

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

~~TOP SECRET~~

5 June 1954

RELEASE IN FULL

GUATEMALA BRIEFING

2003

- (1) Entire briefing top secret and more. Danger in relaxing security after operation completed, particularly if successful.
- (2) Last December pursuant OCB action, initiated program to eliminate pro-Communist government in Guat.
- (3) Plan contemplated:
 - (a) Internal revolution, spark-plugged by Colonel Castillo Armas, most available Guat exile who together with his group had been subsidized by CIA for approximately two years.
 - (b) Defection of Guat Army at highest level.
 - (c) Defection of individual garrisons at strong points.
 - (d) Radio campaign from clandestine transmitters.
 - (e) Subversion of individual Guat leaders, military and civilian.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

(f) Program budgeted at approximately 3 million dollars.

Actual expenditures of operation will be in this range,

not including _____ dollars worth of hardware taken

from CIA stockpile, and subsidies extended subsequent

success of revolution.

(4) In considering operation important remember U. S. government

hand undisclosed. Established theory of fictional group of

rich Americans interested in South America and desirous of

eliminating Communism (United Fruit). CIA representatives

always dealt with Armas and others as representatives of group

and still are known by them in this capacity.

(5) Operation presented problems over and above those of usual

Banana Republic revolution.

- 2 -

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Following fall of Dictator Ubico in 1944, pendulum swung

far to left and Guatemala under left wing leader Arvelo 1944

to _____ when Arbenz took over. Arbenz able army officer

but slowly came under complete influence of hard-core Communists,

particularly Fortuny, Pellecer, Gutierrez, and others who trained

in Communist school, frequent visitors to Moscow and satellites.

Arbenz controlled army; hard-core Communists took over labor

unions, radio, major press organs, and dominated Indian

peasantry who had little interest in Marx, et cetera. Foreign

properties taken over, land divided up and Communist formed

fast state/being organized. General feeling time running against us

and faced early probability of purge in Army, arming of the

laborers, and further liquidation of the intelligentsia.

- 3 -

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

(6) Meanwhile through intelligence channels detailed information obtained regarding Arbenz negotiation to purchase approximately 5 million dollars worth of arms from Czechoslovakia. (Refer attempt trace these arms -- ran down wrong vessel -- arrival of Alfhem at Puerto Barrios. This arrival really blessing in disguise since publicity brought entire situation Guat to a head. However, resulted severe reprisals and due indiscretion one of our main chains within Guatemala completely liquidated and danger that our entire network would be rolled up unless we moved rapidly. Further, summer rains impending which would impede ground and air operations. Castillo forces augmented by defections following Alfhem incident but still the total of his forces on D Day represented less than one hundred bodies trained in guerrilla operations by CIA and approximately _____

- 4 -

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

additional "privates", but obvious necessary move immediately
or lose psychological opportunity, and reports from Guat and
outlying regions indicated popular expectation built up by our
radio and by events so decision made to move.

- 5 -

~~TOP SECRET~~