

Belize

Prime Minister

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DESKBY 121500Z
SIC TEL NO 258 11 Aug 80
TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 121500Z GUATEMALA CITY
INFO PRIORITY MEXICO CITY, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK

ANGLO/Guatemalan DISPUTE

- 1. MR RIDLEYS MEETING WITH PRICE, AT WHICH COURTENAY WAS PRESENT LASTED TWO AND A HALF HOURS AND ENDED WITHOUT AGREEMENT ON PRICES PART TO ANY CONCESSION OF SUBSTANCE TO THE GUATEMALANS
- 2. PRICE STUCK OB DURATELY TO HIS REFUSAL, ALREADY CEPORTED, TO COUNTENANCE ANY ARRANGEMENT INVOLVING SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CAYES OR FOR A PLEBISCITE ON THE FUTURE OF THE TOLEDO DISTRICT. IN THIS HE WAS SUPPORTED BY COURTENAY WHO SEEMED TO BE MAKING AMENDS FOR HIS ACCOMMODATING REACTION TO THE GUATEMALANS PROPOSALS IN NEW YORK
- 3. THE MOST MR RIDLEY WAS ABLE TO WIN FROM PRICE WAS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT SOME KIND OF JOINT ARRANGEMENT IN RESPECT OF THE SEAWARD APPROACHES IN THE BAY OF AMATIQUE MIGHT BE NEGOTIABLE (BY IMPLICATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE) WITH VUATEMALA AND HONDURAS. PRICE ALSO REFRAINED FROM RULING OUT ALTOGETHER A BELIZE-WIDE REFERENDUM, BUT WOULD NOT COUNTENANCE A POST-INDEPENDENCE PLEBISCITE, AS PROPOSED BY THE GUATEMALANS, TO DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF THE TOLEDO DISTRICT. OTHER POINTS STRESSED BY PRICE IN DISCUSSION WERE:
 - A A STRONG UN RESOLUTION EMBODYING A DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE, A REFERENCE TO A UN SECURITY GUARANTEE AND PERHAPS ALSO A PEACE-KEEPING FORCE
 - B HE HAD BEEN ASSURED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE THAT MR RIDLEYS VISIT TO GUATEMALA WAS OF A PURELY SOCIAL NATURE AND WOULD NOT BE USED TO PURSUE THE NEGOTIATIONS
 - C HE WOULD FAVOUR ONE MORE MINISTERIAL MEETING WITH GUATEMALA BEFORE THE UNGA, IF ONLY TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC BLAME FOR THE INEVITABLE BREAKDOWN LAY WITH GUATEMALA
 - D HE WOULD BE WILLING TO ATTEND SUCH A MEETING IN PERSON
 - E HE RE-EMPHASISED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE READY TO ENTER INTO A NON-AGGRESSION TREATY DESIGNED TO ALLAY GUATEMALAN FEARS OF SUBVERSION FROM BELIZE

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HE ALSO UNDERLINED THE CONCESSIONS WHICH THE BELIZE GOVERNMENT HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO MAKE IN ORDER TO SECURE AN AGREEMENT, INCLUDING FREE PORT FACILITIES, A ROAD, AND GUARANTEED MARITIME ACCESS EXTENDING TO THE SEABED

4 AS A RESULT OF THE IMPASSE REACHED AT THIS MEETING, MR RIDLEY NOW FEELS THAT THE MOST HE CAN SAY TO THE GUATEMALAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRESIDENT LUCAS IS THAT HE HAS ENCOUNTERED IN BELIZE IMPLACABLE OPPOSITION TO TERRITOREAL CESSION OF ANY KIND INCLUDING TERRITORIAL WATERS. HE WILL, HOWEVER, IMPLY THAT WE NOW NEED TIME TO STUDY THE OUTCOME OF OUR RECENT TALKS WITH PRICE, BOTH IN MEXICO CITY AND HERE.

THERAFTER, WE SHALL SUGGEST A FURTHER MEETING AT WHICH BOTH SIDES CAN CONVEY THEIR CONSIDERED REACTION TO THE NEW YORK IDEAS. WE HAVE IN MIND SUCH A MEETING AS SOON AS IS REASONABLY PRACTICAL AND WILL SUGGEST AS MUCH TO THE GUATEMALANS. MR RIDLEYS OBJECTIVE WILL THUS BE TO STICK TO HIS INTENTION OF MAKING HIS VISIT TO GUATEMALA CITY A PURELY SOCIAL ONE. HE FEELS THE NEED TO REASSESS THE WHOLE SITUATION BEFORE MAKING ANY FURTHER SUBSTANTIVE MOVE

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