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Project: **IP-137**

OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

Project Initiation Memorandum

Date: **30 June 1950**

To: **D/LA**

From: Publications Division, Projects Planning

Subject: **Political Parties in Guatemala**

25X1A

Statement of Project:

Origin: **Internal** [REDACTED]

Problem: **To furnish estimates of voting strength of political parties in Guatemala.**

Scope: **Estimate should include forecast of outcome of Nov. 1950 presidential election.**

Graphics (if any):

Form: **Memorandum**

Draft due in D/Pub: **As soon as convenient**

Responsible Division: **D/LA**

Dissemination deadline (if any)

Internal Coordination:

Departmental Responsibilities:

Classification to be no higher than: **Confidential**

Recommended Dissemination: **Requester only**

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AD/R+P

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Project: 1P-137

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*1. Guatemala  
2. Political*

OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

Project Initiation Memorandum

*1. Guatemala - political  
2. Political  
Presidential elections  
Nov 1950 - Guatemala*

Date: 30 June 1950

To: D/LA

From: Publications Division, Projects Planning

Subject: Political Parties in Guatemala

Statement of Project:

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Recommended Dissemination: Requester only

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29 June 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR : ORE/Division of Publications  
 25X1A

ATTENTION : [REDACTED]

SUBJECT : Political Parties in Guatemala  
 25X1A

REFERENCE : [REDACTED]

1. It is requested that you supply this office with an estimate of the voting strength of each of the political parties in Guatemala.

2. Any forecast of the outcome of the November 1950 presidential elections in Guatemala that could be made by your office would be greatly appreciated. 25X1A

3. For your information, [REDACTED] of this office, on Extension 3215, is acquainted with this request.

1950 JUN 30 11 39

25X1A


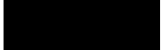
[REDACTED]

20 JUN 30 8 29 AM '50

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29 June 1950


MEMORANDUM FOR : ORE/Division of Publications  
25X1A  
ATTENTION :   
SUBJECT : Political Parties in Guatemala  
REFERENCE :  25X1A

*1P-137*

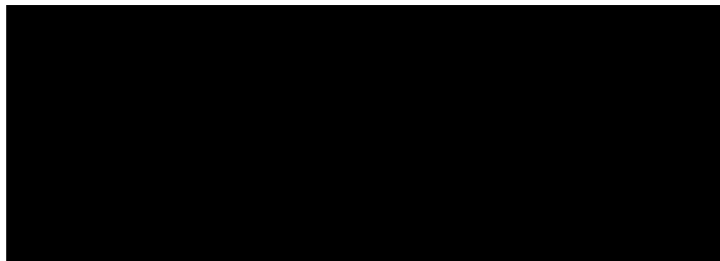
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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

**INSTRUCTIONS:** officer designations should be used in the "To" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "To" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Record and Routing Sheet should be returned to Registry.

FROM: 25X1A

NO.

27189

DATE

29 June 1950

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		REC'D	FWD'D		
1. D/Pub, ORE Att. [REDACTED]					
2. 25X1A					
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Chief, D/Pub (Attn: Projects Planning)

13 July 1950

Chief, D/LA

Voting strength of Guatemalan parties and estimate as to outcome of  
1950 presidential election

25X1A

REFERENCE: D/Pub IP-137, Case [REDACTED], D/LA Project No. 49

I. Estimate of the voting strength of political parties in Guatemala

1. Relative voting strength

a. Major parties The relative voting strength of the major political parties is best estimated as being proportional to party representation in Congress. The last regular congressional election was held in November 1948, at which time 34 Deputies (half of the total number) were elected. The resultant Congress had the following political composition:

Pro-administration parties

FPL (Frente Popular Libertador)	28 seats
PAR (Partido Accion Revolucionaria)	19 seats
PRN (Partido Renovacion Nacional)	6 seats

Opposition parties

PTRD (Partido de Trabajadores Republicano-Democratico) supported by other opposition groups	9 seats
Union Patriotica	4 seats
Independent	1 seat

Vacancies	<u>1 seat</u>
	68 seats

(Note: In March, 1950, one PAR candidate and one Independent candidate were announced as victors in by-elections held to fill two vacancies which came about during 1949. The effect of these elections on the proportional strength in Congress has not been reported.)

The pro-administration parties are now split into two distinct camps, each backing a different candidate for president. It is probable that the oppositionist parties will, before the election, form a coalition behind a single candidate. At election time, therefore, three major party groups are anticipated. Based upon present congressional representation, the relative proportion of the total votes each group should obtain is as follows:

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Voting strength of  
Guatemalan parties

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FPL group (backing Dr. Victor M. Giordani)	41 percent
PAR-RN group (backing Lt. Col. Jacobo Arbenz)	37 percent
Opposition group (backing Gen. Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes or some other opposition candidate)	20 percent

b. Minor parties Parties not represented in the present Congress are, at the moment, of minor importance. None has appreciable strength, and (if not already affiliated) will probably eventually affiliate with one or more of the parties listed above. These minor parties include:

Pro-administration parties

- PIN (Partido de Integridad Nacional) - supports Arbenz
- PP (Partido del Pueblo) - supports Jorge Garcia Granados
- PROG (Partido Revolucionario Obrero de Guatemala) - PAR splinter group, no candidate officially selected, but possibly will support Arbenz
- PRNA (Partido Renovacion Nacional Autentica) - in process of formation; anti-Arbenz, no candidate at present

Opposition parties

- PRDN (Partido de Reconciliacion Democratica Nacional) - supports Ydigoras Fuentes
- PUP (Partido Union Popular) - supports Col. Miguel Angel Mendoza
- PUD (Partido Unificacion Democratica) - supports Ydigoras Fuentes
- PUA (Partido de Unificacion Anti-Comunista) - no candidate
- PSD (Partido Social Democratico) - no candidate

2. Numerical voting strength

It is impossible to estimate accurately the numerical voting strength of the various parties. The total number of votes to be cast in the next presidential election may number 600,000, or more than twice the number cast in the 1944 election. Irregularities in voting procedure and in tabulation of the results will very probably occur, thereby altering the "voting strength" of the parties.

II. Forecast of the outcome of the 1950 presidential election

1. General factors

a. It is believed that the outcome of the 1950 election will depend as much on the manipulation of voters, control of the ballot boxes, and arbitrary



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tabulation procedures as it will on the voting strength of the various political parties. It is to be expected, of course, that the winning candidate will obtain the greatest number of votes. It is questionable whether each of his votes will represent a voter who has gone to the polls voluntarily, without fear of punishment or hope of reward. It is even questionable whether each vote will represent a voter.

b. In view of the above consideration, it is believed that the winner of the 1950 presidential election will almost certainly be one of the pro-administration candidates, and most probably Lt. Col. Jacobo Arbenz, even though the strength of the pro-Arbenz parties in Congress is somewhat less than the strength of the pro-Giordani FPL. The several factors favoring the Arbenz campaign which, at the present time, would appear to insure his election, are listed in section 2, below. Several possible developments could hinder, or even prevent, Arbenz' election. Six such developments are listed in section 3, below.

## 2. Factors favoring Arbenz

a. Press and radio support Arbenz apparently controls three newspapers and is supported by various minor publications. He has been able to obtain radio time more easily than other candidates.

b. Financial support and material aid Arbenz, who was a cabinet minister for five years, has apparently amassed a considerable personal fortune and has consolidated loyalties within the government. He is able to spend freely in his campaign and to demand favors from friends within the government. In the case of certain army officers, he is believed to be buying support through direct payments.

c. Ability to control balloting At the present time, Arbenz is in the best position to bring voters to the polls and to influence local balloting. As at his political rallies, government trucks will probably be available at election time to bring pro-Arbenz voters to the polls. Moreover, Arbenz may have the help of the army and possibly the police force to "maintain order" at voting places, and to arbitrarily influence voters in his favor.

## 3. Possible developments adverse to Arbenz

a. Assassination Arbenz has numerous personal enemies, and his assassination before the election must be regarded as a possibility. This might provide an opportunity for another candidate -- possibly a military man -- to emerge and win the election with the help of the Arbenz "machine".

b. Poor health Should Arbenz be forced to withdraw for reasons of health, he might exert his influence in favor of some new candidate -- probably a military man -- who would then be in a strong position to win the election.

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c. Desertion of key supporters Certain key individuals, notably Col. Aldana Sandoval (Minister of Communications) and Col. Victor M. Sandoval (Chief of the Police) have not publicly announced their support of Arbenz, though they are believed to be behind him. Should these men switch their loyalties to some other candidate, Arbenz' chances of victory would be seriously impaired.

d. Failure to control the National Electoral Board This three-man board controls vote counting and investigates irregularities. Jose Manuel Fortuny, a pro-Arbenz leftist, was recently removed from this board. The man appointed to fill the present vacancy will hold the balance of power between the FPL and the PAR, and may be able to control the election results.

e. Opposition of President Arevalo Should President Arevalo, who exerts considerable influence, openly give his support to another candidate or publicly repudiate Arbenz, the latter's campaign would be injured.

f. Coalition of all anti-Arbenz groups Although unlikely, it is remotely possible that opposition groups might throw their support to Giordani rather than to an opposition candidate, in order to defeat Arbenz.

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