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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
17 September 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Significant Developments in the Latin American Countries on the Counterinsurgency Critical List

A. Countries on the Critical List

1. Guatemala

A wave of minor violence has broken out in Guatemala City for the first time since the Guatemalan military seized power late in March 1963. Several bombings have been reported, and on 6 September an attack on a police station in the capital resulted in several casualties. The terrorists have not yet been identified.

The resumption of violence in the capital may involve elements either of the extreme left or the far right, both of which are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the government for various reasons. Elements from both groups, as well as several chronic plotters, reportedly are conspiring against the government, but there are no indications that any group now has the strength or support necessary for a successful coup attempt.

There has been no recent news concerning guerrilla activities outside the capital, and extreme leftist groups reportedly have decided to de-emphasize their program of rural violence and adopt the tactics of urban terror used by the Communist-dominated Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) in Venezuela.

2. Venezuela

The Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) unleashed a wave of bombings and arson in

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Caracas on 13 September in an effort to disrupt a mass meeting of President Betancourt's Democratic Action (AD) Party. The meeting was held as scheduled, with about half as many present as had been expected by the organizers. Among the absentees was AD's presidential candidate, Raul Leoni.

Nine top leaders of FALN escaped from prison on 16 September, including four ringleaders of the 1962 revolt at Carupano.

Only a few hours before the escape, the government had announced the capture of one of the FALN group which hijacked the Venezuelan freighter Anzoategui in February.

Reportedly, the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV) has gone on "alert" because a rightist revolution is thought to be imminent. The PCV's objective is to give the insurrection an appearance of popular support and cause maximum violence to hinder the government's efforts to defeat the rightist revolt.

B. Other Countries

1. Honduras-Nicaragua

The President of Honduras, through the chief of the Honduran armed forces, has requested helicopter support from the US for Honduran military operations against the Castroite guerrillas reportedly based in the Patuca River area. The guerrillas appear to be operating primarily against the Nicaraguan Government at the present time.

About 300 Honduran troops, under the command of officers who received US counterinsurgency training, plan to establish blockades at the junctures of the Cuyamel and Patuca rivers and of the Guayape and Guayambre rivers and then make a sweep through the intervening area. However, the Honduran Air Force is unable to provide the essential logistical support. There has been no contact between Honduran military units and the insurgents thus far.

On 14 September, Honduran security police in Tegucigalpa arrested three members of the National

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Liberation Front (FLN), the Nicaraguan Communist revolutionary organization which reportedly is sponsoring the guerrilla activity. The police are trying to locate and arrest other members of the FLN. (Map).

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