

SUBJECT: NEWSWEEK ARTICLE ON AMBASSADOR HINTON

1. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE 15 NOVEMBER ISSUE OF NEWSWEEK:

"EL SALVADOR - HINTON'S COMPLAINT

"AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT IS USUALLY SEEN BUT NOT HEARD IN PUBLIC. IN EL SALVADOR, U.S. AMBASSADOR DEANE HINTON FOLLOWED THE RULE FOR 17 MONTHS, DISCREETLY BOLSTERING THE SHAKY GOVERNMENT AND ENCOURAGING REFORMS. BUT HIS RESERVE SEEMS TO BE RUNNING OUT. IN RECENT WEEKS HE HAS WARNED THAT HUMAN-RIGHTS TRENDS "HAVE (TAKEN) SOME HIGHLY UNFORTUNATE BACKWARD STEPS" IN EL SALVADOR, DENOUNCED THE LETHAL TACTICS OF SOME BRANCHES OF ITS SECURITY FORCES AND CONDEMNED A COURT THAT RELEASED A SUSPECT CHARGED IN THE DEATHS OF TWO U.S. CITIZENS. "NORMALLY THE AMBASSADOR WOULDN'T TALK ABOUT THESE THINGS, BUT THIS ISN'T A NORMAL SITUATION," HINTON SAID LAST WEEK. "IF THE COURT SYSTEM ISN'T GOING TO FUNCTION, IF KILLERS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS ARE GOING TO BE LETOFF SCOT-FREE, THEN THIS AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IS GOING TO SPEAK, UP."

"HINTON'S BIGGEST COMPLAINT IS THAT THE SALVADORANS FAILED TO PROSECUTE LT. ISIDRO LOPEZ SIBRIAN FOR ORDERING THE 1981 MURDERS OF TWO AMERICAN AGRARIAN-REFORM EXPERT, MICHAEL HAMMER AND MARK PEARLMAN, AND THEIR SALVADORAN CO-WORKER, JOSE RODOLFO VIERA. SINCE SALVADORAN LAW PROHIBITS SUSPECTS CHARGED IN THE SAME CRIME FROM TESTIFYING AGAINST EACH OTHER, JUDGES REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE TESTIMONY OF TWO NATIONAL GUARD CORPORALS WHO SWORE LOPEZ SIBRIAN AND TWO OTHER MEN ORDERED THE MACHINE-GUN KILLINGS. "WE KNOW THAT MAN (LOPEZ SIBRIAN) IS GUILTY AS HELL-THE EVIDENCE IS COMPLETELY CONVINCING," HINTON TOLD NEWSWEEK. "THE JUDGE JUST IGNORED SOME OF THE EVIDENCE, AND THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THE

...HEAVILY ARMED MEN IN CIVILIAN DRESS ABDUCTED AT LEAST 15 LEFTIST POLITICIANS AND LABOR LEADERS LATE LAST MONTH. THE SALVADORAN ARMY EVENTUALLY ADMITTED HOLDING EIGHT OF THE MISSING MEN, BUT THE REST ARE NOW FEARED DEAD. WITHOUT MENTIONING THAT INCIDENT, HINTON USED AN APPEARANCE BEFORE THE U.S.-SALVADORAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO DEPLORE THE LARGE NUMBER OF SALVADORANS WHO HAD DISAPPEARED AND BEEN "MURDERED -- NOT KILLED IN BATTLE -- MURDERED." HE BLAMED MANY ABUSES ON "SOME ELEMENTS OF THE SECURITY FORCES," DECLARING THAT "THE GORILLAS OF THIS MAFIA, EVERY BIT AS MUCH AS THE GUERRILLAS (OF THE LEFT), ARE DESTROYING EL SALVADOR." IF MORE PROGRESS IS NOT MADE SOON IN ENDING ABUSES AND PUNISHING THE GUILTY, "THE UNITED STATES, IN SPITE OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COMMUNISM, COULD BE FORCED TO DENY ASSISTANCE TO EL SALVADOR," HINTON SAID. THAT WARNING STRUCK MANY SALVADORAN CIVIC AND POLITICAL LEADERS AS "NOTHING SHORT OF BLACKMAIL," SAID ONE INDUSTRIALIST.

GLOOM: HINTON SAYS THAT HE HAD SUBMITTED HIS TOUGH SPEECH TO SUPERIORS IN WASHINGTON "AND THEY DIDN'T CHANGE ONE WORD OF IT." THE CUTTING EDGE WAS HIS IMPLIED WARNING THAT IT MAY PROVE DIFFICULT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO CERTIFY TO CONGRESS IN JANUARY THAT THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT IS MAKING PROGRESS IN HUMAN RIGHTS -- A CONDITION OF U.S. AID. "IT IS MY JOB AS A FRIEND OF EL SALVADOR TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SITUATION," SAYS HINTON. THE AMBASSADOR IS ALSO PESSIMISTIC ABOUT CHANCES FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE GUERRILLA WAR. "I HAD HOPED (THE LEFTISTS) WERE SERIOUS" ABOUT TALKS, HE SAID. "BUT I CONCLUDE THAT THEIR GAME IS NOTHING BUT WORLD PROPAGANDA." THE MORE FORTHRIGHTLY HINTON SPEAKS OUT, THE LESS REASON SALVADORAN OFFICIALS HAVE FOR CHEER. "THE QUESTION WE'RE ALL ASKING NOW," SAID ONE GLOOMY ARMY OFFICER IN SAN SALVADOR, "IS WHETHER WE CAN WIN THE WAR BEFORE WE LOSE THE UNITED STATES."

(JAMES LEMOYNE WITH BETH NISSEN IN SAN SALVADOR)