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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FBO-02 A-01 SY-04 SNM-02 ABF-01 AID-05

SS-15 WRD-01 OC-05 CCO-00 /047 W
---------- 082407
R 291556Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
DEA HQS WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 7447

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 1093

EMBASSY FOR AMBASSADOR VAKY, DEA FOR SAIC
DEA HQS FOR EOI/CUSACK, MCT/ALBRIGHT, MAS/ALVAREZ
SECSTATE FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, VE
SUBJECT: OFFICE SPACE FOR BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE

REF: (A) STATE 012873 (B) BOGOTA 0531 (C) DEA 00473 (D) CARACAS 0331

1. REFERENCES (A) THROUGH (D) ABOVE AND PRIOR REFTELS CONCERNING PROPOSED MOVE OF THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE TO COMMERCIAL SPACE IN BAVARIA BUILDING. REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS HAS REVIEWED PROPOSAL IN DETAIL AND DURING WEEKEND JANUARY 26 SAIC OF BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE TRAVELLED TO CARACAS TO PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING MOVE.

2. AFTER CONSIDERATION OF BENEFITS OF PROPOSED MOVE AND IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF SECURITY INHERENT IN MOVE OF EXTREMELY ACTIVE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE TO COMMERCIAL SPACE THE CARACAS REGIONAL OFFICE, AT THIS TIME AND WITH CONCURRENCE OF SAIC GONZALEZ, IS OF THE OPINION THAT THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE SHOULD REMAIN WITHIN CHANCERY OF U.S. MISSION AT BOGOTA. A STUDY OF CURRENT SPACE ALLOCATION OF BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE INDICATES THAT THIS SPACE CAN BE RESTRUCTURED TO ACCOMMODATE AN ADDITIONAL SPECIAL AGENT AT A CONSIDERABLE SAVINGS TO DEA AND THE USG. ALTHOUGH THIS WILL LEAVE QUARTERS SOMEWHAT MORE CRAMPED THAN WOULD BE CONSIDERED OPTIMUM, THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE
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AND THE CARACAS REGIONAL OFFICE CONCUR THAT SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

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FAR OUTWEIGH THE INCONVENIENCE. ON 28 JANUARY SAIC ADVISED REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS THAT HE HAS DISCUSSED THIS ALTERNATIVE WITH DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION BOGOTA.

3. OVERWHELMING MAJOR CONSIDERATION IS POTENTIAL SECURITY PROBLEM WITH LOCATION OF BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE IN COMMERCIAL SPACE. NATURE OF DISTRICT OFFICE'S ACTIVITIES INVOLVE, IN ADDITION TO NORMAL NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT INTELLIGENCE, SENSITIVE APPRAISALS OF GOC COMMITMENT AND ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS OF NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT, INTELLIGENCE WHICH MAY INCLUDE GOVERNMENTAL PERSONALITIES, AND SUBSTANTIAL INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED FROM OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. AS EXPERIENCE NOW SHOWING IN MOVE OF REGIONAL OFFICE, SECURITY OF THESE FILES IS COMPLICATED AND EXPENSIVE PROJECT, AND, WHERE RISK IS NOT ABSOLUTE NECESSITY (HAVING THESE FILES STORED IN AN AREA NOT UNDER 24-HOUR MARINE GUARD) IT SHOULD BE AVOIDED.

4. CONSIDERATION ALSO GIVEN TO NECESSITY OF TRANSPORT OF SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF CLASSIFIED CABLE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN CHANCERY AND PROPOSED OFFICE SITE. THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE RANKS IN TOP FIVE RECEIVERS OF CLASSIFIED TRAFFIC AND WITHIN TOP TEN SENDERS OF CLASSIFIED TRAFFIC AT THE U.S. MISSION BOGOTA, ACCORDING TO BEST ESTIMATES OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO CARACAS REGIONAL OFFICE. CURRENTLY THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE MAKES AN AVERAGE OF FIVE REGULAR PICK-UP/DELIVERIES OF CLASSIFIED CABLE TRAFFIC DAILY, WHICH DOES NOT COUNT IMMEDIATE PRECEDENT INCOMING CABLES. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE AID COURIER FUNCTIONING BETWEEN THE CHANCERY AND BVARIA BUILDING NOW MAKES TWO COURIER RUNS PER DAY. THE MOVE OF THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE WOULD REQUIRE AT LEAST A 150 PERCENT INCREASE IN THIS SCHEDULE.

5. FROM EXPERIENCE GAINED IN REGIONAL OFFICE MOVE TO COMMERCIAL SPACE IN CARACAS, CARACAS REGIONAL OFFICE UNDERSTANDS THAT A CLASS A OR CLASS B VAULT WITH APPROPRIATE CLASS 5 OR CLASS 6 VAULT DOOR WOULD BE NECESSARY TO STORE OUR CLASSIFIED MATERIAL AT THE BAVARIA BUILDING. DEA REGULATIONS (INSPECTION MANUAL, CHAPTER 82) WOULD ALSO REQUIRE A CLASS A VAULT (OR WITH PRIOR APPROVAL, CLASS B) FOR THE STORING OF SENSITIVE INVESTIGATIVE FILES, WEAPONS AND AMMUNITON, EVIDENCE, TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT AND OFFICIAL ADVANCED GOVERNMENT FUNDS. WHILE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE, THE CONSTRUCTION OF A VAULT TO THESE SPECIFICATIONS WOULD BE EXPENSIVE (VAULT AND DOOR BEING CONFIDENTIAL

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INSTALLED AT REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN CARACAS ARE COSTING ABOUT $13,000.00). THESE PRECUATIONS ARE NOT NECESSARY IN THE CHANCERY WHERE SECURITY CONTAINERS SUFFICE.

6. PREMISES WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE SECURED BY VARIOUS FORCED ENTRY PREVENTION DEVICES AND ALARM SYSTEMS. TIME ELEMENT OF RESPONSE BY U.S. SECURITY GUARDS MUST ALSO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. (THESE SECURITY DEVICES AT THE REGIONAL OFFICE ARE BEING ESTIMATED TO

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RUN BETWEEN TWELVE AND FIFTEEN-THOUSAND DOLLARS.)

7. NOT THE LEAST OF OUR CONSIDERATION IS THE BASIC SECURITY OF OUR AGENTS AND CLERICAL PERSONNEL, GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE DUTIES PERFORMED OVERSEAS BY DEA. LOCATION AT CHANCERY FAR OUTWEIGHTS SECURITY THAT CAN BE AFFORDED IN COMMERCIAL BUILDING.

8. THE CARACAS REGIONAL OFFICE PROPOSES THAT THE BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH U.S. MISSION, BOGOTA, PLAN A RE-STRUCTURE OF CURRENT SPACE TO ACCOMMODATE ITS CURRENT COMPLEMENT AND THE ADDITIONAL SPECIAL AGENT POSITION ANTICIPATED FOR THAT OFFICE. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE SPACE WILL BE CRAMPED AND WE UNDERSTAND RELUCTANCE OF AMBASSADOR TO OVER-LOAD AREA WITH PERSONNEL, HOWEVER, WOULD HOPE THAT AFTER ALTERATIONS THIS TOPIC COULD BE REVIEWED.

9. THE CARACAS REGIONAL OFFICE AND SAIC GONZALEZ FEEL THAT THE ADVANTAGES IN PROPOSED COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE IN BAVARIA BUILDING ARE OUTWEIGHED BY THE SECURITY ADVANTAGES OFFERED BY THE CURRENT LOCATION IN THE CHANCERY. FROM RD BACHRACH.
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