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(STATEMENT ISSUED JUNE 1 BY THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY IN TEGUCIGALPA)

(TEXT)

THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY HAS TAKEN NOTICE OF THE STORIES CARRIED IN SOME RESPONSIBLE NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO NEWSCASTS CONCERNING AN INTERVIEW GIVEN BY A GUATEMALAN, RAFAEL MENDEZ RODRIGUEZ, TO DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN NEWSMEN.

IN THIS INTERVIEW MENDEZ DECLARED--OBVIOUSLY FALSELY--THAT HE HAD BEEN COMMISSIONED BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE GUATEMALAN CIVIL GUARD, COL. ROGELIO (CRUZ LOWE?), TO COME TO HONDURAS TO KIDNAP OR MURDER FORMER COL. CARLOS CASTILLO ARMAS. MENDEZ ASSERTED THAT THE PLOT WAS ARRANGED WITH THE (ASSISTANCE?) OF THE MILITARY ATTACHE AT THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY, COL. LUIS MORALES, AND THE GUATEMALAN AIR ATTACHE FOR CENTRAL AMERICAN, MAJ. VICTOR FIGUEROA.

THE PRESS REPORTS ALSO STATED THAT MENDEZ' INTERVIEW WAS NOTARIZED BY A NOTARY PUBLIC, ANTONIO (ARGEL?).

THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY HEREBY DECLARES THAT IN VIEW OF MENDEZ' STATEMENTS, IN WHICH HE NAMED TWO MEMBERS OF GUATEMALA'S DIPLOMATIC MISSION--AND INDEED THE EMBASSY ITSELF--IT MUST TAKE THIS MEANS TO CLARIFY THE (MATTER?) FOR THE PUBLIC AND THE HONORABLE HONDURAN PRESS, AS FOLLOWS:

ONE--THE EMBASSY OBTAINED OFFICIAL KNOWLEDGE OF MENDEZ RODRIGUEZ' PRESENCE IN HONDURAS LAST MAR. 25, WHEN HE APPEARED AT THE CONSULAR OFFICE TO GET A VISA TO RETURN TO GUATEMALA. THE VISA WAS GRANTED. IT BORE THE NUMBER 317 RPT 317, AND WAS DATED MAR. 25. (HE ALSO?) WANTED A PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH THE AMBASSADOR.

THE INTERVIEW DID NOT RPT NOT TAKE PLACE THAT DAY, (BUT ON?) THE DAY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR GUATEMALA. HE WAS REVEALED TO BE THE BEARER OF IMPORTANT MESSAGES FROM GUATEMALAN EXILES IN HONDURAS ADDRESSED TO OTHER GUATEMALAN LEADERS IN MEXICO. THESE MESSAGES WERE CONCEALED IN A TUBE OF COLGATE'S TOOTH PASTE.

IT MUST BE POINTED OUT THAT BEFORE THE MISSION ENTRUSTED TO HIM WAS DISCOVERED, MENDEEZ HAD INSISTENTLY REQUESTED MONEY TO PAY HIS WAY OUT OF HONDURAS BY LAND ROUTE, AND THAT HE HAD CLAIMED TO BE AN HONEST CITIZEN OF GUATEMALA, DEVOTED TO THE REVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT THAT TODAY GUIDES OUR NATIONAL DESTINIES.

IT MUST ALSO BE POINTED OUT THAT HE CLAIMED HE WAS COMPLETELY WITHOUT FUNDS AND THAT THIS WAS THE REASON HE HAD APPROACHED THE EMBASSY FOR ASSISTANCE. THE ASSISTANCE HE REQUESTED WAS GIVEN HIM--ALTHOUGH NOT RPT NOT AS MUCH AS HE HAD ASKED--MUST AS ANY DIPLOMATIC OR CONSULAR MISSION ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD WOULD HAVE DONE.

TWO--THE RELATIONS THAT MENDEZ RODRIGUEZ HAD WITH COL. MORALES CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

A--ON HIS ARRIVAL IN TEGUCIGALPA LAST MARCH, MENDEZ INTRODUCED HIMSELF TO COL. MORALES AND TOLD HIM THAT HE DESIRED EMPLOYMENT IN THE MILITARY ATTACHE'S OFFICE OF THE EMBASSY AS A CHAUFFEUR, OR--AS A LAST RESORT--AS THE AMBASSADOR'S BODYGUARD. HE SAID HE NEEDED A JOB BECAUSE HE WAS WITHOUT FUNDS TO (KEEP HIMSELF?) OR TO SEND TO HIS FAMILY IN GUATEMALA. HE WAS TOLD IN REPLY THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO INCREASE THE T/O OF ANY SECTION OF THE EMBASSY, AND THAT AMBASSADOR (ALREADY HAD?) A BODYGUARD.

B--IT IS IMPORTANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT MENDEZ SPOKE WITH COL. MORALES SEVERAL TIMES FOR THE PURPOSE OF GIVING ALLEGED URGENT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE MACHINATIONS--KNOWN TO EVERYONE--OF POLITICAL EXILES RESIDING IN HONDURAS. COL. MORALES DOUBTED MENDEZ' VERACITY FROM THE VERY FIRST AND PAID NO ATTENTION TO HIS REPORTS' ALLEGATIONS, ASSUMING HIM TO BE MERELY ANOTHER AGENT IN THE SERVICE OF CASTILLO ARMAS AND HIS FRIENDS.

MENDEZ TOLD COL. MORALES THAT THE LEADERS OF THE GUATEMALAN OPPOSITION IN HONDURAS WANTED TO DISCREDIT HIM--COL. MORALES--BY WHATEVER MEANS THEY COULD, AND THAT THEY WOULD RESORT TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE OR EVEN MURDER IF IT PROVED NECESSARY. HE SAID IN EFFECT THAT HE HIMSELF HAD BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THE ASSIGNMENT OF MURDERING COL. MORALES IN EXCHANGE FOR A LARGE SUM OF MONEY THAT CASTILLO ARMAS WOULD PAY HIM UPON FULFILLMENT OF THE ASSIGNMENT, AND THAT HE HAD ALSO BEEN PROMISED THAT WHEN CASTILLO ARMAS BECAME PRESIDENT, HE--MENDEZ--WOULD RECEIVE ALL MANNER OF ASSISTANCE AND PERSONAL GUARANTEES.

C--THESE ASSERTIONS BY MENDEZ RODRIGUEZ, AS WELL AS VARIOUS TELEPHONE CALLS FROM OTHER INDIVIDUALS, CAUSED THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY TO ASK THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL POLICE--IN REPORT NUMBER 445 RPT 445--FOR A DAY-AND-NIGHT GUARD AGAINST ANY POSSIBLE FUTURE SITUATION, JUST IN CASE MENDEZ RODRIGUEZ' WARNING SHOULD PROVE TO HAVE ANY BASIS IN FACT.

THREE--THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY HAS READ AND HEARD WITH DUE ATTENTION THE NEWSPAPER AND RADIO REPORTS, AND HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE MUCH-PUBLICIZED RAFAEL MENDEZ RODRIGUEZ DID NOT RPT NOT MEMORIZE HIS ORDERS WELL, FOR HIS STATEMENT IS OBVIOUSLY JUST A SERIES OF CONTRADICTIONS, FALSE ARGUMENTS, AND CHILDISH STATEMENTS ... (TWO WORDS UNINTELLIGIBLE--ED.) IN AN ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE THE HONORABLE PRESS REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT AT THIS MEETING.

CAN ANYONE BELIEVE THAT A MAN WOULD AGREE TO COMMIT A DEED OF THIS MAGNITUDE AND THESE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS IN RETURN FOR THE MERE PROMISE OF A REWARD? "EL DIA" COMMENTED ON THIS ... (SEVERAL PHRASES UNINTELLIGIBLE--ED.)

THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY IS CONFIDENT THAT THE HONDURAN PRESS AND READING PUBLIC (WILL DISREGARD?) SUCH A TISSUE OF LIES, WHICH ARE DESIGNED SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCREDITING THE ABOVE-NAMED OFFICIALS; FOR ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS EMBASSY OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN REVEILED IN AN UNSCRUPULOUS AND IRRESPONSABLE MANNER BY (THOSE FACTIONS?) THAT ARE SO PROFUSELY DISTRIBUTED OVER THE HOSPITABLE AND BENEVOLENT SOIL OF HONDURAS.

FOUR--THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY, HAVING NO DIRECT OR INDIRECT (CONTACT?) WITH THESE INTERESTED PARTIES, AND WITHOUT TRYING TO FATHOM THE ULTIMATE PURPOSES OF THIS SORT OF PUBLIC CONDUCT, WISHES TO STATE SPECIFICALLY--AND TO EMPHASIZE--THAT SUCH CONDUCT (CONFUSES?) PUBLIC OPINION AT A TIME WHEN THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT IS ENDEAVORING, IN WAYS KNOWN TO EVERYONE, TO CONDUCT HONORABLE AND SINCERE NEGOTIATIONS FOR FRIENDSHIP AND CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE NOBLE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF HONDURAS--AND AT A TIME WHEN THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT HAS DISCOVERED A NEW DOMESTIC CONSPIRACY TO OVERTHROW THE CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT THAT TOOK OFFICE ON MAR. 15, 1951.

FIVE--THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY HEREBY STATES ITS POSITION, AND VOUCHES FULLY FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE MEMBERS OF ITS MISSION, WHOSE OFFICIAL CONDUCT HAS AT ALL TIMES BEEN PERFECTLY PROPER. IT HEREBY DECLARES ITS CONFIDENCE THAT THEY COULD NEVER BE USED AS (TOOLS OF ANY SORT?) IN MACHINATIONS TENDING TO DISTURB THE GOOD RELATIONS THAT, HAPPILY, UNITE THE GOVERNMENTS OF HONDURAS AND GUATEMALA.