

GRS 380

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FM BELMOPAN 042210Z JAN 85

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3 OF 4 JANUARY 1985

AND TO INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, MEXICO CITY,
KINGSTON, BIS GUATEMALA CITY

UK/BELIZE

1. AT THE NAMING CEREMONY ON 4 JANUARY OF MERLIN HOUSE, THE NEW BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE IN BELMOPAN, PRIME MINISTER ESQUIVEL SPOKE ON THE FUTURE OF BELIZEAN RELATIONS WITH THE UK AND ALSO ON THE GUATEMALA QUESTION.

2. MR ESQUIVEL REFERRED TO THE LONG HISTORY OF CO-OPERATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND BELIZE CULMINATING IN TODAY'S QUOTE DIGNIFIED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO SOVEREIGN STATES UNQUOTE. HE SAID THAT THE NEW RESIDENCE, TOGETHER WITH THE NEW CHANCERY IN BELMOPAN SIGNALLED BRITISH RECOGNITION OF BELIZEAN SOVEREIGNTY AS WELL AS BRITAIN'S COMMITMENT TO CONTINUED ECONOMIC AND SECURITY COOPERATION FOR WHICH HE EXPRESSED THANKS.

3. HE EMPHASISED THAT INDEPENDENT BELIZE WELCOMED THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH TROOPS ON BELIZEAN SOIL. BELIZE WOULD SEEK A STRENGTHENED BRITISH COMMITMENT FOR THE GARRISON TO REMAIN UNTIL EITHER THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM WAS SETTLED OR ALTERNATIVE DEFENCE AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN PUT IN PLACE. HE RECOGNISED THAT SUCH A COMMITMENT WOULD REQUIRE AN EQUALLY SOLEMN COMMITMENT ON THE BELIZEAN SIDE. QUOTE OUR COMMITMENT WOULD BE TO PURSUE, ACTIVELY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY, GOOD FAITH NEGOTIATIONS WITH GUATEMALA IN ORDER TO FIND AN HONOURABLE, JUST AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. NONE OF US WANT BRITISH TROOPS TO REMAIN IN BELIZE IN PERPETUITY. SUCH A SITUATION WOULD BE IN THE INTEREST NEITHER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM NOR BELIZE. I WOULD LIKE TO STATE QUITE CATEGORICALLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE IS PREPARED TO RESUME THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS WITH GUATEMALA. INDEED, WE WILL SEEK AN EARLY RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. SUCH NEGOTIATIONS MUST HAVE FOR US AS THEIR PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE - THE RECOGNITION OF BELIZE'S SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. WE CANNOT HELP BUT FEEL THAT THE TIME IS RIGHT TO PRESS FOR A SOLUTION TO THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM IN CONDITIONS THAT WILL FREE BOTH OUR COUNTRIES TO GET ON WITH THE REAL BUSINESS OF PEACEFUL COOPERATION AND GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS THAT SHOULD ORDER

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/ RELATIONS

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RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES THAT SHARE A COMMON BORDER. WE ARE AWARE THAT TENTATIVE STEPS HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN IN GUATEMALA INDICATING A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. SUCH STEPS OUGHT TO BE TRANSLATED INTO REAL TERMS BY RECOGNITION OF BELIZE'S DEMOCRATIC RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINE ITS OWN DESTINY AND PRESERVE ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WITHIN ITS EXISTING BORDERS UNQUOTE.

4. TEXT FOLLOWS BY BAG.

CROSBY

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