

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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DISPATCH NO. ~~ATULW~~ - 290

~~SECRET~~ RYBAT
CLASSIFICATION

TO : Chief of Station, Lincoln
ATTENTION: CONNIFE

FROM : Chief, WH

DATE APR 28 1954

SUBJECT { GENERAL Operational
SPECIFIC Daniel Alfonso ~~MARTINEZ~~ Estevez

RYBAT PBSUCCESS

RE: LINC 953 (IN 25237); DIR 44167 (OUT 81647)

1. Pursuant to the above station references a special inquiry concerning Subject was undertaken by KUSODA and results of this investigation are attached. In addition to the attached reports KUSODA also determined a thorough check of ODIBEX service files that the Subject entered the West Point Military Academy as a Foreign Cadet on 1 July 1944 and resigned without prejudice on 19 January 1945. The Subject gave as his reason for resigning the fact that it was difficult to adjust himself to Cadet routine and overcome the language barrier.

2. Two previous checks at ODACID produced no record. However a later check of the Division of Biographical Information of ODACID in the names of the Subject produced substantial information which is attached herewith. Other agency checks are pending and the station will be advised of the results when completed.

3. The attached information is being transmitted to station with the usual KUSODA limitations on distribution, applying in this instance.

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OLIVER G. GALBOND

Attachments - 14 pages

27 April 1954

Distribution:

Orig & 1 - LINCOLN

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13 April 1954

On 12 April 1954, the records of the Division of Biographical Information of the Department of State were searched in the subject's name and reflected the following information. It should be noted that most of the information appears in the file under the name of Alfonso _____.

A Biographical Data report dated 12 August 1952 states that Subject had risen to the highest ranks of the Guatemalan Government through his association with President Jacobo ARBENZ. He was born of Spanish-American parents, 30 August 1923 at Escuintla, Guatemala. He attended the Guatemalan Military Academy (Escuela Politecnica) from 1940 to 1944. There he became an honor student and achieved the highest rank in the cadet corp. In 1944 after being commissioned a Second Lieutenant, Subject was appointed to the U. S. Military Academy, West Point, reportedly at the insistence of ARBENZ. However, he left West Point the following year under unknown circumstances which caused varying rumors, the most charitable of which was that he intended to marry a Guatemalan girl, Gencha RITZ who worked at the Guatemalan Consulate in New York. They are, in fact, now married and have two children, ages 4 and 6.

In October 1944, Captain ARBENZ, along with Major ARANA and Jorge TORIBLIO, lead a revolt in Guatemala and installed themselves as a triumvirate. In 1945, Subject was taken on as an aide-de-camp to ARBENZ who was then Minister of Defense under Juan Jose ARAUCA.

In 1946, Subject was elected deputy to Guatemalan Congress for 1947 to 1951 as a representative of the Department of Solola. He was elected on the ticket of the Partido Accion Revolucionaria (PAR), a leftist and Communist infiltrated party associated with ARBENZ, although in a statement made in July 1952, he stated he had never been inscribed as a member. In Congress, he associated with the dominant leftist bloc, being named on a Congressional Committee to be sent to Yugoslavia to study land reform in 1948. The trip was evidently cancelled in June 1948 when the U. S. S. R.-Yugoslav break was made public.

Subject remained closely associated with the presidential aspirations of ARBENZ as against those of Colonel ARANA. In July 1949, ARANA was assassinated. The assassination was generally attributed to supporters of Colonel ARBENZ and it has become accepted that Subject, among others, took a leading part.

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DAN to end land seizures apparently designed to curb the Communist inspired illegal seizures of land such as had occurred in the Escuintla since December.

Despatch #769, 9 March 1954, stated that Subject had been elected a member of the Political Committee of the Partido Accion Revolucionaria (PAR). He, in an open letter to the PAR leadership, had refused to be considered for Secretary Generalship, stating it was incompatible with his office.

Despatch #920, Guatemala dated 18 April 1953 reported that Subject was reportedly the leader of the political faction of the PAR, which faction had been defeated in an election of political officers. Subject was a close confidant of President ARBENZ. Subject's faction had supported the candidacy of pro-Communist PARist, Guillermo MELBOO NE for the position of Secretary General. The election results were considered somewhat of a blow to the Subject, who, it was said, had great hopes for succeeding ARBENZ to the Presidency in 1957 and who felt control of PAR was necessary to achieve this ambition.

Despatch, #682, Guatemala dated 5 February 1952 reported that Communists there had been outspoken in opposition to Subject's Agrarian land reform program and a clash appeared possible.

Cable Airgram (CA-4266) dated 11 February 1954 to the American Embassy, Berne, Switzerland, stated that Subject had departed for Zurich suddenly on 10 January. Conflicting rumors regarding his leaving Guatemala were as follows:

1. He was sent on official mission behind Iron Curtain.
2. He was sent to deposit money for ARBENZ.
3. He wanted to get out before ARBENZ was overthrown.
4. He was in political disfavor with Communists over the Agrarian Reform program and feared threat of a "mass attack" on his person.

His department in the government, heavily infiltrated by Communists, administered the Agrarian Reform Laws. He had been given an unlimited field (of which he obviously took advantage) for personal graft, as controller of the importation of the country's supply of narcotics and liquor. He appears interested in ideological problems, only as far as they interest his personal gain. He has refrained, apparently by design, from taking active part in Communist causes. He attended West Point from 1944 to 1945 but left under undisclosed circumstances. Berne, Switzerland was asked to advise the Department concerning the Subject's activities while abroad.

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After ARBENZ's election, Subject was made his private secretary. He took an intimate part in the ARBENZ administration, being generally regarded as more shrewd and ruthless than his chief. His reputation for toughness was substantiated by an incident in December 1951 when he forcefully caused the resignation of Minister of Interior, Sr. Ramiro ORLANDO Paniagua. Subject has been instrumental in carrying out administration's relations with the Caribbean Legion.

In June 1952, ARBENZ made Subject Chief of the National Agrarian Department (DAN) to administer the new Agrarian Reform Law. The appointment came as a surprise and was partly instrumental to the splitting of the PCG (Partido Comunista Guatemalteco) who had supported its leader Augusto C. C. for the part.

Subject gives the impression of being a swashbuckler and a pirate. He carries a pistol and has the reputation of being a roistering drinker. He appears to have no interest in ideological problems other than to further his own power. Although he gives lip service to the revolution by line, he has refrained from associating with Communist causes. His reported to live far beyond his reported income and it had been rumored that he extorted money from persons affected by Agrarian Reform.

Subject's feelings toward the United States were not known. He sent his young son to an American school in Guatemala. He speaks some Spanish. He was issued a United States Visa on 11 July 1949 (one week after ARBENZ's assassination.)

A memorandum concerning interview with Ambassador GONZALEZ, 28 October 1953. GONZALEZ stated that Subject was living on a scale far beyond his salary as an Army Officer. He has a magnificent home and two cadillacs. He had charge of the importation of Narcotics and Whiskey into Guatemala, in addition to his job as Chief of Agrarian Reform.

Summary of Report on Guatemala, prepared by John A. Clements Associates, New York City, Fall of 1952 stated that although the Communist position in Guatemala was strong, they are not invulnerable. Captain Alfonso _____, head of the Agrarian Department, regarded by many as the coming strong man of Guatemala. Not under their control, although they did make deals with him. He was regarded as number two man in the government, and had showed aspiration of becoming number one. He was regarded as motivated solely by desire for personal gain. He could play along with the Communists not because he feels it expedient. He would turn against his friends or enemies in a moment if he thought it to his

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_____ advantage to do so. There was evidence of a growing coolness between _____ and his old friend, ARBENZ.

Press Digest, American Embassy, Guatemala, 19 May 1953 reported that Major Alfonso _____, Chief of DAN (sic) was President of Autonomous Sporting Confederation of Guatemala (CDAG) that year. The directors of the CDAG had been summoned by the education and finance commissions of Congress to account for "various irregularities" it had committed and for the low state of organized sports in Guatemala today.

Press Digest, American Embassy, Guatemala dated 7 May 1953 stated that Roy GOMMILL, secretary of Agrarian Affairs of the Branch in the Department of Escuintla, was shot to death, 6 May in the El Galisteo "bar-restaurant" there by the Calceyner FERNANDEZ, also a member of a "constant companion and confidant of Major Alfonso _____, Chief of the DAN."

Press Digest, American Embassy, Guatemala, 19 January 1954 stated that Major Alfonso _____, DAN Chief, had failed for the second time to show for a scheduled meeting on financial of Victor FRIEDMAN (aka "MARTIN") due to "urgent cabinet meetings." Chief Inspector, Mario SOLA (A Communist ed. [sic]) presided instead. NOTE: Victor FRIEDMAN was thought to be the brother of Minor FRIEDMAN, confidant of formerly a confidant of President ARBENZ.

BB summary dated 3 March 1954 stated that a Mexican newspaper speculated that _____ had left Guatemala due to a disagreement with ARBENZ. Subject said this was absurd, that his trip was a private one. He had visited the Guatemalan Minister L. Barne. He denied any disagreement with ARBENZ. He denied also that he made the trip to purchase arms.

Embassy Guatemala Digest of Press dated 22 June 1953 stated that Subject had been granted judicial immunity, a privilege enjoyed by ministers and other high government officials.

"New York Times" clipping dated 8 February 1954, stated that Subject, "for ARBENZ aid" and one of the "strongest men in the Guatemalan government" had left Guatemala suddenly on 14 January flying to Zurich, Switzerland. In spite of a statement from the President's office that Subject's departure had been upon the advice of physicians, Subject was reported to be in excellent health. Stopping off enroute at Mexico City, Subject was quoted by "La Prensa" as having said that he planned "to

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reside in Switzerland because of the threat of mass attack" against him during the trouble shooting tour of Escuintla.

During one of Subject's meetings with pro-Communist elements, "La Prensa" stated, Subject had been greeted with cries of "¡Eh, to' _____!" "La Prensa" further quoted Subject as saying that he was "still a good friend of Mr. ARBENZ" but that since he could no longer be of use to him, he was withdrawing.

Despatch #380, Guatemala dated 3 November 1953 states that the treasury in one manner or another had involved some of the highest officials of the ARBENZ administration and that the possibilities of private enrichment in government service were a most important factor in binding "revolutionary" forces together; Subject, chief of the PAN had recently completed a large residence in a fashionable district at a reported cost of \$80,000. He had also acquired valuable business and commercial sites.

Radio teletype, Guatemala, Guatemala, 16 January 1954 stated that Subject had left for Switzerland after threats had been made against his life after he had attempted to stem "Communist inspired" invasions of privately owned properties by landless peasants in Pacific coast area of Guatemala. The peasants had shouted, "Death to _____." It was also felt that his departure might be due to a break with his close friend and associate, President ARBENZ.

Despatch #2238, Guatemala dated 21 February 1947 reported that one Teniente Alfonso _____ was elected to Congress in the January 1947 election there.

Despatch #2671, Guatemala dated 61 October 1947 reported that one Alfonso _____ member of the Independencia party, was a member of the National Legislative Assembly.

Despatch #D 201, Guatemala dated 27 April 1949 reported one Alfonso _____ E. member of Partido Comunista Revolucionaria whose term in Guatemalan Congress was to expire 21 February 1951.

Despatch #446 dated 11 September 1951, Panama, stated that the newspaper "Alerta" had charged that one Alfonso _____, a Guatemalan was involved in a plot to kill E. ARBENZ along with Trujillo and his "hangers on" Rufino P. MAMBRÉ, Juan S. Scazalez and _____ and Minister of

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Education, SANCHEZ. Subject, along with FERNANDEZ and SANCHEZ, had also been in Guatemala when Colonel ARANA was assassinated.

17 September 1951, Department correspondence, stated that Daniel Alfonso _____, born 30 August 1923 in Guatemala, private secretary to President of Guatemala was issued a visa to enter the United States on official business.

Telegram #157, from San Jose dated 24 January 1952 stated the Military desired to get rid of Captain Alfonso _____, by assigning him to Embassy in Washington, D. C., but the Department of State had allegedly refused to accept him.

Despatch #972, Guatemala dated 26 March 1952 stated that the President had rejected the resignation of Captain Alfonso _____ Estavez, his private secretary and Sr. Alvaro Hugo SANCHEZ, Secretary of Propaganda, who had tendered their resignations, per custom of President's principal assistants resigning during each year on the anniversary of President's inauguration.

Despatch #962, Guatemala dated 21 March 1952 stated that President ARBENZ had confirmed in office, his private secretary, Captain Alfonso _____, and two days later, his office announced the appointment of Francisco TORAZAN, and ex-Caribbean Legionnaire, as his personal secretary.

Despatch #224, Guatemala, dated 1 September 1952 announced the Promotion of ARBENZ, of Captain Alfonso _____ Estavez, Chief of National Agrarian Department, to be Major _____.

Despatch #8 dated 2 July 1952 reported that Captain _____, Chief of National Agrarian Department, was ex-officio President of the National Agrarian Council. He was formerly private secretary to ARBENZ and was noted for his participation in the 1949 assassination of Colonel Francisco ARANA, his liaison duties with the Caribbean Legion and his influence over the Chief Executive.

Despatch #14, Guatemala, dated 3 July 1952 reported that President ARBENZ had appointed Captain Alfonso _____, his principal private secretary and one of his closest associates, as head of National Agrarian Department (DAN) an autonomous agency, designed to carry out the recently enacted Agrarian reform law. The appointment had come as a surprise. Captain _____ was described as a forceful, ruthless person without marked political convictions, who could be expected to run DAN with a firm hand and an eye toward the advancement of his own material and political fortunes.

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Despatch #263, Guatemala, dated 1st September 1952 announced Subject's promotion to Major.

Despatch #349, Guatemala, dated 16 October 1952 stated that in an apparent effort to repair that latest damage done to Guatemala-Salvaderan relations, by Guatemalan Communists and leftist anti-Communist moves, ARBENZ had sent Subject to El Salvador with a personal message to OSORIO. ARBENZ reportedly agreed to put an end to the agitation.

Despatch #561, Guatemala dated 23 December 1952, stated the Subject, Chief of the National Agrarian Department, was a man of forceful character and could emerge as the key Guatemalan figure. His rise, however, has been thus far dependent upon President ARBENZ.

Despatch #101, Guatemala dated 31 July 1953 reported that Marco Antonio RAMIREZ has stated that considerable opposition had been encountered in interesting beneficiaries of agrarian reform to form co-operatives which was the "only way" for small farmers. Part of the difficulties were due to the Subject, who because of his political ambitions, believed that it would be better if workers received individual parcels, whereas co-operatives might develop into opposition groups.

Despatch #347, Guatemala, dated 21 October 1953 reported Subject's name had appeared with thousands of others for a petition for negotiations among the United States, the U. S. S. R., the United Kingdom, France and Communist China. The campaign for the petition had been initiated by the Communist-front, Guatemalan National Peace Committee.

Despatch #625, Guatemala dated 22 January 1954 reported that Subject had, on 18 January, suddenly left by plane for Zurich, Switzerland, abandoning his unfinished work of investigating Agrarian reforms disturbances. Stories regarding his departure were conflicting. Some said the Subject had gone to Mexico for medical treatment, others, that he was leaving the country because ARBENZ would not back him against the Communists, inciting the agrarian reform Escuintla disturbances; that he wanted to get out before ARBENZ was overthrown; that he was going on a secret mission behind the Iron Curtain; that he had been sent to Switzerland to hide money for ARBENZ or to buy arms for the government.

Despatch #776, Guatemala dated 12 March 1954 stated that Subject, Chief of National Agrarian Department had announced the intent of the

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