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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1898

MEXICO 4508

E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: PRI GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE IN GUERRERO REPORTEDLY
ABDUCTED BY CABANAS GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION

1. SUMMARY: MEXICO CITY PRESS MORNING OF JUNE 3 CARRIES SUPPOSED COMMUNIQUE FROM LUCIO CABANAS GUERRILLA GROUP IN STATE OF GUERRERO SAYING PRI GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE, SEN. RUBEN FIGUEROA, IS ITS PRISONER. COMMUNIQUE DEMANDS REMOVAL OF TROOPS AND POLICE FROM CABANAS'S AREA OF OPERATIONS AS PRECONDITION TO NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE FIGUEROA HAD ANNOUNCED INTENT TO MEET CABANAS AND OFFER HIM "TOTAL AMNESTY," IT IS NOT YET CERTAIN WHETHER BONA FIDE ABDUCTION HAS OCCURRED. HOWEVER, RECENT CAPTURE AND CONTINUING DETENTION OF ONE OF CABANAS'S PRINCIPAL LIEUTENANTS WOULD APPEAR TO OFFER MORE THAN ADEQUATE MOTIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. SEVERAL MEXICO CITY DAILIES JUNE 3 CARRY ACCOUNT OF A COMMUNIQUE FROM SO-CALLED "PARTY OF THE POOR," GUERRILLA GROUP HEADED BY LUCIO CABANAS BARRIENTOS. COMMUNIQUE WAS FOUND IN TRASH CAN IN ACAPULCO NIGHT OF JUNE 2 AFTER LOCAL NEWSPAPER HAD BEEN ALERTED BY TELEPHONE CALL.

3. COMMUNIQUE IS ADDRESSED TO (PRESIDENT) "LUIS ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ, RELATIVES OF RUBEN FIGUEROA, AND PUBLIC OPINION". TEXT BEGINS WITH STATEMENT: "THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WE

EXTEND CLASSIFICATION

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SHALL MAKE KNOWN, WE HAVE IN OUR POWER, UNDER THE ARMS OF THE PARTIDO DE LOS POBRES, SENATOR RUBEN FIGUEROA, AND WE SHALL LIBERAT HIM WHEN THE GOVERNMENT COMPLIES WITH OUR PETITIONS

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WHICH WE SHALL PUBLISH AT AN EARLY DATE; IF OUR CONDITIONS ARE NOT MET, HE WILL BE EXECUTED". COMMUNIQUE GOES ON TO SAY GUERRILLAS WILL SUBSEQUENTLY REVEAL HOW GOVT IS "KILLING PEOPLE" AND WILL MAKE CLEAR DECEIT BEING UNDERTAKEN BY FIGUEROA (PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE TO HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF INTENT TO OFFER AMNESTY TO CABANAS).

4. AS INITIAL DEMAND AND APPARENT PRECONDITION TO NEGOTIATIONS, COMMUNIQUE ASKS WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS AND "SECRET" AND JUDICIAL POLICE FROM FOUR TOWNS (TECPAN, COYUCA, SAN JERONIMO AND ATOYAC) IN GUERRILLAS' PRINCIPAL AREA OF OPERATIONS. IT CONCLUDES BY SAYING PARTY OF POOR HAS AS ITS MISSION TO STAGE "THE NEW REVOLUTION, WHICH WILL BE SOCIALIST AND WILL OVERTHROW THE BOURGEOISIE (SO THAT) THE POOR WILL GOVERN WITH A PROLETARIAN REGIME. WE PAY NO ATTENTION TO THE PRI*"

5. DATE OF FIGUEROA'S DEPARTURE FROM RESIDENCE IN ACAPULCO (AND/OR OF HIS DISAPPEARANCE) NOT CLEAR; SOME ACCOUNTS INDICATE HE WAS LAST SEEN ON MAY 30. FIGUEROA WAS DUE IN IGUALA, GUERRERO, MORNING OF JUNE 2 FOR STATE ASSEMBLY OF NATIONAL CAMPESINO FEDERATION, WHICH WAS TO TENDER HIM ITS SUPPORT AS "PRECANDIDATE" FOR GOVERNOR OF THE STATE. ASSEMBLY WENT AHEAD IN HIS ABSENCE.

6. IN RECENT INTERVIEWS AND PRESS STATEMENTS, FIGUEROA HAD INDICATED THAT HIS PRINCIPAL TASK AS GOVERNOR WOULD BE TO "PACIFY" THE STATE AND, TO THAT END, HE INTENDED TO MEET WITH CABANAS AND OFFER HIM "TOTAL AMNESTY". FIGUEROA HAD ADDED "IF THERE WAS AMNESTY FOR PANCHO VILLA, WHOSE NAME IS NOW INSCRIBED IN GOLD LETTERS IN THE HALLS OF CONGRESS, WHY NOT AMNESTY FOR CABANAS?" FIGUEROA'S OFFER HAD ALREADY BEEN PUT DOWN BY LEFTIST WEEKLY POR QUE?, WHICH CITED PREVIOUS GOM AMNESTIES THAT HAD LEAD TO MURDER OF THEIR BENEFICIARIES.

7. FIGUEROA, 65, HAS HAD LONG AND CHECKERED POLITICAL/GOVERNMENTAL CAREER, INCLUDING TWO TERMS IN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES (1940-43 AND 1964-67). HE HAS HEADED A TRUCKERS' FEDERATION

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FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS AND IS REPORTEDLY A MILLIONAIRE. ASIDE FROM THAT POSITION AND CURRENT SERVICE IN SENATE, HE IS ALSO "VOCAL EJECUTIVO" OF COMMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE BALSAS RIVER BASIN, A POST IN WHICH HE SUCCEEDED THE LATE EX-PRES. LAZARO CARDENAS. FIGUEROA TWO YEARS AGO WAS ACCUSED OF FINANCING A CRIMINAL NAMED MIGUEL CASTRO BUSTOS, WHOSE ACTIVITIES CONVULSED THE AUTONOMOUS NATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN MEXICO CITY FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. HE HAS LONG ASPIRED TO GOVERNORSHIP OF GUERRERO AND FINALLY GOT THE NOD THIS YEAR, ALTHOUGH HE HARDLY FITS IMAGE OF ECHEVERRIA ADMINISTRATION. HE IS DUE

TO BE NOMINATED BY STATE CONVENTION OF PRI ON JUNE 23. ELECTION IS SCHEDULED FOR DEC. 1 INAUGURATION FOR APRIL 1, 1975. (FIGUEROA WOULD ALSO APPEAR TO REPRESENT PRECISELY THE KIND OF OFFICIAL TO WHOSE ELIMINATION CABANAS AND OTHER GUERRILLAS ARE MOST COMMITTED).

8. COMMENT: ASSUMING FIGUEROA CASE REPRESENTS GENUINE POLITICAL ABDUCTION, IT WILL REPRESENT FIRST REAL TEST OF ECHEVERRIA ADMINISTRATION'S "NO DEAL" POLICY ESTABLISHED IN ARANGUREN/WILLIAMS CASES IN GUADALAJARA LAST FALL (SEE A-531 OF OCT. 19, 1973). SOME SUPPORT FOR SPECULATION THAT GENUINE ABDUCTION HAS OCCURRED LIES IN FACT THAT ONE OF CABANAS'S PRINCIPAL LIEUTENANTS, RODOLFO MOLINA MARTINEZ ALIAS ISIDRO CASTRO FUENTES AND JOSE LUIS ORBE, WAS RECENTLY ARRESTED BY GOM;

[REDACTED] (BOTH ALIASES APPEAR AMONG "SIGNERS" OF JUNE 2 COMMUNIQUE). NUMEROUS OTHER FOLLOWERS AND RELATIVES OF CABANAS ARE ALSO UNDER DETENTION. JOVA

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** [REDACTED]

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