

~~SECRET~~

F-2019-07289

B-00002688054

"UNCLASSIFIED"

2/9/2026

~~SECRET~~



MRN: 84 SAN SALVADOR 3577
Date/DTG: Apr 03, 1984 / 030000Z Apr 84
From: AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE
E.O.: Unknown
TAGS: PGOV, ES, ARENA, PCN
Reference: n/a
Subject: ARENA COURTS PCN FOR SECOND ROUND

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 01 SAN SA 03577 01 OF 02 030134Z
 ACTION ARA-00

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
 H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-08 L-03 PM-10
 PA-01 OMB-01 INRE-00 USIE-00 SP-02 SNP-01 PRS-01
 SLPD-01 /040 W

-----352303 030142Z /60

O 030132Z APR 84
 FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4285

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 SAN SALVADOR 03577

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PGOV, ES
 SUBJECT: ARENA COURTS PCN FOR SECOND ROUND

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY. IN LATE EVENING MEETING APRIL 1, PCN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FRANCISCO JOSE GUERRERO TOLD POLOFF THAT ARENA IS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT PROCEEDING WITH ITS PRESENT PARTY TICKET INTO THE SECOND ROUND AGAINST NAPOLEON DUARTE. ACCORDING TO GUERRERO, D'AUBUISSON OVER LUNCH ASKED HIS SUPPORT IN CHANGING THE ELECTORAL LAW TO PERMIT CHANGES IN PARTY TICKETS IN THE SECOND ROUND FOR PURPOSES UNSPECIFIED, AND TO DO AWAY WITH THE VOTING REGISTRY. HOWEVER, AN ARENA FUNDRAISER IS SAID TO BE PUTTING FEELERS OUT TO THE PCN FOR A POSSIBLE COMBINED ARENA/PCN TICKET, WITH GUERRERO AS THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, ASSUMING THE LAW IS CHANGED. PRESIDENT MAGANA REPORTEDLY TOLD GUERRERO OF A MEETING HE HAD WITH D'AUBUISSON IN WHICH THE LATTER PROPOSED THAT GUERRERO

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

F-2019-07289

B-00002688054

"UNCLASSIFIED"

2/9/2026

RUN AS HIS VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AN IDEA WHICH GUERRERO REJECTS. GUERRERO IS, HOWEVER, INTRIGUED OVER POSSIBILITY OF HEADING AN ARENA/PCN TICKET IN THE SECOND ROUND AND WILL PROPOSE TO THE PCN LEADERSHIP

~~SECRET~~~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 SAN SA 03577 01 OF 02 030134Z

THAT THE PCN SUPPORT CHANGING THE ELECTORAL LAW TO PERMIT AN ALTERATION OF POLITICAL PARTY TICKETS IN THE SECOND ROUND. HE ACKNOWLEDGES, AS DO WE, THAT THE LIKELIHOOD OF AN EVENTUAL ARENA/PCN TICKET, WITH HIMSELF AS THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AND HUGO BARRERA AS HIS RUNNING MATE, IS REMOTE. END SUMMARY.

3. DR. GUERRERO ASKED THAT POLOFF MEET WITH HIM LATE SUNDAY EVENING (MARCH 31) ON DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE SECOND ROUND. IN A 2-HOUR MEETING (2230-0030), POLOFF LEARNED HOW INNOVATIVE SALVADORAN POLITICS CAN BE. GUERRERO SAID THAT ARENA RECOGNIZES IT CANNOT WIN THE SECOND ROUND AND THAT THERE IS A "DUMP BOBBY" MOVEMENT AFOOT. THERE ARE FEELERS OUT TO GUERRERO TO HEAD A COMBINED ARENA/PCN TICKET IN THE SECOND ROUND (A DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD REQUIRE A CHANGE IN THE ELECTORAL LAW), BUT GUERRERO REGARDS THE CHANCES OF THIS COMING ABOUT AS SLIM, MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE STRINGENT CONDITIONS THAT HE WOULD ATTACH.

4. GUERRERO SUMMARIZED THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS FOR POLOFF:

-- LUNCH WITH D'AUBUISSON MARCH 30: JUST AFTER POLCOUNS AND POLOFF MET WITH GUERRERO MARCH 30, HE GOT A CALL FROM D'AUBUISSON TO LUNCH WITH HIM. GUERRERO OFFERED HIS HOUSE. D'AUBUISSON ASKED GUERRERO WHAT HIS PLANS WERE DURING THE COMING WEEK. GUERRERO REPLIED THAT HE WAS PLANNING TO GO TO BELIZE, FISHING. AN EXCITED D'AUBUISSON PLEADED THAT GUERRERO NOT TRAVEL ANYWHERE, AS THERE ARE GOING TO BE SOME "INTERESTING POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS" OCCURRING. D'AUBUISSON THEN ASKED FOR GUERRERO'S SUPPORT IN MODIFYING THE ELECTORAL LAW IN THE ASSEMBLY,

~~SECRET~~~~SECRET~~

PAGE 03 SAN SA 03577 01 OF 02 030134Z

TO ELIMINATE THE VOTING REGISTRY TO ALLOW VOTERS TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS WHEREVER THEY WISHED, AND TO PERMIT ALTERATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TICKET IN THE SECOND ROUND. THE SECOND CHANGE WOULD PERMIT ARENA TO CHANGE ITS TICKET IN HOPES OF PRESENTING A MORE SOLID FRONT AGAINST THE PDC. THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION, D'AUBUISSON SOUNDED CONFIDENT THAT HE COULD WIN AGAINST DUARTE IF THESE

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

F-2019-07289

B-00002688054

"UNCLASSIFIED"

2/9/2026

CHANGES COULD BE MADE. GUERRERO PROMISED NOTHING, MAINTAINING THAT, WITH 29 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, ARENA COULD NOT WIN. GUERRERO SAID HE ALSO TOLD THE ARENA CANDIDATE THAT EVEN IF HE WERE TO WIN, THE COUNTRY WOULD LOSE, AS THE U.S. WOULD WITHDRAW AID AND WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (FRG, ITALY) WOULD WITHDRAW THEIR AMBASSADORS. GUERRERO TOLD D'AUBUISSON THAT HE WOULD CONSULT WITH PCN LEADERS ON PROPOSED CHANGES.

-- CALL FROM ROBERTO MATHES, ARENA FUNDRAISER: GUERRERO SAID THAT ROBERTO MATHES HAD CALLED A PCN LEADER OVER THE WEEKEND AND STATED THAT HE AND OTHER ARENA FIGURES RECOGNIZE THAT D'AUBUISSON CANNOT WIN THE SECOND ROUND AND ASKED IF GUERRERO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HEADING A COMBINED ARENA/PCN TICKET (BARRERA WOULD BE KEPT ON AS VP CANDIDATE). THE PCN LEADER SAID IT SOUNDED INTERESTING AND THE MESSAGE WOULD BE PASSED ON. GUERRERO SAID THE PCN HAS NOT RESPONDED TO ARENA.

-- D'AUBUISSON CALL ON MAGANA: ACCORDING TO GUERRERO, YESTERDAY (SUNDAY, APRIL 1), D'AUBUISSON CALLED ON PRESIDENT MAGANA TO ASK THAT HE WEIGH IN WITH GUERRERO TO GET HIM TO SUPPORT CHANGING THE ELECTORAL LAW, ALONG THE LINES EARLIER INDICATED. D'AUBUISSON THEN SURPRISED MAGANA BY ASKING WHAT HE (MAGANA) WOULD THINK ABOUT CHACHI RUNNING AS THE VP CANDIDATE IN LIEU OF

~~SECRET~~

NNN

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 01 SAN SA 03577 02 OF 02 030134Z
ACTION ARA-00

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-08 L-03 PM-10
PA-01 OMB-01 INRE-00 USIE-00 SP-02 SNP-01 PRS-01
SLPD-01 /040 W

-----352322 030142Z /60

O 030132Z APR 84
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4286

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

F-2019-07289

B-00002688054

"UNCLASSIFIED"

2/9/2026

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 SAN SALVADOR 03577

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, ES

SUBJECT: ARENA COURTS PCN FOR SECOND ROUND

BARRERA, IN THE SECOND ROUND. MAGANA OFFERED NO VIEW AND REFERRED HIM TO GUERRERO. MAGANA SUBSEQUENTLY CALLED GUERRERO AND INFORMED HIM OF THE FOREGOING. MAGANA BRIEFED AMBASSADOR RAPIDLY ON THIS DEVELOPMENT WITH SOME INDICATION THAT DR. GUERRERO WAS BEING ASKED TO ACCEPT FIRST SPOT ON THE COMBINED TICKET. AMBASSADOR WILL MEET AGAIN WITH MAGANA TOMORROW TO POINT OUT SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH SUCH A RADICAL CHANGE IN THE GROUND RULES NOW MIGHT CAUSE TO EL SALVADOR, THE U.S. AND ELSEWHERE.

5. GUERRERO IS ON A HIGH AND BELIEVES ARENA AND PDC WILL COURT HIM FURTHER IN THE NEXT TWO DAYS. (DUARTE WILL BE CALLING HIM TODAY.) GUERRERO SAYS HE IS THE BELLE OF THE BALL AND WOULD "CONSIDER DANCING WITH ONE OF THE TWO SUITORS IF THE RIGHT TUNE WERE PLAYED.") WITH RESPECT TO ARENA, THIS WOULD MEAN:

-- DUMPING BOBBY IN FAVOR OF GUERRERO (HE WOULD KEEP BARRERA, BECAUSE ONE "CAN'T ASK FOR EVERYTHING.").

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 SAN SA 03577 02 OF 02 030134Z

-- ALTERING THE ARENA PLATFORM, TO CONFORM TO PCN PRINCIPLES. THERE COULD BE GIVE AND TAKE ON SUCH ISSUES AS BANKING AND FOREIGN COMMERCE REFORMS, BUT GUERRERO WOULD STAND FIRM ON NEED TO HAVE DIALOGUE WITH THE GUERRILLAS.

6. GUERRERO BELIEVES THERE WILL BE SOME ARENA AGONIZING DURING THE PERIOD MON TO WED. HE READILY ACKNOWLEDGES ARENA WOULD FIND IT HARD TO SWALLOW GUERRERO'S CONDITIONS, BUT POINTED OUT ARENA CANNOT MAKE IT WITH THE PRESENT TICKET AGAINST DUARTE. IN THE END, GUERRERO BELIEVES ARENA WILL STICK WITH D'AUBUISSON. GUERRERO ASSIGNS HIS CHANCES OF HEADING AN ARENA/PCN TICKET A 10 PERCENT CHANCE. STILL, THE NINTH INNING POLITICAL INTRIGUE WAS STIMULATING AND NOTHING WAS LOST, IN GUERRERO'S ESTIMATION. HE WILL MEET WITH PCN OFFICIALS TODAY AND RECOMMEND THAT THE PCN SUPPORT CHANGING THE ELECTORAL LAW TO PERMIT ALTERATION OF THE PARTY TICKETS IN THE SECOND ROUND; HE WOULD NOT SUPPORT DOING AWAY WITH THE ELECTORAL REGISTER. GUERRERO BELIEVES IT IS NOT USEFUL TO TALK TO ARENA UNTIL AFTER WEDNESDAY, WHEN DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE ELECTORAL LAW WILL BE KNOWN.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

F-2019-07289

B-00002688054

"UNCLASSIFIED"

2/9/2026

7. ON DUARTE, GUERRERO SAYS THAT THE PDC WILL LIKELY OFFER SOME GOVERNMENT POSTS TO THE PCN, BUT THAT THE PCN WILL BE NON-COMMITAL. THE BASIC LINE (WHICH WAS ENDORSED SATURDAY BY THE PCN LEADERS) PUSHED BY GUERRERO IS THAT THE PCN WILL ENDORSE NO ONE IN THE SECOND ROUND AND ALLOW NATURE TO TAKE ITS COURSE, PERMITTING DUARTE TO WIN.

8. COMMENT. IT APPEARS UNLIKELY TO US THAT A DUMP BOBBY MOVEMENT WILL HAVE ANY MORE SUCCESS THAN A SIMILAR

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 03 SAN SA 03577 02 OF 02 030134Z

MOVEMENT BY SOME OF D'AUBUISSON'S WEALTHY BACKERS IN THE LAST WEEK OF FEBRUARY. BUT WE WILL BE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY.
PICKERING

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

F-2019-07289

B-00002688054

"UNCLASSIFIED"

2/9/2026

NNN

Dissemination Rule:

Archive Copy

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~