

2003

1. Guatemala, the southernmost of the Central American republics, is a semi-tropical, mountainous country comparable in size to the state of Louisiana, with a population of approximately three and one quarter million. ~~It is~~ Its economy is essentially agricultural with emphasis on the production of coffee, bananas and hemp. Although nominally an independent republic since 1839, the country has been ruled primarily by a series of dictators until 1944 when a liberal coalition brought about the overthrow of General Ubico. The present political situation in Guatemala is an outgrowth of the Revolution of 1944. From that uprising there developed a strong national movement to free the country from military dictatorship, social backwardness and "economic colonialism" which had been the pattern of the past. The present administration of President Jacobo Arbenz still derives some strength from its claim to leadership of the continuing national revolution.

2. The successive administrations of Arevalo (1945-51) and Arbenz have pursued increasingly radical and nationalistic policies. Toleration of Communist activity which characterized the early years of the Arevalo regime has developed into an effective working alliance between Arbenz and the Communists. This alliance, through formation of a Communist affiliated national labor confederation, persecution of foreign economic interests, enactment and implementation of a confiscatory agrarian reform law, court packing, and the conduct of an aggressively anti-American, pro-Communist ~~publicity~~ publicity campaign, has achieved virtual dominance over national political and economic life. The four Communist controlled political parties which form the administration coalition hold 51 of the 56 seats in congress, ^{while} Communists also dominate ~~the confederation of Guatemalan Workers~~ the National Electoral Board, the National Agrarian Department, the Institute of Social Security, the Labor Courts, the Ministry of Education, the Presidential Secretariat of Propaganda and the official press and radio.

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3. ~~The~~ Political tactics of the Communists are adjusted to international ~~strategy~~ strategy and local environment. Through their various positions in the government they have been able to promote direct Soviet objectives such as the condemnation on 1952 of the Korean war as "North American aggression" by 19 deputies in congress, and withdrawal of Guatemala from the Organization of Central American States in March 1953 when faced with the possibility that other members would present an anti-Communist resolution. ~~Foreign~~ Foreign policy has included support of ^{leftist} ~~elements~~ elements in neighboring countries and ~~throughout the region~~ ^{provision of} ~~refuge~~ and aid to ^{subversive} exiles, ~~for~~. Between 1945 and 1950 the Guatemalan government actively and directly supported subversion against ~~the~~ "dictatorships" by participating in the military operations of the Caribbean Legion. Recently, the Guatemalan based, anti-Somoza, Movement of Nicaraguan Partisans of Democracy has adopted a Communist line program. The government of El Salvador has been harassed ^{through} ~~by~~ violently abusive attacks by the Guatemalan press and radio labelling the Osorio government "feudal, reactionary and fascist" and "an instrument through which Washington hopes to liquidate the democratic and progressive government of Guatemala". Since 1950 the Guatemalan Embassy in El Salvador has been the source of material and moral assistance to leftist and Communist elements while agents and propaganda flow freely into El Salvador from the Guatemalan frontier. Honduran Communist front groups receive direction and aid from Guatemalan Communists, with probable government connivance and support, while comparable activities are directed ^{against} ~~toward~~ Costa Rica and Panama. Guatemala's role as a base for aggressive Communist subversion has naturally aroused grave concern throughout Central America.

4. The current political situation in Guatemala is obviously adverse to U.S. interests. In view of this condition

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4 September 1953

4. In November 1951 the first of many meetings was held between Agency officials [] to discuss Guatemala. []

[] In early 1952, after a careful survey of anti-Communist Guatemalan revolutionary leaders, it was decided that RUFUS was the only one with sufficient prestige, character, and ability, to organize and lead a successful revolution. A military plan of action was prepared by RUFUS with the assistance of SEEKFORD, a staff agent [] The plan was reviewed, improved upon and finally approved by []

[] who was called in as a special consultant by the Director. Accompanying the plan was a list of requirements in arms and munitions, which was estimated as sufficient at that time, based on the known capabilities of the regular Guatemalan Army and the expected defection of one-third of its forces, to bring to a successful conclusion the projected movement. D-Day was selected - 15 November 1952, arms procured, and arrangements set up for their shipment in early October to a base in Nicaragua offered by President Somoza of that country. Coinciding with this were numerous PW activities inside Guatemala. All went well until the shipment had actually left the warehouse en route to [] The Department of State refused an export license and at a meeting attended by the Under Secretary of State, his Deputy, the Assistant Secretary for Latin America, and representatives of this Agency, refusal of permit was sustained and a directive given

that we were not to spark any revolutionary movement. In spite of lack of export permit, the shipment left [] but because of our new directive was diverted from the Nicaraguan port to our own base [] [], where it is still in storage.

5 This led to a complete revision of plans by the RUFUS group. The organized anti-Communist civilian elements inside Guatemala, who were anxious to move, proved well enough disciplined to obey RUFUS' instructions not to disclose their hand until the proper signal was given. Persistent efforts were made with the assistance []

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Conversations also took place with Panama, El Salvador, Cuba and Mexico. A commitment was actually made by [] to deliver an additional quantity of arms, by this time required to offset the increased strength of the Guatemalan Army. [] opened a credit of approximately \$300,000 with his Ambassador in Washington for the purchase of planes. [] continued to finance, up to \$5,000 per week, the forces assembled by RUFUS in Honduras and Nicaragua, and to support some of his key people inside Guatemala. Action was scheduled for Easter Week, April 1953. At the last minute, without explanation, [] reneged and another unconnected group led by [] attempted a revolt at Salama which led to disaster for those involved and to the arrest of RUFUS' number one man inside

Guatemala, lawyer Cordoba Cerna. Although Cerna had nothing to do with the abortive revolt, because of his outspoken attacks on the Arbenz Government, his great prestige and popularity among the people, and probably some knowledge of his efforts to organize anti-Communist cells, he was arrested, tortured for eighteen days, and finally pushed across the frontier into Honduras. Prior to the Salama incident there was continual agitation and several large demonstrations by anti-Communist groups over a period of months. In Guatemala City, since Salama and the exile of Cerna, there have been no public demonstrations by anti-Communists, and there is an apparent apathy and fear which it must be assumed has weakened the spirit of resistance and willingness to fight of the 10,000 five-man cells reported [] to have been organized. Any successful action must be preceded, therefore, by preparing a more favorable climate inside Guatemala. Although ^{the} RUFUS plan of a year ago would have little or no chance of success if launched immediately, it is believed that there are sufficient favorable factors if all assets and capabilities are utilized, to permit a building up of RUFUS' chances of success to 80%. At this time it is not possible to make a categorical statement, and it is recommended that the trigger only be pulled if and when this prerequisite of 80% has been achieved. Our preliminary estimate of the time required is four to six months.