

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

2003

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DISPATCH NO. []-1349

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SECURITY INFORMATION
CLASSIFICATION

RYBAT #21-PBSUCCESS

TO Chief of Station, Guatemala DATE 23 December 1953

FROM [] INFO: Washington

SUBJECT { GENERAL Operational
SPECIFIC Mexican-Guatemalan Arms Traffic.

Reference: HGG-A-543, 7 December 1953

1. a) On or about 10 December 1953, [] citizen and known local "coyote" who has figured in unsuccessful Mexican-Guatemalan arms deals in the past year, informed LIBETHENITE-4 that he was attempting to procure the below listed ammunition, weapons, and automobiles for the Guatemalan government. [] furnished source with the list which was written in his [] own handwriting. He asked for source's recommendations for the procurement of the munitions.

"200,000--cal. .50 missiles" (.50 caliber ammunition),
100--bombs, 200 lbs.
100--bombs, 100 lbs.
9--F.P. (complete?) (These two items, according to source, represent SHAMOSH's desire to procure certain type automobiles.)

1--two seater,
Morteros 81, (81mm mortars)
Morteros 60, (60mm mortars)
Bazukas, small and ammo, (2.36" bazookas and ammunition)
Ammo, 30s, (caliber .30 ammunition, amount not specified).
Other available equip."

b) Source told [] that he knew of no place in Mexico where such supplies, the automobiles excepted, could be procured.

2. a) The Office of the Military Attache has not received any information indicating that [] or other persons are attempting to procure munitions through the usual legal or illegal channels. Similarly, no reports have been received from other sources indicating that attempts to procure

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Mexican arms and ammunition are currently in progress.

3. a) The Office of the Military Attache informs [] that Industria Militar (the Mexican Army's munitions producer) is currently operating at about 30% of capacity which is no more than adequate to supply current training requirements. The same office re-affirms that munitions stocks of the Mexican Army are widely scattered throughout the Republic.

b) The same office further informs that any arms export permits must, under existing Mexican regulations, be personally signed by the president, thus effectively throttling arms exports from Mexico to any country. Arms imports to Mexico must be authorized by the chiefs of Industria Militar, so it would appear that trans-shipments through Mexico--necessitating an export permit--are also effectively throttled.

4. It is pointed out that the appearance of Mexican manufactured arms in the recent uprising in Cuba embarrassed the RUIZ Cortines government and resulted in closer federal supervision of arms imports and exports. This appears to be fact, although it is quite certain that the arms that appeared in Cuba were some of those sold by officials of the ALEMAN administration in late 1952.

5. On the basis of available information, it would appear that it would be difficult to procure from Mexico, either legally or illegally, arms for Guatemala. However, [] will be alert for any leads regarding the possibility of arms smuggling from Mexico into Guatemala.

Frederick K. Gollaher

FKG/cav

cc: 3 - Washington
1 - Guatemala City
2 - Files

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