

Trip folder
OCT 25 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director/Intelligence
THROUGH: Assistant Director, Research and Reports
SUBJECT: Trip Report of [REDACTED] 25X1A9a

I. Purpose of Trip

a. To attend the Sixth General Assembly of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, which convened 25 July through 6 August 1955 in Mexico City. Consultations of the Geography Commission, the Cartography Commission, and the History Commission were held simultaneously with the General Assembly. These meetings, held every two or three years in different cities throughout the Hemisphere, provide an excellent opportunity for the procurement of new information and publications on the geographic and cartographic activities in Latin America.

b. To participate in area familiarization travel for two weeks into areas of Mexico currently exhibiting the most noticeable economic growth and development.

II. Activities

a. Attendance at the PAIGH Meetings made possible the renewal of former contacts, as well as the formulation of new ones, for the purpose of exchanging information on current developments in Latin America. Over 300 delegates were present, including a few observers from European countries. In addition to the plenary sessions of the Institute, scientific and technical sessions of the Commissions were held at which national reports were presented outlining progress in each country, and during which new joint projects were instituted for work in the future. Representatives were contacted from various agencies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

[REDACTED] and/or myself during which negotiations were concluded for the exchange of geographic and map materials currently available.

b. It should be noted that [REDACTED] presence was of special significance, since this is the first meeting since 1946 when [REDACTED] was not present. The presence of the Special Assistant for Maps re-emphasized the Department of State's procurement program, and reactivated many agreements which were made quite a long time ago.

c. The two weeks following the Conference were devoted to area-familiarization travel in two distinct regions of Mexico. The first trip took me south of Mexico City by air to Tuxtla Gutierrez in the

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highlands beyond the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. From there I travelled in a hired car for 50 miles along the Pan American Highway, in a section where the road ascends over 5,000 feet to the village of San Cristobal Las Casas. Returning to Tuxtla Gutierrez, I flew to Ixtepec on the Isthmus from which I went to the Pacific port of Salina Cruz, then back north across the Isthmus to Miniatitlan near the Caribbean. From Minatitlan, I visited the agricultural colony at Acayucan, a project of the Papaloapan Commission which is undertaking the development of the Basin of the Papaloapan River--a program similar to TVA on a smaller scale. In addition to the colony at Acayucan, I was guided through the town of Ciudad Aleman, headquarters of the Commission, around the Aleman Dam, claimed to be the largest in Latin America and not yet completed, and through several other aspects of the project such as an experimental agricultural farm, relocated towns flooded out by the waters of the new lake, etc. I returned to Mexico by air from Vera Cruz.

The second week was spent in automobile travel west of Mexico City, in the famous El Bajio, the "breadbasket of Mexico," and through the agricultural regions near the city of Guadalajara. Also visited were the Doban Power Project, the Rio Lerma Irrigation Region, and the mining areas and manufacturing activities around Lagos de Moreno, Leon, Guanajuato, and Queretaro. I was accompanied on both trips by Mexicans who were able to expedite all arrangements considerably and very much to my advantage.

III. Problems or Difficulties

No outstanding problems arose. All necessary arrangements were carefully handled by the appropriate offices before departure, and no difficulties were encountered during the trip, other than a few flat tires, lack of accommodations, etc., which were expected!

IV. Commitments

No commitments were made other than offers to have materials forwarded by the Special Assistant for Maps in the routine business of the Map Procurement Program. These arrangements are in process of being carried out by the Procurement Branch of the Map Library.

V. Recommendations

a. Attendance at meetings such as those of the PAIGH are of unquestioned value. Contacts are made which very directly influence the success of any procurement requests forwarded to Latin American countries. The Latin American temperament is such that much of their business is conducted on the basis of friendship, rather than by the efficient, business-like approach of the typical North American. In

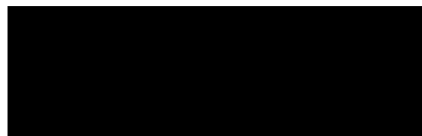
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addition, data and information are acquired at these meetings which we cannot successfully acquire by request through the Embassies. Much of it is of a special-study nature, in manuscript form, or of limited distribution, and only by first-hand contact can we learn of it.

b. Area familiarization travel is worth years of library research. There is no substitute for first hand knowledge of an area. Although I covered over 1,600 miles and saw a great deal of the country, I highly recommend that whenever feasible a period of more than 2 weeks be granted. Travel arrangements, delays caused by local travel conditions, unforeseen opportunities for itinerary change, and many other factors make a two week junket all too brief.



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