

For Line
CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM ~~TOP SECRET~~

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Ever since the work was first started on the preparation of a plan for PBSUCCESS it has been fully recognized that the US would be accused of being the main sponsor of most if not all activities directed against the Arbenz regime. Written statements to this effect were included in the report on Stage I written in December 1953, in a paper written in March 1954 and presented to the Secretary of State and there have been numerous other oral reports to the same effect. Moreover it was assumed that in an operation of this scope some evidence supporting the accusations would unavoidably be available. Nevertheless it was concluded that there was sufficient likelihood that no irrefutable evidence of a legal nature would be discovered to justify the undertaking particularly when the risks were weighed against the importance of the project.

A careful review of all factors bearing on security which have occurred to date indicates that so far the estimates have been accurate and that security has been as well maintained in this project as could reasonably be expected. Consequently it is fair to assume that no irrefutable evidence tying the project to the US Government is in the hands of the enemy. It would of course be as impossible in this case as in all others to guarantee this last statement but it can be asserted that the risks of US involvement today are not such as to warrant, in our opinion, a termination or modification of the project on security grounds, if it is otherwise desirable.

On the general question of US involvement it would seem that the following observations are appropriate:

- a. Although a number of individuals in both the Nicaraguan and Honduran

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Government are undoubtedly personally convinced that the US is sponsoring this operation and although the Guatemalan regime may and probably does have *indications* evidence to this effect, plausible denial by the US in response to any charges could still be sustained. This would be especially true if the Guatemalan regime had been effectively overthrown and its leaders scattered.

b. There is not the slightest doubt that if the operation is carried through many Latin Americans will see in it the hand of the US. But it is equally true that they would see the hand of the US in any uprising whether or not sponsored by the US, ~~and~~ particularly since the US has made it clear in many overt ways that it heartily disapproved of the Arbenz regime. In short it might be said that the only way to forestall such a belief is for the US to make sure that there is no revolution.

c. Assuming that in this instance a decision is taken to terminate or substantially modify the present project for security reasons or at least on the grounds that the hand of the US is too clearly shown, a serious question is raised as to whether ~~could~~ any operation of this kind can appropriately be included as one of the US cold war weapons. *no matter how great the provocation or how favorable the auspices.*

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