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SITUATION LISTING

DATE 01/13/79//013

SITUATION: NIC
SUBJECT CATEGORY: SIT

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

MESSAGE:

EHA752

OO RUEADWW

DE RUEHME #0674/01 3490340

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

O 150338Z DEC 78 ZFF-6

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4422

INFO RUEADWW/WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/JCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 0393

RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 0984

RUESBA/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE 3872

RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 0238

BT

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 20674

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS ACDA

E.O. 12065, XDS-3, 12/14/86 (GELB, LESLIE H.) GR-M

TAGS: PARM, PCAT, US, USSR

SUBJECT: SOVIET VIEWS ON LATIN AMERICAN ARMS RESTRAINT

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT). SUMMARY. DURING INFORMAL MEETING OF MEMBERS OF TWO DELEGATIONS TO DISCUSS LATIN AMERICAN ARMS RESTRAINT INITIATIVE, SOVIETS SAID THEY WERE PREPARED TO INCLUDE REFERENCE OF SUPPORT FOR MEXICAN INITIATIVE IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE. SOVIETS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MEXICAN NOTE REQUIRES ANY ADDITIONAL RESPONSE, AND THAT TO RESPOND AT THIS TIME WOULD BE PREMATURE AND POSSIBLY PREJUDICIAL TO SOVIET POSITION ON FINAL OUTCOME OF MEXICAN INITIATIVE. THEY BELIEVE THAT MEXICANS AGREE THAT LATIN INITIATIVE IS STILL UNFORMED WITH MANY ELEMENTS IN DOUBT. THEY REFERRED TO BRAZILIAN REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE. SOVIET HESITATION TO COMMIT THEMSELVES SUBSTANTIVELY TO MEXICAN INITIATIVE APPEARS TO HINGE ON UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT CUBA. THEY FEAR THAT REGIONAL RESTRAINT INITIATIVE WILL BE USED TO BRING PRESSURE ON CUBA TO REDUCE ITS ARMS LEVELS. END SUMMARY.

2. MEMBERS OF USDEL (J. MATHEWS, G. JONES, P. CLAPP) MET INFORMALLY DECEMBER 13 WITH VLADIMIR CHERNYSHEV, DEPUTY CHIEF LATIN AMERICAN DEPARTMENT, AND VADIM KUZNETSOV, FIRST SECRETARY USA DEPARTMENT, SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY. MATHEWS DESCRIBED PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES MEXICAN GOVERNMENT SEEKING FROM SUPPLIERS IN THEIR AUGUST AND OCTOBER NOTES AND SAID WE THOUGHT IT IN INTEREST OF BOTH US AND USSR

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TO RESPOND POSITIVELY AND ENCOURAGINGLY TO THOSE APPROACHES. IN VIEW OF STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MENDELEVICH THAT USSR VIEWED MEXICAN INITIATIVE FAVORABLY, WE WERE PUZZLED BY APPARENT CONTRADICTION OF SOVIET RELUCTANCE TO REPLY TO THE MEXICAN NOTE.

3. CHERNYSHEV SAID MENDELEVICH HAD ALSO SAID JOINT COMMUNIQUE OUR DELS WOULD ISSUE COULD INCLUDE ONE OR TWO PHRASES IN SUPPORT OF MEXICAN INITIATIVE, AND THAT IN ITSELF WOULD CONSTITUTE A POSITIVE RESPONSE. US SIDE REPLIED THAT COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE WOULD NOT DEAL WITH SUBSTANCE OF NOTES, WHICH IN OUR VIEW CALLED FOR FORMAL REPLY. CHERNYSHEV SAID IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO REPLY. SOVIETS HAD TALKED TO MEXICAN OFFICIALS, WHO TOLD THEM THEIR INITIATIVE REQUIRED MUCH ADDITIONAL WORK. HOW INITIATIVE WILL EVOLVE IN FUTURE NOT ONLY UNCLEAR TO SOVIETS BUT TO MEXICANS THEMSELVES. SOVIETS ALSO RAISED BRAZIL'S REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE AS ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THEIR POSITION. BRAZIL IS IMPORTANT NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT IS THE LARGEST LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY BUT BECAUSE IT IS ARMS MANUFACTURER AND EXPORTER. SOVIETS ALSO AWARE OF "CERTAIN RESERVATIONS" EXPRESSED AT AUGUST LATIN AMERICAN MEETING BY ARGENTINA, "AND POSITION OF CUBA IN THAT RESPECT IS ALSO NOT INSIGNIFICANT." TIME OF NEXT LATIN AMERICAN MEETING NOT YET SET AND "SOME LATIN AMERICANS HAVE TOLD US THAT IF IT TAKES PLACE IT WILL ONLY BE A REPEAT OF THE AUGUST MEETING." IN VIEW OF ALL THESE FACTORS, IT IS PREMATURE FOR SOVIET UNION TO DEFINE ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD MEXICAN INITIATIVE. MATHEWS SAID WE SHARED SOVIET VIEW OF DIFFICULTIES FACING LATIN INITIATIVE BUT WE DREW THE OPPOSITE CONCLUSION. THE GREATER THE OBSTACLES THE MORE IMPORTANT IT IS FOR US TO OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT.

4. CHERNYSHEV SAID US ENTHUSIASM FOR MEXICAN INITIATIVE WAS SOMEWHAT SURPRISING. DOES THE US WISH TO IMPAIR THE 1962 US-SOVIET AGREEMENT ON CUBA BY SUPPORTING THE MEXICAN INITIATIVE?

MATHEWS SAID US ABIDES FIRMLY BY 1962 UNDERSTANDING AND SEES NO CONTRADICTION IN SUPPORTING MEXICAN PROPOSAL. WE DO NOT AGREE WITH ALL ASPECTS OF MEXICAN PROPOSAL BUT BELIEVE IT DESERVES ENCOURAGEMENT.

5. CHERNYSHEV SAID USSR IN PRINCIPLE REGARDED INITIATIVE WITH GREAT FAVOR. PERHAPS CUBA IN PRINCIPLE DOES ALSO, AS IT PARTICIPATED IN AUGUST MEETING, BUT SURELY US WOULD NOT DENY THAT CUBA IS IN A RATHER SPECIAL SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA. IF LATINS AGREE ON ARMS RESTRAINT AT SOME TIME IN FUTURE, PARTICIPANTS MIGHT BE REQUIRED TO

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REDUCE ARMS TO SOME DEGREE. HOW CAN CUBA AFFORD TO DO
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