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Subject - Assassination of President Carlos CASIMIRO Arias
Summary of Recent Press Coverage

1. Press coverage of the assassination of President Carlos CASIMIRO Arias peaked during the month of September. In spite of the concentration on election news in the month of October, there has been an increase in publicity connected with the assassination. Although the information comes entirely from overt sources, it is felt by [redacted] that it will be of interest to Headquarters. There follows a summary of some of the articles which have appeared in the local press during the last two weeks.

2. *El Financiero*, on 4 October 1957, said that the Public Ministry had revealed a detail not previously known to the public, which was that on the morning of the assassination, a member of the Presidential Guard had deserted. The Attorney General of Guatemala, Manuel de IBAÑEZ Cardona, released to the press on 4 October the results of the investigation of the deserter. This investigation revealed that IBAÑEZ had been employed in the collection of this person, Miguel Ángel Estrada, for the purpose of [redacted] on 1 June 1957 solely in the investigation of [redacted] Felipe VIGNES, and that IBAÑEZ had been required to submit a written application due to the fact that he was illiterate. IBAÑEZ said that he knew Emilio VAQUEROS Sanchez, the assassin, only casually through the idea of the latter's intentions. IBAÑEZ added that VAQUEROS was prosecuted with his law for one reason, that he frequently spoke of liberty, and that he called IBAÑEZ a "thunderer" (this is a Guatemalan slang term which is roughly equivalent to a combination of our "fudge knacker", "apple polisher", and "spring" but applies specifically to persons who are trying to work themselves into an official government position). IBAÑEZ claims that he deserted because he had accidentally injured his shoulder in a fall from a horse, and he was required to request discharge. On the morning of 25 July he deserted and started for the town of his birth, San Cristobal Progreso, on the Guatemala/El Salvador border but was captured on 27 July in [redacted] in the Department of Jutiapa. The article mentioned that it seemed a coincidence that VAQUEROS had also injured his hand and had requested permission to leave duty but that a doctor friend said the injury did not warrant the discharge. The article said that IBAÑEZ has been accused of desertion and was being detained, and that IBAÑEZ possessed no knowledge of or participation in the crime. IBAÑEZ did verify the existence of the [redacted] and had been [redacted] with [redacted] [redacted] his [redacted] in his [redacted].

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4. The same article also said that upon being questioned, military officials who had been on duty in the Presidential Residence said that they had received no orders from Colonel Jose Figuerola Ferrer, Colonel Castro, or Colonel Castillo to approach or speak to the President inside the Palace as he needed protection only when he was outside. These officials also said that they were not permitted even to be in the garden when the President and his wife went to the dining room, which accounted for their absence on the night of the assassination.

5. El Financiero, on 10 October, carried an account of the questioning of Monsignor FERRENS, Vice-Chancellor of the Ecclesiastical National. This investigation was effected by the Minister of War as a result of a statement made by Capt. Clemente CASTILLO, former aide of Cecilia Falero de CASTILLO, widow of the President. This captain claimed that when he had brought Monsignor FERRENS to the Residence on the night of the assassination, FERRENS had said that three days prior to the assassination he, FERRENS, had sent word to the President, through Col. Manuel CASTELLANOS, that there were rumors of the assassination of the President. During the investigation, FERRENS flatly denied having made such a statement to either Capt. CASTILLO or Col. CASTELLANOS. According to the article, CASTELLANOS is the brother-in-law of FERRENS.

6. A previous article in La Esfera said that Monsignor FERRENS imagined that the above-mentioned rumor had resulted from a misquotation of his statement to Capt. CASTILLO on their way to the Residence on the night of the assassination. FERRENS said that after his initial shock at the news, he had said nothing to the effect that such a tragedy was not too surprising since so many rumors were constantly circulating concerning plots against the President, at which time he cited special broadcasts heard shortly before the assassination on the Via Radiofónica which warned President CASTILLO that he would be assassinated.

7. El Financiero, on 12 October 1957, reported that Enrique ARIZONA Ferrer, general aide and tutor to President CASTILLO Arana, accused Colonel Jose Figuerola Ferrer and Colonel CASTELLANOS of negligence in attending to the personal security of the President. ARIZONA added that these two Colonels had completely isolated the President from people who had his entire confidence and who would have readily given their lives in his defense.

8. El Financiero, on 15 October, published an account of the interrogation of Col. Manuel CASTELLANOS, Governor of Quezaltenango. This man gave the names of three people who informed him in Quezaltenango that something was going on in the Presidential Residence between 20 and 25 July. He particularly informed President CASTILLO of this plot when the latter was in the area of Quezaltenango inspecting a new highway. The President asked that he, CASTELLANOS, give this information to Col. Manuel CASTELLANOS, who had accompanied the President on this trip. The names of the three people who had passed the information to CASTELLANOS were withheld from the press, saying that they would be revealed at the time of their questioning.

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8. James Hays, on 15 October, said that Colonel Jose Niguelo C. Garcia and Colonel OSMUNDOS, formerly first and third chiefs of the Presidential Staff, respectively, would be questioned concerning the incident on 22 October at 1300 hours. Hays said that they will be questioned about the charge that they facilitated the President from those in whom he had confidence, that they ordered those responsible with the protection of the President to protect themselves, and that in spite of their knowledge of plots against the President, they did not take appropriate precautions.

9. James Hays, on 15 October, published partial results of the chemical examination of the clothes worn by the late President at the time of his assassination. The article said that a microscopic examination revealed that one bullet was fired at the President from a frontal position at a distance not greater than 35 centimeters. Although the official report has not been issued yet, reportedly the above fact has been established by test shots fired at cloth-covered targets. Three distances were used in these tests: 35, 50, and 100 centimeters. The perforation burns and perforations produced by the shots fired at a distance of 35 centimeters were identical in pigmentation and number with those appearing on the breast of the jacket worn by the former President at the time of the assassination. The article added that, due to some coincidences and a series of strange things found on the clothes of the President, the Chemical Department could not yet deliver its final report but hoped to do so within 8 days.

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