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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
JCS MESSAGE CENTER

PRIORITY
P 301320Z JUN 83

ZYUW RUEBJF13216 1811855

TO ATG 8733 ZEN/DCDRINSCOM FT MEADE MD
INFO HOMESTEAD RO USAAG INSCOM HOMESTEAD AFB FL
CIA WASHDC //DCD/ECC/CC/CRES/RS6//
ZEN/CORUSADPSGP FT MEADE MD //JAGPC-OR//
COMUSFORCARIB KEY WEST FL

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SECTION DL OF 03

SERIAL: (U) IR

PASS: (U) DIA FOR DC-4A/DS4-B/JSI-4B/08-3E FOR INFO;
FBI FOR INTD, C-1, C-UNIT FOR INFO

COUNTRY: (U) GUATEMALA (GT)

SUBJ: IIR POSSIBLE COUP IN GUATEMALA/1U

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTEL

DOI: (U) 430616

REQS: (U)

SOURCE: ~~(S//NOFORN)~~

SUMMARY: ~~(S//NOFORN)~~ THIS REPORT PROVIDES INFORMATION ON A POSSIBLE COUP AGAINST GENERAL ((RIOS))-MONTT, PRESIDENT OF GUATEMALA, TO INCLUDE POSSIBLE DATES FOR THE COUP ATTEMPT, INTENTIONS OF PLOTTERS IF THE COUP IS SUCCESSFUL, THEIR RATIONALE FOR LAUNCHING A COUP ATTEMPT, AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARDS A COUP.

TEXT: 1. ~~(S)~~ A COUP IN GUATEMALA IS TO OCCUR WITHIN THE NEXT FORTY-FIVE DAYS, PROBABLY ON A NATIONAL HOLIDAY. IT COULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS 30 JUNE 1983, GUATEMALAN ARMED FORCES DAY OR 25(?) JULY 1983, GUATEMALAN CONSTITUTION DAY, BUT NO LATER THAN 2 AUGUST 1983, THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY CADETS ATTACK ON THE ARMY OF LIBERATION. PRIOR TO THE COUP, GENERAL ((MEJIA)), GUATEMALAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE, WILL BE REPLACED BY A COUP PLOTTER, WHO IDEALLY WILL BE A GUATEMALAN ARMY OFFICER WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN PROMOTED TO GENERAL IN ORDER TO SHOW THAT HE HAS NO CONNECTIONS WITH PREVIOUS MILITARY ADMINISTRATIONS.

2. ~~(S)~~ AS SOON AS GENERAL ((RIOS))-MONTT IS OVERTHROWN, THE NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE WILL CALL FOR ELECTIONS WITHIN SIXTY DAYS OF A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO MAKE NEEDED REFORMS TO THE CONSTITUTION

UNDER THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION, A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS THE ONLY BODY WITH THE AUTHORITY TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION. THE CONSTITUTION ASSEMBLY WILL ALSO SIT AS THE INTERIM LEGISLATURE UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION IS REFORMED AND FREE ELECTIONS ARE HELD IN ABOUT THREE YEARS. THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE WILL CALL ON ALL FIVE FORMER PRESIDENTS (THREE MILITARY AND TWO CIVILIANS AND THE FIVE CIVILIAN SECRETARIES GENERAL OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES TO FORM A COUNCIL OF STATE (CONSEJO DEL ESTADO) TO SERVE AS THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE BODY OF THE COUNTRY UNTIL FREE ELECTIONS ARE HELD. THE ARMY WILL BE ORDERED INTO BARRACKS TO REMAIN IN THE BACKGROUND TO CREATE, ALONG WITH THE DECIDEDLY CIVILIAN MAKE-UP OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE IMAGE THAT THIS IS NOT "ANOTHER MILITARY GOVERNMENT". HOWEVER, THE ARMY WILL DIRECT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE UNTIL NORMALCY IS RESTORED.

ACTION DIA(*) (A,B)
INFO JIC(*) MIDS(*) J3:WCC(*) J5(*) USCINCENTRO(*)
SECDEF:(*) SECDEF(*) USDP(*) ASD-PAGE(*) NMIC(*)
RTS-2B(1) SMS(*) DC-4(*) AT-R(*) ABE(*) DIO(*) DE(*)
08-30(*) DS-3E(*) DB-3E(*) DT-5(*)
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SECTION 02 OF 03

AND 60 YEAR OLD SISTER WERE BEING HELD HOSTAGE IN THE TUNNEL THAT CONNECTS THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE. LUCAS WAS TAKEN TO THE TUNNEL WHERE HE SAW HIS SISTER CRAWLING HIS MOTHER'S HEAD IN HER LAP WHILE A SOLDIER HELD A RIFLE TO THEIR HEADS. ONLY THEN DID LUCAS DECIDE TO RESIGN. HE CONTACTED SENIOR ARMY COMMANDERS, TO INCLUDE HIS BROTHER GEN BENEDICTO ((LUCAS)) GARCIA, WHO WAS SENDING TROOPS TO GUATEMALA CITY TO HIS SUPPORT, AND TOLD THEM HE WAS RESIGNING AND THAT NO RESISTANCE WAS TO BE MADE.

4. ((6))—ALTHOUGH GEN RIOS-MONTT WAS A POPULAR PUBLIC FIGURE AND FAYORED IN THE GUATEMALAN MEDIA, THE PEOPLE HAVE BECOME DISILLUSIONED WITH HIM. THERE IS MORE CORRUPTION NOW THAN AT ANY TIME BEFORE, AND THIS WILL BE MADE PUBLIC. AS AN EXAMPLE OF CORRUPTION, [REDACTED] ALLEGED THAT TWENTY PERCENT KICKBACKS ON IMPORTS WERE DEMANDED OF HIM BY MEMBERS OF THE RIOS-MONTT ADMINISTRATION AND THAT HE HAS SEEN ON GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT PURCHASE REQUESTS THE WORDS "LA REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA" SCRATCHED OUT AND REPLACED BY "LA NUEVA GUATEMALA", WHICH REPRESENTS THE NEW "BORN-AGAIN CHRISTIAN" GUATEMALA WHICH FLIES IN THE FACE OF THE COUNTRY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC HERITAGE. IT WAS ALSO ALLEGED THAT, WHEN GEN RJELL ((LAGERAB)) WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT IN ADMITTEDLY FRAUDULENT ELECTIONS, THE ACTUAL WINNER GEN ((RIOS))-MONTT ACCEPTED AN ARRANGEMENT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY AS GUATEMALA'S DEFENSE ATTACHE TO SPAIN AND SECRETLY RECEIVED 8,000 U.S. DOLLARS PER MONTH WHILE IN SPAIN. IT IS ALLEGED THAT RIOS-MONTT SUBVERTED FUNDS FROM THE NATIONAL TREASURY TO SUPPORT HIS EVANGELICAL CHURCH. ANOTHER CAUSE FOR AN EXPECTED COUP IS THE BREAKDOWN OF GOOD ORDER AND DISCIPLINE IN THE GUATEMALAN ARMY; FOR EXAMPLE, FIELD GRADE OFFICERS ARE TAKING ORDERS FROM COMPANY GRADE OFFICERS. ALSO, RIOS IS NOT SINCERE IN HIS CALL FOR FREE ELECTIONS. REPORTEDLY HIS WIFE AND TWENTY-TWO JUNIOR OFFICERS WHO INSTIGATED THE COUP, ARE THE ONLY "GROUP" SUSTAINING THE PRESENT REGIME, AND ARE ALL RELATED TO RIOS-MONTT. RIOS WILL CONTINUE DELAYING ELECTIONS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN HIS RULE BY EDICT, NOT BY LAW, AND THAT RIOS-MONTT IS ARMING GUATEMALAN INDIANS BECAUSE IT IS HIS INTENTION TO USE THEM AGAINST THE GUATEMALAN ARMY. [REDACTED]

5. ((4))—A RISING LEADER IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE GEN BENEDICTO ((LUCAS)) GARCIA WHO IS POPULAR WITH SOLDIERS AND JUNIOR OFFICERS AND RESPECTED BY SENIOR OFFICERS. BENEDICTO LUCAS IS THE BROTHER OF FORMER PRESIDENT ROMEO ((LUCAS)) [REDACTED]

ANOTHER IMPORTANT BEHIND-THE-SCENES PERSONALITY IS GEN ((GUEVARA)) WHO IS CONNECTED TO THE RIGHT-WING PARTY OF ((SANDOVAL)) ALECRON.

6. ((6)) [REDACTED]

ACTION DIA(*) (I,N)
INFO J1(*) WDS(*) J3:NMCC(*) J5(*) USCINCCENTLO(*)
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FINAL SECTION OF O3

[REDACTED]

PRCL: (U) 2026 00
COLL: (U) NONE
INSTR: (U) DIRC: US
PREP: (U) [REDACTED]
APPR: (U) [REDACTED]
EVAL: (U) YES;
REL TO: (U) NONE
ENCL: (U) NONE
DISSEM: (U) N/A
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