

TOT: 080138Z FEB 80

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] - FURTHER ON OQUELI DEATH

[REDACTED] BACKGROUND, WE SHOULD ADD THAT DESPITE SPECULATION ON EITHER SLIGHTING OR CLEVERLY LEFT HING SPONSORS OF THE MURDERS, WE HAVE NO SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING OQUELI AS OR FLORES' DEATHS NOR OF PROBABLE CULPABILITY. YOU MAY WISH TO PASS ALONG TO [REDACTED] THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S STATEMENT (TAKEN FROM THE 16 JAN 80 PRESS GUIDANCE - STATE 014725) WHICH CONDEMN THE KILLINGS OF GILDA LURCS AND HECTOR OQUELI IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS. SUCH POLITICAL KILLINGS ARE AN OUTRAGEOUS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY ARE AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE PEACEFUL POLITICAL ACTIVITY IMPOSSIBLE AND ROLL BACK THE GAINS DEMOCRACY HAS MADE IN THE REGION IN RECENT YEARS. OUR EMBASSY IN GUATEMALA CITY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA. WE HAVE URGED IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA UNDERTAKE IMMEDIATELY AN URGENT THOROUGH AND OPEN INVESTIGATION OF THESE MURDERS SO THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE CAN BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE. WE NOTE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A REPORTED INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF UNSOLVED POLITICAL MURDERS IN GUATEMALA. WE CANNOT OVERSTATE OUR ADOPTION OF THIS AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF OUR POLICY OF NON-VIOLENCE. OUR AMBASSADOR HAS RAISED IT WITH THE PRESIDENT OF GUATEMALA WHO ASSURED US THAT HE WOULD PURSUE AN AGGRESSIVE INVESTIGATION. THE CERTAIN SUMMIT OF THE COMMISSION FOLLOWED THIS AMBASSADORIAL INITIATIVE.

Approved for Release
NOV 1993