

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

Guat files: 6732-1-25

4 November 1955

2003

MEMORANDUM OF
FROM : C]

The following comments may be useful in connection with the preparation of a reply to Mr. Holland on the subject of Guatemalan exiles:

1. WH/PP objectives with respect to Guat exiles in Mexico (and elsewhere) have been to disrupt their plans and activities, discredit them in the eyes of the people of the host nations, immobilize them and render their actions ineffective (reference: [2158])
2. Instructions to interested field stations have cautioned them to avoid actions that might create gratuitous publicity and public sympathy for the exiles or cast them in the role of martyre (reference: [2158])
3. A full-scale campaign against the exiles in Mexico at this time is deemed unwise for the following reasons:
 - a. Current operations to contain the exiles and render them ineffective are sufficient to cope with the situation except as noted in paragraph 4, below.
 - b. As long as we can contain them in Mexico, there is no apparent advantage in hounding them to another haven where they might obtain greater security and become more dangerous.
 - c. Intensive attacks against the exiles in Mexico would almost certainly result in the formation of communist-sponsored "defense" committees, public protests, demonstrations, etc., throughout Latin America, calling for an end to "Yankee persecution." The net results might be to strengthen rather than weaken the exiles.
 - d. When the highly emotional and historical question of asylum is involved, the exiles will always retain a certain amount of public sympathy even though it seems quite apparent that they are guilty as charged. For this reason, intensified operations would reach a point of diminishing returns in short order. Containment is a satisfactory goal in this situation.

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- e. Defensive responses to intensified attacks probably would lead to another full-scale, area-wide debate regarding the anti-communist revolution of 1954 and repetition of communist propaganda that it was sponsored by the U.S. The less said the better.
 - f. "Black" operations in Guatemala, particularly the type suggested by Mr. Holland, would be most undesirable. The unwitting Guatemalan government might, for example, be incited to bloody preventative actions that would provide hostile propagandists with harmful ammunition.
4. The question of defections should be carefully studied since it seems to have both FI and PP potential. From the latter point of view, defectors in place could disrupt and confuse the exile movement; actual defectors could write authoritative exposes designed to discredit the former Arbenz government, confirm communist machinations and atrocities, reveal counter-revolutionary plans and thereby disrupt implementation, and otherwise publicize derogatory aspects of the exile movement.