

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE IN FULL

2003

AIR FOUCH

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HUL-827

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19 MAR 1954

Chief of Station, Guatemala

LINCOLN

KUCOWN/WASHFUB

Publicity in Guatemalan Press

1. We understand that the story of the unidentified submarine which landed in Nicaragua, caching arms of Communist origin at the shore, did not receive much, if any, publicity in the Guatemalan press. This story however should not only interest Guatemalan newspapers because it concerns a rather ominous event in a neighboring country, but most specifically since certain communications implicate Guatemala directly. The most specific of these clues were the cigarettes of Guatemalan origin found together with the weapons: this has received ample publicity in Nicaragua as shown by the attached masthead of HOVEDADES, Managua, 7 May, which carries a headline referring to those cigarettes, even above the masthead, across the entire page.

2. We suggest therefore that you make a cautious effort to obtain added publicity for this story in the Guatemalan press and public opinion. We would consider it particularly apt if you could induce one of the oppositional members of the Guatemalan congress to address a letter to the President, expressing concern about these clues, pointing at Guatemalan complicity in this arms smuggling affair and demanding a full, public investigation. He might add (if you consider that feasible) that he is greatly concerned by the fact that the Guatemalan Army has been receiving recently its arms and equipment in more or less clandestine and illegal ways which are unworthy of the honor and proud traditions of the Army. He might demand that the President make a full report to congress on this matter, especially since a peaceful foreign policy of the country makes it obviously easy to speak frankly about the very modest state of national armament.

3. If you should find it impossible to utilize a member of congress for the above purpose, we suggest that you try using any of your available press contacts. It might perhaps be possible to arrange for an interview of any suitable traveler who happened to have been in Managua on the day

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76

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of President Somoza's press conference on the subject and to tie the questions relative to the Guatemalan cigarette to that interview. Or, if any of the newspapers with whom you are in contact, has a correspondent in Managua, they might ask him (preferably by telephone) to send a special report on the finding of those cigarettes and any other clues which might point, directly or indirectly, to Guatemala.

4. Please advise as soon as you have been able to take action along either of the above lines.

JEROME C. DURBAR

Attachment
RFL/b

18 May 1954

Distribution:

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