

1 JUNE 1954 EST DATE

RYBAT/PBSUCCESS/SECRET

IA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

RELEASE IN FULL

AIR OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

2003

A. MISSION:

1. To airlift men and supplies into Los Cipre Sales Airport, Guatemala City, which may or may not have been previously seized by friendly forces.
2. To give all possible air support to:
 - a. Hold Cipre Sales during airlift.
 - b. Cover airlift A/C during airlift.
 - c. Support objective of airlift.

B. SITUATION AND COURSES OF ACTION:

1. Considerations affecting the possible courses of action:
 - a. Weather: The main hazard to flying in the Guatemala City area during June and July is tropical storms and frequent thunderstorms. At land stations, such as Guatemala City, thunderstorms are most frequent during the late afternoon and early evening. During June and July rains occur most frequently from the middle of the afternoon through early morning and there is a close association between the occurrence of rain and low cloudiness. Fog has its maximum occurrence during April and has been much more infrequent during the other months. At Guatemala City the occurrence of fog was confined almost exclusively to the hours from 0200 to 0900 local time. There should be no restrictions on visibility due to smoke at this time of year. Considering all weather factors the best hours for air operations during June and July are between 0900 and 1300 local time.
2. Hostile Defense:
 - AA - F-1 reported flak medium not accurate flak batteries 3 places Aurora Airport
 - F-2 flak in city light. Flak at Aurora Airport heavy.
 - C-15 reported AA fire from SE corner city, larger amount NE corner
 - C-16 reported tracers from Palace and North of Railroad station. Larger than 20mm accurate firing.
 - F-7 zoning over city 2000 feet - no flak.
 - P-1, P-4 and P-5 all to Guatemala City - no flak reported.

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Various other reports have been received on two 40mm batteries at Aurora Airport, some at Palace and "various other locations". Guatemala should be queried as to the latest OB before operation begun. All reports on Soviet arms shipment show no heavy AA, but quantities of MG which could be used against A/C.

Fighters Latest estimate Guat Air Force is 2-3 AT-6 and four P-26 all armed with .30 cal guns. Top speed approximately 160-180 miles per hour. No evidence of any attempt to come up against almost 40 missions to date.

Mobile ground Several light tanks and mobile MG squads reported in general area. Small contingent approximately 25 men with 1-2 MG at Los Cipre Sales.

3. Opposition Capabilities:

a. Attempt to destroy transports before they reach airfield:

- (1) By fighter interception.
- (2) By AA

b. Attempt to deny us use of airfield:

- (1) By restraining and/or regaining control of airfield.
- (2) By AA fire from outside confines of field.

c. Attempt to smash ground operation:

- (1) By use of ground troops.
- (2) By use of fighter support.

4. Our own courses of action:

- a. Begin landings at dawn with fighter support.
- b. Begin landings at dusk with fighter support.
- c. Begin landings during night with fighter support.
- d. Begin landings during day with fighter support.
- e. a above without fighter support.
- f. b above without fighter support.
- g. c above without fighter support.
- h. d above without fighter support.

C. ANALYSIS OF COURSES OF ACTION VERSES OPPOSITION CAPABILITIES:

Own course a: Enemy fighter capability no threat with own fighter
Opposition course: support. AA limited and can be avoided or neutralized
a (1) and (2) : by fighters. Surprise attack at dawn should catch
enemy unprepared.

b(1) : Troops involved in initial surprise landing should be
able to overwhelm weak opposition forces at field.
Fighter support should be able to knock out any strong
points in vicinity of field and prevent most outside
support such as tanks from approaching field.

b(2) Initial surprise of dawn landing and subsequent flak
suppression should minimize hostile fire from weapons
now in vicinity of airfield or available to be brought
up.

c(1) Dawn attack should minimize effectiveness of hostile
ground forces and fighter support should be able to
suppress major ground support such as tanks and troop
trucks. Strong points in city can also be effectively
eliminated or rendered ineffectual by air support.

c(2) Status of hostile air force is such that with friendly
fighter support present any attempt at hostile fighter
activity will be decisively negated.