

For a while it seemed like the aircraft was about to land in someone's back garden. I began to panic but then we touched down to an almost perfect landing and pulled right up in front of the airport building just like at Cork. I later could see that ~~the~~ Toncantin International Airport is in fact in a saucer shaped valley in the mountains just a few miles from the centre of Tegucigalpa.

~~most people~~ you The city itself is small and hamely stry across several mountain chains

but a provincial air about it typical of most Latin American ~~cities~~ country towns.

If it were not for the new high rise Hotels, ^{and the ~~year~~ of the constant flow of US} Night clubs, one could scarcely imagine that ^{"Tourists"} it had become the centre of US operations in Central America.

Honduras is desperately poor with an minimum wage of about 2-3 dollars a day and with a population the half of Ireland.

Most foreigners visiting the country as indeed EL Salvador or Guatemala, particularly from the US live to write how perfectly normal the situation is. People in restaurants, walking the streets, not shorty's or killy's.

However my motive in visiting the country were different. Particularly during the last 3 years, the human Rights campaign I work with.

FEDEFAM has been receiving continuing reports of circulating there and particularly that many people were been 'disappeared'. A local Committee of Relatives of disappeared had been set up and applied for membership of the Federation. The organization decided immediately that I should go to express our solidarity, know of their situation & see best what to do.

It did not take me very long to discover the very ominous signs of a country being in a country whose citizens were under a very subtle but brutal reign of terror.

The day after my arrival after attending an early mass in the Cathedral I took a stroll near the presidential house. A van drove by with a radio on its roof but with no identification whatsoever. It pulled over by other simple vehicles

preparing a military alert had been decreed so
the army were constantly patrolling the streets in
Berlin style except here they is no yellow-card
instructions.

The newspaper control

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and a young man jumped wearing sunglasses and walked right into the building adjacent to the Presidential House. Moreover the windows in all these vehicles who were driving now were dark so as it was impossible to identify those inside. Without doubt these vehicles constitute the non-lethal type of help which Reagan has lavishly given Honduras in recent years. During my stay there was scarcely any area of the city where these type of cars were constantly patrolling.

The Government of Honduras ^{which was (solemnity election)} some 2 years ago decided to form local defense committees a decision which was being criticized by the Catholic Church. Because of that there is little respect for them but in most Hotels or public buildings one could see individuals hanging around the door always who went in and out.

There silent presence ~~was~~ indeed ominous. I had
been in Nicaragua some² years previous where there are
many civilian defense groups, but they always identify
themselves and give advice to me. In Honduras
I could not even get a 'good morning' greeting from
the individual who was forced at the door of
the hotel. He just simply didn't want to have
any contact with me!

By any standards Honduras over the
last year has a dreadful human rights
record. A few months previous the local correspondent
of the United Press news agency who could scarcely
be suspected of communism was unceremoniously
booted out of the country after been incarcerated
for several days. Hotels are raided for visitors
journalists or people considered suspect the list
of disappeared which is daily growing include
citizens of many other countries. A few days