

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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Chief, WH

Chief of Station, Guatemala

PBHISTORY

Progress Report 18 August - 1 September 1954

Attached is PBHISTORY progress report for the
period 18 August - 1 September 1954.

FTM/jpk

Francis T. Mylkes

Attachment: Progress report

2 September 1954

Distribution:

3 - Washington
1 - Files

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PBHISTORY Progress Report: 13 August - 1 September 1954

1. On 26 August 1954 PBHISTORY finally became fully operative with the arrival of autostat equipment, which allowed a rapid reproduction of many documents of varying importance. Simultaneously a two-man microfilm team went into action.

2. The secondary sorting of the documents during this period confirmed earlier opinions that the material at hand for the most part was not of high-level intelligence value. Rather the data contained was that which lent itself to research studies regarding the Communist movement in Guatemala. It is felt that at this time the most important documents have been already screened and forwarded and the material remaining is that which primarily will serve research interests. Thus Headquarters can expect a diminishing number of documents for KUGOWN exploitation; and, if no further documents become available, only a few KUFIRE leads can be hoped for.

3. Barring a turbulent political situation which might disrupt the Group's work during the coming month, it is expected with overtime work the entire remaining bulk of documents can be reproduced on or about 1 October.

4. The equally important goal of developing the Comité's action arm is currently completely dependent on the political situation, which fluctuates daily. CALLIGERIS, although outwardly in favor of the Comité, to date has yet to give the Comité his fullest support in its organization problems. It is not known whether this is by design or evidence of his lack of administrative ability to get things done. (See Attachment "A") Now that the reproduction work has moved into a routine of operation, the PBHISTORY chairman is planning to dedicate his primary efforts to aiding and assisting the development of a permanent Comité organization. Paul D. LANGEVIN, the PBHISTORY deputy, with lessening KUGOWN activities, will be responsible for the closest supervision of the photographic reproduction operation. See Attachment "B" for report of KUGOWN activities.

5. During the reporting period, MYLKES hand-carried to SKILLET more than forty documents, which had been obtained from the local Government's Foreign Ministry files and which in a limited way contributed to the white paper being published by the Honduran Government. Subsequently another set of documents which contained valuable information in this respect was delivered to SKILLET.

6. In addition to the above primary duties, the PBHISTORY chairman, via the Comité, has arranged various personal interviews with anti-Communist Guatemalans, so that Representative Hillings, member of the Kersten Committee, can obtain knowledge of Communist activities here and possibly meet suitable individuals for his hearings in the United States. These activities were coordinated closely with the Ambassador and his Chargé, as well as with CALLIGERIS, who had met Hillings' press agent, McMahon, in Tegucigalpa earlier in the year.

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ATTACHMENT "A"

1. According to instructions from CALLIGERIS during the initial meeting with MYLKES on 6 August, another interview was scheduled for the purpose of obtaining from CALLIGERIS certain documents which he claimed he had but which he would withhold until PBHISTORY was in full progress. With the arrival of the autostat machines, MYLKES arranged for the appointment with CALLIGERIS through the Comité leaders; and on 30 August in brief the following took place.

2. MYLKES outlined the activities of the Comité as far as the reproduction work was concerned. He advised CALLIGERIS that the over-all intelligence content of the documents was limited and that from certain Government files which had been submitted it was clear that the Communists and the ARBENZ Government officials had destroyed or taken with them the most damaging material. CALLIGERIS agreed, stating that he personally knew that the Army G-2 files had been burned in their entirety. MYLKES reminded CALLIGERIS that at this point the Comité was sufficiently well organized to receive the exclusive documents which CALLIGERIS had promised to give to MYLKES. CALLIGERIS responded favorably and told MYLKES to get them from his private secretary. (Comment: The private secretary later reported he had no knowledge of such documents but promised to consult with CALLIGERIS on this soonest. No answer has yet been received by MYLKES four days later.)

3. The meeting was a hurried one, and CALLIGERIS packing his pistol apparently was preoccupied about bigger and more important things although he demonstrated interest in the Comité's activities.

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ATTACHMENT "B"

KUGOWN Progress

1. The principal activity of this period was the systematic release to the local press of individual documents. The bank statements of Mrs. ARBENZ, the Caceres "souvenir" from the Soviet to the President, informal receipts for as much as \$25,000, and lists of Soviet books purchased by ARBENZ were among the many documents which received prominent mention. In many cases the photostatic copies were reproduced along with stories. The coverage of the documents also prompted individual editorials in some cases. Second batch of clippings air-mailed to Headquarters 2 September.

2. The PBHISTORY film was completed on 30 August. The first copy was handed over to the team visiting South American capitals (see Paragraph 3). The film itself is a graphic record of the documents and propaganda found by the Comité. Narration is by the three announcers of "Radio Liberation." The final four copies are scheduled for completion 2 September. One copy will be pouched by U.S.I.S. on 3 September, to be clipped and subsequent scenes sent to all major newsreel companies. Due to need of all available copies for present local use, we will send Headquarters a copy at a later date. We suggest obtaining a duplicate from U.S.I.S. if a copy is desired immediately. U.S.I.S. will also, if it is understood, convert the film to 16 mm. for distribution throughout Latin America.

3. The two-man team left Guatemala on 1 September. The two members were Virgilio RODRIGUEZ Beteta, former Guatemalan Ambassador to several South American countries, and Jose Alfredo PALMEIRI, columnist on "El Espectador," known as "Jap." First stop of the tour was scheduled as Santiago, followed by Montevideo and Buenos Aires and later Quito and Bogota. The team will hold press conferences, demonstrating propaganda kits of Communist publications, with photostatic reproductions of PBHISTORY documents, plus a showing of the film mentioned above.

4. A press release was written, in English and Spanish, and air-mailed from Guatemala on 29 August to some ninety principal newspapers in Latin America, North America, and England. This release described the activities of the Comité and the documents uncovered. Plastic matrices, photographs of PBHISTORY materials, were attached to each release. The matrices were made in Mexico, through cooperation of U.S.I.S.

- A. Special release, with photostat of letter insulting PERON workers, was sent to principal Argentine newspapers.
- B. Special release describing Chilean Communists active in Guatemala was sent to Santiago papers.

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