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Department of State **TELEGRAM**

~~SECRET~~ 9296

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 8866
INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
USMISSION UNUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE

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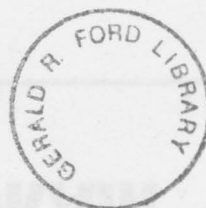
EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PFOR, GT, BH, UK, USUN
SUBJ: BELIZE CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT LAUGERUD

1. AT PRESIDENT LAUGERUD'S REQUEST I MET WITH HIM AT 10 AM NOV 6 FOR A CONVERSATION WHICH LASTED ONE HOUR. WITH THE GREATEST EARNESTNESS AND FRANKNESS, THE PRESIDENT PINPOINTED FOR ME IN GREAT DETAIL THE EXACT LOCATION OF ALL ARMS AND TROOPS IN GUATEMALA. HE ASSURED ME THAT THE ONLY REINFORCEMENTS HE HAS SENT TO THE PETEN WERE NINE ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS AND ONE COMPANY OF TROOPS FROM THE GUARDIA DE HONOR BRIGADE. NO ARTILLERY OR MORTARS WERE INCLUDED. THIS REINFORCEMENT WAS SENT TO POPTUN ON OCT 31 AND IS TO REMAIN THERE. THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT THAT THIS MOVEMENT OF APC'S AND INFANTRY WAS THE REINFORCEMENT WHICH HE HAD TOLD ME IN OUR CONVERSATION OF OCT 14 HE FELT OBLIGED TO MAKE IN THE PETEN FOLLOWING THE INITIAL BRITISH REINFORCEMENT IN BELIZE. HE HAD DELIBERATELY WAITED TWO WEEKS SO AS NOT TO APPEAR TO BE REACTING HASTILY OR IMPETUOUSLY.

2. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE HAD PROMISED ME THE TROOPS WOULD NOT BE SENT TO THE FRONTIER AND THAT HE HAD IN FACT DRAWN ELEMENTS OF TROOPS REGULARLY STATIONED IN THE PETEN AWAY FROM THE BORDER TO LESSEN THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INCIDENT. HE WAS MAINTAINING HIS WORD TO ME.

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3. PRESIDENT LAUGERUD SAID HE WANTED TO ASSURE ME SOLEMNLY AND THROUGH ME MY GOVERNMENT THAT HE WILL NOT ORDER AN ATTACK OR ANY OTHER MILITARY ACTION AGAINST BELIZE AS LONG AS THERE REMAINS THE SLIGHTEST POSSIBILITY OF A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

4. WHEN I INFORMED THE PRESIDENT OF THE SUGGESTIONS THE US IS MAKING TO THE UK OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS THE BRITISH MIGHT CONSIDER TAKING TO EASE THE SITUATION (STATE 261984 AND STATE 262111), LAUGERUD EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION. HE ACCEPTED AS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION THAT THE UK RES ON BELIZE WILL BE ADOPTED BY THE UN. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE RESTRICTIONS WHICH THE RESOLUTION PLACES ON FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS LEAVE GUATEMALA WITH THE FEELING OF BEING "CORNERED." THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT IF THE UK COULD SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO MAKING AN ANNOUNCEMENT SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE PASSAGE OF ITS RESOLUTION THAT IT WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS WITH GUATEMALA IN WHICH ANY SORT OF PROPOSALS COULD BE DISCUSSED, IT WOULD GREATLY EASE HIS PROBLEM OF RESTRAINING PUBLIC OPINION AND THE HOTHEADS IN THE GUATEMALAN ARMED FORCES.

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