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██████████ A MAJOR SOURCE OF THE GROWING DISCONTENT WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES, ESPECIALLY IN THE HIGH COMMAND, IS WHAT MILITARY OFFICERS REGARD AS THE DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES (U.S.) AND GUATEMALA. MOST SENIOR OFFICERS BELIEVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE AT THEIR LOWEST POINT IN 10 YEARS FOLLOWING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S ISSUANCE ON 5 AUGUST OF A TOURIST VISA TO GRADE SCHOOL TEACHER'S ASSISTANT AND COMMON LAW WIFE OF A MIDLEVEL GUATEMALAN INSURGENT LEADER MARITZA ((██████████) GARCIA. (FIELD COMMENT: URRUTIA WAS KIDNAPPED ON 23 JULY IN GUATEMALA CITY AND RELEASED SHORTLY THEREAFTER BY AN UNIDENTIFIED GROUP OF ARMED INDIVIDUALS. THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT IDENTIFIES URRUTIA AS A GUERRILLA SYMPATHIZER AND ACTIVIST AND DISAVOWS ANY KNOWLEDGE OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR HER KIDNAPPING. URRUTIA, HOWEVER, CLAIMS SHE WAS ABDUCTED BY MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES.)

██████████ THE GUATEMALANS ALSO VIEW THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MEXICO CITY'S ISSUANCE OF A VISA TO ALLOW A POLITICAL LEADER FOR THE GUERRILLA UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION GUATEMALAN NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY UNION (URNG), ██████████ TO TRAVEL TO THE U.S. FOR A CONFERENCE AS COMPARABLE TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S HARBORING OF A TERRORIST. MOREOVER, SOME SENIOR GUATEMALAN ARMY OFFICERS BELIEVE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO IMPLICATE OR IDENTIFY GUATEMALAN ARMY OFFICERS AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SEPTEMBER 1990 MURDER OF GUATEMALAN ANTHROPOLOGIST MYRNA ((██████████) CHANG.

██████████ AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY PERCEIVES THE U.S. AS HAVING TAKEN ACTIONS SYMPATHETIC TO THE GUATEMALAN GUERRILLAS, THERE IS A PERCEPTION THAT U.S. CRITICISM OF THE ARMED FORCES FOR ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IS UNJUST. THIS CRITICISM IS VIEWED AS COMING AT A TIME WHEN THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IN GUATEMALA HAS IMPROVED MODERATELY; YET THE ARMY CONSIDERS ITSELF UNDER GREATER ATTACK THAN BEFORE. SENIOR GUATEMALAN ARMY OFFICERS FREQUENTLY ARE ANGERED BY THE PERCEIVED ATTITUDE OF U.S. OFFICIALS THAT GOVERNMENT FORCES ARE ALWAYS GUILTY OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES EVEN BEFORE INVESTIGATIONS HAVE BEGUN. THE GUATEMALAN OFFICIALS VIEW MOST OF THE ACCUSATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AS LEFTIST-INSPIRED PROPAGANDA WHICH COMES FROM PERSONS AFFILIATED WITH POLITICAL FRONT GROUPS FOR GUERRILLA ORGANIZATIONS. MILITARY OFFICERS ARE ANGRY THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO DENY MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE GUATEMALAN ARMED FORCES BECAUSE OF ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. THEY ALSO SEE A GENERAL TREND THAT NONMILITARY U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS ERODING AND FORESEE LITTLE INCENTIVE TO ACCEPT ANY FUTURE U.S. GOVERNMENT PRESSURE TO INVESTIGATE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE ALLEGATIONS.

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THE GUATEMALAN ARMY VIEWS ITSELF AS UNDER ATTACK NOT ONLY BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS BUT BY GUATEMALAN OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS, AS WELL. JUNIOR OFFICERS, IN PARTICULAR, RESENT THE LOW SALARIES THEY EARN EVEN THOUGH THEY SACRIFICE THEIR LIVES ON A REGULAR BASIS WHILE MEMBERS OF THE GUATEMALAN CONGRESS ARE PERCEIVED TO BE CORRUPT AND CONCERNED ONLY WITH PERSONAL FINANCIAL GAIN. (FIELD COMMENT: OFFICERS' MEDIAN SALARY IS QUETZALES (Q) 1,800 PER MONTH, EQUIVALENT TO CIRCA U.S. \$360 AT THE CURRENT EXCHANGE RATE OF Q 5 TO U.S. \$1. IN COMPARISON, CONGRESSMEN EARN Q 17,000-18,000 PER MONTH, EQUIVALENT TO APPROXIMATELY U.S. \$3,400 TO 3,600.)

PERCEIVED U.S. SYMPATHY FOR THE GUERRILLAS, WHAT THE MILITARY SEES AS UNJUST CRITICISM BY THE U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, LOW SALARIES, AND UNCERTAINTIES OVER THE FUTURE ALL ARE CONTRIBUTING TO GROWING DISCONTENT WITHIN THE MILITARY OFFICER CORPS. MOREOVER, THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IS PERCEIVED AS NOT HAVING YIELDED ANY TANGIBLE BENEFITS TO THE MILITARY. FINALLY, THE ARMY PERCEIVES THAT VARIOUS SECTORS OF GUATEMALAN SOCIETY AND INTERNATIONAL GROUPS ARE TRYING TO DESTROY THE MILITARY AS AN INSTITUTION. WHILE THE MILITARY'S DISCONTENT HAS NOT YET RISEN TO A LEVEL WHERE A MOVE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT BY THE MILITARY IS LIKELY, IF THE CAUSES OF THIS DISCONTENT ARE NOT ADDRESSED THE LIKELIHOOD OF A COUP ATTEMPT WILL INCREASE.

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