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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
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TO: Director, Central Intelligence
THRU: Deputy Director (Intelligence)
SUBJECT: Significance of the 20 June UN Security Council Meeting

The 20 June UN Security Council meeting on Guatemala can be expected to have serious repercussions among members of the United Nations; strong neutralist and anti-colonial views are held by various smaller members. Communist propaganda on the issue can be expected to continue its vigorous attempt to further a recognized Soviet objective: the moral isolation of the US.

The Guatemalan complaint to the UN Security Council on 19 June appears to be an attempt to circumvent the inter-American machinery provided by the 1947 Reciprocal Assistance Treaty and to gain wider propaganda opportunities against the United States. The move was a logical one for Guatemala since the Arbenz government was aware of the effort to mobilize the 21-member Organization of American States (OAS) for action against Guatemala.

In an apparent attempt to rebut possible charges that Guatemala ignored completely the regional remedies available, the Arbenz government simultaneously notified the Inter-American Peace Commission. This body, scheduled to meet at 17:00 hours on 21 June, is a semi-autonomous five-member OAS subsidiary, now headed by Mexico's pro-Guatemalan Luis Quintanilla.

The 20 June emergency Security Council meeting ended in the unanimous adoption of a mild resolution, introduced by France, calling for "immediate termination of any action likely to cause bloodshed" and requesting UN members to refrain from "giving assistance to any such action." Soviet veto of the majority-supported Brazilian-Colombian resolution calling for action by the OAS defeated plans to have the crisis handled by regional bodies.

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In the Security Council support for the Brazilian-Colombian resolution, which the United States initiated, came from ten countries: Brazil, Colombia, Denmark, Lebanon, New Zealand, Turkey, China, France, Great Britain and the United States. Only the USSR opposed.

Action by the General Assembly would be possible under the "Uniting for Peace" resolution of 1950, but would involve time-consuming procedures running into a week or two. Among members of the United Nations as a whole, moreover, support for the Brazilian-Colombian resolution probably would not be so large as in the Security Council.

Few specific reactions by influential powers on important voting blocs in the United Nations have thus far been reported.

British Reaction:

Britain appears unwilling to volunteer any action with regard to Guatemala that might cause an unfavorable reaction in its adjacent colony, British Honduras, or involve it directly in a situation likely to cause further friction in Western relations with the Soviet Union.

There is reason to believe that London is not seriously concerned over Communist influence in the Guatemalan government and that it does not believe the Guatemalan army represents a threat to neighboring territories. The British Legation at Guatemala City has expressed these views to the Foreign Office, as well as the conclusion that the recent arms shipments do not appreciably increase the army's capabilities.

London's reluctance to give the United States strong public support on the Guatemalan issue is likely to be strengthened by British public indignation over the American request for active surveillance of British flag vessels suspected of carrying arms to Guatemala.

French Reaction:

France will probably try to avoid any action on the Guatemalan question that would further antagonize the USSR. Premier Mendes-France is eager, for domestic political reasons, to demonstrate French independence of action in international matters; at the same time he wishes to assure the United States that his government wants to maintain its Western ties. The non-controversial French resolution in the Security Council illustrated this attitude.

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Latin American Reaction:

Official Latin American reaction to the Security Council appeal and to the "invasion" is scattered and incomplete. Brazil's and Colombia's action in the Security Council indicated that they will support Washington. The Venezuelan foreign minister, however, refused to comment when approached by the American ambassador. The only other official indications have come from Mexico and El Salvador both of which intend to maintain a "neutral" position. Other comment has come chiefly from exile or left-wing groups in Latin America and cannot be taken as indicative of opinion at large.

Arab-Asian Reaction:

The Arab-Asian bloc's anti-colonial bias will influence its reactions to the issue. The line to be taken by the more volatile members of this bloc was foreshadowed in an Egyptian home service radio broadcast which summed up the situation as "a warning to the Western countries regarding the zones which they believe are subjected to them or to their complete influence."

Soviet Propaganda Reaction:

Soviet propaganda before and since the Security Council meeting has sought to support the charge made then by Soviet delegate Tsarapkin that the invasion was long planned and sponsored by the ruling circles of the United States. The Guatemalan situation is being exploited as a prime example of American imperialism.

The conflict was unleashed, according to Pravda, because "aggressive American forces are trying in every way possible to exacerbate the international situation in the face of circumstances favorable to a peaceful solution in Asia and consequently to a general easing of international tension."

Prospects for a full OAS meeting:

The outlook for a full OAS meeting, which the United States has hoped to convoke for discussion of the Guatemalan threat, is now obscure. Previous Latin American reluctance to name Guatemala specifically as a threat to the hemisphere has probably been intensified by Guatemala's current status as "victim of an invasion." It seems likely that many OAS members

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will insist that any OAS meeting discuss the charges of American, Honduran and Nicaraguan aggression against Guatemala, as well as the original case against Guatemala.

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