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NO. A-119 SECRET/NOFORN  
 TO Department of State  
 DEPT PASS: CINCOSO *Just*  
 DATE: *MAY 23 3 5*  
 HANDLING INDICATOR: *28-75074*  
*Box 11*  
*IPS-1-10*  
*002651*

FROM: American Embassy GUATEMALA DATE: 5/19/70  
 SUBJECT: Ojo Por Ojo  
 REF: *Jack-*  
*This is what we were*  
*afraid of with increased*  
*public safety support*  
*- see last page.*

SUMMARY  
 A new rightist counter-terror organization

has executed several Guatemalan leftists. Ojo Por Ojo (Eye for an Eye) is the extreme right's response to the violence of the left. Its operations have been illegal and brutal. Its choice of targets is scatter-shot. And it has provoked responses which bode ill for Guatemalan society and the American Mission.

Background:

The number of Ojo's victims is undetermined. The press has reported ten bodies found with Ojo por Ojo death notes, but given the generally poor and often erroneous nature of reportage in Guatemala, the figure could easily be higher or lower. All the victims appear to have been tortured before death. The ten and the dates and locations of the finding of their bodies are as follows:

1. Francisco BARRERO Juarez - PGT member, April 26, near Guatemala City.
2. Eligio RODAS Ochoa - taken from home in Costeque - found three days later, April 27, near Guatemala City.
3. Julio Cesar DE LA ROSA - list of PGT members 1965 - taken from Quetzaltenango, later found near Guatemala City, April 26.

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4. Rogelio CERMENO Garcia - [ ] found May 4, Jutiapa. [ ]
5. Rigoberto RAMIREZ - [ ] - Jutiapa, [ ]
6. Lizandro ORTEGA - [ ] - Suchitepequez, May 4. [ ]
7. Cesar ARCHILA Rodriguez - [ ] - Escuintla, May 7. [ ]
8. Unidentified body - Escuintla, May 8. [ ]
9. Norman Gilberto VALLADARES - [ ] - near Antigua, May 16. [ ]
10. Unidentified body - near Antigua, May 17. [ ]

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The notes on some of the bodies, according to the press, read "Ojo por Ojo, thus die members of the PGT, FAR." In at least one case the note accused the victim of having taken part in a specific crime, and, in other cases, of having traveled to Cuba and Russia. On May 6, a body was found near the spot where Ramirez (No. 5 above) had been found two days earlier. The note on that body read "Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth, thus die those who leave our ranks - FAR/PGT" (or "FAR and PGT", depending on which newspaper account is more accurate). The unidentified body (No. 8 above) also reportedly bore the inscription "Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth", but there was no indication that it might have been (or made to appear to be) a leftist retaliatory murder. Every case must be viewed individually. Given the paucity of information available, it would be rash to state definitely that each corpse found with an Ojo note was indeed a victim of that organization. Due to the complex nature of the Guatemalan internal security picture, a body could be a victim of the Right's counter-terror, of the left's terror, of either group taking care of its own traitors, or simply of a clever, cuckolded husband. Whether the count above is accurate or not

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the fact remains that the Ojo exists and has committed torture murders.

2. Public Reaction:

The Guatemalan press is hardly known for its delicacy. A murder is always an important event but it is of even greater significance if a photographer can get to the scene and get a good photo of the corpse. Needless to say, the murders have been more than adequately covered in terms of space, if not accuracy, by the press, and the public is aware of the violence. Julio Cesar DE LA ROCA's death, however, was the only one met with a display of public outrage. As a prominent citizen of Quetzaltenango, his murder prompted an outpouring of condemnations from civic organizations, educational groups, the governing Council of San Carlos University, the press, etc. His death also sent waves of apprehension rolling through the intellectual community, the Christian

Democratic Party (DCG), the fourth estate and perhaps the Communist Party (PCT); groups he had ties with at one time or another.

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There were no press reports of Ojo victims found between May 8 and May 16.

3. Leftist Reaction:

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4. Membership and Motivation:

Ojo Par Ojo organization is made up primarily of the vestigial remains of SCUGA (Special Command Unit, Guatemalan Army). It has a largely military membership with some civilian cooperation.

The membership appears motivated by: (a) disgust with what they feel to be the administration's do-nothing attitude towards leftist guerrillas, (b) anxiousness to seek revenge for the many Rightist figures who have been murdered and (c) a desire to spill some blood now, before Arana takes office and must wear the entire stain. It is unknown how its victims are chosen, but it appears that a discriminating finger is not one of the Ojo's attributes. Of those reported killed above (and once again let it be noted that there is no confirmation that all were Ojo victims) none appear to be major figures on the Guatemalan left (and certainly not within the guerrilla movement). In a time when urban terrorism is the greatest threat, only two of the victims appear to have lived in Guatemala City.

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5. Arana's Dilemma:

As has been oft reported, Colonel Arana owes his victory, in large measure, to his promise to the Guatemalan people to establish law and order in the land. The pressures on him to produce, to live up to his campaign promises, and to maintain the loyalty of the more extreme of his supporters, are immense and probably will grow after he assumes office. There is no shortage of advisors who are telling him what the best way to eliminate the guerrillas is to strike out at a large number of visible leftists; or at least to begin with known leftists who may be induced by venture to lead security forces to the members of the PCT/PAR and FAR. Such counsel leads to the well-known Guatemalan

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process of list-making in which the names of known leftists, ideological Marxists, labor and student leaders and one's own enemies become the targets, leaving the few security-conscious, hardcore and unknown guerrillas relatively unharmed.

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COMMENT: As stated in the CASP, the greatest danger to the fragile Guatemalan democratic system is not ~~from~~ the left. Dangerous as it may be, the left does not have sufficient strength to take power from the constitutional government. What the extreme left desires is an indiscriminate repression by the Right which will alienate large sectors of society and increase their prestige and possible support. The Ojo-type approach to the problem of leftist terrorism serves the purposes of the insurgents more than those of the institutions of Government.

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