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KUGOWN

INFO: PBSUCCESS, Headquarters

Salvadoran Note on Expulsion of Salvadoran Laborers from Guatemala

Ref: HUL-A-745

1. You have undoubtedly noted the article in Diario Latino of 3 June 1954 and its possible KUGOWN use in connection with the recent offer of land to Salvadoran campesinos by Guatemala's DAN chief, Alfonso Martinez.

2. The attachment is a script used on Sherwood. You may not use it in any of your controlled papers or otherwise in its present form but you are free to exploit the ideas in any other manner.

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JEROME Q. DUNBAR

JCD/ SGW/ egw

7 June 1954

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It was just a little over a month ago that Salvador's Diario Latino carried the full text of an interview with Alfonso Martinez, the director of Guatemala's DAN, in which he made the grandiose offer of land to 2000 Salvadorans. At the time we were slightly skeptical of such an offer: it was obvious that Arbens's regime was entering upon a stormy period and that the offer of land was a propaganda move, an effort to gain the good will of the Salvadoran Government which finds it difficult to find work for its many campesinos as well as an attempt to bribe more workers from the rich coffers of the Agrarian Reform Law.

The offer to potential Salvadoran settlers left nothing to be desired -- they were to enjoy all the prerogatives which in theory at least the Guatemalans themselves enjoyed under the Agrarian Reform Law, namely land and the technical assistance and credit necessary to work it profitably. The offer sounds too good to be true. It was.

On May 31 Guatemalan newspapers carried the news that twenty Salvadoran workers in the western zone have been arrested. The Government hinted at a new plot and for their own prestige they could not admit that it was Guatemalans who were involved : as Hitler blamed the nation's ills on the Jews, so the arbencistas claim the new plot was managed by mysterious "tecnicos-extranjeros". Those Salvadorans who had accepted in good faith the offer of the Guatemalan government were the obvious target. Of course they aren't really technicians, they are just good farmers, but since there was no other culprit handy the Salvadorans had to suffer. Some of the farmers had already planted their crops but this was no consideration to the arbencistas who thrive on illegal acts.

But Salvador could not and would not permit Guatemala to trample upon the rights of her citizens in so blatant a fashion. She called home her ambassador to Guatemala, Colonel Jose Alberto Funes, and discussed the matter with him for four days, from May 31 to June 3. On June 3 the newspapers made public the fact that the Salvadoran Chancery, acting on the precise instructions of the President of the Republic, Colonel Oscar Osorio, has sent a note to Guatemala protesting this action. Actually the note is but a straw in the wind for Salvador, as well as Guatemala's other neighbors, can expect an increase in degree and number of such illegal actions as the arbencistas struggle to maintain their regime in the face of domestic and foreign opposition.