

The Situation in Guatemala

President Ydigoras remains in control in the capital following coordinated insurgent attacks on military installations in Guatemala City and in two key provincial cities on 13 November. Attempts to seize the two major army garrisons in Guatemala City --which would have meant the immediate fall of the government-- failed, but the insurgents were able to enter a lesser military installation in the capital and to withdraw with a quantity of military equipment and with a number of defecting soldiers. At about the same time, the army garrison in the Caribbean city of Puerto Barrios revolted, and the garrison in Zacapa, key city controlling the rail line from the capital to the sea, also apparently came under insurgent control. Ydigoras, facing the most serious threat of his nearly three years in office, immediately decreed a state of siege throughout the country.

The extent of army defection is still unclear, but key officers, including Defense Minister Gonzalez Sigui and the capital's two regimental commanders, apparently have thus far remained loyal. The air force, potentially a decisive element in quelling the revolt, has already gone into action against insurgent-controlled bases in Puerto Barrios and Zacapa. A rightist political leader reported on the day of the revolt, however, that part of the air

force is committed to neutrality in passive support of the revolt.

Preliminary reports indicate that the revolt was plotted by a coalition of anti-Ydigoras forces ranging from a rightist faction of the late President Castillo Armas' political machine to the Communist-front Revolutionary Unity party (PUR).

told a usually reliable source on 13 November that the revolt is being led by politically unaffiliated colonels "who lean toward the non-Communist left," and that all anti-Ydigoras parties are to be included in the new government. The PUR, which is reportedly slated for at least one cabinet post, has ties with the Castro regime in Cuba. The Cuban Government was reliably reported last month to have provided the Guatemalan Communists and pro-Communists with financial support and the promise of arms aid for a revolution against Ydigoras.

While there is no evidence at this time that the 11 November rebel attacks in Nicaragua and the current revolt in Guatemala are coordinated moves directed from Cuba, the Castro regime is known to be deeply involved in Central American revolutionary plotting.

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Rebel Incursions Into Nicaragua

Rebel groups attempting to seize key spots in southern Nicaragua were dispersed in separate actions on 11 and 12 November by Costa Rican and Nicaraguan defense groups. They apparently represent a variety of Nicaraguan opposition groups, from conservatives to a leftist pro-Castro faction. Members of the latter group were cultivated by the Cuban ambassador prior to the Nicaraguan diplomatic break with Cuba last June and may subsequently have received Cuban aid. There is no confirmation, however, of Nicaraguan Government claims that the rebel move was directed

or closely supported by the Castro regime.

The Nicaraguan Government, which has declared martial law, expects another attack by rebels known to be near the border with Honduras to the North, but is believed capable of suppressing any new rebel raids from this quarter.

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