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THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

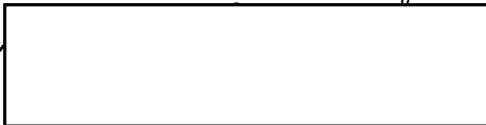
National Intelligence Officers

30 June 1977

NOTE TO: Mr. Hunter Estep
INR/RAR
Rm. 7538 State Dept.

Attached is the Interagency Intelligence
Memorandum requested by Acting Assistant
Secretary Luers on behalf of Under Secretary
Habib concerning Guatemalan arms purchases and
military capabilities.

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Assistant National Intelligence Officer
for Latin America

Atts: (5)

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June 21, 1977

INTERAGENCY INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

A Review of Guatemalan Arms Purchases and Military Capabilities

Introduction

1. Guatemala has claimed sovereignty over Belize (formerly British Honduras) since the mid-19th Century, but did not press its claim for decades. The dispute flared in 1964 when the British granted the colony a degree of self-government and Guatemala broke diplomatic ties with the UK. In 1975 the two sides agreed to talks, but there has been little progress toward resolution of Guatemala's territorial demands. More recently, Guatemalan President Laugerud ordered the mobilization of reserve forces and informed the US he is prepared to go to war over the Belize issue if upcoming talks with the UK fail.

2. Guatemalan arms purchases in recent years have brought new weaponry into an area which has generally been known for low military expenditures. This interagency memorandum describes Guatemala's recently concluded and planned weapons purchases, compares Guatemalan capabilities to those of British forces in Belize, and examines the reasoning behind and implications of this force improvement.

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