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~~SECRET~~ PBSUCCESS RYBAT

DISPATCH NO. HGG-A-845

CLASSIFICATION

TO : Lincoln

DATE: _____

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala []

INFO: Chief, WHD

SUBJECT: GENERAL— Operational-KUGOWN

SPECIFIC— Review of ESSENCE Operations

Reference: HGG-A-814

1. As I advised you when in Lincoln, I believe it is necessary for us to make a complete assessment of all plans and projects of this station.
2. Upon my return from Lincoln I discussed in detail with George L. TRANGER and with RAZMARA the ESSENCE operation and encouraged TRANGER and RAZMARA to make a complete assessment of this project. The attached assessment, prepared by TRANGER on the basis of his detailed discussions with RAZMARA, was immeasurably aided by the material which Lincoln has recently forwarded to this station.
3. It is my opinion that this report, as prepared by George L. TRANGER, faithfully reflects the actual situation of the ESSENCE project and clearly indicates that we must make substantial changes before this project will become a real asset to PBSUCCESS.

[]
Earle N. BANNISTER

Enclosure:

ESSENCE Review as noted

31 March 1954

ENB/cmh

Distribution:

2-Linc w/att
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**CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED**

2003

8 APR 1954

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CLASSIFICATION

MEMORANDUM

FROM : George L. Tranger
SUBJECT: KUGOWN/ESSENCE Activities

The following review of the Essence operation is based on discussions between Razmara/Tranger and Razmara/Essence. It is submitted in order that Lincoln will be fully aware of all current operational problems and to present our suggestions for remedial action which will assure the efficient fulfillment of PBSuccess objectives assigned to the Essence complex. Some of the matters discussed in this review have been previously reported in informal memoranda attached to weekly Kugown operational reports. At this time we wish to summarize all phases of the operation in a single report for study and whatever action may be indicated.

First of all, it is essential that all concerned recognize certain fundamentals: El Rebelde has definite limitations as a vehicle for Kugown /PBSuccess purposes; the unfortunate truth is that the Eeence operation consists to a large degree of Essence the individual; at this time we do not have the controlled facilities necessary to carry out many of the Kugown tasks frequently assigned by Lincoln as targets of opportunity. We have the impression that somewhere along the line the capabilities of the Essence complex have been oversold to Lincoln. If so we ask that you disregard any previous reports, whatever the source. The facts are contained in this review.

In advance we advise you that none of the recommendations contained in this review are presented as panaceas. Although we feel that we have or can develop facilities to further the Kugown objectives of PBSuccess, we must realistically

point out that existing conditions may make it impossible to provide the completely effective vehicle that might be desired. Everyone concerned with the Essence operation is enthusiastic and eager to exploit our assets to the fullest. We will do our best. When we cannot comply with specific requests you will be so informed.

El Rebelde is published by volunteer university and high school students who have no professional skill or experience in newspaper work and are not under any firm control by Essence. At the first sign of danger, or upon receipt of requests to follow a propaganda line not personally acceptable to them, they simply withdraw.

Assuming that professional help could be recruited (highly doubtful), the content of the paper still could not be altered to the full extent desired because of the requirement of law that known persons sign and accept responsibility for all articles. Knowing the retaliatory powers of the government, more and more "authors" have been reluctant to assume such responsibility. For a time the printers were willing to accept articles containing illegible signatures. Recently, however, the police have ordered that all articles be signed by clearly identifiable signatures. The printers will not accept them otherwise.

Legally the paper is not required to submit materials to pre-publication censorship, but in practice that has been and is required by the police. The government can and has put pressure on the printer to refuse the printing of the paper. You are aware that the printer informed the Essence group that he could not print issue No. 12 of the paper "until things calmed down."

As soon as personnel problems (discussed separately) are solved, Essence can and will make suggested changes in the paper's format, introduce subtle changes in the content, increase circulation to outlying districts, broaden the base of appeal to the extent possible and transform the publication into a political newspaper. However, Essence is convinced (and we agree) that the paper cannot be made into a hard-hitting outlet for strongly anti-government, anti-communist propaganda without running the risk of being closed down completely.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) Keep the paper going and make whatever changes possible along the lines suggested by Lincoln. The paper as presently constituted serves a useful purpose morale-wise as visible, overt evidence that internal resistance to the present regime persists. Also, the paper and its propaganda messages are well received, especially in the provinces where newspaper distribution is sparse, and it obviously serves as a harassment device against the government and requires the police to dissipate considerable energy in controlling it.

(2) Do not consider the paper as the principal or best available means of disseminating anti-communist, anti-government propaganda. Under existing conditions we feel that the "hard-hitting" variety of propaganda will have to be covertly produced and distributed (specific recommendations are contained in a separate paragraph).

From time to time Lincoln has asked that we utilize the independent press in the furtherance of certain Kugown objectives, and it is obviously desirable to expand contacts within those circles in order to contrive plants. It must be recognized, however, that the independent press here is constantly on the

defensive, subject to real and implied threats of restrictive action by the government. (For your information, the existing press law has been accurately described as "undoubtedly rigorous and perhaps unnecessarily harsh. . . a potential weapon" in the hands of the government. The law is so worded that almost any act of reprisal can be given an outward appearance of legality.)

Fear of compromise makes it almost impossible to get cooperation from the independent papers. Principally they are afraid to antagonize the government because of their considerable financial investment in plants and equipment. At times they will accept articles provided they are not too offensive and provided that they can protect themselves by obtaining the signatures of persons who assume responsibility for the materials. The lack of courage on the part of the independent press even makes the use of the "refutation" technique suggested in HUL-A-140 very difficult, if not impossible, because they are afraid of being tabbed with the pro-government, pro-communist label. In brief, they have an opportunistic eye cocked to the present and the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) Under existing conditions we should not plan on the "use" of independent papers as a major device for the accomplishment of Kugown-PBSuccess objectives. We will continually be alert to possibilities of using the press along the lines suggested by Lincoln, but we are not optimistic and request that Lincoln bear the true situation in mind when requesting action involving the independent press. Generally, the best that can be contrived through such papers is the release of relatively inoffensive USIA type materials dealing with international communism but avoiding controversial domestic political matters.

(2) However, there is a possibility (suggested by Essence) that should receive immediate attention. Essence believes that we might be able to achieve a measure of cooperation from El Espectador if we are prepared to grant a sizable subsidy or spot payments to the owners to compensate for possible retaliatory action by the government. Essence suggested that as much as \$500 per week might be required to obtain the desired cooperation. Our first reaction was that spot payments might prove as effective and certainly more economical. Whatever the form and method of reimbursement for risks taken, Essence warned that the subject paper probably would not accept an uninterrupted flow of plants. An alternating "sugar and vinegar" treatment would have to be devised (e.g., after printing an anti-communist, anti-government article the paper would have to lay off for a few days, perhaps even print a deception article flattering to the government in an unimportant way). The spot payment method has an additional advantage in that Lincoln can evaluate the importance of a proposed plant or propaganda line at the time it is submitted to us for action and indicate to us how high we should go in contriving its publication. As a final thought, it is suggested that we could probably induce cooperation from El Espectador if, when time permits, the particular propaganda item is first published in an independent or controlled medium outside Guatemala and the resultant clipping(s) rushed to us for delivery to the paper. Then, even though the item aroused the ire of the government, the paper would be in a strong defense position by being able to argue that in the exercise of press freedom it was merely attempting to acquaint the public with the nature of international news relating to Guatemala.

Personnel problems have been well covered in previous reports. Briefly in review, Essence has encountered much difficulty in recruiting persons willing to take the risks and devote the necessary time to the work. Fear is the most important consideration; apathy is a factor. Some potential recruits doubt the efficacy of propaganda, having become somewhat jaded after several years of the same old crud that has not (for them) achieved the desired results. (NOTE: we recognize that it is our job to undo such apathy.) The difficulty of getting personnel is also explained in part by the fact that the government has exiled most of the effective members of the opposition. Still another factor has been cited by Essence who wisely observed that he cannot recruit indiscriminately because of the danger of penetration.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) There is only one possible way to overcome fear and apathy at this time: MONEY. Essence is already working on this matter and is prepared to buy personal services. Again you are reminded that money is not a panacea. We expect much improvement but not a complete solution of this problem.

All of the dangers and difficulties relating to El Rebelde apply to the radio programs. A recent Razmara memorandum pointed out that the program ostensibly sponsored by the Comite Obrero folded after a one-night stand. The station owner was simply told not to sell time to the Comite. This is indicative of the treatment that can be expected for all such programs in the future, and we feel that they can never become effective for our purposes. If they should prove effective, they would be stopped by the government.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) Sustain at least one radio program for possible use as a signal device to alert internal oppositionists. Also, as in the case of the paper, a radio program (even though relatively ineffective) will have some value as a morale factor and will serve as a harrassment device to further dissipate the resources of the police charged with control.

(2) Abandon any plans for using regular commercial radio as a major vehicle for Kugown/PBSuccess purposes. Considering the limited value of the radio programs under present conditions, and in view of propaganda methods and media proposed later in this review, we feel that further attempts to improve the radio coverage would be an unwise dissipation of time and facilities, both human and material. Written scripts containing relatively mild anti-communist themes will be required. Locally, we can adapt some of the El Rebelde material for radio use.

Distribution of "white" propaganda in pamphlet, poster and leaflet form is well organized and is undoubtedly the most efficient Essence operation. Although we will later propose certain clandestine activities in connection with the production and distribution of propaganda, we intend to retain and exploit existing "white" facilities to the extent possible under existing police pressure and goon squad harrassment. You are well aware of Essence organizational activity in provincial areas. Such activities will be encouraged and efforts made to employ rural followers in the distribution of propaganda. However, it is extremely doubtful that we will have the time or human assets needed to organize "black" units in the provinces. When and if "black" action is needed in the provinces Essence probably will have to recruit volunteers from existing "white" groups.

Fortunately we can state that with few exceptions the propaganda lines and guidance offered by Lincoln have been helpful and acceptable to the station, RAZMARA and ESSENCE. The reasons why such lines and guidance have not been utilized to the satisfaction of all concerned are touched on throughout this review. At this point it is necessary to comment on those exceptions that we feel are not useful or pertinent to the existing situation.

RAZMARA and TRANGER are particularly hostile to the suggestion that a strong appeal be made to the intellectuals which you, by a happy choice of words, refer to as "eggheads." You said that "the present state of things in the country is largely determined by intellectuals." The statement is entirely correct. Also true is the fact that the great majority of intellectuals here are extremists who enjoy little or no public trust. In order to establish a militant but responsible and stable opposition leadership we should appeal to the relatively reliable segment of the populace: professional and business people, liberal finqueros, moderate Army officers, Catholic priests and laymen, independent teachers, anti-Communist students, etc. Briefly, the eggheads have made their beds, let them lie in them.

We feel that it will be impossible to hit upon a more significant slogan than "Dios, Patria, Libertad, y Progreso" to represent the ideological base for the opposition movement. Those four words are in effect condensations of many things that are important to these people (e.g., "Patria" means more than country or homeland; it means national sovereignty, independence, etc.).

Our reaction to the suggestion that we attack the theoretical foundation of the enemy is less categorical than to the previous item, but some comments are indicated. First, these are not a basically theoretical people; they are not analytical; they are emotional. The communists recognize this and place their major reliance on bread-and-butter matters and appeals to nationalistic sentiments. While the communists emphasize schools, roads, education, economic and political freedom, etc., we would be in the position of dissipating precious time, money and energy on theoretical matters that at best can interest only a tiny minority. Further, theoretical indoctrination takes times. Do we have it? Appeals to the mind are excellent for long-term purposes, but we assume that our efforts now must be devoted to short-term objectives. In that event appeals to the emotions (and stomach) are indicated. Our purpose is not to win sympathizers but to encourage the presently sympathetic majority to action against the enemy.

With regard to the basic purposes of our propaganda, we feel that it should be designed to (1) intensify anti-communist, anti-government sentiment and create a disposition to act; and (2) create dissention, confusion and FEAR in the enemy camp (fear instead of theoretical blandishments to be the major device to precipitate defections from the enemy).

CONCLUSIONS

From the foregoing review it is apparent that the major operational problems are due to: (1) police controls and the fear engendered by such controls (2) lack of controlled and dedicated personnel, and apathy.

We have indicated that the personnel problem and apathy can be partially solved by bolstering ideological motivation with financial inducements.

We believe the only way effectively to circumvent police controls is to adopt clandestine methods of production and distribution.

CLANDESTINE ACTIVITY:

In addition to the overt units that will be retained and developed within the limits already described, we desire to establish and expand clandestine activities. Two units are under consideration (see attached chart).

One unit will be responsible for the production (in a safe haven) and distribution of unattributed propaganda by clandestine and semi-clandestine means. We hope that 8 or 10 persons can be recruited for this work.

The second unit will be a clandestine rumor-provocation team (also consisting of 8 or 10 persons if possible). Preliminary work on the establishment of this unit has not been satisfactory, but ESSENCE believes that he can form a fairly reliable and effective group in the near future.

The following is a partial list of reasons that illustrate our thinking in connection with the establishment or expansion of clandestine activities:

- (1) avoidance of police control;
- (2) permit us to hit specific targets which cannot be reached with overt propaganda (character assassination, attacks on pro-government personalities, policies, etc.). With overt

propaganda we now have to choose our words carefully or invite suppression; with black methods we can take off the kid gloves;

- (3) arouse curiosity, interest in the unknown, overcome the apathy now exhibited toward overt activities;
- (4) introduce a new element which will encourage enthusiasm and interest (among operational personnel and the consumers) and possibly inspire greater active participation by fence-sitters;
- (5) demonstrate through hard-hitting materials and effective distribution that a real, well-organized opposition to the government and the communists is a fact and thereby engender confidence;
- (6) harass government security forces and cause them to dissipate still more money and energies trying to suppress these clandestine activities;
- (7) possibly invite complete suppression of overt anti-communist, anti-government units and then use such suppression to demonstrate to the people here and abroad the nature and seriousness of the menace and refute claims of "democratic freedoms." The possibility exists, however, that police preoccupation with the clandestine propagandists may take some of the pressure off the overt units and permit them to take a stronger position.

Above all we feel that CLANDESTINE DISTRIBUTION BY UNCONVENTIONAL MEANS will in itself create a terrific impact on the now jaded and somewhat indifferent public. The mere fact that a "person or persons unknown" continually outwit the police with unusual methods will be

enough to spice up the activity and provoke greater interest than that now enjoyed by the overt units. Not only the material but also the operational methods will become the subject of gossip, jokes and speculation and probably create a feeling of suspense and anticipation. People will find themselves waiting for the next item to appear, may even start looking for them in unusual places. In other words the proposed action has unlimited possibilities whereas overt methods now employed are stereotyped.

Attributed materials that are now ignored will arouse curiosity if the attribution is removed and they are placed surreptitiously in restaurants (in napkin holders, restrooms), phone booths (perhaps inserted in the phone book), professional offices (among the literature in the waiting room), government offices, churches (scattered in the pews where they will inevitably be noticed by the church goers), showered over the city at rush hours by bursting balloons released from strategic places, tossed in quantity among crowds along busy streets (the distributor to hit the road quickly on a fast and maneuverable motorcycle), tossed from theater balconies an instant before intermission or the end of the show, places as inserts in other publications, ad infinitum.

Admittedly, distribution will be reduced in terms of numbers but there will be greater circulation of single copies of a particular item. Example: people have been seen to glance quickly at an overtly distributed item, crumple it and drop it on the street. If, however, they unexpectedly found an anti-communist leaflet in a government office they would probably pocket it and show it to friends and family,

comment on where it was found, etc. The net result would be greater impact and ultimately, as it passed from hand to hand, a distribution equal to that achieved by saturation methods.

In brief, our future operations will consist of the following:

1. El Rebelde
2. Radio (at least one program)
3. White printed materials (attributed to one of the overt anti-communist groups and distributed as in the past by overt means on a nation-wide basis)
4. Black provocation and rumor team (confined largely to capital city and including telephone team)
5. Black printed materials (produced and largely distributed in the capital city)

(3,4, and 5 will be the major operations for carrying out the principal KUGOWN/PBSUCCESS tasks; 1 and 2 will be more or less sustaining operations).

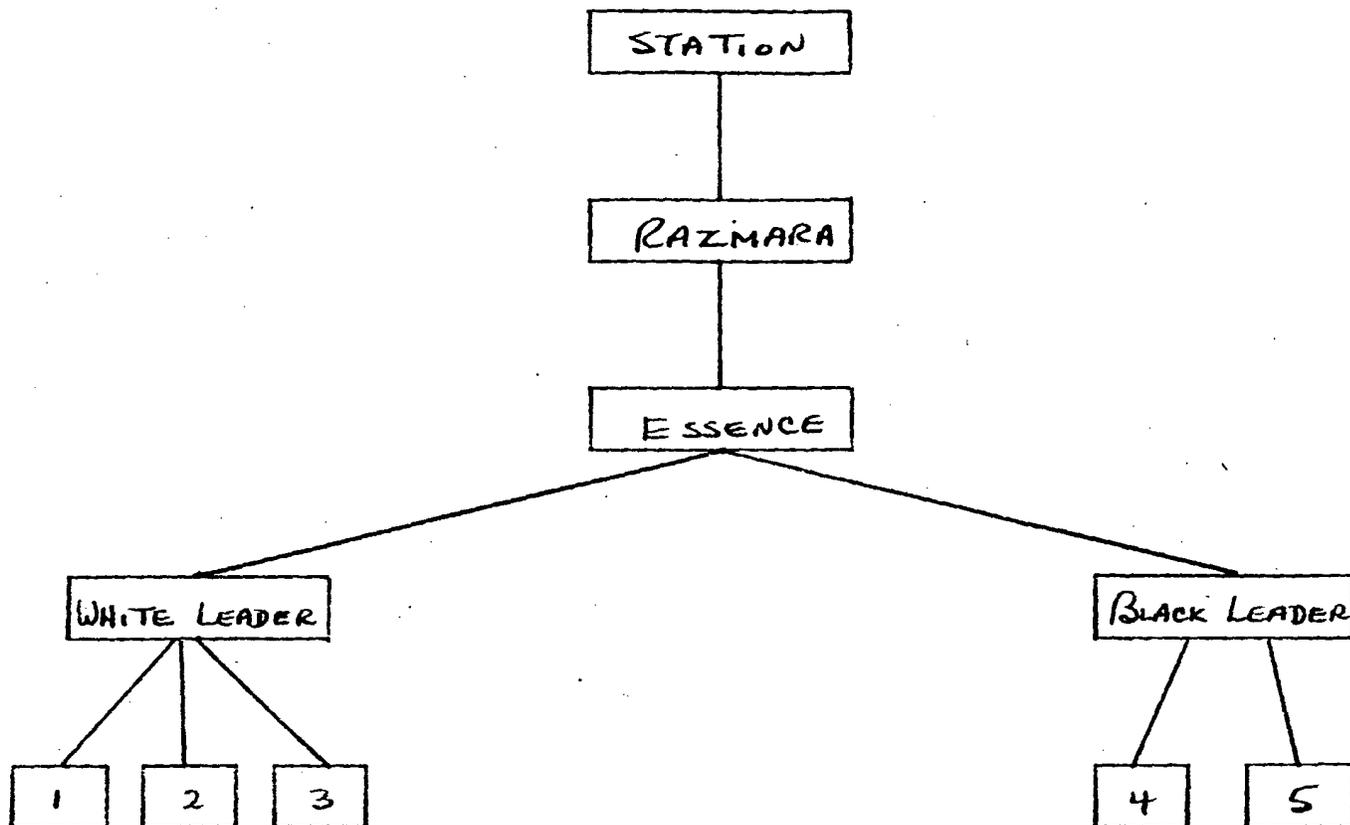
For clandestine activities we intend to emphasize the production of leaflets. They are easy to prepare and distribute surreptitiously and cannot be defaced (like posters) by communist goon squads. The propaganda messages on such leaflets will be short (two or three items) and succinct. No lofty, lengthy tomes that appeal to the intellectual minority; we intend to aim at the heart, the stomach and the liver (fear). (Random example: night distribution; leaflet placed in parked cars or under windshield wipers; message - are you Catholic or Communist You can't be both. Or, are you ready to fight for your Religion, ntry, Family, Freedom?)

We plan to establish two safe havens - one for staff work (editing propaganda materials, preparing stencils, etc.), and one for production only. The first has already been selected and we anticipate no particular difficulty in establishing the second.

As indicated on the enclosed charts a dangerous reliance will be at first placed in ESSENCE as the principal agent for both white and black activities. Under the circumstances we feel that no other arrangements is possible without undermining ESSENCE's morale, his sense of participation and importance to the movement, etc. Maximum efforts will be made (through the professional use of appropriate tradecraft) to minimize the security dangers. Indirectly, the fact that ESSENCE is connected with white activities may provide him with cover for his black activities if we can successfully conceal his relations with personnel of the latter group.

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~~Secret~~



Note: Numbers keyed to activities listed on page 13 of covering memorandum. Security hazard involved in one P/A for both white and black activities is recognized but unavoidable for reasons stated in memorandum. Reliance on Essence is a recognized calculated risk in which we estimate the greater need for short term efficiency than long term security.

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