

PBSUCCESS

~~SECRET RYBAT~~

8 July 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF OF PROJECT

SUBJECT : FM OPERATION

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

2003

I. GENERAL:

A. This report is to serve three purposes: to record the operation from its outset to its finish; to summarize the factors adding to and detracting from the success of the operation; and to list those errors made, avoidable in future operations.

B. The outline to be followed will be informal and in chronological order as follows:

1. Staging and Pre-Operation Preparations
2. The Operation
3. Comments.

II. STAGING AND PRE-OPERATION PREPARATIONS:

A. The Background of the Situation Prior to the Staging

1. Approximately 85 CALLIGERIS personnel had received training in Nicaragua, 75 of these under the guidance of FIVALL. FIVALL graduated 30 sabotage leaders, 6 shock troop leaders, 16 organizers, 4 staff personnel and 19 incompetents. Exactly 13 radio operators graduated under the guidance of DUNAVANT and MIDDLECOTT.

2. Eighty-nine tons of equipment were prepared in three forms at FJHOPEFUL. Forty-three tons were waterproofed for burial. Fifteen tons were packed for drop. Thirty-one tons were prepared for shock troop use. Prior to the staging period the entire burial and shock troop equipment had been moved to Honduras.

3. The [ ] was reluctant to provide support for this operation. The Honduran Government allowed all staging to occur inside its borders. The Nicaraguan Government permitted training and support in the form of air operations to occur within its borders.

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4. The personnel situation: We were operating under the belief that we had 267 men in Honduras and Salvador for use as shock troops and specialists, outside of the training personnel that had been sent to Nicaragua.

5. Plans:

a. Our plans were based on the belief and strong proof that a large percentage of the people inside Guatemala were opposed to Communism and were willing to fight against Communists, and the belief that the CALLIGERIS organization was a good one and that CALLIGERIS had strong organizations in each of the 9 target areas. Each of these target areas was to be organized by a trained organizer to the point that each target area could be conquered by its own inner organization, with the realization that the amount of organization within the Army unit would be the key to the amount of bloodshed necessary.

b. In addition, shock troops were prepared in the following manner:

Puerto Barrios—116 men under the leadership of [ ] to move from Macuelizo to Tenedores to Entre Rios, in order to seal off the Puerto Barrios area.

Jutiapa—46 men under [ ] to move from a point 15 miles west of Metapan through Asuncion Mita to Jutiapa and subsequently to the capital city.

A force of 70 men under [ ] was to move from Florido to Carta Blanca and be in position in Zacapa at H-Hour.

A force of 96 men under [ ] was to move from Copan Ruinas to Camotan to Jocotan to Vado Hondo to seize Chiquimula. There were to hold at Chiquimula until it could be seen whether Zacapa or Jutiapa forces needed aid.

A force of 106 men under [ ] was to move from Nuevo Ocotepeque to Esquipulas to Quezaltepeque. They were to hold at Quezaltepeque and if no aid was needed at Zacapa or Jutiapa, they were to move to San Luis Jilotepeque to Jalapa to Palencia to Guatemala City.

[ ] with 16 men was to break away from [ ] group and take Morales in order to back up the block of Puerto Barrios.

B. Staging and Preparation for the Operation

1. Just prior to D-Day the Communists made a concerted drive against our inner organization. Thousands of people, including key leaders of the Army and civilians were jailed or otherwise incapacitated.

2. Based on the fact that we believed the inner organizations were much more extensive than the portion jailed, we decided to launch the organizers and sabotage leaders to the undamaged portion of the inner organization.

3. All organizers and sabotage leaders were launched by 10 July. It is not known the percentage of these men that reached their destination, but there are many reasons to believe that a large percentage were intercepted at the border.
4. Twenty-two pre-D-Day drops were attempted. No definite light patterns were received on these drops. Portions of the arms were used later at Canales, Palencia and Quezaltenango.
5. Resident radio operators were launched, and later contact was made with Zacapa, Puerto Barrios, Guatemala City and Quezaltenango. One Quezaltenango radio operator and one Guatemala City radio operator did not come up. A radio operator formerly scheduled for Jutiapa was converted to a tactical radio operator.
6. Approximately 100 men crossed into Honduras from Jutiapa just prior to D-Day. In light of the recent roll-up of our inner organization, it was decided to use these men as harassment teams to agitate the rear of the enemy in order to determine if such agitation would ignite the inner organization to the point of a premature D-Day, at the same time hoping that an organized D-Day could be launched when practicable.
7. On assembling the shock troops, however, it was found that CALLIGERIS' total available men was approximately 165. We used the 100 men scheduled for harassment teams in order to fill out our shock troops and depended on pre-D-Day air drops to provide the agitation desired to stir up the inner forces. In addition, Nicaraguans, Costa Ricans, Hondurans and any other interested parties that wanted to join our shock troops were recruited.
8. A pre-D-Day movement of arms into Guatemala was not as successful as desired due to the Alfhem alert, delay in movement to Honduras and other troubles too numerous to mention.
9. Two days before D-Day, the decision to request permission to go was made. The facts bearing on the case were weighed and the field decision to request go was made in spite of the fact that in many cases we could not follow the original plan. One of the most weighing factors was the belief that the history of failing organizations is based more on failures to act than on failures from acting. A report on the factual condition of the situation was withheld with the realization that if the full situation were reported, pressure from above LINCOLN might have caused a delay in operations. A firm belief was shared by all that further delay would only call for a deteriorating situation.

III. THE OPERATION:

On the evening of the 18th all shock troops crossed the line at first darkness as scheduled. Throughout the 19th reporting was sketchy. On the 20th [ ] passed Tenedores. [ ] captured Camotan after a short fight with only one casualty. [ ] took esquipulas with no fight. At this point we picked up 400 recruits for the [ ] group. [ ] was reported at Carta Blanca. [ ] departed the [ ] group. The Guatemalan sabotage team cut the rail bridge between Zacapa and Puerto Barrios. Indications are that communications cuts Jutiapa to Guatemala City, San Jose to Guatemala City, Puerto Barrios to Guatemala City and Zacapa to Guatemala City were successful at this time. [ ] bombed tanks at San Jose and Retalhueh.

On the 21st [ ] was resupplied four miles out of Gualan, indicating that he was not where he was supposed to be. He was resupplied during the daylight hours. [ ] joined [ ] and his instructions were to break away when Quezaltepeque was taken and go to Jutiapa. [ ] was moving toward Vado Hondo. [ ] captured Jocotan after a small fight with the local garrison. [ ] captured one half of Puerto Barrios and controlled the communications from Puerto Barrios to Guatemala City. [ ] captured Morales, Bananera and Los Amates. [ ] bombed the tanks at Puerto Barrios.

On the 22nd [ ] sent an advance party into Gualan, which party became engaged with the opposition. He took the remainder of his forces to support the engagement and after winning, he remained in Gualan. The same day the La Ceiba boat, apparently off course, as they were scheduled to land to a reception party near Santo Tomas, landed above Puerto Barrios and immediately became involved in a fire fight. The exact efficiency of this group can only be determined by the fact that every Puerto Barrios military communique from this day on mentioned this group of 27 men and grossly exaggerated their size. The last 9 men were captured on the night of the 28th. [ ] and [ ] joined at Vado Hondo. CALLIGERIS joined them there, and the FCP moved to Managua. The fighter aircraft ran their first tactical mission, hitting the Guatemala City tanks on this date. [ ] was still containing the Puerto Barrios group. [ ] occupied Morales. Reports from TGW indicated Canales and Quezaltenango uprisings among the populace, and the two chiefs of the Chiquimula Garrison were captured by surprise at Vado Hondo.

On the 23rd [ ] met a superior force at Gualan consisting of the majority of the reinforced Zacapa Command. His radio operator was incapacitated and the radio destroyed, [ ] retreating to a point near La Union. [ ] and [ ] attacked Chiquimula without air support. The attack was successful except for remnants of the garrison which held out at the Cuartel. Thirty-two men and 2 officers were captured. The men reported that the Army did not desire to fight CALLIGERIS. One of the officers joined our forces. [ ] fled from Puerto Barrios under duress. [ ] was still holding Morales on the 23rd. The fighter support on that day hit the Zacapa Garrison, exploding an ammo storage dump, and bombed a bridge between Chiquimula and Jutiapa.

On the 24th air support was launched against the garrison that was holding out in the Cuartel at Chiquimula and against artillery installations within range of the town. An unsuccessful try was made to resupply a reported 500 men organized at Jutiapa. [ ] was run out into the mountains near Morales and the Puerto Barrios commander dispatched a large group toward the Zacapa area. Air search along the Puerto Barrios--Zacapa corridor was made a daily secondary mission for fighter aircraft from this point forward.

On the 25th the Zacapa Garrison counter-attacked Chiquimula. This counter-attack was withstood by a junior officer, [ ] with 200 men. [ ] was brought into the fight as support and was reported as having left in the face of the enemy. [ ] reports 500 enemy dead, probably an exaggerated report. [ ] weapons placement and leadership won the day. The Guardia de Honor was reported moving from Ipala toward Quezaltepeque. Air search and opportune strike flights were run on a continuous basis from this point forward. A small drop was made to a group at Jalapa. Immediately thereafter the recipients attacked the Jalapa Garrison. The air hit four trains full of re-enforcements, destroying 3 of them. Matamoros was hit. El Jicaro bridge was destroyed and the Zacapa to Chiquimula road was strafed and bombed to prevent re-enforcement from Zacapa. Two hundred fifty enemy troops were reported at La Union. Recruits continued to flock to the Liberation Army. The reported strength was 1100 at Chiquimula.

On the 26th the Zacapa Garrison again counter-attacked Chiquimula. On the same day our air support surprised them assembling at the line of departure and they were easily routed. The Jalapa group was resupplied and immediately the enemy commander reported that he was under attack by 1500 rebals. It is believed that the appearance and equipping of this group caused the immediate holding up of the Guardia de Honor in its advance into our rear from Ipala to Quezaltepeque and caused the enemy commander to delay throwing his reserves in at Zacapa-Chiquimula. The air hit the Zacapa marshalling yards, hitting one passenger train carrying troops, hit the Jutiapa bridge and strafed TGW. SOMOZA's intelligence reports that TGW went off the air at that time and that Quezaltenango radio shifted frequency to TGW frequency, Quezaltenango radio ostensibly becoming TGW. Through SOMOZA, YDIGORAS Fuentes offered 300 men to cross against Jutiapa from Salvador. He was lined up with an air drop which was to occur on the night of the 30th. He was given operation money and dispatched to Salvador to make the arrangements. (Eventually, when the final Junta was formed, YDIGORAS was informed that he was not to cross the border under any circumstance.)

All radios were ordered to concentrate on communications cuts, as evidence was on hand to substantiate the fact that PT/16 was causing confusion, which was counteractable only by phone and telegraph. Proof that the teams must have acted on orders comes from a Guatemalan Army emergency order the following day to protect the lines against the rebels at all costs.

On the 27th CALLIGERIS attacked Zacapa and on receipt of enemy fire and without air support due to weather fell back to Chiquimula. The fighter support assigned to hit the tanks at San Jose struck a ship of unknown origin reported by SOMOZA to be carrying arms to Guatemala.

On the 28th a 200-man feint was launched at Ipala for the purpose of deception, and at total darkness all forces were pulled down to the road for the final attack on Zacapa. The air that day hit the Zacapa fort, getting secondary explosions, making us believe an ammo dump was hit. Matamoros was bombed again. IGW was strafed and bombed. The Jalapa group was launched toward Zacapa and [ ] was resupplied and instructed to move to Zacapa the following morning.

On the 29th all ground forces and air support commenced the attack on Zacapa. The advance party entered Zacapa. Zacapa officers were conferred with and arrangements for the Zacapa truce were made by [ ]. The MONZON agreement was completed, and our forces were ordered to hold up. The final disposition of troops was 1500 CALLIGERIS men surrounding 700 Zacapa soldiers at Zacapa, with a reported 4500 men of the Guatemalan Army below Quezaltepeque and 1500 Liberation Army above and to the left of Quezaltepeque at Jalapa.

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#### IV. COMMENTS:

Certain lessons, some newly learned and some paramilitary axioms ignored for the sake of expediency, should be recorded for KUBARK/KUHOOK study and prevention or inclusion in future operations.

##### A. Planning

As can happen in any military or paramilitary operation, PBSUCCESS Headquarters was massive, while the implementing staff was necessarily restricted to a very few. Twenty men can easily think up more things to be done than three men can put into practice. The end result is either a necessary discarding of ideas or a valiant but imperfect implementation of the plans handed down. In this case, because of the loyalty and untiring devotion of KUHOOK field personnel to the project at hand, the latter case proved true. In the event the above is unavoidable in the future, care should be taken to arrange the planning/implementation time ratio giving the implementation phase its proper precedence. Again, since the KUHOOK field personnel did devote itself to the job, the defect was not seriously detrimental but could have been one more possible asset to the opposition.

##### B. Headquarters Direction

It is believed that one of the keys to the success of the operation was LINCOLN's willingness to delegate command to the field at the crucial operational moment. LINCOLN direction was completely constructive and avoided hand-tying, operation-crippling restrictions sometimes found in this type of project.

LINCOLN laid down the rules of conduct of the operation before the operation, confining its direction to those new situations which developed as the operation progressed. This should serve as a model for the future.

##### C. Timing Errors

Unfortunately, three incidents completely removed the element of surprise.

1. The propaganda program, one of the most effective arms of the project's paramilitary machine, was exposed prematurely in this writer's opinion. The first leaflet drop caused the opposition to spring into action right at the moment when the inner organization was necessarily the most active—organizing, equipping, recruiting, etc. To quote [ ] "In my country I have much opposition, mostly underground. I cannot afford to continually oppress that opposition, but at the first sign that it is ready to act, for instance with the type of forewarning that your leaflet drop gave to ARBENZ, I would do exactly what he did—incapacitate the entire organization if possible."

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In fairness to the PF Section, any criticism of this leaflet drop is "Monday Morning Quarterbacking." All field personnel, including the principal agent and his staff, were elated at the first news of the successful drop, and it was only when the serious consequences occurred that the act was criticized.

It is believed that the most effective leaflet drops during the operation were those following a successful paramilitary blow.

2. The premature paramilitary actions in connection with the attempt to stop the Alfhem arms movement aided the enemy in preparing counteraction to the movement. By not accomplishing the destruction of the arms and yet exposing routes of ingress and launching points, we practically negated proposed arms and specialists' movements due to occur within the following three weeks.

3. A request for a June 16 crossing and a June 18 H-Hour was delayed on June 16 to a June 18 crossing, again giving the opposition extra days of preparation after certain exposing preparatory moves had been made.

The result of the above errors was a dearth of coordination of underground support to the operation.

#### D. Value of Training

One major factor in the success of shock troop movement and combat was the calibre of unit and sub-unit leaders. Our leaders proved more effective than those of the opposition in the ground skirmishes and in the two major battles engaged in. It is believed that this effectiveness was gained in paramilitary training received under FBPRIME direction.

In addition to lifting the morale and confidence of the troops, the military efficiency of the unit leaders was shown when the first counterattack against our forces was withstood solely because of a junior officer's wise weapons' placement and command presence under fire. Although very seldom in the future will we be able to train hosts of troops when working behind the Iron Curtain, it should be a prerequisite of our KUHOOK programs that we withdraw unit and sub-unit leaders for at least a month's leadership training. By this means we regain the edge lost through lack of capability to organize in the open.

#### E. Air Support

Air Support provided the clincher to the operation. Air was used strategically to substitute for the vacancy left by the roll-up and subsequent disorganization of the majority of the inner organization. By this method, bridges were cut, reinforcements harrassed, resupply by shipping stopped, troop movements interrupted, gasoline supply virtually destroyed, and arms and ammo supplies destroyed.

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The psychological effect of fighter air support was tremendous and added to the myth that CALLIGERIS' Army was an organized, unbeatable force.

Air support was confined to strategical, semi-tactical and supply support. Close-air support was not feasible for several reasons:

1. No trained air-ground liaison teams.
2. Inefficient tactical communications system.
3. The nature of the fighting was such that unstable positions, undefinable lines and the fast aircraft being used prevented orientation by the pilots.

It should be noted here that the sole close air support employed was by a Cessna 180 and by a C-47 circling the combat area with 30 lb. fragmentation bombs and home-made TNT--nail and scrap iron bombs.

#### F. Communications

We were not prepared for a tactical communications net. Six tactical radios and the FCP radio occupied a full schedule for the base setup we employed. Team to FCP to team communications at times took 24 hours because of staff traffic and blanks in communications due to atmospheric conditions. At times, the round trip traffic was only two hours, but this was not dependable.

Use of code is impractical in a tactical net, due to the time involved and also due to the garble factor. In this operation certain immediate action messages, FCP to Air Support, were garbled. The most damaging were those in which an error or a garble occurred in coordinates. An intelligent guess by a commo officer or an air operations officer's surmise as to what was meant does not suffice. Resupply runs were made under just such circumstances when time did not permit cable clarification. In at least one such instance, it is known that the team was on the ground and that the drop occurred 9 miles North of the team area. Usually, garbles were more prevalent when the operator or commander were under fire.

Having the agent pads and Chief of Operations separated by radio from air support was a serious error rectified early in the operation. Until rectified, air requests were sometimes received after the ground action had occurred. Allowances had been made for this possibility by placing special air request pads in agent hands with the base pad at air operations, but this left air operations working in the dark as to the ground situation. When rectified, we were able to support the operation more properly.

Before rectified, however, we were forced to use voice code using  personal communications to   In these cases, at times, 6-8 hours could be cut from the time necessary for an air request to be honored.

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V. SPECIAL SUBJECT:

In every business there is a special group of persons who comprise the "scoffers," the "disbelievers"—men content to bury their complete lack of usefulness under the guise of lack of faith in success.

Our organization has its share. Some have drifted from project to project and from division to division—confusing assumed "professionalism" with plain lack of energy or ability to do more than point out weaknesses in other people's thinking.

In most cases these people are only dead wood. Usually, their most damage to an operation is confusion of the issue for a short period. However, on this project I can point out four specific instances in which support functions were warned by such characters not to offer requested support as "this project is doomed to failure."

The possible effects of tolerating such persons in an operational organization are too obvious to list here.

It is hoped that this situation can be pointed out to KUBARK heads as an existing condition, true not only in this project but also in others with which the writer has had experience.

VI. Recommendations for all field personnel considered as having performed in an efficient manner are being presented in separate reports. I wish at this time, however, to place in the body of this report my personal opinion that the key man to the success of this project is Vincent C. FIVALL.

FIVALL's firm adherence to orders enabled LINCOLN to rely on the fact that plans were being carried out within the realm of possibility and that Principal Agent attempts to alter those plans were minimized. The preservation of KUBARK interests was considered a solemn duty by FIVALL and it showed up in the results of his work.

His professional knowledge and direct manner of dealing with the indigenous personnel gained him, and KUBARK, their respect and spirit of camarade necessary to good guidance on operations of this type.

In addition, FIVALL's analytical and objective thinking and reporting spotted for LINCOLN many defects in the old CALLIGERIS organization, useful in planning the operation.

It is recommended that his services would be valuable in a KUHOOK staff position within WHD if he is to remain in WHD. If released from WHD, it is recommended that KUHOOK staff consider him for training assignments or a field project assignment after completing a KUHOOK training course a [ ]

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It would be a serious KUBARK/KUHOOK loss to lose this man through disinterest on the part of KUBARK or through allowing him to become de-motivated.

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CPM/PBSUCCESS

WR/lfw  
8 July 1954

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