

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

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2003

9 July 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR/PLANS
SUBJECT : Disposal of Guatemalan Communists
REFERENCE : DIR 07823 (OUT 59911)

1. I believe that this problem, involving possibly 3,000 Guatemalan communists of whom a small number are in jail and over 500 (not all necessarily communists) are seeking asylum, should be handled within Guatemala so far as is practicable.

2. It is suggested that the Government of Guatemala be induced to adopt two policies:

- a. All, communist or not, who committed crimes against humanity under the ARBENZ regime will be rigorously punished.
- b. All residual communists will be given a chance to "work their way back", first under strict but humane supervision on, say, a stretch of the Pan American Highway, and thereafter as they relapse from communism under some sort of a parole system until the authorities are reasonably sure of their rehabilitation.

3. Suggested implementation:

- a. The Guatemalan Government should delay acquiescence in the exit of any of the individuals who are seeking asylum in foreign embassies in Guatemala City, generally alleging that all must be checked as to whether they have committed crimes against humanity.
- b. The Government should announce that it will never agree to asylum for criminals, as defined in paragraph 2 above.

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- c. Presumably a considerable number of the refugees in asylum, provided their hands are clean, eventually will elect either to work their way back or to demonstrate non-communism and seek amnesty.
 - d. The Guatemalan Government should undertake to inform OAS in due course as to the substantiated charges of crimes against humanity lodged against those refugees seeking asylum and of all sentences imposed on non-refugees for such offenses.
 - e. Refugees who continue to seek asylum and against whom no criminal charges are laid should eventually be permitted to leave. Prior to departure their complete identifications and physical descriptions should be established. Their documentation should be valid only for the country granting asylum.
4. Intelligence considerations:
- a. None of the people who recant should be regarded by us as defectors. Nevertheless, they have among them much valuable information on Party techniques, plans and procedures. However, I believe that from five to ten knowledgeable people would be enough to give us all the information that we need. Several of these are probably already available and others may be squeezed out of their present asylum with the passage of time. Such people should be subjected to detailed interrogation, nominally by the Guatemalan authorities.
5. PP considerations:
- a. Propaganda exploitation in connection with the above scheme obviously should be focussed on its rehabilitation aspects. Necessary punitive measures should be played down, with emphasis here on the established guilt of the accused and the fairness of sentences.

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CIA Defector Coordinator

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