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PAGE 01

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FM AMBASSADY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0008
INFO AMBASSADY MEXICO
AMBASSADY BRUSSELS
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A/SHY/Tag

E.O.12356: DECL: 2/23/90
TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, PINR, PINS, PROP, GT
SUBJECT: GUATEMALA: TRADE-UNION LEADERS ABDUCTED

REFS: A) GUATEMALA 1791 B) GUATEMALA 1624

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. THE FEBRUARY 22 GUATEMALAN PRESS REPORTED
THE FEBRUARY 18 ABDUCTION OF TRADE-UNION LEADER
FERNANDO GARCIA. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS,
ARMED MEN KIDNAPPED HIM WHILE HE WAS WALKING
IN ZONE 12 IN GUATEMALA CITY. MR. GARCIA IS
A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE CAVISA
UNION (SINDICATO DE TRABAJADORES INDUSTRIA C.A.
DE VIDRIO S.A./UNION OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF
COMPAÑEROS)

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PAGE 02

OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-00 SS-00 CIAE-00
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VIDRIO S.A.). CAVISA IS A GLASS FACTORY,
A SUBSIDIARY OF A MEXICAN GLASS CORPORATION. IN ADDITION TO THE PRESS REPORTS, HIS TRADE UNION PUBLISHED A PAID ADVERTISEMENT IN WHICH IT DENOUNCED HIS ABDUCTION AND NOTED THAT NOTHING CAN BE RESOLVED BY SUCH ACTS.

3. THE CAVISACA UNION IS AN AFFILIATE OF THE COMMUNIST TRADE-UNION CONFEDERATION FASGUA (FEDERACION AUTONOMA SINDICAL DE GUATEMALA/AUTONOMOUS TRADE-UNION FEDERATION OF GUATEMALA). FASGUA WAS THE TRADE-UNION ARM OF THE PGT (GUATEMALAN LABOR PARTY), WHICH IS THE ORTHODOX SOVIET-RELATED COMMUNIST PARTY OF GUATEMALA. ALTHOUGH THE PGT ITSELF WAS OUTLAWED IN 1954, FASGUA HAS CONTINUED IN LEGAL EXISTENCE TO THIS DAY. AT ONE TIME, IT HAD APPROXIMATELY 51 AFFILIATED UNIONS, ITS CURRENT NUMBER OF AFFILIATES AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP IS UNKNOWN. AS OF 1979 (THE DATE FOR THE LAST KNOWN STATISTICS FOR THIS CONFEDERATION) THE CAVISACA UNION WAS THE THIRD LARGEST FASGUA UNION AFFILIATE WITH SOME 600 MEMBERS.


- IN STILL ANOTHER INCIDENT, UNIDENTIFIED INDIVIDUALS KIDNAPPED PROMINENT LABOR LAWYER
SANTIAGO LOPEZ AGUILAR ON FEBRUARY 17; THEY
SUBSEQUENTLY MURDERED HIM. PRESS REPORTS SAY
THAT A PAPER WAS FOUND ATTACHED TO HIS SHIRT
WHICH SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN EXECUTED AS A TRAITOR
TO THE PGT. IN ADDITION TO HIS PRIVATE PRACTICE,
HE WAS A RESEARCH FELLOW AT THE LAW SCHOOL OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS. AT ONE TIME HE HAD WORKED
AT THE ESCUELA DE FORMACION SINDICAL (SCHOOL OF
UNION FORMATION), WHICH WAS PART OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF SAN CARLOS. ALTHOUGH NOT OFFICIALLY CLOSED
DOWN BY USAC, THIS INSTITUTION HAS BEEN DORMANT
FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS.

- IN A FEBRUARY 2 KIDNAPPING, ABDUCTORS
KIDNAPPED USAC LAW STUDENT SERGIO MANFREDO
BELTETON DE LEON; THEY RELEASED HIM ON FEBRUARY 17.
ALTHOUGH STILL A LAW STUDENT, HIS FAMILY SAID THAT
HE HAD BEEN WORKING ON A LABOR CASE JUST
PRIOR TO HIS ABDUCTION.

5. IN A FEBRUARY 21 HAVANA INTERNATIONAL PRESS
RELEASE, THE CNUS (CONSEJO NACIONAL DE UNIDAD
SINDICAL/NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TRADE-UNION
UNITY) DEMANDED AN END TO THE RECENT REPRESSION,

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 01872 02 OF 02 232333Z
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AMEMBASSY PANAMA

SECTION 02 OF 02 GUATEMALA 01872

A/SY/TAG

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WHICH--THEY ALLEGED--HAS RESULTED IN TWO UNION MEMBERS BEING KILLED AND FOUR OTHERS BEING KIDNAPPED. THE CNUS ANNOUNCED THAT A MEMBER OF THEIR CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND A CNT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER SAMUEL VILLATORO HAD ALSO BEEN KIDNAPPED. THIS ABDUCTION FIRST CAME TO PUBLIC ATTENTION IN GUATEMALA WHEN HIS WIFE ANNOUNCED HIS ABDUCTION ON FEBRUARY 23. AT ONE TIME, MR. VILLATORO HAD BEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SINDICATO DE TRABAJADORES DE FABRICA DE CHICLETS "ADAMS". THE ADAMS CHICLET COMPANY UNION IS AN AFFILIATE OF THE CNT.

THE CNUS ALSO CLAIMED THAT UNKNOWN PERSONS KILLED ALFONSO ALVARADO (ANOTHER CNT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER). COMMENT: EMBASSY INFORMATION INDICATES THAT UNIDENTIFIED INDIVIDUALS KIDNAPPED ALVARADO IN LATE JANUARY; AS YET, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO PUBLIC INFORMATION THAT HE HAS BEEN KILLED. THE CNUS ALSO ALLEGED THAT A GLASS FACTORY WORKER (EMBASSY ASSUMES THEY ARE REFERRING TO FERNANDO GARCIA) WAS ALSO MURDERED AFTER BEING KIDNAPPED. THE CNT AND FASGUA FOUNDED THE CNUS IN 1976. IT IS A MARXIST-LENINIST UMBRELLA TRADE-UNION ORGANIZATION. AS AN AGITPROP ORGANIZATION, IT ISSUES NUMEROUS PRESS RELEASES THROUGH HAVANA ON TRADE-UNION CONDITIONS WITHIN GUATEMALA.

6. COMMENT. WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF BELTRON, ALL OF THE MISSING PEOPLE MENTIONED IN THIS CABLE ARE--OR HAVE BEEN--CONNECTED
WITH MARXIST-LENINIST TRADE-UNION ORGANIZATIONS OR ACTIVITIES. BECAUSE THE RECENTLY KIDNAPPED TRADE-UNION LEADERS HAVE BEEN RELEASED, EMBASSY IS OPTIMISTIC THAT FERNANDO GARCIA OF CAVISA WILL BE RELEASED, IN SPITE OF THE CNUS CLAIM THAT HE HAS ALREADY BEEN MURDERED. EMBASSY IS ALSO OPTIMISTIC THAT SAMUEL VILLATORO WILL BE RELEASED, IF HE IS BEING HELD BY GOG SECURITY FORCES. THE GOVERNMENT IS OBVIOUSLY ROUNding UP PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH THE EXTREME LEFT-WING LABOR MOVEMENT FOR INTERROGATION. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THEY ARE RELEASING MOST OF THESE INDIVIDUALS AFTER THEY QUESTION THEM. NUMEROUS COMPLAINTS FROM INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS


END COMMENT.

CHAPIN