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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY - Report of Questionable Activity in Connection with Project PBSUCCESS

FROM:

William F. Donnelly
Chief, IMS
1 D 4124 Hqs

EXTENSION

1901

NO.

DATE

11 Oct 79

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

DDO

11 OCT 1979

11/12

[]

HAND CARRY

Martene x 6866

2.

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

3.

DDCI

10/16/79

[]

RELEASE AS SANITIZED

4.

5.

DCI

Rec'd
18 Oct 79

[]

DCI SAW SIMILAR

6.

MEMO FROM IG

7.

C/IMS-1D-4124

22 OCT 1979

[]

REPORTING TO IOB.

8.

[]

9.

DC/MP6

22 OCT 1979

10.

where do we file this so we don't have to do again?

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

DD/O.F. 4906

~~SECRET~~
SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY

Executive Registry
79-4271/1

DO/IMS 79-476
11 OCT 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Operations

FROM: William F. Donnelly
Chief, Information Management Staff
Directorate of Operations

SUBJECT: Report of Questionable Activity in
Connection with Project PBSUCCESS

1. This memorandum reports the investigation by the Information Management Staff of a possible questionable activity in connection with a review of the records of Directorate of Operations project PBSUCCESS--the vehicle for the overthrow of the communist dominated regime of Guatemala in 1954.

2. While undertaking a systematic review for declassification of the records of project PBSUCCESS during June-July 1979, the Classification Review Division (CRD), Directorate of Administration, discovered a file entitled "Disposal List - Guatemala". A memorandum in that file seemed to indicate that in September 1952 consideration had been given to killing 58 Guatemalan communists during a military action (presumably an overthrow of the Guatemalan Government) to be carried out by a Guatemalan exile group. The memorandum also called for the exile or imprisonment of 74 other Guatemalan communists. A second memorandum in the file, dated 31 March 1954, representing an updating of older lists, named 34 Guatemalan communists to be disposed of. The discovery of the file was reported by CRD to Chief, Information Management Staff, and in turn by him to the DDO on 11 June 1979. The Inspector General and the DDCI were also informed.

WARNING NOTICE
INTELLIGENCE SOURCES
AND METHODS INVOLVED

DERIVATIVE CL BY C
REVIEW ON 11 OCT 1999
DERIVED FROM D9c.3

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SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY

3. Following the discovery, further review of project PBSUCCESS records by CRD surfaced an additional folder entitled [] and seven other documents which referred to the subject of disposing of or eliminating Guatemalan communists. Two of the documents record conversations with Department of State officials in which the subject is mentioned. In one of these, a 29 March 1954 memorandum for the record, [] reports a meeting in Mr. [] office with Mr. Thomas Mann and Mr. Raymond Leddy of the Department of State to discuss the results of a recent OAS conference and project PBSUCCESS. [] asked Mr. Mann if he had changed his thinking since the conference on the possible methods to get rid of the ARBENZ government. According to [] Mr. Mann repeated that in his opinion "the elimination of 30 of those in high positions of the government would bring about its collapse. He then qualified this statement by saying that perhaps even a smaller number, say 20, would be sufficient."

4. A second memorandum for the record dated 3 June 1954 by Mr. Frank Wisner reporting discussions held with Assistant Secretary Holland seems to refer to the subject. The two were discussing a memorandum prepared by Mr. Tracy Barnes in which Mr. [] had presented as a possible alternative to the "originally conceived, carefully-timed paramilitary action, should that prove difficult of fulfillment," a contingency (underlining added) alternative of leaflet drops, specific sabotage, and possibly political assassination as a means of persuading the Guatemalan army to move against the regime. Mr. [] reported:

Concerning one very sensitive type of treatment, which was raised directly for the first time by [] in his memo prepared here, H considered this and ruled it out, at least for the immediate future, on the grounds that it would probably prove to be counter-productive. This decision was not conclusive and H suggested that we come up with more specific plans both concerning the individual targets, the timing and the statement of the purpose sought to be achieved with respect to each. This would require a fairly solid showing of the advantage to be gained by this type of activity.

