BEGIN SUMMARY: NEWS THAT A RANSOM PAYMENT PLAYED A ROLE IN THE RELEASE OF SENATOR RUBEN FIGUEROA, TOGETHER WITH THE GOM'S HANDLING OF TWO OTHER CASES AND WITH THE RECENT TRENDS OF EVENTS IN OTHER TERRORIST ACTIVITY, LEAD US TO SPECULATE THAT GOM MAY HAVE FOUND A PECULIARLY MEXICAN FORMULA FOR DISCOURAGING POLITICAL KIDNAPPINGS, BUT WITH THE RESULT OF FORCING TERRORISM IN OTHER DIRECTIONS.
END SUMMARY.

WITHHELD B1 PORTIONS UPGRADE TO CONFIDENTIAL
(MILLION DOLLARS) RANSOM WAS PAID FOR HIS RELEASE.  
ACCORDING TO WHAT FIGUEROA ALLEGEDLY SAID, A SECOND 
TWENTY-FIVE MILLION PESOS PAYMENT WAS TO BE MADE, BUT 
WAS OVERTAKEN BY THE EVENT OF HIS RELEASE. REPORT DOES 
NOT MAKE CLEAR WHO PAID RANSOM. 

2. COMMENT: FIGUEROA'S ALLEGED STATEMENT DOES NOT 
LITERALLY CONTRADICT THE GOM VERSION OF HIS RELEASE, 
WHICH NEVER ADDRESS 
THE QUESTION OF RANSOM. HOWEVER, 
IT DOES CONTRADICT STATEMENTS MADE BY FIGUEROA'S FAMILY 
AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEXICAN TRUCKERS UNION, AND IT 
DOES CONTRADICT THE IMPRESSION LEFT BY THE OFFICIAL GOM 
VERSION, WHICH WAS THAT FIGUEROA'S 
RELEASE WAS DUE 
ENTIRELY TO THE MEXICAN ARMY'S ACTION IN "LIBERATING" 
HIM. THE STORY IS EMBARRASSING THEREFORE AND WE SUSPECT 
IT WILL BE IGNORED OFFICIALLY, OR, IF IT GETS MORE ATTEN-
TION THAN IT HAS THUS FAR, NIED.# WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, 
ANY PAPER WOULD PRINT SUCH A STORY UNLESS FIGUEROA IN 
FACT DID MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT. 

ASSUMING FIGUEROA DID MAKE THE STATEMENT, AND THAT 
IT IS TRUE -- A REPORT (REF B, PARA 4) THAT THE TRUCKERS 
UNION WAS SAID BY ONE SOURCE TO HAVE PAID A RANSOM OF 
THIS AMOUNT LENDS CREDENCE -- THE QUESTION THEN BECOMES 
WHAT TO MAKE OF THE GOM VERSION. 

IT IS HELPFUL TO RECALL THAT IN THE LAST FIFTEEN 
MONTHS THE MAJOR POLITICAL FIGURES WHO HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPED 
(ZUNO, FIGUEROA, ANTHONY DUNCAN WILLIAMS) HAVE BEEN 
RELEASED UNHARMED, WHEREAS THE VICTIMS OF THE PRIVATE 
SECTOR (ARANGUEREN, MARGARET SAAD) HAVE BEEN MURDERED. IN 
BOTH THE ARANGUEREN AND SAAD CASES, RANSOM REPORTEDLY WAS 
PAID; THIS COMPLIANCE WITH KIDNAPPERS' DEMANDS DOES NOT 
ASSURE RELEASE OF THE VICTIM. 

FOLLOWING THE SAME LOGIC, WE DOUBT THAT THE SUCCESS-
THIS TENTATIVE CONCLUSION IS SUPPORTED BY THE GOM HANDLING OF THE TORRES ENRIQUEZ CASE (REF C) DEC. 5, IN WHICH A GOM DECEPTION WAS THE KEY TO THE RELEASE OF HOSTAGES AND THE CAPTURE OF TORRES. IT IS SUPPORTED ALSO BY A REPORT THAT IN THE ZUNO CASE THE GOM WON ZUNO'S SAFE RELEASE.

THUS, IN THE FIGUEROA CASE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT KNOWLEDGE THAT A RANSOM PAYMENT WAS MADE ALONE IS REASON TO DENY THE KEY ELEMENT OF THE GOM VERSION OF FIGUEROA'S RELEASE, THAT A GUN BATTLE BETWEEN THE MEXICAN ARMY AND THE CABANAS GROUP TOOK PLACE. BUT, GIVEN WHAT WE KNOW OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE TORRES ENRIQUEZ AND ZUNO CASES WERE HANDLED, WE DO SUSPECT THAT A RANSOM PAYMENT SOMEHOW CONTRIBUTED TO FIGUEROA'S SAFE RELEASE AND TO THE ARMY'S MIRACULOUSLY SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ITS ASSIGNED MISSION. A POSSIBLE SCENARIO IS THAT THE ARMY SIMPLY AMBUSHED THE CABANAS GROUP AS SOON AS FIGUEROA WAS EXCHANGED FOR THE RANSOM PAYMENT. THUS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT A RANSOM WAS PAID, THE GOM IS BY NO MEANS DEPARTING FROM ITS TOUGH POLICY ON POLITICAL KIDNAPPINGS. PAYMENT OF RANSOM IS SIMPLY ONE TACTIC THE GOM MAY USE WHEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT.

IF THE FOREGOING IS CORRECT, MEXICAN GUERRILLA GROUPS MAY EVENTUALLY CONCLUDE THAT A GOVERNMENT WHICH REFUSES TO BE BOUND BY CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS IS IN TOO STRONG A POSITION FOR POLITICAL KIDNAPPINGS TO SUCCEED (ALTHOUGH RELEASE OF IMPRISONED COMPatriOTS AND PUBLICITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE POWERFUL INCENTIVES). WHEN THE MOTIVE

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IS SIMPLY FINANCING, GUERRILLA GROUPS MAY STO KIDNAPPINGS OF PRIVATE PERSONS. WHEN THE OBJECTIVE IS MORE GENERAL -- TO PROVOKE LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN ORDER -- THESE GROUPS MAY TURN TO OTHER FORMS OF TERRORISM, SUCH AS THE RECENT BOMBINGS IN MEXICO CITY. Jova.

NOTE BY OCT: # AS RECEIVED.

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