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PAGE 01 GUATEM 07935 01 OF 02 212146Z  
ACTION ARA-16

INFO	OCT-00	COPY-01	ADS-00	AID-07	INR-10	SS-10	CIAE-00
	DODE-00	H-01	IO-15	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	SY-06
	HA-08	L-03	PM-09	PA-01	MCT-02	INRE-00	SAL-01
	RP-10	SYE-00	USIE-00	SP-02	SR-04	SPRS-01	/107 W

-----007447 212221Z /62

O 212102Z OCT 82  
 FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1560  
 INFO AMEMBASSY BELIZE  
 AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
 AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
 AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
 AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 RELEASE  
 EXCISE  
 DENY  
 DECLASSIFY  
 DECLASSIFY IN PART  
 EO Citations \_\_\_\_\_

FOIA Exemptions \_\_\_\_\_ TS authority to  
 PA Exemptions \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) CLASSIFY as ( ) S or ( ) C Sec.  
 ( ) DOWNGRADE TS to ( ) S or ( ) C

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 GUATEMALA 07935

E.O. 12356: DECL: 10/21/88  
 TAGS: PINS, PINR, SHUM, GT  
 SUBJECT: (C) EMBASSY ATTEMPT TO VERIFY ALLEGED  
 - MASSACRES IN HUEHUETENANGO

REFS: (A) GUATEMALA 7790  
 - (B) GUATEMALA 7741

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)
2. SUMMARY: THREE MISSION OFFICERS VISITED THE DEPARTMENT OF HUEHUETENANGO BY AIR ON OCTOBER 20 IN AN ATTEMPT TO CHECK THE VILLAGES OF FINCA SAN FRANCISCO AND PETANAC, SITES OF ALLEGED LARGE-SCALE MASSACRES PURPORTEDLY CARRIED OUT BY THE GUATEMALAN ARMY. BAD WEATHER

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PAGE 02 GUATEM 07935 01 OF 02 212146Z

FORCED US TO TURN BACK FROM THE HIGHEST ELEVATIONS OF NORTHERN HUEHUETENANGO; WE WERE UNABLE TO REACH EITHER VILLAGE. EMBOFF

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DID, HOWEVER, REACH THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ARMY IS COMPLETELY UP FRONT ABOUT ALLOWING US TO CHECK ALLEGED MASSACRE SITES AND TO SPEAK WITH WHOMEVER WE WISH. END SUMMARY.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THIS VISIT WAS TO CHECK FIRST-HAND TWO SITES OF ALLEGED GOG MASSACRES. REF B, PARA 14, OUTLINED THE BASIC FACTS OF BOTH CASES: PETANAC, WHERE THE ARMY IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE KILLED 89 PEOPLE ON JULY 14; AND FINCA SAN FRANCISCO (ACTUALLY A SMALL VILLAGE), WHERE THE ARMY ALLEGEDLY SLAUGHTERED SOME 300 PEOPLE ON JULY 18. BOTH VILLAGES ARE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN MATEO IXTATAN. THE ARMY HAS DENIED THAT EITHER INCIDENT TOOK PLACE.

4. WE FLEW TO THE ARMY BASE AT HUEHUETENANGO PROPER ON OCTOBER 20. REF A REPORTED THE BASIC MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND REFUGEE SITUATION IN HUEHUETENANGO. WE WERE AGAIN INFORMED THAT THE MILITARY SITUATION IN HUEHUETENANGO IS FAIRLY WELL IN HAND. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE AREAS THAT THE GOG DOES NOT CONTROL, MOSTLY THE PRINGE AREAS OF THE DEPARTMENT THAT BORDER MEXICO. GUERRILLAS APPARENTLY CROSS THE BORDER WITH SOME FREQUENCY, SPREADING MAYHEM, PROPAGANDA AND TERROR. SAN FRANCISCO AND PETANAC ARE IN SUCH AN AREA, FAR NORTH CENTRAL HUEHUETENANGO. WE WERE TOLD THAT SAN FRANCISCO AND NEIGHBORING

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PAGE 03 GUATEM 07935 01 OF 02 212146Z

YALAMBOJOCH HAD BEEN ABANDONED BECAUSE OF GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN THE AREA. PETANAC WAS SAID TO HAVE A FEW PEOPLE STILL LIVING THERE, BUT NO CIVIL DEFENSE PATROL. WE WERE INVITED BY THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN HUEHUETENANGO TO TRAVEL WHEREVER WE MIGHT WISH, WITH THE CAVEAT THAT WE WERE ON OUR OWN IF WE TOUCHED DOWN OUTSIDE OF THE AREA SECURED BY THE ARMY. SUITABLY ADVISED, WE LEFT FOR SAN FRANCISCO. THE WEATHER WAS BAD WHEN WE LEFT AND WORSE WHEN WE ATTEMPTED TO RISE YET HIGHER IN NORTHERN HUEHUETENANGO. THE PILOT ADVISED US HE COULD NOT REACH THE

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AREA IN SUCH WEATHER; WE RETURNED TO THE ARMY  
BASE IN HUEHUETENANGO PROPER.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE WERE UNABLE TO REACH  
SAN FRANCISCO AND PETANAC, THERE ARE SEVERAL  
POINTS WORTH NOTING ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF  
THE ARMY. EMBOFF KNOWS THAT THE RANKING  
OFFICERS AT THE HUEHUETENANGO BASE WERE  
PERFECTLY AWARE OF THE PURPOSE OF OUR VISIT.  
YET, THE COMMANDING, CIVIC ACTION, OPERATIONS  
AND INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS ALL OFFERED US THE  
RUN OF THE DEPARTMENT, AND THIS WITHOUT  
AN ARMY ESCORT. IF THESE OFFICERS HAVE SOMETHING  
TO HIDE, THEY DO NOT SEEM OVERLY CONCERNED  
ABOUT US FINDING IT. THEN AGAIN, IF SAN  
FRANCISCO IS NOW ABANDONED -- AND EMBOFF  
BELIEVES THAT IT IS -- WE WOULD HAVE FOUND NOTHING  
TO CONFIRM OR DENY THE MASSACRE REPORTS.  
PETANAC, HOWEVER, IS APPARENTLY STILL INHABITED.  
IF THE WEATHER WAS CLEAR, WE COULD HAVE EASILY

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PAGE 01 . . . GUATEM 07935 02 OF 02 212147Z  
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Date Printed: 12/11/1997 DOC\_NUMBER: 6201100007005

CHANNEL: n/a

63

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1561  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELIZE  
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
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AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
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USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 GUATEMALA 07935

REACHED EITHER VILLAGE. IN SUM, WE CANNOT  
AT THIS TIME CONFIRM OR DENY THE REPORTS OF  
MASSACRES IN THIS AREA; WE CAN, HOWEVER,  
AFFIRM THAT THE ARMY HAS NO OBJECTION  
TO OUR CRISSCROSSING THEIR COMBAT ZONES IN  
SEARCH OF INFORMATION WE DEEM NECESSARY TO  
POSSESS.

6. THIS TRIP, AT A COST OF APPROXIMATELY \$1,600,  
HAS EXHAUSTED EMBASSY TRAVEL MONEY. WE SHOULD LIKE  
TO ATTEMPT TO CHECK THESE SITES AGAIN IN BETTER  
WEATHER. WE WILL NEED, HOWEVER, ADDITIONAL  
FUNDING FROM ARA. END COMMENT. CHAPIN

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a  
\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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