

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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DISPATCH NO. HUL-A- 726

CLASSIFICATION

DATE 9 MAY 1954

TO PBSUCCESS, Headquarters

FROM LINCOLN

SUBJECT { GENERAL KUGOWN
SPECIFIC Sherwood Policy Directive

Ref: LINC 2540

In further pursuit of our efforts to avoid any premature and uncoordinated action as a result of provocation by the Guatemalan government and communist party as outlined in reference cable, we have also issued to Paul D. LANGEVIN a somewhat more specific policy directive which is to guide him and his production team in the situation created by the latest incidents.

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WILLIAM D. PLAYDON

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WDP/ EFL/ sgw

9 May 1954

Distribution:

2 - LINC

3 - WASH

~~SECRET~~
PBSUCCESS / RYBAT
CLASSIFICATION

8 MAY 1954

Several incidents show clearly that the Government of Guatemala, growing increasingly nervous by the appearance of a powerful clandestine radio station and other signs of increasing unrest throughout the country, is trying desperately to provoke opposition circles into a premature uprising, preferably into isolated, local incidents which it could suppress by armed force, using this as a pretext to make mass arrests among all known oppositionists and to restore thereby its endangered authority.

The most striking example of these governmental provocation attempts is the front-page story in Diario de Centro America of 6 May (reprinted in other papers), trying to tie the local incident which occurred on 30 April (that is, before the clandestine radio ever went on the air) together with the opposition headed by Col. CASTILLO Armas and with the clandestine radio as well, even claiming that "a" clandestine station had been captured.

Another such attempt may be seen in news stories, according to which the clandestine radio called for an armed uprising -- which is, as you know, a gross distortion of the facts.

Confronted with this obvious provocation attempt, you have to fulfil three main tasks:

- 1) Help to frustrate the provocation attempt, warn the people against any foolhardy, premature, purely local or individual action, ask for discipline and a combined effort.
- 2) Expose each example of provocation, such as the two cases mentioned above, as a sign of governmental weakness and hysteria;

note, incidentally, that such provocations have been for many years a standard device of the Soviet Secret Police in its ruthless efforts to lure any opposition into the open.

- 3) At the same time, however, be careful not to discourage the daily growing popular readiness for active opposition -- but undertake a concerted effort to channel this vitally important readiness into the right direction and at the right time. For instance, express sympathy with the rebellious campesinos of Chiquimula, interpret their action as understandable protest against the communist bureaucracy of the Department of Agriculture, and so forth.

For the time being and until a definite change of policy has been made, confine all broadcasts strictly to attacks upon the Arbenz-Communist regime and to calls for passive resistance, boycott, etc. Emphasize that this restraint is by no means a sign of weakness and hesitation, but on the contrary, a sign of strength and discipline of the oppositional cause and evidence of our determination not to cause needless bloodshed which the panicky Guat government obviously wants to provoke.