

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 21 June 1954

Re: claim that Liberation forces are merely "foreign invaders"
without popular support.

1. Widespread disaffection in Air Force. American officials report that Lt. Col. Luis URRUTIA, active Guatemalan Air Force officer who took asylum in the Salvadoran Embassy, Guatemala City, June 19, has stated that 90% of the Air Force officers would leave the country within 48 hours if they were able; they had discussed this among themselves and were in full agreement. (URRUTIA, two other officers and three mechanics were about to flee when strafing of the airfield rendered their plane unserviceable). (GUAT CITY EMBTEL 1045, 19 June 1300).

2. Report that 5,000 local men support Liberation forces at Champona. US officials learned from a reliable source that on the night of June 18 Carlos Jose ARZANO Altamiro, chief of the Propaganda Office of the National Agrarian Department, sent a telegram from Bananera to Arbenz and labor leaders warning them 100 Hondurans were in Champona [a small railway siding some 8 miles from the Honduran border, not shown on most maps] and 5,000 local men were back of them.

--GUAT CITY EMBTEL 1044, 19 June 1200.

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

RE: CP Type "Reign of Terror" in Guatemala

According to Guat City EMBTEL 1005, 15 June, 6 pm, it is stated that "Yesterday morning (14 June, ed.), American who lives on outskirts of town was shown three bullet-riddled bodies lying in a side alley near his house. When police arrived two hours later, each corpse was clutching pistol which had not been there before. Identities of deceased unknown but they are presumed victims of government terror."

~~SECRET~~

21 June 1954

Re: False claim MENDOZA house was BOMBED

[This supersedes the item submitted yesterday as para. 3 under the heading "RE: BOMBINGS". As amended, the item should read:

False claim by Guatemala official radio (TGW).

The Guatemalan official radio falsely claimed that on June 18 planes failed to hit with bombs the Guardia de Honor headquarters but hit "the home of Col. Mendoza and the home of his mother."

American observers on the scene reported that Mendoza's home was not hit. And they report that eye-witnesses among the neighbors state that the house of Mendoza's mother was openly set on fire by Enrique Viteri and other members of the Guardia Civil.

Sources: GUAT CITY EMBTEL 1040, 1900 hours of June 18; GUAT 921.

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21 June 1954

Re: Liberation forces are "authentically Guatemalan".

RADIO LIBERACION broadcast 21 June 1954, 0400 GMT:

"The Executive Committee of the great liberating movement makes known to the Army and the people of Guatemala the following:.....

"...4. The report that the liberating army is formed of mercenary soldiers and that it is financed by monopolies or foreign governments is completely false and tendentious. We categorically declare that our forces are authentically Guatemalan, that the materials and resources have been acquired by patriotic circles that are 98 per cent Guatemalans, and we are determined to expel forever from our soil the real invaders and Soviet mercenaries who unlawfully hold public power..."

~~SECRET~~

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DRAFT

CABOT LODGE MATERIAL

20 June 1954
(2300)

RE: BOMBINGS

1. Embassy observers saw no bombs. Peurifoy reported (#1039, 1800 of June 18) that: One June 18 at 1555 local time Embassy personnel saw two F-47's buzz Guatemala City at 500 feet. They dropped no bombs whatever. They merely tossed out leaflets. They fired four bursts merely into the air (i.e. merely readying their guns ^{while on an upward swing} as precautionary measure?).

2. On June 19 at 0745 hours a plane passed over Guatemala City. Again, there were no bombs. The city was calm and people were on the streets as usual. Only the stores were closed.

3. Absurd claim by Guatemala official radio (TGW). The Guatemalan official radio falsely claimed that on June 18 planes failed to hit the Guardia de Honor headquarters but hit "the home of Col. Mendoza and the home of his mother."

American observers on the scene reported that Mendoza's home was not hit; (this the claim that it was hit ^{Traveler need for "evidence" of bombing plus} merely reflects Arbenz's anger at Mendoza's joining the liberation forces). Further, although one house which was burning may perhaps have been the house of Mendoza's mother, as any passerby could verify, it had not been hit by any bomb. This house afire was one block from the Escuela Politecnica and near the home of Col. Carlos Enrique Diaz. (Suggestion: as a retaliation measure, Arbenz forces from the Escuela Politecnica may have set fire to the house of Mendoza's mother).

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE IN FULL

2003

20 June 1954
(2330)

RE: There HAS been a CP-type reign of terror in Guatemala.

1. Arbenz said in his June 19 broadcast: "...There is no reign of terror in Guatemala.."
2. But US officials in Guatemala City have reported that reliable witnesses have, for example, seen the body, in the city morgue, of Gabriel MARTINEZ del Rosal, an anti-Communist lawyer; he was mutilated and charred and had a bullet through the center of his forehead.
3. And US officials have reported that Perfecto VILLEGAS, a brother-in-law of CASTILLO Armas, was arrested by the Guardia Civil, shot, and then a truck was run over his body, --the Government then announcing that he was a "hit-and-run victim". (VILLEGAS, a veteran anti-Communist, had been arrested in 1952 and under threat of torture made a confession, which he later repudiated, to having acted as a courier for CASTILLO Armas).
4. And US officials have reported that KAUFMAN, an active anti-Communist, was arrested by the Guardia Civil and tortured to death, his feet being completely charred ("carbonized").
5. According to an Associated Press story from Tegucigalpa, June 15, Col. Rodolfo MENDOZA, Guatemalan Air Force officer who fled the country a few days before, told reporters that a "reign of terror" gripped the country and that at least 600 persons were in jail. (His brother, Miguel Angel MENDOZA, former Guatemalan Under-secretary of Defense, told reporters: "I think there is a great division in the Army and I am sure that when the moment comes, most of them will take the course for which we are fighting.")

20 June 1954
(2330)

Re: Leading supporter of ARBENZ admits Kremlin guidance.

From ~~WMI~~ AP wire:

New York (AP)--One of Guatemala's top labor leaders, speaking in the Kremlin a few days ago, swore flatly (allegiance) to Moscow.

A Moscow newspaper which arrived here today published the text of a speech made by the Secretary of the Guatemalan General Confederation of Labor, Vergilio GUERRA, whose organization is one of the biggest supporters of embattled leftist President Jacobo ARBENZ Guzman. In his speech GUERRA made plain that he and his labor movement look to the Soviet Union for guidance.

GUERRA arrived in Moscow in early June, to attend the Soviet trade union conference. He spoke June 11 in the Kremlin to this assembly and his speech was published in the Moscow paper Trud June 13.

20 June 1954
(2330)

re: Falsity of Guatemalan claim that they have been BOMBED.

The US State Department statement, issued June 19:

"At the request of Foreign Minister Toriello, Ambassador Peurifoy together with the French Minister and the British chargé called at the National Palace last night. The Foreign Minister asked them to inform their Governments that Guatemala City had been attacked by two aircraft which had bombed a house near the center of town and strafed the National Palace..."

Toriello's statement that a house had been bombed was false. As indicated on an attached sheet, US officials in Guatemala City who witnessed planes over the city on June 18 and 19 reported that there were no bombs.

In a document addressed to the Chairman of the UN Security Council (which was broadcast by the Guatemala official radio June 19), Foreign Minister Toriello stated that:

"This morning airplanes from Honduras and Nicaragua attacked the country dropping bombs / false: there were no bombs dropped / on fuel deposits in the Port of San Jose in the city of Retalhuleu. Today, at 1600 hours, American-made airplanes of the P-47 type, coming from those two countries, attacked Guatemala City, machine-gunning Government buildings, private homes, and bombing military bases. Those same airplanes later attacked the military base of San Jose port..."

Re: NO BOMBS.

RADIO LIBERACION, monitored on June 19 by the official US
Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) broadcast/~~XXXXXX~~ at 0703... an
interview with the head of the Liberation Air Force, Col. Rodolfo
MENDOZA, who said the planes that flew over Guatemala City carried
no bombs and only fired their guns into the clouds. Mendoza said
the two planes were P-47's.