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By isl, NARA, Date 7-15-05

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During farewell call on SecNav 26 November, Admiral Nieto stated GOS continues in understanding that stationing of Polaris submarines in Rota falls within terms "Secret Note" (September 26 confidential exchange on "major changes") and therefore subject to "agreement" between two governments. When informed that 17 December 1962 note and 20 December clarification by Munoz Grandes gave authorization and that future conversations would refer only to working details, Admiral Nieto stated: / I don't know. We believe that this should be the subject of government-to-government discussion, otherwise the Secret Note would be meaningless. The Spanish Government is ready to consider this matter with the greatest sympathy. I do want to state that this bears no relationship whatever with my previous request. (Assistance for Spanish Navy outside framework of renewal agreement.) One thing has no relationship whatever with the other. I am not a gambler. I am talking from the bottom of my heart rather than from my head. Both matters are separate and I assure you that we wish to remain as friendly as at present. UNQUOTE.

In view

Drafted by: EUR:WE:Ortiz/Defense/CNO:Buck:pr

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In view of above and failure Nieto to state clearly official Spanish Government position on Polaris use of Rota as promised earlier, we believe Nieto backing off from position taken 13 November which may have resulted from Garrigues influence. Appears Garrigues may have been unaware of 17 December note at time of September renegotiations. Therefore, he believed Polaris question still open and covered by exchange of notes requiring prior consultation between both governments on any major change in U.S. military equipment on Spanish territory.

If above true, it seems to us that nothing can be gained by an approach to Munoz Grandes that would put him on spot and also embarrass Nieto and Garrigues. If you concur, recommend Chief JUSMG use first opportunity inform Munoz Grandes in routine manner that Navy now advertising for bids on breakwater and will soon have to inform personnel on Polaris tender of their scheduled deployment. Since these actions would make it very difficult to keep from the press, we would like his views on making an appropriate statement in near future regarding Polaris basing at Rota.

We feel this approach will enable us to determine where we stand on the Polaris question and put problem back in Munoz Grandes-Chief JUSMG channel where we would like to keep it if possible. Request country team's views earliest.

END

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