

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

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In November 1951 the first of many meetings was held between Agency

officials and officers of [] to discuss Guatemala.

[] offered cover, the full support of their organization for intelligence, and later, financial assistance. In early 1952, after a careful survey of anti-Communist Guatemalan revolutionary leaders, it was decided that RUFUS was the only one with sufficient prestige, character, and ability, to organize and lead a successful revolution.

A military plan of action was prepared by RUFUS with the assistance of

SEEKFOR, a staff agent []

] The plan was reviewed,

improved upon and finally approved by []

] retired, of the

Marine Corps, who was called in as a special consultant by the Director.

Accompanying the plan was a list of requirements in arms and munitions,

which was estimated as sufficient at that time, based on the known

capabilities of the regular Guatemalan Army and the expected defection

of one-third of its forces, to bring to a successful conclusion the

projected movement. D-Day was selected - 15 November 1952, arms

procured, and arrangements set up for their shipment in early October to a base in [] of that country.

Coinciding with this were numerous PW activities inside Guatemala.

All went well until ^{the} shipment ~~was~~ had actually left warehouse en route to New Orleans. The Department of State refused an export license and a meeting attended by the Under Secretary of State, his Deputy, the Assistant Secretary for Latin America, and representatives of this Agency, refusal of permit was sustained and a directive given that we were not to spark any revolutionary movement. In spite of lack of export permit, ^{because of our new directive} the shipment left New Orleans but was diverted from [] to our own base [] where it is still in storage.

This led to a complete revision of plans by the RUFUS group. The ^{organized} ~~organized~~ anti-Communist civilian elements inside Guatemala, who were anxious to move, proved well enough disciplined to obey RUFUS' instructions not to disclose their hand until the proper signal was given. Persistent efforts were made with the assistance of [] and one of its

high level consultants, former [] and currently

[], to enlist the support principally of the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Conversations also took place with Panama, El Salvador, Cuba and Mexico.

A commitment was actually made by Trujillo to deliver an additional

quantity of arms, by this time required to ^{offset} ~~offset~~ the increased strength

of the Guatemalan Army. ^{President} Perez Jimenez of Venezuela opened a credit of

approximately \$300,000 with his Ambassador in Washington for the purchase

of planes. [] continued to finance, up to \$5,000

per week, the forces assembled by RUFUS in Honduras and Nicaragua, and

to support some of his key people inside Guatemala. Action was scheduled

for Easter Week, ^{April 1953} At the last minute, without explanation, Trujillo

renege and another unconnected group led by Carlos Simmons attempted

a revolt at Salama which led to disaster for those involved and to the

arrest of [] lawyer Cordoba Cerna.

Although Cerna had nothing to do with the abortive revolt, because of

his outspoken attacks on the Arbenz Government, his ^{great} ~~great~~ prestige, and

popularity among the people, and probably some knowledge of his efforts to organize anti-Communist cells, he was arrested, tortured for eighteen days, and finally pushed across the frontier into Honduras. Prior to the Salama incident there was continual agitation and several large demonstrations by anti-Communist groups over a period of months. In Guatemala City, since Salama and the exile of Cerna, there have been no public demonstrations by anti-Communists, and there is an apparent apathy and fear which it must be assumed has weakened the 10,000 five-man cells reported by [] to have been organized, *the spirit of resistance and willingness to fight* ~~and their spirit of resistance and willingness to fight~~. Any successful action must be preceded, therefore, by preparing a more favorable climate inside Guatemala. ^{Although} ~~this~~, the RUFUS plan of a year ago would have little or no chance of success if launched immediately, it is believed that there are sufficient favorable factors if all assets and capabilities are utilized, to permit a building up of RUFUS' chances of success to 80%. At this time it is not possible to make a categorical statement, and it is recommended that the trigger only be pulled if and when this prerequisite of 80% has been achieved. Our preliminary estimate of the time required is four to six months.