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VIA Air

DISPATCH NO. [] 1919

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

No. 148

2003

TO Chief of Mission, Guatemala DATE 15 June 1954
FROM [] INFO: Wash.
SUBJECT General - Guatemalan Matters
Specific - Removal of ARBENZ
EVALUATION: F-6 SOURCE: LIBETHENITE-4

1. Jose Arcadio CHEVEZ, (Guatemalan, labor lawyer), arrived in Mexico on 5 June 1954 via TACA flight 100 from Guatemala. His primary purpose in coming to Mexico was to attend to the burial of his daughter.

2. [] CHEVEZ gave [] the following information which [] is believed to have accurately related. In view of the known reputation of CHEVEZ as an opportunist, the information is reported for the value it may have to addressees.

3. a) CHEVEZ stated that prior to his departure for Mexico, he had an interview with Licenciado Eugenio SILVA Pena, the apparent head of a "group of friends of ARBENZ" who intend to spirit ARBENZ out of Guatemala.

b) ARBENZ, with his family, is to take a trip to an unspecified Guatemalan town and "from there fly to Switzerland by chartered plane." ARBENZ, who is not a Communist, is physically afraid to take any action against the Communists who surround him. He fears death for himself if he should take any action to curb the Communists who surround him.

c) Upon the departure of ARBENZ, the group to which SILVA Pena and CHEVEZ belong will undertake a coup d'etat to control any action by the army or the Communists. The "junta" will establish a provisional government and gradually eliminate the Communists from the government of Guatemala.

4. Participants in the "junta" in addition to CHEVEZ are:

a) Eugenio SILVA Pena, former Secretary of Foreign Relations and a close friend of ARBENZ and Juan Jose AREVALO. (former Sec. of Guat.)

b) (Licenciado) Francisco VILLAGRAN, (former Secretary of Gobernacion in the AREVALO government.)

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- lawyer.) c) Licenciado Jose FALLA Aris (sic), a prominent Guatemalan lawyer.)
d) Others not named and for whom CHEVEZ has little regard.

5. CHEVEZ states that the threats from Honduras and the division of Guatemalan lands to farmers have served to unite support for ARBENZ. He is of the opinion that the threat of Carlos CASTILLO Armas is without real substance; that CASTILLO Armas has little or no support within Guatemala and little support and equipment in Honduras; that once CASTILLO's forces have crossed into Guatemala they will be crushed.

6. CHEVEZ stated he will return to Guatemala during the week of 13 June.

Frederick K. Gollaher

FKG/cav

cc: 1 - Guat.
3 - Wash.
2 - Linc.
1 - Files

C 21919
15 June 1954
Page 2

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