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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Wisner

DATE: 19 July 1954

ATTN :

FROM :

SUBJECT:

Attached are suggestions for Mr. Wisner's meeting with
Mr. Watson.

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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

2003

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19 July 1954

1. London EMBTEL 306, 17 July 1954 to Department stated that the Foreign Office declined afford opportunity examine draft of White Paper on Guatemala. It described British assurance that the document will not contain interpretive comment. Also Foreign Office suggestion that by the time the White Paper is published the main interest in Guatemala will have passed and the document will create only incidental interest.

Suggestion: That Mr. Watson be advised of our desire for continued good relations with the British Service in Central America and that we feel that if the White Paper is offensive to the Guatemalan government, it could in the end raise the question of British Honduras; that one has but to read the press to realize that CIA is not unfavorably inclined toward the Castillo Armas junta. Mr. Watson may wish to include in his advice to the Department some interpretive comment.

2. The British press support may be asked on the subject of differentiating between traditional right of asylum as practiced by Latin American countries and that pertaining today in Guatemala which involves, in part, that of common crimes (such as murder, torture and theft) which the right of asylum does not in fact pretend to condone or protect.

3. The Guatemalan Ambassador to England, Sr. Aguilar, desires to make a public utterance but fears that in view of the British press position on Guatemala that he may give offense to the Foreign Office (not quite true). It is suggested that Mr. Watson be asked to recommend to the Foreign Office that they facilitate Aguilar's press statement.

4. Some of the statements made by people such as Mr. Crossman in the July 5 Parliamentary Debates in the House of Commons should be shown to Mr. Watson with the suggestion that we hope that this kind of thing does not receive publicity in the international press friendly to Great Britain.

5. It may be possible to make available to Mr. Watson a copy of Communism in Guatemala prepared by RQM/OIS in February 1954. At the same time it could be stated that early reports on documents collected lead us to believe that an equally interesting sequel to this may be expected.

6. Suggest that it is hoped that the British press will not fall for the new line to the effect that the ALFHEM shipment was worthless military junk. In this connection, see page 34 of the July 19 "Time", "... dutifully passed along from Mexico by the New York Times." We are

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reliably advised that the machine guns, mines, grenades and ammunition were in good condition and that while the howitzers, anti-tank guns and rifles were in poor condition, they were certainly usable and were not junk. They were probably in as good condition, or better, than the standard arms of the Guatemalan army.

7. In this connection, it is hoped that the British press does not take the line that the Guatemalan army failed because of this "poor" equipment. The truth, in fact, is that the Arbenz regime did not have the support of the army or of the people, and judging from the performance of the workers' militia, did not even enjoy their confidence.

8. It may be observed that the British Service, if not the Foreign Office, has a fine record for getting hold of the essential truth and important factor in any given situation. The truth and factor in this situation, as will emerge more and more clearly month by month, is the international communist control of Guatemala--other circumstances and stories are misleading and therefore a disservice to the struggle against international communism.

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