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UNCLASSIFIED GUATEMALA 013821/01  
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ORIGIN AMB INFO DCM/2

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OO RUEHC  
DE RUEHGT #3821/01 355 \*\*  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O 212158Z DEC 93  
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE #831  
BT  
SECRET SECTION 01 OF 02 GUATEMALA 13821

CLASS: SECRET  
CHRG: PROG 12/21/93  
APPR: AMBASSADOR  
DRFTD: POL:LKUSHITZ  
CLEAR: ADCM:GAC/POL:DK/LF  
ATT:AC  
DISTR: XDIS  
ORIGIN: WHG ID: 01354 LB

FROM THE AMBASSADOR FOR ARA A/S WATSON,  
DAS SKOL AND DAS PATTERSON

EXDIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: MARR, MASS, PREL, PHUM, PGOV, GT  
SUBJECT: CONCERNS OVER THE MILITARY

REF: GUAT 13800

1. SECRET -- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: I AM CONCERNED OVER THE POTENTIAL DECLINE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MILITARY. IF THIS WERE TO OCCUR, IT COULD UNDERMINE BOTH PRESIDENT DE LEON AND HIS FORWARD-LEANING MOD. THE BOTTOM LINE IS WE MUST CAREFULLY CONSIDER EACH OF OUR ACTIONS TOWARD THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY, NOT ONLY FOR HOW IT PLAYS IN WASHINGTON, BUT FOR HOW IT IMPACTS HERE, AND AVOID WORKING AT CROSS-PURPOSES TO OUR LARGER GOALS. END SUMMARY.

3. AS REFLECTED IN REF, I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE DIRECTION OF OUR MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH GUATEMALA AND THE POSSIBILITY WE MAY LOSE INFLUENCE WITH THE INSTITUTION. ALWAYS SENSITIVE TO PERCEIVED AND ACTUAL SLIGHTS, THE ARMY IS NOW SENDING US SIGNALS OF THEIR DISPLEASURE OVER PERCEIVED SLIGHTS ON THE E-IMET FT. BENNING COURSES AND THE UH-1 HELICOPTERS. THEY ALSO ARE OBVIOUSLY UNCOMFORTABLE (AND UNHAPPY) WITH THE PRESSURE I AM PUTTING ON THEM TO FIND CONTRERAS.

4. WHILE, TO US, ALL THESE DECISIONS/ACTIONS ARE EXPLAINABLE AND JUSTIFIABLE, THE ARMY SEES THEM AS A COORDINATED "SIGN" THAT ITS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ARE UNAPPRECIATED, THE GOAL POSTS CONSTANTLY MOVING. I AM NOT ONE TO SHY AWAY FROM A FIGHT AND HAVE NO INTENTION OF BACKING DOWN ON PRESSURING THE ARMY TO LOCATE AND ARREST CONTRERAS. THAT SAID, I BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO FIND WAYS TO SHOW WE RECOGNIZE THE ARMY HAS MADE POSITIVE STRIDES. TRUE, IT HAS A LONG WAY TO GO, BUT IT IS ALSO LIGHT YEARS AHEAD OF WHERE IT WAS ONLY A SHORT TIME AGO.

GUATEMALA  
AM EMBASSY  
# 327223  
Captioned Telegrams

United States Department of State  
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review  
Review Authority: OLSON, OSCAR  
Date: 06/25/98  
Case ID: 96122292

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5. MY GREAT FEAR IS THAT WE WILL UNDERCUT DEFENSE MINISTER ENRIQUEZ AND, BY EXTENSION, PRESIDENT DE LEON. THE LESS APPRECIATIVE OF CHANGE WE APPEAR TO BE (IN THE EYES OF THE OFFICER CORPS), THE MORE ENRIQUEZ IS UNDERMINED. THIS IS TROUBLESOME SINCE, FRANKLY, THERE IS NO ONE IN THE OFFICER CORPS WITH HIS ABILITY TO PUSH THE ARMY IN A PRO-DEMOCRATIC, PRO-PEACE AND PRO-HUMAN RIGHTS DIRECTION. IF OUR PERCEIVED BEHAVIOR IS USED AGAINST HIM, AS WE BELIEVE QUILLO AND OTHER HARDLINERS MAY BE DOING, HIS POSITION COULD BE UNDERMINED.

6. POSITIVE PROGRESS BY THE ARMY, AS YOU ARE WELL AWARE, IS KEY TO DISTANCING THIS COUNTRY FROM ITS TRAGIC PAST. IN BOTH DE LEON AND ENRIQUEZ, WE HAVE A COMMITTED AND FORWARD LOOKING TEAM WILLING TO WORK WITH US TO MEET THE GOALS WE ALL SHARE. IT WOULD BE A PYRRHIC VICTORY IF WE WERE TO "PUNISH" GUATEMALA FOR ITS INADEQUACIES AT THE COST OF ENRIQUEZ' JOB OR INFLUENCE, UNDERMINING DE LEON AT THE SAME TIME.

7. AS IMPLIED ABOVE, I AM WARY THAT PROBLEMS WITH THE MILITARY COULD SPILL OVER INTO OTHER AREAS. CERTAINLY, I BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER THE POSSIBILITIES FOR A NEGOTIATED PEACE ACCORD, THEY ARE BETTER WITH ENRIQUEZ AS MOD. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT DIFFICULTIES WITH THE ARMY AND PERCEPTIONS OF INORDINATE U.S. PRESSURE COULD AFFECT DE LEON'S ABILITY TO BE FORWARD-LEANING ON THE PAC'S AND THE PEACE PROCESS IN GENERAL.

8. THE BOTTOM LINE, I BELIEVE, IS WE MUST CAREFULLY CONSIDER EACH OF OUR ACTIONS TOWARD THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY, NOT ONLY FOR HOW IT PLAYS IN WASHINGTON, BUT FOR HOW IT IMPACTS HERE. WE MUST NOT/NOT WORK AT CROSS-PURPOSES TO OUR LARGER GOALS. AS NOTED REF, I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY OUR ENGAGING THE MILITARY (AFTER A YEAR SPENT IN WASHINGTON WAITING TO COME HERE, NOTHING COULD BE CLEARER TO ME). I ALSO INTEND TO CONTINUE DOING WHAT IS RIGHT, EVEN IF IT RUBS THE ARMY THE WRONG WAY (E.G., THE DEVINE/CONTRERAS CASE). AT THE SAME TIME, THOUGH, WE MUST TRY TO CALIBRATE OUR ACTIONS TO BUILD AND RETAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE ARMY.

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