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Department of State

RELEASE IN PART B6

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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INFO OCT-01 403-08 ES-01 /004 W
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R 102301Z JUN 82
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9457

ELECTIONS AND PUBLICLY DECLARES HE WILL STEP DOWN FROM OFFICE AT THAT TIME. ANYTHING LESS THAN THIS WOULD BE MORE THAN A GIANT LEAP AWAY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS THAT WE SUPPOSEDLY HOLD SO DEAR. THE USG SHOULD MAKE A CLEAR AND PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT WE DO NOT CONDONE THE SELF-IMPOSITION OF A PRESIDENT IN WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AS A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC. BY FAILING TO DO THIS WE FORFEIT OUR RIGHT TO BE LEADERS OF THE FREE WORLD.

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DISSENT CHANNEL

FOR ARA, HA/HR, IHR, S/P

E.O. 12065: GDS 6/10/86 (GONZALES, RAYMOND J.) DR-P
TAGS: CASC, PIUS, SHUM, GT
SUBJECT: US SHOULD CONDITION RECOGNITION OF PRESIDENCY OF RIOS MONTT

AW

REF: GUATEMALA 285

1. ~~ENTIRE TEXT~~

2. FOLLOWING DISSENT CHANNEL MESSAGE DRAFTED BY

3. THE USG SHOULD NOT AND CANNOT RECOGNIZE WITHOUT COMMENT THE NEW PRESIDENCY OF GENERAL EFRAIN RIOS MONTT. TO HAVE RECOGNIZED THE MILITARY JUNTA THAT TOOK POWER MARCH 23 WAS TO STRETCH OUR CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY TO ITS LIMITS. IN THAT INSTANCE, HOWEVER, THERE WAS AT LEAST POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE OVERTHROW OF THE CORRUPT LUCAS REGIME AND POWER WAS AT LEAST DIVIDED TO SOME DEGREE AMONG THE JUNTA MEMBERS. NOW WE HAVE NEITHER A REFLECTION OF POPULAR WILL NOR ANYTHING THAT RESEMBLES A DIVISION OF POWER. TO TRY TO PUSH THIS COUNTRY IN THE DIRECTION OF DEMOCRACY AFTER RECOGNIZING THE LEGITIMACY OF A RIOS MONTT PRESIDENCY WOULD BE AS HYPOCRITICAL AS SUDDENLY RECOGNIZING THE ARGENTINE'S CLAIM TO THE FALKLANDS JUST TO AVOID FURTHER PROBLEMS FOR OURSELVES. BOTH INSTANCES ARE BASED ON PRINCIPLES WE CANNOT BY METAPHORIZE THAT HIS ASCENDENCY WAS ALSO GAINED BY FORCE OF ARMS. HE HAS NO NATIONAL MANDATE, NO POPULAR WILL EXPRESSED BY A VOTE, ONLY THE TENUOUS SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY. AS LONG AS THE USG CONTINUES TO RECOGNIZE HEADS OF STATE IMPOSED ON THE CITIZENS OF A COUNTRY BY THE MILITARY POWERS, WE HAVE NOT COME FAR FROM THE DAYS IN WHICH WE RECOGNIZED FULGENCIO BATISTA, ANASTASIO SONDZA OR JUAN VICENTE GOMEZ.

IN ADDITION, THE USG SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT IN THE FIGURE OF RIOS MONTT WE ARE DEALING WITH A MAN WHO MAY NOT BE IN FULL POSSESSION OF HIS MENTAL FACULTIES. I HAVE PERSONAL AND RELIABLE INFORMATION THAT AN HOUR BEFORE HIS PRESS-CONFERENCE OF YESTERDAY, JUNE 9, TO HAVE HIMSELF ANOINTED AS PRESIDENT, HE MADE A CALL TO HIS "CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE WORD" ASKING HIS ELDERG TO PRAY FOR HIM AS HE WAS ABOUT TO TAKE ON "GREAT POWERS." WHILE I HAVE NOTHING AGAINST PRAYER, I FEEL HE MAY GO SO FAR AS TO JUSTIFY INDISCRIMINATE KILLING IN JULY WHEN THE AMNESTY PROGRAM ENDS, BY MERELY ASKING HIS ELDERG TO JOIN IN PRAYER BEFORE THE SLAUGHTER. WE ARE DEALING HERE WITH A MAN WHO MORE AND MORE IS TAKING ON THE IMAGE OF A DESPOT WHO BELIEVES HE RULES BY DIVINE WILL. HE WILL NOT ONLY EMBARRASS THE USG IN THE FUTURE, BUT ALSO CAUSE GREAT HARM TO HIS PEOPLE AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. WE SHOULD WITHHOLD ANY IMMEDIATE RECOGNITION OR AID UNTIL HE SETS A SPECIFIC DATE FOR

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ROUTING TELEGRAM

RELEASE IN PART B6

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S/P: TTHORNTON:WHINKLE:VMY
7/29/82 X21009
S/P:PWOLFOWITZ

ARA/CEN:RBLOHM
INR/IAA:LLICHT
OFP:ESVENDSON

ARA:SWBOSWORTH
HA:DROBERTS

ROUTINE. GUATEMALA

DISSENT CHANNEL FOR [REDACTED] FROM S/P PAUL WOLFOWITZ

E.O. 12065: GDS 7/29/88 (WOLFOWITZ, PAUL)

TAGS: CASC, PINS, SHUM

SUBJECT: RECOGNITION OF RIOS MONTT PRESIDENCY

REF: GUATEMALA 4173

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1. THANK YOU FOR YOUR DISSENT MESSAGE (RETEL) WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN THE DISTRIBUTION YOU REQUESTED AS WELL AS CUSTOMARY DISTRIBUTION TO THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

2. SEVERAL OF THE POINTS THAT YOU MAKE IN YOUR TELEGRAM ARE SHARED HERE. THE FUTURE COURSE OF GUATEMALA UNDER A RIOS MONTT PRESIDENCY IS CERTAINLY OPEN TO QUESTION, THE ABSENCE OF AN ELECTORAL TIMETABLE IS DISTURBING, AND THE POLICY THAT RIOS MONTT WILL ULTIMATELY TAKE TOWARD THE GUERILLAS IS UNCERTAIN. THE OBJECTIVES THAT YOU HAVE FOR GUATEMALA ARE, I BELIEVE, UNIVERSALLY SHARED HERE--A FULL RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND A RETURN TO REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

3. WE ARE LESS PESSIMISTIC THAN YOU ARE, HOWEVER, AND BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS BEEN, SINCE THE MARCH COUP, A MODEST POSITIVE TREND THAT IS WORTH PRESERVING AND STRENGTHENING. THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF ANY POLICY THAT IS HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS IS PRECISELY THE STAGE

PTW
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OUTGOING TELEGRAM

Continuation Sheet

OPTIONAL FORM 125-A (OCR) (10-75)
Formerly DS-322-A (OCR)
Dept. of State

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AT WHICH WE ARE IN GUATEMALA--THE GRADUAL REPLACEMENT OF PUNISHMENTS BY REWARDS AS A MEANS OF RECOGNIZING PROGRESS MADE AND OF ENCOURAGING FURTHER PROGRESS. STRAIGHT-OUT CONDEMNATION AND FULL-SCALE PRESSURE ARE ALTERNATIVES, BUT ONLY IF THEY WORK. ON THE BASIS OF PAST PERFORMANCE IN GUATEMALA, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL. THEY COULD WELL RESULT IN A REVERSAL OF THE PROGRESS MADE AND THE END OF THE MODEST, BUT REAL, INFLUENCE THAT WE HAVE OVER THE SITUATION IN GUATEMALA.

4. WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THERE IS A REASONABLE POSSIBILITY THAT RIOS MONTT WILL PROVIDE POSITIVE LEADERSHIP IN GUATEMALA. OBVIOUSLY THIS IS BY NO MEANS ASSURED; HE IS A MERCURIAL PERSONALITY AND MUST BE WATCHED CLOSELY. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, TO LOOK BEHIND HIS RHETORIC TO SEE JUST WHAT HE DOES, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE AMNESTY PERIOD DRAWS TO AN END. YOUR PREDICTION MAY TURN OUT TO BE CORRECT, BUT IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO PREJUDGE A SITUATION THAT MAY HAVE A POSITIVE OUTCOME, ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE IS NO READILY APPARENT BETTER ALTERNATIVE.

5. THE PRESENT SITUATION IN GUATEMALA IS INDEED NOT DEMOCRATIC, BUT HARDLY LESS SO THAN THE JUNTA ITSELF (OR, FOR THAT MATTER, OF ANY LIKELY SUCCESSOR REGIME). I AGREE THAT WE MUST PRESS FOR A RETURN TO DEMOCRACY IN GUATEMALA, ALTHOUGH THE NEAR-TERM OUTLOOK MAY EVEN BE LESS BRIGHT THAN ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS FRONT. AGAIN, IF WE ARE TO HAVE ANY POSITIVE EFFECT, IT IS MORE LIKELY TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH INCENTIVES RATHER THAN SANCTIONS. I FAIL TO SEE ANY REASON WHY, ON INSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS, WE SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM RIOS MONTT WHEN WE ARE WILLING TO DEAL WITH THE OTHER EQUALLY UNDEMOCRATIC JUNTA.

6. THE PROGRAMS THAT WE PROPOSE TO UNDERTAKE IN GUATEMALA ARE LIMITED IN SCOPE AND DESIGNEDLY SO SINCE THEY ARE RESPONDING TO EVIDENCES OF PROGRESS THAT ARE ALSO LIMITED AND A SITUATION THAT IS AMBIVALENT. THEY DO, HOWEVER, SERVE THE DUAL PURPOSE OF ENCOURAGING PROGRESS WHILE STRENGTHENING GUATEMALA'S CAPABILITY TO DEAL WITH FORCES WHOSE TRIUMPH WOULD HARM OUR INTERESTS AND THOSE OF GUATEMALA. OUR ASSISTANCE SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS SUPPORT FOR RIOS MONTT AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT FOR THE REFORM PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE THAT IT PROVIDES THE BEST LEVERAGE FOR ENCOURAGING FURTHER IMPROVEMENT.

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7. I VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR EXPRESSING YOUR VIEWS THROUGH THE DISSENT CHANNEL ON THIS ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT MATTER. WE ARE DEALING WITH UNCERTAINTIES IN THE FUTURE AND EVEN, TO SOME EXTENT, IN THE PRESENT. HAVING WEIGHED THE POSSIBILITIES, INCLUDING THE CONSIDERATIONS THAT YOU HAVE PUT FORTH, THE DEPARTMENT REMAINS OF THE VIEW THAT A POLICY OF MODEST INCENTIVES IS BEST FOR US AND BEST FOR GUATEMALA. THIS POLICY WILL HAVE TO BE KEPT UNDER CLOSE REVIEW BY THE DEPARTMENT AND THE EMBASSY TO MAKE SURE IT IS SERVING ITS PURPOSE. I AM GLAD THAT YOUR SENSITIVE CONCERN FOR THE SITUATION IN GUATEMALA IS ONE OF THE INPUTS TO THAT REVIEW PROCESS. YY

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