

OPS

GRS 250

S E C R E T

SECRET

FM FCO 051230Z MAY 82

TO PRIORITY BELMOPAN

TELEGRAM NUMBER 109 OF 5 MAY
INFO WASHINGTON

BELIZE: BRITISH GARRISON

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T99/82

1. MIPT. THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO MR PRICE.
2. BEGINS

*Subjecta
Belize -
Guatemala Dispute
fcz*

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I HAVE NOT REPLIED BEFORE TO YOUR LETTER OF 9 FEBRUARY IN WHICH YOU ASKED US TO REVIEW THE TIME-TABLE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH GARRISON FROM BELIZE BECAUSE WE WERE WAITING TO SEE WHETHER PROGRESS COULD BE MADE TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT WITH GUATEMALA IN THE PERIOD FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS THERE. IN FACT THE SITUATION HAS BECOME EVEN MORE UNCERTAIN. WE HAVE NOW DECIDED THAT WE SHOULD NOT PROCEED WITH PLANS TO WITHDRAW THE GARRISON BY THE AGREED DATE OF 21 JUNE. AT THIS STAGE WE ARE PREPARED TO EXTEND IT BY A PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS BEYOND THAT DATE. NO ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE ABOUT THIS BUT WE WILL MAKE CLEAR IF ASKED THAT THE GARRISON WILL BE STAYING FOR THE TIME BEING.

WE FULLY UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN AND IT IS OUR INTENTION TO WATCH DEVELOPMENTS WITH GUATEMALA CLOSELY, TO REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH THE US GOVERNMENT AND TO CONSULT YOU AS THE SITUATION AND OUR IDEAS DEVELOP.

EVERY GOOD WISH,

YOURS SINCERELY

MARGARET THATCHER

THE HONOURABLE GEORGE PRICE.

ENDS

PYM

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