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11 April 1956

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE IN FULL

2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: C/A-H

SUBJECT: Current British view of Guatemala.

I enclose for the information of yourself and the appropriate members of your Division, an extract from the British Minister to Guatemala Allen's Annual Report for 1955, which has been passed to me on a highly confidential basis. [If you decide you would like to send this to Jake Esterline, please be sure to cover it with an appropriate admonition as to the confidential source of the document.] I think it is both interesting and encouraging to note that the British Minister, and also to a very considerable extent I am told, the British Foreign Office have swung around to our way of seeing things and are taking a generally very favorable view of the Arana regime. You will, of course, recall the trouble that arose between the British and ourselves during June, 1954, and how hard we worked to get the Foreign Office straightened out at the time.

ASST. DIR. OF PLANS
FRANK G. NUNN
Deputy Director (Plans)

Attachment:
Extract described, dated
16 January 1956

cc: (all w/copies of att)
DCI
DDCI
A/DEP/P ✓
C/OP

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Guatemala.

January 16, 1956

Sir,

In spite of one or two threats of armed subversion, inseparable from the life of most Latin American States, Guatemala on the whole settled down under her Conservative Government in 1955. Though the year started with serious economic difficulties, she had, by the end of it, begun to reap the benefits of having become one of the favourite disciples of the United States in the Western hemisphere. The United States Government, for their part, have handled Guatemala with outstanding tact and generosity, evidently with a desire to show that it pays to get rid of Communist penetration. Colonel Castillo Armas has accepted, sensibly and without undue touchiness, this powerful outside help in setting his country on its feet. While parliamentary democracy at the moment is a farce here, there is a fairly general respect for law and human freedom. The President has so far managed to resist the pressure of his more reactionary supporters to use dictatorial methods and can be said to have installed and maintained decent administration.

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