

A: COURIER
(SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH)

DISPATCH NO. ~~100~~-A-1233

~~SECRET~~ PBSUCCESS RYBAT
CLASSIFICATION

TO : LINCOLN

DATE: JUN 15 1954

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala []

INFO: Chief, WHD

SUBJECT: GENERAL— KUGOWN Operational

SPECIFIC— Material for SHERWOOD Use

1. Transmitted herewith are copies of a translation of a report regarding conflict between the Guatemalan Army and the communists. The report charges that President ARBENZ is conniving with the communists to undermine the strength of the army which is the principal obstacle in the path of the communists in Guatemala.

2. This report was turned over to JMBLUG-1 by the chief of the ODIBEX mission who claims that it was placed under the door of his office in a sealed envelope. Source remarked that he believes it was written by a member of the General Staff. He also said that it is the second such article that he has received. JMBLUG-1 remarked that the ODIBEX mission chief probably knows the identity of the writer but is pledged to protect him.

3. The reason for transmitting this report for SHERWOOD use is explained in the final paragraph by the writer himself: revelation of this information would be a blow to ARBENZ because it would possibly demoralize him upon learning that the army is not secure. If used, it would be wise to paraphrase slightly.

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

[]
George L. Tranger

Attachment: 1 report

2003

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14 June 1954

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Guatemala, and in Guatemala especially, the Army is in ^{im-} eminent danger of annihilation because Communism in a desperate attempt to expand has placed its attention on the Permanent Force which it knows is not contaminated with its doctrine and therefore presents a serious obstacle.

But if a manner is not ~~xxxx~~ found to stop this offensive headed by the President of the Republic, very soon the Army of Guatemala will be another Popular Army at the service of Soviet Russia. This is not the first time the President has tried to convince the Officers of the Army of the goodness of Communism and the danger of Imperialism represented by North America. At the end of last year there was a meeting of more than 400 Officers and said official spoke to them for more than two hours with the most negative result imaginable and two days ago (Tuesday, 8 June 1954) another one of these conferences was held at the Headquarters of the General Staff. Of course the excuse was that the President wanted to give us an explanation of the situation of the country, both internal and international. We were asked to write down questions with complete liberty and without fear in order that the President might know how we felt and be better able to give us an explanation.

Of course this was not the reason - it was simply because the President has decided to assure the collaboration of the Army for expansion ends of ~~the~~ communism and because the Executive is scared to death. He clearly stated to us that if he knew he did not have the support of the Army he would not take any position; only the bad thing in this case is that he made a veiled threat because ~~taking~~ of history he spoke of the agrarian movement in Mexico and pointed out that there the professional army, which everywhere is conservative and bourgeois, had allied itself with the reaction and the people had turned against it to destroy it. Among his statistics he pointed out that in Mexico ONE MILLION MEN had died to assure the Agrarian Reforms and here

a strong tribute must also be paid.

Since this is the psychological moment to deal a blow against Communism, I think this information should be made known to the anti-communist forces who can do something for Guatemala and I can say to them with absolute surety that at present the Army is not contaminated because the meeting to which I refer was attended by the Chiefs of the Organizations, the Directors of the Schools, the personnel of the General Staff of the Army and of the Ministry of National Defense and they all in one voice expressed that they were anti-communists. The President on the other hand does not realize his mistaken reasoning and for four hours (from 4 in the afternoon to 8 in the evening) continued his explanation of his obstinate anti-imperialism and did not hear one voice of approval. While speaking of yankee imperialism he expressed his disgust at the treatment given the Military Missions and the confidence with which they are shown the army installations and our equipment and resorted to threat against those who show any sympathy toward these Military Missions which he described as conspirators.

As I have already said, it was requested that he be asked questions and the Estado Mayor presented about five pages of questions most of them concerning communism and the support the government gives this Party, but they did not do any good because in answering the two questions he considered less dangerous, he immediately went off into an attack against imperialism and treason. Truly this official has a political blindness which will greatly harm him and which has kept him from seeing the anti-communist spirit which exists among the officers and ~~him~~ he persists in trying to convince us with his periodical conferences; but with such little intelligence that he has only demonstrated to the Officers that HE HAS NOTHING LEFT OF MILITARY IN HIM - for him the support he owes the parties that helped him climb the ladder to

power comes before the Army and his companions-in-arms.

Among the things pointed out to him was our poor military situation because the country is in the greatest poverty and we lack organized reserves. Not even a rudimentary mobilization chart has been made up by the General Staff but he thinks everything will be solved by arming the Labor Unions (Sindicatos) (whose members form the Communist Party in Guatemala); that solution is the most threatening one that can be conceived against the Army because in the Units (Unidades) the political leaders could more effectively give orders than the Commanding Officer of the Troops and to make things worse when the presence of any Officer in the ranks is no longer convenient for the leaders, he can be made to disappear and at this rate the Army would soon be a popular one and each one of the leaders a "Comisario de Guerra".

A special recommendation was the appointing of the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ "Servicio de Comisionados Militares" with well-defined members of official political parties such as the PAR and Guatemalan Workers Party, notwithstanding the protest of the Superior Council of National Defense that they are not communists and that the Council is formed by the Zone Commanders. Of course the danger now lies in the fact that the President has promised the leaders of the political parties that the Army will collaborate with them and they will not cease in their propaganda which sooner or later will make its effects felt ~~through~~ ^{though} not on all of us.

As a faint ray of understanding he swore he was not a Communist and that Pellecer, Castillo Flores, etc. are not Communists either; his liking of communism comes from their both being anti-imperialists; that communism is a patriotic doctrine for Latin America since it fights the "dollar" policy and that he will not tolerate continued friendly propaganda towards the country which oppresses us with its power and companies which absorb national

richness and that they must be considered as the great enemy for they are responsible for setting the rest of the Central American countries against Guatemala.

I limit myself to this for I believe what has been said is enough for you to realize the danger of giving Communism time to assert itself in Guatemala. To increase the feeling of impending doom, the President did not falter in stating that a great shedding of blood is necessary to affirm the Agrarian Reform because the same has happened in all countries that have seen Agrarian Reform. If the subject matter of the conference I refer to and which took place the 8th of this month has given enough publicity it would be a magnificent blow for the President because a leak in this case would make him impatient and demoralize him because it proves the little security in the Army ; that he only needs a small opportunity to free himself from his worse enemies, the red leaders.