

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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O 102042Z DEC 82  
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2432

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EXDIS - PROPER LADY - MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT

DECAPTIONED

E.O.12356: DECL: 12/10/88  
TAGS: PTER, GT  
SUBJECT: GUATEMALAN COUNTER TERRORISM CAPABILITIES

CAPTION: EXCLUSIVE JSOC FOR LTC BRUCE ALLEN

REF: STATE 316707

1. SECRET ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ON PAPER, THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA (GOG) HAS A COUNTER TERRORIST CAPABILITY WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, THE G-2 AND THE ARMY. THE G-2 OPERATIONAL SECTION IS THE PRIMARY COORDINATOR OF COUNTER TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND CALLS UPON THE NATIONAL POLICE AND ARMY TO RENDER SUPPORT UNDER G-2 DIRECTION. WITHIN THE G-2 THERE EXISTS AN OPERATIONS UNIT, HEADED BY MAJOR JOSE ((SOTO)) SALAN THAT RESPONDS TO TERRORIST SITUATIONS SUCH AS EMBASSY SEIZURES. ACCORDING TO TWO G-2 OFFICERS THERE IS NO SPECIAL TRAINING GIVEN TO THIS G-2 UNIT NOR ANY SPECIAL WEAPONS OR EQUIPMENT. THE ONLY ADVANCE PREPARATION THAT EXISTS IS A LARGE MAP OF THE CITY WHICH HANGS ON A WALL AND IS DIVIDED INTO OPERATIONAL SECTIONS.

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2. THE G-2 HANDLED THE SEIZURE OF THE BRAZILIAN EMBASSY WHICH OCCURRED IN MAY 1982. THEIR RESPONSE WAS TO SURROUND THE BUILDING, CUT OFF POWER, WATER

AND FOOD TO THOSE INSIDE AND WAIT WITHOUT ACCESSED UNCLASSIFIED  
TO ANY TERRORIST DEMANDS AS DIRECTED BY PRESIDENT  
RIOS MONTT. THE SEIZURE WAS RESOLVED BY PERMITTING  
THE TERRORISTS TO DEPART TO MEXICO, A DECISION MADE  
BY PRESIDENT ((RIOS)) MONTT, HIMSELF. WHEN ASKED  
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE AMERICAN  
EMBASSY WAS SEIZED, A G-2 OFFICER RESPONDED THAT  
ANY COUNTER TERRORIST REACTION WOULD DEVELOP  
'ACCORDING TO THE SITUATION.'

3. THE NATIONAL POLICE "CAPABILITY" IS NOTHING MORE  
THAN AN ON-THE-SPOT RESPONSE TO A TERRORIST SITUATION.  
ALTHOUGH THE NATIONAL POLICE HAS A SWAT TEAM, ITS  
MEMBERS HAVE NO SPECIALIZED TRAINING, EVEN IN  
MARKSMANSHIP. IN A TERRORIST SITUATION, COUNTER  
TERRORIST MEMBERS ARE SELECTED ON AN AD HOC BASIS  
FROM PERSONNEL PRESENT AT THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS.  
THERE ARE NO PRIOR PLANS. THE ONLY EXPERIENCE THE  
COUNTER TERRORIST TEAM HAS LIES IN THOSE MEMBERS  
WHO HAVE RESPONDED PREVIOUSLY TO A TERRORIST SITUATION--  
IN OTHER WORDS, THOSE WHO HAVE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING.

4. A SIMILAR SITUATION EXISTS WITHIN THE ARMY. THERE  
IS NO SPECIALIZED TRAINING, NO SPECIAL WEAPONS OR  
EQUIPMENT, NO PRIOR PLANNING, AND COUNTER TERRORIST  
MEMBERS ARE SELECTED ON THE SPOT FROM VOLUNTEERS AS  
THE CRISIS OCCURS. NOTE, THE MILITARY HAS A RANGER  
(KAIBILE) UNIT AT THE MARISCAL ZAVALA BRIGADE  
HEADQUARTERS WHICH HAS BEEN CALLED A COUNTER  
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TERRORIST UNIT. IT IS ACTUALLY A RANGER TYPE MILITARY  
UNIT, HOWEVER, AND IS NOT SPECIFICALLY TRAINED FOR  
TERRORIST BARRICADE SITUATIONS, ETC. THIS UNIT HAS  
RECENTLY BEEN DEPLOYED TO THE PETEN, AND IS NOW  
OPERATIONALLY UNDER THE POPTUN MILITARY BRIGADE.

5. IN SUMMARY, MISSION BELIEVES THAT NO FORMAL COUNTER  
TERRORIST CAPABILITY EXISTS WITHIN THE GOG. IF A  
TERRORIST SITUATION WERE TO ARISE IN THE NEAR FUTURE,  
THE BEST BET WOULD BE TO COORDINATE U.S.G. ACTIVITIES  
WITH G-2.

7. IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION RECENTLY, HOWEVER,  
THAT SIX ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE/SECURITY ADVISORS  
ARE WORKING WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT,

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

THE GENERAL ARCHIVES AND SUPPORTING SERVICES  
PRESIDENTIAL STAFF (AFSAEMP). IT WAS THESE SIX ADVISORS  
WHO PLANNED THE SUCCESSFUL OPERATION RELEASING JORGE  
MARIO ((RIOS)) MUNOZ, THE NEPHEW OF PRESIDENT EFRAIN  
((RIOS)) MONTT, ON 22 NOVEMBER 1982. IT IS NOT KNOWN  
AT THIS TIME WHETHER THEIR ASSIGNMENTS ARE PERMANENT,  
OR ON A TEMPORARY BASIS. THERE HAVE BEEN PRIVATE  
SECTOR REPORTS OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADVISERS WORKING  
WITH THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY IN THE FIELD, BUT NO  
ELEMENT OF THE MISSION HAS EVER OBTAINED INFORMATION  
TO SUBSTANTIATE THESE RUMORS. CHAPIN

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