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FM GUATEMALA CITY 26/2237Z AUG 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

DESKBY 27/0900Z

TELEGRAM NUMBER 391 OF 26 AUGUST

R F I : IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN (PERSONAL) PRIORITY WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK

*Belize  
Prime Minister*

*See last paragraph  
in particular.*

*Wm  
4/18*

*mt*

INFO SAVING MEXICO CITY

BELIZE/GUATEMALA

1. RODRIGUEZ (DIRECTOR OF BELIZE AFFAIRS) CAME TO SEE ME ON 26 AUGUST TO DELIVER THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S REPLY TO MR RIDLEY'S MESSAGE OF 24 JULY (TRANSLATION IN MIFT). *(attached)*
2. I SAID TO RODRIGUEZ THAT THIS WAS NOT EXACTLY THE MESSAGE THAT I HAD BEEN TOLD TO EXPECT FOUR WEEKS AGO. I ASKED WHY THERE HAD BEEN A DELAY OF FOUR WEEKS AND WHAT HAD CAUSED THE CHANGE.
3. RODRIGUEZ EXPLAINED THE DELAY BY QUOTING VISITS OF OTHER FOREIGN MINISTERS, THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S FAMILY'S CAR ACCIDENT, AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S PREOCCUPATION WITH POLITICS AND ELECTION TACTICS. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE OF SUBSTANCE FROM WHAT I HAD EXPECTED BUT THIS MESSAGE WAS LESS EXPLICIT IN SUGGESTING AN EARLY MEETING THAN HAD BEEN THE MESSAGE DRAFTED ON 30 JULY. I SAID THAT I COULD SEE THAT, AND I ASKED WHETHER THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT REALLY WANTED FURTHER DISCUSSIONS BEFORE BELIZE BECAME INDEPENDENT. RODRIGUEZ SAID THAT THEY DID.
4. I SAID THAT I WOULD SO INFORM YOU, BUT I EXPECTED THAT YOU AND PREMIER PRICE WOULD WONDER WHAT HAD CHANGED SINCE THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS IN NEW YORK IN JULY. RODRIGUEZ BEGAN TO EXPLAIN AT LENGTH THAT ALL THAT WAS NEEDED <sup>WAS</sup> TO TURN THE HEADS OF AGREEMENT INTO A TREATY, WHICH THE BELIZEANS HAD REFUSED TO DO IN JULY. I SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT SO. THE HEADS OF AGREEMENT HAD CONTAINED NOTHING ABOUT MILITARY USE OF THE CAYS NOR ABOUT THE DURATION OF THE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE CAYS. THESE WERE THE TWO POINTS ON WHICH THE BELIZEANS HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE GUATEMALAN REQUIREMENTS. HAD THE GUATEMALAN POSITION CHANGED? RODRIGUEZ TRIED TO DISMISS MILITARY USE AS A QUESTION THAT HAD NEVER BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE GUATEMALANS BUT HAD BEEN INVENTED AS A PROBLEM BY THE BELIZEANS. I REMINDED HIM THAT THE SUBJECT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN LONDON LAST MARCH. HE THEN CAME NEAR TO ADMITTING THAT GUATEMALA COULD NOT REALLY MAKE ANY MILITARY USE OF THE CAYS.
5. ON DURATION HE TRIED TO CLAIM THAT GUATEMALA HAD BEEN PROMISED THE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE CAYS IN PERPETUITY IN LONDON LAST MARCH. I SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT SO. I COULD REMEMBER PREMIER PRICE OBJECTING TO THE TERM PERPETUITY. HE THEN SAID THAT 15 YEARS WAS TOO SHORT A PERIOD, GUATEMALA SHOULD BE OFFERED AT LEAST 99 YEARS. I SAID THAT GUATEMALA WAS BEING OFFERED WHAT COULD AMOUNT TO AN INDEFINITE PERIOD BUT EXPRESSED IN UNITS OF 15 YEARS WITH PROVISION FOR A REVIEW AT THE END OF EACH SUCH UNIT. HE THEN ADMITTED THAT THIS COULD WELL PROVE ACCEPTABLE.

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6. HE RAISED THE QUESTION OF ACCESS TO THE HIGH SEAS. I SAID THAT I THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM NOW IN KEEPING TO THE "SNAKE" SOLUTION. HE SAID THAT GUATEMALA MIGHT WANT MORE THAN THE SNAKE BUT I REMINDED HIM THAT GUATEMALA HAD ACCUSED THE BELIZEANS OF ACTING IN BAD FAITH BY OFFERING LESS THAN THE SNAKE.

7. I SAID THAT I DID NOT KNOW WHETHER YOU OR PREMIER PRICE WOULD FEEL ABLE TO RENEW THE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE SHORT TIME LEFT BEFORE INDEPENDENCE. IN PRACTICE THIS WOULD MEAN HOLDING TALKS IN THE COURSE OF THE NEXT TWO WEEKS. I ASKED WHETHER THE GUATEMALANS WOULD BE READY TO RENEW TALKS SO QUICKLY IF YOU AND PREMIER PRICE WISHED TO DO SO. HE SAID THAT THEY WOULD, BUT HE SAID IT WITHOUT ANY GREAT CONVICTION.

8. MY GUESS IS THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER IS NOW LESS INTERESTED IN THE RENEWAL OF NEGOTIATIONS THAN HE WAS, AND THAT THE MESSAGE HAS ONLY BEEN DELIVERED NOW BECAUSE OF AMERICAN PRESSURE. (MY TELNO 390) HOWEVER THE GUATEMALANS ARE NOW ABLE TO SAY TO THE AMERICANS THAT THEY HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR READINESS TO TRY AGAIN. IF ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF OUR GOOD STANDING WITH THE MAERICANS I RECOMMEND THAT WE MAKE SOME POSITIVE PROPOSAL IN REPLY.

FCO PSE PASS ALL

WILMSHURST

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

DESKBY 27:0900Z AUG 81

TELEGRAM NUMBER 392 OF 26 AUGUST

R F I : IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN (PERSONAL) PRIORITY WASHINGTON ROUTINE  
UKMIS NEW YORK  
INFO SAVING MEXICO CITY

MIPT : BELIZE/GUATEMALA

1. FOLLOWING IS TRANSLATION OF FOREIGN MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO MR  
RIDLEY, DATED 26 AUGUST :

BEGINS :

DEAR NICHOLAS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR NOTE OF 24 JULY LAST, IN WHICH YOU INFORMED  
ME OF THE AGREEMENTS REACHED IN LONDON WITH PREMIER GEORGE PRICE,  
WHICH REFERRED TO THE DATE OF 21 SEPTEMBER FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF  
BELIZE, THE STATIONING OF BRITISH FORCES IN THE TERRITORY AFTER THAT  
INDEPENDENCE, AND THE CONTINUING WORK BY GREAT BRITAIN IN TRAINING  
THE BELIZE DEFENCE FORCE.

AT THE SAME TIME YOU INFORMED ME THAT YOU WERE CONTINUING WITH  
THE UNWISE (LIT. IMPRUDENTE) INTENTION OF INVOLVING THIRD COUNTRIES  
IN ACTIONS RELATED TO THE SECURITY OF BELIZE, IN VIOLATION OF THE  
PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERVENTION AND THEREBY CAUSING JUSTIFIED  
CONCERNS, IF NOT THE INSTABILITY OF THE AREA.

I AM VERY PLEASED BY YOUR WISH THAT WE KEEP IN TOUCH, TO THE  
BENEFIT OF OUR TASK OF REACHING A SOLUTION OF THE TERRITORIAL  
CONTROVERSY OVER BELIZE, AND BY YOUR INDICATION OF THE FRANK SPIRIT  
OF FRIENDSHIP WHICH HAS BEEN DISPLAYED DURING OUR NEGOTIATIONS.

IN THIS SENSE I AM HAPPY TO LET YOU KNOW THAT HERE IN GUATEMALA  
WE ARE READY TO COOPERATE WITH WHATEVER EFFORT WE CAN MAKE TO REACH  
AN ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT SATISFACTORY TO ALL, AND WHICH WOULD LEAD  
TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE HEADS OF AGREEMENT.  
MY CORDIAL GREETINGS. RAFAEL CASTILLO VALDES.  
ENDS

FCO PASS ALL

WILMSHURST

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