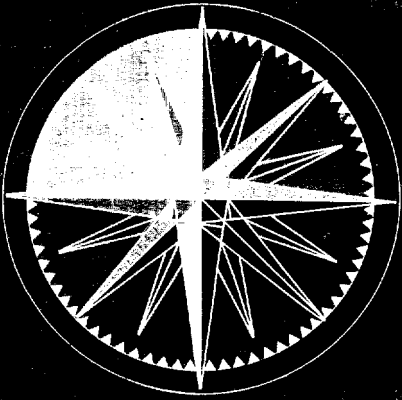


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# SPECIAL REPORT

GUATEMALAN COMMUNISTS TAKE HARD LINE AS INSURGENCY CONTINUES

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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## GUATEMALAN COMMUNISTS TAKE HARD LINE AS INSURGENCY CONTINUES

The actions of the strongly anti-Communist military regime imposed by Col. Enrique Peralta after the ouster of President Ydigoras in March 1963 have caused Guatemala's Communist Party (PGT) to alter its tactical line. Many of the younger party leaders have become more and more attracted to the idea of armed struggle and resentful of the old guard's subservience to the Russian line of coexistence and peaceful revolution. This militant element appears to have recaptured the leadership of the Guatemalan revolutionaries and to have made the PGT a hard-line party. Continuation of the insurgency problems will adversely affect the transitional regime's plans for a return to constitutional rule.

### Beginning of Guerrilla Movement

Guatemala is a prime target for Communist subversion in the Western Hemisphere. It has achieved this position as a result of Communist prominence during the Jacobo Arbenz administration (1951-54), the ability of its small but experienced and disciplined Communist party to survive in very adverse circumstances, and the esteem gained in revolutionary circles by "socialist" guerrilla groups led by Marco Antonio Yon Sosa. The party has been strongly supported by international Communist propaganda, which has used the 1954 anti-Communist revolution under Castillo Armas as a case study in "American imperialism."

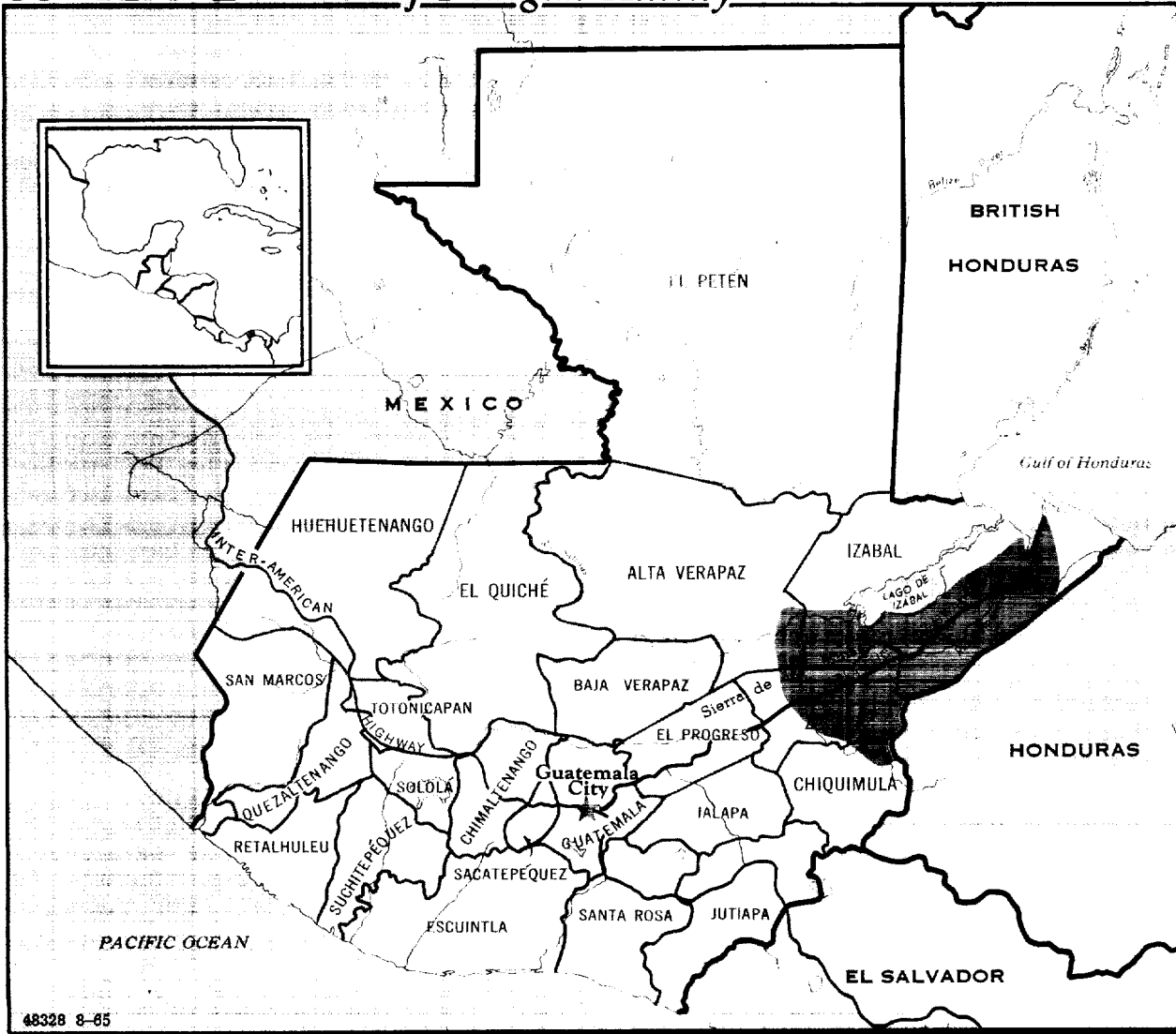
With the anti-Communist "liberation" in June 1954, Guatemalan Communists were confronted with the problem of survival under a regime pledged to eradicate Communist influence and destroy the party. Throughout the Castillo administration (1954-57)

the PGT remained a relatively ineffective clandestine organization. After the assassination of Castillo in 1957 the PGT made considerable gains, particularly in the tide of resurgent leftism that took place during the regime of President Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes (1958-63). This leftist revival was, however, broad and disunited and beyond the control of PGT. The guerrilla movement had its beginning in the uprising of 13 November 1960 by a defecting group of young army officers. As far as is known, the revolt was a purely military movement whose sole aim was the overthrow of Ydigoras. Unsuccessful in this goal, the rebel officers went into exile or hiding and continued plotting. Lt. Yon Sosa became leader of those who decided on guerrilla action, and the group organized as the "13 November Revolutionary Movement" with its base in the north-eastern department of Izabal, a mountainous jungle region well suited to guerrilla operations.

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***GUATEMALA: Area of Insurgent Activity***



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Cuba began giving material assistance to the group in early 1962, and Yon Sosa himself later spent some months in Cuba. Under Yon, the guerrillas scored limited success--petty harassment of communications lines, buses, and railroad tracks; attacks on military supply points and plantations to acquire money and arms; assassinations of army collaborators; and sporadic attacks against commercial and official installations.

The PGT soon established contact with the guerrillas. It began supplying them with food and medicine and initiated a propaganda campaign to exaggerate the popularity and significance of the movement. At this point, the PGT's international line was the standard Soviet line and the Sino-Soviet split had little effect in Guatemala. The party's main activity was in the political realm, infiltrating partisan, labor, and student organizations. Violence was espoused only as one of many means toward revolution, and military work received only incidental attention.

By 1962, perhaps a score of PGT members had been trained in guerrilla tactics in Cuba. The party's first use of such tactics, however, ended in disaster, when a group sponsored by a former high-ranking Guatemalan military officer, Carlos Paz Tejada, was crushed.

PGT Split Over Use of Violence

From 1961 to 1963 the PGT leadership had little difficulty

in maintaining ideological unity in spite of incipient pro-Chinese feeling among some of the members. PGT and other leftist groups made progress under Ydigoras, although they were kept divided by the President's deals, threats, and contradictory actions. They were preoccupied for much of 1962 and early 1963 by the problem of selecting a candidate to support in the presidential elections scheduled for November.

The cause of the small PGT minority in disagreement with the party's relative inaction in the guerrilla movement was boosted by the military ouster of Ydigoras at the end of March. Very shortly after Minister of Defense Enrique Peralta imposed what the PGT now calls "the military dictatorship," party leaders established a separate military commission for guerrilla warfare and terrorism. In May 1963, central committee member Carlos Rene Valle y Valle contended that armed struggle was a reality in northeastern Guatemala; that it implied a new way of life for all party members; and that, although the usual peaceful methods would be used for a while, the entire party would eventually be armed. Some individual PGT members were working with the organized guerrilla groups, but these members were admonished not to hold party meetings among the other guerrillas who were men of different ideologies.

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Throughout 1963 and 1964, PGT leaders remained divided over recourse to violence as the major form of struggle. Members who were working with the guerrillas in the hills increasingly championed the insurreccional line and called for the party to follow their example. Party documents of the day upheld armed violence as a form of struggle forced on the party but continued to emphasize organizational work among the masses as the PGT's primary mission. Party leaders admitted that conditions for revolution had not completely matured in Guatemala. This unwillingness to take a strong stand in favor of violence was regarded by some members as unrealistic subservience to the Soviet line. A pro-Chinese faction became more vocal and some rank and file members defected.

The party had managed by late 1963 to establish a united guerrilla front, called the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR). FAR included three main guerrilla groups: Yon Sosa's 13 November Movement, a Communist "12 April" youth group, and a Communist-dominated "20 October" group. Also established was a more ambitious revolutionary front to coordinate antigovernment activity. This group, called the United Resistance Front (FUR), encompassed the FAR, the PGT, and two leftist parties. FUR occasionally had the participation of the leftist university students, Francisco Villagran Kramer's far leftist Democratic Revolutionary Unity Party (URD) and the Communist-dominated

Autonomous Trade Union Federation of Guatemala (FASGUA).

The establishment of the FAR and FUR represented a new attempt by PGT to control the guerrilla movement. Yon Sosa, while accepting material aid, had never been willing to accept PGT direction--a stand in which he was supported by many of the extremists, including some PGT members. The revolutionaries resented the PGT's attempts to control them while it was reluctant to commit itself wholeheartedly to armed revolution. PGT efforts to dominate the guerrillas also were undercut by the guerrillas' ability to secure funds, equipment, and training from other countries. In late 1963, action groups under the military commission of the PGT were ostensibly released from the control of the central committee to act as agents of the FUR. The party's intent was to gain covert control of FUR and direct guerrilla activity through these action groups.

Emergence of "Trotskyite"  
Influence

The Peralta government's security forces, relatively ineffective in the unconventional warfare waged in the northeast, acted with vigor and some success against party installations in Guatemala City. There the party was demoralized, members became suspicious of one another, and the rank and file refused to carry out party tasks for fear of the police.

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As a consequence, the PGT presumably lost a good part of its low-level membership and was whittled down to militant, dedicated stalwarts. Feeling apparently began to develop against those members of the central committee and other high-level PGT members who, while living comfortably in Mexico, continued to emphasize work among the masses and to warn against the error of wholesale dedication to violence. At the same time, the guerrilla bands were aided by emissaries from Cuba and Mexico, who brought encouragement and recognition along with supplies and funds to the revolutionaries.

By midsummer 1964, [redacted]

[redacted] began to mention Maoist influence among the guerrillas. One source depicted Mario Silva Jonama, a member of the central committee and a leader of FAR, as leader of a strong pro-Chinese faction [redacted]

[redacted] on differences within FAR, and claimed that the guerrillas were influenced by Francisco Amado Granados, a Guatemalan exiled in Mexico who "took the Chinese view of violent revolution."

In July Revolucion Socialista, a publication purported to be the periodical of the 13 November Movement, first appeared. It derided peaceful means of revolution as inadequate for the struggle in Guatemala. This first issue did not attack the Soviet Union and tended to avoid

the Peiping-Moscow issue. But it did support an uncompromising, nationalistic revolutionary creed.

Shortly thereafter, the PGT replied to the 13 November Movement in an open letter. The PGT response pointed out that the subversive movement was not as successful as 13 November had painted it, that revolutions took time, and that impatience could only bring harm to the cause. PGT decried the divisionist tendencies of 13 November and appealed for unity. The PGT letter, signed by the Political Commission of the central committee, was heavily larded with laudatory comments on the Soviet Union. The polemic between the two groups continued for some months.

The party consistently praised Yon Sosa--blaming provocateurs for his lapses. It tried to convince him that his Mexican contacts were "Trotskyites," possibly with connections with Communist China, who intended to betray the guerrillas. In December the polemic diminished and there were reports of a *modus vivendi* under which the PGT would accept 13 November leadership of terrorist activities and guerrilla operations while the party publicly stuck to its peaceful coexistence line on international affairs. Yon Sosa was to command guerrillas in the field, and Luis Turcios Lima was to operate in Guatemala City.

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International Concern Over  
Disunity of Guerrillas

The Communist presses in Europe and Latin America have given considerable attention to revolutionary forces in Guatemala, and the guerrillas are known to be in contact with emissaries from Cuba, other Central American countries, and Mexico.

One such representative is Victor Rico Galan, a Marxist journalist [redacted]

[redacted] In the fall of 1964 Guatemalan security forces confiscated a large amount of propaganda including the text of an address by Rico Galan to the guerrillas. After lauding the 13 November movement as the symbol of the struggle for national liberation of all of Latin America, Rico said that Cuba's Ernesto "Che" Guevara believed that the revolutionary movement was most solid and firm in Guatemala and Venezuela and told the 13 November group that their difficulties were due in large measure to PGT reluctance to forsake ideas for action. He described the role of the PGT as one of support, and that of 13 November as one of dragging PGT into a more active commitment to the struggle.

Rico accused the revolutionaries in Guatemala of embracing an ideology beyond the grasp of the masses. The Guatemalan masses, he said, had a very elementary understanding

of their own problems. Rico also chided the guerrillas for engaging in polemics with the PGT. He encouraged ideological study but warned against preoccupation with intellectual matters which could not be translated to the uneducated masses. Rico then urged unity among all the revolutionaries.

These points expressed by the Mexican journalist appear to have been affirmed by the meeting of Communists in Havana in November 1964, which called for unity among the liberal forces and a more activist stance on the part of the orthodox parties in several countries including Guatemala. Whether in response to external nudging or not, the 13 November group and the PGT apparently reconciled their differences, but only temporarily.

PGT Takes a Harder Line

Prior to the fall of Khrushchev, the 13 November publication Revolucion Socialista carefully avoided taking a strong position on the Sino-Soviet split. After Khrushchev's political demise, the publication labeled the ousted Soviet leader as the cause of most Communist troubles. It unabashedly praised the Chinese Communists and criticized PGT for backing international peaceful co-existence and bourgeois nationalist revolution. No mention was made of the call for unity which resulted from the Cuban Communist conference of November, and in fact Yon Sosa withdrew his group from the FAR.

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A little later, the PGT began endorsing the use of force to achieve its goals. A PGT Political Commission document of early 1965 states that the revolutionary struggle cannot be realized by peaceful means, and that the party must carry out a protracted armed struggle. However, because the peasants and workers are not yet a sufficiently strong and decisive element in the national life, the social revolution cannot take the form of immediate insurrection. The struggle is said to be in its first phase, which is organizational and defensive, calling for ideological development of the masses, creation and development of the necessary clandestine organizations, and formation of experienced and dedicated cadres.

At about the same time the party began to implement its verbal sanction of violence. It reconstituted the FAR, which now presumably incorporates all ideologically sound revolutionary elements, and is itself in the process of reorganizing along quasimilitary lines.

the PGT has received word from Fidel Castro that if it intensifies its activities and can sustain itself through 1965, Havana will give the party complete financial support. Other information, too, indicates that funds from Cuba are contingent on an

increase of violence and terrorism.

The soft-liners in the PGT no longer appear to control the party. The influence of the exiled PGT leaders--such as Victor Manuel Gutierrez, Jose Manuel Fortuny, Edelberto Torres Rivas, and Jaime Diaz Rozzotto--has diminished and indeed may be nonexistent.

Current Division of Extremists

In December 1964, Luis Turcios Lima, chief of the guerrilla band called "Edgar Ibarra," had written to both Yon and the PGT attacking the infiltration of Trotskyites into the 13 November Movement and calling for a reconciliation among the revolutionaries. In January 1965, Turcios repeated his attack on "Trotskyite" control of the guerrillas and announced his withdrawal from the 13 November. Turcios officially split with Yon in early June 1965 and was accepted into the PGT. His guerrilla group is now under the direct command of the central committee.

The guerrilla movement in Guatemala now consists of two groups: the FAR or "Edgar Ibarra" group led by Turcios under PGT direction, and the 13 November group headed by Yon with aid from Maoists or "Trotskyites." There is no way of estimating how many chose to follow Turcios or how many remained with Yon.

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The harder line implicit in the PGT's acceptance of Turcios' guerrillas appears to remain within the bounds of Soviet orthodoxy. From what is known of the Havana Conference in November 1964, Moscow apparently has given the stamp of approval for a harder line in domestic affairs to the parties in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Honduras, Haiti, Paraguay, and Panama. Those PGT members anxious to take advantage of this green light seem to have overcome the reluctance of the "intellectual" leadership. Even so, for some of the members the espousal of armed struggle proved too little and too late.

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Many young members of the party and associated youth groups already had left the PGT to join Yon in the hills.

In July that PGT members throughout Guatemala and particularly in the zones of guerrilla activity were confused and demoralized by recent PGT documents describing the 13 November as Trotskyite, provocative, and divisionist, and labeling Yon Sosa a traitor.

Central committee member and guerrilla Ricardo Ramirez de Leon, in a March 1965 meeting with PGT leaders, expressed strong disagreement with the party's orthodox line and accused them of indecision in the armed struggle at a time when strong leadership was required. Ramirez said that he was going to Mexico to start his own group to represent PGT in the struggle.

In June 1965 the central committee wrote to exiles in Mexico

stating that certain high-level members of the party had adopted the hard line with Ramirez and that they believed Ramirez and the others had joined forces to form a new party.

It is certain that the party is badly split, has lost pivotal members, and has been damaged by more efficient action by Guatemalan security forces. Nevertheless, terrorists continue their activities, and the direction and purpose of their raids imply organization and discipline, assets that deny any imminent departure of the party from the Guatemalan scene.

#### Political Implications

The Peralta regime, in its more than two years of rule, has lost the political support of all partisan organizations left of center and has gained the avowed enmity of most of them. The current preparations for a return to constitutional government are in the nature of a "guided democracy," characterized by institutional and regulatory assurances that only "safe" organizations will participate in the national elections scheduled for March 1966. The exclusion of all but those partisan groups considered "safe" by the incumbent government represents to both extreme and moderate liberals a commitment to an intolerable status quo. It has been clear to most of the liberal parties for some time that they have no early opportunity to achieve power through legal means.

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Most of the moderate groups, while recognizing that subversion is the only path open at this time, have feared to engage in serious plotting in the face of the relative efficiency of the security apparatus. The government, on the other hand, may have painted itself into a corner. Renewed restriction of civil liberties under martial law (the state of siege has been lifted, but probably only temporarily) might well turn usu-

ally moderate groups to violence. Terrorist groups, realizing this, are planning increased sabotage and assassination attempts to force the maintenance of the state of siege. Chief of Government Peralta's lack of political acumen and his apparent inability or unwillingness to clarify his political intentions portend long-term instability for Guatemala. (SECRET [redacted])

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