

SECRET

Department of State

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
INCOMING
EXCISE



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ACTION MODS-00

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 /000 W

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O 131912Z AUG 90 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0534

S E C R E T SAM SALVADOR 10791

MODIS

EYES ONLY - FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FROM THE
AMBASSADOR

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGDY, XJUS, ES
SUBJECT: THE JESUIT CASE, ANOTHER BIG JOE

EL

7-27-93

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. THIS IS A REQUEST FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION. SEE FINAL PARAGRAPH.
3. SUMMARY:
 - STAFFDEL MOAKLEY, (IN PERSONS OF JIM MCGOVERN (STAFFER FOR CHAIRMAN MOAKLEY) AND BILL WOODWARD (STAFFER FOR GERRY STUDDS, D-MAI), WAS GIVEN WHAT COULD BE BREATHTROUGH INFORMATION ON JESUIT SLAYING AND COVERUP JUST PRIOR TO DEPARTURE ON AUGUST 12. GIVEN RANK AND STATURE OF SOURCE OF THEIR INFORMATION, ONE OF ESAF'S MOST SENIOR AND RESPECTED OFFICERS, MCGOVERN/WOODWARD HAVE JUSTIFICATION FOR BELIEVING THAT THIS IS ACCURATE ACCOUNT. I AM NOT SO CERTAIN, BUT IF BASIC STORY IS TRUE OR IF CONGRESS BELIEVES IT TO BE OUR POLICY IS AT PERIL SINCE THE DIFFICULT TO DISMISS

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IMPLICATIONS WOULD BE THAT (1) THE DECISION TO KILL THE JESUITS WAS A DELIBERATE ONE MADE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE ESAF, (2) COLONEL PONCE LATER SUGGESTED THAT HE TOOK CREDIT FOR THAT DECISION, (3) POSSIBLY HUNDREDS OF OFFICERS KNEW THE TRUTH AT THE TIME OF THE KILLINGS AND HAVE MAINTAINED A DESPERATE SILENCE SINCE, AND (4) PRESIDENT CRISTIANI WAS INFORMED OF THESE ALLEGATIONS BY THE STAFFDEL'S MILITARY SOURCE BUT HAS APPEARED TO TAKE NO ACTION TO VERIFY AND/OR ACT ON THE INFORMATION.

4. STAFFDEL HAS DEPARTED, BUT FIRST CONVEYED TO ME WHAT THEY HEARD AND CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING ACQUISITION OF INFORMATION. THEIR SOURCE TOLD THEM THAT THE BASIC FACTS WERE COLLECTED FROM A NUMBER OF MILITARY SUB-SOURCES AT LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEVEL. APPARENTLY SUB-SOURCES HAVE TOLD OTHERS, MOST LIKELY INCLUDING JESUIT ORDER, THIS ACCOUNT. IF TRUE, IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF WHEN AND HOW ACCUSATION COMES INTO PUBLIC VIEW. STAFFDEL REPORTEDLY FELT THAT CHAIRMAN MOAKLEY WILL BE COMPELLED TO GO PUBLIC, POSSIBLY AS EARLY AS MIDDLE OF THIS WEEK.

5. GIVEN EXPLOSIVE NATURE OF CHARGES, INABILITY AT THIS POINT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY ARE IN PART OR ALL TRUE, POSSIBILITY THAT THIS IS ATTEMPT BY ONE OR MORE ALONG CHAIN OF INFORMATION TO PLAY MILITARY POLITICS, AND PERIL TO U.S. POLICY SHOULD STORY EMERGE UNDER CHAOTIC CIRCUMSTANCES. I REQUEST IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND INSTRUCTIONS. END SUMMARY.

6. BACKGROUND:

THE LAST TWO MEMBERS OF STAFFDEL MOAKLEY, MCGOY AND WOODWARD, DEPARTED SAN SALVADOR MORNING OF AUGUST 12. THEY ASKED

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DECLASSIFIED UNDER E.O. 12958 () IN FULL; () IN PART;
PORTIONS WITHHOLDEN CLASSIFIED () ; DELIBERATIVE () ;
LAW ENFORCEMENT () ; PRIVACY () ; STATUTORY () ;
NOT RELEVANT TO E.I. SALVADOR () .
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STRICTLY PROTECT TO CONVEY TO ME THE CONTENTS OF AN
INTERVIEW THEY HAD HAD DAY BEFORE, WITHOUT DETAILS OF
WHAT THEY PLANNED TO DO BEYOND INFORMING CHAIRMAN
MOAKLEY AND PREDICTION THAT HE MIGHT BE COMPELLED TO GO
PUBLIC SOON.

7. STAFFDEL'S SOURCE IS

CREDIBILITY ON THE HILL AMONG
THOSE CONGRESSMEN AND STAFFERS WHO HAVE MET HIM
NOTWITHSTANDING HIS TIES TO RIGHT, INCLUDING THIRTY YEAR
FRIENDSHIP WITH ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON, A MEMBER OF SAME
MILITARY SCHOOL TANDA.

8. FYI - GIVEN PREVIOUS ACCUSATIONS THAT USG HAS
"BURNED" ANYONE COMING FORWARD WITH INFORMATION ON
JESUIT CASE THAT IMPLICATES ESAF, IT IS EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT TO OUR RELATIONS WITH CHAIRMAN MOAKLEY AND
OTHERS THAT . . . NOT BE IDENTIFIED AS PRIMARY
SOURCE. . . STAFFDEL THAT WHAT HE PASSED TO THEM
WAS KNOWN TO MANY OTHERS, SO ATTRIBUTION TO HIM IS NOT
NECESSARY. I URGE THAT HIS IDENTITY BE PROTECTED AT ALL
COSTS. END FYI.

9. REPORTEDLY TOLD STAFFDEL THE FOLLOWING:

- - HE ACQUIRED THE VERSION OF EVENTS SURROUNDING THE
- JESUIT MURDER AND COVERUP FROM A MULTITUDE OF SUB-
- SOURCES, THE MAJORITY OF WHO ARE
- STUDENTS AT THE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE

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(FYI). A NUMBER OF THE PRESENT STUDENT BODY AT THE SCHOOL ARE DISGRUNTLED SURVIVORS OF THE 1979 COUP THAT BROUGHT DOWN THE ROMERO MILITARY REGIME. THEY WERE JUNIOR OFFICERS AT THE TIME, AND HAVE SINCE PAID CAREER PENALTIES FOR ASSOCIATION WITH ADOLFO MAJANO. MOST OF THESE OFFICERS HARBOR INTENSE DISLIKE OF THE TANDONA AND PRESENT ESAF HIGH COMMAND. (END FYI.) THE OSTENSIBLE REASON FOR THE LIEUTENANT COLONELS' REVELATIONS TO THEIR COMMANDER WOULD BE FRUSTRATION AND ANGER THAT THE HIGH COMMAND'S PERFORMANCE THROUGHOUT THE JESUIT CASE PUTS THEIR INSTITUTION AT GREAT RISK. RECOGNIZE THAT OTHER LESS NOBLE MOTIVES MIGHT BE INVOLVED. CC

AT CLOSE OF NOVEMBER 15 MILITARY COMMANDERS MEETING VARIOUS PARTICIPANTS RETURNED TO THEIR UNITS, CALLED TOGETHER THEIR OFFICERS AND CONVEYED GIST OF THE JUST ATTENDED MEETING. SEVERAL THEM TOLD SMALLER CIRCLES OF MOST TRUSTED SUBORDINATES THAT THE DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TO ELIMINATE THE JESUITS. ONLY ATTENDEES WHO IDENTIFIED BY NAME AS HAVING CONVEYED SPECIFIC INTENT TO KILL JESUITS IN THIS MANNER WERE COLONEL BENAYIDES AT MILITARY SCHOOL AND GENERAL JUAN BUSTILLO AT AIR FORCE. CC

AT LATER MEETING ON DECEMBER 19 WITH RELATIVELY LARGE GROUP OF OFFICERS, COLONEL PONCE STATED THAT "IF I HAD NOT MADE THAT DECISION, I WOULD NOT BE HERE TODAY." WHILE NOT EXPLICITLY IDENTIFIED AS SUCH, CONTEXT OF HIS REMARKS STRONGLY IMPLIED

THAT DECISION HE WAS TALKING ABOUT WAS ONE TO KILL THE JESUITS. THIS, AT LEAST, WAS CONCLUSION OF OFFICERS CONVEYING STORY WHO WAS NOT HIMSELF PRESENT. CC

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THESE OCCURRENCES WERE BY DEFINITION KNOWN TO MANY OFFICERS AT THE TIME THEY HAPPENED. MANY MORE HAVE HEARD OF THEM SINCE. IT WOULD, ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] BE SURPRISING IF ONE OR MORE OFFICER HAS NOT TOLD FRIENDS AMONG JESUITS AND CIVILIAN SECTORS. THOSE OFFICERS PASSING THIS INFORMATION REPORTEDLY HAVE GONE SO AFTER CONCLUDING THAT PRESENT ESAF LEADERSHIP IS WILLING TO LET INSTITUTION OF ARMED FORCES DESTROY ITSELF RATHER THAN OWN UP TO ENORMITY OF THEIR CRIME.

cc 29

12. QUESTIONS I HAVE:

WHY WOULD [REDACTED] TELL WHAT HE MUST REALIZE IS STORY THAT COULD DESTROY THE ESAF TO STAFFDEL MOAKLEY?

cc

WHEN I ASKED, INTERLOCUTOR COULD ONLY GUESS, SAYING THAT [REDACTED] BELIEVES STORY IS ABOUT TO COME OUT, POSSIBLY BY JESUITS, AND THAT DAMAGE IS THUS ALREADY UPON US. ASKED [REDACTED] FOR HIS SUB-SOURCES MOTIVES COULD BE INTERNAL MILITARY POLITICS, I.E., TO DELIVER FATAL BLOW TO PRESENT HIGH COMMAND. [REDACTED] AGREED WITH ME THIS POSSIBIL TY CANNOT BE DISMISSED. (FYI). GIVEN WHAT I KNOW [REDACTED] I WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO SUSPECT MOTIVES OF SUB-SOURCES THAT HIS, I.E., I TEND TO BELIEVE HE WAS TOLD WHAT HE SAYS HE WAS. END FYI)

cc
cc
cc
cc

WOULD ANY OFFICER WHO ALLEGES KNOWLEDGE OF THESE EYENTS BE WILLING TO TESTIFY AND BRING CHARGES INTO OPEN, PERMITTING CREDIBLE INVESTIGATION?

THE REPLY HERE WAS MORE FORCEFUL - NO OFFICER, [REDACTED] WOULD DARE PUBLICALLY BREAK THE CODE OF SILENCE.

cc

WHY DID STAFFDEL GIVE ME HEADS UP, WHAT DID THEY

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INCLUDING ADMINISTRATION-CONGRESSIONAL BI-PARTISAN
ASSISTANCE EFFORTS. GIVEN THE POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE
SHOULD THESE CHARGES COME OUT IN AN UNFAVORABLE MANNER,
I ASK FOR IMMEDIATE ANALYSIS BY WASHINGTON AND
INSTRUCTIONS.

WALKER

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