

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Costa Rica/Nicaragua

DATE DISTR. 24 November 1948

SUBJECT Exiles' Preparations for an Attack Against Figueres Government

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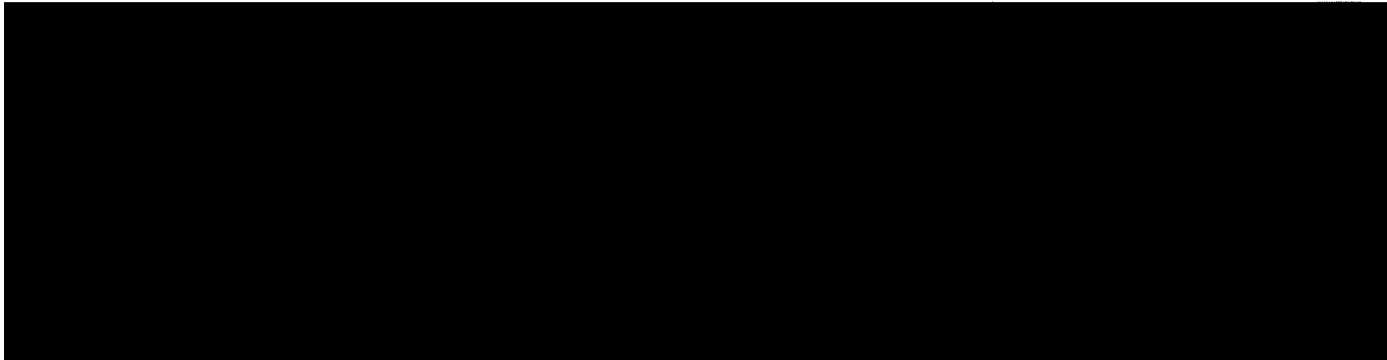
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1. Certain indications point to the possibility that the Costa Rican exiles now in Nicaragua will soon launch an attack against the Figueres regime. On 18 October 1948, Betulio Blanco, former Secretary to Dr. Rafael Angel Calderon Guardia, the ex-President of Costa Rica, reported that Calderon Guardia had advised that a counter-revolution would be opened from Nicaragua as soon as the fall rains stop and the weather changes (any time after the middle of November).

2. [redacted] the leader of the Calderon forces in Costa Rica is Fernando Castro Cervantes, a wealthy politician who aspires to the Costa Rican presidency. Orders to the Calderon supporters have been simple: merely to keep out of jail and to head north into the province of Guanacaste as soon as the movement gets underway.

3. Evidence that the Costa Rican government is aware of the possibilities of revolution is seen in the continued road and border patrols and in the troop deployment in the north. According to some, the reason that Figueres has been reluctant to have the Caribbean Legion forces leave Costa Rica is that he wants them around in case of trouble. This belief is discounted, however, by those who believe that Somoza will not encourage the revolutionaries to begin the offensive themselves from Nicaragua, but instead will wait until he himself is attacked, and then strike against Figueres.

4. The Costa Rican government recently received information from its legation in Managua to confirm its apprehension concerning counter-revolutionary movements. The government was advised that a group of Costa Rican exiles in Nicaragua had received three hundred uniforms and three hundred pairs of shoes. The Legation also requested control of the departure of launches from Costa Rica, as many additional exiles were arriving in the Nicaraguan port town of Rivas without passports.

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5. In Managua, Trino Araya Salas, the Costa Rican Minister to Nicaragua, advised Oscar Bakit, a Costa Rican exile, to return home. Araya said that the Figueres government would not persecute voluntary exiles who returned to their country. He even offered to furnish air passage to Costa Rica to Bakit and his mother, who is in Nicaragua with him, and said that he would settle their hotel accounts.

6. Calderon Guardia has completely replaced ex-President Picado as leader of the Costa Rican revolutionary movement. The exiles trust his leadership explicitly

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and are so confident of his success against Figueres that they have refrained from accepting regular employment in Nicaragua which would hinder their immediate departure to Costa Rica. Alvaro Gene Sojo, one of the prominent exiles, has completely abandoned the camp of Teodoro Picado and continues to make trips to Rivas and to Diriamba to confer with Calderon Guardia.

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