

9-28-1990

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Honduran President Visits U.S. To Lobby For More Military Aid

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, September 28, 1990

On Sept. 24, government officials in Tegucigalpa said President Rafael Callejas was scheduled to arrive in Washington on Sept. 26 in an attempt to persuade the US Congress to approve the Bush administration's \$41 million request for military aid to Honduras. In FY1990, Congress reduced military assistance to Tegucigalpa by half. Callejas will also seek support for approval of the Bush administration's \$132 million economic aid request, which includes \$80 million in balance of payments assistance, \$14.8 million in PL480 food shipments, and \$38 million in development aid. Honduras needs \$20 million to pay for 12 F-5 fighter planes. If aid is reduced, Tegucigalpa would have to spend most of its military aid on the planes. The planes give Honduras air superiority in the region. According to Callejas, the planes are very useful in anti-drug efforts. He added that F-5 pilots have already intercepted aircraft carrying drugs in Honduran airspace. Finally, the president announced the installation of a radar complex at the Atlantic port of Trujillo in the near future for anti-drug surveillance purposes. (Basic data from Notimex, AFP, 09/24/90)

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