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5-6322

3 June 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: PLAYDON

SUBJECT : Enclosed Memorandum on Possible Modified Strategic Plans
for PBSUCCESS

1. I am sending you herewith the memorandum on the above subject that I volunteered to do on the occasion of your last meeting here. It is based almost entirely, as you will see, on the report of your conversation with WHITING and on our subsequent general conversation in the meeting in WHITING's office. It will, therefore, add little to the knowledge and wisdom you already possess but may serve to set forth in reasonably orderly form the line of thought that emerged from those conversations and to crystallize more sharply the possible modifications in strategy which we all undertook to study further.

2. I should explain the status of this memorandum. It was completed on 2 June and has been read, but only hurriedly, by WHITING and his associates on this project. I believe it is fair to say that they are in general agreement with the views I have expressed. On the other hand, this is a first draft and there are a number of respects in which both they and I would clarify it and improve it if we were not in a hurry to send it along to you.

3. Even though we are not taking time for any further editing there are four points of substance I shall mention briefly here. Two of them are mentioned in the paper but require more emphasis, we all agree, than they there receive. The other two are really additional to the paper.

a. We are gravely disturbed at what may turn out to be the extent of the damage resulting from the capture of SEMANTIC's files. The reports we have seen so far from WSBURNT express varying opinions as to the extent of this damage but do not as yet contain any clear and definite evidence. Accordingly, we foresee the probability of considerable further delay before the organizers and HRCs can move forward and a distinct possibility that the internal civilian organization will have to be largely rebuilt. Needless to say, these considerations suggest that considerable further delay will be unavoidable.

b. We are similarly impressed with the probable effect of increasingly strict security controls being applied by the WSBURNT government. We note that all private planes have been grounded at one airport where they will be easily subject to control. We also note the considerably increased difficulty of penetration through the WSBURNT/WSHOOPS border and the consequent increased reliance on penetrations by way of DEFROG. This state of affairs not only imposes additional delays but strengthens the case for testing out the capabilities of CALLIGERIS' organization to mount both internally and externally based operations in the face of the enemy's precautions before committing it to the major test of an attempted rebellion.

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c. A crucially important piece of intelligence which I did not mention in my memorandum because it is still far from firm is the report from two sources (which, to be sure, may not be independent from one another) that CALLIGERIS is not popular with the senior officers in the army and they would be disinclined to follow his lead. If subsequent evidence tends to confirm these reports, a major shift in the plan of PBSUCCESS might be necessary. In any event, the receipt of even a single report of this sort re-emphasizes the absolutely vital necessity of having in hand better intelligence on the defectability of the army before any final decision is made by CALLIGERIS or ourselves to try to detonate a rebellion.

d. Perhaps the most serious consideration of which I omitted mention from my memorandum is your own growing conviction of the personal weakness of CALLIGERIS himself. This seems to us to require careful re-examination of present plans. It is my own tentative opinion, which I have not discussed with others here, that, if it is too late in the game to drop CALLIGERIS and find another leader, we should consider trying to persuade him to delegate considerable authority to an individual of real competence preferably one of his ablest supporters, brought into his headquarters to serve as his constant adviser and guide. (I wonder if SECANT could fill this role after exfiltration?)

4. Whatever your views of the proposals in the enclosed memorandum we take it for granted that the forward movements of equipment and personnel now in progress will not prejudice the strategy decision. Specifically, I assume that the several teams and the shock troops which are moving forward to staging areas could and would be used for sabotage and harassment operations beginning immediately, if this course of action were decided upon. And I assume, too, that such operations might well be mounted from the staging areas selected as the bases for sabotage and FM operations contemplated under the original strategy. If I am correct, we can afford to take a few more days for this re-examination of strategy without in the meanwhile holding up any moves that can be made. Nevertheless, we share what must be your own impatience to agree on our course.

5. As a final point let me emphasize that what I have said in the enclosed paper and this covering memorandum is not influenced by ODACID policy considerations. I believe it is the view of most of us here that we are not under serious limitations from outside; our concern is to make sure that we have the soundest possible operational plan.

SIGNED

Encl.

Present Status and Possible Modified Strategic
Plan for Project PBSUCCESS

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**PRESENT STATUS AND POSSIBLE MODIFIED STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PROJECT
FESUCCESS**

1. The present strategic plan of FESUCCESS requires the carrying out during a preparatory phase, of four operations which are designed to pave the way for a carefully timed and synchronized rebellion by military and civilian elements against the present regime. The four operations are: (a) A major FP offensive, (b) the training and equipping of small forces intended to carry out sabotage and FM operations from a base outside of WSBURHT, (c) the building up of and the provision of arms for an internal civilian organization, and (d) the organization of a conspiracy within the armed forces. At the present time the first of these four operations is so far in advance of any of the others that the strategic plan as a whole is out of phase. The state of tension and turmoil in WSBURHT has already reached such a point that it will be extremely difficult to maintain at just the proper pitch and intensity for the length of time that will be necessary to complete the other preparatory operations. The second (training) operation has been completed. By contrast, the third, the formation and arming of an internal civilian organization, has received a setback of as yet unknown but probably great seriousness as a result of the lag in the movement of arms and equipment into WSBURHT and the capture of SEMANTIC's files and the compromise of at least the senior internal leaders. The prospects for the crucial fourth operation, the organization of a military conspiracy, remain unclear. On the one hand, most current intelligence supports the estimate that the Army is anti-Communist and that the potential, at least, for large defections and perhaps for a rebellion by virtually the whole military establishment exists. On the other hand, the original strategic plan provided (no doubt wisely) for no efforts to organize on CALLIBERIS' behalf a conspiracy within the armed forces until after organizers had gone forward into WSBURHT only 30 days before an already scheduled D-day and for no means of communicating with these organizers until after RRO's were in place at an even later date. Since the same circumstances that have delayed the movement of arms have already delayed the movement of the organizers and the RRO's, there is not as yet any military conspiracy organized and in communication with CALLIBERIS with even roughly known assets, nor is there as yet any hard intelligence as to the feasibility of organizing such a conspiracy. It should be emphasized that this uncertainty as to the defectibility of the Army was not unexpected and would have persisted about up to the present time even if all phases of the operation had remained on schedule. Delays imposed first by the disorders in Honduras and more recently by the SEMANTIC incident have, however, delayed the date by which, if all goes well, hard intelligence can now be expected to be available.

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2. As indicated above, the present strategic plan contemplates, on a previously scheduled D-day, a revolution which will involve: (a) the defection of all or part of each of the larger garrisons (with two exceptions), (b) the support of each revolting garrison by an organized force of armed civilians, and (c) externally mounted FM and SAB operations. The plan calls for the close synchronization of action and of timing among the several elements involved in each locality and among all localities in the country. In order to maximize the chances of success for this plan it has seemed important to conserve all assets until D-day and to try to prevent any violent action which might set off a movement by a part of the rebellious forces prematurely. It was necessary to depart from this general rule in the sabotage attempt against the Alfhelm's cargo. The question now arises, however, as to whether it would not be desirable to undertake forthwith sabotage and harassment actions on as large a scale as possible and to make full use for this purpose of the external assets that have been trained for SAB and FM operations on D-day and of all elements of the internal civilian organization that remain active after the capture of SEMANTIC's files has had its full effect. To pursue such a course of action would involve the shaping of the internal organization to conduct longer term resistance activities having the usual aims, objectives, methods, and organization of true resistance operations. It would also involve the commitment in advance of D-day of most of the external assets available to CALLIGERIS in a fashion which would for the most part preclude their use in the event of a military rebellion for the missions originally planned.

3. The following are persuasive arguments in favor of this course of action:

a. In view of the state of tension and turmoil that has already been created in WESBURN it seems probable that one of two developments will occur: Either there will be a relaxation of tensions and a cooling off of tempers or the pressure will continue to mount rapidly to a point which threatens an explosion. A relaxation and cooling off will create an impression in the regime, among the potential rebels, and in the general public that Arbenz has survived another crisis and his enemies have again demonstrated their weakness and lack of organization. At a minimum such an outcome will dissipate the effects of the already successful FP campaign and, though it might lead to some relaxation of precautions by the regime, will leave all opposition elements in a timid and discouraged state. If the conspiracy against the regime were tightly organized and its personnel subject to discipline (as in a typical Communist conspiracy) this outcome might not be disadvantageous. But it would gravely impair the prospects of a movement which will require, if

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it is to succeed, the quick and spontaneous support of many individuals and many groups that have not been and cannot be built into a closely knit organization.

b. It is generally agreed that the success of any rebellion in WESURWT will turn on the behavior of the Army. As stated above, there is extensive evidence that the Army is strongly anti-Communist and is increasingly dissatisfied with Arbenz. Nevertheless, the behavior of most of the potentially rebellious officers on whom reports have been received suggests that they will not actively join a rebellion unless and until convinced that there is real strength behind it and that it had a good chance of success. It may be that the organizational activities provided for in the present strategic plan will overcome this state of mind and induce many officers to join an organized conspiracy in support of CALLIGERIS. But the chances of their so doing would be much increased by events which created the impression in their minds that the regime was weak and that a crisis was approaching. Moreover, a spontaneous military rebellion by virtually the whole of the Army acting on the initiative of a number of its senior officers quite independently of any larger nation-wide conspiracy, and independently, too, of external leadership, may be more likely than a conspiracy organized by CALLIGERIS. Yet such a spontaneous military rebellion would surely be rendered more likely by an atmosphere of pressure and crisis. In short, a course of action which will produce a mounting sense of pressure would seem likely to improve the chances for either an externally organized or a spontaneous rebellion by the Army.

c. A serious defect of the present strategic plan is that it allows for very little time between the actual organization of the military and civilian conspiracy in the field and the launching of a full-scale rebellion and therefore allows little opportunity even to assess the strength of the assets that can be accumulated and no opportunity whatever to test out in active operations the effectiveness of either the civilian organization or the external assets intended for S&B and PH operations. This weakness of the plan is compounded by the complexity of the operation called for on D-day itself and the requirement of quite precise synchronization. By contrast, the immediate inception of harassment and sabotage operations and their conduct preferably on an expanding scale would (if successful) both train and test a resistance movement. It would both require and provide an occasion for the improvement of channels of communication, and it would certainly yield intelligence as to the quality and reliability at least of the civilian assets believed to be available. There are, of course, real dangers in any effort to maintain in existence for a considerable period of

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time a conspiratorial organization but it is questionable whether any organization that cannot stand this test will have the capability to mount the operations presently planned for D-day.

4. These major advantages must, however, be weighed against the cost and risks that have deterred the suggested course of action up until this time.

a. The principal cost is that the course of action proposed would require the commitment of external assets and render them unavailable for FM operations if and when a military rebellion materializes. It is submitted, however, that this cost is not a heavy one for two reasons. First, if the sabotage teams that have been trained outside of WSBURNF now move into the country, recruit additional local personnel, gain some experience, and are reasonably careful, they will not be lost as assets but considerably augmented in number and improved in quality. Likewise, if it is possible to set up through the HRO's an improved communications net and to keep it functioning in hostile territory, the chances of carrying out at a later date a synchronized operation will be vastly improved. Accordingly, the only asset that will be dissipated and rendered unavailable to support a military rebellion will be the personnel of the three FM shock forces. On the present plan, these would be too small in numbers to be decisive in themselves and their ability quickly to reach their objective would be questionable because of the heavier guards that have now been posted along the WSBURNF frontier. One of these three units was intended to perform what would in effect be a major sabotage operation (inland from Puerto Barrios), and if this is considered an essential element of any successful military rebellion, one group of trained men might be retained for this purpose. But the other two shock forces were expected only to join with and reinforce two revolting garrisons. If the garrisons in question do actually rebel, the shock forces would hardly seem to be needed; if the garrisons do not, the shock forces would certainly not be adequate. Accordingly, the abandonment of this feature of a D-day plan would not seem to be too serious.

b. The principal risk that has deterred the encouragement of harassing and sabotage operations up to this time has been that of a premature detonation of a rebellion. Naturally, if, unknown to us, there is already a well organized conspiracy within the army, then the sooner action is detonated the better. If, however, as it is safer to assume, no organized conspiracy as yet exists, then a mounting sense of pressure in the country will be more likely to stimulate army officers to conspire with one another than to induce a premature overt rebellion, at least until a conspiracy had been put together with some success. To be sure, if tension remains high and a real sense of crisis develops, there will be a real risk of premature action. But this is inherent in any revolutionary

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situation unless the revolutionary forces are tightly organized and disciplined. At the moment there is no prospect of creating in WSBURNT a revolutionary movement with a high degree of organization and discipline. Accordingly, the choice is between failing to create the sense of crisis which alone gives promise of success and accepting the risk of so doing.

5. On the basis of the foregoing considerations, the balance of advantage, it is submitted, is clearly in favor of an effort to maintain and tighten the present sense of tension by sabotage and harassment activity, to test and train the civilian organization in the process and to make of it an active resistance movement, and simultaneously to approach defectable military leaders as planned for the purpose of organizing a military conspiracy. The general outlines of this modified strategy require no further elaboration but a few suggestions may be in order as to its implementation and implications.

a. Presumably the only assets immediately available to undertake harassing and sabotage operations are those now in WSHOCPS. Accordingly, the first phase of the revised strategic plan would be a series of such operations which would have to be mounted from WSHOCPS, at least until such time as it had been possible to lay the foundations within WSBURNT for a continuing active resistance movement.

b. One of the requirements for a continuing active resistance movement would seem to be far quicker and more reliable communications than are now available and dependable arrangements for moving supplies and arms into WSBURNT, at least on a small scale, as required. To meet the first of these needs, the RROs should presumably move forward as soon as it has been possible to identify civilian leaders that have not been compromised through SEMANTIC's files. Presumably the organizers would move at the same time and their mission would be modified and expanded into that of initiating necessary arrangements for the receipt and storage of at least small quantities of equipment, the provision of shelter for SAB teams to enable them to operate within WSBURNT for considerable periods of time, and suitable contact between active teams operating in an area, the civilian leader in that area, and through him, the RRO. The continuing task of the resident civilian leader would be to recruit additional local personnel for local operations, as well as to develop a civilian organization for use at the time of an open rebellion. As the internal resistance organization developed it might well be possible and desirable to supply equipment needed in appreciable quantities by way of air drops.

c. It should never be lost sight of that the whole purpose of developing an internal resistance movement and carrying out sabotage and harassment operations could not be as in wartime to interfere with the communications or the supply of a hostile military force or to tie down in occupation duty troops that would otherwise be available

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for active combat. By contrast, the purpose of these activities in WSEBURET would be to make the Arbenz administration aware of the existence of a widespread and well-organized conspiracy, to dramatize for the general public the extent of and the inability of the regime to cope with it, and above all, to convince the army and non-communist political leaders that a moment of crisis was approaching. These are all FP objectives. The success of any specific operation would therefore be measured by the degree to which it produced a state of confusion in the country, caused a breakdown of its essential services of a sort not likely to be resented by the public or the army, gave an impression of the power of the underground opposition, or tended to break the nerve of the administration. Targets should be very carefully selected with these tests in mind. Operations which resulted in considerable bloodshed, or which appeared to be wanton acts of destruction, or which seriously damaged the property of influential local citizens or injured the pride of the armed forces would be apt to produce the exact reverse of the desired result. Above all, it would be important to avoid a situation in which the pride and honor of the army came to be at stake in its efforts to put down internal disorder.

d. With this last objective in mind, a campaign of internal harassment and resistance should be accompanied with a FP program aimed mainly at the army. Presumably its theme should be the unity of interest between the resistance and the army in their common desire to oust the communists. Another supporting theme might be the alleged existence of a large conspiracy within the army friendly to and explicitly allied with the civilian resistance movement.

e. Concurrently with the development of a true internal resistance movement and with harassing operations, the effort to organize a military conspiracy should go forward as rapidly as possible. For security reasons there should probably be a minimum number of contacts between sympathetic military officers and the civilian resistance movement. Certainly, since the main object of the exercise would be to defect military officers in place, they should neither be used in nor knowledgeable of harassment operations. Moreover, if our present estimates of the temper of the army is correct, there is every advantage in having the military conspiracy organized by and in the army with a minimum of direction and contact from the outside. There is always a chance that it would develop into a movement quite independent of CALLIGERIS which would perhaps carry out a spontaneous army rebellion and there is also a possibility that a conspiracy initiated in this way would absorb or be absorbed by any other opposition afoot in the army and thus gain a broader base. The basic objective is not to bring about a military rebellion in the interests of CALLIGERIS or any other particular individual but rather to prompt a crystallization of the opposition within the army and to create in the minds of the members of this military opposition a sense of alliance with the civilian resistance movement.

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f. The revised strategic plan here suggested would have obvious implications for the timing of PPSUCCESS. If it were highly successful one can hope that a sense of pressure and crisis would build up fairly rapidly, and that a spontaneous military rebellion would be induced within the near future. In this event, of course, there would never be a D-day organized and detonated from outside the country. But if opposition within the army is still uncrystallized and unorganized, if no rebellion comes about until a real resistance movement and a real military conspiracy has been organized and a plan of synchronized action developed and put into effect, it is difficult to avoid the impression that D-day would have to be postponed until at least a number of weeks after that presently contemplated.

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6. A revised strategic plan would have obvious implications for the timing of PBSUCCESS.

a. If sabotage and harassment operations were highly successful, and if in fact the army is ripe for rebellion and is reasonably unified, one can hope that a sense of pressure and crisis would build up rapidly and that a spontaneous military rebellion would be induced within the near future. In this event, of course, there would never be a D-day organized and detonated from outside the country. But if, as well may be the situation, opposition to Arbens within the army is and remains uncrystallized and unorganized, it must be assumed that no successful rebellion will come about until a real military conspiracy has been organized on the initiative of CALLIGERIS and his supporters or on that of some other leader or group of officers with whom contact can be established. Moreover in the absence of a spontaneous military rebellion, it will be desirable to have the support of a real resistance movement and nearly essential to have at least a communications system. For purely operational reasons, therefore, it seems unlikely that the preparatory build up for an externally directed rebellion could be completed and a plan of synchronized action developed, communicated, and put into effect, until at least a number of weeks after the date originally contemplated.

b. It should be emphasized that, even if the remaining steps in the original strategic plan were carried out without modification on the schedule previously laid out, some weeks postponement would be necessary. The organizers seem not yet to have gone forward as of the 1st of June and the RROs have not even started forward. Presumably, these men will have to wait at least a few more days until the extent of the compromise resulting from the capture of SEMANTIC's file has been more closely assessed. Accordingly, they can hardly be in place with less than a month's delay behind the originally contemplated date. As pointed out above, the original plan left very little time for them to do their work and to communicate back to LINCOLN and to CALLIGERIS firm, first hand estimates of the extent of the defection to be expected in each garrison. To try to telescope further the time allowed between the arrival of the organizers and RROs at their stations and D-day would gravely prejudice both the chances for the success of the operation and the availability of the intelligence on which alone a final decision can be made to launch it. The conclusion appears inescapable, therefore, that something close to a month's postponement is unavoidable even in the absence of any change of the strategic plan.

c. The proposed modified strategic plan differs from the original plan in two respects that are relevant for timing. First, it calls for a more careful build up of a resistance movement and for the actual carrying out of externally and internally based harassment and sabotage operations prior to D-day. Second, it envisages the need for more time than allowed in the original plan to organize a military conspiracy and for much firmer intelligence on the state of the military conspiracy prior to a final decision by any external headquarters (CALLIGERIS, LINCOLN, or Headquarters) to touch off a rebellion. Accordingly the adoption of the modified strategy would probably require somewhat longer postponement of an externally scheduled D-day than that already rendered unavoidable by the delays that have been experienced to date.

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