

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

VIA AIR POUCH

DISPATCH NO. 5 1-660

2003

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TO : LINCOLN

DATE: 11 JUNE 1954

FROM : ACTING CHIEF OF STATION, []

INFO: CHIEF, WHD

SUBJECT: General - Operational
Specific - Statements of []

REF: LINC 3615; LINC 3574; [] 1065.

1. [] was brought to Station office by PBPRIME Military Attache 8 June 1954. Having received LINC 3615 and LINC 3571 Station felt it wise to attempt to question subject.

2. [] emphatically refused to talk with other than KUBARK, and after examining his credentials the undersigned felt it necessary to reassure him. This action was taken due to the urgency of LINC 3615.

3. After obtaining the attached information he was put in contact with WELLBANK who submitted the second part of the attachment on 9 June 54 with the statement that [] would proceed to WSHOOFS soonest.

4. Also attached is a copy of the Military Attache's report of his conversation with [] It was at the M.A.'s invitation that the subject visited the Embassy. Station showed no interest when the M.A. offered to turn [] over for questioning. After the M.A. had completed his interview and had taken [] to see the Counselor of the Embassy. Station asked the M.A. to drop by the office. The M.A. brought [] along, made introductions and left.

5. The statement in Para 4 of the M.A.'s Report pertaining to confirmation by local CAS is not correct since no confirmation was given.

6. Three articles referring to the flight from Guatemala are also attached for your interest.

INCLOSURES:

1. Statement by [] in dup.
2. M.A. REPORT
3. Newspaper clippings..three.

[]
PHILLIP L. PURWELL

10 June 1954
PLP/hgw

DISTRIBUTION:

- 2-LINCOLN w/encls 1,2 & 3 as noted above.
- 2-Washington w/encl #1.in duplicate.
- 2-Files w/encl #1 in single copy.

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12 JUN 1954

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Attachment #1.

. 360

Debriefing of [] by Station:

Friday morning, 4 June 54, I was at the home of Colonel MENDOZA's mother-in-law, Dona Romelia Tejada, visiting. A man arrived on a bicycle; he had never been seen by her before and I didn't see him at all. He had a note to give to Dona Tejada addressed to Colonel Rodolfo (Fito) MENDOZA, his wife who was also named Romelia and to me. Dona Romelia brought me the note which said, "Hide yourself immediately. The police know everything." The same for [] (which is me)." It was written in Spanish.

"Fito" was due to arrive at the house within 15 minutes so I waited for his arrival to give him the note. In the meantime he had made a flight to Chahal and had returned to the airport at Guatemala City about 11:40 a.m. There he was met by an American (Note: He implied this person was a member of KUBARK) who told him the same thing after which he drove to the house, picked me up, and returned to the airport and secured a clearance for a local flight and we left for Salvador. The weather was bad and we dodged in and out of thunder storms until we finally landed in Santa Ana where the uncle of Fito's wife lives. We attempted to contact him without success and instead talked to the president of the local Aero Club, Fredrico Batle, who advised us that the local authorities were rather inefficient and it would be better for us to come on to San Salvador, which we did. Incidentally, I left my 45 automatic with him.

Arriving in San Salvador we first reported to the Salvadoran Airforce since MENDOZA is ex-chief of the Guatemalan Airforce; then, we reported to the National Police; and now we are under the protection of the Salvadoran Government. We made a statement to the Department of Special Investigations concerning our life history for the past five years. One of the questions referred to participation in any political parties in Guatemala; the answer, of course, was negative.

Of interest may be the fact that we were contacted by Miguel VAREAS, Guatemalan Army Attache, on the day of our arrival and asked why we were here and why we came. We only told him that he should know the conditions himself.

I have not seen Miguel MENDOZA since approximately 27 May when he came to my home to determine whether or not it was suitable for occupancy in an emergency, since it is more or less isolated. Apparently he was given the same warning that we received 4 June advising us to flee. In speculating he may have gone to Mexico.

For our protection two Salvadoran Police are on watch in front of the Hotel International where we are staying. We were in jail for one night and treated royally by the Salvadoran Police.

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Additional comments: [] WELLBANK

[] reports situation very tense in Guatemala City. The people and the Government are especially fearful of air attacks to which they feel very vulnerable. Dropping an unopened bundle of leaflets in the patio of the National Palace, whether done consciously or not, was "an act of genius". The first reaction that resulted from frightened bungling was replaced by admiration for a demonstration of just what could be done and the control that could be exercised in getting the "SOBs" in the Palace.

[] plans to give CALLIGERIS his idea of appropriate air action as soon as he reaches []. He seems to have a detailed knowledge of the content of the ALFHEM Arms Shipment and states that airplanes which, if they arrive, will ruin all our plans, are due in the next shipment. He states that even the pro-Government airforce men realize their weakness in the air and have so advised AREENZ & CO. [] feels that an air attack would panic the armed forces in the City. He talked with the PBPRIME M.A., who had obtained his passport from Guatemala, without giving out any information.

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