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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE AS SANITIZED  
2003

17 March 1954

MEMORANDUM TO: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)  
SUBJECT: PFSUCCESS -- Black Flights

Approval is recommended for Black Flights from DIERO BALO to the forward areas when the following requirements have been completed:

1. [ ]
2. Permission received from [ ]  
for the establishment of a clandestine radio station. [ ]  
is preferred.
3. Those officers on the staff of RUFUS who would be informed of the Black Flights, previously be screened by the polygraph team now ready to depart for Honduras.
4. Acceptable evidence that a sufficient number of the officers of the Guatemala City garrison are committed to RUFUS to assure control of that garrison. This requirement and that of Para. 5 are included because of statement on page 17 "Second Interim Report on Stage Two, PFSUCCESS", 15 March 1954, that "Once arms arrive in forward friendly areas and are placed in the hands of indigenous anti-Communist personnel, CIA, through PFSUCCESS, will not be able to insure effective control over the use of these arms except through fulfillment of existing operational plans. Departure from or undue delay of those plans, would jeopardize control over the arms and could result in unilateral action despite all efforts to forestall same".
5. Confirmation through reliable sources that a sufficient force is actually in readiness effectively to receive, maintain, move and employ such equipment as delivered.
6. A paper be prepared by Lincoln clearly spelling out the cover story and exact details of how the flights will be made. This paper should receive Headquarters approval including concurrence of the A. J. [ ] before any operations are undertaken. Among the details to be included in paper are:

a. Whether air fields in those countries are capable of receiving black flight aircraft, i.e. size of field, runway surface conditions all weather, and physical obstacles affecting landings and take-offs.

b. Whether adequate means of refueling black flight aircraft exists at those fields.

c. Whether these fields are reasonably secure from sabotage and other overt acts from Guatemalan agents and/or other dissidents present in the area.

d. Whether weather conditions during the rainy season and/or prevailing winds preclude use of the field during certain times of the year.

e. Whether these fields can be sufficiently illuminated to be used at night while maintaining a reasonable safety factor. Obstacles which could be detected and avoided during hours of daylight might preclude use of the field for night landings.

f. Whether these fields are of such proximity to Guatemala that any unusual air activity would be noted and made readily available to the Arbenz forces.

J. C. KING  
Chief, WH

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