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TEXT OF TELEGRAM 84GUATEM011308

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ACTION ARA-00

INFO	OCT-00	COPY-01	ADS-00	INR-10	EUR-00	SS-00	CIAE-00
	H-01	IO-15	NSC-01	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	SY-06
	HA-08	L-03	PK-10	PA-01	PC-01	MCT-03	OMB-01
	INRE-00	A-02	SYE-00	SP-02	SNP-01	PRS-01	SLPD-01
	SPD-02	/070 W					

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O 301607Z OCT 84
 FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4707
 USIA WASHDC 2173
 INFO CONTADORA COLLECTIVE
 USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PH
 DIA WASHDC//JSI-4B/DB-3C2
 USAFPO/LAI HOWARD AFB PH
 AMEMBASSY BONN
 AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
 AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY MADRID
 AMEMBASSY OSLO
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMEMBASSY ROME
 AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
 USMISSION GENEVA

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 GUATEMALA 11308

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USIA FOR AR
ROME ALSO PASS TO VATICAN: DEPT FOR A/SI/TAG

E.O. 12356 DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PGOV, SHUX, GT, ASEC
 SUBJ: WEEKEND VIOLENCE CLAIMS PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER,
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- UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND ASSEMBLY MEMBER

SUMMARY (LOU)

 OVER THE WEEKEND, A MEMBER OF THE PEACE CORPS,
 A MEMBER OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, TWO MEMBERS
 OF THE ECONOMIC FACULTY OF SAN CARLOS UNIVERSITY,
 AND A PROMINENT BUSINESSMAN, TOGETHER WITH

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BODYGUARDS IN SEVERAL CASES, WERE MURDERED.

END SUMMARY.

SANTOS HERNANDEZ

2. (U) A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, SANTOS HERNANDEZ, AND HIS TWO BODYGUARDS, ROBERTO PINZON AND JORGE ANIBAL MERLOS, WERE ASSASSINATED IN GUATEMALA CITY AT APPROXIMATELY 1545 HOURS ON OCTOBER 26. THE MURDERS WERE CARRIED OUT BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS WHO ARRIVED ON THE SCENE IN TWO VEHICLES, REPORTEDLY A CAR AND A PANEL TRUCK.

3. (U) HERNANDEZ WAS THE FIRST ASSEMBLY MEMBER TO BE KILLED.

4. (U) THE MURDER BROUGHT EXPRESSIONS OF INDIGNATION AND OUTRAGE FROM MANY OF THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL PERSONALITIES AND GROUPS. THE BODY OF HERNANDEZ WAS BROUGHT TO THE NATIONAL CONGRESS BUILDING ON OCTOBER 27 FOR EULOGIES BEFORE BEING

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RETURNED TO HIS HOME IN THE EL QUICHE DEPARTMENT OF GUATEMALA FOR BURIAL. DURING THE CEREMONY, THE ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE ASSASSINATION WAS READ, AND THREE DAYS OF MOURNING WERE DECLARED. THREE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY'S EXECUTIVE— DR. HECTOR ARAGON QUINONEZ, RAMIRO DE LEON CARPIO, AND ROBERTO CARPIO NICOLLE, WHO ROTATE THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENCY ON A MONTHLY BASIS, ALL MADE STATEMENTS PRAISING HERNANDEZ AND DENOUNCING THE MURDER.

5. (U) THE ASSEMBLY IS SCHEDULED TO MEET ON OCTOBER 29 TO DISCUSS FILLING THE NEW VACANT SEAT.

6. (S) BACKGROUND

AT THIS POINT, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TRIPLE MURDER. THERE ARE SEVERAL VIABLE THEORIES: FIRST IS THAT IT WAS A POLITICAL MURDER ARRANGED EITHER BY THE FUM IN RETALIATION FOR HERNANDEZ'S DEFECTION, OR BY THE MLN BECAUSE HERNANDEZ WAS REPORTEDLY THINKING OF BACKING OUT OF HIS PLANNED SHIFT TO THE MLN. THE MLN HAD SCHEDULED A FORMAL CEREMONY FOR THIS WEEK TO ACCEPT HERNANDEZ INTO THE PARTY. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT HERNANDEZ WAS TARGETED BY THE LEFT IN AN ATTEMPT TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE

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OF HIS HIGH VISIBILITY. A SECOND,
PLAUSIBLE THEORY AT THIS POINT, IS THAT THE
ASSASSINATION GREW OUT OF SOME OF HERNÁNDEZ'S
BUSINESS DEALINGS. HE HAD APPARENTLY HELD A
MONOPOLY ON TRANSPORTING GOODS AND PEOPLE IN
HIS HOME TOWN--A MONOPOLY WHICH SEVERAL OTHERS HAD
ATTEMPTED TO BREAK IN THE PAST. HE ALSO OWNED
BUSINESSES IN GUATEMALA CITY.

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	SPD-02	/070 W					

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SAN CARLOS UNIVERSITY FACULTY

7. (U) TWO PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC FACULTY OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS WERE ALSO MURDERED OVER THE WEEKEND.

8. (U) AN ECONOMICS PROFESSOR, CARLOS DE LEON GUDIEL,

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WAS KILLED THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 26 BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS WHO INTERCEPTED AND SHOT THE PROFESSOR AS HE WAS DRIVING HOME FROM THE UNIVERSITY.

9. (U) THE FOLLOWING DAY, OCTOBER 27, THE DEAN OF THE ECONOMICS FACULTY, VITALINO GIRON CORADO, WAS ASSASSINATED IN MID-AFTERNOON WHEN HE STOPPED TO PURCHASE GASOLINE AT A GUATEMALA CITY GAS STATION. HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO ATTEND FUNERAL SERVICES FOR DE LEON.

10. (U) UNIDENTIFIED ASSASSINS IN TWO VEHICLES REPORTEDLY FOLLOWED GIRON INTO THE GAS STATION. INDIVIDUALS FROM ONE CAR APPROACHED AND REMOVED GIRON'S WIFE FROM THE VEHICLE WHILE THE SECOND GROUP FIRED INTO THE CAR AT CLOSE RANGE KILLING GIRON. THE FUNERAL, HELD ON OCTOBER 28, ELICITED A LARGE CROWD OF MOURNERS.

11. (U) THE GOVERNMENT OF GENERAL OSCAR HUMBERTO MEJIA VICTORES ISSUED A STATEMENT DEMOUNCING THE MURDERS OF DEPUTY HERNANDEZ AND PROFESSOR GUDIEL AS A "MACABRE PLAN" TO DISRUPT THE "GUATEMALAN FAMILY". IN ITS STATEMENT, THE GOVERNMENT

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ATTRIBUTED THE MURDER OF HERNANDEZ TO "ANTI-SOCIAL ELEMENTS", A PHRASE WHICH USUALLY IS USED TO REFER TO COMMON CRIMINALS IN THIS KIND OF CONTEXT.

12. ANALYSIS (S)

THE ASSASSINATIONS WERE PROFESSIONAL IN EXECUTION. CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT AT LEAST THE DE LEON MURDER MAY HAVE BEEN THE WORK OF GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES.

BOTH PROFESSORS WERE RUMORED TO BE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PGT ORGANIZATION. CARLOS DE LEON GUDIEL HAD ALSO BEEN PREVIOUSLY KIDNAPPED (AND LATER RELEASED) BY SECURITY FORCES. TWO OTHER SAN CARLOS FACULTY MEMBERS HAVE, IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, ALSO BEEN ASSASSINATED BY A SIMILAR MODUS OPERANDI.

13. (S) COMMENT.

THE MURDER OF TWO REPUTED PGT MEMBERS OF SAN CARLOS UNIVERSITY LEAVES THE UNIVERSITY'S RECTOR, DR. EDUARDO MEYER,

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IN EXTREME DANGER. HE HAS PUBLICLY DECLINED THE USE OF PROTECTIVE AGENTS. BUT HE IS A HIGHLY PUBLIC FIGURE, AND SAN CARLOS IS IN THE MIDST OF A PGT-FOMENTED LABOR DISPUTE. THE PGT HAS A HISTORY OF RETALIATING AGAINST THE MURDER OF ITS MEMBERS. AN ATTACK AGAINST MEYER, SOMETIMES RUMORED AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, WOULD BE VERY DETRIMENTAL TO THE PROCESS OF RETURNING GUATEMALA TO CONSTI-

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	SPD-02	/070 W					

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4709
USIA WASHDC 2175
INFO CONTADORA COLLECTIVE
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
DIA WASHDC//JSI-4B/DB-3C2
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TUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. END COMMENT.

FUN LEADER ATTACKED

14. (U) THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE FUN, GABRIEL
GIROM ORTIZ, REPORTED THAT HIS HOUSE HAS BEEN
ATTACKED BY UNKNOWN INDIVIDUALS ON OCTOBER 26 AT
ABOUT ONE IN THE MORNING. SEVERAL SHOTS WERE FIRED

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AT THE HOUSE, BUT NO INJURIES WERE REPORTED. GIRON HAS REQUESTED GOVERNMENT SECURITY IN LIGHT OF THE ATTACK. GIRON HAD ATTEMPTED TO REMOVE HERNANDEZ FROM THE ASSEMBLY WHEN THE LATTER WAS PUBLICLY REVEALED TO BE ILLITERATE, AND TAKE HIS PLACE, BUT THIS WAS OVERRULED BY THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL. THUS, THERE WAS SPECULATION THAT GIRON ORDERED THE ASSASSINATION, A THEORY THAT DOES NOT SEEM LOGICAL.

----- PROMINENT BUSINESSMAN

15. (U) ALSO FOUND MURDERED ON OCTOBER 25 WAS PROMINENT GUATEMALAN BUSINESSMAN FREDDY SEDRI CALDERON, TOGETHER WITH HIS BODYGUARD, RENE ORENOS RAMAS. SEDRI WAS KIDNAPPED ABOUT SEVENTEEN DAYS AGO BY SIX ARMED MEN. INITIAL NEWSPAPER REPORTS OF THE INCIDENT ORIGINALLY IDENTIFIED THE SIX AS "POLICE INVESTIGATIVE AGENTS". TWO PERSONS HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN ARRESTED AND ARE BEING HELD.

16. (C) ANALYSIS.

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THE MURDER OF SEDRI AND HIS BODYGUARD, AT THIS POINT, APPEAR TO HAVE NO POLITICAL OVERTONES. THE DOUBLE MURDER HAS THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A CRIMINAL ACT FOLLOWING THE BREAKDOWN OF RANSOM NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND THE ABDUCTORS.

MURDER OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER

17. (LOU) PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER PETER WOLFE WAS FOUND MURDERED IN GUATEMALA CITY SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 28. WOLFE WAS SHOT JUST BENEATH THE LEFT EYE AT CLOSE RANGE SOMETIME AFTER LEAVING A PARTY THAT WAS BEING GIVEN BY JOHN BURNETT, A U.S. CITIZEN WHO IS WORKING AS A WIRE SERVICE REPORTER IN GUATEMALA. THE MURDER IS BELIEVED TO HAVE OCCURRED SOMETIME BETWEEN 2 AND 3 AM. WOLFE'S BODY WAS FOUND IN THE VICINITY OF HIS RESIDENCE. A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY, A WATCH, AND A RELATIVELY NEW JACKET THAT MR. WOLFE HAD RECENTLY PURCHASED WERE STILL ON THE BODY WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED. A WALLET WHICH MR. WOLFE WAS KNOWN TO HAVE HAD ON HIS PERSON WAS MISSING. POLICE INVESTIGATIONS ARE CONTINUING.

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