

2003

10 May 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)

SUBJECT : Sit-Rep on Uruguay's Grant of Asylum to Ex-President Arbenz of Guatemala

REFERENCE : ID/P Memorandum to GWH dated 4 May 1957, same subject

(1) On 26 March 1957 it was learned, through [ ] Liaison, that ex-President Arbenz was planning to go to Uruguay. On 27 March [ ] was instructed to discuss with Ambassador Patterson the merits of making representations to the Uruguayan Foreign Office, urging that a visa not be granted. Subsequent discussions with the Department of State revealed that Ambassador Patterson was not successful in making these representations and that in all likelihood, the visa would be granted, if it had not already been done.

(2) On 29 March [ ] were instructed by cable to make press plants disclosing Arbenz' plans and giving something of his background, especially, his choice of residence behind the Iron Curtain. Stations were told to withhold this action until further confirmation of the information received from [ ] Liaison.

(3) On 25 April an officer of WH Division met with Mr. Spencer King of the State Department in order to discuss future policy in the Arbenz matter. It was decided that the action should, in general, be broken down into three phases: a) period during which Guatemala would be the only complainant; b) period during which other Latin American countries would join in the complaint; and c) final phase in which the United States would be able to make its opinions known. It was agreed that the Guatemalans should begin immediately at home and abroad to sound their protests.

*check #* (4) On 25 April the WH Staff Agent in Guatemala asked President Castillo Armas to have his Ambassador in Montevideo make a protest to the Uruguayan Foreign Office citing Mr. Arbenz' choice of Iron Curtain Haven, the availability of Swiss citizenship to him and the Caracas Resolution as it pertains to the Arbenz case. In addition, President Castillo was asked to have his protests presented in other parts of the world. He was also asked to arrange for press releases through his various diplomatic missions abroad and to consider the merits of a White Paper on the treacherous Communist Arbenz.

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In keeping with Mr. Spencer King's request, we did not ask President Castillo to make protests to the OAS or the UN, but it is expected that this action will be taken when there is more positive confirmation of Arbenz' plans.

(5) On 26 April [

check ] were asked to inspire press activity condemning Arbenz' impending return to this Hemisphere. In addition, [

With its Headquarters in Mexico City, was directed to send cable protests to all Latin American presidents, the OAS and the UN. Secondary cable protests from members of this hemisphere-wide organization, will be forthcoming from several Latin American countries. These stations were also instructed to use their press assets to point out the danger to the hemisphere inherent in Arbenz' return and the violation of the spirit of the Caracas Resolution.

(6) On 10 May [

] advised of unconfirmed information that Arbenz may be granted a Mexican visa. On the same date, La Prensa, a Spanish language newspaper of New York City, carried an AP release under a 9 May dateline from Paris stating that Arbenz had received a visa for Uruguay and that he would fly to Uruguay on 11 May. This is confirmed by a FBIS Report. NE Division has asked [ for cable confirmation.

(7) On 10 May a cable went to [

] and [ ] to arrange a reception demonstration for Arbenz; the reception committee would include two Uruguayan journalists who are associated with the new hemisphere-wide anti-Communist press association formed last month in Lima during the Third Congress Against Soviet Intervention.

(8) INTECK materials and other [

] documents have been reviewed for the purpose of releasing data for use in this operation. Three general categories of information have been found; a) political matter (to be released in Montevideo); b) personality data (to be released in Mexico), and c) material on the schism within Guatemalan exiled groups (to be released in Chile). After the initial release of these materials, the widest possible replay will be undertaken. INTECK materials of the aforementioned category (a) include Arbenz' ties with the Communists; his activity behind the Iron Curtain, including the USSR in China; indications that his daughters are still behind the Curtain; Communist maneuvers to get him a visa. Category (b) information discloses Arbenz' unstable character, including opinions about his being a drug addict, a hypochondriac, a dipsomaniac, unfaithful in his marital life, the love affairs of his wife with leading Communists, a scandal caused by him in Prague, his attempted suicide, and there are press reports about his arrest for

drunkenness in

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Paris. Category (c) information involves numerous personalities surrounding Arbenz and could be used to drive a wedge between the Communist and non-Communist factions. On 10 May cables are being sent to [ ] instructing these [ ] to exploit these materials accordingly. In addition, a field memo is being sent to all [ ] bringing them up-to-date on the complete operation and providing them with general instructions.

9. It will be possible to use [ ] liaison channels or other high-level official contacts to pass information in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Bogota, Quito, La Paz, Lima and Santiago. A review is being made of "The Gray Book" (secret U.S. officials only) prepared during PBSUCCESS. This book contains documents from Arbenz' personal papers (PBIHQ). It may be worth while releasing this document in order to pass it through the above-mentioned liaison channels.

10. WH files and those of Graphics Registry have been reviewed to find horror photographs which might be resurrected at this time for re-use by a number of [ ] Some photographs of this kind have been found and a hemisphere-wide mailing is planned through [ ] a controlled organization in Mexico City. Cable instructions will also go [ ] asking that the Guatemalan Government or some ostensibly private organization in Guatemala release other photographs for international mailing.

matter

11. The Arbenz/hus has been discussed with the FP Senior Staff. The Staff was of the opinion that there might still be time to do something in Paris with a view to having Arbenz returned to Czechoslovakia. In case his departure from Paris is delayed, further discussions of this possibility will be held. The Staff also felt that something might be done through the OAS, and as discussed above, this action is being held in abeyance until the Department of State agrees that the time is propitious.

12. All Latin American stations are being instructed to render mutual support to each other through lateral pouching of clippings and other materials. If Arbenz, in fact, arrives in this Hemisphere, an attempt will be made to expose his political and subversive activities, thus showing that he has violated the accepted rule of asylum.

13. The above paragraphs disclose various actions already begun through a number of WH stations. It is difficult to say, owing to normal pouch delays, exactly how far operations have progressed. Press clippings, in compliance with our instructions, have been received, however, from Uruguay, Cuba and Guatemala.

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Chief

Western Hemisphere Division

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cc: BP/OPS/[ ]