CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION ARA-00

INFO  LOG-00  COPY-01  ADS-00  INR-10  SS-00  CIAE-00  NSCE-00
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O 042207Z APR 85
FM AMBASSADOR GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7552

C O N F I D E N T I A L  SECTION 01 OF 02 GUATEMALA 03228

E.O. 12356 DECL: OADR
TAGS: PINS, PNR, SHUM, SOCI, PREL, GT
SUBJ: BACKGROUND AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE
      MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUP (GAM)

REF:  (A) 84 GUATEMALA 6866   (B) 84 GUATEMALA 7120
      (C) 84 GUATEMALA 8575   (D) 84 GUATEMALA 9247
      (E) 84 GUATEMALA 9727   (F) 84 GUATEMALA 10345
      (G) 84 GUATEMALA 10684   (H) 84 GUATEMALA 10898
      (I) 84 GUATEMALA 11174   (J) 84 GUATEMALA 12278
      (K) 84 GUATEMALA 12716   (L) 84 GUATEMALA 13092
      (M) GUATEMALA 388   (N) GUATEMALA 797
      (O) GUATEMALA 1198   (P) GUATEMALA 1668
      (Q) GUATEMALA 2421
      (R) SCHIVELEY/SCHOFIELD TELCONS MARCH 27 AND 28
      (S) GUATEMALA 3116

(C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

SUMMARY

MESSAGE SUMMARIZES PREVIOUS EMBASSY REPORTING ON GAM
THROUGH EARLY MARCH. A SUMMARY OF GAM ACTIVITIES

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IN MARCH IS ALSO PROVIDED WITH SOME EMPHASIS ON ITS
ACTIVIST ACTIVITIES (BLOCKING TRAFFIC, OCCUPATION
OF GOVERNMENT OFFICES, ETC.) AND THE GOG REACTION
TO THOSE ACTIVITIES. MESSAGE ENDS WITH REFERENCE TO MESSAGE REPORTING ON HECTOR GOMEZ’S MURDER.
END SUMMARY.

1. THE ABOVE LIST OF 20 REFTELS/REFTELCONS DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUP (SPANISH ACRONYM, GAM) FOR THE REAPPEARANCE OF RELATIVES. THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES THOSE MESSAGES, AS WELL PROVIDES UP-TO-DATE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.


3. ON SEPTEMBER 13, GAM REPRESENTATIVES WERE RECEIVED BY THE CHARGE (GAMBLE), AT THEIR REQUEST, AND AGAIN REPEATED THEIR REQUEST FOR OUR INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE MISSING PERSONS. LATER THAT DAY THE CHARGE MET WITH VICE FOREIGN MINISTER MARROQUIN, TOLD HIM ABOUT THE MEETING, STRESSED U.S. CONCERN ABOUT MISSING PERSONS AND REITERATED

THE GREAT IMPORTANCE THAT THE U.S. PLACES ON HUMAN RIGHTS. (REFTEL E).

IN AUGUST 1984, THE GAM MET UNHRC SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR LORD COLVILLE (REFTEL C). DURING HER LATE SEPTEMBER VISIT TO GUATEMALA, DEPARTMENT’S HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER FOR GUATEMALA, MARIANNE GUSTAFSON, ALSO MET WITH THE GROUP (REFTEL F).

4. IN MID-OCTOBER 1984, GAM ORGANIZED A PEACEFUL 21 KM MARCH FROM NEARBY SAN LUCAS TO GUATEMALA CITY, WHICH CULMINATED IN A SHORT RALLY IN FRONT OF THE NATIONAL PALACE, FOLLOWED BY A MASS CELEBRATED AT THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL. THE MARCHERS NUMBERED BETWEEN
5. In late November 1984, members of the GAM organized another public event, a "symbolic journey" to the constituent assembly. Members met with the assembly president and again demanded action in locating their missing relatives. A few days later they were received by Chief of State Gen. Mejia and they repeated their demands (RefTel J). A second meeting with Gen. Mejia on November 30 led to the formation of a govern-
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E.O. 12356 DECL: OADR
TAGS: PIN, PINR, SHUM, SOCI, PREL, GT
SUBJ: BACKGROUND AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE
MENT COMMISSION WHOSE COMMISSION WAS TO INVESTIGATE
AND REPORT ON ALL THE GAM CHARGES (REFTEL K).
IN MID-DECEMBER 1984, GAM MET WITH THE GOG
TRIPARTITE COMMISSION (REFTEL L).

6. IN EARLY JANUARY 1985, ABOUT 115 MEMBERS OF
GAM HELD A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION ON THE STREET
IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY. THEY PRESENTED EMBOFF
WITH A SHORT MESSAGE FOR AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMAN,
WHICH REQUESTED THAT HE USE HIS GOOD OFFICES
IN FINDING THEIR MISSING RELATIVES (REFTEL M).
THROUGHOUT JANUARY, GAM HELD SEVERAL MORE SMALL
DEMONSTRATIONS AND MEETINGS DESIGNED TO PUBLICIZE
THEIR CAMPAIGN. THEY MET AGAIN WITH UNITED
NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON GUATEMALA, LORD
COLVILLE (REFTELS N AND O).

7. IN EARLY FEBRUARY 1985, GAM LEADERS MET WITH
STATE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF HUMAN
RIGHTS, HA/HR, JAMES THYDEN DURING HIS VISIT
TO GUATEMALA. OFFICE DIRECTOR THYDEN LISTENED
TO THEIR PLEAS AND SUGGESTED TO THEM THAT A HIGH
INTERNATIONAL PROFILE WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO
ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES, SINCE PUBLICITY COULD
BE THEIR SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL (REFTEL P).
ON MARCH 20 THE DCM HOSTED A RECEPTION FOR
GUATEMALA DESK OFFICER JAMES CASON, TO WHICH
THE TWO MAJOR LEADERS OF GAM WERE INVITED.
THEY MADE EXCELLENT USE OF THE RECEPTION TO
DISCUSS THEIR POSITION WITH A WIDE RANGE OF
GOVERNMENT, MILITARY AND PRIVATE SECTOR OFFICIALS.

8. THROUGHOUT MARCH OF THIS YEAR, GAM HELD MORE
PUBLIC ACTIONS TO EMphasize THEIR OBJECTIVES.
ON MARCH 1, APPROXIMATELY ONE HUNDRED GAM MEMBERS
OCCUPIED THE OFFICE OF THE GUATEMALAN ATTORNEY

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GENERAL, PROTESTING BOTH THE LACK OF ACTION BY THE
GOG TRIPARTITE COMMISSION AND ATTORNEY GENERAL’S
FAILURE TO MEET WITH THEM. ON MARCH 6, GAM AGAIN
APPEARED BEFORE THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. ON MARCH 19,
GAM MEMBERS EFFECTED A SYMBOLIC OCCUPATION OF THE
ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS, SHOUTED DOWN SOME OF ITS MEMBERS,
AND AGAIN DEMANDED THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY’S
ACTION ON THE MISSING AND POLITICAL PRISONERS.

9. BEGINNING IN MID-MARCH OF THIS YEAR, THE
GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT BEGAN TO EXPRESS DISAPPROVAL
OF THE TACTICS CHOSEN BY GAM TO PURSUE THEIR OBJEC-
TIVES. BETWEEN MARCH 15-20, BOTH THE OFFICIAL
GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN, RAMON ZELADA CARRILLO
AND THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, GUSTAVO ADOLFO LOPEZ
SANDOVAL, WARNED THE GAM AGAINST HOLDING ANY FURTHER
DEMONSTRATIONS THAT RESULTED IN BLOCKING TRAFFIC.
(NOTE: THE OCCUPATION OF THE ASSEMBLY (PARA 8)

10. THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN ANY PUBLIC
ACTIVITIES BY GAM FROM APPROXIMATELY MARCH 22
UNTIL THE FIRST DAYS OF APRIL.

11. ON MARCH 25, DEPARTMENT INFORMALLY ADVISED
EMBASSY THAT A HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP IN WASHINGTON
HAD PROVIDED THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE NAMES OF
FOUR MEMBERS OF GAM WHO HAD ALLEGEDLY RECEIVED
VARIOUS THREATS FROM UNKNOWN SOURCES. HECTOR
ORLANDO GOMEZ CALITO WAS INCLUDED ON THAT SHORT
LIST. AS REPORTED IN REFTEL S, GOMEZ WAS NOT THEN
KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY IN ANY CAPACITY RELATED TO
GAM. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE
SPECIFICS OF GOMEZ’S MURDER HAVE BEEN PROVIDED
SEPTEL.

PIEDRA

NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions ***  n/a
*** Current Classification ***  

UNCLASSIFIED