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F-2016-15972

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MRN: [82 SAN JOSE 6633](#)
Date/DTG: Sep 30, 1982 / 300000Z Sep 82
From: AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE; GUATEMALA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE
E.O.: Unknown
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, PINR, ES, CS, (AVILA, EDUARDO)
Reference: 82 SAN SALVADOR 8043, 82 GUATEMALA 7187
Subject: SALVADORAN DIPLOMAT INVOLVED IN BOMBING

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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 SY-06 H-08 L-03
PM-09 PA-01 MCT-02 INRE-00 SYE-00 USIE-00 FBIE-00
SP-02 SPRS-02 /071 W
-----327724 302039Z /60

O 301933Z SEP 82
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2103
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE
RULPALJKOUSCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN

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E.O. 12356: DECL: 9-30-88
TAGS: PEPRBN PINS, PINR, ES, CS
SUBJECT: SALVADORAN DIPLOMAT INVOLVED IN BOMBING

REF: (A) SAN SALVADOR 8043, (B) GUATEMALA 7187 (NOTAL)

1. (C) SUMMARY. POLICE HAVE REVEALED THAT SALVADORAN DIPLOMT WAS INVOLVED IN BOMBING INCIDENT LAST MONTH IN LIMON UNFORTUNATELY THIS WILL BALANCE OFF ADVERSE PUBLICITY GRN RECEIVED OVER THEIR THREE DIPLOMATS' INVOLVEMENT IN JULY 3 BOMBING OF HONDURAN AIRLINE OFFICE. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) JUDICIAL POLICE (OIJ) AUTHORITIES REVEALED ATSA PRESS CONFERENNE YESTERDAY (SEPTEMBER 29) AFTERNOON THAT SALVADORAN

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DIPLOMAT EDUARDO AVILA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR A TERRORIST BOMBING IN LIMON. THE INTENDED VICTIM, WHO SUFFERED SERIOUS LEG INJURIES, WAS CUBAN/AMERICAN LUIS MEDINA. MEDINA'S TWO COMPANIONS AND SEVERAL BYSTANDERS WERE ALSO INJURED

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WHEN THE BOMB EXPLoded IN MEDUNA'S AUTOMOBILE WHICH WAS PARKED IN FRONT OF A HOTEL. AVILA WAS SUPPOSEDLY CONDUCTING COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS IN COSTA RICA AGAINST ARMS TRAFFICKERS SUPPLYING WEAPONS TO SALVADOREN GUERRILLAS.

3. ~~(LOU)~~ ALTHOUGH MOTIVES FOR THE BOMBING ARE STILL WRAPPED IN CONSIDERABLE MYSTERY, AVILA APPARENTLY BELIEVEDNA WAS INVOLVED IN SUPPLYING WAR MATERIAL TO THE FMLN. IT WAS PREVIOUSLY SPECULATED THAT THE INCIDENT WAS THE PRODUCT OF A PERSONAL VENDETTA OR RELATED TO CRIMINAL, POSSIBLY DRUG RELATED, ACTIVITIES. THESE POSSIBILITIES CAN NOT BE COMPLETELY DISCOUNTED.

4. ~~(LOU)~~ ALTHOUGH AVILA HIMSELF PLACED THE BOMB, ANOTHER SALVADORAN, DAGOBERTO ZAMBRANO AEVALO, HAD WORKED WITH HIM AS AN INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE AND WAS HIS ACCOMPLICE IN THE ATTEMPT AGAINST LUIS MEDINA'S LIFE. ZAMBRANO HAS COOPERATED WITH COSTA RICAN AUTHORITIES AND WAS PRESENTED AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE TO TELL HIS SIDE OF THE STORY. ACCORDING TO ZAMBRANO, HE AND HIS IMMEDIATE BOSS, AVILA, WORKED WITH THE SALVADORAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE ON MISSIONS OF ESPIONAGE TO MONITOR FMLN GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES AND ESPECIALLY ARMS TRAFFICKING. ZAMBRANO SAID HE ALSO WORKED WITH A MAJOR OCHOA OF THE SALVADORAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE. EDUARDO ERNESTO ALFONSO AVILA IS CARRIED ON THE CURRENT DIPLOMATIC LIST AS A CIVIL AFFAIRS ATTACHE AT THE SALVADORAN EMBASSY; AN OFFICIAL LISTED AS SIGIFREDO OCHOA PEREZ HAS THE TITLE COMMERCIAL ATTACHE. ZAMBRANO ACCOMPANIED AVILA ON THE MISSION AGAINST MEDINA IN LIMON, BUT CLAIMS HE REFUSED TO PLACE THE SIX DYNAMITE STICK BOMB. ZAMBRANO, HOWEVER, STOOD BY TO COVER AVILA AT THE SCENE OF THE INCIDENT ARMED WITH

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A MACHINE GUN.

5. (U) SHORTLY AFTER THE BOMBING, ZAMBRANO (FOR UNEXPLAINED REASONS) TRAVELLED BY LAND TO NICARAGUA. THERE HE CONTENTS THAT HE WAS ARRESTED BY THE SANDINISTAS, AND CONFINED IN THE "EL CHIPOTE" PRISON FOR SOME 42 DAYS. HE TOLD THE NICARAGUAN AUTHORITIES THAT HE WAS A MEMBER OF A

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HUMAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION BASED IN SAN JOSE, AND WAS FINALLY RELEASED LAST WEEK. HE RETURNED TO COSTA RICA AND TURNED HIMSELF IN TO THE AUTHORITIES.

6. (U) FORMIF VOLIO ANNOUNCED THAT EDUARDO AVILA HAD BEEN DECLARED PERUONA NON GRATA, BUT HE HAD ALREADY LEFT COUNTRY THE PREVIOUS WEEK. VOLIO INFORMED US THAT HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE SALVADORAN AMBASSADOR, CARLOS MATAMOROS, KNEW NOTHING OF AVILA'S ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES. MATAMOROS IS REPORTEDLY OUT OF THE COUNTRY, BUT EXPECTED BACK EARLY NEXT WEEK. PRESS REPORTS THAT HE WILL BE BRINGING APOLOGY ON BEHALF OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO THE GOCR.

7. (U) NEWSPAPERS REPORT THAT AVILA HAS BEEN DETAINED IN SAN SALVADOR IN CONNECTION WITH LAST YEARS' MURDER OF AMERICAN AIFLD OFFICIALS AND SALVADORAN RODOLFO VIERA, THE HEAD OF THE AGRARIAN REFORM INSTITUTE.

8. (U) COMMENT: THE AVILA CASE WILL UNFORTUNATELY DO MUCH TO BALANCE OFF THE ADVERSE PUBLICITY GRN RECEIVED OVER ITS DIPLOMATS' INVOLVEMENT IN JULY 3 BOMBING OF SAGSA AIRLINE OFFICE HERE. IF THE GOES PUBLICLY APOLOGIZES IT CAN, HOWEVER, GET SOME FAVORABLE CONTRAST WITH ATTITUDE OF NICARAGUANS, WHO REFUSED TO ADMIT THEY WERE CAUGHT RED HANDED. THE BIZARRE BACT THAT ZAMBRANO WAS IN NICARAGUA FOR OVER A MONTH IMMEDIATELY BEFORE HE "FESSED UP", TO GOCR AUTHORITIES, RAISES QUESTION OF POSSIBLE GRN MANIPULATION. HOWEVER, IT ALSO WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR GOES TO EXPLAIN HOW
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EDUARDO AVILA, A SUSPECT IN THE PERLMAN/HAMMER MURDERS, HAS BEEN TUCKED AWAY DOWN HERE IN SALVADORAN EMBASSY AS DIPLOMAT ACCREDITED TO COSTA RICA. ZAMBRANO, IN PRESS CONFERENCE REFERRED TO HIS ACTIVITIES AS PART OF A LARGE NET (UNSPECIFIED) RUN BY AVILA.
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