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2 March 1948

MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Disturbances in Central America and Antarctica

1. Attached hereto is a brief appreciation
of subject situations.

[Redacted]

Deputy Assistant Director
Reports and Estimates

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Disturbances in Central America
Antarctic Situation

Summary: CIA estimates that the most serious Central American revolutionary situation at present exists in Costa Rica, where a civil disobedience strike as a result of the present political impasse is likely. There are no new developments since special memorandum of 27 February in the revolutionary situation in Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Although disorderly anti-British activity in Guatemala exists as a consequence of the dispatch of British warships to Belize, a deepening political rift within Guatemala will, it is estimated, reduce the likelihood of a retaliatory show of force by Guatemala against British garrisons in Belize. There has been no important new development on the Antarctic controversy since the article in CIA Weekly Summary of 20 February.

Chances of revolution in Costa Rica: The 1 March vote by the Costa Rican Congress voiding the recent presidential elections has created a revolutionary situation. The Electoral Tribunal by a two to one vote had previously declared the Opposition candidate Ulate the winner. Unless a last minute compromise can be effected, a civil disobedience strike -- which will force all banks and many business establishments to close their doors and which will impair the functioning of the country's major public utilities -- is to be expected.

Guatemala and British Honduras: There have been no new developments respecting Guatemalan-British relations ~~vis-a-vis~~ the Belize controversy since CIA Daily Summaries of 28 February and 1 March. Anti-British disturbances persist in Guatemala. CIA estimates that political conditions there now make it even less likely that Guatemala will participate in a retaliatory show of force against British garrisons in Belize; deepening political rivalry between the Radical PAR and the more moderate PFL will make Guatemalan Chief of the Armed Forces Araña, a moderate, more reluctant than ever to move forces out of Guatemala City toward the frontier of British Honduras; such a move would leave the capital in the hands of PAR extremists, who would then be able to take over complete control of the government and oust him from office.

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