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 RUESMG/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA 9818  
 RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 2923  
 RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 6366  
 RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 0260  
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 C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 06744



E. D. 12356: DECL: 8/16/89  
 TAGS: PGOV, GT, ES, HO, OREP  
 SUBJECT: GEN. MEJIA RAISES POSSIBILITY OF  
 - U.S. AID DURING MEETING WITH  
 - SENATOR WILSON

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: DURING HIS MEETING WITH SENATOR PETE WILSON OF CALIFORNIA ON AUGUST 12, HEAD OF STATE AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE GENERAL OSCAR HUMBERTO MEJIA VICTORES RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF RECEIVING U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE EITHER DIRECTLY OR VIA EL SALVADOR. END SUMMARY.

3. GENERAL MEJIA VICTORES TOLD SENATOR WILSON THAT HE PERSONALLY WANTED TO "ACCELERATE" THE ELECTORAL CALENDAR IN GUATEMALA, BUT THAT THE GUERRILLA PROBLEM WAS ONE OF THE MAJOR VARIABLES TO BE CONSIDERED. WHILE GEN. MEJIA FELT THAT THE INSURGENCY PROBLEM WAS CURRENTLY UNDER CONTROL, IT COULD GROW IF THE GUERRILLAS RECEIVED MORE OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. IN THAT EVENT GEN. MEJIA SAID THAT HE WOULD REQUEST MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ESPECIALLY ARMS, BECAUSE GUATEMALA'S STOCK WAS BOTH OF LOWER QUALITY THAN THAT OF THE GUERRILLAS AND ALMOST TOTALLY EXHAUSTED. THE GENERAL NOTED THAT WHILE THE ISRAELI GALIL WAS THE GUATEMALAN ARMY'S BASIC WEAPON, THE GUERRILLAS USED M-16S. SENATOR WILSON OBSERVED THAT THE SALVADORAN GUERRILLAS ALSO USED THE M-16, AND GEN. MEJIA REPLIED THAT IN BOTH CASES THE WEAPONS ORIGINATED IN VIETNAM AND WERE SHIPPED TO CENTRAL AMERICA.

4. AT THIS POINT, GENERAL MEJIA TOLD SENATOR

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WILSON THAT GUATEMALA'S IMMEDIATE NEED WAS FOR ARMS AND HELICOPTER PARTS. HE ELABORATED BY SAYING THAT WHEN HE, GENERAL GUSTAVO ALVAREZ OF HONDURAS AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE VIDES CASANOVA OF EL SALVADOR VISITED WITH GEN. GORMAN ON THE USS RANGER ON AUGUST 6, GENERAL VIDES CASANOVA HAD RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF GUATEMALA RECEIVING AID VIA EL SALVADOR SINCE DIRECT AID TO GUATEMALA WAS BLOCKED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS. SENATOR WILSON EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE TOPIC HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN GENERAL GORMAN'S PRESENCE AND WONDERED WHAT GEN. GORMAN'S REACTION HAD BEEN.

5. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION, GENERAL MEJIA SAID THAT THE CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL, OF WHICH GUATEMALA WAS CURRENTLY CHAIRMAN, WOULD BE REACTIVATED. HE, GENERAL VIDES CASANOVA AND GENERAL GUSTAVO ALVAREZ WERE GOING TO MEET TO DISCUSS WAYS OF COORDINATING THEIR EFFORTS.

6. COMMENT

- A MAJOR GUATEMALAN NEWSPAPER, "EL GRAFICO", CARRIED ON PAGE TWO OF ITS AUGUST 16 EDITION A WIRE SERVICE STORY FROM NEW YORK REPORTING THAT ACCORDING TO THE NEW YORK TIMES, GUATEMALAN AND EL SALVADORIAN MILITARY OFFICIALS HAD REACHED AGREEMENT WHEREBY GUATEMALA WOULD PROVIDE TRAINING FOR SALVADORIAN TROOPS IN RETURN FOR LIGHT ARMS AND AMMUNITION SUPPLIED TO EL SALVADOR BY THE UNITED STATES. AT NO POINT IN THE CONVERSATION WITH SENATOR WILSON DID GENERAL MEJIA INDICATE THAT ANY SUCH AGREEMENT HAD ALREADY BEEN REACHED. THE PROPOSAL TO TRANS-SHIP ARMS TO GUATEMALA VIA EL SALVADOR PUT FORWARD BY GEN. MEJIA COULD HAVE BEEN INTENDED AS A TRIAL BALLOON BY GENERAL MEJIA WHO SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT COULD INDEED BY-PASS THE CONGRESSIONAL PROHIBITION AGAINST GUATEMALAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

7. FOR USCINCSO: IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE FOR U.S. POLICY TOWARD GUATEMALA TO KNOW WHATEVER GENERAL GORMAN OR GENERAL WOERNER RECALL CONCERNING THE CONVERSATIONS ON THE CARRIER RANGER OR IN

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HONDURAS CONCERNING MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND ITS NEIGHBORS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF ANY SUCH AGREEMENT.

CHAPIN

END OF MESSAGE

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