

00 F C O

00 BONN

00 PARIS

00 WASHINGTON

PP MOSCOW

GRS950

IMMEDIATE

ADVANCE COPY

D E D I P

SECRET

BURNING BUSH

FROM UKDEL NATO 100215Z DEC 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 456 OF 10 DECEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE (PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR/MINISTER)

BONN PARIS WASHINGTON

PRIORITY MOSCOW

PS
ND FLOUSSN
[Handwritten signature]

FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

QUADRIPARTITE DINNER 9 DECEMBER: CENTRAL AMERICA.

1. THE SECRETARY OF STATE ASKED WHETHER THE UNITED STATES SAW THE PROBLEM AS MORE SOVIET OR MORE CUBAN IN ORIGIN. MR HAIG SAID HE HAD ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT IT WAS MORE SOVIET. IT WAS RUSSIANS, NOT CUBANS, WHO WERE RUNNING THE NICARAGUAN AIR FORCE, JUST AS THEY WERE DIRECTING CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA AND CONTROLLING LIBYAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT. THE PROBLEM IN CENTRAL AMERICA WOULD LEND ITSELF TO REMEDIAL ACTION IF THE RUSSIANS WERE WILLING: IT WOULD NOT REQUIRE ANY BACKING DOWN ON THEIR PART. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY WOULD NO DOUBT CONTINUE, BUT THE RUSSIANS COULD TURN OFF THEIR OWN ROLE.

2. LORD CARRINGTON ASKED WHAT CONCLUSIONS THE UNITED STATES DREW FROM THIS ANALYSIS. HAIG SAID THAT AMERICA WOULD HAVE TO QUOTE WORK THE PROBLEM WITH THE RUSSIANS AND CUBANS UNQUOTE, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TO WORK ON THE SOCIAL INJUSTICES AND HELP THOSE IN DANGER TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. HE HAD FOUND A GROWING CONSENSUS IN SOUTHERN AMERICA THAT THE ORIGIN OF THE PROBLEM LAY OUTSIDE THE HEMISPHERE.

NICARAGUA

3. HAIG DESCRIBED THE SITUATION AS EXTREMELY WORRISOME. EVEN MEXICO WAS WORRIED, ALTHOUGH NOT TO THE POINT OF BEING WILLING TO COORDINATE HER ACTIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. NICARAGUA WAS NOT YET IN THE SOVIET GRASP, AND A RECENT POLL SHOWED THAT ONLY 27 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION SUPPORTED THE REGIME. BUT THAT WAS THE DIRECTION IN WHICH EVENTS WERE MOVING. HE HAD TOLD THE NICARAGUAN FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN EARLY DATE FOR ELECTIONS WOULD BE WELL RECEIVED, AND THAT IF NICARAGUA STOPPED INTERFERING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF HER NEIGHBOURS, NOBODY WOULD INTERFERE IN HERS. AS THINGS STOOD, THE COSTA RICANS FOR EXAMPLE WERE IN A STATE OF TERROR.

4. CHEYSSON SAID THAT FRANCE WAS NOT QUITE CONVINCED BY THIS ANALYSIS. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIET UNION DIRECTED EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED, EVEN IN CUBA. THE SANDINISTA'S WERE NOT FULLY IN CONTROL OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEM; THEY HAD ONLY BEEN IN POWER FOR 2 YEARS. BUT THEY APPEARED TO ENJOY GOOD SUPPORT AMONG THEIR OWN PEOPLE. (MR HAIG DISSENTED.) CERTAINLY NICARAGUA SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO FALL INTO SOVIET HANDS. BUT MILITARY ACTION WOULD NOT PREVENT THIS. THE ELECTION RESULTS IN HONDURAS HAD BEEN A GOOD SIGN AND COULD BE A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR NICARAGUA. MR HAIG AGAIN DISAGREED; HE QUOTED THE HONDURAN FOREIGN MINISTER AS TELLING HIM THAT THE ELECTION HAD TAKEN PLACE QUOTE THROUGH THE BARREL OF A GUN UNQUOTE.

EL SALVADOR

5. HAIG SAID THAT THERE WERE 32 AMERICAN TECHNICAL ADVISORS IN SALVADOR, COMPARED WITH 6,000 CUBANS PROVIDING NOT JUST ADVICE BUT COMMAND AND CONTROL TO THE GUERRILLAS. HE HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE GROWING CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE FACTS IN THE REGION. THE WORST THING WOULD BE FOR THE US TO THROW ITS WEIGHT AROUND, BUT IT COULD NOT SIT SILENTLY EITHER. EVERY FOREIGN MINISTER HE HAD SPOKEN TO HAD URGED THE US TO CONTINUE ON ITS PRESENT COURSE, ALTHOUGH ADDING THAT HIS OWN COUNTRY COULD NOT SAY THIS IN PUBLIC. IN THE SHORT TERM HAIG WAS MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN PESSIMISTIC ABOUT EL SALVADOR. THERE HAD BEEN SOME RECENT MILITARY SUCCESSES AND SOME PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ELECTIONS. WE SHOULD ALL DO WHAT WE COULD TO ENCOURAGE A HIGH TURN-OUT AND A CREDIBLE ELECTION; A LOW TURNOUT WOULD HELP ONLY THE TWO EXTREMES. BUT WHETHER CREDIBLE ELECTIONS WOULD BE POSSIBLE, HAIG DID NOT KNOW. AND IF THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA WAS NOT SOLVED, THERE WOULD IN THE LONG RUN BE DISASTER IN SALVADOR.

6. GENSCHER SAID THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO SEND THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR BACK TO SAN SALVADOR, BUT SIMULTANEOUSLY THERE HAD BEEN ACTIONS AGAINST GERMAN PROPERTY IN THE COUNTRY. HE WOULD FEEL HAPPIER IF OTHER AMBASSADORS ALSO RETURNED TO THEIR POSTS. (THIS HINT WAS NOT TAKEN UP.)

7. THE SECRETARY OF STATE RECALLED THAT BRITAIN WAS AMONG THOSE ASKED TO SEND OBSERVERS TO WATCH THE PROPOSED ELECTIONS. THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED. DUARTE WAS NO DOUBT SINCERE IN OFFERING TO GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF OPPOSITION CANDIDATES, BUT IT WAS AN OPEN QUESTION WHETHER HE COULD REALLY DO THIS.

GUATEMALA

8. HAIG SAID THAT GUATEMALA MADE SALVADOR LOOK LIKE A THRIVING DEMOCRACY. BUT THE US HAD EVIDENCE OF A HEAVY CUBAN HAND BOTH THERE AND IN COLOMBIA, WHICH WAS A REAL DEMOCRACY. CHEYSSON INTERVENED TO SUGGEST THAT IT WAS FAILURES BY THE REGIME, PERSECUTION OF THE INDIANS ETC WHICH HAD GIVEN THE CUBANS THEIR CHANCE IN GUATEMALA. HAIG DID NOT DISAGREE. BUT HE SAW A STATISTICAL CORRELATION BETWEEN VIOLENCE FROM THE LEFT AND FROM THE RIGHT. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY HOW PLURALISM COULD BE PROMOTED. IN SALVADOR THERE HAD BEEN SUBSTANTIAL LAND REFORM AT A PACE PERHAPS FASTER THAN THE COUNTRY COULD ABSORB. IN GUATEMALA THE US HAD NOT PROVIDED HELP. BUT A REVOLUTION THERE WOULD THREATEN VITAL AMERICAN INTERESTS: HE MENTIONED OIL, THE PANAMA CANAL AND MEXICO.

9. LORD CARRINGTON CLOSED THE DISCUSSION BY COMMENTING THAT US INTERESTS WERE OF COURSE AFFECTED IN CENTRAL AMERICA MORE THAN THOSE OF ANY OTHER POWER.

ROSE

NNNN

SENT 4 100346Z ET