

TELEGRAM

APR 15 23 01 '83

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FROM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA		CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED	R
E.O. XXXXX	12356: DECL: OADR	CN: 3677	
TAGS:	PREL, XK, HO	<i>Int'l</i>	
SUBJECT:	CONTADORA INITIATIVE		
ACTION:	SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE		
INFO:	AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY KINGSTON IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO IMMEDIATE USINTEREST HAVANA IMMEDIATE USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE		
	TEGUCIGALPA TEGUCIGALPA 3677		
	EXDIS	DECAPTIONED	
REF:	(A) STATE 100703; (B) CARACAS 3192; (C) BOGOTA 4054; XXX		
AMB	(D) TEGUCIGALPA 3636; (E) SAN SALVADOR 3186; (F) GUATEMALA 2890		
DCM	1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT		
POL	2. <u>SUMMARY:</u> Something is amiss in Contadora Four proceedings. Venezuelans and Colombians are reporting that a Five-plus-Four meeting within the next week as a virtual certainty whereas Hondurans and Guatemalans, at xxxxx least,		

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CLEARANCES:			

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(Formerly FS-413)
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are saying that no immediate concrete next steps are yet known. We ~~fail~~ foresee potential isolation of Honduras and U.S. with Contadora Four and others wittingly or unwittingly tilting towards Nicaragua's bilateral approach. Embassy believes additional high level demarches by USG along lines of reftel (A) may be warranted. END SUMMARY.

3. From separate conversations with President Suazo, Foreign Minister Paz Barnica, Presidency Minister Carlos Flores and Foreign Office Advisor Hernandez, it is clear that Hondurans are not ~~aware~~ aware of any concrete next steps in Contadora initiative. Paz Barnica told us there was some corridor talk while the four Foreign Ministers were here about a possible meeting in Panama next week but the discussion was vague and completely inconclusive. Our reading of reports we have from Bogota, Caracas and San ~~Salvador~~ Salvador lead us to conclude that others are operating on assumptions that concrete preparations for possible Foreign Ministers meeting next week may in fact be much farther along. We also note recurrent theme of regional meeting in ~~form~~ ^{form} but which would in fact serve as a cover for bilaterals along lines preferred by Nicaraguans.

4. There is growing sense of isolation on part of GOH in this entire process. They see Costa Ricans going the bilateral route. They cannot understand why Salvadorans are less vocal than they about Nicaraguan regional threat;

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and Guatemalan position is completely unclear to them. They take umbrage at occasional Guatemalan references to playing a mediator role between Honduras and Nicaragua, which position to GOH suggests less than complete certainty on part of Guatemalans as to who is right and who is wrong in this situation. Our Political Counselor just had a most disheartening conversation with Foreign Office Advisor ~~Hernandez~~ ^{Hernandez} who threw up his arms and said, "Let's be frank, the U.S. and Honduras are the only true advocates of a comprehensive and regional approach. We are isolated." Hernandez also complained about what he considered to be ineffectiveness of the three other most interested Central American Foreign Ministers. He characterized Chavez Mena as essentially pursuing his ^{own} ~~own~~ agenda. He assumed Volio was on his way out; and he mentioned rumors to effect that Castillo's position is similarly insecure. Only action at the Central American Head of State level would, in his ^{judgment} ~~judgment~~, have any chance of success.

5. We are reluctant to recommend courses of action from this ~~vantage~~ vantage point because the facts would appear to be in doubt. We first need to know whether indeed plans are proceeding apace for a Foreign Ministers meeting in Panama. If so, it would appear that such plans are being made ~~unbeknownst~~ unbeknownst to the GOH, which would appear to

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be a violation of the spirit in which the Contadora Group is carrying out its mandate. Could it be that Honduras is being bamboozled? Is this an elegant charade designed to backslide into an endorsement of the bilateral approach? We fear that it could be and are inclined to share Foreign Minister Zambrano's pessimistic assessment. Under circumstances, we do not understand why Zambrano seems prepared to go forward with participation in a Five-plus-Four meeting in Panama next week. We agree with Ambassador Landau that delay is probably the best solution. The time gained must be used to persuade Venezuelans and others to blow the whistle on bilateral implications of the course upon which the Contadora Four now appear to be embarked. In addition to Venezuela, it would seem to us that at least El Salvador, if not also Colombia and Guatemala, could be persuaded of the dangerous course upon which the Contadora initiative now appears to be embarked.


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