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*Prime Minister*

FM GUATEMALA CITY 14/1430Z AUG 80

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 252 OF 14 AUGUST

R F I : IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN (PERSONAL)

R F I : PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, MEXICO CITY, WASHINGTON.

*This seems to have been a useful visit*

MR RIDLEY'S VISIT

1. ALTHOUGH THE MAINLY SOCIAL CHARACTER OF THE VISIT HAS BEEN SCRUPULOUSLY PRESERVED BY THE GUATEMALANS, FORMAL TALKS WITH CASTILLO VALDEZ AND THE PRESIDENT, AND FREQUENT SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS WITH MEMBERS OF THE BELIZE COUNCIL PRODUCED A NUMBER OF INTERESTING EXCHANGES.

2. THE GUATEMALANS SEEM NOW TO HAVE ACCEPTED THAT PROGRESS TOWARD INDEPENDENCE CANNOT BE HELD UP, DESPITE OUR CONTINUING WILLINGNESS TO TALK. OBJECTIVES OF CASTILLO VALDEZ SEEMED TO BE

(1) TO CEMENT A GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. THE WARMTH OF THE WELCOME AND THE ATTENTIONS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE GUATEMALAN SIDE WERE NOTEWORTHY

(2) TO SECURE A FURTHER NEGOTIATING MEETING SOON AND IN ANY EVENT BEFORE THE U N G A IN THE AUTUMN.

(3) TO REPEAT THEIR GENUINE DESIRE FOR NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME UNDERLINING THE CONSTRAINTS ON THEM.

(4) TO PRESENT AN ACCEPTABLE IMAGE OF GUATEMALA.

3. IN FORMAL TALKS, MR RIDLEY DID NOT DISGUISE THE HOSTILITY OF PRICE AND THE BELIZEANS TO LAND CESSION OR ANY DEROGATION OF SOVEREIGNTY. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF NEW YORK IDEAS, THOUGH MR RIDLEY SAID THAT INITIAL REACTIONS IN BELIZE HAD BEEN NEGATIVE. CASTILLO VALDEZ SAID THAT MORE IDEAS WERE NEEDED. WITH THE PRESIDENT MR RIDLEY FLOATED THE IDEA OF DIRECT NEGOTIATION ON A BASIS OF EQUALITY BETWEEN BELIZE AND GUATEMALA ON CE THE FORMER HAD GAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE. SKINNER KLEE AND HERRERA SAW SOME ATTRACTION IN THIS IDEA WHICH WAS BY NO MEANS TURNED DOWN OUT OF HAND, THOUGH THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF GAVE IT NO ENCOURAGEMENT DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE PROBABLE LEFT WING COMPLEXION OF INDEPENDENT BELIZE. THE PRESIDENT SEEMED PREOCCUPIED WITH GUATEMALA 'S INTERNAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT AND MISREPRESENTATION ABROAD : ON BELIZE HE CLEARLY EXPECTS SUBSTANTIAL FACE SAVING PROVISION IN ANY EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT.

4. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON THE LAST DAY THAT MR RIDLEY AND CASTILLO VALDEZ SHOULD MEET IN THE PERIOD MID SEPTEMBER/MID OCTOBER FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. THIS WAS ANNOUNCED TO THE PRESS. OUTCOME OF PRICES' INVITATION TO CASTILLO VALDEZ (BELMOPAN TELNO 036) WILL NOT AFFECT THIS ENGAGEMENT.

*MS*  
*MP*  
*2/1/8*

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15-GUATEMALANS



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5. GUATEMALANS WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO BE FRIENDLY. CASTILLO SAID THAT TENSION BETWEEN UK AND GUATEMALA HAD NEVER BEEN LOWER.
6. SEAL WAS SET WHEN MR AND MRS RIDLEY WERE MADE HONOURED GUESTS OF THE CITY OF GUATEMALA ON THEIR LAST EVENING.

WILMSHURST

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