining Indians were put u... Spanish colonists, who were to ...us indoctrination for the natives, ... for the king, and keep the Indi... his *encomienda* system merely le... Soon Guatemalan Indians and A... had to be imported to supplem... r.

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's the mining boom had collaps... r roads and ports, inadequate c... ate technology, and dispersed ... ncreasingly acute labor short... cury to separate silver from its ... t down the mines.

175 years Honduras languishe... emained unsettled and some ... erted to Indian control. Nothi... ort value could be found to ju...

The high cost of building roads through the ... mountains. Tropical fevers, smugglers, ... Caribbean pirates periodically closed the ... Coast ports. In 1643 the British sacked ... port of Trujillo and sought to establish colo... on the Bay Islands and mainland. On the ... they began their long association with ... Indian and black fisherfolk misnamed ... Indians that eventually evolved into a ... buffer state. Although the "Miskito King... never came to much, it further reduced ... contact with the outside.

The Assertion of Independence. Following the ... of the Spanish Succession (1701–1715), the ... Bourbon kings of Spain set about the task of ...ializing the empire in order to defend it. ... agenda unleashed a continuous struggle ... the agents of change and the partisans ... tradition.

The Bourbons lowered the tax on gold and ... and reduced the cost of mercury, briefly ...ulating mining around Tegucigalpa in the ... A much-hated monopoly was estab... on tobacco, and a trading-monopoly com... failed to trigger North Coast commerce as ... Campaigns to build roads and bridges ... too puny to break the lock grip of isola... Revitalized military efforts (especially the ... of a major fort at the port of Omoa), the ...lishment of Trujillo, and tenacious diplo... maneuvering had pushed the British off ... Mosquito Shore and Bay Islands by 1786, but ... the Bourbon projects raised unrealistic ... expectations while new tax levies ... Honduran ire.

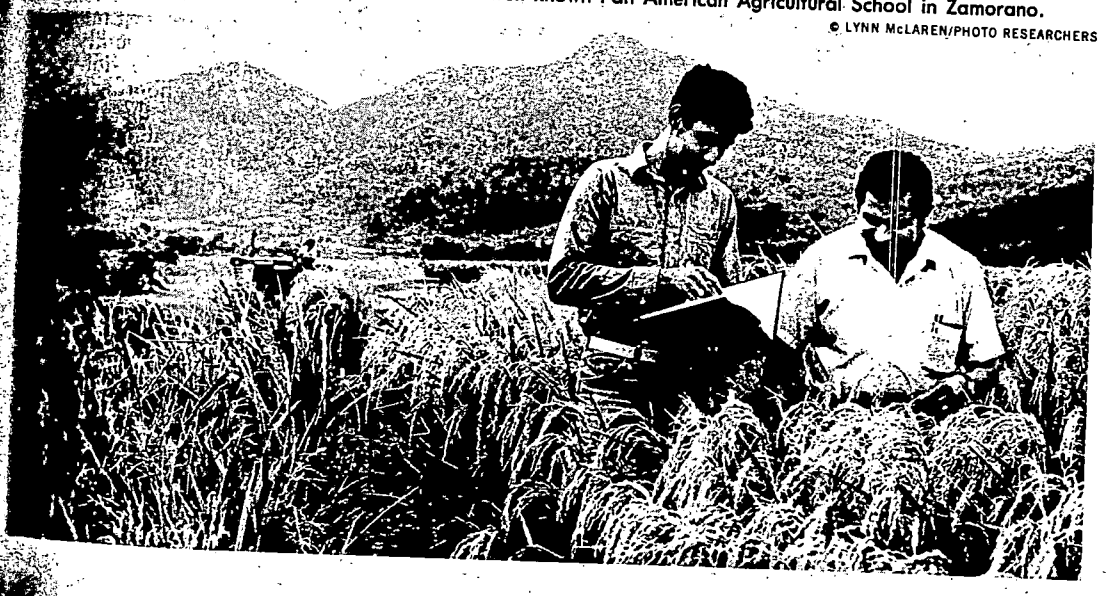
The extension of the royal intendancy system ... Central America in 1786 increased provincial ...omy and fostered separatism in the region, ... the intendants, although appointed by ... Spanish crown, were given broad fiscal and ... powers in the areas under their jurisdic... Napoleon's invasion of Spain in 1808, a ... of his strategy to deny the Iberian Peninsula ... Britain, touched off a multifaceted power ... that outlasted the Napoleonic Wars and ... all the way into Honduran politics. ... sought to retain control over the King... dom of Guatemala; Guatemala tried to maintain its grip on the outlying provinces of Central America; and Comayagua, despite desperate efforts, failed to stave off Tegucigalpa's thrust for autonomous municipal status.

Amid the chaos, news arrived of Mexico's declaration of independence from Spain (1821). Tegucigalpa campaigned stridently for an independent Central American union. Comayagua advocated what actually took place—incorporation with the just-formed Mexican Empire. But when the empire disintegrated in 1823, Central Americans had no choice but to chart their own future. For some 60 years following the declaration of an independent United Provinces of Central America in 1823, Honduras served as a battlefield for two opposing Central American political factions. One, the Conservatives, advocated a strong central government, an established Catholic Church, and an aristocracy, values derived from the colonial regime; the other, the Liberals, favored decentralized government, freedom of religion, and social equality, values borrowed from revolutionary France and the United States. Honduras supplied the early leaders for both camps: José Cecilio del Valle led the Conservatives until his untimely death in 1834; General Francisco Morazán, the Liberal champion, twice served as president of the Central American federation.

High-handed Liberal reforms led Conservatives to disband the Central American federation in 1838, thus raising Honduras to the status of a sovereign republic. Political adversaries within Honduras and bands of exiles from neighboring Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua threatened, by their constant fighting, to tear the infant state apart. The disarray attracted adventurers like Frederick Chatfield and William Walker, who tried to take over parts of the republic and set up British or American colonies. To make the situation even worse, government officials ruined Honduran credit by an ill-advised attempt to build an interoceanic railroad across the isthmus. In exchange for 36 miles (58 km) of poorly constructed narrow-gauge rail line, Honduras assumed the world's largest per capita debt.

An improved strain of rice is examined at the well-known Pan American Agricultural School in Zamorano.

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Neo-Liberal Reforms. In the final quarter of the 19th century a new generation of leaders came to power. The first of these "neo-Liberals" was Marco Aurelio Soto. He and his successors retained the Liberal commitment to economic growth but borrowed the Conservative notion of strong central government concentrated in the executive branch. Soto quickly linked up the most important towns by telegraph, an important weapon in his pacification of the countryside. He moved the capital from Comayagua to Tegucigalpa and connected it to the outside world by building the Southern Highway to the Gulf of Fonseca. He encouraged all manner of economic development schemes, the most promising of which was the reopening of the silver mines. Of the more than 100 American and British mining companies, only the New York and Honduras Mining Company was profitable. The brief mining boom, however, did reduce Honduran seclusion. Ships again began to make regular calls at ports on both coasts, and roads built to transport foreign mining equipment from the ports further promoted Honduran commerce.

By 1900 silver mining once more had played out its role in getting the economy on track, but bananas already offered a lucrative substitute. Refrigerator ships made commercial distribution of bananas possible, and soon the Standard Fruit and United Fruit companies organized the banana trade. Benefiting from generous land and tax concessions and the conquest of yellow fever, these North American companies quickly colonized the North Coast plains. By 1930 huge plantations crisscrossed by narrow-gauge rail lines made Honduras the world's number one banana producer.

The creation of a "banana enclave" by foreign investors had important repercussions in Honduras. The relatively generous wages offered by the fruit companies attracted Jamaican blacks and inland peasants and shifted the center of population dramatically northward. San Pedro Sula was transformed from a dusty town to a bustling commercial center soon challenging the economic preeminence of Tegucigalpa. The new affluence that attended the banana boom widened the gap between rich and poor, thus eroding social homogeneity. The machinations of banana captains—the Vaccaro Brothers, Samuel Zemurray, and Minor C. Keith—blighted Honduran democracy through their use of bribes, cooption of officials, and diplomatic strongarm tactics. Banana production, however, spawned an active union movement.

While the banana enclave prospered, the Central Highlands remained insulated from change and politically unstable. During the 1930's, however, President Tiburcio Carías imposed political peace. This austere dictator kept himself in power from 1933 to 1948. Despite the multiple shocks of the Great Depression, outbreaks of Panama fungus disease and sigatoka leaf blight on the banana plantations, and World War II trade restrictions that devastated the economy, Carías managed to accomplish much. He extended the road system, paid off most of the national debt, and with funds from the United States modernized the military, especially the fledgling air force.

The Contemporary Crises. After the mid-20th century, Honduras managed to consolidate itself further in many ways, even though faced by an array of crises. The Hondurans' resilience and reservoir of goodwill enabled them to wi... natural and social catastrophes such as the ... hurricanes that struck in the early 1970's. ... worst of the three, Fifi, smashed into the ... Coast in September 1974, claiming 10,000 ... and leveling the banana stands.

The introduction of modern health care ... nated a demographic explosion that prod... population that was 50% under the age of 15 ... that doubled approximately every 20 years. ... avalanche of people soon outstripped ava... agricultural land, severely taxed urban faci... and glutted the labor market.

The demographic crisis was the main ... of the "Soccer War" between Honduras and ... Salvador. The Honduran military gover... unable to lead the country out of economic ... pression despite membership in the Ce... American Common Market (CACM), blamed ... 300,000 Salvadorian immigrants for the de... rating economy and began repatriating ... Tensions erupted in violence in June 1969 ... ing World Cup soccer play between the ... countries; diplomatic relations were broken ... in July, El Salvador invaded. The crack H... ran air force turned back a Salvadoran ar... thrust that had bogged down in the mounta... the western highlands. The fighting left ... nations bloodied and the CACM a shambles.

The Soccer War underscored yet another ... portant development in contemporary Hond... political development: the intrusion of new ... terest groups into politics. Since the 1950's ... ganizations such as teachers' unions, pe... syndicates, and cattlemen's associations ... somed, and the Catholic Church was revitali... These groups increasingly challenged the do... nance of the traditional National and Liberal p... ties by attempting to voice and enact their ... spective programs. By far the best organi... and most effective of these new political gro... was the military itself, which repeatedly int... vened to stave off perceived internal political ... ses, even at times establishing military ... Unlike the militaries in neighboring Cen... American countries, however, the Honduran ... itary did not become the enforcing arm of ... closed aristocracy. Instead it seemed to see ... role as broker and referee of the civilian sec...

The protracted leftist guerrilla warfare ... right-wing semiofficial terrorism that engulf... Honduras' immediate neighbors constituted p... haps the most serious crisis for the country. Ref... ugees fleeing to Honduras from the violence ... their homelands, as well as neighboring milita... in hot pursuit of rebels crossing the Hondura... border, repeatedly taxed the sagacity of the na... tion's diplomats. The attendant military build... to protect Honduran sovereignty from interna... and external threats seriously stressed civilia... political, economic, and social development.

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HONDURAS: EYE OF THE STORM 11/83

IN THE HOLIDAY WEEK before Easter the beach at Tela, on the Caribbean coast of Honduras, displays a crowd divided by neither wealth nor race.

All the colors of Honduras are here: Indian rust, African black, European white. Families arrive hanging onto groaning yellow buses, castoffs from United States school systems, and in expensive cars.

Willowy girls in swimsuits from Miami boutiques draw admiration. Campesino women wade the surf in their underwear; no one criticizes them. Millionaire and cane cutter, both know equality on Tela's beach.

There are T-shirts that say "M*A*S*H" and "100 Percent Fat Free" (this on a buxom lady). Everyone consumes: skewers of charcoaled beef, ices drenched in pink and purple, the water and flesh of coconuts.

Palms wave, the surf is cool. Only the passage of an army patrol—four men in camouflage with pistols and carbines—suggests that Hondurans have anything to worry about save the pursuit of tropical pleasures.

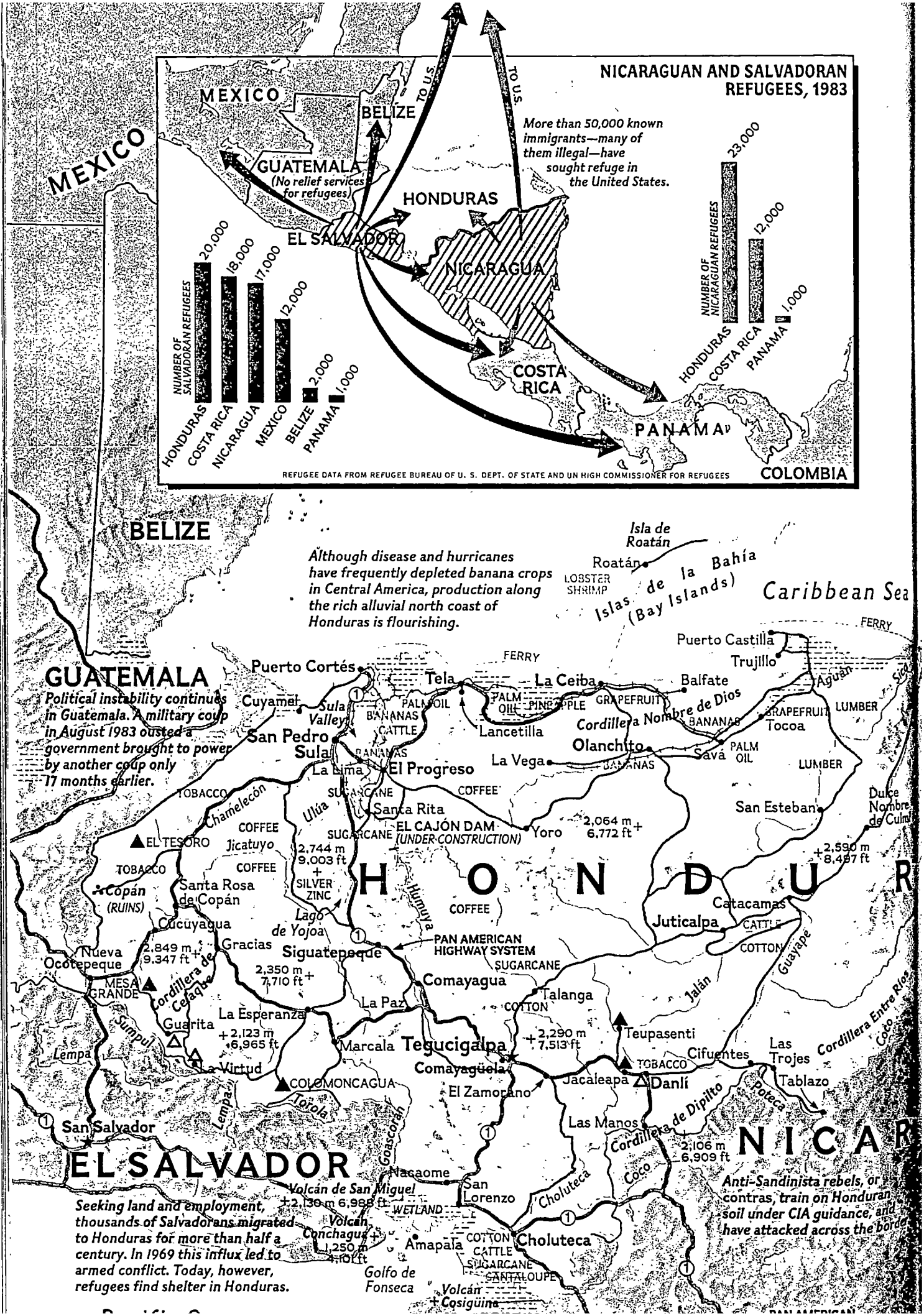
Geography locks Honduras into the turmoil of Central America. To the south, the Sandinista government that came to power in Nicaragua in 1979 seems increasingly Marxist. Honduran and Nicaraguan soldiers have skirmished. To the southwest, in El Salvador, vicious warfare continues between U. S.-backed government troops and guerrillas. Nicaragua has been accused of slipping arms across Honduras to the Salvadoran guerrillas; those guerrillas have been accused of terrorist acts within Honduras. To the northwest, Guatemala has known years of strife (map, pages 620-21).

Alarmed by the increased presence among its neighbors of leftists/Communists (take your pick), the Honduran government snuggled up closer to the United States, becoming in effect a U. S. bastion. Honduras looked the other way as the CIA sent counterrevolutionaries into Nicaragua from its soil. Last summer Honduras allowed Green Berets to set up a base for training Salvadoran troops while preparing to welcome thousands of other U. S. soldiers on extended maneuvers. Meanwhile, U. S. warships steamed off the coasts. Honduras is receiving from its ally 37 million dollars in military aid and 97 in economic aid this year.

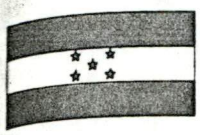
Yet, as I watch the happy crowd on Tela's



Journey out of fear *brings a Honduran campesino family to the treacherous road from Las Trojes to the abandoned village of Cifuentes, less than a mile from*


NICARAGUAN AND SALVADORAN REFUGEES, 1983
MEXICO
BELIZE
GUATEMALA
(No relief services for refugees)
HONDURAS
EL SALVADOR
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
COLOMBIA
TO U.S.
TO U.S.
More than 50,000 known immigrants—many of them illegal—have sought refuge in the United States.
NUMBER OF SALVADORAN REFUGEES
20,000
18,000
17,000
12,000
2,000
1,000
HONDURAS
COSTA RICA
NICARAGUA
MEXICO
BELIZE
PANAMA
NUMBER OF NICARAGUAN REFUGEES
23,000
12,000
1,000
HONDURAS
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
REFUGEE DATA FROM REFUGEE BUREAU OF U. S. DEPT. OF STATE AND UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
BELIZE
GUATEMALA
Political instability continues in Guatemala. A military coup in August 1983 ousted a government brought to power by another coup only 17 months earlier.
Although disease and hurricanes have frequently depleted banana crops in Central America, production along the rich alluvial north coast of Honduras is flourishing.
Isla de Roatán
Roatán
Islas de la Bahía (Bay Islands)
LOBSTER SHRIMP
Caribbean Sea
FERRY
Puerto Castilla
Trujillo
Puerto Cortés
Tela
La Ceiba
Balfate
Aguan
Sico
Cuyamel
Sula Valley
PALM OIL
BANANAS
CATTLE
PALM OIL
PINEAPPLE
GRAPEFRUIT
Cordillera Nombre de Dios
BANANAS
GRAPEFRUIT
LUMBER
Tocoa
San Pedro Sula
Lancetilla
Olanchito
Savá
PALM OIL
LUMBER
La Lima
El Progreso
La Vega
BANANAS
TOBACCO
SUGARCANE
COFFEE
Chamelecón
Ulúa
Santa Rita
EL CAJÓN DAM (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)
Yoro
2,064 m + 6,772 ft
San Esteban
Dulce Nombre de Culmí
+2,590 m 8,497 ft
EL TESORO
TOBACCO
COFFEE
Jicatuyo
2,744 m 9,003 ft + SILVER ZINC
Copán (RUINS)
Santa Rosa de Copán
Lago de Yojoa
Humuya
COFFEE
Catacamas
Juticalpa
CATTLE
COTTON
Guayape
Cucuyagua
2,849 m 9,347 ft +
Gracias
Siguatepeque
PAN AMERICAN HIGHWAY SYSTEM
SUGARCANE
Nueva Ocotepeque
MESA GRANDE
Cordillera de Celaque
2,350 m 7,710 ft +
Comayagua
Talanga
COTTON
Jalán
Sumpul
La Esperanza
La Paz
Guarita
+2,123 m 6,965 ft
Marcala
Tegucigalpa
+2,290 m 7,513 ft
Teupasenti
Cifuentes
Las Trojes
Cordillera Entre Ríos
Coco
Lempa
La Virtud
Comayagüela
TOBACCO
Danlí
Tablazo
COLOMONCAGUA
Jacaleapa
El Zamorano
Torola
Las Manos
Cordillera de Dipilto
Poteca
San Salvador
Lempa
Goascorán
2,106 m 6,909 ft
EL SALVADOR
NICAR
Nacaome
Volcán de San Miguel +2,130 m 6,988 ft
San Lorenzo
Choluteca
Coco
WETLAND
Volcán Conchagua + 1,250 m 4,101 ft
Amapala
COTTON
CATTLE
SUGARCANE
CANTALOUPE
Choluteca
Golfo de Fonseca
Volcán + Cosigüina
Seeking land and employment, thousands of Salvadorans migrated to Honduras for more than half a century. In 1969 this influx led to armed conflict. Today, however, refugees find shelter in Honduras.
Anti-Sandinista rebels, or contras, train on Honduran soil under CIA guidance, and have attacked across the borde

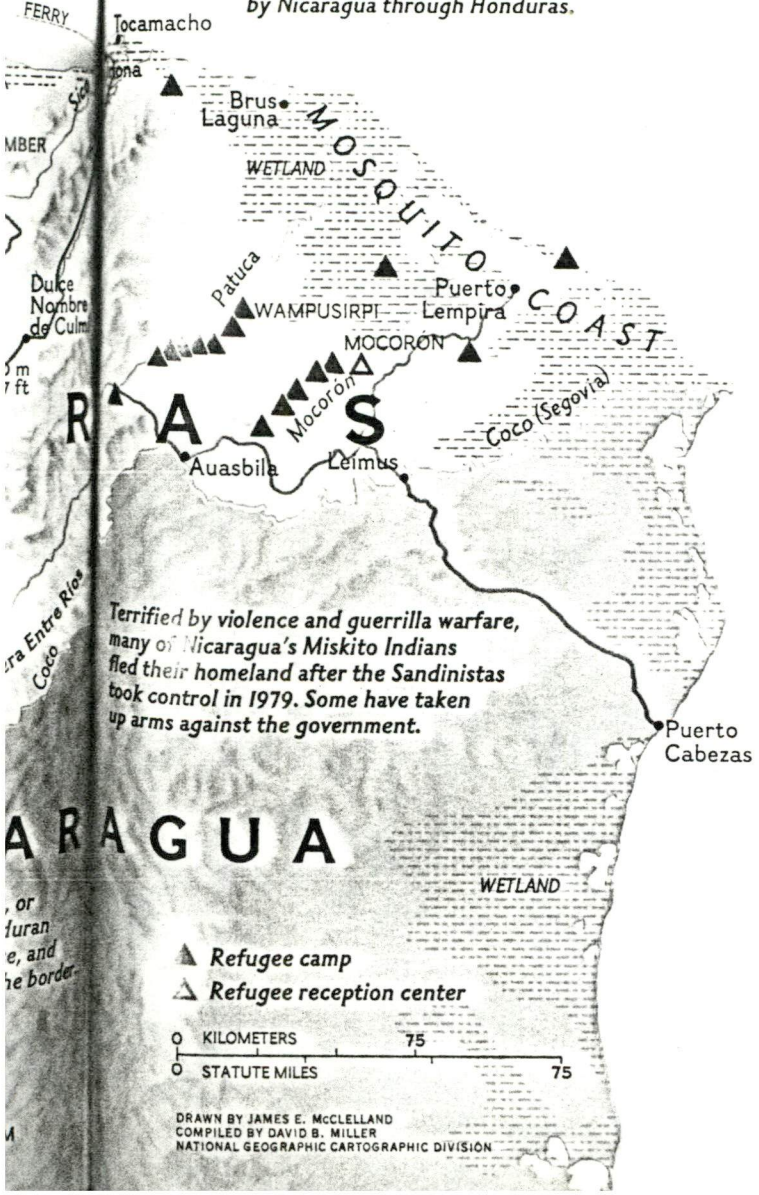
UNFULFILLED DREAM of Central American harmony finds expression in the Honduran flag. Each star represents a constituent of the United Provinces of Central America—Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua—established in 1824 after declaring independence from Spain, but dissolved in 1838.



The region's poorest country, Honduras now finds its own problems compounded by those of old confederates (chart).

AREA: 112,088 sq km (43,277 sq mi). **POPULATION:** 4,200,000. **CAPITAL:** Tegucigalpa. **RELIGION:** Roman Catholic. **LANGUAGE:** Spanish. **LITERACY:** 60 percent. **ECONOMY:** Export crops: bananas, coffee, lumber, beef, sugar. **INDUSTRIES:** food processing, textiles, mining. **LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 58 years. **PCI:** $600.

With Central America's strongest air force, Honduras has accepted a U. S. offer to enlarge airstrips and build a training center near Puerto Castilla. The U. S. charges that Salvadoran guerrillas are supplied by Nicaragua through Honduras.



Terrified by violence and guerrilla warfare, many of Nicaragua's Miskito Indians fled their homeland after the Sandinistas took control in 1979. Some have taken up arms against the government.

beach, Honduras seems better prepared for peace than for war.

During the centuries that Spain ruled Central America, from the 1500s until 1821, Honduras was a backwater, sparsely populated. Conquistadors sought quick wealth in gold and silver, but never found a bonanza lode. Only a handful of Spaniards settled and farmed. Revolutions bloodied the country—the government has changed hands a hundred times—but the typical Central American alliance of rich landowners and army never became so oppressive here.

In recent years land reform has proceeded, albeit in fits and starts. The press freely reports. Labor enjoys guaranteed rights. In 1981 more than 80 percent of the eligible voters cast ballots for a president, ending 18 years of almost continuous military rule.

But enormous problems still dog Honduras. Nearly half of the four million people cannot read. Development lags; Central America looks risky to investors. Tourism has shrunk to a trickle of divers lured to reefs around the Bay Islands, off the Caribbean coast. Most visitors pursue other affairs. At my hotel in Tegucigalpa, the capital, were arrayed one day a table of missionaries, one of arms merchants, and one of journalists looking for a war.

HONDURAS REACHES OVER from its long Caribbean shore to poke a toe into the Pacific, on a littoral squeezed between Nicaragua and El Salvador. Between oceans, it is a nation of parts. The savannas and rain forest inland from the Mosquito Coast are the back, back of beyond. To the west, pine-clad peaks spill over from Guatemala and El Salvador.

Highway 1, the nation's main stem, wriggles northwest from Tegucigalpa, descending to great tropical trees, the soaring *ceiba* and the wide-reaching *castaño*. "The north coast," Hondurans call the region around the cities of San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba. Millions in the U. S. slice and sprinkle a bit of the north coast's production over their cornflakes; bananas and sugar, along with coffee, beef, and lumber, are important exports. Especially bananas.

Toward the fruit on a big, drooping stem, Roberto Hernandez thrust calipers set at the right diameter for harvest, a fraction less

than an inch and a half. The fit was snug. Two easy swings of his machete and he had fulfilled his job title, which is *cortador*—cutter. The stem fell on the shoulder of Angel Castro, a *cablero* or cableman. Angel trotted off to hang his hundred-pound load on a heavy wire; a tractor would draw this stem and dozens more to a packing shed.

I watched them work a few miles from La Lima, headquarters of the Tela Railroad Company. You know its product as Chiquita Banana. The Boston traders who created the United Fruit Company (now United Brands) at the turn of the century also built railroads; Honduras rewarded them with land grants. The tracks never went farther than the plantations and ports.

Bananas locked the United States and Honduras into a relationship almost familial. Honduras's 20-centavo coin, worth ten U. S. cents and the size of a dime, is called a "die-meh." Teenagers at Puerto Cortés attend "El Franklin"—El Colegio Franklin D. Roosevelt. Rarely in two months in Honduras did I hear anti-U. S. sentiment.

It is curious, this good feeling, for when Chiquita and her friends were riding high, earlier in this century, they were no ladies.

Samuel Zemurray, a U. S. planter, may have financed the overthrow of a Honduran president in 1911, to gain concessions from a friendlier regime. At least, many Hondurans believe he did. Fruit companies got possession of a million acres; by 1915 Honduras was the quintessential banana republic. As recently as 1975 United Brands was accused of paying a Honduran official one and a quarter million dollars for a tax break.

"We have made mistakes in the past," acknowledged Fred Koch, Tela Railroad's general manager. "But we live here and we try to act responsibly."

This much is certain: In its relations with its employees, the company has improved enormously. Cortador Hernandez and cablero Castro will each earn in a fair day about $15, more than some agricultural laborers earn in a week.

I met Señor Isabel Canales, whose muscles bulge from hefting stems, over a beer. We walked to his home, a three-bedroom house, painted blue, fringed with red hibiscus. It cost $9,400. "I pay half," he said. "The company pays the other half."



Diplomas on the living-room wall testified to the completed schooling of Oswaldo, Fernando, and Maria Canales. The company paid for their education through the sixth grade. "I didn't learn to read and write myself until five years ago," Isabel said. The company paid for that too.

Rafael Valle, president of the 10,000-member Tela Railroad union, recalled the year 1954, when he earned $1.15 a day. "We were being exploited. The government had no laws with which to rule the banana companies." Twenty-five thousand United Fruit employees struck for 67 days that year.

The workers won; the benefits accrued to the entire country: legal recognition of workers' rights, guaranteed minimum wages. "Companies learned they could not exploit," Señor Valle said. "Workers learned how to settle problems." Many Hondurans believe the lesson of 1954—that disputes can be settled peacefully—has helped the nation enjoy greater internal peace than its neighbors.

Tela Railroad shrank its payroll by 60 percent. But worker productivity soared. The company returned much land to the government. Planting a more compact banana variety, the company harvests more fruit on less land—in a good year, 800 million pounds of bananas on 17,000 acres.

SOME of Tela Railroad's redundant workers got jobs in San Pedro Sula, a 20-minute drive from La Lima. Sticky after a rain, San Pedro seems too tropical to be the energetic city that billboards advertise. Five miles outside the city signs proclaim manufacturers of jeans, swimwear, and chemicals. The main enterprise seems to be none of these, but billboards.

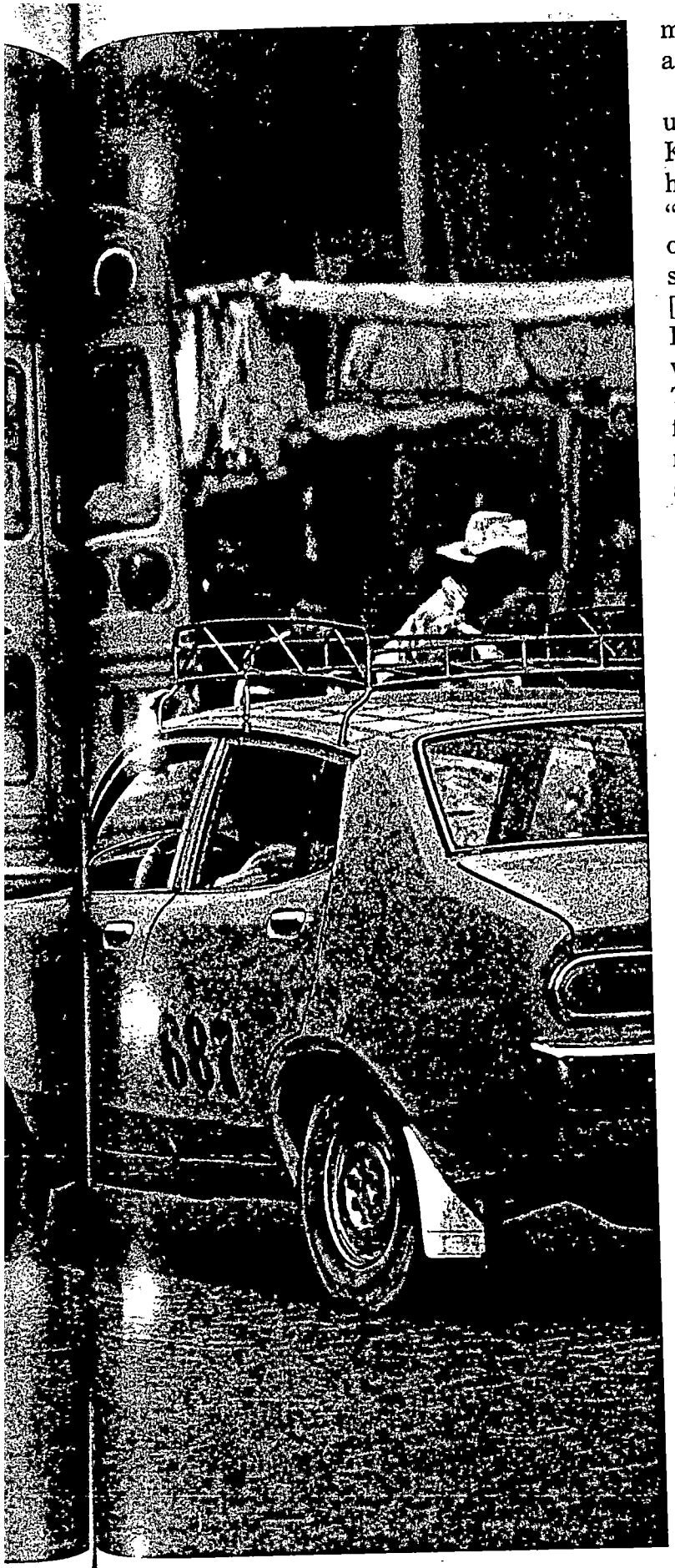
Edgardo Canahuati, 26, Georgia Tech graduate, explained the energy: "Arab people are aggressive. They like to work, they like to make money, they like to live good."

Edgardo's father migrated from Bethlehem when it was still part of Palestine. In a small building he began to produce brassieres for the Lovable Company, a major supplier to U. S. stores. The venture has been successful, not to say uplifting. Before the recession the company was shipping as many as 10,000 dozen brassieres to the United States in a week. Another 5,000 dozen were produced for Central American



Taking aim *with M-16 rifles, Honduran security forces get target practice under guidance of United States Green Berets at a regional military training center (**left**). Opened in June near Puerto Castilla, the U. S.-financed center trains Honduran and Salvadoran troops.*

*Near the Salvadoran border, Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martínez (**right,** at right), head of the Honduran armed forces, briefs a battalion commander on plans to enlarge the airstrip at Cucuyagua. By dispatching its own troops for maneuvers in Honduras and stationing aircraft carriers offshore, the U. S. hopes to "establish its presence" in Central America.*



are limited to the north coast. Main arteries are paved, but dirt roads predominate.

markets—markets now constricted on account of the region's troubles.

I went to a factory that produces shirts, underwear, and pajamas to meet Gabriel Kattan. He spoke machine-gun English, honed on buying trips to the United States. "My father came from Palestine at the time of World War I on a Turkish passport," he said. "That's why we're called Turcos here. [Many consider the nickname degrading.] People were fleeing the Ottoman Empire, which wanted to conscript them as soldiers. They were Christians—they wouldn't fight for the Turks. My father was 18. My grandmother got him a bride, got him married, and 'Out you go.'"

Few Hondurans had deigned to enter commerce; there was little manufacturing. Long tradition in trade well prepared the Arabs to fill the vacuum. They now number some 12,000, mostly Palestinians.

Sewing does not pay well, but it *is* work. Women in towns near San Pedro sew covers on a fifth of all the softballs pitched in the world. I watched Mirtala Carranza pull threads with a needle in each hand, stretching her arms in a politician's victory gesture. An affiliate of Tennessee-based Worth Sports Company pays her $5.50 if she sews 48 softballs in a day, and a bonus for any over that. Her record: 72.

The trouble with such work, as manufacturers see it, is that there isn't enough of it. "So many of the garments your people wear come from Asia," Señor Kattan reminded me. "Why can't we make them here? We're in your backyard. Your country would not have such problems in Central America if we could keep the people busy."

NEAR QUIET Comayagua, once Honduras's capital, I turned off Highway 1 and headed for La Paz. Attention has been lavished on this town: new water mains, paved streets, a renovated bridge on the new highway. Such are the rewards of being a president's birthplace.

Dr. Roberto Suazo Córdova, country doctor turned politician, led the Liberal Party to victory in the 1981 election. His La Paz retreat is a plain house built around a small courtyard.

To Hondurans, President Suazo's simple tastes are refreshing. The government he

took over from the military smelled of corruption. But many people, long used to army rule, wonder if their government now has two heads, one the president's, the other a general's. "There is only one head, President Roberto Suazo Córdova's," the president told me firmly.

He talked briefly of plans for a campaign against illiteracy. But mostly this day he wanted to talk about threats from without. "We are in a half-moon of convulsion," he said, citing El Salvador's civil war and neighboring Nicaragua, "definitely Marxist, receiving support from Cuba."

As to the future? "If the guerrilla is successful in El Salvador, both Honduras and Guatemala are finished." It is the domino theory. "If Central America falls, Mexico falls too, and then the problem will be at the border of the United States."

Honduras, he added, intends to maintain "the tightest relationship with the United States"; so tight, in fact, that 125 U. S. soldiers now train Salvadoran troops on Honduran soil (page 622). The base was built last summer—a favor to the Reagan Administration, which preferred not to invite congressional ire by sending more military advisers to El Salvador.

"La Base" worries some Hondurans, who fear that it will bring terrorist retaliation by Salvadoran rebels.

"I don't think we should be a training ground for El Salvador or a post office for counterrevolutionaries in Nicaragua," a young man told me. "If we've got to fight somebody, I'll do my part, but first I think we ought to try to settle things peacefully."

Declared Efraín Díaz Arrivillaga, U. S.-educated member of the Honduran Congress and outspoken critic of government policy: "I don't think the Sandinistas are a real threat to Honduras, nor are the guerrillas in El Salvador, if they win." He believes the U. S. government has used Honduras to further its own aims—to bolster El Salvador while trying to cripple Nicaragua.

"We should be more worried about strengthening our democratic institutions," Señor Díaz said. "The government should work harder on social problems—health, malnutrition, housing, land reform, illiteracy. If we do not attack our social problems, we will have fertile ground for revolution."

AT THE END of April, Tegucigalpa is praying for winter—that is, for the rainy season, which usually arrives with May. Water is rationed in the new neighborhoods that climb the mountainsides, and some days the airport is closed on account of smoke.

Slash-and-burn agriculture is still the norm in Honduras, at a cost both to the forests and to comfort in the capital, which appears some days almost as smoggy as Los Angeles. Once the rains begin, however, the fires are quenched and the mountainsides turn brilliant green.

On a hazy Sunday evening I could detect no gloom in the central park, clutched in tangled thoroughfares. Strolling families met around the equestrian statue honoring Francisco Morazán, hero of a brief Central American federation in the 1820s and '30s. Young men made the acquaintance of young women, buying them cotton candy or pizza.

There is the look of the country about many of these strollers; half, in fact, probably grew up in some small town. A city of only 150,000 in the early 1960s, Tegucigalpa—possibly "silver hill" in an Indian tongue—has almost quadrupled.

One Sunday I walked in Colonia Kennedy, one of the first subdivisions built to cope with spurting growth. Funds from President John F. Kennedy's Latin American program, the Alliance for Progress, built the first 750 houses. Expanded with soft loans from the Inter-American Development Bank, Colonia Kennedy now holds 48,000 people. Roses and geraniums show the pride that residents take in their modest homes.

Among Hondurans, Kennedy is beloved as no recent U. S. President—although President Reagan is gaining because of his strong anti-Communist stand.

I heard praise for Mr. Reagan inside the turreted armed-forces headquarters in Tegucigalpa's sister city, Comayagüela.

As commander of Honduras's 17,000-man military force, including police, Gustavo Alvarez Martínez wears the four stars of a general. His status is unique in the world, he believes: He cannot be fired by the president. "I was elected by Congress. To replace me, the president would have to get Congress to pass a petition." That was not defiance. He added emphatically: "The

president gives me orders. The military accepts the role of being governed."

At one point he spoke of the "human responsibility for protecting the environment"—the restoration of United Fruit's botanical garden at Lancetilla is one of his special interests. A few minutes later he was declaring that as a last resort "direct military intervention" might be necessary to curb Nicaragua. I pass on his emphasis: This would be a last-resort step. "It could not be done if the United States did not go in."

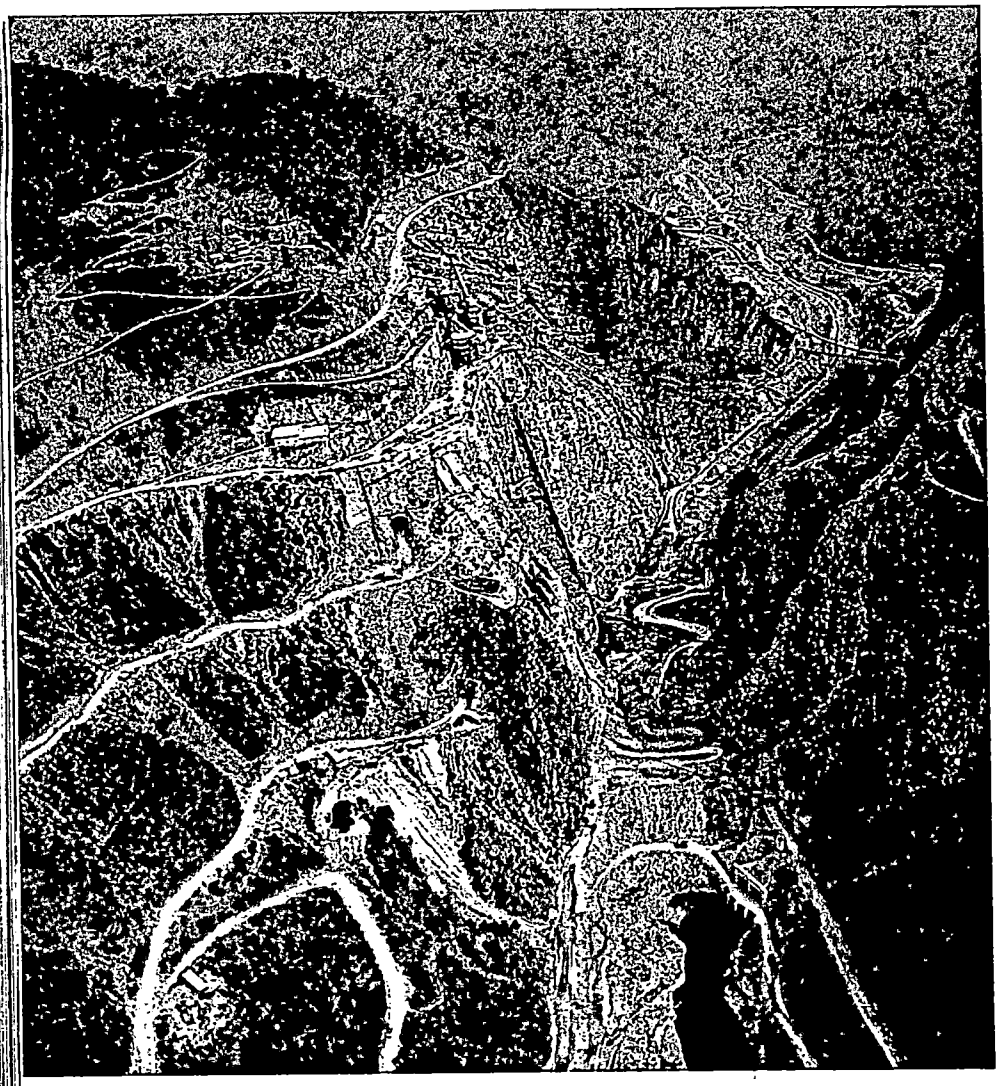
Nicaragua, the general contends, is the chosen base for "an aggressive invasion" of Central America, "originated by the Soviet Union through Cuba." He cites the arms buildup there and the thousands of Cuban advisers and workers. "Nicaragua just got two new helicopters and four more are on the way. They have four Ilyushin transports and will receive more."

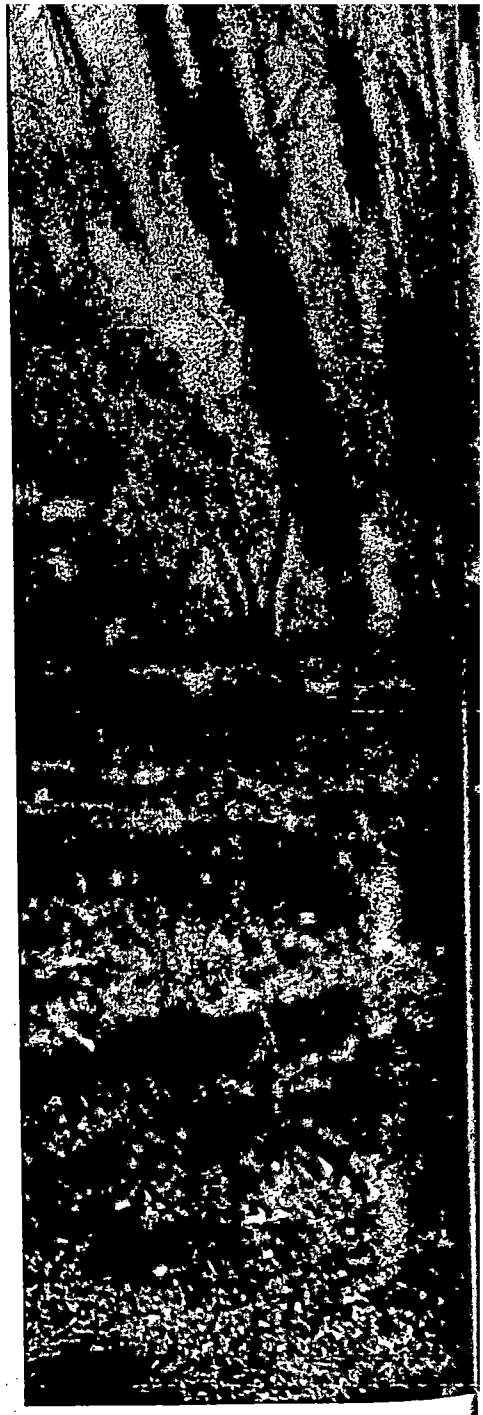
Not with optimism, I think, General Alvarez reckons the future of Honduras dependent upon public opinion in the United States. "How can we defend ourselves alone? The United States can say 'That's your problem,' but I think there is a moral commitment. Latin America was inspired by the American example of 1776 and the French Revolution. How can it be that you would abandon us and allow those principles to be lost in this hemisphere?"

Some Hondurans contend that the army and police have not always paid diligent attention to democratic principles. Dr. Ramón Custodio López, a physician who chairs the private Committee for Defense of Human Rights, told me the committee



Floating market *comes to the customers on Roatán, largest of Honduras's Bay Islands. Small craft bring bananas, plantains, and cassavas from the mainland to island harbors, where the boatmen peddle the produce. Bananas are the country's chief product, accounting for one-third of all exports.*





***Tallest power plant** in Central America, a 745-foot-high dam under construction at El Cajón (**above**) will generate a third of the country's electricity. Damming the Humuya River will flood 36 square miles of land rich in unearthed ancient Indian artifacts, possibly Maya. While archaeologists bemoan that loss, ecologists decry the destruction of forest by slash-and-burn agriculture. Fire set by this farmer (**right**) to clear land for an orchard burned out of control, scorching 40 acres of pine.*

counts 31 murdered Hondurans and 33 disappearances this year and last. Many—not all—were leftists; in most instances the committee suspects the security forces.

This record pales beside those of neighboring nations where political victims are counted in the hundreds or thousands. Still, Dr. Custodio asks: "Why is this possible in a democracy?"

THE U. S. M-16 confronts the Soviet AK-47 at the ragged town of Las Manos, on the Nicaraguan border, less than a three-hour drive from Tegucigalpa. The weird nonwar confrontation I glimpsed there offered no indication that skirmishes had erupted in the vicinity. Some miles distant, two U. S. journalists were killed last June; Honduran officers said their car hit a Sandinista mine on a Honduran road.

On their side of Las Manos, a group of Honduran soldiers played soccer. Others lounged about in combat gear. Beyond a 50-yard strip of highway respected as a no-man's-land, a Nicaraguan soldier watched the game.

"Sometimes we hear them shouting slogans like 'Live Free or Die,' " said a Honduran lieutenant. "I think they try to encourage themselves." An extra clip was



taped to his M-16. A gold parachute emblem signified that he had made a hundred jumps; like many Hondurans, he was trained at a U. S. installation in Panama.

Nearer to Tegucigalpa on the route from Las Manos, I met other men uniformly dressed—students in denim. They planted bananas, sacked seed corn, and sprayed insecticide. The Pan-American Agricultural School at El Zamorano believes in getting dirt under the fingernails.

"The trouble with most agricultural schools in Latin America is that they produce *agrónomos* who don't know what to do when they hit reality," said Dr. Simon E. Malo, the school's director. "You don't learn farming just by reading books."

At the urging of Samuel Zemurray, he of the 1911 revolution tale, the United Fruit Company founded this school in 1942; it is independent of the government.

No agricultural school in Latin America enjoys a better reputation. Students work hundreds of hours on its 12,000-acre farm, besides going to classes. This labor helps the school earn half a million dollars a year from vegetables and seed. Some 15 nations, including Nicaragua, are represented among this year's 425 students. Many graduates take advanced degrees in the U. S.

Food production lags in Honduras and other Latin American nations, which import much of what they eat. "There aren't nearly enough trained men to take information to the farmer," Dr. Malo said. He hopes the school can find funds to quadruple enrollment. It could do a lot with the price of a couple of Huey helicopters—or a couple of Ilyushin transports.

ONE DAY at San Pedro Sula I got into a Huey lent by the Honduran Air Force. Second Lt. Rafael Rivera Suazo rose to 2,000 feet and clattered south. After half an hour we spied a blade of a ridge through which the Humuya River had forced a notch. San Juan trees bloomed on the flanks, flashing yellow through the haze. Closer, we hovered over hairpinning roads and a temporary town.

With 360 millions in borrowed dollars, Honduras is building Central America's tallest dam here in order to trim the nation's oil bill. The 745-foot-high El Cajón dam will hold back a lake of 36 square miles.

Beyond the construction site, Lieutenant Rivera plunged into the river canyon. Suddenly we were looking up at trees—flashing past at 90 knots. Only 23, and only six months out of flight training, my pilot was cool as ice; while skimming the water, he was listening to rock music on his headset.

The air force, pride of Honduras, has about 70 pilots and 50 combat aircraft, including French Super-Mystères and updated Sabre-jets of Korean War vintage. Hardly modern, this air force is nevertheless rated as Central America's best.

Copán, near the Guatemalan border, is hardly modern either. I drove to this site, one of the great Maya centers of Middle America, with Ricardo Agurcia, the young director of the Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History. "I love this place," Ricardo said. The feeling is infectious.

In the afternoon came a gentle shower, and we took cover beneath a corbeled arch. I looked across the main plaza, at the temples, the stairway with more than 1,250 glyphs, the ball court, and the elaborately carved statues of rulers whom archaeologists know as Squirrel and 18 Rabbit. There is, to me, no edifice here so awesome as to overpower. The plaza is like a garden of sculpture.

"What do you think of this place?" asked Bill Fash, Harvard-trained U. S. archaeologist and a colleague of Ricardo's.

"Peaceful," I said.

"You got it," Bill said, laughing. "That's one reason I've worked here five years."

Three deer ambled out of the woods, making our tranquillity complete.

Do not think Copán is static. Less than a mile from the main plaza I stood atop the house of a man of influence in the eighth century and watched 35 archaeologists, workmen, and students from Pennsylvania State University. Probing the remains of numerous stone buildings, they used wheelbarrows, buckets, shovels, trowels, dental picks, brushes, and transits. Honduras borrowed three million dollars to finance an ambitious study of Copán and the restoration of temples and residential buildings.

Bill Fash turned to the long bench behind me. Perhaps it had been the sleeping area of



Silent beauty *beneath the waves lured Leah Riley (**above**) from a desk job of selling insurance in Oregon to the Bay*

of 16 glyphs. "Nobody beat the artisans of Copán at carving," he said. "They had the best stone in the Maya realm, this volcanic tuff." Soft when quarried, it could be worked easily. Exposed to air, it hardened.

"Their writing was very stylized," Bill continued. "There was a lot of competition, and the way to distinguish yourself was to put your message in an innovative way." He regarded the figure in the glyph at the left end of the row. "This little curl under the fellow's eye is the numeral eleven. This little torch that the next figure carries stands for three." He read more, then calculated that the building was dedicated in A.D. 786, late in the Maya's Classic period.

A figure holding a "sun glyph" suggests that the occupant watched the heavens; perhaps he was an astronomer.

Copán's population may have climbed to 15,000. But soon after the dedication that archaeologists believe it could no longer feed itself. Preliminary analysis of bones from burials at the end of Copán's greatness suggests that the people were malnourished and diseased. Many died young.

For modern Honduras, these indications are sobering. At the present growth rate, it will have 20 million people in half a century.

I TOOK the good highway that climbs to Santa Rosa de Copán, an antique town with cobbled streets, two hours from the ruins. In this vicinity the mountains get serious about being mountains, sending two peaks beyond 9,000 feet; in the valleys the isolation is intense.

The road on to Gracias was a jarring challenge, all ruts, rocks, and fords. Briefly in the 1540s Gracias was the seat of the Spanish *audiencia* that governed Central America. But the government moved to Guatemala in



*Islands, where she co-manages a resort, teaches scuba diving, and leads tours. Off Roatán (**right**) she explores coral formations that, diving enthusiasts say, compare in splendor to Australia's Great Barrier Reef.*

1549, and Gracias is today merely the capital of the Department of Lempira, boasting neither industry nor asphalt.

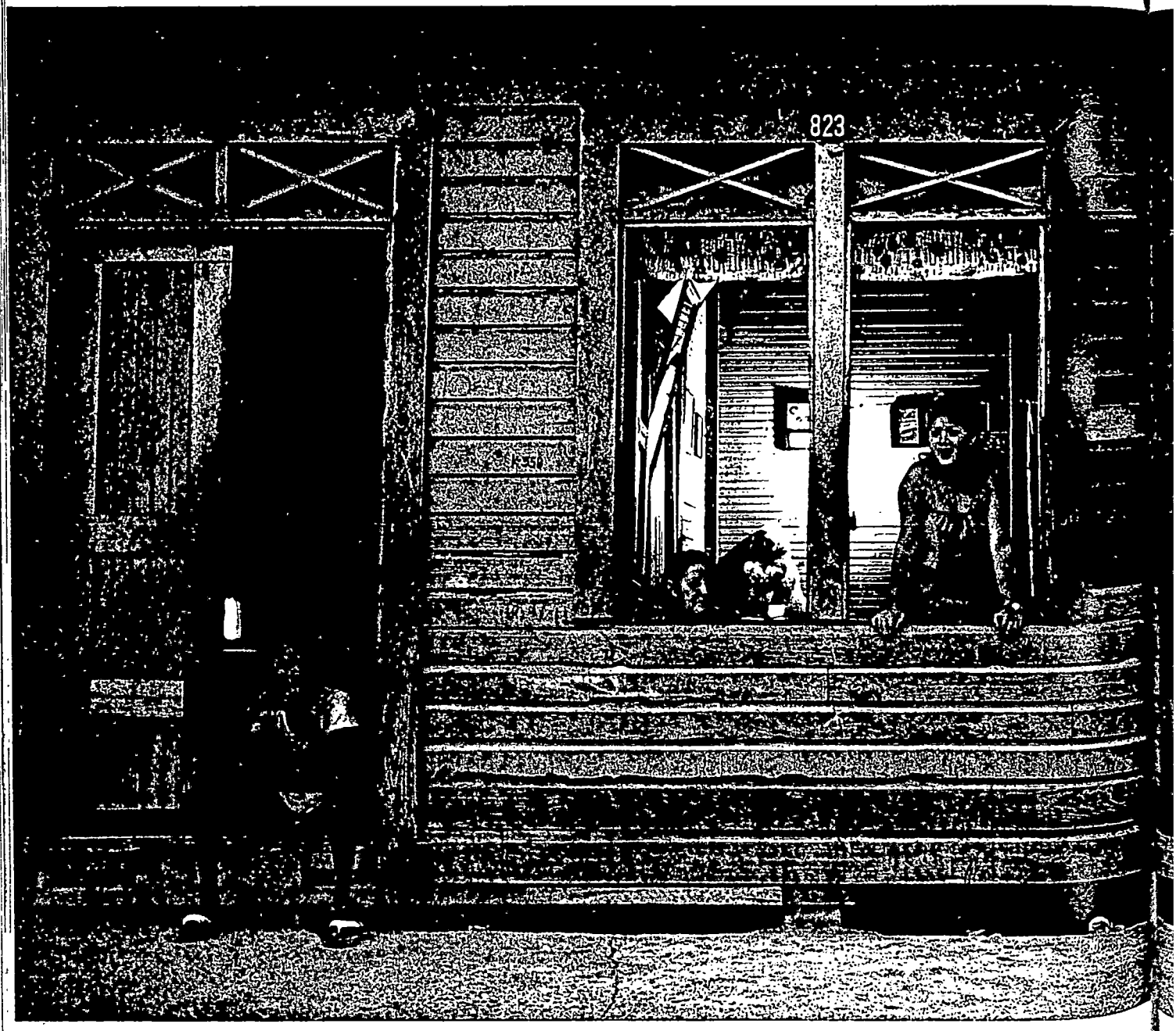
Men travel miles to earn a dollar or two in Gracias, bending under loads of heavy red pottery. Sometimes a trudging man is accompanied by a boy. Not really a boy, it seems, but a miniature adult, with his own load of pots roped to his forehead.

Indian blood courses the veins of the people who claw the hillsides and sell a bit of pottery. They revere the Indian leader that the Spaniards called Lempira—Lord of the Mountain. He fought valiantly against the conquest for two years beginning in 1537; the Spaniards killed him during a truce.

Soldiers told me that the nation's best troops are recruited in this area. "They're hardheaded, but when they learn to fight, nothing stops them," a sergeant said.

Recruited? Not precisely. Compulsory military service is enforced by the press-gang, an old Central American custom. "The soldiers take anyone who is healthy," a woman in the Gracias market told me.

A villager said: "A *comandante* tells the mayor to produce 25 young men. He cannot refuse. A truck comes. The boys cry because they do not want to leave their mothers. The mothers cry because they want their sons at home." Once in the army, however, many Lempirans make it a career.



UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO frequent air service relieved the isolation of such towns as Gracias. But air service shrank as it grew more costly, and Honduras's road network is far from complete. So I chartered a Cessna when I started along the Mosquito Coast. Charlie Wettstein, son of German immigrants, set me down first at Trujillo.

My host was a voluble Italian, manager of a little jerry-built hotel sheltered by sea grapes and almond trees. In this pleasant but plain setting Angelo Rubboli strove to maintain a patrician aura, dressing in white shirt and white pants with a blue scarf at his neck. Angelo, wanderer of the world, is not the first Italian to reach this place. That was Christopher Columbus, in 1502.

Trujillo, an early Spanish stronghold, is guarded by a massive brick fortress whose rusting cannon still point seaward. Behind, the town is small and drowsy. There being no taxi, I engaged Arturo René Ramos and his old pickup. "To the cemetery," I said.

Among the leaning stones we found one that said "Wuliam-Walker 1860." Contemporaries called *William* Walker a "filibuster," a military adventurer. Nashville-born, he made himself dictator of Nicaragua for one year in 1856. On another expedition he captured Trujillo but was pried out by a British man-of-war. Pursued by Hondurans, he surrendered to the vessel's captain, who gave him to the locals. They shot him.

Arturo regarded the stone. "He doesn't deserve anything this good," he said. "He was a mafioso, and he didn't like blacks." Arturo, who is black, knew that Walker had planned to introduce slavery in Nicaragua.

Trujillo has forgotten another William who, like Walker, arrived in difficulty. William Sydney Porter was on the lam in 1896, avoiding trial for bank embezzlement (for which he eventually served time). This was before he became famous as short-story writer O. Henry. In the book of stories called *Cabbages and Kings*, in which Trujillo is "Coralio," Porter described paradise: "The fetterless, idyllic round of enchanted days . . . a life full of music, flowers, and low laughter . . . and the many shapes of love and magic and beauty that bloomed in the white tropic nights. . . ."

In a beachside cottage at Angelo's hotel, lulled by the surf and the drum of rain on the thatched roof, I rejoiced that Trujillo seemed unchanged.

It will change. At nearby Puerto Castilla, Honduras is spending 45 million dollars to develop a port for lumber, bananas, and palm oil. A new paved road reaches back into the Aguán River Valley, a promising



***An open-door**—and open-window—policy prevails in Tela, where residents visit with passersby. Life geared down to a slower pace in Tela when the United Fruit Company, now United Brands, moved offices inland to La Lima.*

agricultural area. And, close by, Green Berets train Salvadoran soldiers.

ENGLISH SEA DOGS who preyed on Spanish galleons spread the name Mosquito Coast, possibly commemorating its premier pest, or taking the name of a prominent group of Indians in this region.

Charlie's Cessna followed the coast, over savannas green and flat as a billiard table. Turning, we trailed the Patuca River inland. Above the dense treetops of rain forest, I had the sensation of flying over broccoli in a supermarket. We pancaked down on the grass strip at Wampusirpi.

I looked there at people standing in a line, expecting to see in their rust-hued faces confusion and fear. But the eyes revealed nothing. Each person, each silent, withdrawn person, seemed simply stunned. All had walked days to get to Wampusirpi.

Name, age. Names and ages of children, grandmothers, uncles. At the line's end the information was recorded. Then each family could draw a ration of food: corn, beans, rice, powdered milk, enough coffee for one cup per person per day.

Miskito Indians from Nicaragua, some of these people fled heavy-handed changes imposed by the Sandinista government. Some fled fighting between the Sandinistas and counterrevolutionaries. Nearly four thousand Miskitos have been settled along the Patuca by World Relief, an evangelical church organization headquartered in Wheaton, Illinois.

Everything is boomtown raw in Wampusirpi. Smoke rises from cooking fires by tents. A *private* bath in the creek? Maybe after ten at night. Lacking dormitory space, World Relief's staff lays pallets on office floors and strings hammocks for a second tier of bodies. It is makeshift, crude, urgent ministration to the burdened. It is beautiful.

At the present time Honduras is sheltering 23,000 refugees from Nicaragua, 20,000 from embattled El Salvador, and 500 from Guatemala.

Many who reached Wampusirpi tell of violence. Sidney Kittle Goslen, minister of the Moravian faith, the dominant faith among Miskitos, said Sandinista soldiers burned his village. Son of a Texan who mined in Nicaragua, he spoke fair English. "They burned my house first and killed my little cattle. They burned another house. They went to the church and burned it down."

His village was beside the Coco River, also called the Segovia, which forms part of the border between Nicaragua and Honduras. The Sandinistas apparently burned riverside villages to clear the border of inhabitants. Miskitos who did not flee were compelled to resettle elsewhere.

"It's my faith that the people will be able to go back," said Señor Kittle, who is 69. "I'm getting old, and I'm not very healthy. Maybe I ain't going." He looked away, but not before I saw that his eyes were wet.

The little clapboard Moravian church in Wampusirpi filled with people after dark, and presently there floated in the velvety night yearning voices. A good Baptist would recognize the old hymn as "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." As the Miskitos know it, the words, in rough translation from their language, say that in time of trouble,

I run fast to God,
And tell him in his ear.
He knows everything about me,
He understands my suffering.

I WENT BACK to Tegucigalpa and took the highway that twists to the hot Pacific coast. A dugout bore me to Amapala, on an island in the little Gulf of Fonseca. Three Honduran patrol boats painted with menacing shark's teeth rode at anchor there.

From the island it is possible on a clear day to see the volcano named Cosigüina in Nicaragua and two volcanoes, Conchagua and 7,000-foot San Miguel, in El Salvador. "Where the hell is Honduras?" asked a T-shirt I had seen on a boy in Tegucigalpa. (Yes, they have those there, too.) I can answer: It is between volcanoes. □

Facing an uncertain future, *a 13-year-old Miskito Indian clears land at Wampusirpi resettlement area after she and her family walked for more than a week from Nicaragua. Supplied with basic farming tools, they and countless other refugee families throughout Central America struggle to carve out new lives free from the ravages of war.*

City of Kings and COPÁN

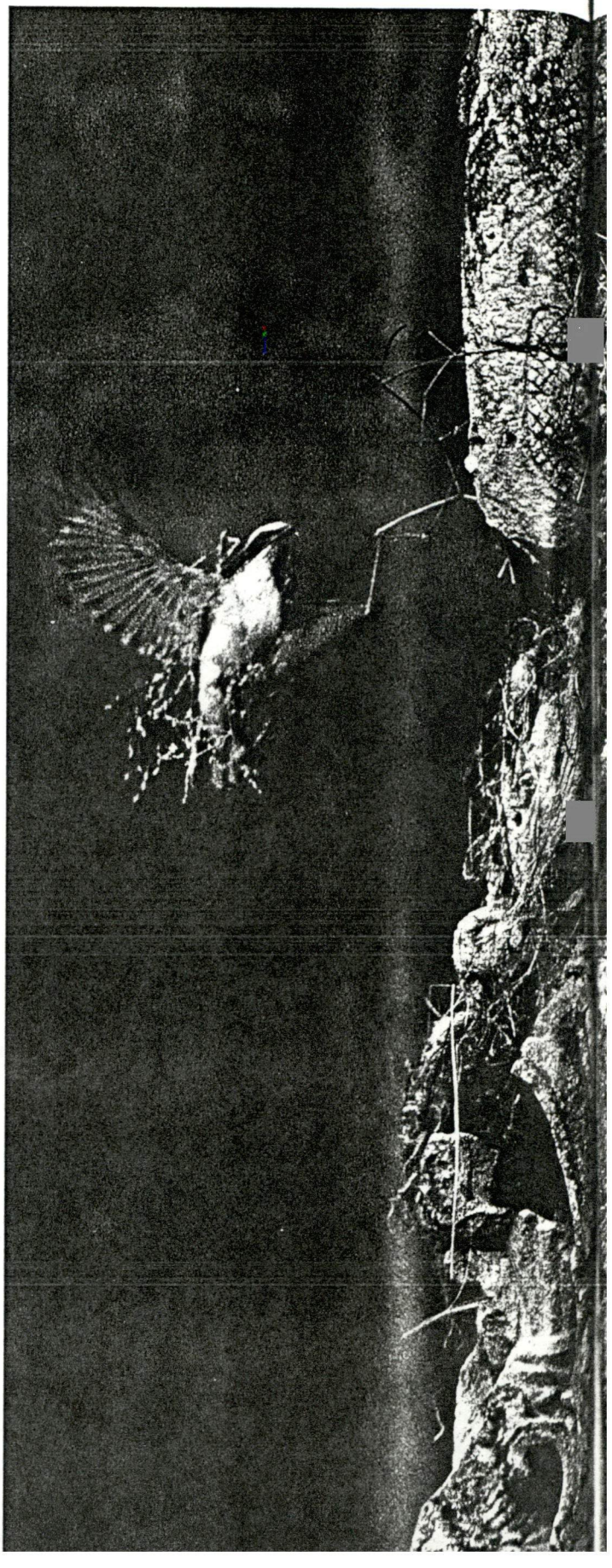
By GEORGE E. STUART
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF ARCHAEOLOGIST

Photographs by
KENNETH GARRETT

ON OR ABOUT OCTOBER 14, A.D. 652, Lord Smoke Imix, the Sun King, 12th in the royal succession, ordered that four carved stone monuments be placed at widely separated points on the upper slopes of the Copán Valley in what is now western Honduras. His reason for this action is unknown. Some experts believe that the stelae marked astronomical alignments; others, that Smoke Imix wished to reinforce his ancestral identity with the sacred mountains surrounding his capital; and still others, that they simply helped to define the king's domain.

One—labeled Stela 12 in the catalog of the monuments of ancient Copán—stands solitary on the heights about two miles east of the modern town. Whenever I am there, I make the trek to that windblown summit, for I know of no other place in the realm of the Maya where one can behold in a single sweep the loveliest of landscapes and so many tangible reminders of the 3,000 years of human culture that have played out upon it.

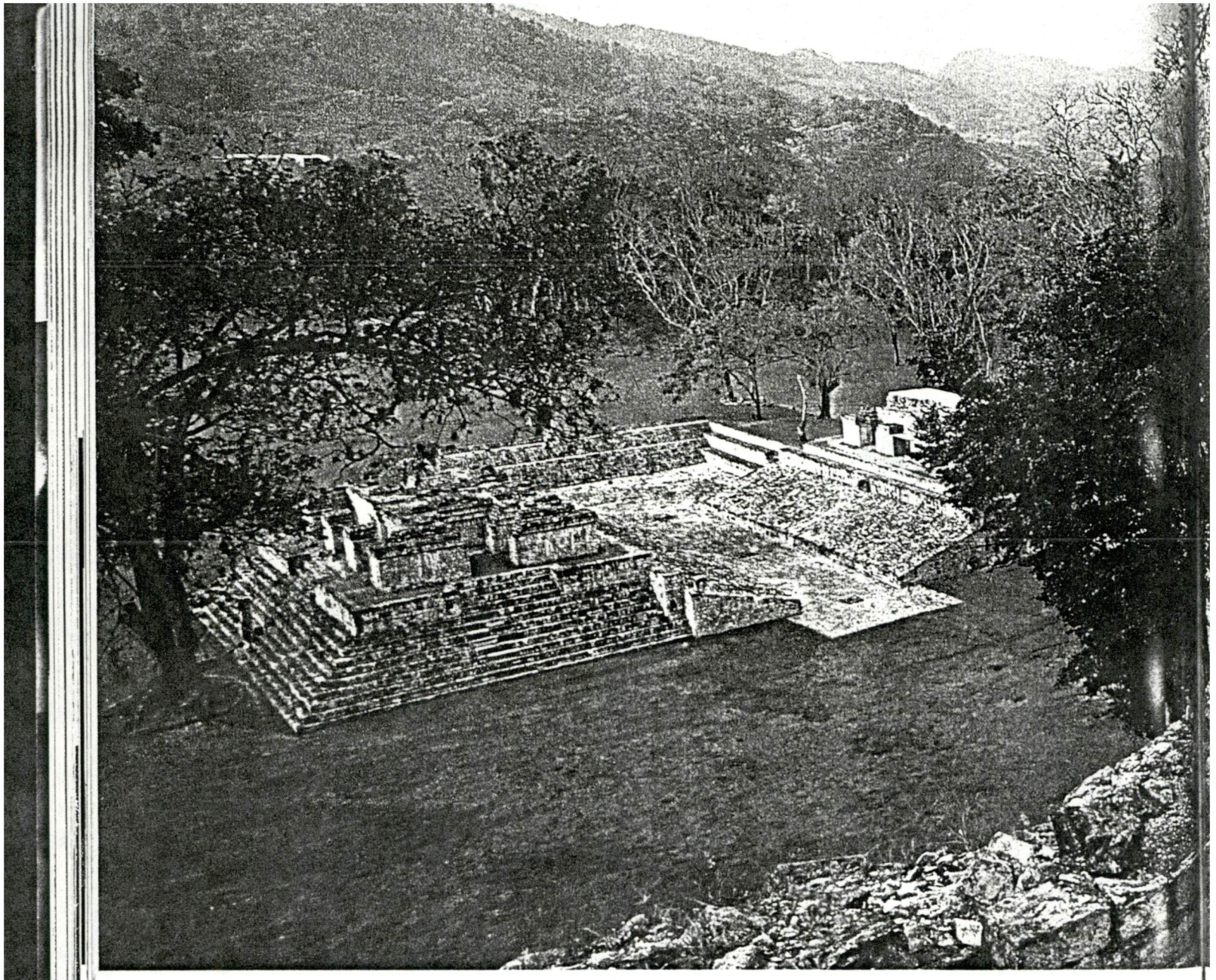
Here, inscribed in stone, is the most complete chronology of a Maya royal house. And here, as nowhere else, continuing work in deciphering the hieroglyphs and artistic symbolism of the Maya has been matched by that



Battered by the ages, a stone portrait of the Maya ruler known as 18 Rabbit shelters the nest of a great kiskadee, a flycatcher. The eighth-century reign of this powerful lord saw the metropolis of Copán in its full flowering.

Commoners





seeking to unveil the finer points of their society and its everyday life.

If you stand by Stela 12 and know just where to look, you will spot Stela 10 across the widest part of the valley, about level with the eye. Like a tiny grain of rice on end, it appears all but lost amid the fields and foliage. Lower, near the river, red-tile roofs and white stucco define the living town of Copán Ruinas.

The clump of dark forest on the near side of town shrouds the most extraordinary feature of the whole valley—the soaring Acropolis of ancient Copán, a royal city of the Classic Maya (A.D. 250 to 900), whose ornate buildings and sculptures, even in ruin, make it one of the greatest treasuries of art and architecture in all the Americas.

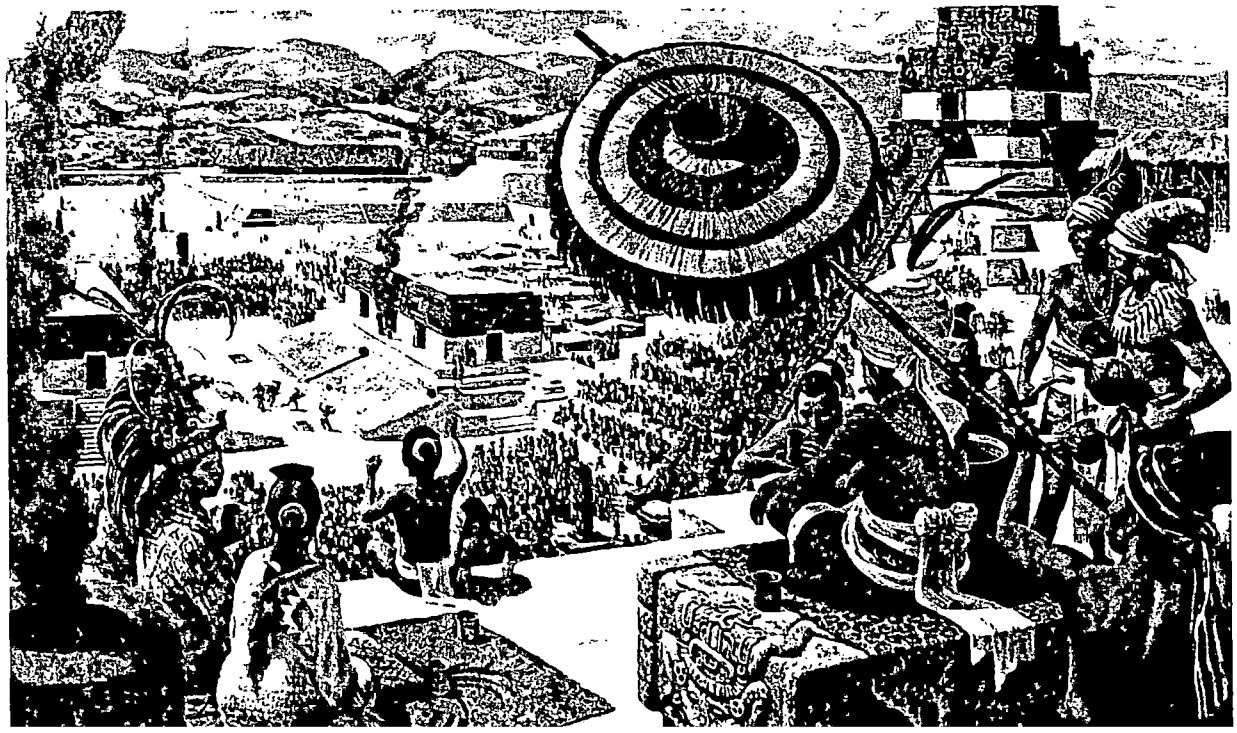
Archaeologists refer to the Acropolis and the platforms, pyramids, stairways, and plazas that adjoin it as the Main Group of Copán. The Main Group also holds what art historian Linda Schele calls "a forest of kings"—stone figures, larger than life, of Copán's greatest rulers, portraits sculptured almost in the full round and so laden with the symbols of ancient power politics and the complex ideology behind it that, even to the layperson, Copán's art seems unique.

It was the famed American traveler John Lloyd Stephens and his companion, English artist-architect Frederick Catherwood, who brought the first widely popular notice of Copán—and the first accurate drawings of its intricately carved monuments—to the outside world. The pair came across the ruin in deep forest in the rainy winter of 1839:

"It lay before us like a shattered bark in the midst of the ocean, her masts gone, her name effaced, her crew perished, and none to

The spectacle of the ball game packed thousands into Copán's ceremonial center. More than a sport, it was a metaphor for contesting mythical beings and concepts. Yax Pac, who ruled from A.D. 763 to 820, watches with his family (below) from a temple terrace now in ruins. The buildings and monuments around him proclaim his power and divine lineage.

PAINTING BY H. TOM HALL



tell whence she came, to whom she belonged . . . or what caused her destruction."

Since 1885, when Englishman Alfred P. Maudslay began to document and excavate Copán in earnest, four generations of scientists have sought to answer the questions posed by Stephens.

BY THE LATE 1940S archaeologists from Harvard University and the Carnegie Institution of Washington, D. C., in association with the Honduran government, had excavated and restored some buildings, while others had deciphered dates on the monuments. The half century of effort at Copán was paced by investigations at other sites ranging from northern Yucatán to the Pacific coast and from the Chiapas jungle to the Caribbean. The Maya image was that of a peaceful stargazing people obsessed with the grandeur of time; a society of farmers ruled by astronomer-priests; a people without written history, largely untouched by trouble. In other words the Maya were like no other civilization on earth.

The picture began to change dramatically about 1960. Carnegie Mayanist Tatiana Proskouriakoff demonstrated that the hieroglyphic passages on the monuments dealt with human history, and epigraphist Heinrich Berlin isolated the "emblem" glyphs of Maya polities or lineages. About the same time, Soviet scholar Yuri Knorozov showed that elements of the writing stood for syllables in the spoken language.

The last decade or so has witnessed a giant step in our knowledge of the Maya, and Copán has played a primary role in the process. Under the continuing guidance of the Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History, a series of international efforts has focused not only on the Main Group but also with equal intensity on the surrounding landscape. The National Geographic Society has provided support for several of these projects.

The Copán River follows a tortuous course through the region, bisecting a valley of about 80 square miles. Some of the valley is fertile flatland, as prized by the modern Copanec farmer as by his ancient counterpart. The rest, between the plain and the ridge summits—a vertical distance of around 3,000 feet—is an amphitheater of slopes interrupted by tributaries and ravines that carry the rainwater between May and November.

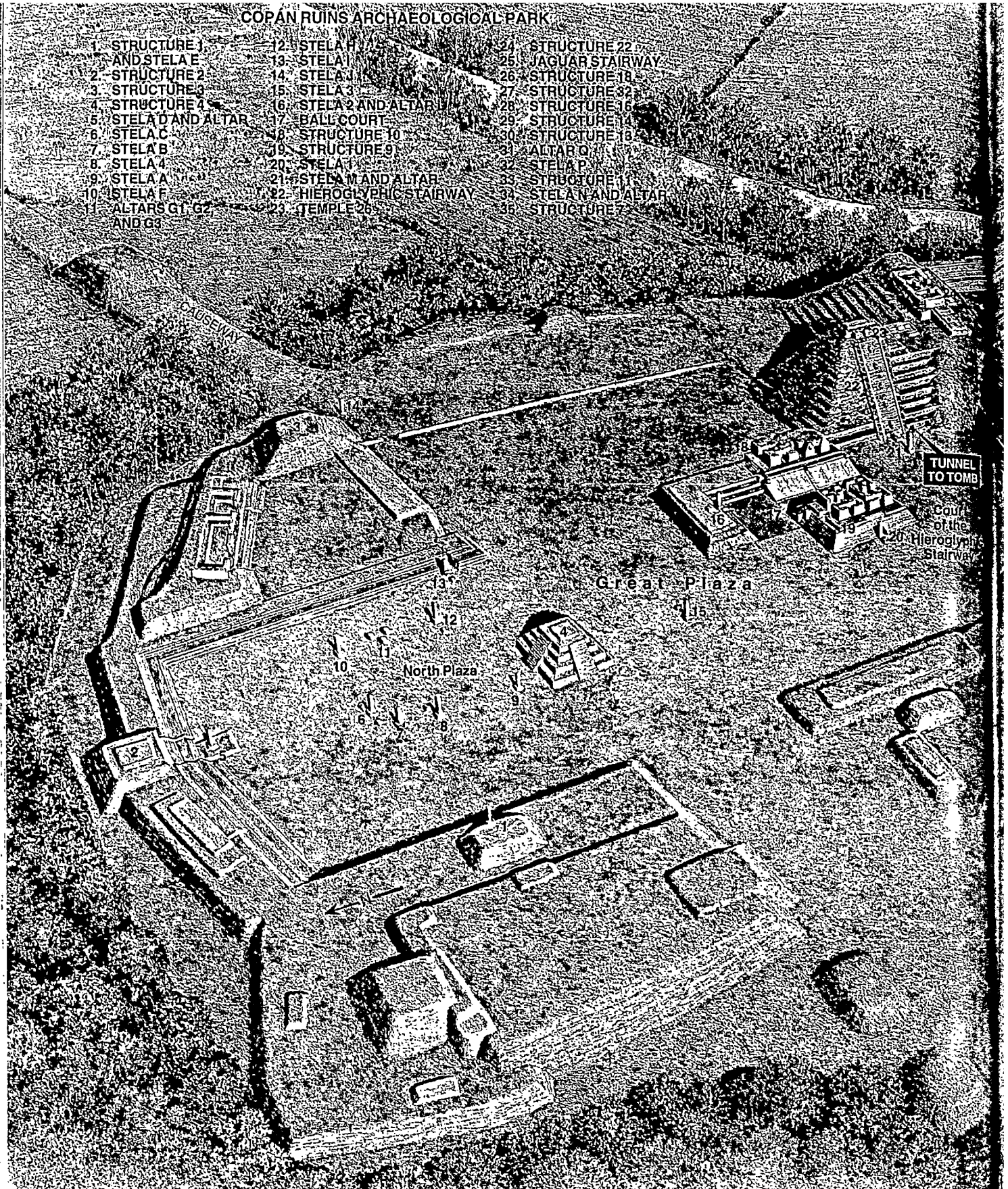
To archaeologists the 9.25-square-mile heart of the valley bottomland is the "Copán pocket." It holds some 3,500 mounds—the overgrown ruins of buildings—including the great mass of the Main Group. Up and down the valley lie at least 1,000 other mounds.

In this microcosm of the Maya world anthropologists, epigraphists, art historians, and many others whose specialties range from pollen study to bone pathology have wrested a saga of power and pomp, of the lives and labors of the humblest corn farmers, and of everyone in between. Perhaps the most important discovery of all is that the story of Copán's nobility, artists, merchants, craftsmen, and farmers is more pertinent to our times than we could ever have imagined—for it illustrates the folly of the misuse of land.



Razor-sharp edges of chert lance heads found in a cache dating from A.D. 755 show profiles of human faces (detail, right). Each piece, about a foot tall, must have taken hundreds of hours to produce. Brandished by the king, the lances probably were emblems of his authority.

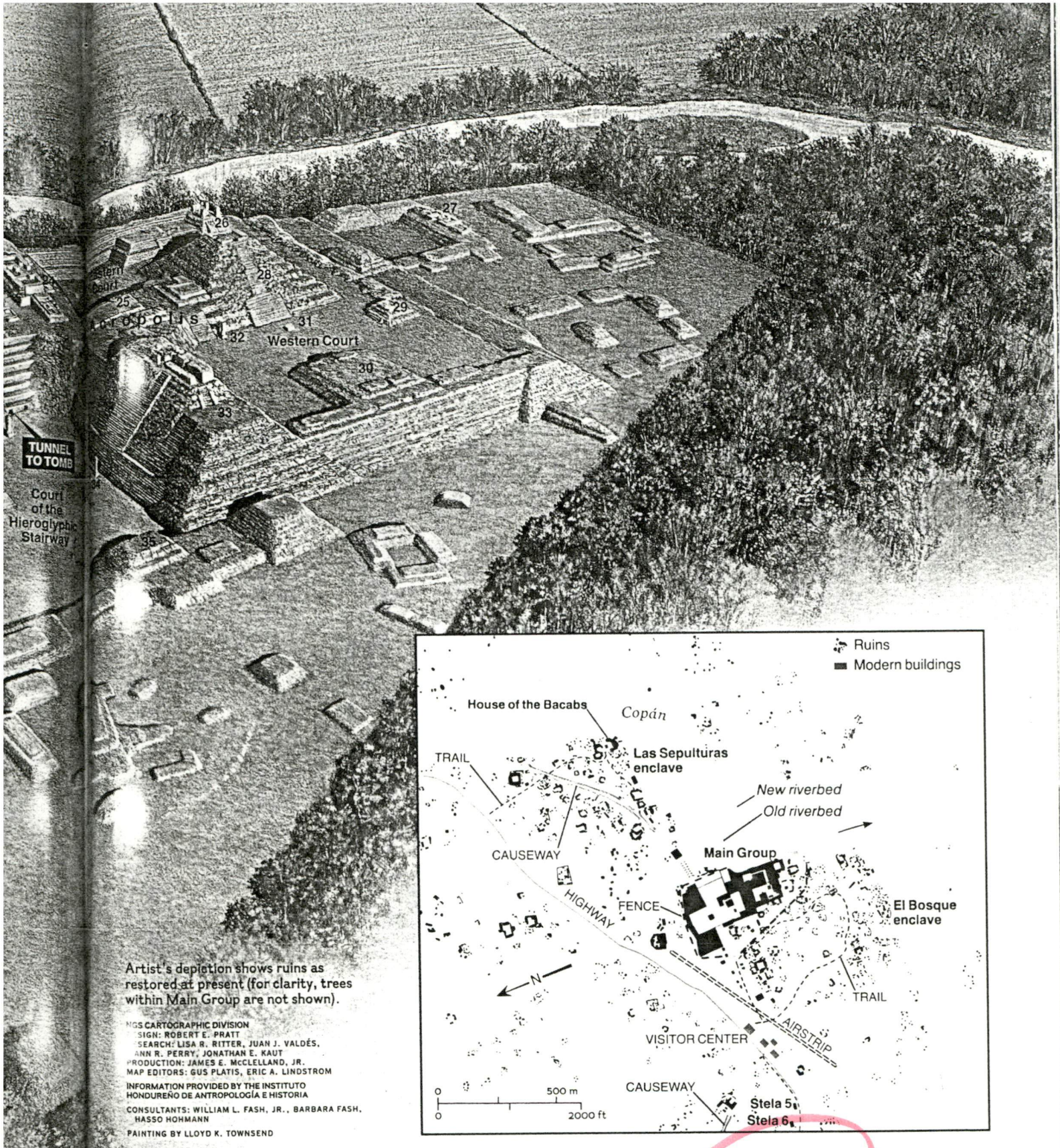
THE COPÁN ACROPOLIS rises 100 feet off the old riverbed to dominate the Main Group. Its whole east edge was cleanly sliced off by more than a millennium of erosion after the site was abandoned. In the late 1930s archaeologists rechanneled



Rebuilding Copán

When diplomat-explorer John Lloyd Stephens bought Copán from a local farmer for $50 in 1839, "an immense forest shrouded the ruins." Tree roots had tumbled stones from buildings, vines had invaded cracks, and earthquakes had toppled stelae. But "the beauty of the sculpture, the solemn stillness of the woods . . . and the mystery that hung over [the site]" intrigued him—and the generations of archaeologists who followed.

Over the past century a series



Artist's depiction shows ruins as restored at present (for clarity, trees within Main Group are not shown).

NGS CARTOGRAPHIC DIVISION
DESIGN: ROBERT E. PRATT
RESEARCH: LISA R. RITTER, JUAN J. VALDÉS, ANN R. PERRY, JONATHAN E. KAUT
PRODUCTION: JAMES E. McCLELLAND, JR.
MAP EDITORS: GUS PLATIS, ERIC A. LINDSTROM

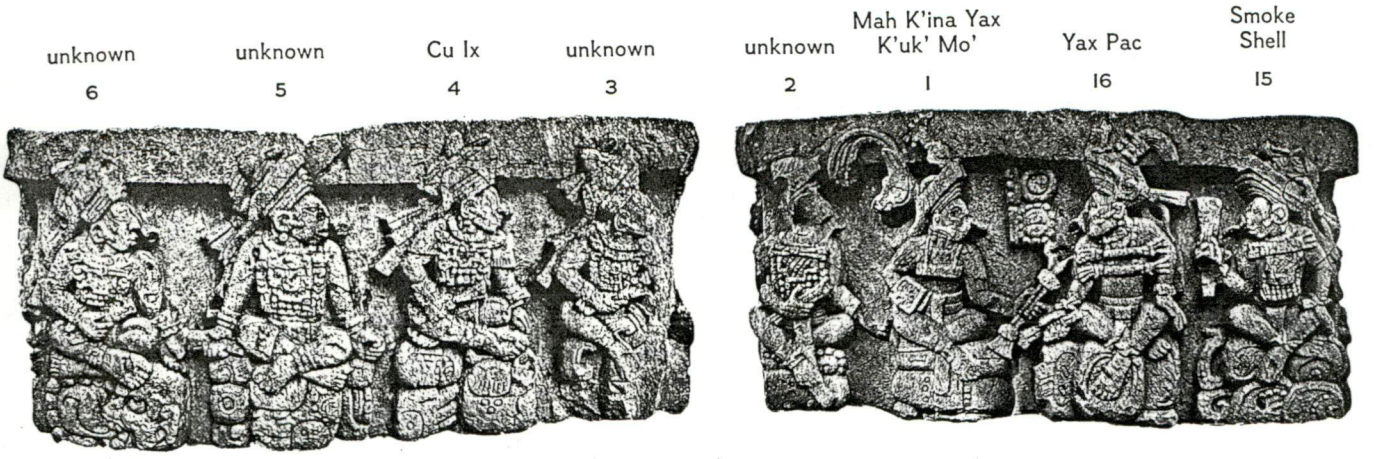
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE INSTITUTO HONDUREÑO DE ANTROPOLOGÍA E HISTORIA

CONSULTANTS: WILLIAM L. FASH, JR., BARBARA FASH, HASSO HOHMANN

PAINTING BY LLOYD K. TOWNSEND

of campaigns at this site in western Honduras has cleared and restored what we see today. Early work investigated the ceremonial structures and royal residences of the Main Group (above). Recent projects have studied houses in the areas of Las Sepulturas and El Bosque.

Farmers moved to this fertile river valley about 1000 B.C. In its glory, from A.D. 600 to 800, Copán was a major center of Classic Maya civilization. Its graceful art and architecture were almost unrivaled in the New World. But the city fell victim to its own success. The growing population covered farmland with houses and leveled the forest. The political hierarchy collapsed at the start of the ninth century, and the site was slowly abandoned.



the river to prevent any further damage.

The exposed cross section is every archaeologist's fantasy—once the sense of loss over what has vanished is overcome. The cut reveals a profile of successive plastered floors, masonry walls, vaulted cavities, and other features that show the whole to be the sum of many parts. The growth of the Acropolis coincided with the long golden age of royal Copán, for its heights served as the seat of power of at least 16 kings.

What meets the eye is merely the last set of buildings. The Maya, ever conscious of architectural relationships as statements of power and ancestry and as mirrors of the layout of their cosmos, often built time and time again on the same spot.

Consider Structure 11 on the north edge of the Acropolis. Its stairway of cut stones the size of sofas provided the sole access to the heights of power. Erected in the late eighth century by the last major ruler of Copán, Yax Pac—whose name means Rising Sun—it conceals, among other things, part of a deeply buried stairway that once led to one of the first buildings on the site. That remnant, revealed by an exploratory tunnel, is inscribed with the name of Mah K'ina Yax K'uk' Mo', Great Sun Lord Quetzal Macaw, the founder of the dynasty early in the fifth century.

Or contemplate Structure 22, built by the famous 18 Rabbit, who ruled Copán between 695 and 738. On the summit of the Acropolis, it faces south, across a courtyard dedicated to the planet Venus. The ornate facade, now fallen except for its basal "porch" with stone teeth, once depicted a huge monster mouth.

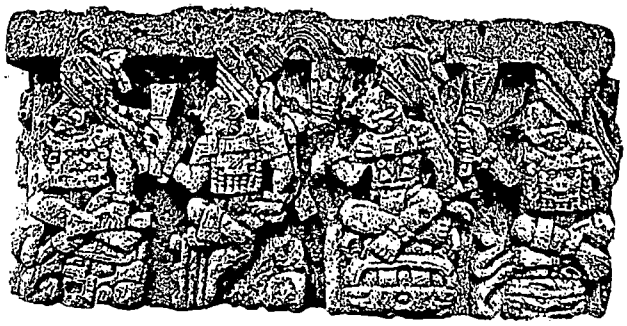
Crouching supernatural figures flank the door of its inner chamber. They share the burden of a two-headed monster representing the heavens. The "front," or east end, of the monster bears symbols of Venus; the "rear," or west, those of the sun. Not surprisingly, the whole building is oriented so that its long axis is in perfect alignment with distant Stela 12. The outer corners of Structure 22 are decorated with stacked countenances of "Cauac monsters," representing mountains. According to Yale art historian Mary Miller, the whole is nothing less than a celebration of rulership frozen in stone.

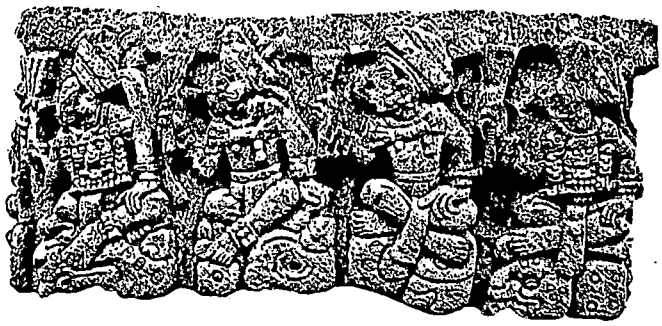
So palpable was the power of the imagery of Structure 22 that Yax Pac later constructed an annex perfectly aligned on its major axis, and he made sure that his own mortuary memorial, Structure 18, was placed in the same aura of power on the south edge of the Acropolis in special relationship to the monster-mouth facade of his revered ancestor.

Thus, by means of decor and positioning, the Main Group served as a stupendous architectural metaphor for power derived from real and supernatural ancestors and from the very earth and sky. The images, in effect, composed an artificial landscape with pyramids as mountains and doorways as caves. The stelae complete the replication of nature's visible world, for they are labeled in hieroglyphs with the term *te-tun,* or tree-stone.

While the royal saga of Copán is at least partly recoverable from the carved texts of the "official" histories, that is only part of the story. Data on the lives and ways of the rest of the valley people are equally crucial—and infinitely more difficult to come by. Hence the formation in 1977 of an interdisciplinary archaeological project by the Honduran government in collaboration with a series of eminent Maya scholars.

Gordon Willey of Harvard was instrumental in the new effort, calling upon his decades of experience in the analysis of settlement patterns—the reconstruction of the nature of a society through study of the ways in which its remains are arranged on the landscape. To create a control for a valid sampling, he





designed a progression of categories based on the size and complexity of the mound groups that dotted the valley. A Type 1 group was smallest, no more than a few low simple structures around a courtyard. At the other end of the scale were Type 4 groups, those with dozens of mounds and occasional structures exhibiting such hallmarks of distinction as vaults, sculptures, or unusual height.

When the anthropologists applied the scheme to the completed map of the valley, certain patterns emerged. Type 4 complexes in the Copán pocket were clustered in two areas. One of these "urban enclaves," called El Bosque, or the Woods, filled the flats just southwest of the Main Group. The other, Las Sepulturas, the Tombs, lay to the east and north, the largest aggregation of mounds outside the Main Group itself.

In effect the map supplied two dimensions of the Copán Valley study area. Intensive excavation at Las Sepulturas under William T. Sanders and David Webster of Pennsylvania State University refined what was known of the third necessary dimension. Digging down, layer by layer, and dating the material found in each, it was possible to establish the dimension of time.

"Las Sepulturas was linked to the Main Group by a causeway," archaeologist Bill Fash remarked as he guided me through the place in 1987, "so we knew it was important. What we didn't count on was the depth of the deposits here. They provided us with much of what we know of Copán in the Middle Preclassic period, about 1000 to 300 B.C."



Incense swirls around a jaguar sacrifice. As in many important ceremonies, attendants dress as aspects of Chac, the god of rain and lightning. Central figures wear plumes and jades of privilege.

On the sides of the altar, the 15 predecessors of Yax Pac, Copán's last major ruler, sit atop their name glyphs or descriptive signs (top). On the front, facing his own accession date, Yax Pac receives insignia of office from the city's first king.

Behind the altar archaeologists found small crypts with macaw bones and a larger one with the remains of 15 big cats—perhaps killed in honor of Yax Pac's royal ancestors.

PAINTING BY H. TOM HALL

"PEOPLE CAME here around 1000 B.C.," says Fash, "and probably the reasons were simple. The valley had water and good bottomland—everything you needed to be a good Maya farmer."

Little is known of those earliest Copanecs, save for the information afforded by a Preclassic cemetery seven feet beneath the surface of Las Sepulturas. A necklace of jade jaguar claws placed with one burial of about 900 B.C. indicates trade in luxury raw materials, for the jade came from the Motagua River Valley of Guatemala. And the decoration on the accompanying pottery suggests affiliations with the Olmec people, who, centered on Mexico's Gulf coast some 500 miles northwest of Copán, exerted their still little understood influences up and down the Pacific coast. Other burials of the same time proved devoid of goods, suggesting, even then, a thriving village population with a growing differentiation between elite and commoner.



Erected by the ruler who founded the royal line, Copán's oldest dated monument captures the attention of epigraphist David Stuart, the author's son. The glyphs for December 11, 435, appear at the top of the stela, which was found last spring in a building buried under Structure 26 and its Hieroglyphic Stairway (right). Just enough text remains below the break to read the king's name, Mah K'ina Yax K'uk' Mo'.

We know even less of Copán during the several centuries around the time of the birth of Christ. As a frontier settlement between the Maya area and various other groups to the east and south, it was situated in a locale propitious for trade. The archaeological record, however, is without evidence of any public buildings or ceremonial precincts. Perhaps the clues still lie buried deep in the very lowest levels of the Acropolis or under the present town, where several important Early Classic monuments have been found. Or maybe such remains were simply razed by later builders.

At any rate, while the burgeoning Maya centers at El Mirador, Tikal, and Uaxactún, in the lowlands of Guatemala's Petén, immortalized their powerful Late Preclassic elite in painted stucco adorning great public buildings, and while such highland centers as Kaminaljuyú in Guatemala and Chalchuapa in El Salvador passed through spectacular periods of prosperous state formation, Copán remains almost mute until the fifth century A.D.

Around A.D. 450 a shaman died and was buried at Las Sepulturas with all the trappings of his office—tortoiseshell rattles and a ritual "kit" containing divining stones, a codex, and animal teeth and bones. The accompanying pottery, lidded vases with slab legs, is typical of Early Classic times, reflecting relationships with the Maya highlands to the west and, ultimately, with the metropolis of Teotihuacan in Mexico's central highlands.

This burial of such an important person away from the Main Group suggests that power in the valley may have been shared among several lineages. And, according to Sanders and Webster, the population was still relatively low—perhaps no more than 3,000.

The origins of these Early Classic families of power is still a matter of debate among the Copán investigators. Sanders and Webster



believe that the families may have entered the valley shortly before this time. Fash thinks that a Maya elite simply developed in place.

Whatever the answer, all agree that the power of one lineage accounts for the monumental record of the Main Group that begins in the fifth century.

THE DYNASTIC LINE of royal Copán, whose span of existence virtually defines the Classic period there, is frozen on the four sides of Altar Q, a great block of greenish andesite set at the base of the ruined staircase to Structure 16. Near it lie the fallen stone skulls that once graced that building—the tallest in the Main Group.

The sides of the altar hold the portraits of 16 individuals, the rulers of the dynasty, each in full regalia and seated upon his name glyph (pages 496-7). The group is positioned so that Yax Pac—who commissioned the altar—is receiving the trappings of office from the long-dead founder of the dynasty.

Few details of the lives of these men are known until the reign of Smoke Imix (628 to 695), whose long life and reign witnessed the first great period of the city. During his time the valley population increased as never before both in numbers and in complexity, as the sprawl of buildings and clearings slowly moved outward from the Copán pocket.

The sampling of rural mound groups of the time indicates a diversity of activity. Some householders manufactured pottery, blending the old traditions of the Pacific littoral of El Salvador with Maya styles of the western highlands to create what archaeologists call Copador ware. Others may have been woodworkers, for they left behind a great number of razor-sharp bladelets made of obsidian, mainly from the Ixtepeque quarry in Guatemala. Still others drew upon the geologic bounty of the slopes and ridges at hand, manufacturing *metates,* or corn grinders, of durable rhyolite.

Smoke Imix's power as ruler was apparently matched by his prowess as warrior, and it may not have been limited to the valley. Altar L at Quiriguá, a site on the Motagua River in Guatemala—some 30 miles north of Copán and the center of a city-state ruled by a rival lineage—bears the image of a lord seated cross-legged Copán style beside the name Smoke Imix. If it is indeed the Copán ruler's name, as epigraphist David Stuart of

Vanderbilt University believes—and a date on Quiriguá Monument 12, readable as May 30, 653, is certainly right for this—then it is possible that the eroded relief marks a Copán takeover of the smaller Quiriguá polity.

When the powerful Smoke Imix died at Copán in June 695 in his 80s, 18 Rabbit inherited the Copán throne.

On Stela B, his accession monument in the Great Plaza, 18 Rabbit is depicted in full glory. His costume bears all the symbols of Classic Maya power—the jade belt of miniature ancestor heads and dangling trios of sacred mirrors; the loincloth blending elements of the holy countenance and the sacred tree that centers the universe; and the great headdress dominated by indicators of place and lineage, giant macaw heads and tiny figures amid the swirls of stone corn foliage.

Such monuments depicting 18 Rabbit as a god fill the Great Plaza, but it was his role as warrior that seems to have been his undoing and that led to one of the most disastrous days in the history of Copán—May 3, 738. On that day, according to passages carved on the graceful sandstone Stela E at Quiriguá, King Cauac Sky of that neighboring polity captured 18 Rabbit and had him beheaded.

Ironically that day fell in the midst of what would normally have been a season of high hopes in the Copán Valley—the time of the burning of fields for the planting. Shortly after the first rains, the new ruler, Smoke Monkey, took office. In the wake of the catastrophe he appears to have run the course of his reign (738 to 749) without distinction.

His son, Smoke Shell, a contrasting personality, acceded to the Copán throne in February 749. Soon afterward he instigated a renaissance of construction such as Copán had seldom witnessed. Among his works is that which has become to Mayanists and laypeople alike the most memorable feature of Copán—the great Hieroglyphic Stairway.

AWESOME even by Copán standards, the stairway rises wide and steep up the west face of the pyramid that supports the vestiges of Structure 26, between the Ball Court and Structure 11, creating a plaza designed to impress. This, indeed, may have been the primary reason for its construction.

"I see the Hieroglyphic Stairway as a sort of rally cry for the dynasty," says Bill Fash. "A real building spree that Smoke Shell hoped would reinstate the good old days of Smoke Imix."

The 50-foot-wide stairway once consisted of 72 steps, each a foot and a half high, between ornate balustrades. Its risers hold a text of more than 1,250 hieroglyphs chronicling the entire dynastic history of Copán to the year 755, when the stairway was dedicated. As epigraphist Berthold Riese noted, the content of the Hieroglyphic Stairway text equals that of perhaps 20 stelae. Punctuated by five life-size seated figures of stone, it stands as the longest single written inscription from all pre-Columbian America.

Unfortunately the Hieroglyphic Stairway collapsed in the 1800s. As a consequence only 30 of its risers are in their original order. The rest are jumbled, and, even now, detached stones from the original come to light in nearby piles of fallen rubble.

This state of affairs with regard to what surely must be one of the prime cultural monuments of the world impelled the Honduran government to approve the Copán Mosaics Project in 1985, an endeavor taken on by Bill Fash and his wife, Barbara, staff artist for the project. With the aid of epigraphists Linda Schele, David Stuart, and Nikolai Grube, they will try to restore the stairway text to its original state—at least on paper.

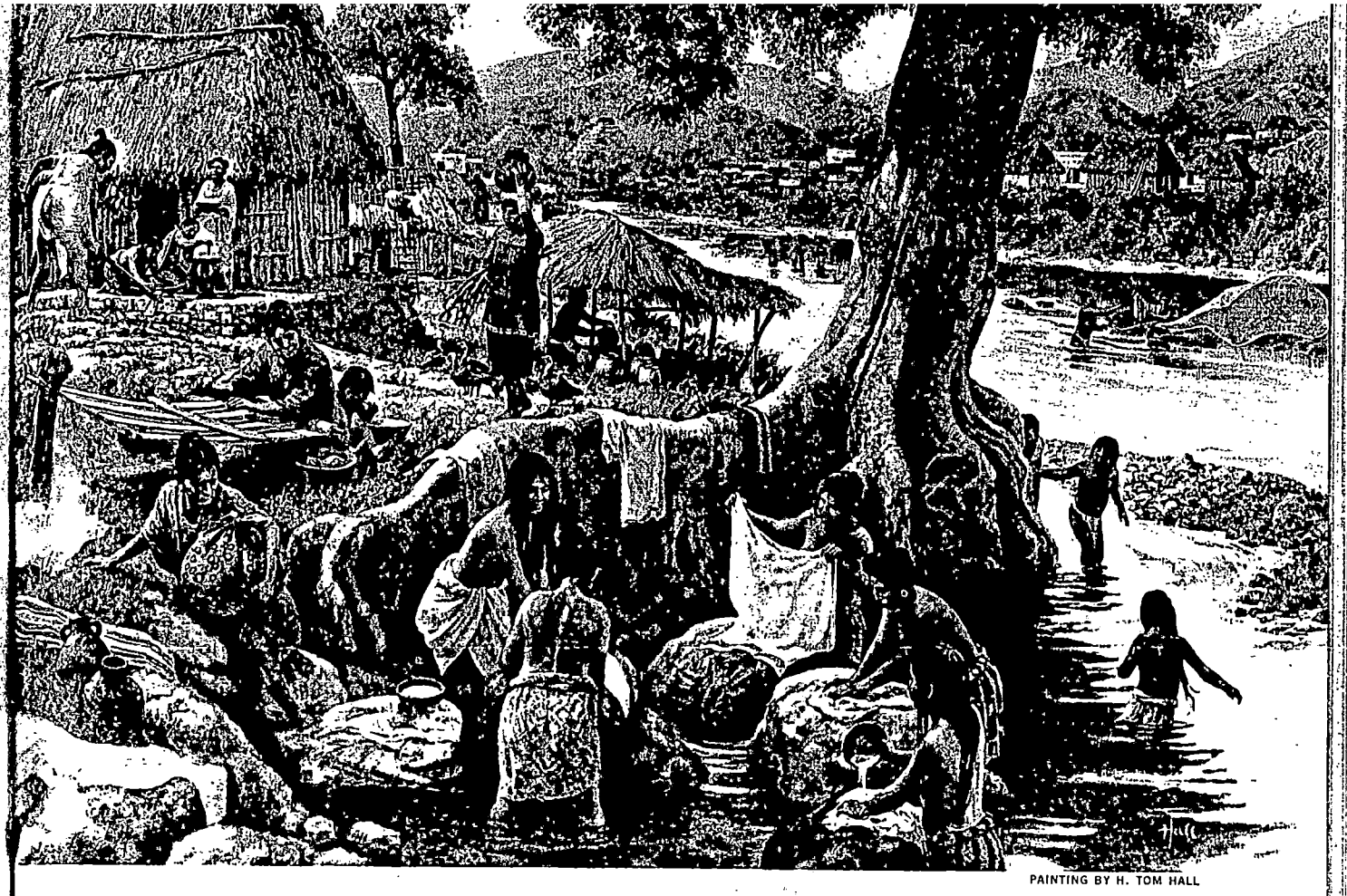
"Casts of the whole thing should be made," says Bill, "and the original stones placed in a protected environment. The old photographs tell all too clearly how much the stairway has suffered from rain and groundwater. It's a sad case and a big, big job."

Perhaps the largest task facing the Fashes is the sorting of the piles of sculpture that have fallen from the carved facades of the old buildings.

"We're getting pretty good at this," Barbara told me as we wandered through an alleyway of stone monster noses. "Each building had its set, its system of adornment, and lucky for us no two were quite alike."

"Of course, we still have our GOK piles," Bill adds. "Those are the stones whose original locations God only knows."

A great cache beneath the Hieroglyphic Stairway was uncovered a couple of seasons ago by David Stuart. It proved to be one of the most sumptuous ever found in the Maya area. Two elaborate carved jades—one a pectoral, or chest ornament, the other a short



PAINTING BY H. TOM HALL

In sight of the palaces and public buildings, valley residents pursued livelihoods that supported the city's ruling elite. Most farmed corn, beans, and squash and lived in thatch-roofed dwellings. Tradesmen, artists, and nobles built more elaborate homes. Far from being an empty religious center, as researchers first thought, Copán had a population as large as 20,000 at its peak.

standing figure—were among the talismans of sacred power carefully placed inside a clay incense burner, along with a sacrificial knife, bloodletting lancets of stingray and sea anemone spines, and a spiny oyster shell full of red pigment.

Beside the sealed cache vessel lay three of the finest "eccentric flints" ever found—delicately flaked silhouettes of translucent chert, each depicting seven Maya profile faces (pages 492-3).

The archaeology of the valley suggests that even as the stairway was dedicated, shadows lay over the region. Rebecca Storey's analysis of Copán skeletal material shows hints of malnutrition and disease as the farmsteads pushed the forest farther and farther toward the ridges around the time when the next king, Yax Pac, took office on July 2, 763.

Yax Pac continued the frantic building, perhaps to reinforce the power he must have felt was rapidly slipping away. To emphasize his position in the dynasty, he commissioned the carving of Altar Q and dedicated it by sacrificing jaguars, the ultimate symbol of Maya royalty.

LIFE IN SUBURBAN COPÁN in the era of Yax Pac is best mirrored by the unusually complete record found buried at Las Sepulturas. From the very beginning Gordon Willey had suspected that the site was an elite residential zone, and Bill Sanders and David Webster's excavations beginning in 1980 confirmed that. There were, however, a fair share of surprises.

The largest compound in the zone is composed of 40 to 50 buildings arranged so as to create 11 courtyards. The compound is dominated by what Webster calls "the House of the Bacabs," or officials. The palace boasts a massive hieroglyphic bench and facades, now



Transforming the back of Structure 22, workmen remove rubble and restore fallen walls. Inside, a hieroglyphic frieze beneath a step (bottom) has eroded dramatically since 1885, when Alfred P. Maudslay took the photograph laid beside it. Efforts to stop such deterioration include plans to set up a museum nearby for the major pieces of sculpture. Reproductions would replace originals at the site.

partly restored, that once featured ten life-size male figures with elaborate feather headdresses, each seated on a giant hieroglyph *na,* or house. Eight of these adorned the upper facades. The two lower ones, flanking the front door, appear to be scribes, for each holds a cut conch-shell "ink pot."

The man who lived here—archaeologists see him as the patriarch of a powerful lineage of scribes and artists—held tremendous power, perhaps exceeded only by that of Yax Pac himself.

The domain of the patriarch at Las Sepulturas around the year 800 held a population of some 250, counting kin and others. Its buildings, arranged around courtyards of varying size and prestige, include houses for young men (one seems to have been a dressing room for ball players), temples, shrines, storage rooms, kitchens, and workshops. Some of the residential quarters—distinguished by sleeping and sitting benches and refuse dumps—may have served as quarters for women, others as men's dormitories. Refuse in nearby rooms suggests that professional craftspeople also lived at Las Sepulturas. Judging by the character of associated burials, "foreigners"—perhaps tradesmen from central Honduras—may have been part of the patriarch's extended household as well.

ON JUNE 28, 810, the Long Count—the elegant mechanism by which the Classic Maya counted the passage of days through eternity—rested at the station 9.19.0.0.0, the all-important ending of the 20-year-long *katun.* And it was only seven days off the solstice. The city, without doubt, observed the occasion with all the pomp it could muster, and it is logical to believe the celebration took place in the plaza of red plaster embraced by the Ball Court, the pyramid of the Hieroglyphic Stairway, and the brooding bulk of Structure 11.

Yax Pac died during the winter of 820. By then the Main Group stood complete, as we know it today. The population of the Copán Valley had reached its all-time peak, an estimated 18,000 to 20,000, scattered over every available farm plot. It is at this point that the fortune of the once powerful Copán lineage took its fatal turn as competition from valley nobles, overpopulation, and growing problems of land misuse negated the relevance of the royal power centered in the Main Group.

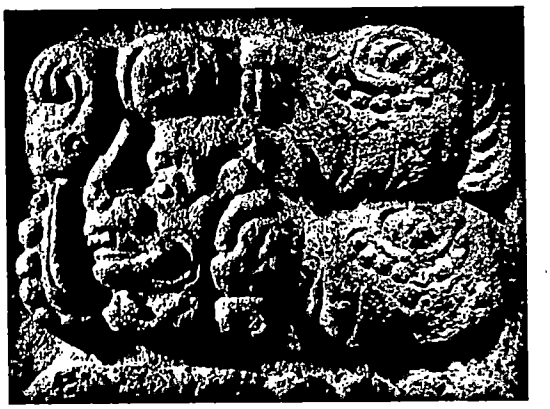
A single undistinguished sculpture, Altar L, suggests the moment, if not the nature, of the end of the last chapter in the royal history of Copán.

Linda Schele and University of Hamburg epigraphist Nikolai Grube made the discovery. "Here were two people shown in royal regalia, just as on Altar Q," explains Linda.

"They're even sitting on their name glyphs. The one on the right is Yax Pac. The other is someone we've never heard of—one U Cit Tok', meaning perhaps 'the father of flint.' And there's an accession glyph."

According to the best possible reconstruction of the date, the event depicted on Altar L took place on February 10, 822, the very last date set to stone in Copán.

"The clincher," notes Linda, "came when Barbara Fash drew the thing and realized that the carving had never been finished! In other words, one day the sculptor of Altar L picked up his tools, walked away, and never came back to finish the job. For me that single episode marks the end of royal Copán."



With each sun that sets behind God N (right), we learn more about glyphs like this one representing the ruler's title, Divine Lord of Copán, and confirm John Lloyd Stephens's belief that the people of Copán "published a record of themselves, through which we might one day hold conference with a perished race."

And how did the valley fare after the demise of the royal court? Not too badly, if we accept the startling findings of Ann Freter, who specializes in dating obsidian, and David Rue, who studies the implications of old pollen deposits.

Dates from thousands of obsidian blades found in the course of the sampling of valley mound groups make a consistent line on a graph that ends not around A.D. 800 but four centuries later. And the pollen profile of the Copán pocket substantiates these findings: The forest did not begin its recovery there until about 1200.

"What we have, then," notes Webster, "is the fascinating conclusion that the Maya 'collapse' at Copán is much more complex than we formerly envisioned."

In short, Copán did not die suddenly, as a study of its royal monuments alone would indicate. Rather it was a slow process, the logical result of exhausted forest and farmland, that saw the population in slow decline. Population remained relatively high, even in the rural areas, well after 800, and there was continued elite activity for another couple of centuries in the area surrounding the abandoned Main Group. But after 1200 the valley was without population, as it had been in the beginning, vulnerable to the encroaching forest.

THE WORK GOES ON. Barbara and Bill Fash continue to supervise the Copán Mosaics Project, and many of the GOK piles have shrunk as the isolated pieces of sculpture, numbered and removed to the safety of the laboratory facility, await possible reassembly.

Meanwhile Rudy Larios applies a genius that even the master architects of ancient Copán would have envied. On my last visit he was supervising the consolidation of the complex masonry walls behind Structure 22.

Wendy Ashmore of Rutgers University has completed her second season of excavating two elite house sites on the slope above the lab and storage facility. She is testing the idea that at least some such elite compounds were deliberately arranged in accordance with the ancient notions of sacred geography that, even to this day, pervade the Maya belief system.

And Bill Fash, along with his colleagues Ricardo Agurcia Fasquelle of the Honduran Institute and Bob Sharer of the University of Pennsylvania, continues to pick away at the secrets of the Acropolis, helped by the large team of Copanecs whose skills range from photography and drafting to the flawless excavation of the fragile cache deposits.

Recently the tunnels into the dense rubble behind the Hieroglyphic Stairway yielded what Bill Fash calls the "founder's stela"—a near pristine monument from the early fifth century, the era of the shadowy Mah K'ina Yax K'uk' Mo', who started the royal city on its journey to immortality.

Truly, as Fash has said, quoting another noted for his skills of deduction, "The game is afoot." And who can guess what further discoveries await at Copán, where an extraordinary archaeological richness is matched by the extraordinary and continuing teamwork of scientists from many disciplines. □

democratic ideals as manifested in the recent elections and in the Salvadoran decision to hold Presidential elections no later than March, 1984. He expressed appreciation for efforts of the Salvadoran Government to reduce the number of deaths caused by violence, despite the opposition of anti-democratic forces. He also indicated his satisfaction with the continuation of the land reform program.

The Salvadoran leader pointed out the desire of his government for peaceful development and full observance of human rights. He noted the creation of the Commission on Human Rights and the formation of a Peace Commission charged with proposing a practical plan for the participation of all citizens and political movements in the democratic process.

President Magaña suggested that as important as the efforts that each country makes internally to correct its structural economic problems is an international economic situation which encourages full development of that country's human and natural resources. In this regard, he praised the U.S. Caribbean Basin Initiative and expressed the hope that the trade and investment provisions would be approved quickly by the U.S. Congress.

President Reagan referred to the interest of the American people and government in cooperating with the Salvadoran Government in its internal efforts. He stressed his concern about the prosecution of those implicated in the murder of American citizens in El Salvador and asked for unstinting efforts to prosecute those responsible for the deaths of the American Churchwomen and the AFL–CIO consultants and the disappearance of other American citizens.

Both leaders also examined the situation in Central America and expressed concern for the increase of tensions in the area. They rejected the use of force in the resolution of bilateral conflicts, interference in the internal affairs of other countries and the violent imposition of alien ideologies and systems rejected by democratic societies. President Magaña emphasized the need for all countries to respect the principle of self-determination as exercised by the Salvadoran people in the elections of March 28. He noted that this principle is fundamental to the peaceful coexistence of peoples. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the Final Act of the October 4 San José conference of democratic nations—principles which, in their opinion, represent the best hope for peace in Central America.

The two leaders agreed to maintain direct contact in order to further high levels of bilateral cooperation.

Given in San José, Costa Rica, December 3, 1982.

Remarks to the People of Honduras
December 4, 1982

President Suazo has been gracious in inviting me to visit your country, and I'm anxiously looking forward to it. Early this summer, we were honored to have your President visit Washington, and I'm happy to have this early opportunity to continue our talks.

He told me then of the pride of the Honduran people in their democratic achievement, of their desire for peace with their neighbors, and of the measures you are taking to revive your economy. These are all goals we share with you. Both of our countries are concerned by the economic problems and the threat to peace the countries in Central America face.

Honduras has been a leader in Central America. You've put forward concrete proposals for a comprehensive peace throughout your region. Your transition to democracy answered those who argue that freedom is a luxury that struggling countries cannot afford. And you've proved that a freely elected government has the will and determination to take the actions needed to put your economy on a sound course.

The Honduran people have won the admiration of my fellow countrymen, and the peace proposals your President presented to the Organization of American States last March are ones which we in the United States support fully. They were incorporated in the Final Act of the eight democratic countries that met in San José in October. They are reasonable and attainable for all parties, and I hope they will lead to peace in Central America.

Honduras has also played a prominent role in the Central American Democratic Community, which is dedicated to freedom, economic development, and the security of each nation against aggression in any form by one neighbor against another. These are goals which can be achieved, and it is with this hope that I will come to Honduras to meet with President Suazo.

We have common aspirations and values. I'm sure we will be able to strengthen the cooperation between our two nations and our people. I will bring with me the best wishes and friendship of the American people.

Thank you.

Note: The President's remarks were taped on November 22 at the White House for later broadcast on Honduran television.

Radio Address to the Nation on the Caribbean Basin Initiative
December 4, 1982

I'm speaking to you today from San José, Costa Rica. Later this evening, I'll return to Washington, having visited with six neighboring heads of state. Our delegation has seen firsthand the vitality and potential of our New World neighbors. We've also heard and discussed their needs and aspirations and how they affect our own vital national interests.

United States interests require that we support our fellow Americans with a hemispheric policy which preserves and promotes democratic institutions, advances and encourages free market economies, and provides the security essential for these systems to develop and flourish. In our discussions during these last 4 days, I pledged our continued commitment to work as friends and neighbors with the other nations of this Western Hemisphere. We'll stand firmly with them to achieve the promise of economic progress and political stability that is the legacy of peace in the Americas.

Through cooperation, together we can protect ourselves from counterfeit revolutionaries who seek to destroy growth and impose totalitarianism on people who love freedom. Let us remember something very important: If our neighbors, particularly our nearest neighbors in the Caribbean Basin, are in trouble, their troubles inevitably become ours, unless we work together to solve them.

Right now their difficulties are not entirely of their own making. World prices for their traditional products—sugar, bananas, bauxite, and coffee—have been declining sharply for several years. At the same time, the prices for their essential imports, particularly petroleum, have remained high. This worldwide recession, the longest and most severe in postwar history, has hit their economies with all the fury of the tropical storms they're exposed to each year.

We cannot afford to ignore these difficulties. Our ties with the countries of the Caribbean Basin are very close. One-half of our trade passes through this area. Prolonged social and economic disruption would cause an exodus of desperate people seeking refuge where so many others have already found it—in the United States. The interests of Caribbean Basin countries are our interests; their security is our security.

The difficulties in the Caribbean Basin may seem overwhelming, but just as tropical storms give way to sunshine and calmer seas, economic despair will give way to optimism if people have the prospect to build a better life in freedom. Our support for

the urgency of adequate cooperation to overcome the crisis and to defeat poverty.

President Reagan, you are among friends willing to cooperate in every action in favor of liberty, justice, and peace.

Thank you very much.

President Reagan. Mr. President, first on behalf of those who are with me today from our country, let me thank you and the people of Costa Rica for your hospitality.

Last month in Washington President Monge warned against the arrogance of any leader who believes that his own political formulation is perfect. And as our fellow citizens often let us know, none of us is perfect. But the basic value of the democratic societies that we represent are far more perfect than those of any other form of government. Our dedication to freedom, our respect for human rights, our adherence to the rule of law are far superior to the totalitarian rule that others would impose in the name of the false revolutions. Theirs are hollow promises and empty rhetoric.

We celebrate today our commitment to freedom and to peaceful political reconciliation. I particularly want to reaffirm to all of you the pledge that my administration has made to the economic well-being and security of the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean. We know that political principles and collective security are not served by unstable economies.

Our Caribbean Basin Initiative offers a realistic foundation on which to build increased trade between our countries—trade that will benefit all our citizens. This evening I'm returning to Washington, where I will continue to press for quick congressional action on the important trade and investment provisions of the initiative.

In that spirit of mutual commitment, may we rise now in a toast to President Monge, to Costa Rica, and to liberty.

Note: President Monge spoke at 12:37 p.m. at the Casa Presidencial. He spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Following the luncheon, the two Presidents participated in a departure ceremony at Juan Santamaria Airport, and President Reagan traveled to San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Roberto Suazo Córdova of Honduras in San Pedro Sula

December 4, 1982

President Suazo and I have just completed a very useful exchange of ideas on the full range of bilateral issues and regional problems that confront our two democracies. In this, our second meeting this year, we have continued the close consultation that we began in Washington last July. This has given our dialog continuity and enabled us to analyze these problems in greater detail.

I have expressed my administration's support and my nation's admiration for President Suazo's efforts to ensure, for the Honduran people, the benefits of a democratic government elected on the principles of the rule of law. President Suazo has made it clear to me that there will be no retreat from that noble principle.

We are in agreement that we must work together to oppose those who seek to disrupt the promise of economic progress and political stability that is the legacy of peace in the Americas. My administration is convinced that through cooperation and solidarity, our governments can protect our democratic institutions and free-market economic systems from the counterfeit revolutionaries who seek to destroy growth and impose totalitarianism on free people.

We will cooperate in every way we can with Honduras and the other democratic governments of Central America to further our common objectives.

It's a pleasure to be here, and our only

regret is that it has to be such a very short visit. But, again, we're grateful to the President, the people of Honduras for giving us this opportunity to visit with them.

Note: The President spoke at 5:15 p.m. to reporters assembled in Hangar 3, near the headquarters building of an Air Force base where he and President Suazo and their delegations had met.

Earlier in the afternoon, President Reagan was accorded a welcoming ceremony at La Mesa International Airport.

As printed above, this item follows the transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, Following a Meeting With President José Efrain Rios Montt of Guatemala
December 4, 1982

Well, ladies and gentlemen, President Ríos Montt and I have just had a useful exchange of ideas on the problems of the region and on our bilateral relations.

Our conversation today has done much to improve the climate of relations between our two governments. I know that President Ríos Montt is a man of great personal integrity and commitment. His country is confronting a brutal challenge from guerrillas armed and supported by others outside Guatemala.

I have assured the President that the United States is committed to support his efforts to restore democracy and to address the root causes of this violent insurgency. I know he wants to improve the quality of life for all Guatemalans and to promote social justice. My administration will do all it can to support his progressive efforts.

We have heard a great presentation, and as I said on the first day of my visit far south of here in Brasilia, people from my country—government officials of my country in the past have come to South and Central America to various countries proposing plans and ideas of their own. I know they were sincere, and yet I think there was a certain insensitivity connected with what they were doing. I said from the first day and until this, our last stop on this visit, that we came here to ask, not tell. We have come here to find out and to learn what we can about the possible differences between us and the possible answers to those differences. And we know now a great deal more about the problems confronting Guatemala. And we're going home and do our best to see if we can't be helpful now in finding some answers to the problems.

And I will now turn the microphone over to President Ríos Montt.

Note: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. to reporters assembled in Hangar 3, near the headquarters building of an Air Force base where he and President Ríos and their delegations had met.

Following his remarks, the President returned to La Mesa International Airport and departed Honduras for the return trip to Washington, D.C., where he arrived shortly before midnight.

Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters on the President's Trip to Latin America
December 4, 1982

Q. You've been partying all night—from one cabin to another.

The President. No, I just brought a birthday cake, and then I brought a farewell

HONDURAS SINCE 1823. When final independence came to Central America in 1823, Honduras embraced approximately 60,000 square miles but contained probably fewer than 150,000 inhabitants, of mixed Indian, Iberian, and African ancestry. Most of these mestizos lived in pocket-sized villages nestled in isolated valleys scattered throughout the deeply corrugated mountain spine that dominates the interior. No roads linked these villages; horse and mule trains provided the only transportation.

The overwhelming majority of the villagers wrung a meager sustenance from small patches of corn and beans. Frequent floods, droughts, infertile soil, and rude farming skills made subsistence agriculture a precarious undertaking. Folk miners called *guirises* eked out a livelihood grubbing in abandoned colonial mines. Together, the peasants and folk miners made up the lower strata of Honduran society.

An occasional prosperous hacienda owner grazed cattle on suitable highland savannas or on the coastal plains. Landed creoles of this type dominated the rural society around their estates. In the more important "urban" centers, especially Comayagua and Tegucigalpa, bureaucrats manned small governmental and ecclesiastical outposts and a few merchants handled the limited trade. Unable to produce the cochineal, indigo, or cacao that other Central American countries exported to European markets, Honduras had little contact with the outside world. In this circumstance, the politicians, clergy, and businessmen were social and political dependents of the landed elite.

Until internecine struggles finally destroyed the Federation of Central America in 1839–1840 (*see* CENTRAL AMERICA, FEDERATION OF), "Liberals" usually controlled the government at Comayagua but effected little reform beyond reducing the already-weak authority of the Catholic Church. With the defeat of Gen. Francisco MORAZÁN by the Guatemalan strong man José Rafael CARRERA, "Conservatives" gained the upper hand and led their country out of the Federation. For the next thirty years, the Conservatives maintained nominal control, but actual power devolved on the dominant regional cattle barons. Personal jealousies flared into meaningless armed struggles between rival elite factions, which often enjoyed the support of sympathizers in neighboring states. Banditry spread like cancer across the countryside in the atmosphere of violence.



HONDURAS

Area: 43,277 sq. mi. Population: 2,495,000 (1969 est.).

In the 1850s the stream of forty-niners rushing to the California gold workings prompted an American diplomat-archaeologist, Ephraim George Squier, to promote the construction of an interoceanic railway across Honduras. However, a change in local administration, conflicting estimates of the cost of the enterprise, and monetary crises in New York and Europe delayed the project until the PANAMA RAILROAD and completion of the transcontinental railroad across the United States made the Honduran route nonessential for international transportation. The Honduran government nevertheless continued to dream of opening up its undeveloped hinterland by means of an interoceanic rail system. In the late 1860s it secured several large loans from European bankers, with which it constructed a mere 60 miles of track, from Puerto Cortés through and beyond San Pedro Sula, before funds ran out. This railway did little to ease the lack of transportation into the interior, where most of the people lived. The completion of the Panama Railroad (1855) and the inauguration of regular shipping from Panama to San Francisco made the island port of Amapala on the Gulf of Fonseca the preferred point of entry for goods and passengers for this area. On the other hand, the huge foreign debt incurred to construct this spur of rails hung like a dark cloud over Honduras for three-quarters of a century, inhibiting the inflow of capital.

In 1876 Marco Aurelio SOTO, a reform Liberal, assumed power in Honduras. With the collaboration of like-minded executives in neighboring states who discouraged exiles from continuing the practice of launching attacks from sanctuaries within their borders, Soto was able to pacify Honduras. Factional warfare and banditry virtually ceased during his Presidency (1876–1883). Convinced that emulation of advanced societies in Europe and North America would develop his undeveloped domain, Soto initiated an ambitious program to provide Honduras with a modern infrastructure. By 1880 most important towns and villages had been tied into a telegraph network with international cable connections to the United States and Europe. Soto also commenced construction of a cart road, the Southern Highway, from Amapala to Tegucigalpa, to which the seat of government had been transferred in 1880. Successors completed this vital artery and extended it to several other important districts. *See also* LIBERAL PARTY (HONDURAS).

Beginning in 1880 American capitalists, and later English ones, formed more than 100 companies to rework old silver and gold mines with modern techniques and imported machinery. With the important exception of the New York and Honduras Rosario Mining Company, most of the concerns failed before they produced much bullion, being overcome by steadily declining silver prices, monetary panics, and a recrudescence of domestic turmoil in Honduras from 1891 to 1894. The mining boom failed to realize early expectations, but many new roads were opened and old ones repaired to facilitate the importation of mining equipment, commerce was stimulated, and small-scale ancillary industries were created.

By 1900 bananas emerged as the most important Honduran export. For several decades before the turn of the century, ships touching north coast Honduran ports had purchased bananas from natives for sale in New Orleans and other Gulf Coast cities of the United States, but commercial production was delayed until rapid refrigerated shipping became a reality. American capitalists, who possessed the essential entrepreneurial skills and initial investment capital required to establish and manage the large banana plantations, the fleet of cargo ships, and the market outlets abroad, quickly gained control of the industry. By 1930 the two giants, the UNITED FRUIT COMPANY and the Standard Fruit Company, had made Honduras the leading banana exporter in the world, shipping almost 30 million bunches in 1930. By 1940, however, sigatoka and Panama diseases had ravaged the banana plants, and Honduras dropped behind Ecuador in production. *See also* BANANA INDUSTRY (CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN).

The development of the banana "enclave" on the north coast wrought important changes in Honduras. A major transfer of population occurred as laborers and service personnel migrated to the north coast from the interior. The demands of the banana plantations encouraged the growth of commercial and light industrial activity in the San Pedro Sula–Puerto Cortés area, causing a shift in the locus of economic power away from Tegucigalpa. The increased wealth accruing to Honduras widened the gap between the upper and lower classes; the banana tax revenue and the influence of foreign elites reinforced the dominant political and social position of the ruling class. Finally, the plantation system provided a fertile environment for developing a labor movement despite efforts by the dictator Tiburcio CARÍAS ANDINO (1933–1948) and his successor, Juan Manuel GÁLVEZ (1949–1954), to discourage union activity. In 1954 banana workers began a wildcat strike for higher wages and a shorter workweek. The strike spread to other industries; ultimately 50,000 wage earners, a sizable portion of the Honduran work force, walked off their jobs. Negotiations for settlement of the strike were prolonged because of the struggle of rival labor leaders for control of ad hoc unionization and because of the fruit companies' lack of good faith.

Since 1950 the government has taken a more direct interest in the development of the country. An ambitious road-building program funded by international agencies has begun integrating the country with all-weather roads and paved arterial highways. Exports of timber, coffee, cotton, and citrus fruits have been encouraged. An AGRARIAN REFORM law enacted under President Ramón VILLEDA MORALES (1957–1963) attempted to eliminate unproductive landholdings. Much-needed programs of public health and municipal sanitation services have been put into operation, causing a rapid population growth. By 1969 the population had reached almost 2.5 million.

By 1950 Central Americans, including Hondurans, had realized the obstacles to further economic development inherent in the small size of their countries. In an effort to overcome this problem, the five countries banded together to form the CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMON MARKET in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Although Honduran exports to the other partners in the Common Market expanded encouragingly, the country's inferior industrial capacity caused imports to rise at a more rapid pace and the balance of payments to turn permanently against Honduras: in 1968 this imbalance amounted to more than $15 million. Moreover, a provision of the Common Market that eliminated all restrictions on workers seeking employment across frontiers led to a flood of Salvadoran peasants wanting land in relatively unpopulated Honduras. For these and other reasons, relations between Honduras and El Salvador became increasingly strained. Finally a minor incident triggered the so-called FOOTBALL WAR in 1969. In the uneasy aftermath of that conflict Honduras withdrew from the Common Market and reinstated tariffs on Central American imports. At first, officials appeared eager to make Honduras autarkic, but recent negotiations reveal that they are now attempting to use the threat of sabotage of the Common Market system as a means of exacting more favorable conditions for Honduras in its economic intercourse with its Central American neighbors.

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KENNETH V. FINNEY

HOPKINS, EDWARD A[UGUSTUS] (1823–1888). North American entrepreneur and the first United States diplomatic agent to the Republic of Paraguay (1851–1855). An officer in the United States Navy, Hopkins resigned from the service in 1845 to pursue a dream of exploiting the untapped riches of South America and becoming wealthy in the process. He had economic interests in several American republics, but Paraguay attracted him the most, and in 1845 he obtained an appointment from President James Polk as special agent to Paraguay, basically to ascertain whether the United States should recognize that nation. In Paraguay he exceeded his orders and assured President Carlos Antonio LÓPEZ that the United States would soon recognize Paraguay, writing Secretary of State James Buchanan that Paraguay must be recognized because it was a modern, powerful state.

After his initial short visit, Hopkins made several other trips to Paraguay in the late 1840s, explored the country, and expounded on its commercial possibilities. In 1851 he was appointed United States Consul to Paraguay just as López was making him a special Paraguayan envoy to the United States. Hopkins promised United States recognition of Paraguay in return for a monopoly of steam navigation on the Paraguay River. He returned to the United States, set up a navigation company, and then went back to Paraguay with machinery and trade goods and the sought-for recognition. However, López soon lost his apprecia-

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need to go forward without hesitation in transforming the social structures to give way to an era of progress,'' Callejas said.

Callejas interrupted his speech to embrace Azcona, and recognized efforts of Central American presidents to seek a peaceful solution to the regional conflict.

''I want to take advantage of this occasion to firmly and candidly recognize the efforts undertaken by the Central American presidents in seeking the definite establishment of peace in Central America,'' Callejas said.

Arias said the Central American presidents were ''encouraged and satisfied'' with Callejas' promises to join their efforts to establish peace in the region.

''Although (Callejas) did not sign the (1989 peace) accord he will have to carry on the peace-seeking work so that it bears fruit as soon as possible,'' Arias said.

The Central American presidents did not discuss when a next summit might take place, Arias said.

Referring to Nicaragua, Callejas said, ''The political efforts of the Central American leaders have been fruitful. An electoral process is under way in the brother nation of Nicaragua. The political and negotiated option won over the language of death by rifle and warfare propaganda.

''Burning in the heart of the peoples of Central America is a flame of hope and faith in that the Nicaraguan electoral process will live and finish its democratic path and that a genuinely democratic and pluralistic national government will spring forth from the ballot boxes,'' Callejas said.

In an open allusion to El Salvador, Callejas said, ''Other brother peoples of our martyred Central America still live with machine-gun fire and terror. I hope that the leaders of these nations might be able to share the atmosphere of peace and democracy that we Hondurans live in.

''A trustworthy peace for Central America is one that is based on the reduction of armies and elimination of offensive arms.''

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BYLINE: By VILMA ROSALES

DATELINE: TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras

KEYWORD: HONDURAS

BODY:

Rafael Leonardo Callejas took the oath Saturday to become the third consecutive civilian president of Honduras, and expressed hope for a peaceful solution to the regional conflict.

Callejas, of the conservative National Party, won the Nov. 26 elections on a campaign platform of reducing unemployment and increasing funds for the poor. He was sworn in at 10:50 a.m. by Rodolfo Irias Navas, president of the newly elected, 128-member National Assembly.

Minutes before, outgoing President Jose Azcona Hoyo of the Liberal Party bestowed Callejas, 46, with the presidential sash at Tegucigalpa's National Stadium before 20,000 people, including four Latin American presidents and U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle.

After taking the oath, Callejas applauded Azcona in his hourlong inaugural speech for guiding a peaceful transfer of power.

''And I make public before these people gathered here ... that thanks to his (Azcona's) guidance for the first time in the democratic history of Honduras since 1932, a president of the republic from a governing party transfers'' presidency to an opposition party, Callejas said.

Roberto Suazo Cordova of the Liberal Party assumed office Jan. 27, 1982, heading Honduras' first civilian government in 10 years and ending a virtually uninterrupted 18 years of military rule. Azcona was inaugurated four years later, the first time in 26 years that one civilian president passed power to another.

Presidents Vinicio Cerezo of Guatemala, Alfredo Cristiani of El Salvador, Oscar Arias of Costa Rica and Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela attended the ceremony.

Some 25 additional delegations from abroad and 60 diplomats also attended the inauguration. Nicaragua's delegation was headed by Interior Minister Tomas Borge.

''We attend this historical event in the institutional and democratic life of our country, at a time when the people of the world feel an unpostponable

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A pro-American sympathiser under increasing pressure to disband 10,000 U.S.-backed Nicaraguan Contra rebels camped here, Callejas did not refer to the rebels in his address.

Many Contras, who were to disband in December according to a plan signed by five Central American presidents last August, have refused to lay down their arms.

Callejas said he was confident that the Central American peace process would continue, adding: "Enduring peace in Central America is also built on the restructuring of troops and the elimination of arms."

Callejas, who holds a master's degree from the University of Mississippi, served in military regimes during the 1970s, rising to natural resources minister in 1975-80.

Honduras, a major partner in U.S. military and intelligence activities in the region during the 1980s and considered one of Washington's closest allies in Central America, has staged almost constant military manoeuvres with U.S. troops since 1983 and is a permanent base to about 1,200 U.S. soldiers.

SUBJECT: POLITICS

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January 27, 1990, Saturday, BC cycle

LENGTH: 461 words

HEADLINE: CALLEJAS ASSUMES HONDURAN PRESIDENCY, VOWS TO RESCUE ECONOMY

BYLINE: By Lori Hawkins

DATELINE: TEGUCIGALPA, Jan 27

KEYWORD: HONDURAS

BODY:

Rafael Callejas became president of Honduras on Saturday, vowing to rescue the country from near-bankrupcy with an emergency economic plan which includes drastic reductions in government spending.

"One commitment of my government is to adopt the most austere policy over public spending to stabilise prices, eliminate inflation and encourage economic growth," Callejas said in his inaugural address.

In the third civilian transition since the military handed over power in 1981, Callejas and his technocratic cabinet need to pull Honduras, the poorest country in Central America, from its worst economic crisis in history.

The inauguration, attended by U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle, marked the first time the presidency has been handed over to an opposition party since the military stepped down.

Callejas, 46, said he would cut government spending and call for international economic aid.

"Reality makes it necessary for us to ask for the international help which have been offered to the region in various forms to accelerate the economy," Callejas of the National Party.

Callejas has said he would close down state institutions to reduce the fiscal deficit, last year running at 7.9 per cent of gross domestic product against 4.7 per cent in 1988.

Honduras was declared ineligible for new loans by the International Monetary Fund after President Jose Azcona of the ruling Liberal Party stopped payments on 25.6 million dollars of obligations in November.

The World Bank declared Honduras ineligible for further loans last February because it was 57 million dollars in arrears.

Callejas, who campaigned on a promise to mend fences with the international financial community, has said he will renew talks with the IMF and the World Bank.

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"We should maintain relations with the United States, including military exercises designed to help professionalize our army," he has said.

Peace is vital to Callejas' efforts to attract new foreign investment to Honduras, the president said.

The new president has promised to decentralize the government, sell some state-owned companies and create incentives for investment and exports.

Honduras is one of the poorest nations in the Western Hemisphere, with a per capita income of about $$500. Literacy is 56 percent.

Honduras' principal exports are bananas, coffee, beef, lumber, metals and sugar. Its major trading partner is the United States.

Honduras returned to elected government in 1980 after nearly 20 years of military rule.

The last time there was a party-to-party transition came in 1933, when Tiburcio Carias Andino of the National Party took over from Liberal Vicente Mejia Colindres. Carias didn't allow another vote until 1948.

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The Associated Press

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January 27, 1990, Saturday, AM cycle

SECTION: International News

Columbus 1502

LENGTH: 425 words

HEADLINE: Honduran President Sworn In

BYLINE: By FREDDY CUEVAS, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras

KEYWORD: Honduras

BODY:

In the first peaceful transfer of power to an opposition party in 57 years, Rafael Leonardo Callejas was sworn in Saturday as president before 40,000 people in Honduras' national stadium.

Vice President Dan Quayle and four Latin American presidents were among dignitaries from 60 nations at the inauguration of Callejas, who has promised to sell some state-owned companies and to establish a "direct dialogue" with neighboring Nicaragua and El Salvador.

He faces grim problems in this underdeveloped U.S. ally of 5.2 million people - a stagnant economy, a $$3.2 billion debt that Honduras has stopped making payments on, and civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The new president of the legislature, Rodolfo Irias Navas, placed the presidential sash on Callejas, whose term runs through January 1994. Among those attending the ceremony were presidents Vinicio Cerezo of Guatemala, Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela, Alfredo Cristiani of El Salvador, and Oscar Arias of Costa Rica.

Callejas, 46, comes from a landholding family and was trained as an agricultural economist at Mississippi State University.

The National Party candidate won the election Nov. 26 by beating Carlos Flores of the governing Liberal Party. He replaces Jose Azcona Hoyo.

Relations between Honduras and Nicaragua have been tense for years because Honduras has allowed anti-Sandinista Contra rebels to set up bases on its territory.

Callejas has said he wants the U.S.-backed rebels removed but wants to keep military relations with the United States close. The United States maintains an air base in Honduras.

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Honduras

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