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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

ACTION COPY

SECRET

Action

FROM: GUATEMALA

Info

ACTION: SECSTATE IMMEDIATE

SECRET GUATEMALA 2827

1966 DEC 3 PM 9:04

EXDIS

FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROBERT SAYRE ARA FROM VAKY

1. I AM REPEATING BELOW "EYES ONLY" MESSAGE RECEIVED TODAY FROM GENERAL PORTER SINCE IT NOT INDICATED IT REPEATED STATE AND SINCE I THINK YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF IT:

"SECRET SC6091A

EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR MEIN AND COLONEL WEBBER, COMUSMILGP
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR SPECIAL TRAINING

1. HAVING RETURNED FROM WASHINGTON THIS MORNING (3 DECEMBER), I WISH TO INFORM YOU OF THE FOLLOWING UNUSUAL DEVELOPMENT: JUST BEFORE MY RECENT DEPARTURE FOR U.S., COLONEL SOSA, GAF INTELLIGENCE CHIEF, SOUGHT INTERVIEW WITH MINISTER CORRIGAN AND PRESENTED IN ARRIAGA'S NAME A VERBAL REQUEST FOR USSOUTHCOM ASSISTANCE IN COVERT TRAINING SPECIAL SQUADS TO KIDNAP CERTAIN SELECTED INDIVIDUALS IN CAPITAL WHOM MOD. CONSIDERS KEY MEN IN COMMUNIST-INSPIRED INSURGENCY AND TERRORIST EFFORT. IT WAS INDICATED TARGET PEOPLE WOULD BE EXILED.
2. WASHINGTON AGENCIES POSITIVELY RECOMMEND AGAINST ANY SUCH TRAINING SUPPORT BY MY COMMAND AND STATE THEY ALSO WOULD NOT SUPPORT SUCH AN ACTIVITY THROUGH OTHER INSTRUMENTALITIES. THEY DO STRONGLY RECOMMEND, HOWEVER, THAT WE FULLY SUPPORT CURRENT POLICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS AND INITIATE MILITARY PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE TRAINING AND ADDITIONAL COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS TRAINING.
3. SINCE MOD ARRIAGA SCHEDULED BE HERE AS GUEST MY COMMAND MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER, I INTEND INFORM HIM USSOUTHCOM UNABLE SUPPORT REQUEST TRANSMITTED THROUGH SOSA BUT THAT WE STAND READY ASSIST IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE IN TRAINING GUATEMALAN ARMED FORCES IN FIELDS MILITARY PSYOPS AND CI OPERATIONS.
4. PERTINENT CORRIGAN MEMO TO ME FOLLOWS IN "EYES ONLY" MESSAGE FOR YOUR INFORMATION.
GP-1"

2. I UNDERSTAND CORRIGAN DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH YOU AND I ASSUME YOU AWARE OF CONTENTS HIS MEMO REFERRED TO IN LAST PARA PORTER'S MESSAGE. I HAVE THAT MEMO AND CAN CABLE TEXT YOU DO NOT HAVE IT SINCE CONTENTS IMPORTANT TO FLAVOR WHOLE MATTER.

SECRET

Def 9-5 GUAT
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Guatemala 2827
HR POL 23 GUAT

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-2-GUATEMALA 2827, DECEMBER 4, 1966

3. PRESENTATION BY COL SOSA 'CURIOUS ONE, REVEALS DEGREE OF "WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS" THAT CHARACTERIZES PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION, AND SUGGESTS CARE BE TAKEN IN INTERPRETING IT. CHANNEL OF REQUEST SEEMS 'CURIOUS ONE IN FIRST PLACE IF ARRIAGA HIMSELF REALLY BEHIND IT, AND WE WONDER HOW MUCH SOSA REALLY REFLECTED ARRIAGA'S VIEWS. WE WILL BE INTERESTED IN WHAT ARRIAGA REVEALS ABOUT HIS VIEWS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH PORTER. ALSO NOT RPT NOT CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT EITHER KNOWS OR APPROVES. CREATION OF SPECIAL COVERT ACTION UNIT WITHIN OFFICIAL ORGANIZATION CAN OBVIOUSLY BE POLITICAL DYNAMITE SINCE IT CREATES POWERFUL FORCE OF COERCION AND SINCE IT IS UNCLEAR WHO WOULD REALLY CONTROL IT OR HOW IT WOULD ULTIMATELY REALLY BE USED.

4. I CERTAINLY CONCUR IN CONCLUSION WE CANNOT PROVIDE TRAINING REQUESTED. I SUGGEST ALSO, HOWEVER, THAT IN CIRCUMSTANCES WE SHOULD CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZE EVEN CONVENTIONAL CI ASSISTANCE TO BE SURE WE KNOW AS WELL AS WE CAN WHAT POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS LIKELY TO BE DOMESTICALLY. IN PRESENT COMPLICATED SITUATION WE MIGHT UNWITTINGLY CONTRIBUTE TO INSTABILITY RATHER THAN HELP WHEN WE EXTEND AID.

5. I AGREE WITH GENERAL PORTER'S PROPOSED ACTION IN TALKS WITH ARRIAGA PER PARA 3 HIS MESSAGE. NEEDLESS TO SAY, HOWEVER, SPECIFIC FORMS AND TYPES OF ANY ADDITIONAL AID WHICH MIGHT BE EXTENDED SHOULD BE CAREFULLY REVIEWED BY EMBASSY AND STATE FROM POLITICAL VIEWPOINT BEFORE COMMITMENTS MADE.

6. I PROPOSE SEND BRIEF MESSAGE TO GENERAL PORTER ON AFTER-NOON DEC 4 IN SENSE PARAS 3 TO 5 ABOVE SO THAT HE MAY HAVE BENEFIT OUR COMMENTS PRIOR HIS MEETING WITH ARRIAGA MORNING DEC 5.

GP-1
BT

NOTE: ADVANCED DELIVERY TO S/S-O AT 10:10 PM
PASSED: WHITE HOUSE AT 10:10 PM

SECRET