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THE WHITE HOUSE

2/26

Sandy -

This is Rick Muccio's
resignation letter.

Do you think Porus
needs to respond?

Please let me know.

2/26 Phil Caplan.

Phil -

no

④

To Jim -

RM

cc: Clerk

Muccio not PA or PAS

Noted
CS



97 FEB 24 - 1997
United States Department of State

Bureau of Inter-American Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20520-6258

2-24-97

February 25, 1997

Phil - This is a
bootleg copy from
David Johnson.
B.

President William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I had the honor and privilege of serving as your special adviser for Cuba from May 1995 until April 1996. When we met to discuss your response to the downing of two unarmed civilian aircraft by Cuban MiGs in February 1996, you joked about how challenging it is to work on Cuban issues. Yet, I was proud to have the opportunity to serve you in advancing the prospects for a peaceful, democratic transition in Cuba and never regretted taking the assignment.

That is why I write now with deep sadness to inform you of my decision to resign in protest from your Administration. I left my position as your special adviser willingly when it became clear to me that I could no longer advance the cause of democracy in Cuba. But I leave your Administration unwillingly, because of an action by the CIA to exact revenge on me for my part in the revelations by Senator Robert Torricelli about CIA misconduct in Guatemala.

I want you to know Mr. President that I acted to protect your policies and the national interest when I informed then-Congressman Torricelli in March 1995 that the CIA had misled me and the Congress about its involvement in the murder of an American citizen and the husband of an American citizen. Despite the conclusions of the Star Chamber proceedings to which I have been subjected, I faced no easy choices in March 1995. I had given my word to the Congress that your Administration was not covering up wrongdoing in Guatemala. When it became clear to me that the CIA was, I felt obliged to tell the truth to the people's elected representatives. I made a choice that was consistent with the values of your Administration and the law, and gave Congress the ability to provide real oversight of intelligence activities. For that act of conscience the CIA is being allowed to end my service in your Administration.

Mr. President, the United States is a "witness of honor" to the Guatemalan peace process. There were no interests of our country in 1994 and 1995 that justified the withholding of critical information from your ambassador to Guatemala and

from senior officials here in Washington about the participation of CIA assets in human rights abuses. You still do not know the full truth about this matter because the CIA continues to value the protection of its assets over adherence to the policies that you have articulated. The CIA refuses to recognize that the "friends" it acquired during the Cold War are now the principal enemies of the policies of democracy and human rights that you placed at the center of our policy toward Latin America and the Caribbean.

I also want you to know that to avoid embarrassing the Administration I refrained for many months from defending myself publicly against the specious allegations made about my conduct by the CIA, the Justice Department, the State Department's Inspector General, and the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. I only spoke out when it became clear to me this past fall that I would be given no due process by the CIA. After the CIA took its revenge, denying me the possibility of continuing to work on foreign policy issues for you, I tried again to avoid public criticism of the Administration by offering to resign if you would restore my clearance, or to accept an appointment to a domestic policy position if it were a clear promotion and, therefore, a rejection of the CIA's vindictive action. Neither of these compromises were pursued effectively by your advisers.

I leave your Administration to join Senator Torricelli in an effort to achieve real reform at the CIA. Senator Torricelli has offered me the opportunity to continue to work on foreign policy when the CIA hoped to end my career. Senator Torricelli has stood with me and defended me and my reputation. Your Administration has not. I believed that in taking on such controversial assignments as Cuba and Guatemala I could count on my Administration when the inevitable controversies arose. I was mistaken.

Observers and retired CIA officers refer euphemistically to "morale" problems at the CIA. The public criticism by the CIA's Operations Directorate of CIA leadership and its rejection of attempts to reign in the participation of CIA assets in systematic human rights violations are not symptoms of morale problems, but of mutiny. The Directorate is rebelling against the policies of your Administration. The denial of my SCI access is but a minor trophy in this resistance to change. If you do not take decisive steps to bring the Agency under control, far graver damage to our democracy will result than the denial of a clearance to one individual.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Nuccio

Richard A. Nuccio