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## Guatemalan Exiles, Caribbean Basin Dictators, Operation PBFORTUNE, and the Transnational Counter-Revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution, 1944-1952

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Guatemalan Exiles, Caribbean Basin Dictators, Operation PBFORTUNE, and the Transnational Counter-Revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution, 1944-1952

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in History

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## **Abstract**

When U.S. officials in 1952 approved the first Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation to overthrow Guatemalan president Jacobo Arbenz, they unknowingly stepped into a regional conflict that, for nearly ten years, included dissident Guatemalan exiles, Caribbean Basin dictators, and the Guatemalan governments of Arbenz and his predecessor Juan José Arévalo. Since the mid-1940s, exiles and dictators had denounced the Guatemalan Revolution as the product of Mexican, Soviet, and international communism. The anti-communist ideology of Guatemalan exiles, Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, Honduran dictator Tiburcio Carías, and Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo facilitated various conspiracies aimed to destabilize Arévalo and Arbenz's governments throughout the 1940s. For their own reasons, a network of exiles and dictators put into motion a counter-revolution that included subversive ventures and self-proclaimed anti-communists who became patrons for colonel Carlos Castillo Armas in the early 1950s. In 1952, it was this network's intelligence-sharing and lobbying of U.S. officials that built the foundation of Operation PBFORTUNE. The CIA's involvement and resources bolstered regional support for Castillo Armas's plot, thereby radicalizing the network's dynamics and size. However, the State Department and Agency's unfamiliarity with the network's history led to the conspiracy's abrupt termination while U.S. officials paternalistically blamed the 'latinos' for Operation PBFORTUNE's end.

## Table of Contents

I.	Introduction.....	1
A.	Historiography of Anti-Communist Opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution.....	3
B.	Historiography of Operation PBFORTUNE.....	17
C.	Chapter Outline.....	28
II.	Chapter 1: Guatemalan Exiles and Central American Dictators, 1944-1947.....	32
A.	Dissident Guatemalan Exiles and the Anti-Mexican, Anti-Soviet, Anti-Communist Ideology.....	34
B.	The U.S. Government, Anastasio Somoza, Tiburcio Carías, and the Guatemalan Revolution.....	45
C.	Guatemalan Exiles, Central American Dictators, and the Transnational Counter-Revolution.....	58
D.	Conclusion.....	66
III.	Chapter 2: Rafael Trujillo and the Guatemalan Revolution, 1944-1947.....	68
A.	Rafael Trujillo and Imperialismo Dominicano in the Caribbean Basin.....	71
B.	Trujillo and the Guatemalan Revolution.....	81
C.	Arévalo Breaks Diplomatic Relations with Trujillo and Cayo Confites as the ‘Brigada Internacional Comunista’.....	87
D.	Conclusion.....	94
IV.	Chapter 3: Dissident Guatemalan Exiles and Rafael Trujillo, 1947.....	96
A.	Colonel Arturo Ramírez and the Invasion Conspiracy.....	98
B.	General Federico Ponce and the Air-Bombing Conspiracy.....	101
C.	General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes and the Guatemalan Army Conspiracy.....	106
D.	Juan Pinillos and the Dominican Legation in Tegucigalpa.....	108
E.	Conclusion.....	110
V.	Chapter 4: A Caribbean Basin Anti-Communist Network, 1948-Early 1950s.....	111
A.	General Federico Ponce and Caribbean Basin Officials, 1948.....	112
B.	Luis Coronado Lira, 1948.....	114
C.	Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, 1948.....	117
D.	General Roderico Anzueto and Colonel Arturo Ramírez, 1949.....	121
E.	Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas and the 1950 Base Militar Attack.....	125

F.	Conclusion .....	131
VI.	Chapter 5: Before Operation PBFORTUNE, Early 1950s .....	132
A.	The State Department, Guatemala, and the International Cold War, Early 1950s ...	134
B.	Miller, Mann, and the New U.S. Cold War-Oriented Policy toward Guatemala .....	140
C.	General Harry Vaughan, Colonel Cornelius Mara, Guatemalan Exiles, and Caribbean Basin Dictators before Operation PBFORTUNE .....	145
D.	The CIA, the Caribbean Basin Anti-Communist Network, and Castillo Armas, Early 1950s .....	150
E.	Somoza Lobbies for a Washington Visit .....	157
F.	Conclusion .....	163
VII.	Chapter 6: Considering Operation PBFORTUNE, 1952 .....	165
A.	Somoza in Washington, May 1952 .....	166
B.	Somoza, Vaughan, and Mara, May – July 1952 .....	169
C.	The CIA, the State Department, and the Conspiracy, Mid-1952 .....	175
VIII.	Chapter 7: Operation PBFORTUNE, 1952 .....	182
A.	The Conspiracy as Operation PBFORTUNE .....	184
B.	Miller and Zuleta in Panama City, October 1952 .....	193
C.	Blaming ‘the Latinos,’ Late 1952 and 1953 .....	198
IX.	Conclusion .....	202
X.	Bibliography .....	211
A.	Archives .....	211
B.	Document Compilations .....	213
C.	Memoirs .....	214
D.	Secondary Sources .....	217

## **I. Introduction**

In August of 1952, Dominican Ambassador in Mexico City Héctor Incháustegui Cabral wrote to Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo. He recounted a handful of meetings with representatives of colonel Carlos Castillo Armas and colonel Roberto Barrios Peña, two Guatemalan exiles who “were searching for assistance, weapons,” to support uprisings and invasions against the Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz. On the morning of August 21, Incháustegui Cabral invited the Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, and Colombian ambassadors in Mexico City to the Dominican Embassy. The purpose of the conference, he summarized for the Dominican dictator, was “to learn what would be the position of their Governments in the possibility that there emerged a serious movement in Guatemala” to overthrow Arbenz’s government. Incháustegui Cabral confirmed for Trujillo, “Everyone, absolutely everyone, agrees that a change in Government, in the ideology of the Government rather, in Guatemala would be very useful for the healthy life of the Continent, primarily in the Caribbean zone.” Concluding the conference, all four ambassadors decided to invite the Honduran ambassador in Mexico City for additional meetings and suggest that their respective governments encourage the Honduran government to aid Castillo Armas and Barrios Peña.<sup>1</sup>

This August 1952 conference between Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, and Colombian officials to discuss Castillo Armas and Barrios Peña’s plots represents only one of many such moments that made up what this dissertation defines as the transnational counter-revolution in the Caribbean Basin against the Guatemalan Revolution. Various scholars have

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<sup>1</sup> Héctor Incháustegui Cabral, Embajador Dominicano en la Ciudad de México, a Rafael Trujillo, Ciudad de México, 21 agosto 1952, Archivo General de la Nación, Santo Domingo (en adelante AGN), Fondo “Presidencia,” Colección “Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores” (en adelante SERREE), Caja IT 2903957 “Fechas extremas 1948-1952, Ref. Antigua 2270” (en adelante Caja IT 2903957), Expediente “México, 1951-1952, Código 5/c.”

analyzed how the international Cold War influenced the Dwight Eisenhower Administration's authorizing the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) under Operation PBSUCCESS in 1953 and 1954 to remove Arbenz and terminate the Guatemalan Revolution. However, no one has examined how Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators since the mid-1940s had pursued the same goals without the support or knowledge of the United States (U.S.) government.

This dissertation reveals that dissident Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators from the mid-1940s into the early 1950s promoted a transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution that commenced before the international Cold War and served as the basis for Operation PBFORTUNE in 1952. Reformist teachers, students, middle-class leaders, and military officers in 1944 deposed Guatemalan dictator Jorge Ubico and ushered in what one witness hailed as "ten years of spring in the country of eternal tyranny."<sup>2</sup> Immediately, Ubico's exiled protégés, Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio 'Tacho' Somoza, and Honduran dictator Tiburcio Carías denounced the Guatemalan Revolution and the new government under Juan José Arévalo as products of Mexican- and Soviet-directed communism. With this anti-communist ideology, Guatemalan exiles lobbied Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo to support invasions, uprisings, and air-bombings against Arévalo's government. Before and after the August 1952 conference, the dictators and their officials operated as a loosely-formed anti-communist network whose members repeatedly convened to discuss Guatemalan affairs, exchanged correspondence to evaluate the exiles, and financed exiles' conspiracies against Arévalo and Arbenz's governments. Not only did these exiles and dictators set into motion a transnational counter-revolution that preceded the international Cold War and Operation PBSUCCESS. The Guatemalan exiles and

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<sup>2</sup> Luis Cardoza y Aragón, *La revolución guatemalteca* (México: Cuadernos Americanos, 1955), 9.

Caribbean Basin dictators' efforts became the foundation of Operation PBFORTUNE, the first CIA covert operation under the Harry Truman Administration in 1952 designed to overthrow Arbenz's government. When Somoza and Castillo Armas offered U.S. officials a conspiracy that would not implicate the U.S. government, the CIA approved material and financial assistance for an invasion into Guatemala. The U.S. government's involvement, however, radicalized the counter-revolution's dynamics as the dictators' intelligence-sharing accelerated and expanded to such an extent that the State Department terminated the operation. To exonerate themselves and ignore the bureaucratic debacles that surrounded Operation PBFORTUNE, U.S. officials resorted to racist and paternalistic constructions of 'latinos' to blame the dictators.

#### **A. Historiography of Anti-Communist Opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution**

The Guatemalan Revolution is both one of the lesser examined subjects in Latin American Studies and one of the most thoroughly studied topics in U.S.-Latin American relations. On one hand, Latin Americanist scholars have examined important components of the Guatemalan Revolution, including agrarian reform, the labor movement, political organizations, and the myriad reformist impulses.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the memoirs of influential leaders and participants in the Revolution have provided invaluable insights into the Revolution's origins,

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<sup>3</sup> Jim Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside: Rural Conflict and Agrarian Reform in Guatemala, 1944-1954* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Deborah Levenson-Estrada, *Trade Unionists against Terror: Guatemala City, 1954-1985* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 14-48; Guadalupe Rodríguez de Ita, *La participación política en la primavera guatemalteca: una aproximación a la historia de los partidos durante el periodo 1944-1954* (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, 2003); Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 19-71.



goals, and dynamics.<sup>4</sup> Historians have even assessed the impact of the Guatemalan Revolution upon Guatemalan foreign relations in the mid- to late 1940s and noted that Arévalo's government aided the Caribbean Legion, a loose organization of leftist anti-dictatorial exiles who sought to overthrow Trujillo, Somoza, and Carías.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, scholars have inadvertently overlooked the actions of Caribbean Basin dictators and Guatemalan exiles and the prolific role of both local and regional self-described 'anti-communist' opposition in Latin America against the Guatemalan Revolution. Only a handful of historians have considered the indigenous origins of Latin American anti-communism, for most scholarship centers upon the impact of the international Cold War upon anti-communist organizations and ideologies.<sup>6</sup> As a result, there are few studies of Guatemalan

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<sup>4</sup> Manuel Galich, *Del pánico al ataque* (Guatemala: Departamento de Publicidad de la Presidencia de la República, 1949); Juan José Arévalo, *Guatemala: la democracia y el imperio* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Palestra, 1955); Cardoza y Aragón; Carlos Samayoa Chinchilla, *El dictador y yo*, seg. ed. (Guatemala: Editorial J. de Pineda Ibarra, 1967); Alfonso Bauer Paiz e Ivan Carpio Alfaro, *Memorias de Alfonso Bauer Paiz: historia no oficial de Guatemala* (Guatemala: Rusticatio Ediciones, 1996); José Manuel Fortuny, *Memorias de José Manuel Fortuny* (Guatemala: Editorial Óscar de León Palacios, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> Charles Ameringer, *The Democratic Left in Exile: The Antidictatorial Struggle in the Caribbean, 1945-1959* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1974); Piero Gleijeses, "Juan José Arévalo and the Caribbean Legion," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21.1 (1989): 133-145; Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 107-116; Miriam Rocío Samayoa, "Análisis comparativo de la política exterior de Guatemala durante los periodos del 44 al 54 y 1954-1975," tesis inédita, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, 1991; Julio Izquierdo Echeverría, "La política exterior de Guatemala en el período revolucionario, decenio 1944-1954," tesis inédita, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, 1995; Charles Ameringer, *The Caribbean Legion: Patriots, Politicians, Soldiers of Fortune, 1946-1950* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); Roberto García Ferreira, "La política exterior guatemalteca: 1944-1954," *Espacios Políticos* 5.6 (2012): 71-90.

<sup>6</sup> Margaret Power, *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende, 1964-1973* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002); Roberto Baptista Júnior, "Anti-sovietismo: reflexos e práticas compartilhadas de repressão no sistema interamericano, 1945-1964," tese inédita, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2005; Victoria Langland, "Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails: Reading Sex and Revolution in 1968 Brazil," in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser (eds.), *In from the Cold: Latin America's New*

anti-communism before Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>7</sup> Rather, the literature has focused upon how U.S. policies aided or bolstered Guatemalan anti-communists.<sup>8</sup>

This dearth of research is the understandable result of the devastating role of the U.S. government in facilitating the overthrow of Arbenz's government. With Operation PBSUCCESS, U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles authorized the CIA under Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles to provide financial and material assistance to Castillo Armas, organize a psychological warfare campaign, coordinate with Caribbean Basin dictators and anti-communist organizations, bribe Guatemalan officials,

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*Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 308-349; Víctor Gálvez Borrell, "Cambios y crisis del régimen político en Guatemala: 1954-1985," *Espacios Políticos* 1.0 (julio 2008): 5-20; Marcelo Casals Araya, "Anticomunismos, política e ideología en Chile: La larga duración de la 'campana del terror' de 1964," tesis inédita, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2012; Mario Virgilio Santiago Jiménez, "Anticomunismo Católico: raíces y desarrollo del movimiento universitario de renovadora orientación (Muro), 1962-1975," tesis inédita, Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 2012; Benjamin Cowan, "'Why Hasn't This Teacher Been Shot?' Moral-Sexual Panic, the Repressive Right, and Brazil's National Security State," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 92.3 (2012): 403-436; Avital Bloch y María del Rosario Rodríguez (eds.), *La Guerra Fría y las Américas: 1945-1970* (México: Universidad de Colima y Universidad de Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2013); Roberto García Ferreira y Arturo Taracena Arriola (eds.), *Guerra Fría y anticomunismo en Centroamérica* (Guatemala: Serviprensa, 2015). On Latin American anti-communism before the international Cold War, see Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Daniela Spenser, *The Impossible Triangle: Mexico, Soviet Russia, and the United States in the 1920s* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Jeffrey L. Gould and Aldo A. Lauria-Santiago, *To Rise in Darkness: Revolution, Repression, and Memory in El Salvador, 1920-1932* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> The only notable work that has analyzed Guatemalan anti-communism during the Guatemalan Revolution but before Operation PBSUCCESS is Robert H. Holden, "Communism and Catholic Social Doctrine in the Guatemalan Revolution of 1944," *Journal of Church and State* 50.3 (January 2008): 495-517. Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*, 78-86, touches upon Catholic and students' anti-communism during the Guatemalan Revolution. Manolo E. Vela Castañeda, "Guatemala, 1954: ideas de la contrarrevolución," *Foro Internacional* 45.1 (2005): 89-114, focuses on the anti-communist ideas during the 1954 coup.

<sup>8</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*; Stephen M. Streeter, *Managing the Counterrevolution: The United States and Guatemala, 1954-1961* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 2000); Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*.

and air-bomb Guatemala City. Demoralized, the Guatemalan Army removed Arbenz. Consequently, numerous scholars have examined U.S. policy toward Guatemala during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations in order to make sense of why U.S. officials chose to destabilize Arbenz's government. These works have ranged from the role of bureaucratic politics and the United Fruit Company (UFCO) in U.S. officials' decision-making to U.S. policymakers' perceptions of communism, revolution, and economic nationalism to the historical legacy of U.S. interventionism in Latin America.<sup>9</sup> In fact, scholars find themselves forced to invest much of their energy in lobbying for the declassification of relevant CIA sources in order to examine U.S. policy toward Guatemala during Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ronald M. Schneider, *Communism in Guatemala, 1944-1954* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1959); Blanche Wiesen Cook, *The Declassified Eisenhower: A Startling Reappraisal of the Eisenhower Presidency* (New York, NY: Penguin, 1981), 218-92; Thomas M. Leonard, *The United States and Central America, 1944-1949: Perceptions of Political Dynamics* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1984), 75-105; Cole Blasier, *The Hovering Giant: U.S. Responses to Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1910-1985*, sec. ed. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985); Bryce Wood, *The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1985), 145-190; Stephen Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 26-63; Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 85-133, 223-266; Gaddis Smith, *The Last Years of the Monroe Doctrine, 1945-1993* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1994), 65-73; Kenneth Lehman, "Revolutions and Attributions: Making Sense of Eisenhower Administration Policies in Bolivia and Guatemala," *Diplomatic History* 21.2 (Spring 1997): 185-213; James Siekmeier, *Aid, Nationalism, and Inter-American Relations: Guatemala, Bolivia, and the United States, 1945-1961* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1999); Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 2005); Michael Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 1-27; Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 21-25.

<sup>10</sup> Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982); Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of Its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999). On the challenges in accessing CIA sources on Operation PBSUCCESS, see Lorraine M. Lees and Sandra Gioia Treadway, "A Future for Our Diplomatic Past?: A Critical Appraisal of the *Foreign Relations Series*," *Journal of American History* 70.3 (December 1983): 621-629;

While these scholars have made great progress in revealing the nuances of U.S. policy toward Guatemala from the mid-1940s into the early 1950s, much of the literature on the international Cold War has portrayed Operation PBSUCCESS as the point when the Cold War ‘arrived’ in Latin America. Scholars of U.S.-Latin American relations have touched upon U.S. policies toward Juan Perón in Argentina, the 1948 Costa Rican Civil War, and the Bolivian Revolution as important events that shaped the first years of U.S. Cold War policy toward Latin America.<sup>11</sup> However, specialists on the international Cold War have devoted more attention to developments in Europe and Asia and confined the first years of the Cold War in Latin America to Operation PBSUCCESS and Fidel Castro’s revolution in Cuba.<sup>12</sup> Many compilations include chapters and selections on the Cold War in Latin America that are separated from essays on the Cold War’s origins while others completely overlook Latin America until Castro’s movement in 1959.<sup>13</sup> Latin Americanist scholars have lamented this seeming marginalization of Latin America

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Stephen G. Rabe, “The U.S. Intervention in Guatemala: The Documentary Record,” *Diplomatic History* 28.5 (November 2004): 785-790; William B. McAllister, Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron W. Marrs, *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable” : A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series* (Washington: United States Department of State Office of the Historian, 2015), 231-236.

<sup>11</sup> Wood; Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 6-41; John H. Coatsworth, *Central America and the United States: The Clients and the Colossus* (New York, NY: Twayne, 1994), 49-67; Mark T. Gilderhus, *The Second Century: U.S.-Latin American Relations since 1889* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2000), 113-139; Kyle Longley, *In the Eagle’s Shadow: The United States and Latin America* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2002), 193-216; Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 21-35.

<sup>12</sup> See Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2007); Carole Fink, *Cold War: An International History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Jussi M. Hanhimaki and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cold War: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 379-411; Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Greg Grandin, “What Was Containment?: Short and Long

from the larger literature. Greg Grandin in 2006 criticized how “historians of US policy toward [Latin America during the Cold War] focus on the period’s most rousing events” and ignore the interplay between U.S. policy, the Cold War, and Latin America.<sup>14</sup> Due to “so little crosstalk between foreign relations scholars and historians of Latin American politics and society,” Gilbert Joseph in 2010 summarized, “Studies have proceeded largely in the conventional channels of diplomatic history, focusing on discrete U.S. policy objectives and high-profile leaders and events (e.g., the Cuban Missile Crisis) and drawing disproportionately on U.S. government documents.”<sup>15</sup>

Challenging these historiographical gaps between international history, Cold War Studies, and Latin American Studies, Latin Americanist historians have urged scholars to expand upon traditional analyses of U.S.-Latin American relations during the Cold War and examine what is now known as the ‘Latin American Cold War.’ Grandin referenced myriad works on Latin American social and cultural history after World War II and claimed that “the time has come for US historians to assess the Latin American Cold War from a higher vantage point, one less preoccupied with what motivated United States policymakers and more concerned with

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Answers from the Americas,” in Robert J. McMahon (ed.), *The Cold War in the Third World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 27-47. Compare the absence of Latin America in Jeremi Suri, “The Early Cold War,” in Robert D. Schulzinger (ed.), *A Companion to American Foreign Relations* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 215-229, to Darlene Rivas, “United States-Latin American Relations, 1942-1960,” in *A Companion to American Foreign Relations*, 230-254.

<sup>14</sup> Greg Grandin, “Off the Beach: The United States, Latin America, and the Cold War,” in *A Companion to Post-1945 America*, ed. Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 426.

<sup>15</sup> Gilbert M. Joseph, “Latin America’s Long Cold War: A Century of Revolutionary Process and U.S. Power,” in Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph (eds.), *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin America’s Long Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 400-401.

identifying what was being fought over in Latin America itself.”<sup>16</sup> Whereas most works had sought to detail U.S. officials’ goals in Latin America, prominent Latin Americanist historians have suggested that scholars should identify how Latin American leaders pursued their own goals, constructed their own policies, and shaped the Latin American Cold War. Joseph and Daniela Spenser in 2008 cited recent archival discoveries and interpretative tools that would allow scholars to examine the “Latin Americanization” and “transnationalization” of the Cold War in Latin America and consider “the gamut of multiform engagements that constituted the Latin American Cold War.”<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Tanya Harmer noted that the Latin American Cold War did not revolve solely upon U.S. policies but derived from the actions of multiple “regional proponents of communism and capitalism” within Latin America.<sup>18</sup> Hal Brands defined the Latin American Cold War as a “series of overlapping conflicts” that included “diplomatic and transnational” dimensions.<sup>19</sup> Grandin and Joseph both suggested that experts on U.S.-Latin American relations refine their analyses on the construction of U.S. policy toward Latin America, incorporate Latin American-based sources and actors, and gauge how U.S. resources contributed to the various revolutionary and counter-revolutionary processes and insurgent and counter-insurgent movements that made up Latin American Cold War conflicts.<sup>20</sup> More recently, Alan McPherson identified what he describes as ‘the paradox of Latin American Cold War

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<sup>16</sup> Grandin, “Off the Beach,” 426.

<sup>17</sup> Gilbert M. Joseph, “What We Now Know and Should Know: Bringing Latin America More Meaningfully into Cold War Studies,” in *In from the Cold*, 7; Daniela Spenser, “Standing Conventional Cold War History on Its Head,” in *In from the Cold*, 381-382.

<sup>18</sup> Tanya Harmer, *Allende’s Chile & the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 2.

<sup>19</sup> Hal Brands, *Latin America’s Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 2, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Greg Grandin, “Living in Revolutionary Time: Coming to Terms with the Violence of Latin America’s Long Cold War,” in *A Century of Revolution*, 3-5; Joseph, “Latin America’s Long Cold War,” 398-407.

Studies.’ The more scholars have examined the Latin American Cold War, McPherson found, “the Cold War itself fades to the background.” Ultimately, the international “Cold War was only one among a host of other important, often revolutionary processes occurring before, during, and after the years of the Cold War.” In this vein, McPherson encouraged scholars to recognize that multiple “intersecting historical forces” defined the Latin American Cold War.<sup>21</sup>

At the same time, foreign relations scholars and Cold War Studies experts provided new methodological suggestions to better measure the links between the international Cold War and regional and indigenous events related to decolonization, technological advancements, and other global trends during the twentieth century. Ian Tyrrell, Thomas Bender, and others celebrated an “era of unprecedented internationalization in [the] historiography” of U.S. history that welcomed transnational and internationalist histories moving beyond a tight focus on the United States.<sup>22</sup> In proposing a ‘global Cold War’ frame of analysis, Odd Arne Westad argued that historians, while taking into consideration the role of U.S. and Soviet ideologies, needed to examine how the Cold War overlapped with so-called ‘Third World’ conflicts, how Third World elites maneuvered within the Cold War, and how such elites utilized the Cold War in pursuit of their own goals.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Alan McPherson, “Afterword: The Paradox of Latin American Cold War Studies,” in Virginia Garrard-Burnett, Mark Atwood Lawrence, and Julio E. Moreno (eds.), *Beyond the Eagle’s Shadow: New Histories of Latin America’s Cold War* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2013), 307-308, 314.

<sup>22</sup> Ian Tyrrell, “American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History,” *American Historical Review* 96.4 (October 1991): 1031-1055; Thomas Bender, “Historians, the Nation, and the Plenitude of Narratives,” in Thomas Bender (ed.), *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 1-22; Prasenjit Duara, “Transnationalism and the Challenge to National Histories,” in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, 25-46; Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> Odd Arne Westad, “The New International History of the Cold War: Three (Possible) Paradigms,” *Diplomatic History* 24.4 (Fall 2000): 561-564; Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 3-5.

Michael Hogan followed with a plea for scholars on U.S. foreign relations to “collaborate with those who seek to internationalize” U.S. foreign relations.<sup>24</sup>

These calls from Latin Americanist historians and Cold War Studies experts resonated as more scholars researched the Latin American Cold War. Limitations on Latin American-based sources in countries under dictatorships and military regimes had left scholars reliant on U.S.-based sources and had hindered more thorough examinations like those championed by Grandin and Joseph. Following the end of the international Cold War and most Latin American dictatorial and military regimes, scholars began accessing archives and depositories that revealed how Latin American actors pursued their own Cold War-era policies that intersected with, conflicted with, or circumvented U.S. officials’ goals.<sup>25</sup> Scholarship on the regional and international dimensions of the Latin American Cold War have moved away from examinations of U.S. policy toward Latin America and toward balanced assessments of inter-American relations in which Latin American actors influenced U.S. Cold War-oriented policy and key Cold War-era conflicts, and an increasing number of studies examine the plethora of social and political developments outside of the ‘rousing events’ of Operation PBSUCCESS and Castro’s movement.<sup>26</sup> This

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<sup>24</sup> Michael J. Hogan, “‘The Next Big Thing’: The Future of Diplomatic History in a Global Age,” *Diplomatic History* 28.1 (January 2004): 13. Also see Akira Iriye, “Internationalizing International History,” in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, 47-62.

<sup>25</sup> See the historiographical essays by Stephen G. Rabe, “Marching Ahead (Slowly): The Historiography of Inter-American Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 13.3 (Summer 1989): 297-316; Mark T. Gilderhus, “An Emerging Synthesis? U.S.-Latin American Relations since the Second World War,” *Diplomatic History* 16.3 (Summer 1992): 429-452; Max Paul Friedman, “Retiring the Puppets, Bringing Latin America Back In: Recent Scholarship on United States-Latin American Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 27.5 (November 2003): 621-636; Stephen G. Rabe, “Marching Ahead (Forthrightly): The Historiography of Inter-American Relations,” *Passport* 45.2 (2014): 25-31; Andrew J. Kirkendall, “Cold War Latin America: The State of the Field,” *H-Diplo* Essay No. 119 (November 2014): 1-17.

<sup>26</sup> Christopher M. White, *Creating a Third World: Mexico, Cuba, and the United States during the Castro Era* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2007); Asa McKercher, “‘The Most Serious Problem’? Canada-US Relations and Cuba, 1962,” *Cold War History* 12.1



literature now recognizes that, especially after 1959, many Latin American regimes, organizations, and actors without the direct encouragement or support of the U.S. government shaped anti-communist policies during notable conflicts.<sup>27</sup>

Despite these crucial historiographical and methodological innovations, the literature on anti-communist opposition to Arévalo and Arbenz's governments during the Guatemalan Revolution continues to focus on U.S. policy toward Guatemala and Operation PBSUCCESS. The discussion of the impact of Operation PBSUCCESS has spoken of the international repercussions of the fall of Arbenz's government in such places as Chile and Uruguay.<sup>28</sup> Innovative research has even gone beyond the Western Hemisphere to examine Czechoslovakian-Guatemalan relations during Arbenz's government and the Soviet Union's

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(2012): 69-88; Aragorn Storm Miller, "Precarious Paths to Freedom: The United States, the Caribbean Basin, and the New Politics of the Latin American Cold War, 1958-1968," unpubl. PhD diss., University of Texas, 2012; Renata Keller, "A Foreign Policy for Domestic Consumption: Mexico's Lukewarm Defense of Castro, 1959-1969," *Latin American Research Review* 47.2 (2012): 100-119; William Michael Schmidli, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and U.S. Cold War Policy toward Argentina* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013); Garrard-Burnett, Lawrence, and Moreno, *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow*; Thomas C. Field, Jr., *From Development to Dictatorship: Bolivia and the Alliance for Progress in the Kennedy Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

<sup>27</sup> Ariel C. Armony, *Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America, 1977-1984* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1997); J. Patrice McSherry, *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); Harmer; Margaret Power, "Who but a Woman? The Transnational Diffusion of Anti-Communism among Conservative Women in Brazil, Chile and the United States during the Cold War," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 47.1 (2015): 93-119; Luis Herrán Ávila, "Las guerrillas blancas: anticomunismo transnacional e imaginarios de derechas en la Argentina y México, 1954-1972," *Quinto Sol* (Argentina) 19.1 (2015): 1-26; Aaron T. Bell, "A Matter of Western Civilisation: Transnational Support for the Salvadoran Counterrevolution, 1979-1982," *Cold War History* (Available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14682745.2015.1019870#>).

<sup>28</sup> Mark T. Hove, "The Arbenz Factor: Salvador Allende, U.S.-Chilean Relations, and the 1954 U.S. Intervention in Guatemala," *Diplomatic History* 31.4 (September 2007), 623-663; Roberto García Ferreira, "'El caso de Guatemala': Arévalo, Arbenz y la izquierda uruguaya, 1950-1971," *Mesoamérica* 49 (2007): 25-58; Max Paul Friedman, "Fracas in Caracas: Latin American Diplomatic Resistance to United States Intervention in Guatemala in 1954," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 21.4 (2010): 669-689.

response to Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>29</sup> Still, inter-American analyses of regional anti-communist proponents during the Latin American Cold War have only examined events after 1959 and Castro's movement.

As a result, dictators and exiles are relegated to asides briefly acknowledging that dictators were 'enthusiastic' supporters of Operation PBSUCCESS and that a few exiles lobbied for U.S. officials' assistance. Piero Gleijeses in *Shattered Hope* finds that Somoza "was eager and enthusiastic" to participate in Operation PBSUCCESS, Nick Cullather in *Secret History* claims that "Somoza's support became essential to PBSUCCESS," and Richard Immerman and Stephen Streeter assume that Somoza and Trujillo's actions in the early 1950s derived from Arévalo's involvement with the Caribbean Legion in the late 1940s.<sup>30</sup> No historian, though, has considered whether Somoza, Trujillo, or any other Caribbean Basin dictator attempted to undermine Arévalo's government before becoming such 'enthusiastic' supporters of Operation PBSUCCESS.

Likewise, Guatemalan exiles are considered peripheral actors in every history of the Guatemalan Revolution and Operation PBSUCCESS. No work has examined how Castillo Armas, Barrios Peña, Luis Coronado Lira, general Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, Juan Córdova Cerna, José Luis Arenas, and other dissident Guatemalans built links and networked with anti-communist leaders or organizations in the Caribbean Basin before the early 1950s and Operation

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<sup>29</sup> Lukás Perutka, "Arms for Arbenz: Czechoslovakia's Involvement in the Cold War in Latin America," *Central European Journal of International & Security Studies* 7.3 (September 2013): 59-76; Michelle Denise Reeves, "Extracting the Eagle's Talons: The Soviet Union in Cold War Latin America," unpubl. PhD diss., University of Texas, 2014, Chapter 1.

<sup>30</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 292-294; Cullather, 48; Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 95-96; Streeter, *Managing the Counterrevolution*, 25-26. Ameringer's works on the Caribbean Legion focus on the anti-dictatorial left, Gleijeses, "Juan José Arévalo and the Caribbean Legion," and Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 107-116, only examine how U.S. officials interpreted Arévalo's support for the Caribbean Legion.

PBSUCCESS. Gleijeses notes that dictators favored certain exiles, and multiple experts on Operation PBSUCCESS admit that Castillo Armas, Ydígoras Fuentes, and other exiles lobbied for the U.S. government's support in the early 1950s.<sup>31</sup> Guadalupe Rodríguez de Ita's work on the Mexican government's asylum for Guatemalan exiles during the Guatemalan Revolution quickly moves past allegations and rumors of conspiracies by Guatemalan exiles against Arévalo's government in order to discuss Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>32</sup> Those works that do discuss Guatemalan exiles have overlooked counter-revolutionary exiles opposed to the Guatemalan Revolution and have highlighted only the worldviews of anti-dictatorial exiles opposed to Ubico's dictatorship and the regimes that followed Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>33</sup> Coronado Lira, Córdova Cerna, Arenas, and other exiles only appear in the literature after their time in exile due to their joining Castillo Armas's regime.<sup>34</sup> Most historians of U.S. policy-making have portrayed Castillo Armas as subservient to U.S. officials during Operation PBSUCCESS and during his subsequent regime from 1954 until his assassination in 1957, with

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<sup>31</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 220-221, 248-252; Cullather, 49-51; Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 141-143; Streeter, *Managing the Counterrevolution*, 23-5.

<sup>32</sup> Guadalupe Rodríguez de Ita, *La política mexicana de asilo diplomático a la luz del caso guatemalteco: 1944-1954* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, Dirección General del Acervo Histórico Diplomático de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 2003).

<sup>33</sup> Jorge Ramón González Ponciano, "Guatemaltecos en la ciudad de México," *Amérique Latine Histoire et Mémoire* 2 (2001), online at <http://alhim.revues.org/590>; Nathalie Ludec, "Voces del exilio guatemalteco desde la ciudad de México," *Amérique Latine Histoire et Mémoire* 2 (2001), online at <http://alhim.revues.org/599>; Roberto García Ferreira, "La diplomacia liberacionista y el exilio guatemalteco en América del Sur, 1954-1960," *X Jornadas de Sociología* (2013), online at <http://www.aacademica.com/000-038/452>; Guadalupe Rodríguez de Ita, "Exiliados guatemaltecos en México: Una experiencia recurrente," *Pacarina del Sur: Revista de Pensamiento Crítico Latinoamericano* (noviembre 2014), online at <http://www.pacarinadelsur.com/home/abordajes-y-contiendas/319-exiliados-guatemaltecos-en-mexico-una-experiencia-recurrente>.

<sup>34</sup> Francisco Villagrán Kramer, *Biografía política de Guatemala, Volumen I* (Guatemala: FLASCO, 1993), 171, 174, 187, 226; Rodríguez de Ita, *La participación política en la primavera guatemalteca*, 176, 227.

Guatemalanist literature reducing the new Guatemalan dictator to a tool of U.S. imperialism.<sup>35</sup>

Alongside the numerous works published by the Secretaría de Propaganda y Divulgación [Secretary of Propaganda and Disclosure], later renamed Secretaría de Divulgación, Cultura y Turismo [Secretary of Disclosure, Culture, and Tourism] during Castillo Armas's regime, his defenders have produced celebratory biographies that ignore his regime's reliance on both U.S. resources and the network sponsored by Caribbean Basin dictators.<sup>36</sup>

As with the literature on U.S.-Latin American relations during the international Cold War, this is generally the result not of a lack of interest by historians but of the legacies of dictatorial regimes and revolutionary upheavals in Latin America during the international Cold War.<sup>37</sup> My research, however, relies on the collections of the Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores [Secretary of State for Foreign Relations, or SERREE] collection at the Dominican Archivo General de la Nación [National Archive, or AGN] in Santo Domingo that reveal how Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators conspired against the Guatemalan Revolution.

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<sup>35</sup> See Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 250-251; Streever, *Managing the Counterrevolution*, 33-58. Zachary Karabell, *Architects of Intervention: The United States, the Third World, and the Cold War, 1946-1962* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 92-135, attempts to argue that Castillo Armas did not merely follow U.S. officials' orders, but Karabell does not provide any original research and does not produce a convincing argument in support of this thesis.

<sup>36</sup> Mario López Villatoro, *Por qué fue derrotado el comunismo en Guatemala?* (Guatemala: Talleres Gráficos Díaz Paiz, 1955); Emma Moya Posas, *La Jornada épica de Castillo Armas vista desde Honduras* (Tegucigalpa: Talleres la República, 1955); *Guatemala y su dolor: Corona fúnebre sobre la tumba del coronel Carlos Castillo Armas* (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional de Guatemala, 1957); Manuel de la Guarda, *Castillo Armas, libertador y mártir* (Guatemala: Editorial Indoamérica, 1957); Guillermo Putzeys Rojas, *Así se hizo la liberación* (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional de Guatemala, 1976).

<sup>37</sup> Natural disasters and the Sandinista Revolution damaged, destroyed, and lost essential materials in Nicaragua. Repositories such as the Honduran Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores in Tegucigalpa hold collections that remain unexamined. The staff at the AGN in Santo Domingo have faced numerous challenges in obtaining, organizing, and opening useful materials on the links between Trujillo, Caribbean Basin dictators, and Guatemalan exiles.

My work provides the first insights into how dissident Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators opposed Arévalo and Arbenz's governments and began a transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution. Alleging that Mexican and Soviet communists had encouraged the Revolution, dissident Guatemalans conspired to prevent Arévalo from assuming the presidency. Similarly, Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo accused Arévalo's government as the tool of Mexican, Soviet, and international communism since Arévalo and Guatemalan students, officials, and journalists welcomed and aided Nicaraguan, Honduran, and Dominican anti-dictatorial exiles. Due to their shared anti-communist ideology, Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators networked and plotted to undermine the consolidation of Arévalo's government. This study reveals that by 1948 the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network was fully formed, though quite loosely, as Somoza, Carías, Trujillo, and their officials shared intelligence on Guatemalan exiles and provided financial support for exiles' conspiracies. Deriving from their own anti-communist worldviews and independent of the international Cold War, Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators initiated an indigenous regional conflict with the Guatemalan governments and a transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution.

Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators nurtured their own indigenous anti-communist ideology that conflated Mexican, Soviet, and international communism with leftist ideals and anti-dictatorial movements. At the dawn of the international Cold War, these leaders and groups were already putting forward an anti-communist worldview to denounce their opponents and legitimize their actions and regimes. By patronizing Guatemalan exiles, financing coup plots, and coalescing into the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network, Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo acted as regional anti-communist proponents without the endorsement and often

without the knowledge of U.S. officials. Guatemalan exiles played pivotal roles, too, as conspirators against the Guatemalan governments. Not only did the exiles' conspiracies lead to heightened tensions inside Guatemala; the exiles helped bring together the patrons who would compose the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network. Most importantly, exiles and dictators transnationalized and Latin Americanized what would become one of the most defining episodes in Latin American history and set the foundation for what would become a Latin American Cold War conflict, ahead of and in most respects separately from the bipolar Cold War structure of the superpowers' intervention and influence. Operation PBFORTUNE was only the climax of a process that started regionally in both its power and conceptual frameworks.

## **B. Historiography of Operation PBFORTUNE**

The difficulties in accessing sources on U.S. policy toward Guatemala in the early 1950s and the limited availability of sources regarding the conspiracies of Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators against the Guatemalan governments together have resulted in a historiographical gap surrounding the first CIA covert operation implemented during the Truman Administration in 1952 to overthrow Arbenz's government, Operation PBFORTUNE. According to the existing literature, Somoza flew to Washington in the summer of 1952 and asked U.S. officials to support a plot to overthrow Arbenz's government. Somoza mentioned this conspiracy during luncheons and conferences to various officials, including U.S. president Harry Truman, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Edward Miller, Jr., and Truman's military aides general Harry Vaughan and colonel Cornelius Mara. Most State Department officials ignored Somoza's suggestions. Flying to Managua, Somoza lobbied Mara who then convinced Truman to support the plot. Under Operation

PBFORTUNE, general Walter Bedell Smith, Allen Dulles, and the CIA provided money and weapons for an invasion of Guatemalan exiles led by Castillo Armas. Contrary to U.S. officials' goals, Somoza shared details about Operation PBFORTUNE with other Caribbean Basin leaders. Because of Somoza's indiscretions, State Department officials not included in the operation, such as Acheson, Miller, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Mann, learned of Operation PBFORTUNE and believed the operation threatened the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal of U.S.-Latin American and Latin American international relations.<sup>38</sup> These State Department officials terminated Operation PBFORTUNE in October 1952.

Operation PBFORTUNE occupies a nebulous place in the historiography due to the lack of sources and the scholarly focus on Operation PBSUCCESS. Operation PBFORTUNE has never received a thorough examination due to limited, and often conflicting, source material.<sup>39</sup> Historians originally relied upon and continue to consult journalist Herbert Matthews's 1971 memoir because crucial sources on U.S. policy toward Guatemala in the early 1950s were classified and unavailable. Matthews in *A World in Revolution* published "verbatim from the note" of a September 1953 "superconfidential" conversation with Miller. Matthews recorded Miller's explaining that "Miller and the State Department were at all times ignorant of what was brewing," but Mara, Bedell Smith, and the CIA with the approval of Truman arranged to have

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<sup>38</sup> In 1950, the "Office of Middle American Affairs" became the "Bureau of Inter-American Affairs," so documents, references, and scholarship oftentimes interchange these terms in the early 1950s.

<sup>39</sup> "Editorial Note," Document 11, in Susan K. Holly and David S. Patterson's (eds.) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954: Guatemala* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2003) (hereafter *FRUS Guatemala*), 20, highlights such difficulties, "Little documentation on the beginning of [Operation PBFORTUNE] was found." The note then refers readers to only three known CIA-based documents, Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, and Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*. CIA reviewers redacted many of the documents and references on Operation PBFORTUNE in Cullather.

money and arms delivered for the operation. Miller, Mann, Acheson, and others in the State Department halted the operation upon learning of an arms shipment from the CIA to Somoza.<sup>40</sup>

Scholarship on the CIA and U.S. government-sponsored covert operations in the late 1940s and early 1950s overlooks Operation PBFORTUNE in favor of Operation PBSUCCESS or discusses events outside of the Western Hemisphere. Because Operation PBFORTUNE only involved the CIA's transfer of money and weapons to Latin American actors rather than the psychological warfare and number of U.S. operatives involved in Operation PBSUCCESS or in known CIA operations outside the Western Hemisphere, there are no memoirs or recollections of CIA personnel involved in it. This is a contrast to the accounts and memoirs of Operation PBSUCCESS from Howard Hunt, David Atlee Phillips, and William Pawley.<sup>41</sup> Richard Helms's role in Operation PBFORTUNE, as well as Operation PBSUCCESS, is repeatedly overlooked in Helms's memoirs, and studies on him focus on his tenure as Director of the CIA.<sup>42</sup> Examinations of general Walter Bedell Smith's tenure as the CIA Director in the early 1950s do not provide insights into Operation PBFORTUNE.<sup>43</sup> CIA official Richard Bissell, Jr., does not share any

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<sup>40</sup> Herbert L. Matthews, *A World in Revolution: A Newspaperman's Memoir* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 262-264.

<sup>41</sup> E. Howard Hunt, *Undercover: Memoirs of an American Secret Agent* (New York, NY: Putnam, 1974); E. Howard Hunt, *American Spy: My Secret History in the CIA, Watergate and Beyond* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2007); David Atlee Phillips, *The Night Watch* (New York, NY: Ballantine, 1977); Max Holland, "Private Sources of U.S. Foreign Policy: William Pawley and the 1954 Coup d'État in Guatemala," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7.4 (Fall 2005): 36-73.

<sup>42</sup> Robert M. Hathaway and Russell Jack Smith, *Richard Helms: Director of Central Intelligence, 1966-1973* (Washington: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 1993); Richard Helms and William Hood, *A Look over My Shoulder: A Life in the Central Intelligence Agency* (New York, NY: Random House, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Ludwell Lee Montague, *General Walter Bedell Smith as Director of Central Intelligence: October 1950-February 1953* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 1992). Daniel K.R. Crosswell in *Beetle: The Life of General Walter Bedell Smith* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 53-54, only touches upon Operation PBFORTUNE and repeats Matthews and Cullather's accounts while focusing on Bedell Smith's role in Operation PBSUCCESS.



information on Operation PBFORTUNE in his memoirs.<sup>44</sup> Other studies of the CIA quickly move past Operation PBFORTUNE to discuss Operation PBSUCCESS, as when Tim Weiner relegates it to a brief discussion in the “Notes” section of *Legacy of Ashes*.<sup>45</sup> Studies on Allen Dulles and his brother John Foster Dulles highlight events outside Guatemala, whereas works specifically on the Dulles brothers and Guatemala emphasize their tenure as lawyers for UFCO through the firm Sullivan and Cromwell in the 1930s or roles in Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>46</sup> As a result, scholars have not incorporated Operation PBFORTUNE into a larger discussion on the CIA’s formative years.

Specialists on U.S.-Latin American relations have only assessed Operation PBFORTUNE to gauge the impact of the international Cold War upon U.S. policy toward Guatemala. Richard Immerman in *The CIA in Guatemala* utilizes Miller’s account to argue that Operation PBFORTUNE demonstrates how, “by the end of the Truman administration, at least some officials as well as the CIA had become convinced that a policy of conciliation toward Guatemala was unproductive.” Truman officials with Operation PBFORTUNE approved of “a clandestine operation in conjunction with Guatemala’s surrounding dictatorships,” as would Eisenhower officials with Operation PBSUCCESS. Immerman alleges, “The stillborn project [of

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<sup>44</sup> Richard M. Bissell, Jr., Jonathan E. Lewis, and Frances T. Pudlo, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior: From Yalta to the Bay of Pigs* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 90.

<sup>45</sup> See John Prados, *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2006), 111; Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2007), 562-563.

<sup>46</sup> John Robinson Beal, *John Foster Dulles, 1888-1959* (New York, NY: Harper, 1957); Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1973); Paul J. Dosal, *Doing Business with Dictators: A Political History of United Fruit in Guatemala, 1899-1944* (Lanham, MD: Scholarly Resources, 1993); Peter Grose, *Gentleman Spy: The Life of Allen Dulles* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1994); James Srodes, *Allen Dulles: Master of Spies* (Washington: Regnery, 1999); Richard H. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999); Schlesinger and Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit*.

Operation PBFORTUNE] foreshadowed the events of two years later” in Operation PBSUCCESS “and represents the continuity of the cold war ethos.”<sup>47</sup> Bryce Wood in *The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy* agrees with Immerman. Wood finds that Latin Americanist policy-makers under the Truman Administration such as Miller and Mann adhered to “the twenty-year-old tradition of nonintervention in the American republics” and opposed suggestions by CIA officials in 1952 to overthrow the Guatemalan government in Operation PBFORTUNE. CIA officials from Operation PBFORTUNE, including Dulles and Bedell Smith, rose to positions of influence during the Eisenhower administration and received support from Eisenhower, the new Secretary of State Foster Dulles, and other policy-makers “uncommitted to the Good Neighbor Policy” who replaced Acheson, Miller, and Mann. For Wood, this bureaucratic shift in the State Department facilitated Operation PBSUCCESS under veterans of Operation PBFORTUNE.<sup>48</sup>

Where Immerman locates similarities between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations regarding Operation PBFORTUNE, Stephen Rabe claims that Acheson, Undersecretary of State David Bruce, and other State Department officials’ opposition to Operation PBFORTUNE illustrates important differences between the Truman Administration’s reluctance to employ covert operations and the Eisenhower Administration’s willingness, due in large part to Foster Dulles’s serving as Secretary of State and his brother Allen Dulles as the head of the CIA, an argument akin to that of Wood.<sup>49</sup> Rabe supports his conclusion by quoting from an October 03 report from Mann to Acheson in the incomplete compilation, the 1983 *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954: The American Republics*, in which, following

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<sup>47</sup> Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 122.

<sup>48</sup> Wood, 157-159.

<sup>49</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 48-49.

a conversation with Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa regarding the conspiracy, Mann reported that he and Miller affirmed to the ambassador “that the United States could never condone military intervention on the part of an American State against one of its neighbors.”<sup>50</sup> Rabe’s contrast between Acheson, Bruce, Mann, Miller, and the State Department under the Truman Administration and Foster Dulles and the State Department under the Eisenhower Administration resembles Robert Beisner’s 2006 conclusion that Acheson was never informed about Operation PBFORTUNE. Beisner argues that Acheson “persuade[d] Truman to halt” it.<sup>51</sup> Acheson after the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco reminded Truman of their having prevented “similar suggestions for Iran and Guatemala” in the early 1950s.<sup>52</sup> Beisner, as do Wood and Rabe, stresses that “Eisenhower and [Foster] Dulles obeyed different impulses and ousted Arbenz in a coup in 1954.”<sup>53</sup> Nelson Lankford, Burton Hersh, and Stephen Kinzer allege that Bruce played a central role in notifying Acheson of CIA actions and terminating Operation PBFORTUNE.<sup>54</sup>

The declassification of some sources on U.S. policy toward Guatemala in the early 1950s has allowed historians to reaffirm Beisner’s assessment of Acheson’s opposition to Operation

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<sup>50</sup> Rabe, 49; Thomas C. Mann to Dean Acheson, “Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann) to the Secretary of State,” 714.00/10-352, [Washington,] 03 October 1952, in N. Stephen Kane and William F. Sanford, Jr. (eds.), *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954: The American Republics, Volume IV* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1983) (hereafter *FRUS 1952-1954*), 1043.

<sup>51</sup> Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 576.

<sup>52</sup> Dean Acheson to Harry S. Truman, 03 May 1961, quoted in Beisner, 584-585.

<sup>53</sup> Beisner, 576.

<sup>54</sup> Burton Hersh, *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1992), 338; Nelson D. Lankford, *The Last American Aristocrat: The Biography of David K. E. Bruce, 1898-1977* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1996), 249; Stephen Kinzer, *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War* (New York, NY: Henry Holt, 2013), 101-102.

PBFORTUNE and refine Rabe's presentation of a State Department unaware of the plot.<sup>55</sup> Similar to Immerman's argument for similarities between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, Gleijeses in *Shattered Hope* claims that Truman approved Operation PBFORTUNE and that both administrations conspired against the Arbenz government. No evidence except for second-hand references from State Department and CIA officials have directly linked Truman to the project, but Gleijeses references his interview with Helms who claimed, "Truman okayed a good many decisions for covert operations that in later years he said he knew nothing about."<sup>56</sup> Cullather's *Secret History*, a redacted account from the Agency's commissioned history of Operation PBSUCCESS built from CIA records unavailable to the public, touches upon Operation PBFORTUNE to note how the Agency believed they had obtained Truman and the State Department's approval to overthrow the Arbenz government. Cullather claims Miller and the State Department only terminated Operation PBFORTUNE when the plot risked becoming a publicized scandal among Latin American leaders "alert for signs of backsliding on [the U.S. government's adherence to] the nonintervention pledge."<sup>57</sup>

Operation PBFORTUNE remains on the margins of the historiography on U.S. policy toward Guatemala in the 1940s and Operation PBSUCCESS in the early 1950s despite new historiographical suggestions and methodological innovations regarding the Latin American Cold War, the global Cold War, and internationalizing U.S. foreign relations. Historians have not placed Operation PBFORTUNE into a regional or international context that considers how U.S.

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<sup>55</sup> These works shaped Rabe's later portrayal of the State Department as less coherent in Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 41-42.

<sup>56</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 366-367. Specialists on U.S.-Guatemalan relations and CIA operations continue to state that Truman approved Operation PBFORTUNE. See Kate Doyle and Peter Kornbluh, "CIA and Assassinations: The Guatemala 1954 Documents," *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 4* (The National Security Archive, George Washington University), online at: <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB4/index.html>.

<sup>57</sup> Cullather, 31.

officials' decisions intersected with those of regional actors or resonated in the Caribbean Basin and the rest of Latin America. This dearth of research on it is a stark contrast to that on the regional and international consequences resulting from Operation PBSUCCESS noted earlier. Scholars continue to present the CIA as the primary actor in the conspiracy, and Castillo Armas, Somoza, Trujillo, and other Caribbean Basin leaders receive supporting roles. Scholars of U.S. policy during the international Cold War only refer to Operation PBFORTUNE to note that the Agency as early as 1952 began to consider assassination proposals.<sup>58</sup> Works discussing Operation PBSUCCESS, U.S.-Nicaraguan relations, or other U.S. interventions in Latin America or the Third World merely reference Operation PBFORTUNE and repeat the claims of Immerman, Gleijeses, and Cullather.<sup>59</sup>

This dissertation argues that Operation PBFORTUNE was the point in time when U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala intersected with the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution. Somoza and Castillo Armas lobbied U.S. officials to support what originally appeared as one of the many conspiracies that Guatemalan exiles and members of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network had organized since the mid-1940s. Truman's military aides and the CIA agreed that the U.S. government would provide material assistance to the conspiracy, bolstering the network's support. This 'green light' from the CIA, however, radicalized the network's dynamics as the network's intelligence-sharing accelerated

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<sup>58</sup> See Gerald K. Haines, "CIA and Guatemala Assassination Proposals 1952-1954," Document 0000135796, June 1995, Central Intelligence Agency Library, "Guatemala" Collection, online at [www.foia.cia.gov/collection/guatemala](http://www.foia.cia.gov/collection/guatemala) (hereafter CIA FOIA); Stephen M. Streeter, "Interpreting the 1954 U.S. Intervention in Guatemala: Realist, Revisionist, and Postrevisionist Perspectives," *The History Teacher* 34.1 (November 2000): 68-69; Hanhimaki and Westad, 455-457.

<sup>59</sup> Paul Coe Clark, Jr., *The United States and Somoza, 1933-1956: A Revisionist Look* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992), 187-189; Coatsworth, 72; Michael D. Gambone, *Eisenhower, Somoza, and the Cold War in Nicaragua, 1953-1961* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 89; Karabell, 104; Robert H. Holden, *Armies without Nations: Public Violence and State Formation in Central America, 1821-1960* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 203; Grow, 15.

and expanded. Somoza and Castillo Armas expected U.S. officials to participate in the conspiracy, incorporated additional Caribbean Basin anti-communist leaders into the conspiracy, and even discussed the conspiracy with State Department officials. Despite their having approved a policy that allowed for the U.S. government to encourage indigenous counter-revolutionary opposition to Arbenz's government, Miller, Mann, and others in the State Department feared the network's radicalized intelligence-sharing threatened the public image of the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal and halted Operation PBFORTUNE. CIA and State Department officials, rather than acknowledging or understanding the network's intelligence-sharing or the links between the U.S. government and the network's actions, resorted to racist and paternalistic constructions to cast blame upon 'the latinos.'

This dissertation's presentation of Operation PBFORTUNE speaks to several historiographical debates. This dissertation challenges how historians of U.S. policy toward Guatemala have presented Miller and Mann as devoted adherents to the non-intervention ideal and on the sidelines during Operation PBFORTUNE.<sup>60</sup> Instead, this dissertation argues that Miller, Mann, and the State Department in the early 1950s approved a new U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala that allowed the U.S. government to encourage indigenous counter-revolutionary movements against Arbenz's government as long as the public image of non-intervention remained intact. It was this U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala that shaped the State Department's discussions when first evaluating Castillo Armas and

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<sup>60</sup> While no scholar has thoroughly analyzed Miller's service in the State Department, those who have discussed Mann have consistently stressed Mann's opposition to U.S. intervention in Guatemalan affairs in the early 1950s. See Walter LaFeber, "Thomas C. Mann and the Devolution of Latin American Policy: From the Good Neighbor to Military Intervention," in Thomas J. McCormick and Walter LaFeber (eds.), *Behind the Throne: Servants of Power to Imperial Presidents, 1898-1968* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 176-177; Thomas Tunstall Allcock, "Becoming 'Mr. Latin America': Thomas C. Mann Reconsidered," *Diplomatic History* 38.5 (November 2014): 1022.

Somoza's conspiracy as a viable possibility to overthrow Arbenz's government. This chapter reinforces Beisner's claim that Acheson was unaware of Operation PBFORTUNE but proves Cullather's assumption by identifying how Miller and Mann's lack of support derived not from their commitment to non-interventionism but from their fear that exposure of U.S. involvement jeopardized the image of non-intervention. This chapter reconsiders Miller's actions during Operation PBFORTUNE. Miller in Matthews's memoir and State Department documents claimed that he was never aware of the conspiracy's details and opposed Operation PBFORTUNE. Never-before-utilized Dominican reports and recently-declassified CIA files implicate Miller as one of the members of the State Department who discussed and even encouraged the conspiracy. Whereas Mann considered but ultimately opposed any U.S. government-based involvement in the conspiracy, Miller only opposed Operation PBFORTUNE due to the network's radicalized intelligence-sharing. This dissertation also finds that U.S. officials' racism toward Latin America shaped Operation PBFORTUNE's conclusion.<sup>61</sup> Members of both the State Department and the CIA called upon racist and paternalistic images of Latin Americans in order to remove blame from U.S. officials and denigrate 'the latinos' for what U.S. officials decided to portray as 'rumors' of the U.S. government's involvement in a conspiracy to overthrow Arbenz's government.

This dissertation's treatment of Operation PBFORTUNE contributes to important historiographical discussions regarding the global Cold War and the Latin American Cold War.

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<sup>61</sup> Numerous works have identified the important influence of racism in U.S. policy toward Latin America and U.S. foreign policy more generally, see Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987); Gerald Horne, "Race to Insight: The United States and the World, White Supremacy and Foreign Affairs," in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (eds.), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, sec. ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 323-335; Michael L. Krenn, *The Color of Empire: Race and American Foreign Relations* (Washington: Potomac Books, 2006).

This dissertation internationalizes U.S. policy toward Guatemala by presenting Operation PBFORTUNE as the product of both U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala and the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution. Guatemalan exiles and members of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network transnationalized and Latin Americanized U.S. policy toward Guatemala by shaping the conspiracy, lobbying U.S. officials, incorporating U.S. resources, and sharing intelligence. Reaching into the international Cold War, the exiles and dictators presented their opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution in a manner similar to U.S. officials' interpretations of Arbenz's government, a common technique employed by Third World elites and leaders toward the superpowers during the global Cold War. Since prominent U.S. officials, Guatemalan exiles, and Caribbean Basin leaders' goals to overthrow Arbenz's government converged, this dissertation identifies Operation PBFORTUNE as the moment when the international Cold War overlapped with the longstanding and indigenous regional conflict between Guatemalan exiles, the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network, and the Guatemalan governments to become a global Cold War and a Latin American Cold War conflict. Exiles and dictators had organized conspiracies since the mid-1940s without any consideration of the international Cold War, but the exiles and dictators' lobbying and U.S. officials' decisions brought together the transnational counter-revolution and the Cold War during Operation PBFORTUNE. The Cold War's impact manifested as the CIA's 'green light' to provide material assistance transformed the conspiracy into the Agency's first covert operation to overthrow Arbenz's government, so this dissertation examines how the network's members increased their support and how the network's intelligence-sharing expanded and accelerated. In effect, this plot no longer represented one of those conspiracies that proliferated throughout the Caribbean Basin since 1945. Under Operation PBFORTUNE, the plot became a Latin American



Cold War conflict organized by Caribbean Basin anti-communist actors and radicalized by the U.S. government, and the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution joined U.S. Cold War-oriented policy and the international Cold War to become a global Cold War conflict.

### **C. Chapter Outline**

Chapter 1 examines how Guatemalan exiles and Central American dictators from 1944 into 1947 opposed the Guatemalan Revolution when U.S. officials did not interpret the Revolution or Arévalo's government as communist or threats to regional stability. Guatemalan exiles' letters and writings detail the emergence of an anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology, while State Department files from U.S. embassies in Central America recreate the movements and networking of prominent Guatemalan exiles. While not exhaustive, these two sets of documents, plus the Dominican SERREE items, together demonstrate how Somoza and Carías espoused the same anti-communist ideology as the exiles, interpreted the associations between anti-dictatorial exiles and the Guatemalan Revolution as threats to their respective regimes, welcomed Guatemalan exiles into Nicaragua and Honduras, and were implicated in various conspiracies against Arévalo's government.

Chapter 2 provides a case study of the development of Trujillo's opposition between 1944 and 1947 to the Guatemalan Revolution and Arévalo's government. Dominican SERREE files show that Trujillo held a foreign policy of 'imperialismo dominicano' in which the Caribbean Basin dictator aimed to stifle and undermine any anti-dictatorial sentiments or movements that questioned or challenged his regime. The Guatemalan Revolution evolved from a point of irritation to a central issue in Dominican officials' discussions due to the growing

prevalence of anti-dictatorial propaganda in Guatemala, numerous denunciations of the despot, and the links between Arévalo, leading anti-Trujillo democratic leaders in the Caribbean Basin, and anti-Trujillo Dominican exiles. In 1947, Arévalo's government broke diplomatic relations with the Dominican dictatorship, and the Guatemalan president assisted exiles who sought to overthrow Trujillo during the Cayo Confites expedition. The dictator, for his part, utilized anti-communism to criticize Arévalo's government and presented Arévalo's support for anti-dictatorial exiles as manifestations of Mexican and Soviet communism in the Caribbean Basin.

Chapter 3 provides a case study of how Guatemalan exiles coopted Trujillo to become a regional proponent against the Guatemalan Revolution and aid their conspiracies against Arévalo's government. In contrast to the limited materials on Somoza and Carías, Dominican SERREE files reveal how colonel Arturo Ramírez, general Federico Ponce, general Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, and Juan Pinillos utilized Dominican-Guatemalan relations, alongside their real concerns and instrumental arguments, to support their anti-communist campaign and gain Trujillo's help.

Chapter 4 reveals how Somoza, Trujillo, Carías, and their officials came together from 1948 into the early 1950s as a Caribbean Basin anti-communist network. Following scholarship on right-wing Latin American and trans-Atlantic anti-communist networks, this chapter examines how these dictators together opposed the Guatemalan Revolution.<sup>62</sup> Due to the

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<sup>62</sup> See Footnote 27; Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York, NY: New Press, 2001); Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Political Economy of American Hegemony, 1945-1955* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002); Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Alessandro Brogi, *Confronting America: The Cold War between the United States and the Communists in France and Italy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Luc van Dongen, Stéphanie Roulin, and Giles Scott-Smith (eds.), *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War: Agents, Activities, and Networks* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

solicitations of multiple Guatemalan exiles on behalf of plots against Arévalo's government, the dictators ordered their officials to convene and discuss the exiles' conspiracies. Without the knowledge of U.S. officials, the network participated in a system of intelligence-sharing in which members debated and subsequently provided various degrees of support to Ponce, Luis Coronado Lira, Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, general Roderico Anzueto, Ramírez, and ultimately Castillo Armas.

Chapters 5 through 7 focus on Operation PBFORTUNE. Chapter 5 considers the foundations of Operation PBFORTUNE. In the early 1950s, Miller, Mann, and Latin Americanist officials in the State Department constructed a Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala that allowed the U.S. government to encourage opposition against Arbenz's government while protecting the image of the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal. Guatemalan exiles and the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network directly and indirectly shaped U.S. policy toward Guatemala, and Guatemalan exile doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla, Somoza, and Trujillo formed cordial relationships with Truman's military aides general Harry Vaughan and colonel Cornelius Mara. Somoza in early 1952 began to lobby for a visit to Washington in order to solicit the U.S. government's assistance for Castillo Armas.

This maneuvering truly took off, as shown in Chapter 6, when Somoza and Castillo Armas encouraged U.S. officials to endorse the conspiracy and brought such pressure in Washington as to create bureaucratic conflicts between the White House, the State Department, and the CIA. Tapping into U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala, Somoza argued that his plans would not undermine the U.S. government's ostensible adherence to non-interventionism. Vaughan and Mara endorsed the conspiracy while the State Department and the CIA debated the merits of the U.S. government's involvement. Finally, the Agency issued a

‘green light’ for Operation PBFORTUNE and began preparing material assistance for the conspiracy.

Operation PBFORTUNE thus displayed the intersection between U.S. Cold War constructs and the region’s transnational counter-revolution, the focus of Chapter 7. CIA support not only bolstered the network; it radicalized the network’s intelligence-sharing. Somoza incorporated Colombian ambassador Eduardo Zuleta Ángel into the plot, and the network’s members discussed the U.S. government’s involvement. Learning of this accelerated and expanded intelligence-sharing regarding the U.S. government’s complicity in an indigenous conspiracy to overthrow Arbenz’s government, Miller, Mann, and the State Department feared the intelligence-sharing would endanger the image of the U.S. government’s adherence to the non-intervention ideal. Upon canceling Operation PBFORTUNE, the State Department and the CIA relied upon caution as much as racist and paternalistic tropes of ‘the latinos.’

## II. Chapter 1: Guatemalan Exiles and Central American Dictators, 1944-1947

Doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla was quite busy in mid-1945 attempting to put an end to the Guatemalan Revolution. Earlier in March of that year, the Guatemalan physician collaborated in an abortive coup to prevent newly-elected president Juan José Arévalo from taking office. Sent into exile in Costa Rica, Padilla only continued plotting. First, the Guatemalan in May met with Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza. Padilla flew next to El Salvador for various reunions with leading officials under Salvadoran military president-dictator Salvador Castaneda Castro and then to Honduras for time with advisors to Honduran dictator Tiburcio Carías. The exile's networking throughout Central America realized its goal, as confirmed by the U.S. government's intelligence-gathering and censorship system installed in the early 1940s to monitor fascists and Nazi-sympathizers during the Second World War. Intercepted and copied by U.S. censors, radiograms to Padilla included what was "undoubtedly double talk" confirming "that the promises of money and arms ha[d] materialized."<sup>63</sup> On his own initiative, Padilla succeeded in lobbying for the support of multiple Central American dictators to organize a conspiracy to overthrow Guatemalan president Arévalo and stop the Guatemalan Revolution.

This chapter examines how in the mid-1940s dissident Guatemalan exiles and Central American dictators initiated a transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution and conspired against the Guatemalan government of Juan José Arévalo. Prominent exiles, including general Federico Ponce, general Roderico Anzueto, colonel Arturo Ramírez, Juan Pinillos, doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla, Luis Coronado Lira, and Carlos Salazar, Jr., held

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<sup>63</sup> Boaz Long, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 2072 "Subject: Statements by Guatemalan Minister of Foreign Affairs in Newspaper Interview," Guatemala City, 02 February 1945, 814.00/2-245, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter NARAII), Record Group 84 "Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State" (hereafter RG84)," "Costa Rica, U.S. Embassy, San José, Classified General Records, 1938-1961," Box 40.

an ideology that reduced the Guatemalan Revolution and Arévalo's government to products of the Mexican Revolution, the Soviet Union, and international communism. The exiles' anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist worldview resonated not with U.S. officials but with Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza and Honduran dictator Tiburcio Carías, for the two Central American dictators conflated anti-dictatorial, anti-fascist, and leftist movements against their regimes into manifestations of Mexican, Soviet, and international communism. This constructed 'triptic' facilitated the exiles and dictators' networking, organizing conspiracies against Arévalo's government, and setting into motion the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution.

As the Revolution diverged from the established social and political order in Guatemala, dissident Guatemalan exiles defended the previous status quo and denigrated the Revolution as the outgrowth of communism. As Pierre Bourdieu argues, "Social identity lies in difference, and difference is asserted against what is closest, against that which represents the greatest threat."<sup>64</sup> By tapping into anti-communist ideas, these exiles sought to both legitimate their opposition to the Revolution and create an identity that placed the exiles against the transformations brought about by the Revolution. Their self-positioning dovetailed with the worldview held by Central American dictators, thus establishing a transnational network of government and non-government groups. Micol Seigel summarizes, "Transnational history examines units that spill over and seep through national borders, units both greater and smaller than the nation-state."<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 479.

<sup>65</sup> Micol Seigel, "Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn," *Radical History Review* 91 (Winter 2005): 63. On the 'transnational turn' and transnational studies, see Robert A. Gross, "The Transnational Turn: Rediscovering American Studies in a Wider World," *Journal of American Studies* 34.3 (December 2000): 373-393; the articles in Thomas Bender, editor, *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California

Guatemalan exiles and Central American dictators conflated anti-dictatorial, anti-fascist, and leftist ideals in Guatemala and elsewhere as the alleged infiltration of communism into the Caribbean Basin. Reflecting “the complex dynamics of interconnected histories and transnationalism cutting across distinct nation-state identities,” these actors constructed a collective identity through the anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology and conspired against Arévalo’s government well before the Cold War set in.<sup>66</sup> In most respects, this chapter welcomes the challenge posed by Greg Grandin, who called for historians to “historicize political violence” during the Latin American Cold War with its locating a transnational and indigenous anti-communist ideology that bolstered counter-revolutionary political violence in the Caribbean Basin from as early as the mid-1940s.<sup>67</sup>

#### **A. Dissident Guatemalan Exiles and the Anti-Mexican, Anti-Soviet, Anti-Communist Ideology**

Dissident Guatemalan exiles put forward an anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology that aimed to unite opponents of the Guatemalan Revolution, criticize Arévalo’s government, and legitimate their actions to overthrow the Revolution and Arévalo. At its onset, the Revolution challenged the conservative nature that had defined Guatemalan society for decades. Beneficiaries of previous regimes, most notably that of Guatemalan dictator Jorge Ubico, interpreted the Revolution as a threat to the prevailing social and political order. In their descriptions of the Revolution and Arévalo’s government, notable dissidents tapped into

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Press, 2002); and Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J. T. Way, “Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis,” *American Quarterly* 60.3 (September 2008): 625-648.

<sup>66</sup> Luis Roniger, “Connected Histories, Power and Meaning: Transnational Forces in the Construction of Collective Identities,” *Journal of Classical Sociology* 11.3 (2011): 252.

<sup>67</sup> Grandin, “Living in Revolutionary Time,” 19.

conservative Guatemalans' longstanding opposition to the Mexican Revolution, the Soviet Union, and international communism, forming not just a conspiring group but also a collective identity that crossed sovereign boundaries.

The early programs and anti-fascist potential of the Guatemalan Revolution brought widespread acclaim and support from marginalized and oppressed peoples in Guatemala. Epitomized in the 1898-1920 dictatorship of Manuel Estrada Cabrera and 1931-1944 dictatorship of Ubico, Guatemalan classic liberalism had faced only a handful of challenges, and these regimes and their adherents ensured that debt peonage and strict vagrancy laws, severe curtailment of political freedoms, complete restrictions against labor activity, and enforced subservience of indigenous peoples defined Guatemalan society into the 1940s.<sup>68</sup> In 1944, dissatisfaction with Ubico's reign intermixed with the Atlantic Charter, the Four Freedoms, and other anti-fascist symbols of the Second World War, prompting students, laborers, middle-class leaders, and reformist military officers to push for the expulsion of Ubico and his associates.<sup>69</sup> Despite treatments that depict Arévalo's tenure as more moderate than that under Jacobo Arbenz, historical and scholarly accounts agree that the Guatemalan Revolution was "ten years of spring

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<sup>68</sup> On Guatemalan liberalism, see David McCreery, "Debt Servitude in Rural Guatemala, 1876-1936," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 63 (1976): 735-759; García LaGuardia, *El Pensamiento liberal de Guatemala* (San José: Editorial Universitaria, 1977); David McCreery, "An Odious Feudalism," *Latin American Perspectives* 13.48 (1986): 99-115; David McCreery, *Rural Guatemala: 1760-1940* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 161-295; Jim Handy, *Gift of the Devil: A History of Guatemala* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1998), 35-56; and Greg Grandin, *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000). On the Estrada Cabrera and Ubico dictatorships, see Joseph Apolonio Pitti, "Jorge Ubico and Guatemalan Politics in the 1920s," unpubl. PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 1975; Kenneth Grieb, *Guatemalan Caudillo: The Regime of Jorge Ubico* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1979); Rafael Arévalo Martínez, *Ecce Pericles: La tiranía de Manuel Estrada Cabrera en Guatemala* (San José: EDUCA, 1982); and Rafael Arévalo Martínez, *Ubico* (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1984). There are also various memoirs and accounts produced by these dictators' supporters and opponents.

<sup>69</sup> Anti-Ubico protesters' incorporation of anti-fascist ideals and symbols is repeatedly described in accounts from Cardoza y Aragón and others.



in the country of eternal tyranny,” in the words of Guatemalan intellectual Luis Cardoza y Aragón, and a “sociological awakening,” in U.S. anthropologist Richard Adams’s description.<sup>70</sup> As a result, dissident Guatemalans such as Ubico’s political supporters and sycophants saw Guatemala’s 1945 Constitution, 1947 Labor Code, and other policies implemented by Arévalo’s government as overturning Guatemala’s traditional social and political order and emblematic of the infiltration of Mexican, Soviet, and international communism into Guatemala. Regional conservatism thus targeted reformism with instant references to the communist monolith.

Although there is little work on Guatemalan anti-communism at the dawn of the Guatemalan Revolution, the exiles’ worldview shared many tropes found in anti-communist strains elsewhere in the Caribbean Basin. Central American elites conflated the Mexican Revolution with labor activism, anti-imperialism, and nationalism, as with Augusto Sandino’s movement in Nicaragua.<sup>71</sup> Agents for Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista believed Mexican communist leader Vicente Lombardo Toldano and Russian agents coordinated regional opposition against Batista’s regime, the Mexican and U.S. Communist Parties provided economic and intellectual assistance to Batista’s opponents, and the Mexican government under Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas offered resources and havens to various anti-Batista organizations.<sup>72</sup> Soviet communism and the Communist International did receive some support

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<sup>70</sup> Cardoza y Aragón, *La revolución guatemalteca*, 9; and Stokes Newbold [Richard Adams], “Receptivity to Communist Fomented Agitation in Rural Guatemala,” *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 5.4 (1957): 361. On the differences between Arévalo and Arbenz’s tenure, see the works of Gleijeses; Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside*; and Grandin.

<sup>71</sup> See Spenser, *Impossible Triangle*; and Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream: Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

<sup>72</sup> Agente J-19 al Agente H-277, S-X-Nro. 2581, 21 octubre 1936, Archivo del Instituto de Historia de Cuba, La Habana (en adelante AIHC), Fondo “Ejército, 1934-1952” (en adelante FE), Colección “Agentes del SIM” (en adelante SIM), Expediente “Agente J-19 expedientes, informes e investigaciones;” Agente W-105 al Agente J-19, Informe 4400-9648-G-3, 20 abril 1936, AIHC, FE, SIM, Expediente “Juan V. Govea (Agente W-105);” Vicente E. González, Jefe

in Central America, but political and ideological disagreements undermined many relationships such as those between Mexican and Soviet communists in the 1920s.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, notable reformers, such as Venezuela's Rómulo Betancourt, broke with international communism.<sup>74</sup> Still, Guatemalan officials during Ubico's regime feared that Mexican president Cárdenas sought to "export revolution" to Guatemala based on the model of the Mexican Revolution, and officials such as Guatemalan Secretary of Foreign Relations Enrique Muñoz Meany in the first years of Arévalo's government spoke of "the anti-Mexican policy which arose in the dictatorial systems of Ubico."<sup>75</sup> Communist labor organizations did appear in El Salvador and Guatemala, but Salvadoran dictator Maximiliano Hernández Martínez and Ubico violently suppressed these movements during the 'Red Scare' of the early 1930s and sent numerous anti-dictatorial leaders into exile in Mexico.<sup>76</sup> As U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Boaz Long described in the mid-1940s, the Revolution saw "waves of leftist individuals . . . come down from Mexico," most of whom had been "exiles for years" although they were joined by a "few fellow travelers."<sup>77</sup> That

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del Puesto de la Escuela 19 de la Guardia Rural, al Jefe de la Escuela 19 de la Guardia Rural, San Luis, 24 julio 1935, AIHC, FE, Colección "Regimiento No. 8 Ríus Rivera," Expediente "Expediente del J' del Regimiento."

<sup>73</sup> See Spenser, *Impossible Triangle*; and Rodolfo Cerdas Cruz, *La hoz y el machete: la internacional comunista, América Latina y la revolución en Centro América* (San José: Universidad Estatal A Distancia, 1986).

<sup>74</sup> The various works on Rómulo Betancourt, as well as Peru's Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, stress this point.

<sup>75</sup> Quoted in Amie Kiddle, *Facing South: Mexico's Relations with Latin America during the Cárdenas Era and the Creation of Mexican National Identity* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, forthcoming), 64-65; "The Withdrawal of Recognition from Franco is an Act of Revolutionary Activity," *El Imparcial* 29 January 1945, in Boaz Long to Secretary of State, No. 2072, Guatemala City, 02 February 1945, 814.00/2-245, NARAII, Record Group 59 "General Records of the Department of State" (hereafter RG59), Decimal File 814 "Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Guatemala, 1945-1949" (hereafter DF814), National Archives Microfilm Publication M1527 (hereafter M1527), Roll 1.

<sup>76</sup> See Gould; and Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*.

<sup>77</sup> Boaz Long to Secretary of State, No. 1993 "Subject: Political," Guatemala City, 18 January 1945, 814.00/1-1845, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

identification came easy to dissident Guatemalan exiles who often originated from Guatemala's upper class and conservative groups allied with Ubico.

Many dissident Guatemalan exiles were prominent military or political officials during the thirteen-year regime of Jorge Ubico while others came from Guatemala's upper class. A Guatemalan military officer and jefe político [political chief], general Federico Ponce rose in Ubico's ranks to become the dictator's trusted associate.<sup>78</sup> When the Revolution deposed Ubico, Ponce served as a member of the resulting three-man junta, installed himself as the new president, and attempted to suppress popular dissent. As against Ubico, students and middle-class reformers protested Ponce, and reformist military officers under Arbenz and major Francisco Arana removed Ponce in October 1944.<sup>79</sup> Embodying the repressive capacities of Ubico's regime, general Roderico Anzueto headed the dictator's secret police and was, not surprisingly, one of the first officials expelled when the Revolution broke.<sup>80</sup> Colonel Arturo Ramírez took up various capacities under Ubico's regime until serving as the dictator's consul in New Orleans. During the first days of the Revolution, Ramírez was charged with a protester's death but evaded trial thanks to his exile after the abortive conspiracy in March 1945.<sup>81</sup> Unexamined in the historical literature, Juan Pinillos moved between Ubico's Secret Service and

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<sup>78</sup> There is no work on general Federico Ponce, but details of Ponce's service under Ubico and ascent from jefe político to Ubico's second-in-command can be found in reports from U.S. officials in Guatemala City.

<sup>79</sup> The most succinct discussion of Ponce's regime is in Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 26-29.

<sup>80</sup> There is no work on general Roderico Anzueto, but he repeatedly appears in accounts and memoirs detailing Ubico's regime. See Galich, *Del pánico al ataque*.

<sup>81</sup> There is no work on colonel Arturo Ramírez. While Ponce and Anzueto receive marginal asides in historical works or various references in memoirs, Ramírez only appears in U.S. and Dominican files.

Foreign Service.<sup>82</sup> U.S. and Dominican reports placed Pinillos in the early 1940s as “Chief of Secret Service” under Ubico capable of “interven[ing]” in cases before the National Police and representing Ubico, and subsequently Ponce, in Honduras to lobby for regional support against the Revolution.<sup>83</sup> Doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla worked as a physician at Guatemala City’s Military Hospital. In contrast to other dissident exiles, Padilla was expelled during Ubico’s regime for reasons including his involvement in a murder and a plot to assassinate the very dictator himself. Padilla returned to Guatemala by early 1945 only to be expelled during the abortive March 1945 conspiracy.<sup>84</sup> Luis Coronado Lira and Carlos Salazar, Jr., were notable lawyers during Ubico’s regime. Salazar’s father served as Ubico’s foreign minister, and both lawyers represented wealthy German coffee barons and bankers during disputes over the dictator’s seizing German fincas [plots of land] during the Second World War.<sup>85</sup>

Upon their exile, these dissident Guatemalans immediately denounced the Guatemalan Revolution and Arévalo’s government as influenced by foreign ideologies. From exile in Mexico City, Ponce initially charged Arévalo as both a Nazi and a communist. In an August letter to U.S. president Harry Truman, Ponce warned that U.S. officials should “fix [their] attention on the American continent and particularly on the strategic zone of the Caribbean and Guatemala where the Nazi-Fascist claws have been imbedded taking advantage of the time when the United States

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<sup>82</sup> There is no work on Juan Pinillos. However, Pinillos appears in memoirs by Guatemalans, and even Venezuelans, who worked with Caribbean Basin dictators and opposed the Guatemalan Revolution.

<sup>83</sup> “RE: JUAN PINILLOS,” 28 July 1944, NARAIL, RG84, “Guatemala, U.S. Embassy, Guatemala City, Classified General Records, 1937-1961” (hereafter US Embassy Guatemala City), Box 11.

<sup>84</sup> There is no work on doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla. Information on Padilla comes from U.S. files.

<sup>85</sup> There are no works on Luis Coronado Lira or Carlos Salazar, Jr. Information on the two anti-communist lawyers comes from U.S. and Dominican files, as their own writings do not shed light into their occupations.

was absorbed with the preoccupations of the gravest stages of the war.”<sup>86</sup> The following month, he depicted Arévalo as a “well-known Nazi-communist agent.” As in the letter to Truman, the exile stressed his belief that Arévalo’s government threatened the “security of the United States of America and Central America in particular.”<sup>87</sup> Although a cursory read of correspondence from Ponce to U.S. officials might give the impression that the Guatemalan summoned Nazism, anti-communism, and anti-Americanism in order to manipulate U.S. officials, dissidents utilized these references in their communications with their compatriots and, as will be shown, Caribbean Basin leaders. For example, in a letter to Anzueto intercepted by U.S. censors, Padilla too claimed that Guatemala needed to “shake off the Nazi-Communist and anti-American yoke.”<sup>88</sup>

Tactically, dissident exiles decried that the Revolution transformed Guatemala into a Soviet state. Coronado Lira incorporated this trope throughout his writings. In 1946 while in Costa Rica, the Guatemalan decried that Arévalo’s government sought to build “a totalitarian state equal to that of Russia.”<sup>89</sup> In El Salvador’s *Diario de Hoy* the next year, Coronado Lira put out a similar statement and “declared [Arévalo] to be a servant of Sovietism.”<sup>90</sup> From Honduras, he pleaded that the Guatemalan people “not allow the washing away of the colors [of the

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<sup>86</sup> Federico Ponce to Harry S. Truman, Mexico City, 15 August 1945, 814.00/8-1545, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>87</sup> Federico Ponce a Sidney E. O’Donoghue, Primer Secretario de la Embajada Estadounidense en la Ciudad de México, Ciudad de México, 04 octubre 1945, with Sidney E. O’Donoghue, First Secretary of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, to John W. Carrigan, Chief of the Division of Mexican Affairs, Mexico City, 04 October 1945, 814.00/10-445, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>88</sup> C.R. 3,550 “CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GUATEMALAN POLITICAL EXILES,” San José, 11 April 1945, with No. 273 “Subject: Activities of Guatemalan political exiles,” San José, 11 April 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>89</sup> Luis Coronado Lira, *Totalitarismo espiritualista: Tres panoramas y un caso de nacionalidad* (San José: Alajuela, 1946), 16.

<sup>90</sup> Albert F. Nufer, U.S. Ambassador in San Salvador, to Secretary of State, No. 1818 “Subject: Guatemalan Revolutionaries in El Salvador,” San Salvador, 30 October 1947, 814.00/10-3047, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

Guatemalan flag, sky blue and white,] to become red or the symbolic Quetzal of our freedoms to change into the sickle and hammer of communist totalitarianism.”<sup>91</sup> He was not the only one to voice such claims, evidenced in a compilation of anti-Arévalo articles from Guatemalan exiles. There, Coronado Lira blamed Mexican communist Vicente Lombardo Toledano for violating Guatemalan sovereignty as fellow exiles blamed the Mexican for planting “the exotic seed of communism” in the “soil of America” and operating as the “instrument of Russia.”<sup>92</sup>

Guatemalan exiles incessantly conflated Mexico, the Soviet Union, and international communism with the allegation that Lombardo Toledano manipulated events in Guatemala in order to spread international communism throughout the Americas. In various letters and petitions to U.S. officials, Pinillos’s writings epitomized this worldview. In May 1945, the Guatemalan claimed that the “Mexican Embassy in Guatemala [had] organized all the movements” that overthrew Ubico. Pinillos believed Lombardo Toledano commanded various communist agents in Guatemala “in the service of Russian communism.” With weapons flowing into Guatemala from Mexico, these agents were behind the revolutionary movements aimed against Carías in Honduras. Pinillos concluded that Arévalo’s government was a “communist regime” behind the “overt INTERVENTION of Mexican communism in the affairs of Guatemala and Central America.”<sup>93</sup> Exactly a year later, he repeated these allegations. After

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<sup>91</sup> Luis Coronado Lira, “Violación constitucional y fracaso rotundo de un régimen,” en Comité de Defensa Patria, *La Tribuna de la libertad: Voz de los Guatemaltecos en el destierro* (Masaya: Plutarco, 1946), 16.

<sup>92</sup> Marco Archila C., “Un liberal y militar guatemalteco,” en *La Tribuna de la libertad*, 24; Carlos Lemus, “La Prédica imperialista de Lombardo Toledano,” en *La Tribuna de la libertad*, 17; Luis Coronado Lira, “Del Licenciado Coronado Lira al Embajador de los EE. UU. Mexicanos,” en *La Tribuna de la libertad*, 21.

<sup>93</sup> Juan Pinillos a Edward R. Stettinius, Secretario de Estado de los Estados Unidos, Tegucigalpa, 23 mayo 1945, NARAI, RG84, “Honduras, Tegucigalpa Legation and Embassy, Classified General Records, 1940-1958” (hereafter US Embassy Tegucigalpa), Box 26. Capitalization in original.

praising the U.S. government's preparations to provide economic aid to Europe, the Guatemalan pronounced that Arévalo had revealed his "clearly communist affiliation." Pinillos argued that Arévalo sent Guatemalan delegates to events in Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Costa Rica as part of a "communist campaign" to bring "unease" and "agitation" throughout Central America. He summarized this supposed conspiracy, "Arévalo is determined to move forward with this plan that was originally planned by the communist leader, Vicente Lombardo Toledano." Consequently, Pinillos believed this design had only one outcome: "to establish a small dependency of the Soviet Union toward the Panama Canal."<sup>94</sup> Later that same year, he again alleged that Arévalo's government, "with the necessary resources that had been provided by the Soviet government through Lombardo Toledano," intervened in the "internal affairs" of Honduras and allowed Honduran exiles to conspire against Carías's regime.<sup>95</sup> Other exiles disseminated the same tropes held by Pinillos. First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City Walter Washington in November 1946 received a letter from an unnamed Guatemalan exile. The exile blamed "strong cells" in Guatemala inspired by "International Communism" for trying to take over radio and railroad properties and linked all labor strikes by Guatemalan unions to the Soviet Kremlin.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, in a memorandum handed to U.S. officials in Tegucigalpa, Padilla summarized that Arévalo's government was "a totalitarian tyranny with communist tendencies,"

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<sup>94</sup> Juan Pinillos a James Byrnes, Secretario de Estado de los Estados Unidos, Tegucigalpa, 23 mayo 1946, with Department of State Central Translating Division, Translator's Summary of Communication, 23 May 1946, 814.00/5-2346, NARAIL, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>95</sup> Juan Pinillos a John B. Faust, Secretario de la Embajada de los Estados Unidos, Tegucigalpa, 19 agosto 1946, NARAIL, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 32.

<sup>96</sup> Memorandum, Ciudad de México, 26 noviembre 1946, with S. Walter Washington, First Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 1,961 "Subject: Guatemalan Exile's Information," Mexico City, 29 November 1946, 814.00/11-2946, NARAIL, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

influenced by “Mexican expansionism,” and designed “to sow confusion” in the Americas “in the event of a future war between the United States and Russia.”<sup>97</sup>

The shared identity that united Guatemalan exiles began to take shape as early as May of 1945. Guatemalan exiles of the Frente Nacional Democrático de Guatemala en México [National Democratic Front of Guatemala in Mexico] and the Unión Democrática Nacional de Guatemala [National Democratic Union of Guatemala] organized demonstrations in front of the Guatemalan Embassy in Mexico City to protest Arévalo’s government’s expelling Guatemalans who participated in the abortive March 1945 conspiracy.<sup>98</sup> Two months later, the Frente Nacional Democrático de Guatemala en México alleged that the “Communist Party . . . actually holds public power” in Guatemala.<sup>99</sup> In response, the Guatemalan Embassy in Mexico City noted that the Frente Nacional Democrático de Guatemala was composed of those that sought “to build systems of Government [in Guatemala] equal to those of generals Ubico and Ponce.”<sup>100</sup>

Committees of Guatemalan exiles played an important role in publishing counter-revolutionary propaganda. Padilla and Coronado Lira formed the Comité de Defensa Patria [Committee for Homeland Defense] that issued radio transmissions and published articles in Managua, Tegucigalpa, and San Salvador. In the book *La Tribuna de la libertad: Voz de los*

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<sup>97</sup> Carlos Padilla, Memorandum, Tegucigalpa, 21 noviembre 1947, with Harold E. Montemat, Chargé d’Affaires ad interim at U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Memorandum “Subject: Memorandum left by Dr. Carlos Padilla November 21,” Tegucigalpa, 02 December 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34.

<sup>98</sup> George S. Messersmith, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, A-1140, Mexico City, 10 April 1945, 814.00/4-1045, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>99</sup> “Los liberales no complotan,” *Novedades* (Ciudad de México) 22 mayo 1945, with Robert F. Hale, Third Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, No. 24,617 “Subject: Embassy of Guatemala in Mexico Refutes Charges of ‘Frente Nacional Democrático de Guatemala,’” Mexico City, 24 May 1945, 814.00/5-2445, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>100</sup> “En Guatemala no ha habido ‘purga,’” *El Nacional* (Ciudad de México) 23 mayo 1945, with Robert F. Hale to Secretary of State, No. 24,617, Mexico City, 24 May 1945, 814.00/5-2445, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.



*Guatemaltecos en el destierro* [*Freedom's Tribune: Voice of Guatemalans in Exile*], their group claimed to represent the “voice of thousands of Guatemalans in exile” opposed to Arévalo’s government. The book reproduced numerous newspaper articles and radio speeches from Coronado Lira and other Guatemalan exiles that recited the anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology. Among the included items were “Violación constitucional y fracaso rotundo de un régimen [Constitutional Violation and Round Defeat of a Regime],” “La Prédica imperialista de Lombardo Toledano [The Imperialist Preaching of Lombardo Toledano],” and “Denunciando la tiranía de Arévalo Bermejo [Denouncing the Tyranny of Arévalo].”<sup>101</sup> The Comité Patriótico Guatemalteco [Guatemalan Patriotic Committee] helped publish Catholic and anti-communist Guatemalan exile José Calderón Salazar’s pamphlet, *Guatemala bajo el signo rojo* [*Guatemala under the Red Sign*]. He contrasted the “chaos of a Revolution promoted by the Soviet Union” against Guatemala’s “national and Christian tradition,” a technique that would be emulated by numerous opponents of the Revolution.<sup>102</sup> Forming committees around their opposition to the Revolution also enabled exiles to make their voice known beyond the Caribbean Basin. In November 1947, the Comité de Ayuda a los Exiliados Guatemaltecos [Committee for Support to Guatemalan Exiles] sent an open letter to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. In the letter, the committee listed 20 Guatemalan exiles in the United States, 103 in Mexico, 82 in El Salvador, 11 in Honduras, 9 in Nicaragua, and 12 in Costa Rica. Among the exiles were Ponce, Anzueto, Ramírez, Padilla, Coronado Lira, and many more. The Committee claimed there did not “exist freedom,” “the free operation of political parties,” or “the freedom of expression of thought” in Guatemala and

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<sup>101</sup> *La Tribuna de la libertad*.

<sup>102</sup> José Calderón Salazar, *Guatemala bajo el signo rojo* (México: Comité Patriótico Guatemalteco, 1947), 5.

described Arévalo's government as "exactly the type of sovietizante regime in its tactics and goals." They even compared Arévalo's government's depicting exiles as "reactionaries" to policies under communist regimes in Romania and Poland.<sup>103</sup> Alongside these open letters and publications, Ponce, Ramírez, and Coronado Lira at various points of time were involved in the production and distribution of a forged letter between Arévalo and the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Mexico City, Vasili Yakubovsky, that would make its way throughout the Caribbean Basin.<sup>104</sup>

## **B. The U.S. Government, Anastasio Somoza, Tiburio Carías, and the Guatemalan Revolution**

Dissident Guatemalans, especially exiles, directed to U.S. officials much of their writing on the alleged Mexican and Soviet communist infiltration of Guatemala, yet U.S. officials rarely took such charges seriously in the mid-1940s. The literature on U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala highlights U.S. officials' concerns in the late 1940s and early 1950s that the Guatemalan Revolution provided inroads for international communism. However, such fears only escalated in the late 1940s.<sup>105</sup> In the first years of the Revolution, Washington tried to make

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<sup>103</sup> Comité de Ayuda a los Exiliados Guatemaltecos, "Señores Delegados de la UNESCO," la Ciudad de México, noviembre 1947, con Luis Thomen, Embajador Dominicano en Washington, a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, No. 687 "Asunto: Acusaciones de exilados guatemaltecos en México, en contra del Gobierno de Guatemala," Washington, 19 febrero 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349 "Fechas extremas 1947-1950, Código 658" (en adelante Caja IT 2903349).

<sup>104</sup> S. Walter Washington to Secretary of State, No. 392 "Subject: Alleged Letter Sent By Guatemalan President to Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Mexico," Mexico City, 11 July 1946, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 14; Secretary of State to Officer in Charge of the American Mission in Guatemala City, No. 589, Washington, 29 November 1946, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 14; Robert E. Wilson, Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 1680 "Subject: Photostat of Letter Allegedly Written by Guatemalan Ambassador in Mexico to President Arévalo," San Salvador, 01 August 1947, 814.00/8-147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>105</sup> See Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 98-102.

sense of the conflicting charges of Arévalo's fascist, socialist, and communist proclivities. Consequently, U.S. officials publicly reiterated their government's non-interventionist policy while privately remarking on their limited belief in the words of dissident Guatemalan exiles. Whereas Guatemalan exiles found little response from Washington, their worldviews intersected with those held by Central American dictators Anastasio Somoza and Tiburcio Carías, for the Nicaraguan and Honduran dictators too believed that Guatemala served as a bastion for Mexican, Soviet, and international communism.

U.S. officials recorded numerous allegations of Mexican and Soviet communism in Guatemala. Reporting on the Guatemalan Army and opposition to the Revolution, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Boaz Long in March 1945 explained how dissidents "were alarmed at the present tendency [of Arévalo's government] toward 'too close [a] friendship' with Mexico." He believed that such a "fear, which is shared by many Guatemalans, appear[ed] to be based on the reasoning that any opportunity given to [the] infiltration of Mexican ideas w[ould] eventually bring about socialistic and communistic developments that w[ould] be disastrous to established interests in Guatemala."<sup>106</sup> Before his eventual exile, Jorge Toriello in multiple asides to U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Edwin Kyle claimed that Guatemala was "going Communist fast under the influence of the Mexican Government."<sup>107</sup> Otto Dorion, a director of Guatemala Central Bank, admitted that the Revolution "was extremely popular and has the

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<sup>106</sup> Boaz Long to Secretary of State, No. 2237 "Subject: Continued Indications of Unrest in the Guatemalan Army," Guatemala City, 09 March 1945, 814.00/3-945, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>107</sup> Jorge Toriello, Edwin J. Kyle, Memorandum of Conversations "Subject: Status of Jorge Toriello with respect to Polices of Guatemalan Government," 26 and 28 September 1945, with Edwin J. Kyle, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 681 "Subject: Transmitting Memorandum of Conversations with Señor Jorge Toriello, Guatemalan Minister of Finance," Guatemala City, 01 October 1945, 814.00/10-145, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

support of practically everyone in the country,” but he was “afraid of Mexican influence in Guatemala” that, according to “a Mexican friend of his, was being fomented by and at the instigation of the Russian Embassy” in Mexico City.<sup>108</sup>

In Argentina, U.S. officials also reported on the claims of Arévalo’s alleged fascist or communist sympathies. Chargé d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires Edward Reed described how former Vice Consul in Mendoza Richard Post held interviews regarding Arévalo’s political background with a variety of professors, “including conservatives, liberals[,] and socialists.” According to Post, all agreed that Arévalo “desired a moderately liberal and constitutionally stable form of government for his country” and “maintained no close relations with extremists and gave no signs of having sympathy for either Communists or Fascists.”<sup>109</sup> In fact, John Griffiths, a special assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, believed any “suspicions that might be had about Arévalo and his supposed Communist leanings” were “so utterly without real foundation as to call for no response.” He even warned, “I think we are sufficiently accustomed to the local practice of listing as Communists all those who are opposed to the present Government,” concluding “I cannot imagine the existence of any other basis for attributing to Arévalo Communist sympathies.”<sup>110</sup>

Whether in Guatemala City, Mexico City, or Washington, U.S. officials referred to this frequent habit in which opponents of Arévalo and the Revolution summoned unsupported

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<sup>108</sup> Sidney E. O’Donoghue, Memorandum, Mexico City, 10 January 1945, with Sidney E. O’Donoghue to John Willard Carrigan, Mexico City, 12 January 1945, 814.00/1-1245, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>109</sup> Edward L. Reed, Chargé d’Affaires ad interim at U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, to Secretary of State, No. 17,049 “Subject: Antecedents of Juan José Arévalo, President Elect of Guatemala,” Buenos Aires, 13 January 1945, 814.00/1-1345, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>110</sup> John F. Griffiths, Special Assistant at U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, Memorandum “Subject: Juan José Arévalo, President Elect of Guatemala,” Buenos Aires, 08 January 1945, with Edward L. Reed to Secretary of State, No. 17,049, Buenos Aires, 13 January 1945, 814.00/1-1345, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

charges of Mexican, Soviet, and international communist infiltration in Guatemala. In mid-1946, the Office of the Legal Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City submitted a report, “RE: COMMUNISM IN GUATEMALA,” that opened, “There is no evidence to prove that there exists in Guatemala at the present time a Communist party or other type of Communist organization.” The report highlighted that various “charges of ‘Communist’ [were] thrown by the opposition at Government and labor leaders” although these opponents could never “prove their statements.” The report also concluded that the Arévalo-Yakubovsky letter was “felt to be forged” due to the letter’s “tone,” “contents,” and “a superficial comparison of the signature with a known signature” of Arévalo.<sup>111</sup> The next month, the Office of Central America and Panama Affairs sent a memorandum devoted to the Arévalo-Yakubovsky letter. The Office repeated the opinion of the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City that the letter was not “anything more than a forgery which ha[d] been very poorly prepared.” Among the seven reasons that the letter was a forgery, including the misspelling of Yakubovsky’s name and the inane reasoning in Arévalo’s writing any confidential communication to Yakubovsky, the Office believed, “The tone of the letter fits more appropriately the warped propaganda of General Ponce and other [Guatemalan] exiles in Mexico who place much emphasis on the charge that Arévalo is a Communist.”<sup>112</sup>

Despite their meetings with or receiving materials from dissident Guatemalan exiles, U.S. officials adhered to a policy of non-intervention in Guatemalan affairs. In October 1945, Kyle directly told Toriello, “I cannot mix up in your internal political affairs” which “would be against

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<sup>111</sup> Office of the Legal Attaché of U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, “RE: COMMUNISM IN GUATEMALA,” Guatemala City, 18 July 1946, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 14.

<sup>112</sup> Robert Newbegin, Office of Central America and Panama Affairs, to Ellis O. Briggs, Office of American Republics Affairs, Office Memorandum “Subject: Alleged Letter from President Arévalo to Soviet Chargé in Mexico City,” 06 August 1946, 814.00/8-646, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

my country's wishes and certainly against my own desires."<sup>113</sup> Due to the multiple entreaties by Guatemalan exiles in El Salvador for conferences with U.S. officials, U.S. Ambassador in San Salvador Albert Nufer ordered U.S. officials to act "courteously [while] carefully avoid[ing] any statement that might be construed as an encouragement" of the dissidents' activities.<sup>114</sup> When Coronado Lira asked Robert Wilson of the Office of Central America and Panama Affairs to meet with him and Salazar, Wilson brought along another U.S. official and insisted that his "presence would not imply that [Wilson] was expressing any preference in these local political issues."<sup>115</sup> In early 1945, First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City Sidney O'Donoghue reported "that the Mexican Government had joined with us in urging the other Governments of Central America not to intervene in each other's internal affairs."<sup>116</sup>

U.S. officials' adherence to a non-interventionist policy toward Guatemala was bolstered by the officials' obvious lack of trust in Guatemalan exiles. Kyle admitted his "fear [that Toriello] may not be sincere," "might be an ingrate," and "might, by spreading rumors against [Arévalo], gradually destroy the confidence of the people" in Arévalo.<sup>117</sup> In late 1947, U.S. officials believed Toriello's claims that Arévalo's government was dominated by communists

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<sup>113</sup> Jorge Toriello, Edwin J. Kyle, Memorandum of Conversations, 26 and 28 September 1945, with Edwin J. Kyle to Secretary of State, No. 681, Guatemala City, 01 October 1945, 814.00/10-145, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>114</sup> Albert F. Nufer to Secretary of State, No. 1818, San Salvador, 30 October 1947, 814.00/10-3047, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>115</sup> Jorge Toriello, Carlos Salazar, Jr., Luis Coronado Lira, Norman Stines, Second Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, Robert E. Wilson, Office of Central America and Panama Affairs, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Guatemala: Local politics, communism, arms and munitions shipments," 06 October 1947, 814.00/10-647, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>116</sup> Sidney E. O'Donoghue to John Willard Carrigan, Mexico City, 12 January 1945, 814.00/1-1245, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>117</sup> Jorge Toriello, Edwin J. Kyle, Memorandum of Conversations, 26 and 28 September 1945, with Edwin J. Kyle to Secretary of State, No. 681, Guatemala City, 01 October 1945, 814.00/10-145, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

“should not be taken too seriously” since Toriello “very definitely ha[d] an axe to grind and d[id] not have a record for reliability himself.”<sup>118</sup> Walter Washington at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City identified Ponce, while distributing the Arévalo-Yakubosvky letter, as “so embittered and prejudiced in his conversation and giv[ing] forth so much unreliable and inaccurate information that the [U.S.] Embassy place[d] little confidence in the material which he distribute[d].”<sup>119</sup> In October 1945, Chargé d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa John Faust forwarded to First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City Robert Woodward a copy of a letter from Pinillos. Faust sarcastically described Pinillos as his “old sporting pal” and, upon summarizing how Pinillos believed “the red hand of Moscow may soon be around their gullets,” joked, “Well, it’s no skin off Honduran noses,” and suggested “mention[ing] the name of the wide awake laddie” to the State Department.<sup>120</sup> Upon receiving Padilla’s late 1947 memorandum, Chargé d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa Harold Montemat concluded that the Guatemalan’s charges were “probably old hat and of very little, if any, importance.”<sup>121</sup>

In contrast to U.S. officials, Somoza and Carías issued the same charges against the Guatemalan Revolution as did the Guatemalan exiles. The Nicaraguan and Honduran dictators nurtured their own anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology when interpreting events in Guatemala. In public writings and communications with U.S. officials, Somoza, Carías, and

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<sup>118</sup> Robert E. Wilson to Robert Newbegin, Robert F. Woodward, Office of American Republics Affairs, Norman Armour, Office of American Republics Affairs, “Subject: Conversation with Jorge Toriello,” 06 October 1947, with Jorge Toriello, Carlos Salazar, Jr., Luis Coronado Lira, Norman Stines, Robert E. Wilson, Memorandum of Conversation, 06 October 1947, 814.00/10-647, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>119</sup> S. Walter Washington to Secretary of State, No. 392, Mexico City, 11 July 1946, NARAII, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 14.

<sup>120</sup> John B. Faust, Chargé d’Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, to Robert F. Woodward, First Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, Tegucigalpa, 04 October 1945, NARAII, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>121</sup> Harold E. Montemat, Memorandum, Tegucigalpa, 02 December 1947, NARAII, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34.

their representatives summoned the same tropes utilized by Guatemalan exiles, such as the spread of Soviet communism and influences of Mexican communist Lombardo Toledano, to denounce events in Guatemala. Also, Somoza and Carías focused much of their attention on Nicaraguan and Honduran exiles who opposed the dictators' regimes. Here, the two dictators saw the Guatemalan Revolution and anti-dictatorial exiles as the byproduct of Mexican, Soviet, and communist machinations.

Somoza dwelled upon the supposed spread of Mexican communism into Guatemala. In January 1945, the Nicaraguan dictator already claimed the Guatemalan Revolution was “inspired by Mexico.”<sup>122</sup> Intertwining labor activity and international communism, Somoza believed such ideas “had come from Mexico to Guatemala.”<sup>123</sup> U.S. officials such as Ambassador in Managua Fletcher Warren knew that the dictator's worries stemmed from his opposition to the Mexican Revolution. In June 1945, Warren reported that Somoza's “well-known fear and distrust of Mexico” led to the dictator's “see[ing] the hand of Mexico” in Guatemalan affairs. The dictator was “vehemently opposed to the spread of Mexican radicalism in Nicaragua and believe[d] it to stem from Moscow.” Due to this worldview, Somoza believed Arévalo was “acting at the instigation of Mexico and, ultimately, the Soviet Union.”<sup>124</sup> For the dictator, Mexican communism remained the most dangerous threat and greatest influence in Guatemala. In early 1945, he warned U.S. officials that the Mexican government was selling machine guns, rifles, and ammunition to the Guatemalan government. After various exchanges regarding the arms

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<sup>122</sup> Harold D. Finley, Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Managua, to Secretary of State, No. 2823 “Subject: President Somoza Expresses Concern at Mexican Actuation in Central America,” Managua, 16 January 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>123</sup> Fletcher Warren, U.S. Ambassador in Managua, to Secretary of State, A-177, Managua, 28 May 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>124</sup> Fletcher Warren to Secretary of State, No. 55 “Subject: Attitude of Nicaragua Toward the Guatemala-El Salvador Unionist Attempt,” Managua, 06 June 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.



sale, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City George Messersmith explained that the “Government of Nicaragua has its own private quarrel with the Government of Mexico,” so he did “not believe that any great value can be given to information which the Nicaraguan Government may give with respect to such arms sales by Mexico.”<sup>125</sup> Following up on Messersmith’s reports, Chargé d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City Herbert Bursley added that the Mexican Foreign Office had actually contacted the State Department about the arms sales.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, later reports found that the Mexican government had sold the arms and ammunition to the Guatemalan government following warnings concerning Ponce’s organizing conspiracies from Chiapas and Tabasco to invade Guatemala and overthrow Arévalo’s government.<sup>127</sup> Not only did Somoza ignore such claims and not send any representatives to Arévalo’s inauguration.<sup>128</sup> During a coup attempt against Arévalo’s government in October 1945, the dictator told U.S. officials that the Mexican Government was “sending three officials of the Mexican Army to Guatemala to assist Arévalo in maintaining control.”<sup>129</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Edwin Kyle replied that there was “no indication” of Mexican army officers in Guatemala and found it “difficult to

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<sup>125</sup> George S. Messersmith to John W. Carrigan, Mexico City, 16 February 1945, 814.113/2-1645, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>126</sup> Herbert S. Bursley, Chargé d’Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, No. 24,416 “Subject: Possible Cancellation by Guatemalan Government of Order for Armament from Mexico,” Mexico City, 11 May 1945, 814.113/5-1145, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>127</sup> Maurice C. Holden, Assistant U.S. Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Report No. R184-46 “Sale of Arms to Guatemala,” Mexico City, 14 June 1946, with Andrew E. Donovan, II, Chargé d’Affaires ad interim at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 1498 “Subject: Purchase of Arms by Guatemalan Government from Government of Mexico,” Guatemala City, 28 June 1946, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 14.

<sup>128</sup> Harold D. Finley to Secretary of State, 123, 13 March 1945, 814.001/3-1345, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 3.

<sup>129</sup> Fletcher Warren to Secretary of State, 557, Managua, 11 October 1945, 814.00/10-1145, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

understand how they could be of assistance” to Arévalo’s government.<sup>130</sup> Finally, Somoza’s newspaper *Novedades*, among its litany of propaganda directed against the Guatemalan Revolution, published the Arévalo-Yakubovsky letter as evidence of Soviet communism in Guatemala.<sup>131</sup>

Cariás’s regime nurtured an identical ideology. As had Somoza, Honduran Ambassador in Washington Julián Cáceres in 1945 discussed “the dangers of increasing the communist influence in Central America.”<sup>132</sup> Over two years later, he again “stated that there was little question but what [sic] the Arévalo Government was taking orders from outside the country.” He implored U.S. officials to see that Arévalo’s government “was communistic and that the orders were coming from Soviet Russia.”<sup>133</sup> As early as 1944, Honduran Foreign Minister Silverio Laínez warned U.S. Ambassador in Tegucigalpa John Erwin of “a movement with communist background . . . being established in Central America [and] originating in Mexico.”<sup>134</sup> Erwin’s response to these warnings mirrored those given to Guatemalan exiles. When Laínez the following year complained about communism in Central America, the U.S. official reported, “It should be observed that Dr. Laínez . . . probably looks under his bed each night for a

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<sup>130</sup> Edwin J. Kyle to Secretary of State, 605, Guatemala City, 12 October 1945, 814.00/10-1245, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>131</sup> Gabriel Arroyo, “Juan José Arévalo organizó la fracasada invasión contra la República Dominicana,” *Novedades* 02 septiembre 1949: 6, con César Pina Barinas, Embajador Dominicano en Managua, a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, Managua, 02 septiembre 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903350 “Fechas extremas 1949-1950, Código 658” (en adelante Caja IT 2903350), Expediente “Nicaragua, 2903350.”

<sup>132</sup> Julián R. Cáceres, Honduran Ambassador in Washington, John Moors Cabot, Office of American Republic Affairs, Memorandum of Conversation, 28 May 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>133</sup> Julián R. Cáceres, Robert Newbegin, Gordon S. Reid, Office of Central America and Panama Affairs, Memorandum of Conversation “Subject: Courtesy Call of Ambassador Cáceres,” 02 October 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34.

<sup>134</sup> John D. Erwin, U.S. Ambassador in Tegucigalpa, to Secretary of State, “Subject: Communication from Guatemalan Government to Honduran Foreign Office Calling Attention,” Tegucigalpa, 12 September 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 19.

Communist.”<sup>135</sup> Carías suppressed all labor organizations, communist literature, and news bulletins from the Soviet Embassy in Mexico from entering Honduras.<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, the dictator believed “Toledano’s agents [were] busy in Central America” and felt that “the agitation is closely connected with the new regime in Guatemala.”<sup>137</sup> In March 1945, Laínez insisted that communist propaganda in Honduras came from the Mexican government and Lombardo Toledano, “perhaps through persons connected with the present Government of Guatemala” under Arévalo.<sup>138</sup> As did Somoza, Carías had Honduran newspapers claim that the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City and Lombardo Toledano shaped the direction of the Guatemalan Revolution.<sup>139</sup> Furthermore, his son in 1945 told U.S. officials “that Communism in Central America has received its impetus by Arévalo’s action” in Guatemala.<sup>140</sup> The next year, the son repeated that Guatemala was “already in the hands of the Communists” and receiving “help from Mexico” while handing U.S. officials a copy of the Arévalo-Yakubovsky letter.<sup>141</sup> In 1947, Laínez issued the same charges that communists “were becoming increasingly active in many

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<sup>135</sup> John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, No. 1940 “Subject: Political Developments in Salvador as reported to American Embassy in Tegucigalpa,” Tegucigalpa, 12 July 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.

<sup>136</sup> Nathan A. Brown, Jr., Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Report No. R11-45 “Subject: Communist Propaganda and Activities in Honduras,” Tegucigalpa, 08 February 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.

<sup>137</sup> John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, No. 1745 “Subject: President Carías reports efforts of outside agitators to stir labor troubles in Honduras,” Tegucigalpa, 28 March 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.

<sup>138</sup> John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, No. 1725 “Subject: Honduran Minister for Foreign Affairs somewhat worried regarding Communist propaganda,” Tegucigalpa, 21 March 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.

<sup>139</sup> Guy G. Goddard, Administrative Assistant at U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Military Attaché Report No. R13-45 “Subject: Estimate of the Situation,” Tegucigalpa, 12 February 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.

<sup>140</sup> Gordon S. Reid, Tiburcio Carías, Jr., Memorandum of Conversation “Subject: RESTRICTED,” 15 July 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34.

<sup>141</sup> William Dawson, Member of U.S. Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations, to Ellis O. Briggs, New York, 05 December 1946, 814.00B/12-546, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 3.

other countries of the world” outside of the Soviet Union and alleged that constitutional suspensions in Guatemala, actually the result of dissident exiles’ conspiracies as will be discussed in Chapter 3, were “intimately tied up with the communist problem there.”<sup>142</sup>

Escalating Somoza and Carías’s self-proclaimed anti-communist opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution was the association between Arévalo’s government and anti-dictatorial exiles in Central America. U.S. officials noted that the Nicaraguan and Honduran governments “consider[ed] Arévalo and [his] associates [as] communist” and Somoza and Carías feared “that Russia expect[ed] soon to place diplomatic representatives in all Central American countries.”<sup>143</sup> However, the two dictators conflated communism with the myriad anti-fascist and leftist challenges to their respective regimes in the postwar years.<sup>144</sup> For them, Guatemala’s open reception of, and frequent support for, anti-dictatorial exiles merely confirmed the dictators’ denunciations of the infiltration of Mexican, Soviet, and international communism into Guatemala.

In the first days of the Guatemalan Revolution, anti-Somoza exiles turned to Arévalo’s government and like-minded allies there. Nicaraguans constantly fled to the Guatemalan Embassy in Managua in order to escape Somoza’s Guardia Nacional [National Guard]. When Nicaraguan students during an anti-Somoza protest in October 1945 entertained officials from

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<sup>142</sup> Harold E. Montemat, Memorandum “Subject: Routine Call on Foreign Minister,” Tegucigalpa, 23 September 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34.

<sup>143</sup> Robert E. Wilson to Robert Newbegin, Robert F. Woodward, Norman Armour, “Subject: Conversation with Jorge Toriello,” 06 October 1947, with Jorge Toriello, Carlos Salazar, Jr., Luis Coronado Lira, Norman Stines, Robert E. Wilson, Memorandum of Conversation, 06 October 1947, 814.00/10-647, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1; John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, No. 1940, Tegucigalpa, 12 July 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 26.

<sup>144</sup> Although there are no works on how the dictators interpreted anti-fascist movements in the postwar years, the best work on Latin American responses to such ideas in the mid-1940s are the works found in Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough (eds.), *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944-1948* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

the Guatemalan Embassy in Managua, Somoza ordered his Guardia Nacional to suppress the event. In the aftermath, the Guatemalan minister in Managua gave asylum to almost 50 of the dictator's opponents while Somoza's regime criticized the minister.<sup>145</sup> Despite this repression, students continued joining other opponents of the regime, participated in strikes, received asylum at the Mexican Embassy in Managua, and departed for Guatemala.<sup>146</sup> There, Nicaraguan exiles openly associated with Guatemalan officials, students, and journalists.<sup>147</sup> The links between anti-Somoza activists, the Guatemalan Revolution, and the Mexican government fueled Somoza's hatred of Arévalo's government. In January 1945, he claimed Arévalo's government was "letting Central American exiles have a free hand" in Guatemala.<sup>148</sup> As the government defended itself against various conspiracies in late 1947, Somoza's *Novedades* claimed the Guatemalan president was "taking his turn in these abuses" from Guatemalan exiles after intervening in Nicaraguan affairs.<sup>149</sup> The newspaper went so far as to call out Nicaraguan exiles' editorials and publications in Guatemala's *Mediodía*. One *Novedades* article mocked the Guatemalan Revolution for accepting Nicaraguan exiles while sending out dissident Guatemalan exiles and

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<sup>145</sup> Manuel A. Peña Batlle, Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, a Rafael Trujillo, 25139 "Asunto: Manifestación estudiantil contra el Gobierno de Nicaragua," Ciudad Trujillo, 18 octubre 1945, Caja IT 2903348 "Fechas extremas 1944-1950, Código 658" (en adelante Caja IT 2903348), Expediente "Nicaragua."

<sup>146</sup> Héctor García Godoy, Encargado de Negocios ad interim de la República Dominicana en Managua, a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 44 "Asunto: Informe Político correspondiente a la semana del 15 al 21 de octubre de 1945," Managua, 22 octubre 1945, Caja IT 2903348, Expediente "Nicaragua."

<sup>147</sup> Roberto Despradel, Embajador Dominicano en la Ciudad de Guatemala, a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 367 "Asunto: Cable cifrado No. 27740 relativo al traslado de la sede de esta misión a Tegucigalpa," Ciudad de Guatemala, 16 noviembre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

<sup>148</sup> Harold D. Finley to Secretary of State, No. 2823, Managua, 16 January 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>149</sup> "Al margen de la situación guatemalteca," *Novedades* (Managua) 25 septiembre 1947, with Maurice M. Bernbaum, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim at U.S. Embassy in Managua, to Secretary of State, No. 1768 "Subject: Local Reaction to the Guatemalan Revolt," Managua, 29 September 1945, 814.00/9-2947, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

described “a democratic Guatemala from where numerous exiles have left, many of whom have had a brotherly reception in Nicaraguan soil.”<sup>150</sup>

Carías also decried the links between anti-dictatorial exiles, the Guatemalan Revolution, and sometimes the Mexican government. In Guatemala, anti-Somoza Nicaraguan exiles and anti-Carías Honduran exiles published articles, pamphlets, and books that lambasted the dictatorial regimes.<sup>151</sup> In Honduras, Carías’s regime in August 1947 sought the retirement of Guatemalan Minister in Tegucigalpa Carlos Zachrisson. Akin to his counterparts in Managua, Zachrisson constantly was “speaking poorly” of the dictatorship,” “giv[ing] asylum” to Carías’s enemies, and “shamelessly encourag[ing] opponents.”<sup>152</sup> In 1944, Laínez outlined “his belief that certain activities of the Honduran and other Central American exiles in Mexico [were] being financed by the Government of that country.”<sup>153</sup> Honduran officials soon complained that anti-Carías exiles based in Guatemala frequently moved into Honduras with weapons obtained in Guatemala.<sup>154</sup> Carías and Honduran Minister in Guatemala City Luciano Milla Cisneros reported similar attacks from Honduran exiles in Guatemala with Arévalo’s government allegedly giving orders

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<sup>150</sup> Héctor García Godoy a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 98 “Asunto: Informe Político correspondiente a la semana del 19 al 25 de noviembre de 1945,” Managua, 26 noviembre 1945, Caja IT 2903348, Expediente “Nicaragua.”

<sup>151</sup> “Apoyo de la AEU a Nicaragüenses democráticos,” *El Imparcial* (Guatemala) 26 septiembre 1945; “Aislamiento de las dictaduras centroamericanas,” *El Imparcial* (Guatemala) 29 septiembre 1945; Francisco Morazán, “Lo falso de las dictaduras,” *El Mediodía* (Guatemala) 08 octubre 1945, con Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 336 “Asunto: Informe político,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 16 octubre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>152</sup> Víctor A. Fernández J., Encargado de Negocios ad interino de la República Dominicana en Tegucigalpa, a Arturo Despradel, Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, No. 308 “Asunto: Envío de copia de las “Refutaciones” de esta Legación,” Tegucigalpa, 05 agosto 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>153</sup> John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, No. 727 “Subject: Activities of Honduran political exiles,” Tegucigalpa, 18 January 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 18.

<sup>154</sup> Julian R. Cáceres, John Moors Cabot, Memorandum of Conversation, 28 May 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

“to supply the [exiles] with Red Cross material, mortars, and arms.”<sup>155</sup> In December 1946, the dictator discussed various reports of “future armed movements in Central America to be instigated by” Arévalo.<sup>156</sup> Into late 1947, Arévalo’s military officials, such as Arana, explained how their government “ha[d] been accused of harboring Central American exiles and of giving them employment.” To U.S. officials, he “maintained that this was done only as a humanitarian gesture and that the employment was of a minimum nature, only sufficient for the immediate economic necessities of the persons concerned.” The Guatemalan highlighted how he had “issued orders for the removal of all Honduran exiles from the immediate vicinity of the Honduran frontier.”<sup>157</sup> Regardless, the association of Arévalo’s government and anti-dictatorial exiles persisted into the late 1940s and, in the Somoza and Carías’s worldviews, served as further evidence of the Guatemalan Revolution’s threat to the region’s stability.

### **C. Guatemalan Exiles, Central American Dictators, and the Transnational Counter-Revolution**

Sharing an anti-communist ideology and hatred of the Revolution, Guatemalan exiles and Central American dictators began networking and organizing conspiracies to overthrow Arévalo’s government. U.S. officials found themselves inundated with reports that Pinillos, Padilla, Coronado Lira, and other exiles found a warm reception in Nicaragua, Honduras, and even El Salvador for an audience to discuss methods to remove Arévalo’s government. The patronage of Central American dictators financed the exiles’ networking in the Caribbean Basin.

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<sup>155</sup> John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, A-110, Tegucigalpa, 07 May 1945, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 12.

<sup>156</sup> John D. Erwin to Secretary of State, A-259, Tegucigalpa, 20 December 1946, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 14.

<sup>157</sup> Andrew E. Donovan II to Robert Newbegin, Guatemala City, 02 August 1947, 814.00/8-247, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

In their turn, exiles' conspiracies offered dictators the opportunity to destabilize an allegedly communist government that supported their own countries' exiles. Therefore, a combination of ideological and geopolitical concerns brought together exiles and dictators, beginning the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution.

The archival material on these links provides only perfunctory details. The reports provided by U.S. officials, however, suggest that transnational factors, a common ideology and shared opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution, facilitated their networking. At the Revolution's onset, Guatemalan dissidents cooperated in plots to overthrow Arévalo's government and repeatedly denounced the links between the Guatemalan Revolution and anti-dictatorial exiles, depicting that opposition as a mere attempt to spread communist influence in Central America. This was the case with the correspondence by Guatemalan exiles Adán Manrique Rios and José Miranda with the representatives of the American governments who were meeting for the Río de Janeiro Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security in August and September of 1947. The two exiles held Arévalo's government responsible for aiding opponents of Somoza and Carías and "intervening in the countries of Central America."<sup>158</sup> These allegations intersected with the dictators' goals, for they considered regional cooperation to deter support for anti-dictatorial exiles. In February 1944, Carías and Laínez first debated "the possibility of approaching" Somoza and other dictators "to persuade them to join with the Government of Honduras in bringing to the attention of the Mexican Government the activities of certain Central American exiles now in Mexico."<sup>159</sup> By 1945,

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<sup>158</sup> Adán Manrique Rios y José A. Miranda, *La Verdadera fisonomía política del Gobierno de Guatemala: Carta dirigida a los Delegados de las Naciones Americanas en la Conferencia de Río Janeiro* (México: 1947).

<sup>159</sup> John B. Faust to Secretary of State, No. 784 "Subject: Activities of Central American Political Exiles," Tegucigalpa, 02 February 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 18.



Somoza and Carías together lobbied other Central American leaders in Costa Rica and El Salvador to join conferences and exert diplomatic pressure to discourage Arévalo's open support for anti-Somoza and anti-Carías exiles. They hoped these mechanisms "would cause Arévalo to cease his alleged interference with other Central American affairs."<sup>160</sup> For these reasons, dissident Guatemalan exiles and Central American dictators came together and put into motion the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution.

Pinillos was one of the first exiles to build transnational ties with Central American regimes opposed to the Guatemalan Revolution. Upon Ubico's ousting from power, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Boaz Long requested that the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa monitor Pinillos upon his leaving Guatemala for Honduras.<sup>161</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Tegucigalpa John Erwin placed an agent on him who reported that he had called upon Carías on behalf of Ponce's junta. With this information, Erwin met with Láinez. Apparently, Guatemalan Foreign Minister Carlos Salazar had "suggested to [Láinez that] a confidential agent of the Guatemalan Government be sent to [Tegucigalpa] to ascertain for himself the political conditions" there. Furthermore, Erwin noted that Honduran Minister in Guatemala City Luciano Milla Cisneros "ha[d] been around with" Pinillos. During a conversation with Erwin, United Fruit Company [UFCO] official William Tailion mentioned having invited Pinillos and Cisneros to a UFCO event.<sup>162</sup> Subsequent reports from Erwin and the Legal Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City recreated Pinillos's time in Guatemala City. Cisneros had reserved Pinillos's

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<sup>160</sup> John Erwin to U.S. Embassy in Managua, Tegucigalpa, 13 October 1945, NARAI, RG84, "Nicaragua, U.S. Legation and Embassy, Managua, Classified General Records, 1938-1961" (hereafter US Embassy Managua), Box 9, Folder "800: 1945."

<sup>161</sup> Boaz Long to U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Guatemala City, 28 July 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 11.

<sup>162</sup> John Erwin to Boaz Long, Tegucigalpa, 02 August 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 11.

room, Cisneros and Laínez had met with the exile, and he visited many of Carías's officials.<sup>163</sup> In exile following Ponce's removal, he frequently visited the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa to discuss regional affairs and deliver reports on Guatemala, as discussed above.

While U.S. reports do not provide further insight into Pinillos's interactions with Carías's regime, other sources reveal the extent to which he nurtured his relations with Honduran, and even Nicaraguan, officials during his exile. In Tegucigalpa, he served as a leading propagandist against Arévalo's government. His networking with Honduran officials was even more significant. In September 1947, Dominican Chargé d'Affaires in Tegucigalpa Víctor Antonio Fernández explained that Pinillos met frequently with Cisneros.<sup>164</sup> In another report, Fernández described Pinillos as "the leader of the Guatemalan exiles [in Tegucigalpa], keeping up-to-date on events" in Guatemala.<sup>165</sup> As will be examined in Chapter 3, Pinillos also assisted fellow Guatemalan exiles. When questioned about his opposition to Arévalo's government and claiming to have "turned down three requests by Carías to assist in Arévalo's overthrow," Somoza showed Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Managua Maurice Bernbaum a letter from Pinillos to Guatemalan exile colonel Arturo Ramírez.<sup>166</sup> Through this combination of anti-communist activities and relationships with Honduran officials, Pinillos emerged as an important link between Caribbean Basin regimes and dissident Guatemalan exiles.

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<sup>163</sup> "Juan Pinillos, Translation," Tegucigalpa, 05 August 1944, with John Erwin to Boaz Long, Tegucigalpa, 07 August 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 11; Legal Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, "Juan Pinillos, Guatemala City, Guatemala," 29 August 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala City, Box 11.

<sup>164</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 375 "Asunto: Informe sobre los acontecimientos en Guatemala," Tegucigalpa, 22 septiembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>165</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 347 "Asunto: Procesado el ex-Jefe de la Policía de Guatemala," Tegucigalpa, 06 septiembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>166</sup> Maurice M. Bernbaum to Secretary of State, 268, Managua, 01 July 1947, NARAI, RG84, "Costa Rica, U.S. Embassy, San José, Classified General Records, 1938-1961," Box 58.

Along similar lines, Padilla maneuvered between Guatemalan exiles and the region's dictatorial regimes. In Guatemala, he helped organize the abortive March 1945 conspiracy. The plot aimed to prevent Arévalo from taking office by bribing the Guatemalan Army, even offering Arana \$2,000 a month if Arévalo were removed. He served as the principal financier of the conspiracy, but Ramírez and others from the Guatemalan Army joined. Though the plot was aborted, Arévalo's government had to suspend constitutional rights in early April during its investigations and exile Padilla, Ramírez, and their collaborators.<sup>167</sup> Over the next months, Padilla remained in contact with Ramírez and general Roderico Anzueto. For almost a year, U.S. censors intercepted letters and telephone calls between Padilla and Anzueto, leading U.S. officials to believe "plans were definitely afoot for a political coup in Guatemala."<sup>168</sup> By mid-1945, the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI] reported that Padilla's movement in Guatemala was "still intact" but failed to raise the necessary funds to bribe the appropriate military officers.<sup>169</sup>

It is likely that these financial difficulties led to Padilla's lobbying Somoza and Carías for assistance. In the summer of 1945, the exile began traveling throughout Central America. In May, he met with Somoza, a former editor of *Novedades*, and members of the Guardia Nacional. By June, he claimed to have received support from both Somoza and Carías, yet FBI sources

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<sup>167</sup> Boaz Long to Secretary of State, No. 2351 "Subject: Jailing and Deportation of Opposition Politicians because of Alleged Plot to overthrow Guatemalan Government; 30-Day Suspension of Constitutional Guarantees," Guatemala City, 09 April 1945, 814.00/4-945, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>168</sup> Robert F. Woodward, Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 2437 "Subject: Possible Involvement of American Citizens in Activities of Guatemalan Political Exiles," Guatemala City, 27 April 1945, 814.00/4-2745, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>169</sup> John Edgar Hoover, Director of Federal Bureau of Investigation, to Frederick B. Lyon, Chief of the Division of Foreign Activity Correlation, "Subject: Revolutionary Plans, Guatemala," Washington, 02 June 1945, 814.00/6-245, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

could not confirm this.<sup>170</sup> In mid-June, Erwin doubted that either dictator would support conspiracies against Arévalo's government and described such a possibility as "too fantastic for credence," yet the U.S. official who read Erwin's report sarcastically wrote, "O yeah?"<sup>171</sup> The next week, Padilla again claimed to have received the dictators' support, and Somoza welcomed 20 Guatemalan exiles into Managua.<sup>172</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Managua Fletcher Warren approached Somoza to discuss Padilla. The dictator "said that he had seen him for a few minutes," Warren reported, but "Somoza did not comment further." As the ambassador admitted, it was "the first time since my arrival [Somoza] has shown any apparent reluctance in discussing any matter."<sup>173</sup> As had Erwin when reporting on Carías, Warren believed that Somoza would not intervene against Arévalo, though he did not rule out that the dictator was deceiving him.<sup>174</sup> In early August, Padilla informed an FBI source that, together with another exile, colonel José

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<sup>170</sup> "Re: Doctor and Colonel CARLOS PADILLA Y PADILLA," Managua, 23 August 1945, with John Edgar Hoover to Frederick B. Lyon, "Subject: COLONEL CARLOS PADILLA Y PADILLA, GUATEMALAN EXILE," Washington, 28 September 1945, 814.00/9-2845, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>171</sup> John Erwin to Secretary of State, A-148, 14 June 1945, 814.00/6-1445, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>172</sup> "Re: Doctor," Managua, 23 August 1945, with John Edgar Hoover to Frederick B. Lyon, "Subject: COLONEL CARLOS PADILLA," Washington, 28 September 1945, 814.00/9-2845, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1; William P. Cochran, Second Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Managua, to Dana G. Munro, Office of American Republics Affairs, John E. Lockwood, Office of American Republic Affairs, and Fletcher Warren, "Subject: Guatemalan Political Exiles in Managua," 10 July 1945, with Fletcher Warren to Secretary of State, A-226, Managua, 21 June 1945, 814.00/6-2145, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>173</sup> Fletcher Warren to Secretary of State, A-226, Managua, 21 June 1945, 814.00/6-2145, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>174</sup> Fletcher Warren to Secretary of State, A-226, Managua, 21 June 1945, 814.00/6-2145, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

Enrique Ardón Fernández, and others, he had worked with officers of the Guardia Nacional to secure visas and other items for exiles in Managua.<sup>175</sup>

Padilla remained an active conspirator in Central America over the next couple of years. In July 1946, he had joined various exiles as part of a conspiracy organized by Jorge Palacios to overthrow Arévalo's government.<sup>176</sup> At the end of the year, Padilla, Jorge Toriello, Anzueto's son, and others assisted a conspiracy involving dissidents within the Guatemalan Army.<sup>177</sup> As opposition groups in Guatemala prepared a march to protest the Labor Code in March 1947, Guatemalan Foreign Minister Eugenio Silva Peña approached U.S. officials and showed a telegram with information provided by Salvadoran military president-dictator Salvador Castaneda Castro. Castaneda "had received reliable information to the effect that Guatemalan exiles under the leadership of Padilla in Honduras intended to fly over Guatemala City during the manifestation and drop bombs." Silva Peña then shared another telegram and more reports that Luis Coronado Lira had purchased a plane in Honduras with the help of Padilla, so the Guatemalan Air Force and Guatemalan Army prepared their forces "to intercept" the plane. First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City Andrew Donovan, as he would during Ponce's

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<sup>175</sup> "Re: Doctor," Managua, 23 August 1945, with John Edgar Hoover to Frederick B. Lyon, "Subject: COLONEL CARLOS PADILLA," Washington, 28 September 1945, 814.00/9-2845, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>176</sup> John Edgar Hoover to Frederick B. Lyon, "Subject: Revolutionary Activities in Guatemala," Washington, 02 July 1946, 814.00/7-246, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>177</sup> John Edgar Hoover to Jack D. Neal, Chief of the Division of Foreign Activity Correlation, "REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES IN GUATEMALA," Washington, 31 December 1946, 814.00/12-3146, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

air-bombing conspiracy later the same year, described the plot as “improbable.”<sup>178</sup> Over the next months, Arana met with Donovan to warn about Padilla’s activities abroad.<sup>179</sup>

Into the end of 1947, Padilla deepened his relationships with fellow exiles and Central American regimes but became a nuisance to U.S. officials unable to properly determine the extent of the exile’s activities. In August, the State Department warned that he was “now in Washington engaging in political maneuvering” and “allegedly acting as a confidential agent” of Carías but had not registered with the Foreign Agents Registration Act.<sup>180</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Tegucigalpa Paul Daniels approached Láinez to investigate the exile’s claims. Not surprisingly, Láinez assured Daniels that Carías “himself had told [Láinez] that Padilla was not [Carías’s] agent.” Instead, Láinez shifted the blame for Padilla’s activities from the dictator to another of Carías’s officials, Fernando Zepeda Durón. According to Láinez, the exile could have “receive[d] some payment” from Zepeda Durón, the director of Carías’s newspaper *La Época* and an influential advisor close to Carías.<sup>181</sup> Although Daniels could not verify this, he and the Office of Central America and Panama Affairs utilized the potential links between Padilla and Zepeda Durón and decided it would “probably be right in not encouraging Padilla to visit the Department” anymore and treat Padilla “as a completely private individual.”<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Andrew E. Donovan II to Secretary of State, No. 2311 “Subject: Manifestation of Opposition Political Parties on March 16,” Guatemala City, 18 March 1947, 814.00/3-1847, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>179</sup> Andrew E. Donovan II to Robert Newbegin, Guatemala City, 02 August 1947, 814.00/8-247, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>180</sup> Robert A. Lovett, Acting Secretary of State, to “Certain American Diplomatic Officials,” 18 August 1947, 814.00/8-1847, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>181</sup> Paul C. Daniels, U.S. Ambassador in Tegucigalpa, to Secretary of State, A-1919, Tegucigalpa, 21 August 1947, 814.00/8-2147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>182</sup> Gordon S. Reid, to Robert E. Wilson, Murray M. Wise, Office of Central America and Panama Affairs, and Robert Newbegin, “Subject: Carlos Padilla,” 21 August 1947, 814.00/8-2147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1. Underline in original.

Even as the State Department distanced itself from Padilla, reports continued to arrive that placed Padilla in the midst of political intrigues against Arévalo's government. In September, U.S. Ambassador in San Salvador Albert Nufer warned that Padilla's "principal associate" in El Salvador was Luis Coronado Lira.<sup>183</sup> When Robert Wilson of the Office of Central America and Panama Affairs met with Coronado Lira the next month, the exile described working with Padilla, Carlos Salazar, Jr., and other exiles while hoping to contact Ponce.<sup>184</sup> Nufer confirmed for Wilson that Coronado Lira and Padilla were networking, but U.S. officials did not receive any further information on Padilla until the next year.<sup>185</sup> By that time, Coronado Lira, possibly through Padilla's contacts, was already preparing a conspiracy with the assistance of Caribbean Basin regimes, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

#### **D. Conclusion**

While U.S. officials' main attention remained elsewhere, a transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution had emerged in the Caribbean Basin in the mid-1940s in the form of networking between dissident Guatemalan exiles and Central American dictators Anastasio Somoza and Tiburcio Carías. Tapping into their own worldviews, exiles and dictators constructed their anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology to denounce reformist projects and anti-dictatorial exiles tied to Arévalo's Guatemalan government. Whether in Ponce's telegrams, Coronado Lira's writings, or the dictators' warnings to U.S. officials,

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<sup>183</sup> Albert F. Nufer to Secretary of State, A-230, San Salvador, 03 September 1947, 814.00/9-347, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>184</sup> Luis Coronado Lira, Robert E. Wilson, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Possible Revolution in Guatemala, 16 October 1947, 814.00/10-1647, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>185</sup> Albert F. Nufer to Secretary of State, No. 1818, San Salvador, 30 October 1947, 814.00/10-3047, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

proclamations that the Mexican Revolution, the Soviet Union, and international communism dominated Guatemala predated any fears on the part of U.S. officials. With their own ideology, exiles such as Pinillos and Padilla traveled throughout Central America, disseminated their ideas, influenced plots and conspiracies in Guatemala, and began networking with Central American dictators who sought to undermine Arévalo's government for their own ideological and strategic reasons. As will be seen in Chapters 4 through 7, the transnational forces behind the exiles' maneuverings would continue into the late 1940s and early 1950s. In the meantime, the exiles would soon take advantage of another regional conflict in the Caribbean Basin and find in the Dominican Republic a new anti-communist proponent against the Guatemalan Revolution.



### III. Chapter 2: Rafael Trujillo and the Guatemalan Revolution, 1944-1947

In January 1948, Rudy Unger Colorao with the Dominican Film Company in Ciudad Trujillo wrote to the Assignment Director for Paramount News with Paramount Pictures, E. P. Genock. Arévalo over the past year had not only broken relations with the Dominican dictatorship but assisted a group of anti-Trujillo exiles in an abortive coup to topple the despot. By mid-1947, Trujillo's regime in newspapers and radio throughout the Caribbean Basin denounced these efforts as the products of international communism. To bolster this propaganda campaign, Dominican officials such as Unger were now turning to film. Speaking for Paramount News, Genock asked Unger to "advise urgently what pictures can be secured in the [Dominican] Republic at this time and what preparations are being made to prevent [a] Communist invasion of your Republic."<sup>186</sup> By February, Unger was ready to expand the campaign.<sup>187</sup> Akin to Somoza and Cárías, Trujillo had come to oppose the Guatemalan Revolution.

This chapter utilizes the emergence of a regional conflict between Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, Arévalo's government, and anti-Trujillo exiles and groups in the mid-1940s as a case study into how a Caribbean Basin dictator emerged as a vocal, self-proclaimed anti-communist opponent of the Guatemalan Revolution. Following a policy of imperialismo dominicano [Dominican imperialism], Dominican officials throughout the Caribbean Basin confronted propaganda, exiles, and governments opposed to the dictatorship and denounced all such opposition as communist-inspired. In the first years of the Revolution, the dictator and his officials grew steadily frustrated as the Guatemalan people allowed the dissemination of anti-

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<sup>186</sup> E. P. Genock, Assignment Director for Paramount News, to Rudy Unger Colorao, Dominican Film Company, New York, 27 January 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902659, "Fechas extremas 1947-1948, Ref. Antigua 2502" (en adelante Caja IT 2902659), Expediente "1948, Código 5/c."

<sup>187</sup> Rudy Unger Colorao a Telésforo R. Calderón, Secretario de Estado de la Presidencia, Ciudad Trujillo, 03 febrero 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902659, Expediente "1948, Código 5/c."

Trujillo propaganda and Arévalo drew close to Venezuela's democratic leader and critic of the despot, Rómulo Betancourt. When Arévalo in 1947 suspended diplomatic relations with the regime and aided an expedition of anti-Trujillo exiles who attempted to overthrow the dictator, the despot began to charge Arévalo's government as communist-inspired, guilty for supporting a 'brigada internacional comunista [international communist brigade],' and a threat to inter-American stability.

Following the inter-American trail, this chapter departs from traditional examinations of U.S.-Latin American relations to reveal how the dictator's regime devoted attention and resources toward transnational points of contact throughout the Caribbean Basin that included anti-Trujillo exiles, students, journalists, politicians, and governments. Recent works on the despot continue to explore how he inserted himself throughout the country's life, but little has been done to examine how his influence or goals spread beyond the borders of the Dominican Republic.<sup>188</sup> Instead, research on Dominican foreign relations during his reign has focused on Dominican-U.S. relations due to Trujillo's presenting his anti-communist dictatorship as compatible with U.S. Cold War-oriented policies in Latin America.<sup>189</sup> Although a handful of

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<sup>188</sup> See Richard Lee Turits, *Foundations of Despotism: Peasants, the Trujillo Regime, and Modernity in Dominican History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Valentina Peguero, *The Militarization of Culture in the Dominican Republic: From the Captains General to General Trujillo* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); Ignacio López-Calvo, *God and Trujillo: Literary and Cultural Representations of the Dominican Dictator* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2005); and Lauren Derby, *The Dictator's Seduction: Politics and the Popular Imagination in the Era of Trujillo* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

<sup>189</sup> Bernardo Vega, *Los Estados Unidos y Trujillo*, 5 tomos (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1982-1987); Stephen G. Rabe, "The Caribbean Triangle: Betancourt, Castro, and Trujillo and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1958-1963," *Diplomatic History* 20.1 (Winter 1996): 55-78; G. Pope Atkins and Larman C. Wilson, *The Dominican Republic and the United States: From Imperialism to Transnationalism* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998); Eric Paul Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door: The Good Neighbor Policy and the Trujillo Regime in the Dominican Republic, 1930-1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965*

works have begun to analyze his foreign policy toward Haiti, Venezuela, and Cuba, there is no work on Dominican-Guatemalan, Dominican-Caribbean, Dominican-Central American, or Dominican-Latin American relations.<sup>190</sup> Additionally, scholarship on the 1947 anti-Trujillo plot from Cuba spearheaded by Dominican exiles, known as the Cayo Confites expedition, has not assessed how the dictator responded to the links between anti-Trujillo exiles and governments or how the expedition influenced regional affairs in the Caribbean Basin.<sup>191</sup>

In examining inter-American relations in the Caribbean Basin in the mid-1940s, this chapter expands upon the concept of *imperialismo dominicano*, mentioned in 1949 by the Cuban government of Carlos Prío Socarrás and briefly noted in Eliades Acosta Matos's *La Telaraña cubana de Trujillo* [*The Cuban Spider Web of Trujillo*], to describe how the dictator sought to influence Cuban affairs.<sup>192</sup> Thanks to previously-untapped sources on his foreign policy, my purpose is to illustrate how the Dominican regime attempted to influence affairs not merely in Cuba but throughout the Caribbean Basin. As *imperialismo dominicano* targeted Guatemala,

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(Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Michael Hall, *Sugar and Power in the Dominican Republic: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Trujillos* (New York, NY: Greenwood, 2000).

<sup>190</sup> Bernardo Vega, *Trujillo y Haití*, 4 tomos (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1988-2009); Santiago Castro Ventura, *Trujillo vs. Betancourt ¿rivalidad perpetua!* (Santo Domingo: Editora Manatí, 2008); Jorge Renato Ibarra Guitart, *Las relaciones cubano-dominicanas: su escenario hemisférico, 1944-1948* (Santo Domingo: Archivo General de la Nación, 2011); Eliades Acosta Matos, *La Telaraña cubana de Trujillo*, 2 tomos (Santo Domingo: Archivo General de la Nación, 2012).

<sup>191</sup> Ameringer, *The Democratic Left in Exile*; Gleijeses, "Juan José Arévalo and the Caribbean Legion;" José Diego Grullón, *Cayo Confites: la revolución traicionada* (Santo Domingo: Editora Alfa y Omega, 1989); Ameringer, *The Caribbean Legion*; Richard E. Clinton, Jr., "The United States and the Caribbean Legion: Democracy, Dictatorship, and the Origins of the Cold War in Latin America, 1945-1950," unpubl. PhD diss., Ohio University, 2001; Humberto Vázquez García, *La expedición de Cayo Confites*, 2da. ed. (Santo Domingo: Archivo General de la Nación, 2014).

<sup>192</sup> Memorandum confidencial a Carlos Hevia, Secretario del Ministerio de Estado, diciembre 1949, Archivo Central del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, La Habana (en adelante ACMINREX), Expediente "Cayo Confites, 1946-1947;" Acosta Matos, *La Telaraña cubana de Trujillo*, tomo 2, 487-488.

Trujillo did what the other regional dictators contemplated, with identical arguments and justifications: the regional conflict between Trujillo and Arévalo, for the former, signified an international struggle that conflated anti-dictatorial and anti-fascist opposition as communist threats to his regime and to regional stability, best preserved by his own hegemony. Thus, these Caribbean Basin affairs followed their own logic independent of the superpowers' emerging tensions during the Cold War.

#### **A. Rafael Trujillo and Imperialismo Dominicano in the Caribbean Basin**

Imperialismo dominicano had several dimensions. Although the dictator repressed most sources of opposition within the country, he and his officials closely monitored anti-Trujillo exiles' activities and propaganda elsewhere. At the end of the Second World War, these exiles tapped into anti-fascist ideals and networked with allies, as in Venezuela, to criticize the regime. With increased criticism emanating from transnational networks in the Caribbean Basin, the dictator's officials escalated their attempts to suppress such groups.

In the Dominican Republic, Trujillo's regime relied upon a combination of state-sponsored force and cultural coercion, well-documented in the historical literature and by various memoirs. Numerous works, especially first-hand accounts from the dictator's own officials, identify how the dictator utilized his control over the Dominican military, employment of a police force, and brutal methods of assassination and torture to eliminate opponents, silence the Dominican press, and construct one of the most sadistic dictatorships in the Caribbean Basin from the 1930s to the early 1960s.<sup>193</sup> Foreign observers agreed with such accounts. In 1945, U.S.

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<sup>193</sup> On memoirs of the inner workings of Trujillo's regime, see José Almoína, *Yo fui secretario de Trujillo* (Buenos Aires: Editora y Distribuidora del Plata, 1950); Germán Ornes, *Trujillo: Little Caesar of the Caribbean* (New York, NY: Thomas Nelson, 1958); Arturo R. Espaillat,

Ambassador in Ciudad Trujillo Ellis Briggs outlined, “The foundation of Trujillo’s administration has been and remains fear.”<sup>194</sup> Additionally, Trujillo’s influence went beyond force. As narrated by Richard Lee Turits, Ignacio López-Calvo, and Lauren Derby, the dictator also utilized the Dominican state to build a personalistic political party, construct numerous busts and monuments in his name, rename ‘Santo Domingo’ as ‘Ciudad Trujillo,’ and implant himself into the everyday fabric of Dominican life. British Ambassador in Ciudad Trujillo Russell Duncan Macrae in 1947 neatly summarized, “Trujillo feels that he is the State and the interests of the country are his interests.”<sup>195</sup>

Abroad, the regime expended great effort to undermine anti-Trujillo exiles. U.S. and British officials, alongside Dominican exiles, recognized that opposition abroad posed the greatest challenge to the dictator’s reign while acknowledging the weaknesses facing groups based in the Dominican Republic. Noting the effectiveness of the dictator’s repression, one U.S. official explained, “The suppressive measures of the Government are carried out with such energy and vigilance that it appears almost certain that the opposition can achieve nothing in the

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*Trujillo: The Last Caesar* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery, 1963); Jesús de Galíndez, *The Era of Trujillo: Dominican Dictator*, Ed. Russell H. Fitzgibbon (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1973); and Joaquín Balaguer, *Memorias de un cortesano en la ‘Era de Trujillo’* (Santo Domingo: Editora Corripio, 1989). On Trujillo’s monopolization of force, see Howard J. Wiarda, *Dictatorship and Development: The Methods of Control in Trujillo’s Dominican Republic* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1968); Roberto Cassá, *Capitalismo y dictadura* (Santo Domingo: Editora de la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, 1982); Bernardo Vega, *Control y represión de la dictadura Trujillista* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1986); and Juan Isidro Jimenes-Grullón, *Una Gestapo en América: Vida, tortura, agonía y muerte de presos políticos bajo la tiranía de Trujillo* (Santo Domingo: Sociedad Dominicana de Bibliófilos, 2003).

<sup>194</sup> Ellis O. Briggs, U.S. Ambassador in Ciudad Trujillo, to Secretary of State, No. 609 “Subject: Year-end estimate of the general situation prevailing in the Dominican Republic,” Ciudad Trujillo, 03 January 1945, NARAI, RG84, NARAI, RG84, “Dominican Republic, Strictly Confidential Files, 1929-1945” (hereafter DRSCF), Box 1. Underline in original.

<sup>195</sup> Russell Duncan Macrae, “Political Situation,” Ciudad Trujillo, September 1947, National Archives, London (hereafter NAL), Foreign Office Collection (hereafter FO371), File “60919: Alleged involvement of Cuba, Guatemala and Venezuela in a communist.”

Republic.” Those few active opposition groups sought merely “to create incidents which attract outside attention to conditions existing [in the Dominican Republic] with the hope that foreign pressure may be brought to bear which will cause the withdrawal of the persons now in control of the Dominican Republic.”<sup>196</sup> Consequently, the most effective opposition groups organized and networked outside the country. Despite the absence of a comprehensive examination of the dictator’s persecution of his opponents abroad, exiles’ testimonies and memoirs recount his ceaseless efforts to eliminate them wherever they went in the Americas.<sup>197</sup> His officials and spies persecuted exiles such as Juan Bosch, Ángel Morales, José Antonio Bonilla Atilas, and others, culminating in the murders and disappearances of Mauricio Báez, Andrés Requena, José Almoina Mateos, and Jesús de Galíndez.<sup>198</sup> The exiles’ resilience only seemed to justify the dictator’s acts. When Macrae reported that Trujillo had “no fear of internal revolution,” another

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<sup>196</sup> Andrew B. Wardlaw, Third Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Ciudad Trujillo, to Secretary of State, No. 345 “Subject: Organized opposition to the Administration in the Dominican Republic,” Ciudad Trujillo, 22 September 1945, NARAI, RG84, DRSCF, Box 1.

<sup>197</sup> Due to the difficulties in tracing the movements and recreating the activities of Dominican exiles who networked between the United States, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Venezuela, and numerous other locations, scholars of the anti-Trujillo opposition have generally focused on that within the Dominican Republic, as in Juan José Ayuso, *Lucha contra Trujillo, 1930-1961* (Santo Domingo: Editorial Letra Gráfica, 2010). Bernardo Vega provides one of the best compilations of materials on anti-Trujillo opposition abroad in *Unos desafectos y otros en desgracia: Sufrimientos bajo la Dictadura de Trujillo* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1986). With the memoirs mentioned in Footnote 6, studies and memoirs of prominent anti-Trujillo exiles and testimonies of anti-Trujillo exiles in *Clío*, the journal of the Academia Dominicana de la Historia [Dominican Academy of History], shed light into the important role played by exiles as sources of opposition to the dictator’s reign. Alongside writings from Juan Bosch, Juan Isidro Jimenes-Grullón, and others, see Nicolás Silfa, *Guerra, traición y exilio*, 3 tomos (Barcelona: 1980-1981); Justino José del Orbe, *Del exilio político dominicano antitrujillista, en Cuba* (Santo Domingo: Editora Taller, 1983); Ángel Miolán, *El Perrede desde mi ángulo* (Santo Domingo: Editorial Letras de Quisqueya, 1984); and Tulio H. Arvelo, *Nuestras luchas civiles, 1844-1965* (Santo Domingo: Editora Universitaria, 2005).

<sup>198</sup> Although numerous works touch upon Trujillo’s use of assassins, the most succinct discussion can be found in Bernardo Vega, *Almoina, Galíndez y otros crímenes de Trujillo en el extranjero* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 2001).

British official responded with the question, “because possibly all the likely revolutionaries are abroad?”<sup>199</sup>

Due to the dictator’s fixation on such transnational threats to his regime, his officials followed a policy of imperialismo dominicano in the Caribbean Basin designed to suppress exiles while monitoring governments that tolerated them. The best way to discern imperialismo dominicano’s work and scope is to look at the sources that defined it. A one-time official under Trujillo, José Almoína Mateos fled into exile and in September 1947 sent a memorandum on the despot’s foreign policy to Caribbean Basin governments, including Cuba, Mexico, the United States, and Venezuela.<sup>200</sup> Almoína pleaded that Trujillo represented “an evident and constant threat to peace and security” in the Caribbean Basin, for the dictator’s “monarchical-absolutist government” shaped the regime’s “reactions and goals abroad.” For this reason, the exile wished to warn the region’s governments of the “danger” of Trujillo’s “actions that spill over, with absolute and irrefutable reality, the geographic-political borders of the Dominican Republic.” In over 90 pages, Almoína’s report detailed how the dictator supported dissidents who organized invasion conspiracies and newspapers against the Venezuelan government of Rómulo Betancourt and Acción Democrática [Democratic Action], paid off Cuban journalists and labor leaders to criticize and challenge the government of Ramón Grau San Martín and the Auténticos [Authentic], built a favorable lobby in the United States and accused anti-Trujillo politicians such as Spruille Braden of being “in favor of communism,” financed newspapers in Colombia to

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<sup>199</sup> Russell Duncan Macrae, British Ambassador in Ciudad Trujillo, “Political Situation in Santo Domingo,” Ciudad Trujillo, September 1947, NAL, FO371, File “60919: Alleged involvement of Cuba, Guatemala and Venezuela in a communist.”

<sup>200</sup> The report is reproduced in Salvador E. Morales Pérez’s, *Almoína, un exiliado gallego contra la dictadura trujillista* (Santo Domingo: Archivo General de la Nación, 2009). The report sent to the United States was copied and can be found in the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

combat ex-president and anti-Trujillo activist Eduardo Santos, financed pro-Trujillo and anti-Cárdenas articles in Mexico, and supported coup and assassination attempts in Haiti.<sup>201</sup> Other targets represented the bastions of the exiles' support; Venezuela's Betancourt, Cuba's Auténticos, Colombia's Santos, Mexico's Cárdenas, and the United States's Braden all offered asylum to exiles, refused to close critical publications, and denounced the dictator. Imperialismo dominicano thus sought to trump transnational anti-Trujillo networks.

Though focused upon Dominican-Cuban relations, Cuban officials in December 1949 defined Trujillo's foreign policy in terms similar to those employed by Almoina. Increasingly strained relations between the two nations had led the Auténtico government to discuss the dictator's foreign policy toward not only Cuba but the region as a whole. In the resulting analysis, the despot's "interventionist" and "aggressive" foreign policy sought to establish "imperialismo dominicano" throughout the Caribbean Basin, for the dictator "direct[ed] his efforts to raising and supporting in neighboring countries the development of fixed political, military, and social conditions that would guarantee the dictatorial Trujillista regime and permit the Dominican Republic to carry out a predominant role in the Caribbean Basin." Referencing Almoina's memorandum, Cuban officials highlighted the despot's payments to journalists, subsidies to newspapers, bribing politicians, hiring lobbyists, and deploying spies. The Auténtico government also warned that Trujillo "accus[ed anti-Trujillo] Governments of supporting the expansion of communism in America" in order "to undermine the prestige of Governments ideologically" opposed to the dictator. He supported "conspiracies" against "neighboring republics" in the hope of encouraging "governments of a type akin to that of" his own. In an

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<sup>201</sup> José Almoina, "Informe confidencial que sobre la política dominicana produce el licenciado José Almoina Mateos, ex-secretario particular del presidente Trujillo," Ciudad de México, septiembre 1947, NARAI, RG84, DRSCF, Box 1.



“obligated” form of gratitude, such governments would support the dictator by “avoiding abroad conspiracies designed to overthrow Trujillo,” contribute to “favorable interests for the Dominican Republic,” and “establish the influence of the dictator in those countries.”<sup>202</sup>

The Second World War, however, challenged Trujillo’s foreign policy. Throughout Latin America, anti-dictatorial groups drew inspiration from the international conflict, as Ubico, Somoza, and Carías had discovered in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras.<sup>203</sup> In his memorandum, Almoína noted that the United Nations and liberal governments interpreted the regime alongside other “dictatorships still in existence [in the Americas] as an effect of the historic cycle” of Latin American dictatorships that had come to an end.<sup>204</sup> Briggs emphasized in the conflict’s aftermath that “Trujillo [was] a dictator, indifferent to or even hostile to many of the fundamental principles for which [the United States] stands” and a blatant hypocrite when he “ha[d] declared himself to be ‘on [the United States’] side’ in this war.”<sup>205</sup> Although their activities dated back to the 1930s, anti-Trujillo exiles summoned the Second World War to buttress their propaganda and networking. Despite the dictator’s best attempts at “convincing the outside world that a democracy exist[ed]” in the Dominican Republic, the “Partido Dominicano Revolucionario [Revolutionary Dominican Party],” the “Unión Democrática [Democratic

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<sup>202</sup> Memorandum confidencial a Carlos Hevia, diciembre 1949, ACOMINREX, Expediente “Cayo Confites, 1946-1947.”

<sup>203</sup> See Bethell and Roxborough.

<sup>204</sup> José Almoína, “Informe confidencial,” Ciudad de México, septiembre 1947, NARAI, RG84, DRSCF, Box 1.

<sup>205</sup> Ellis O. Briggs to Secretary of State, No. 70 “Subject: Estimate of the Situation in the Dominican Republic: Recommended United States Policy with Respect Thereto,” Ciudad Trujillo, 05 July 1944, NARAI, RG84, DRSCF, Box 1.

Union],” labor organizations in La Romana and Puerto Plata, and other groups repeatedly cited the Atlantic Charter, the Four Freedoms, and anti-fascism to bolster their denunciations.<sup>206</sup>

The regime took notice that the Second World War strengthened anti-Trujillo exiles’ networking in the Caribbean Basin. Dominican officials abroad devoted numerous files solely to newspaper articles, speeches, and pamphlets produced by these opponents in the mid-1940s. In Cuba, the “Unión Democrática Antinazista Dominicana [Dominican Anti-Nazi Democratic Union]” published *América contra Trujillo* [*America against Trujillo*].<sup>207</sup> From Bogotá, the “Comité Colombiano Universitario Pro-Democracia en la República Dominicana [Colombian University Committee Pro-Democracy in the Dominican Republic]” denounced “nazitrujillismo [nazi-Trujillismo].”<sup>208</sup> The “Partido Revolucionario Dominicano [Dominican Revolutionary Party]” printed *La Historia del hombre que se proclamó igual a Dios* [*The History of the Man who Proclaimed Himself Equal to God*], which mocked the dictator’s motto, “God and Trujillo.”<sup>209</sup> The “Asociación de Estudiantes Hispanoamericanos en México [Association of Hispanic American Students in Mexico]” drew in delegates from Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela and republished anti-Trujillo propaganda such as *En Lucha contra Trujillo* [*Fighting against*

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<sup>206</sup> Andrew B. Wardlaw to Secretary of State, No. 345, Ciudad Trujillo, 22 September 1945, NARAI, RG84, DRSCF, Box 1.

<sup>207</sup> Unión Democrática Antinazista Dominicana, *América contra Trujillo*, La Habana, 27 febrero 1944, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903226 “Fechas extremas 1945-1952, Código 93, 606” (en adelante Caja IT 2903226), Expediente “1945, Código 5/c.”

<sup>208</sup> Comité Colombiano Universitario Pro-Democracia en la República Dominicana, Bogotá, 04 enero 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903226, Expediente “1945, Recortes de Prensa, Código 5/c.”

<sup>209</sup> Partido Revolucionario Dominicano, *La Historia del hombre que se proclamó igual a Dios*, México, mayo 1943, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903226, Expediente “1945, Código 5/c.”

*Trujillo*].<sup>210</sup> Bosch and other exiles published *Quisqueya Libre* [*Free Dominican Republic*] from Havana and included articles from anti-Trujillo groups, leaders, and exiles throughout Latin America.<sup>211</sup> Foreign observers often commented on how the proliferation of anti-fascist ideals and opposition groups' networking irritated the dictator. Within the Dominican Republic, Briggs in mid-1944 believed, "Trujillo's present preoccupation and repressive measures are doubtless not disconnected from concern over recent political disturbances in other countries, notably El Salvador, Ecuador, Cuba[,] and currently in Guatemala."<sup>212</sup> As had his British counterpart, Briggs located "no immediate prospect (barring the possibility of assassination) of Trujillo's overthrow," yet the official identified a "considerable and apparently growing sensitiveness of Trujillo in the face of the anti-Trujillo campaign of Dominican exiles, especially in Venezuela and Cuba, and of the Dominican Government's concern at the espousal of the exiles' cause by liberal elements in these and other countries."<sup>213</sup> British officials also reported that the networking between Dominican exiles and Venezuelan officials to lobby Caribbean Basin governments to break relations with the regime caused considerable "stress" upon the dictator's foreign policy.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Asociación de Estudiantes Hispanoamericanos en México, *En Lucha contra Trujillo*, México, enero 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903226, Expediente "1945, Código 5/c."

<sup>211</sup> There is no complete collection of *Quisqueya Libre*, but one can find copies in the "Colección Bernardo Vega" through the Archivo General de la Nación in Santo Domingo, a partial bounded collection at the Biblioteca Nacional de Cuba José Martí in Havana, and a partial bounded collection at the Biblioteca del Instituto de Historia de Cuba in Havana.

<sup>212</sup> Ellis O. Briggs to Secretary of State, A-297, Ciudad Trujillo, 27 June 1944, NARAI, RG84, "Dominican Republic, U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulate, Santo Domingo, Classified General Records, 1944-1961" (hereafter US Embassy Santo Domingo), Box 2.

<sup>213</sup> Ellis O. Briggs to Secretary of State, No. 609, Ciudad Trujillo, 03 January 1945, NARAI, RG84, DRSCF, Box 1.

<sup>214</sup> No. 115 "Dominican-Guatemalan Relations," Guatemala City, 17 July 1947, NAL, FO371, File "60868: Relations between Guatemala and the Dominican Republic."

The networking between Dominican exiles and Venezuelan leaders especially unnerved Trujillo. A longtime opponent of the dictator, Rómulo Betancourt and his Acción Democrática party nurtured close relationships with many Dominican exiles such as Bosch.<sup>215</sup> As a result, Betancourt and Acción Democrática's rise to power in Venezuela in 1945 provided a haven for anti-Trujillo activism. Although Betancourt's government ceaselessly attacked the Dominican dictator's image from 1945 onward, events in 1944 already preoccupied the despot. In 1944, Dominican exiles in Caracas led by Buenaventura Sánchez lobbied Venezuelan political leaders to organize the "Comité de Amigos de Santo Domingo [Committee of Friends of Santo Domingo]." As Deputy Rosales Aranguren proclaimed before the Venezuelan congress, "The cause of Santo Domingo is not a cause of a group of Dominicans, nor of a group of Venezuelans, but an American cause."<sup>216</sup> Seizing upon the Second World War, Senator Jóvito Villalba explained that the Comité would "begin pursuing an extensive campaign for the application of the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter in Santo Domingo." Venezuelan political leaders in the Comité lectured on Venezuela's "being a signatory to the Atlantic Charter," expressed support for anti-fascist movements in Guatemala and elsewhere, and denounced the regime.<sup>217</sup> The efforts of Dominican exiles through such transnational organizations as the Comité climaxed when the Venezuelan congress demanded breaking diplomatic relations with the dictator.

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<sup>215</sup> The relationships between Betancourt, Bosch, and Dominican exiles and antagonism between Betancourt and Trujillo are frequently mentioned in works on Trujillo, Betancourt, Bosch, Venezuelan history, and Dominican history.

<sup>216</sup> *Ultimas Noticias* (Caracas), en Boletín Hebdomadario de Información Confidencial, No. 18, 24 julio 1944, con Manuel A. Peña Batlle a Rafael Trujillo, "Asunto: Boletín Hebdomadario de Información Confidencial," Ciudad Trujillo, 24 julio 1944, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903759 "Fechas extremas 1944-1948, Código 240" (en adelante Caja IT 2903759), Expediente "Boletín 1944, Código 240."

<sup>217</sup> Boletín Hebdomadario de Información Confidencial, No. 18, 24 julio 1944, con Manuel A. Peña Batlle a Rafael Trujillo, "Asunto: Boletín Hebdomadario," Ciudad Trujillo, 24 julio 1944, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903759, Expediente "Boletín 1944, Código 240."

Transnational activism directly contributed to an escalation in Trujillo's foreign policy in the mid-1940s. After the Venezuelan congress repudiated relations with the regime, Dominican Secretary of State for Foreign Relations Manuel Peña Batlle issued a "strictly confidential" circular to all Dominican officials abroad that drew together many of the elements which Almoina and Cuban officials linked to imperialismo dominicano. Peña Batlle outlined a list of objectives for Dominican officials to pursue that would defend the dictator's image and regime in the face of rising criticism. At the top of the list, Peña Batlle ordered officials to "impede similar events [i.e. the Venezuelan congress's denouncing diplomatic relations] from being produced in the country of your jurisdiction" and "observe as much as possible the activities of the so-called Dominican exiles." To combat the growing number of anti-Trujillo transnational networks, officials also needed to "try to expand further the links your mission maintains with the country's press where you are accredited."<sup>218</sup>

Officials quickly attempted to realize Peña Batlle's orders. In Havana, they hired Venezuelan exile doctor José Vicente Pepper. Pepper produced numerous books and articles, many of which were featured quite prominently in Dominican newspapers, that denounced the allegedly communist activities of Betancourt's government. On the despot's payroll, the doctor published the bilingual book *Yo Acuso a Braden* [*I Accuse Braden*] that labeled Braden a Soviet and communist agent after the U.S. official vocally denounced Trujillo's regime.<sup>219</sup> As part of his employment, Pepper received payments from the regime as a spy and maneuvered between Dominican officials and fellow Venezuelan exiles. Through the doctor, Trujillo sent various sums of money to purchase armaments as part of conspiracies to overthrow Betancourt's

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<sup>218</sup> Manuel A. Peña Batlle a los Jefes de Misiones Diplomáticas," Circular No. 21 "Asunto: Actitud del Congreso de Venezuela contra nuestro Gobierno," Ciudad Trujillo, 24 julio 1944, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903759, Expediente "Boletín 1944, Código 240."

<sup>219</sup> José Vicente Pepper, *Yo acuso a Braden* (Ciudad Trujillo: Editora Montalvo, 1947).

government.<sup>220</sup> The regime also hired Cuban journalist José Arroyo Maldonado who worked with *La Prensa Asociada*, the *Associated Press*'s arm in Latin America. Officials provided Arroyo Maldonado with as much as \$1,500 a month to prevent anti-Trujillo articles from appearing abroad and to counteract propaganda from prominent Dominican exiles or Cuban officials.<sup>221</sup> Into the late 1940s, officials financed the activities and conspiracies of Pepper, Arroyo Maldonado, and various Caribbean Basin journalists, exiles, and officials as the means to deter anti-Trujillo activism and undermine opposing governments.

## **B. Trujillo and the Guatemalan Revolution**

Because of Trujillo's policy of imperialismo dominicano, the Guatemalan Revolution caught the attention from Dominican officials. After the first year, many Guatemalans openly networked with anti-Trujillo activists, newspapers published numerous articles critical of the dictator, and Arévalo began a close relationship with fellow democratic leader Betancourt. Repeatedly, Dominican Ambassador in Guatemala City Roberto Despradel reported on the transnational links between Arévalo, Guatemalans, and anti-Trujillo groups and leaders. By the end of 1946, the ambassador found himself unable to realize Peña Batlle's orders or expand imperialismo dominicano in Guatemala. Fearing Arévalo planned to break diplomatic relations with the regime, Despradel came to define the Guatemalan government as communist.

The ambassador initially forwarded to Ciudad Trujillo many of the complaints given by opponents of the Guatemalan Revolution but did not believe that Guatemalan affairs were

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<sup>220</sup> José Vicente Pepper a Emilio Zeller, 04 julio 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903226, Expediente "1946, Cartas de Zeller y Pepper, Código 5/c."

<sup>221</sup> R. Paíno Pichardo, Secretario de Estado de la Presidencia, a Rafael Trujillo, Memorandum, AGN, Colección Bernardo Vega (en adelante CBV), Expediente 073-034 "Expediente sobre la reorganización de la Prensa Unida Asociada."

directed by Mexican, Soviet, or international communists. Like his U.S. counterparts, Despradel understood that the Revolution was linked to anti-dictatorial movements and anti-fascist ideals in the Caribbean Basin. In December 1944, he claimed “ideologues that turn a blind eye to reality” had initiated a conflict throughout Central America with Guatemala as the center of “the incessant revolutionary propaganda.”<sup>222</sup> Though anxious about anti-dictatorial and anti-fascist sentiments, he showed little concern about the Revolution. Reporting on the activities of Mexican Ambassador in Guatemala City Romeo Ortega and visits of Lombardo Toledano, he concluded the Revolution was for them an international movement against “the dictators and tyrants of America.”<sup>223</sup> Unlike Nicaraguan and Honduran officials, Despradel never defined Guatemala as a source of communist activities. He joined other Dominican officials in criticizing the rupture of diplomatic relations between Guatemala and Francisco Franco’s Spain and took note of the activities of Nicaraguan and Honduran exiles in Guatemala.<sup>224</sup> He reported Guatemalan conservatives’ rumors of links between Moscow and alleged Guatemalan communists and fears that “Russia [would] build a Legation or Embassy in Central America with

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<sup>222</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 115 “Asunto: Declaración de la Junta de Gobierno estableciendo los principios fundamentales de la revolución,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 06 diciembre 1944, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348 “Fechas extremas 1944-1950, Código 658” (en adelante Caja IT 2903348), Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>223</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 127 “Asunto: Elecciones presidenciales en Guatemala y posibles complicaciones internacionales en la América Central,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 19 diciembre 1944, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>224</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 42 “Asunto: Rompimiento de relaciones diplomáticas por la Junta Revolucionaria, con el Gobierno español,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 26 enero 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950;” Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 103 “Asunto: Informe misceláneo,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 03 abril 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

a base in Guatemala” for Stalin to play “a great role in the political future” of Guatemala.<sup>225</sup>

While reporting these developments, from October 1944 into mid-1945 he never denounced the Revolution as the product of Mexican, Soviet, or international communism.

Beginning in August 1945, Despradel began to show some concern as Guatemala emerged as a focal point for anti-Trujillo propaganda. Indeed, the summer of 1945 appeared to mark a rise in transnational anti-dictatorial activism in the country. In a report titled “Attacks on the Dominican Government,” he explained that Colombian ex-president Eduardo Santos continued employing his newspaper *Tiempo* in Bogotá to publish anti-Trujillo articles and recently met in Caracas with “enemies of the Dominican Government.” From Venezuela, Santos traveled to Guatemala to meet “with Arévalo and with some Nicaraguan and Honduran enemies of their respective governments.” As the Colombian leader remained a very reputable anti-Trujillo activist, Despradel understood that this networking in Guatemala would target not only Somoza and Carías but the Dominican dictator as well. At the end of August he had not found any anti-Trujillo articles but “feared that soon a widespread campaign [would] begin.”<sup>226</sup> The ambassador concluded his report by quoting a recent speech by Arévalo in which the Guatemalan president tapped into the anti-fascist ideals of the Second World War:

The war has ended. The Allies have paid a terrible price in blood, life, and resources to defend liberty in all the countries of the world. Now begins the second phase of this great war with the purpose of assuring that those sacrifices will not have been in vain and to implant the democratic ideal in all nations. Particularly our America should not consent to the existence of totalitarian regimes under a democratic disguise. Guatemala has the

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<sup>225</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 152 “Informe misceláneo,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 30 abril 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950;” Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 194 “Asunto: Informe misceláneo,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 15 junio 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>226</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 275 “Asunto: Informe misceláneo,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 29 agosto 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”



first democratic government in its history. We hope to soon see the same privilege reach other American lands that wish for it.<sup>227</sup> Despradel found a receptive audience in Peña Batlle who also understood that Arévalo's criticisms applied to Trujillo.<sup>228</sup>

Despradel's analysis was quite prescient. In October, Guatemalan newspapers started to publish various anti-Trujillo articles, duly forwarded by the ambassador.<sup>229</sup> In September, Arévalo invited Braden following the U.S. official's public recriminations against Latin American dictatorships. Despradel naturally worried that the visit was to cement a U.S.-Guatemalan shared position behind "the anti-dictatorial policies" of Arévalo's government.<sup>230</sup> In compliance with Peña Batlle's orders, the ambassador wrote letters to Guatemalan newspaper editors to discourage anti-Trujillo writings and present the dictator as a democratic leader. In one such letter sent to the editor of Guatemala's *Mediodía*, Despradel complained that the newspaper over the past month had widely disseminated critical anti-Trujillo writings, such as "Casos y Cosas, Movimiento Continental contra los Tiranos [Cases and Things, Continental Movements against Tyrants]," "Panorama, Los días de los Tiranos están Contados [Panorama, The Days of the Tyrants Are Numbered]," and "Casos y Cosas, Los Cosas de Trujillo [Cases and Things, The

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<sup>227</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 275, Ciudad de Guatemala, 29 agosto 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

<sup>228</sup> Manuel A. Peña Batlle a Rafael Trujillo, 21721 "Asunto: Informe misceláneo de la Legación en Guatemala," Ciudad Trujillo, 12 septiembre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

<sup>229</sup> "Nepotismo de Trujillo," *El Imparcial* (Guatemala) 09 octubre 1945, Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 336, Ciudad de Guatemala, 16 octubre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

<sup>230</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 294 "Informe político," Ciudad de Guatemala, 17 septiembre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

Things of Trujillo].” Particularly resented, one article merely reprinted a cable to Braden championing his anti-dictatorial position.<sup>231</sup>

In the aftermath of similar events in Venezuela, Despradel believed Arévalo and his government sought to break diplomatic relations with Trujillo’s regime. In July 1944, Peña Batlle had ordered Dominican officials to prevent calls for suspending relations with the Dominican Republic. Less than a year and a half later, the Guatemalan Ambassador in Ciudad Trujillo departed, and Despradel fretfully commented that Arévalo’s government hesitated to send a new representative. By October 1945, he believed that “Arévalo and his friends [were] considering the proposition of not maintaining relations with the governments marked as dictatorships.”<sup>232</sup> In a rather roundabout manner, Despradel attempted to allay his superiors’ concerns. He highlighted that numerous groups of exiles, students, journalists, workers, and politicians lobbied Arévalo’s government to end diplomatic relations with the Nicaraguan and Honduran dictatorships as well. As a result, he explained, “[the Guatemalan] government would not be able to break relations with [Trujillo’s regime] without breaking relations with the governments of Carías and Somoza, due to obligations to the student mass and the refugees of those two countries.”<sup>233</sup> Acknowledging the tensions created by transnational groups of students and exiles, the ambassador hoped that Arévalo’s government would not unilaterally end relations with three dictatorships simultaneously.

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<sup>231</sup> Roberto Despradel a Ovidio Rodas Corzo, Director de *Mediodía*, No. 349, Ciudad de Guatemala, 02 noviembre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>232</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 336, Ciudad de Guatemala, 16 octubre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>233</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 367, Ciudad de Guatemala, 16 noviembre 1945, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

Only in 1946 did Despradel begin to describe Arévalo's government as communist. Based upon the Dominican ambassador's reports, such claims stemmed in large part from the growing friendship between Arévalo and Betancourt, the anti-Trujillo Venezuelan leader whom Dominican officials denounced as a communist. In the first of various reports on the matter, Despradel found that Arévalo in May 1946 began to speak very favorably of Betancourt and received Venezuelan officials with "much enthusiasm."<sup>234</sup> At this point, he wrote to Trujillo personally in order to recount his efforts to undermine this relationship. During a diplomatic event, the ambassador took to the side Guatemalan Minister of Foreign Relations Eugenio Silva Peña and proceeded to lecture him on the "political incompetence of Arévalo." Despradel's words evoked the same fears of his Nicaraguan and Honduran counterparts when speaking of the "free hand that [Arévalo gave] to the communists" in Guatemala.<sup>235</sup> Arévalo soon invited Betancourt to visit Guatemala, convincing Despradel that the two democratic leaders were conspiring to spread communism. In a report to Peña Batlle, the ambassador remarked at length on the characteristics of the "two governments of a communist form . . . in Guatemala and Venezuela."<sup>236</sup> During his visit at the end of July 1946, Betancourt joined Arévalo in giving speeches that criticized the dictatorial government in the Dominican Republic, a seeming coordination of the two countries' foreign policies against Trujillo. Despradel alleged that the

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<sup>234</sup> Roberto Despradel a Rafael Trujillo, Ciudad de Guatemala, 21 mayo 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

<sup>235</sup> Roberto Despradel a Rafael Trujillo, Ciudad de Guatemala, 21 mayo 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

<sup>236</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 226 "Informe político y misceláneo," Ciudad de Guatemala, 05 julio 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950."

Venezuelan president had turned a diplomatic meeting with Arévalo into a “communist meeting” and a veritable “diplomatic boycott” against Trujillo’s regime.<sup>237</sup>

In August 1946, the rumor about Arévalo’s plans to break diplomatic relations with the regime reached Costa Rica when Dominican Ambassador in San José César Tolentino forwarded information from a reliable source.<sup>238</sup> In the middle of a handful of cables and reports between Tolentino, Peña Batlle, and Despradel, Despradel had to interject that the Guatemalan foreign minister had assured him that such news was “untrue.”<sup>239</sup> Still, doubts continued. A week after disputing the rumor, he noted the possibility that Arévalo would send a Guatemalan chargé d’affaires to Ciudad Trujillo who had studied “communism in Mexico, under the direction of the great Bolshevik ambassador [Constantine] Oumansky.” All Despradel could do was report that Trujillo’s regime had shown great patience and respect to Arévalo’s government without any “reciprocity.”<sup>240</sup>

### **C. Arévalo Breaks Diplomatic Relations with Trujillo and Cayo Confites as the ‘Brigada Internacional Comunista’**

In mid-1947, the Dominican dictator joined Somoza and Carías in openly charging Arévalo’s government and the Revolution as communist-dominated and threats to inter-

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<sup>237</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, No. 263 “Asunto: Informe político y misceláneo,” Ciudad de Guatemala, 05 agosto 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>238</sup> Manuel A. Peña Batlle a Rafael Trujillo, 21607 “Asunto: Información suministrada al Embajador Tolentino acerca de posible actitud,” Ciudad Trujillo, 14 agosto 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>239</sup> Manuel A. Peña Batlle a Rafael Trujillo, 21885 “Asunto: Información suministrada al Embajador Tolentino acerca de posible actitud,” Ciudad Trujillo, 16 agosto 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>240</sup> Roberto Despradel a Manuel A. Peña Batlle, Ciudad de Guatemala, 21 agosto 1946, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348: Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

American stability. When Arévalo suspended relations and assisted anti-Trujillo exiles during the Cayo Confites expedition, Dominican officials claimed the president sought to undermine regional solidarity. From mid-1947 onward, the Dominican dictator and his officials identified Arévalo and the Revolution as sources of communist infiltration in the Caribbean Basin.

Anti-fascism motivated Arévalo's decision to suspend relations. Indeed, Arévalo utilized the so-called May 1947 'elections' in the Dominican Republic to realize Despradel's fear. A few weeks after the elections, Arévalo informed Guatemalan Foreign Minister Eugenio Silva Peña that the Guatemalan government did not wish to continue relations with Trujillo's regime. The president cited his 1945 speech on the Second World War's legacy and repeated that "democracy [was] not in danger only in Europe nor [was] defended only on the battlefield." He described the May 1947 'elections' in the Dominican Republic as akin to other "electoral farces," "the worst type of coup d'état that a Government can deal against the free will of its people," and "signif[ying] that the republic principle of alternability in power has been sadly adulterated." Arévalo respected the principle of non-intervention and swore to "not intervene in the internal life of friendly countries, however grave the acts may be" there, but he claimed that "the American Republics, sworn to the defense of democracy, [were] not obligated to grant their friendship to Governments which in this America have exchanged the republican forms of government for monarchal [sic] forms."<sup>241</sup>

Dominican officials moved quickly to refute Arévalo's claims and characterize the Guatemalan president as a communist agent. Immediately, they conflated Arévalo and Betancourt as communist leaders who threatened inter-American stability. In the weeks after

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<sup>241</sup> Juan José Arévalo to Eugenio Silva Peña, Guatemalan Minister of Foreign Relations, Guatemala City, 07 July 1947, with Andrew E. Donovan II to Secretary of State, No. 2549 "Subject: Suspension of Diplomatic Relations with the Dominican Republic," Guatemala City, 09 July 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Santo Domingo, Box 14.

Arévalo's words were made public, Secretary of State for Foreign Relations Arturo Despradel assured Trujillo, "It is evident that the attitude of Guatemala, of course, surely, with the Government of Venezuela, is designed to try to prove that we represent an inconvenience for the harmony and unity that define the fraternal coexistence of the peoples and governments of this Continent."<sup>242</sup> He dismissed those democratic leaders' charges against imperialismo dominicano. As had his brother in Guatemala City, he claimed that the suspension of diplomatic relations by Guatemala and Venezuela were "absolutely unilateral acts."<sup>243</sup> Repeatedly, the brothers alleged that Arévalo and Betancourt's governments actions were "unjustifiable positions" that were "contrary to all the norms and principles that govern the foreign relations" of Latin American governments.<sup>244</sup>

This was the same script used by Dominican officials in public announcements in the United States, Great Britain, and Latin America. In this version, the severance of diplomatic relations "ha[d] not caused, however, any feeling of surprise, to the Dominican Government, owing to the knowledge which for some time the Dominican Government has had of [Arévalo's] demagogic tendencies and of his efforts to guide the policies of his Government by the communistic ideology which he personally professes."<sup>245</sup> Dominican officials, as did their Nicaraguan and Honduran counterparts, warned that Arévalo's policies threatened regional security in the Caribbean Basin. Trujillo interpreted the president's action as evidence of "the

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<sup>242</sup> Arturo Despradel a Rafael Trujillo, "Memorandum al Excelentísimo Señor Presidente de la República," Ciudad de Trujillo, 16 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>243</sup> Arturo Despradel a Rafael Trujillo, "Memorandum," Ciudad de Trujillo, 16 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>244</sup> Arturo Despradel a Rafael Trujillo, "Memorandum," Ciudad de Trujillo, 16 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>245</sup> Dominican Republic Foreign Office, "Official Announcement," 18 July 1947, with Julio Ortega Frier, Embajador Dominicano en Washington, a Arturo Despradel, No. 2238 "Asunto: Suspensión de las relaciones diplomáticas con nuestro Gobierno," 23 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

interest of President Arévalo in interrupting the rhythm [sic] of collective harmony and in breaking the unity which consolidates the peoples and the Government of the Americas, united in their democratic ideals.”<sup>246</sup> Even the rhetoric of the Second World War was turned around to question Arévalo’s actions. Whereas Arévalo had recounted the anti-fascist ideals behind the international conflict, Dominican officials tried to highlight inter-American and global solidarity. “While the majority of the peoples and Governments of the American nations actively favor the unity and rehabilitation of devastated Europe,” they wrote, the president’s actions were a “deplorable contrast to these noble objectives” and aimed “to undermine and to break the unity and solidarity which serve as the very foundation of the peaceful living-together of the peoples of this Hemisphere.”<sup>247</sup>

Some of the dictator’s worst fears soon were realized. While ending diplomatic relations, Arévalo joined Betancourt and Cuba’s Auténticos in supporting a group of exiles, organized by anti-Trujillo leaders, in an expedition to overthrow the dictator. Alongside Honduran, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, and Spanish exiles, Dominican exiles under Bosch, Juan ‘Juancito’ Rodríguez, and Miguel Ángel Ramírez received money, armaments, and more from Arévalo, Betancourt, the Auténticos, Cuban students, and the Haitian government under Dumarsais Estimé. Ultimately, the exiles came into possession of dozens of machine guns, 200 submachine guns, hundreds of pistols and bombs, bazookas, mortars, anti-tank guns, 7 ships, and 16 planes. At Cayo Confites in Cuba, they prepared an expedition that aimed to coordinate land and aerial invasions of the Dominican Republic with internal uprisings that would oust Trujillo. The exiles’ efforts took center stage in the Cuban press in mid-July, prompting Dominican officials’ protests.

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<sup>246</sup> Dominican Republic Foreign Office, “Official Announcement,” 18 July 1947, with Julio Ortega Frier a Arturo Despradel, No. 2238, 23 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>247</sup> Dominican Republic Foreign Office, “Official Announcement,” 18 July 1947, with Julio Ortega Frier a Arturo Despradel, No. 2238, 23 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

Facing a public conflict that jeopardized regional stability, U.S. officials discouraged Cuban officials' support, bringing the coup to an abortive end in September 1947.<sup>248</sup>

In internal and public communications, Trujillo and Dominican officials defined the Cayo Confites expedition as a “brigada internacional comunista.” Spies that infiltrated the expedition revealed Arévalo’s assistance. At the end of July, the *International News Service* quoted Dominican Ambassador in Washington Julio Ortega Frier stating that “3,000 ‘Communist revolutionaries’ plan[ed] to use Cuba as a base for an invasion of the Dominican Republic.”<sup>249</sup> This claim then appeared in various newspapers, including one from *The Florida Times-Union*.<sup>250</sup> Ortega Frier later sent to Arturo Despradel a translation of an October 16 article from Washington’s *The Evening Star*.<sup>251</sup> In the article, Stephen Trumbull interviewed Dominican exile Ángel Morales who described the popular transnational support for the expedition originating from Cuban students.<sup>252</sup> Trumbull never described any members of the Cayo Confites expedition

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<sup>248</sup> Alongside the works referenced in Footnote 4, this summary draws upon items from Record Group 84 at the U.S. National Archives in College Park, from the British National Archives in London, from the Archivo Nacional and the Archivo Central del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores in Havana, and from the Archivo General de la Nación in Santo Domingo.

<sup>249</sup> “U.S. Checking Up on Report: Dominica Charges Invasion Plot Based in Cuba,” *The Florida Times-Union* (Jacksonville) 28 July 1947, con Nilo H. Soto, Cónsul Dominicano en Jacksonville, a Arturo Despradel, No. 31/105 “Asunto: Proyecto de invasión de la República Dominicana por revolucionarios comunistas,” Jacksonville, 28 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902656 “Fechas extremas 1947, Ref. Antigua 2502” (en adelante Caja IT 2902656), Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>250</sup> Nilo H. Soto a Arturo Despradel, No. 31/105, Jacksonville, 28 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902656, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>251</sup> Julio Ortega Frier a Arturo Despradel, No. 3527, “Asunto: Actividades de los enemigos de nuestro Gobierno. (Declaraciones públicas de Ángel Morales),” Washington, 17 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902655 “Fechas extremas 1947, Ref. Antigua 2502” (en adelante Caja IT 2902655), Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>252</sup> Stephen Trumbull, “UN CORRESPONSAL HABLA CON EL JEFE DE LA REVUELTA DOMINICANA. EL MOVIMIENTO SIGUE EN PIE,” traducción, *The Evening Star* (Washington) 16 octubre 1947, con Julio Ortega Frier a Arturo Despradel, No. 3527, Washington, 17 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902655, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”



as communists, but Dominican officials were quick to label the coup as an international communist conspiracy. In his own response, Dominican Secretary of State Telésforo Calderón confirmed receiving the materials on the “Brigada Internacional.”<sup>253</sup> Dominican Minister in Washington Joaquín Salazar forwarded a translation of an October 1 editorial in *The Washington Post* on the Cayo Confites expedition, questioning its downplaying of communism in the region.<sup>254</sup> Indeed, the writer warned “it would be an improper and crass simplification of Latin American politics to assume that all resentment against Trujillo has communist inspiration” and that “it would be foolish to give credit, without more evidence, to the allegations of Trujillo that the conspiracy was purely communist.”<sup>255</sup> Salazar reassured Trujillo that this mischaracterization would be soon refuted.<sup>256</sup>

Salazar understated such efforts. Dominican officials had already begun to utilize their contacts in the Caribbean Basin press to recast the public image of the Cayo Confites expedition and Arévalo’s role, reflecting those techniques identified by Almoina and Cuban officials as part of Trujillo’s policy of imperialismo dominicano. The head of the Dominican Information Center in Miami and New York City, Harry Klemfuss, prepared press releases and bulletins for news agencies in the United States and elsewhere. In these statements, he emphasized the “800 communist-led revolutionists” and described the Cayo Confites expedition as a “Dominican

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<sup>253</sup> Telésforo R. Calderón a Arturo Despradel, Núm. 30170 “Asunto: Actividades de los enemigos de nuestro Gobierno. (Declaraciones públicas de Ángel Morales),” Ciudad Trujillo, 25 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902655, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>254</sup> Joaquín E. Salazar, Ministro Consejero de la Embajada Dominicana en Washington, a Arturo Despradel, No. 3282 “Asunto: Editoriales de los diarios “*The New York Times*” y de “*The Washington Post*” en torno a la proyectada invasión de la República,” Washington, 01 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902655, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>255</sup> “GOLPE REPRIMIDO,” traducción, *The Washington Post* (Washington) 01 octubre 1947, con Joaquín E. Salazar a Arturo Despradel, No. 3282, Washington, 01 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902655, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>256</sup> Joaquín E. Salazar a Arturo Despradel, No. 3282, Washington, 01 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902655, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

invasion by communists and self-exiled Dominicans,” often manually editing those drafts.<sup>257</sup> By October 1, the press agent informed Ortega Frier: “We are making every use of our newspaper contacts to insure a favorable and friendly reaction from the press.”<sup>258</sup> Dominican officials also employed Caribbean journalists on Trujillo’s payroll. Arroyo Maldonado of *Prensa Asociada* was a prime agent for the sponsored campaign. *Prensa Asociada* items were broadcast in Latin America as well as in the English version of the *Associated Press*. *The Times-Picayune*’s headline read as, “Arévalo accused of providing the weapons; The Heads of the ‘invasion’ accuse the ‘lunatics’ for the failure.”<sup>259</sup> In November, Dominican Consul in San Francisco José Aybar “personally informed” the editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Scott Newhall, that the Dominican government “possessed irrefutable proof that the failed invasion of an adventurous brigada comunista militarily trained” at Cayo Confites was organized by Arévalo and Betancourt and represented “a threat to the peace and security of the hemisphere.”<sup>260</sup> This concerted effort relentlessly invoked inter-American stability against alien communist conspiracies.

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<sup>257</sup> See items in AGN, Fondo Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores (en adelante FSERREE), Caja IT 707580 “Legación en Washington de Relaciones Exteriores, 1947” (en adelante Caja IT 707580), Legajo No. 3 “Revolución contra el gobierno Dominicano, Relaciones con el Gobierno de Cuba, Representaciones,” Legajo No. 2 “Informes de prensa, fotografías, 1947.”

<sup>258</sup> Harry Klemfuss, Jr., Dominican Information Center, to Julio Ortega Frier, New York, 01 October 1947, AGN, FSERREE, Caja IT 707580, Legajo No. 3 “Revolución contra el gobierno Dominicano, Relaciones con el Gobierno de Cuba, Representaciones,” Legajo No. 3 “Informes de prensa, fotografías, 1947.”

<sup>259</sup> José Arroyo Maldonado, “SE ACUSA A AREVALO DE SUMINISTRAR LAS ARMAS. LOS JEFES DE LA ‘INVASION’ ACUSAN A ‘LUNATICOS’ POR EL FRACASO,” traducción, *The Times-Picayune* (Nueva Orleans) 05 octubre 1947, con J. Marino Incháustegui, Cónsul General Dominicano en Nueva Orleans, a Arturo Despradel, “Asunto: Acusación de que el Presidente de Guatemala suministró armas a la ‘invasión’,” Nueva Orleans, 06 octubre 1947, Caja IT 2902655, Expediente “1947, Código 5/c.”

<sup>260</sup> José E. Aybar, Cónsul General Dominicano en San Francisco, a Arturo Despradel, No. 466 “Asunto: Remisión de recortes de periódico con sus respectivas traducciones,” San Francisco, 26 noviembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2902657 “Fechas extremas 1947-1948, Ref. Antigua 2502,” Expediente “1947-1948, Código 5/c.”

#### D. Conclusion

Not surprisingly, Dominican officials' incessant remarks that Arévalo's government represented a communist threat to inter-American solidarity intersected not only with Caribbean Basin dictatorships but with a transnational group searching for regional anti-communist proponents against the Guatemalan Revolution. When criticizing the rupture in relations between the Dominican Republic and Guatemala, Dominican Chargé d'Affaires in Tegucigalpa Víctor Fernández Jiménez cited Guatemalan exile José Calderón Salazar's *Guatemala bajo el signo rojo* in that Arévalo's "Government – emerging from the chaos of a Revolution promoted by the Soviet Union –, tolerates communism."<sup>261</sup> In early July, Dominican Ambassador in Mexico City Gustavo Julio Henríquez sent a cable to Trujillo reporting that a committee of Guatemalan exiles was preparing to publish articles in the Mexican press in support of Trujillo and denouncing Arévalo's "communist and pernicious ruling" in Guatemala.<sup>262</sup> That same month, Guatemalan exiles from the "Comité Patriótico Guatemalteco," the same group that helped publish Calderón Salazar's *Guatemala bajo el signo rojo*, distributed various pamphlets that reproduced an article written by the Catholic and anti-communist Mexican journalist René Capistrán Garza for the Mexican newspaper *El Universal*. In the article, Capistrán Garza alleged that Arévalo's rupture in relations with the Dominican Republic threatened "continental unity" and followed the "irritated attitude assumed by Russia" in opposition to the Marshall Plan.<sup>263</sup> In Honduras and

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<sup>261</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández Jiménez, "Refutaciones a las informaciones de la Legación de Guatemala," Tegucigalpa, 31 julio 1947, con Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 308, Tegucigalpa, 05 agosto 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>262</sup> Gustavo Julio Henríquez, Embajador Dominicano en la Ciudad de México, a Rafael Trujillo, Cable 407, Ciudad de México, 09 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>263</sup> Comité Patriótico Guatemalteco, "El Comunista Presidente de Guatemala sabotea la conferencia de Río de Janeiro," con José A. Paniagua, Encargado de Negocios ad interim de la

Mexico, the Guatemalan exiles' anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology aligned quite well with the regional conflict between Arévalo's government and Trujillo's regime. Such an ideological alignment already began bringing together a Dominican dictator, well-known to support conspiracies against opposing governments, and Guatemalan exiles, well-versed in transnational networks opposed to the Guatemalan Revolution. As the next chapter will reveal, these exiles gladly seized this opportunity to cultivate a new regional anti-communist proponent against Arévalo's government.

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República Dominicana en la Ciudad de México, a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 432, Ciudad de México, 17 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349 "Fechas extremas 1947-1950, Código 658" (en adelante Caja IT 2903349).

#### IV. Chapter 3: Dissident Guatemalan Exiles and Rafael Trujillo, 1947

In late July 1947, various Caribbean Basin diplomatic officials attended a celebration at the Salvadoran Presidential House in honor of Salvadoran military president-dictator Salvador Castaneda Castro. During the festivities, Dominican Chargé d’Affaires in San Salvador René Malagón took the opportunity to converse with the Salvadoran dictator about recent events, including the escalating tensions between Trujillo and Arévalo. Castaneda assured the Dominican official that a document “of great importance” would soon be delivered. The following day, Salvadoran Director of the Press, Guatemalan exile, and ardent opponent of Arévalo’s government Gustavo Martínez Nolasco called upon Malagón at the Dominican Legation. The Salvadoran official handed over the document in question, a reproduction of the Arévalo government’s official list of the dozens of Guatemalans expelled since the Revolution’s first days.<sup>264</sup> Over the past weeks, multiple Guatemalan exiles had lobbied Trujillo to finance plans to end the Guatemalan Revolution, so the Dominican dictator was now investigating whether to support these exiles.

This chapter presents the relationships in 1947 among four prominent Guatemalan exiles, Trujillo, and Dominican officials as a case study of how exiles lobbied a Caribbean Basin dictator to serve as a regional anti-communist proponent against Arévalo’s government. Among the exiles, colonel Arturo Ramírez, general Federico Ponce, general Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, and Juan Pinillos wrote to Trujillo and met with Dominican officials. Independent of the international Cold War, these self-proclaimed ‘anti-communists’ came together under the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution.

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<sup>264</sup> René Malagón, Encargado de Negocios ad interino de la República Dominicana en San Salvador, a Arturo Despradel, No. 170 “Asunto: Suspensión de relaciones diplomáticas de Guatemala con nuestro país,” San Salvador, 24 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

Methodological innovations into the transnational dimensions of Latin American foreign relations and SERREE files recreate these relationships. Borrowing from literary, cultural, and American studies, Mary Louise Pratt suggests that a “contact zone” represents “the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations.”<sup>265</sup> Though Pratt introduces ‘contact zones’ to discuss colonial encounters and imperial relations, scholars of U.S.-Latin American relations and Latin American foreign relations have adapted the term.<sup>266</sup> Gilbert Joseph employs the term to examine the “sites of multivocality; of negotiation, borrowing, and exchange; and of redeployment and reversal” that shaped how Latin Americans maneuvered under, against, and within the “American [U.S.] empire.”<sup>267</sup> Ariel Armony utilizes ‘contact zones’ to analyze the “multifaceted network of interactions between governments and pressure groups centered mainly on the exchange of information, the mobilization of economic and military resources, and the coordination of operational plans” in Latin America’s Dirty Wars during the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>268</sup> Along this line, this chapter argues that exiles’ letters and meetings at Dominican diplomatic sites represented a semi-formal, transnational, anti-communist zone of contact and collaboration between Guatemalan exiles, Trujillo, and Dominican officials in which participants discussed

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<sup>265</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992), 6. Also see Mary Louise Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone,” *Profession* 9 (1991): 33-40.

<sup>266</sup> On uses of transnational zones as sites of contact during the Cold War, see Deborah Cohn, *The Latin American Literary Boom and U.S. Nationalism during the Cold War* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012); Jessica Stites Mor, *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 113.

<sup>267</sup> Gilbert M. Joseph, “Close Encounters: Toward a New Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations,” in Gilbert M. Joseph, Catherine C. Legrand, and Ricardo D. Salvatore (eds.), *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 5.

<sup>268</sup> Ariel C. Armony, “Transnationalizing the Dirty War: Argentina in Central America,” in Joseph and Spenser, *In from the Cold*, 137.

and organized conspiracies against Arévalo's government. It is through such zones that one can identify how Caribbean Basin actors bolstered their own anti-communist ideology before the Cold War's escalation.

#### **A. Colonel Arturo Ramírez and the Invasion Conspiracy**

Colonel Arturo Ramírez was the first Guatemalan exile to lobby Trujillo for economic aid against Arévalo's government. Writing to Trujillo, the exile presented his anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideological opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution as similar to that held by the dictator. To obtain further information about the conspiracy, Trujillo ordered Dominican officials to remain in contact with the exile. In lobbying the dictator, Ramírez helped open the zone of contact and collaboration between exiles, Trujillo, and Dominican officials that would play a crucial role in other conspiracies.

As had other exiles in the mid-1940s, Ramírez visited the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa in early 1947 to disseminate his anti-communist worldview to U.S. officials. In March, the exile met for the first time with Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa lieutenant colonel Nathan Brown.<sup>269</sup> Ramírez portrayed Arévalo as subservient to Mexican communist Vicente Lombardo Toledano, a "tool of Moscow," and a "threat to Hemisphere Solidarity."<sup>270</sup> Into July, Ramírez continued delivering reports alleging that Mexican and Soviet communism in

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<sup>269</sup> Brown wrote, "Colonel Ramírez presented a card of introduction from Adrian Recinos," Guatemalan dictator Jorge Ubico's ambassador to the United States, defeated candidate in Guatemala's presidential election against Arévalo, and dissident Guatemalan exile, and Ramírez was accompanied by Guatemalan exile Carlos Humberto Ceballos.

<sup>270</sup> Nathan A. Brown, Jr., to M. A. Devine, Jr., Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, No. 8-47 "Subject: Political Developments in Guatemala and Mexico," Tegucigalpa, 14 March 1947, NARAII, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 33.

Guatemala influenced regional conflicts and threatened Caribbean Basin stability.<sup>271</sup> At every point, the exile found the hand of the Soviet Union and Mexico.<sup>272</sup> Like his fellow U.S. officials throughout Central America, Brown placed little confidence in the exile's claims. When describing his lobbying of the Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, and Honduran dictators, Ramírez admitted that Castaneda changed his mind, Somoza “weasled [sic]” out, and Carias was “too cagey to make a definite promise.”<sup>273</sup> Brown on both July 15 and August 1 concluded that Ramírez's “efforts ha[d] been unsuccessful.”<sup>274</sup>

Unknown to U.S. officials, though, Ramírez reached out to Trujillo. The exile first wrote the dictator on July 8 to lobby for assistance while tapping into his anti-communist ideology. “The communist outbreak in Central America was born from the continued efforts of Vicente Lombardo Toledano and the Soviets to the South of Mexico . . . to insert spearheads into the Continent,” Ramírez warned, “It is obvious to relate the threat that this illness poses to the American family.”<sup>275</sup> The exile repeatedly evoked the metaphor of ‘illness’ to describe

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<sup>271</sup> Brown appears to have been transferred from Tegucigalpa to Ciudad Trujillo in late 1947, explaining why there are no reports from Brown after August 1947.

<sup>272</sup> Nathan A. Brown, Jr., with Paul C. Daniels to Secretary of State, No. 2860 “Subject: Political Conditions; Transmitting Comments on Military Attaché's Report Dated July 16, 1947,” Tegucigalpa, 18 July 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34; Arturo Ramírez a Nathan A. Brown, Jr., Tegucigalpa, 17 julio 1947, con Nathan A. Brown, Jr., to Paul C. Daniels, “Memo to: The Ambassador,” Tegucigalpa, 23 July 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34.

<sup>273</sup> Nathan A. Brown, Jr., R-68-47 “Activities of Oppositionists to Current Regime in Guatemala,” Tegucigalpa, 01 August 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 33. Evidence of Ramírez's associations with leading political and military officials in El Salvador can be found in Chapter 4 regarding Ramírez's 1949 conspiracy.

<sup>274</sup> Nathan A. Brown, Jr., with Paul C. Daniels to Secretary of State, No. 2860, Tegucigalpa, 18 July 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 34; Nathan A. Brown, Jr., R-68-47, Tegucigalpa, 01 August 1947, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Tegucigalpa, Box 33.

<sup>275</sup> Arturo Ramírez a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 08 julio 1947, con Emilio García Godoy, Secretario Particular del Presidente de la República, a Víctor Ant. Fernández J. vía Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, Núm. 19809, Ciudad Trujillo, 18 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.



communism in Guatemala.<sup>276</sup> He implored Trujillo, “For such a motive, I write to you, respectfully, in order to inform you that there is a means of exercising the first step toward the establishment of a sanitary measure that will clean the American Continent of this Siberian leprosy.” The exile combined this language with a personal appeal to the dictator’s image as a leading ‘anti-communist’ statesman, “The entire world is expecting this sanitary measure that has already come to constitute a real dam against the advance of communism in the economic sense, and global Democracy will have in you a paladin.” Having made his appeal to Trujillo, Ramírez requested the opportunity to provide an exhibition to Dominican officials in Tegucigalpa on his plan to overthrow Arévalo’s government.<sup>277</sup>

Trujillo approved Dominican officials to meet with Ramírez and receive the exhibition, denoting the emergence of the zone of contact and collaboration between Guatemalan exiles, Trujillo, and Dominican officials.<sup>278</sup> Accompanied by fellow Guatemalan exile Juan Pinillos, Ramírez delivered to Dominican Chargé d’Affaires in Tegucigalpa Víctor Antonio Fernández his exhibition, “EXPOSICIÓN SOBRE LOS ASUNTOS RELACIONADOS con GUATEMALA [EXHIBITION REGARDING THE AFFAIRES RELATED to GUATEMALA].”<sup>279</sup> After repeating the exile’s numerous allegations that Guatemala under Arévalo was the “most disciplined and abject disciple of Soviet Russia in Central America,” the exhibition centered

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<sup>276</sup> The language employed by Ramírez closely resembles that behind National Security Doctrine ideology.

<sup>277</sup> Arturo Ramírez a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 08 julio 1947, con Emilio García Godoy a Víctor Ant. Fernández J. vía Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, Núm. 19809, Ciudad Trujillo, 18 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>278</sup> Emilio García Godoy a Víctor Ant. Fernández J. vía Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, Núm. 19809, Ciudad Trujillo, 18 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>279</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Emilio García Godoy vía Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, No. 290 “Asunto: Remisión de carta del señor Arturo Ramírez al Excelentísimo Señor Presidente de la República,” Tegucigalpa, 28 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349. Capitalization in original.

upon the conspiracy.<sup>280</sup> Exiles based in Nicaragua would invade Guatemala by passing through Honduras with the support of Carías.<sup>281</sup> These exiles would seize important border posts before capturing three Guatemalan departments. At that point, Ramírez believed, an assortment of governments would intervene to prevent a full-scale civil war. A representation composed of Central American, Dominican, and U.S. representatives would request that Arévalo's government allow Ramírez and leading exiles to join the Guatemalan congress. Working through the congress, these newly-returned exiles would demand a new government and remove Arévalo from power.<sup>282</sup>

Ramírez's invasion plan was not realized. Constitutional suspensions implemented by Arévalo's government revolved around reports of Ponce's air-bombing conspiracy, no evidence suggests a relationship between the two plots, and Ponce's actions probably overshadowed those of Ramírez. Notwithstanding these complications, Ramírez's plot played a central role in bringing forward the zone between exiles, Trujillo, and Dominican officials. The dictator in particular took notice, though he had already begun to work against Arévalo.

## **B. General Federico Ponce and the Air-Bombing Conspiracy**

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<sup>280</sup> Arturo Ramírez, "EXPOSICIÓN SOBRE LOS ASUNTOS RELACIONADOS con GUATEMALA," Tegucigalpa, 27 julio 1947, con Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Emilio García Godoy vía Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, No. 290, Tegucigalpa, 28 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>281</sup> Versión descifrada del párrafo de Arturo Ramírez, "EXPOSICIÓN," con Arturo Despradel a Emilio García Godoy, No. 20463 "Asunto: Remisión de carta del señor Arturo Ramírez al Excelentísimo Señor Presidente de la República," Ciudad Trujillo, 05 agosto 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>282</sup> Arturo Ramírez, "EXPOSICIÓN," Tegucigalpa, 27 julio 1947, con Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Emilio García Godoy vía Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, No. 290, Tegucigalpa, 28 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

General Federico Ponce's air-bombing conspiracy became the first to receive Trujillo's direct approval. Ponce sought to coordinate the aerial bombing of Guatemala City with planes purchased in the United States and an invasion of exiles. The exile's plan intersected with the dictator's new role as a patron of Guatemalan exiles opposed to Arévalo's government, yet Ponce and Trujillo's goals conflicted with U.S. officials' policy toward Guatemala. It was U.S. officials who actually alerted the Guatemalan Government.

Ponce had approached U.S. and Dominican officials since June-July 1947. At the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, First Secretary Walter Washington confessed his surprise when Ponce on June 23 called upon U.S. officials, without any prior notice. Nor did Washington buy into Ponce's anti-communist rhetoric. The U.S. official merely recorded that Ponce "intimated that he was about to take some action" regarding Arévalo's government.<sup>283</sup> Next, Ponce headed to the Dominican Embassy in Mexico City. On July 17, Dominican Chargé d'Affaires José Paniagua sent an encoded cable to Dominican Secretary of State Telésforo Calderón forwarding the exile's greetings to Trujillo.<sup>284</sup> The zone, established during Ramírez's lobbying, facilitated the dictator's prompt response and reciprocal greetings.<sup>285</sup>

A month later, Ponce met with U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City Walter Thurston. The exile wished to notify U.S. officials about his plan to overthrow Arévalo's government, handing

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<sup>283</sup> S. Walter Washington to Secretary of State, No. 4023 "Subject: Guatemala: General Federico Ponce's Activities," Mexico City, 24 June 1947, 814.00/6-2447, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>284</sup> José Paniagua a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 433, Ciudad de México, 17 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>285</sup> Arturo Despradel a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 18908 "Asunto: Expresiones de simpatía del ex-Presidente de Guatemala, General Federico Ponce," Ciudad Trujillo, 22 julio 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

over a manifesto and a phonograph that would be distributed to the Guatemalan people.<sup>286</sup> The manifesto took Thurston aback:

Upon reading his manifesto and seeing that it spoke of the “serial bombardment which had just taken place over some points of the capital,” I told him that it would be a matter of great regret if he should bomb Guatemala City killing civilians. He replied that he would only bombard certain strategic points.<sup>287</sup>

U.S. officials in Washington reacted immediately to Thurston’s report. Under Secretary of State Robert Lovett sent cables to his country’s embassies in Guatemala City, Mexico City, and elsewhere to notify local authorities about the plot.<sup>288</sup> While U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Edwin Kyle took the information directly to Arévalo’s government, Thurston met with Acting Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico Jaime Torres Bodet.<sup>289</sup> Torres Bodet assured Thurston his government would prevent any such plot.<sup>290</sup>

The exile had better luck with the Dominican dictator. On August 27, Dominican Ambassador in Mexico City Gustavo Julio Henríquez notified Trujillo that Ponce’s plan required “economic aid to initiate operations.”<sup>291</sup> The next day, Trujillo agreed to assist.<sup>292</sup> Over the next

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<sup>286</sup> Walter C. Thurston, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 916, Mexico City, 21 August 1947, 814.00/8-2147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>287</sup> Walter C. Thurston, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 916, Mexico City, 21 August 1947, 814.00/8-2147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>288</sup> Robert A. Lovett to U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, Telegram No. 248, Washington, 22 August 1947, 814.00/8-2147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1; Robert A. Lovett to U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Telegram No. 796, Washington, 22 August 1947, 814.00/8-2147, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>289</sup> Edwin Kyle to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 361, Guatemala City, 09 October 1947, 814.00/10-947, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1; Walter C. Thurston, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 363, Mexico City, 25 August 1947, 814.00/8-2547, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>290</sup> Walter C. Thurston, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 363, Mexico City, 25 August 1947, 814.00/8-2547, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>291</sup> Gustavo Julio Henríquez a Rafael Trujillo, Cable 558, Ciudad de México, 27 agosto 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>292</sup> Rafael Trujillo a Gustavo Julio Henríquez, 28 agosto 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

month, Ponce worked with the ambassador to purchase weapons in Mexico and prepared to air-bomb Guatemala City.<sup>293</sup>

Ponce's conspiracy was soon found out, leading to constitutional suspensions in Guatemala. On September 16, Arévalo issued a presidential decree that suspended constitutional guarantees for thirty days, for Guatemalan Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Arturo Herbruger claimed to have "evidence Trujillo was supplying funds."<sup>294</sup> However, U.S. officials in Guatemala City doubted the Guatemalan government's allegations. Throughout September, First Secretary Andrew Donovan made note that little evidence of the plot had been released to the public.<sup>295</sup> Into October, Donovan kept emphasizing the lack of available proof.<sup>296</sup>

Never reported by U.S. officials, the Guatemalan government did receive evidence of Ponce's plot. In Tegucigalpa, Guatemalan exile Juan Pinillos frequently met with Dominican Chargé d'Affaires Víctor Antonio Fernández to discuss regional affairs. Since Trujillo's regime had no officials in Guatemala following the rupture in diplomatic relations, Fernández obtained information on the constitutional suspension from Pinillos.<sup>297</sup> On October 06, Fernández forwarded to his superiors one of the many summaries that would be written by Pinillos over the

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<sup>293</sup> Gustavo Julio Henríquez a Rafael Trujillo, Ciudad de México, 20 septiembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>294</sup> Edwin Kyle to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 334, Guatemala City, 17 September 1947, 814.00/9-1747, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>295</sup> Andrew E. Donovan II to Secretary of State, No. 2639 "Subject: Possible Plot to Overthrow Guatemalan Government," Guatemala City, 19 September 1947, 814.00/9-1947, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1. Capitalization in original.

<sup>296</sup> Andrew E. Donovan II to Secretary of State, No. 2651 "Subject: Political Developments in Guatemala," Guatemala City, 26 September 1947, 814.00/9-2647, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1; Andrew E. Donovan II to Secretary of State, No. 2657 "Subject: Address to Nation Delivered by President Arévalo September 27, 1947," Guatemala City, 06 October 1947, 814.00/10-647, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>297</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 375, Tegucigalpa, 22 septiembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

next weeks.<sup>298</sup> Guatemala's commander of the Guardia Civil [National Guard], colonel Víctor Sandoval, had made a radio speech at 8:00p.m. on October 03. Apparently, a Mexican gunrunner had approached the Guatemalan Embassy in Mexico City. Over the past weeks, the gunrunner had sold weapons to Ponce until the exile reneged on the "total arranged price." Consequently, the gunrunner agreed to inform on the conspiracy if Arévalo's government would "purchase the rest of the armaments."<sup>299</sup>

Though skeptical of the allegations, U.S. officials did assist the Guatemalan government. On October 09, Guatemalan Foreign Minister Enrique Muñoz Meany met with Kyle to share reports from Washington, Mexico, and Honduras that Ponce had purchased bombers in the United States, now located in Florida or San Antonio, Texas, for a coordinated aerial bombing and land invasion. Kyle forwarded Muñoz Meany's request to investigate the matter but noted that these rumors may have derived from the U.S. government's own warnings to the Guatemalan government in August.<sup>300</sup> Regardless of whether U.S. officials in Guatemala City believed the reports, Lovett ordered the Bureau of Customs to look into the matter.<sup>301</sup> The dictator had provided assistance for the exile's conspiracy, but U.S. officials never reported having located Ponce's planes or ever believed that Trujillo had actually aided the exile.

Ponce's conspiracy and the resulting constitutional suspensions provide an important example of how exiles' conspiracies, facilitated by the zone between exiles, Trujillo, and Dominican officials, contributed to the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan

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<sup>298</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 401 "Asunto: Noticias de Guatemala," Tegucigalpa, 06 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>299</sup> Juan Pinillos, Tegucigalpa, 04 octubre 1947, con Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 401, Tegucigalpa, 06 octubre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>300</sup> Edwin Kyle to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 361, Guatemala City, 09 October 1947, 814.00/10-947, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>301</sup> Robert A. Lovett to U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, Telegram No. 306, 10 October 1947, 814.00/10-947, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

Revolution. It also reveals its limits, as the potentially most consequential sponsor, the United States, refused to partake in the plot.

### **C. General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes and the Guatemalan Army Conspiracy**

General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes's conspiracy to initiate a coup d'état through the Guatemalan Army illustrates how exiles' ideology intersected with Dominican officials' worldviews. As the Guatemalan Ambassador in London, Ydígoras Fuentes cultivated a relationship with Dominican Ambassador in London Andrés Pastoriza and lobbied for Trujillo's economic aid; moreover, the exile's writings resonated with Dominican officials, buttressing their indigenous anti-communist ideology.

Ydígoras Fuentes emerged as a prominent general and one of Guatemalan dictator Jorge Ubico's protégés, yet the Guatemalan broke with Ubico's regime in the first days of the Guatemalan Revolution. The resulting junta and Arévalo's government sent Ydígoras Fuentes as the Guatemalan ambassador in London. Ydígoras Fuentes and historians have characterized this tenure in England as an 'unofficial' exile designed to discourage Ydígoras Fuentes from using his contacts in the Guatemalan Army to plot against Arévalo's government.<sup>302</sup> In his memoirs, Ydígoras Fuentes presented himself as a popular anti-communist opponent of the Guatemalan Revolution but never admitted to lobbying for Trujillo's aid or conspiring against Arévalo's government.<sup>303</sup> According to SERREE files, Ydígoras Fuentes did utilize his 'unofficial' exile to build relationships with Trujillo's regime and propose a conspiracy.

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<sup>302</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 75.

<sup>303</sup> Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, *My War with Communism*, trans. Mario Rosenthal (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 33-48.

Immediately after Arévalo's government broke diplomatic relations with Trujillo's regime, Ydígoras Fuentes and Pastoriza held a telephone conversation in which the Guatemalan touched upon the regional conflict. Describing the conversation, the Guatemalan expressed his genuine "friendship" with Pastoriza and "esteem" for the Dominican dictatorship.<sup>304</sup> All this was of course meant to lever the regime for assistance in overthrowing Arévalo. Pastoriza got a sense on how 'vast' Ydígoras Fuentes's network in the Guatemalan Army was and trusted that it could effectively wage a coup d'état. All the Guatemalan needed, Pastoriza explained to the dictator, was "an assistance of fifty thousand dollars" cash to circumvent the banks. As had other Dominican officials with Ramírez, Ponce, and Pinillos, the ambassador offered to mediate and relay information between Trujillo and Ydígoras Fuentes.<sup>305</sup>

Pastoriza had a dearth of documents from Ydígoras Fuentes on Guatemalan affairs to forward to his superiors. In "MEMORANDUM DE LA SITUACIÓN POLÍTICA [MEMORANDUM OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION], etc., de GUATEMALA," the Guatemalan repeated the common tropes that Mexican and Soviet communism drove Guatemalan affairs, going back to the alleged role of "the Mexican Embassy" and "Soviet money" in the fall of Ubico's dictatorship.<sup>306</sup> With his memorandum, Ydígoras Fuentes gave Pastoriza a letter from an associate in New York City, Aguilar Kestler, who copied newspaper articles on Guatemalan affairs. As expected, the associate transcribed articles in conservative

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<sup>304</sup> Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes a Andrés Pastoriza, Embajador Dominicano en Londres, Londres, 17 julio 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-106 "Documentos sobre la situación política de Guatemala."

<sup>305</sup> Andrés Pastoriza a Rafael Trujillo, Memorandum, Londres, 21 agosto 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-106 "Documentos sobre la situación política de Guatemala."

<sup>306</sup> Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, "MEMORANDUM DE LA SITUACIÓN POLÍTICA, etc., de GUATEMALA," 09 agosto 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-106 "Documentos sobre la situación política de Guatemala."



newspapers from Guatemala City, New York City, and elsewhere that denoted Arévalo's government as led by Mexican and Soviet communists.<sup>307</sup>

Ydígoras Fuentes's conspiracy came to naught, as did the previous ones. Indeed, it is probable that events surrounding Ponce's air-bombing conspiracy hindered any efforts. However, Dominican officials utilized Ydígoras Fuentes's documents as anti-communist propaganda. On September 1, Calderón forwarded copies to Henríquez in Mexico City, "We have the greatest interest that you get [Ydígoras Fuentes's documents] published in the Mexican press, and, to this effect, it is recommended that you take the necessary steps to ensure this end."<sup>308</sup> Furthermore, Trujillo in September 1953 would admit to giving \$35,000 to Ydígoras Fuentes.<sup>309</sup> Not only did Ydígoras Fuentes's conspiracy resonate with Dominican officials and Trujillo; it set into motion a relationship that would continue into the early 1950s.

#### **D. Juan Pinillos and the Dominican Legation in Tegucigalpa**

Juan Pinillos utilized the zone to provide information to and cultivate relationships with officials at the Dominican legation in Tegucigalpa. The exile's relationship with Dominican officials originated with Ramírez's conspiracy, but subsequent the exile's main merit was that of providing his vast knowledge of Guatemalan affairs after the break in diplomatic relations

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<sup>307</sup> H. Aguilar Kestler, c/o Mrs. Caballero, a Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, Nueva York, 01 agosto, 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-106 "Documentos sobre la situación política de Guatemala."

<sup>308</sup> Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, "MEMORANDUM," 09 agosto 1947, con Telésforo R. Calderón a Gustavo Julio Henríquez, Núm. 24002, Ciudad Trujillo, 01 septiembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>309</sup> Andrew B. Wardlaw, First Secretary to the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Rudolph Schoenfeld, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City, William Krieg, Counselor of U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, and John C. Hill, Second Secretary to the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, Office Memorandum, "Subject: Conversation about Discussions with President TRUJILLO About Possible Overthrow of Guatemalan Government," 18 September 1953, NARAI, RG84, "Guatemala, U.S. Embassy, Guatemala City, Classified & Unclassified General Records, 1953-1956" (hereafter US Embassy Guatemala 2), Box 3, Folder "350: Guatemala, Aug. - Dec. 1953."

between Trujillo's regime and Arévalo's government. On August 21, he informed Fernández that Guatemalan exiles in Tegucigalpa had shipped military equipment from Puerto Barrios in Guatemala. Fernández forwarded this information to Despradel, and García Godoy summarized the information for Calderón.<sup>310</sup> In early September, Fernández obtained more information from Pinillos regarding bureaucratic changes in Guatemala's Guardia Nacional. By this point, Fernández saw the exile as a reliable informant.<sup>311</sup>

Pinillos's information proved particularly useful when Trujillo's regime sought to charge Arévalo for the Guatemalan president's complicity in the Cayo Confites expedition. In their public reports, Dominican officials claimed that the Soviet legation in Guatemala City supported the 'international communist brigade' by providing money to the Cuban and Venezuelan governments. Pinillos interjected that there was no Soviet embassy or legation in Guatemala City. Rather, "The Russian Embassy in Mexico has had jurisdiction in Guatemala and has been sending delegates (unofficially) to remain in clandestine communication with Arévalo." The exile related how "the money [for the Cayo Confites expedition had] been provided from Russia to Guatemala through unofficial Agents and Vicente Lombardo Toledano who has made incognito visits to Guatemala."<sup>312</sup> Fernández forwarded Pinillos's information to Despradel, at

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<sup>310</sup> Emilio García Godoy a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 22297 "Asunto: Actividades que realizan los enemigos de nuestro Gobierno," Ciudad Trujillo, 22 agosto 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-057 "Expediente sobre la expedición de exiliados salvadoreños a Cuba."

<sup>311</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 347, Tegucigalpa, 06 septiembre 1947, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>312</sup> Juan Pinillos a Víctor Ant. Fernández J., Tegucigalpa, 18 octubre 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-089 "Expediente sobre el armamento utilizado en la expedición de Cayo Confites."

which point officials produced a report for Trujillo.<sup>313</sup> As had Ydígoras Fuentes's writings, Pinillos's charges intersected with Dominican officials' interpretations of Arévalo's government.

## **E. Conclusion**

The conspiracies by Ramírez, Ponce, and Ydígoras Fuentes and Pinillos's visits to the Dominican Legation together present an important case study of how Guatemalan exiles built collaborative relationships with a Caribbean Basin leader who served as a regional anti-communist proponent of the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution. These exiles utilized a regional conflict in the Caribbean Basin and their anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology to reach out to Trujillo and Dominican officials. The exiles' lobbying and Trujillo and Dominican officials' reciprocation built the semi-formal, transnational, anti-communist zone of contact and collaboration in which they discussed how to overthrow Arévalo's government. Together, these actors furthered the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution while U.S. officials persisted in giving Arévalo's government credit for his reforms. Additionally, these exchanges would lead Trujillo to build collaborative relationships with other Caribbean Basin leaders who served as regional anti-communist proponents against the Guatemalan Revolution.

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<sup>313</sup> Víctor Ant. Fernández J. a Arturo Despradel, No. 415 "Asunto: Error en la acusación que presentará el Gobierno dominicano ante el Tribunal Internacional de Justicia," Tegucigalpa, 18 octubre 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-090 "Expediente sobre el juicio contra los expedicionarios de Cayo Confites;" Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez a Rafael Trujillo, No. 28956 "Asunto: Error en la acusación que presentará el Gobierno dominicano ante el Tribunal Internacional de Justicia," Ciudad Trujillo, 31 octubre 1947, AGN, CBV, Expediente 070-090 "Expediente sobre el juicio contra los expedicionarios de Cayo Confites."

## **V. Chapter 4: A Caribbean Basin Anti-Communist Network, 1948-Early 1950s**

Since the mid-1940s, Guatemalan exiles had cultivated beneficial relationships with three prominent Caribbean Basin dictators in pursuit of the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution. Some, like generals Federico Ponce and Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, appeared to work solely with Trujillo. Juan Pinillos, doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla, colonel Arturo Ramírez, and others traveled throughout the region, building rapport and contacts with multiple leaders and important officials. By the beginning of 1948, the exiles' activities brought about a new phase in their counter-revolution. Spurred on by the exiles' lobbying, Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo came together and formed the first anti-communist network in Latin America.

This chapter reveals how a loosely-formed Caribbean Basin network of self-proclaimed 'anti-communist' dictators shared intelligence on and supported Guatemalan exiles' conspiracies to overthrow Arévalo and Arbenz's governments. From 1948 into the early 1950s, general Federico Ponce, Luis Coronado Lira, Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, general Roderico Anzueto, colonel Arturo Ramírez, and colonel Carlos Castillo Armas lobbied the dictators for assistance. In response, Somoza, Trujillo, Carías, and their respective officials corresponded and met to discuss the exiles' plots. Independent of the international Cold War and without U.S. officials' support, this Caribbean Basin anti-communist network pursued the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution and furthered an indigenous and regional conflict between Guatemalan exiles, Caribbean Basin dictators, and Guatemala's governments.

Research on indigenous anti-communist networks in Latin America during the international Cold War offers the framework to analyze the goals and interactions of Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators. Scholarship on U.S. policy toward Guatemala has only

portrayed dictators as supporters CIA operations in the early 1950s to overthrow Arbenz's government and overlooks the dictators' earlier opposition to Arévalo's government. In contrast, works on the cooperation between Mexican and South American anti-communist organizations, links between right-wing Chileans and Brazilians, transnational sources of support for Central American anti-communist regimes, and Operation Condor have highlighted how frequently anti-communist Latin American leaders shaped regional conflicts.<sup>314</sup> Along this line, this chapter examines how the zone of contact and collaboration between Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators continued to enlarge its numbers and broaden its scope.

#### **A. General Federico Ponce and Caribbean Basin Officials, 1948**

Solicitations from Guatemalan exile general Federico Ponce facilitated the first meeting in which the network's members shared intelligence on a plot to overthrow Arévalo's government. Following his abortive air-bombing conspiracy, Ponce continued to lobby Trujillo and Dominican officials for economic assistance. To evaluate the exile's solicitation, Trujillo ordered Dominican Special Ambassador Rafael Paíno Pichardo to meet in Washington with Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa. The February 1948 meeting between Paíno Pichardo and Sevilla Sacasa expanded the zone of contact and collaboration as Dominican and Nicaraguan officials took Ponce's solicitation into consideration.

Having only recently emerged over the past months as a regional anti-communist proponent against the Guatemalan Revolution, Trujillo in early 1948 sought out advice from more experienced anti-communist proponents. Apparently, such information would allow the dictator to better gauge the capabilities of the exiles pleading for the patron's assistance.

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<sup>314</sup> See Armony, *Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade*; McSherry, *Predatory States*; Harmer; Power, "Who but a Woman?"; Herrán Ávila; Bell.

Following the abortive air-bombing plot, Ponce had made a new request for Trujillo's aid.<sup>315</sup> The opinion of the Nicaraguan official proved particularly enlightening. Sevilla Sacasa believed the exile's "requested economic assistance seemed very substantial" and suggested having the Dominican ambassador in Mexico City, Joaquín Balaguer, meet with Ponce "to determine for what the requests sum pertain[ed]." Sevilla Sacasa's advice did not end there as he advised Dominican officials to generate a "list of the people" that Ponce knew.<sup>316</sup>

Here, the Dominican and Nicaraguan ambassadors began analyzing the governmental and military structures in Guatemala. Sevilla Sacasa imparted his knowledge of Ponce, how the military junta under Arbenz and colonel Francisco Arana deposed Ponce, and the exile's remaining influence in the Guatemalan Army. The Nicaraguan ambassador assured Paíno Pichardo that Ponce "ha[d] friends within the military element of Guatemala and is a staunch enemy of Arévalo" but warned that "the strong man in Guatemala within the [Guatemalan] Army is Colonel Arana, who shows a great loyalty to Arévalo in order to sustain [Arévalo] in the [Guatemalan] Presidency." Before turning to other matters, the Nicaraguan ambassador shared with Paíno Pichardo the rumor that Arévalo invested much time and energy to appease Arana and prevent the general from backing any coups against the Guatemalan Revolution.<sup>317</sup> Ultimately, the two officials had exchanged information on Guatemalan exiles' conspiracies against Arévalo's government, and this intelligence-sharing would become common among members of the emerging anti-communist network.

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<sup>315</sup> R. Paíno Pichardo, Embajador Especial de la República Dominicana, a Rafael Trujillo, Memorandum No. 3, febrero 1948, AGN, CBV, 077-097 "Expediente sobre la captura de aviones en Nicaragua."

<sup>316</sup> R. Paíno Pichardo a Rafael Trujillo, Memorandum No. 3, febrero 1948, AGN, CBV, 077-097 "Expediente sobre la captura de aviones en Nicaragua."

<sup>317</sup> R. Paíno Pichardo a Rafael Trujillo, Memorandum No. 3, febrero 1948, AGN, CBV, 077-097 "Expediente sobre la captura de aviones en Nicaragua."

## **B. Luis Coronado Lira, 1948**

While Ponce brought Dominican and Nicaraguan officials together, Luis Coronado Lira became the first exile patronized by different members of the emerging network. In the mid-1940s, he and his associate, Carlos Salazar, Jr., had traveled the Caribbean Basin and published various denunciations of Arévalo and the Guatemalan Revolution as the products of Mexican- and Soviet-inspired communism. By early 1948, Coronado Lira began to interact with Nicaraguan and Dominican officials, and two Caribbean Basin dictators sponsored him.

Somoza in March 1948 requested that the exile travel to Managua to organize a plot against Arévalo's government. Based upon information from Nicaraguan exile and former advisor to Somoza doctor Francisco Aguirre, Gordon Reid at the U.S. Office of Central America and Panama Affairs on March 19 reported that the dictator had "called" Coronado Lira from San Salvador to Managua. Aguirre claimed, "Somoza then offered [the exile] men, money[,] and arms and told [Coronado Lira] 'to get busy and start a revolution in Guatemala as soon as possible.'"<sup>318</sup> U.S. officials in Managua attempted to monitor the exile's movements with only marginal success. On March 22, Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Managua Maurice Bernbaum confirmed that Coronado Lira had been in Managua since March 13. When Bernbaum attempted to obtain more information, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Oscar Sevilla Sacasa and Somoza's son major Anastasio 'Tachito' Somoza both remarked that Somoza "had given no

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<sup>318</sup> Francisco Aguirre, Gordon S. Reid, Memorandum of Conversation, 19 March 1948, NARAIL, RG84, US Embassy Managua, Box 26, Folder "800: Nicaragua, General conf file, 1948."

encouragement.”<sup>319</sup> Bernbaum’s only other information was that Coronado Lira spent the Holy Week “presumably seeing Somoza” until flying to Balboa, Panama, on March 29.<sup>320</sup>

Unknown to U.S. officials, Coronado Lira was then in Ciudad Trujillo April and May 1948 and met with either Trujillo or the dictator’s higher officials. Following the February 1948 meeting between Paíno Pichardo and Sevilla Sacasa and after meeting with Somoza, the exile’s traveling suggests that Nicaraguan and Dominican officials shared intelligence on or encouraged Coronado Lira’s activities. On April 23, Dominican Secretary of State for Foreign Relations Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez ordered Dominican Chargé d’Affaires in San Salvador René Malagón to meet with Salazar, Coronado Lira’s associate.<sup>321</sup> At their meeting in early May, Salazar gave the Dominican official newspaper articles and a memorandum for Coronado Lira. From San Salvador, Malagón sent Salazar’s documents to Ciudad Trujillo and reported that Salazar would soon provide “definitive information” to Coronado Lira.<sup>322</sup> Because Coronado Lira earlier met with Somoza, it is likely this ‘definitive information’ related to the exile’s lobbying the two dictators for armaments or resources.

Salazar’s memorandum argued that the situation in Guatemala stood against Arévalo’s government and bolstered Coronado Lira’s lobbying. The exile reported that in late April colonel Miguel Mendoza had organized a plot against Arévalo’s government that, upon being

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<sup>319</sup> Maurice M. Bernbaum to Secretary of State, No. 74, Managua, 22 March 1948, 814.00/3-2248, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 2.

<sup>320</sup> Maurice M. Bernbaum to Secretary of State, No. 79, Managua, 30 March 1948, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Managua, Box 24, Folder “800: Nicaraguan Involvement in Guatemala internal affairs, Confidential telegram file, 1948.”

<sup>321</sup> René Malagón a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, No. 91 “Asunto: Cuestiones relacionadas con el viaje del Lic. Luis Coronado Lira a nuestro país,” San Salvador, 11 mayo 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>322</sup> Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez a Telésforo R. Calderón, 14306 “Asunto: Informes para ser transmitido al señor Coronado Lira Salazar,” Ciudad Trujillo, 11 mayo 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.



discovered, saw the suspension of the Guatemalan Constitution and congressional laws and the suppression of the Guatemalan people's movements and associations. Salazar claimed, "The atmosphere in Guatemala is [one] of unease and anxiety motivated by the presence of soldiers and police that monitor neighbors and pedestrians within and outside of the capital." Salazar warned Coronado Lira, or more likely the intended targets of the two exiles' lobbying, that Guatemala's official radio, *La Voz de Guatemala* [*The Voice of Guatemala*], gave half an hour of time to communist worker organizations. These organizations over the radio spoke of how "only communism is capable of destroying capitalism, yankee imperialism[,] and the rule of feudalism of landowners."<sup>323</sup> Such propaganda resembled that of other exiles who aimed to convince potential dictators, officials, and patrons to take advantage of these supposedly suitable moments to launch a plot against Arévalo's government. To this effect, Salazar concluded his memorandum, "The political and economic situation is undisputedly chaotic."<sup>324</sup>

No reports confirm that Coronado Lira took any venture to completion. Various events in the Caribbean Basin, such as the Costa Rican Civil War and the Venezuelan military's coup against Rómulo Betancourt's government, received much of Somoza and Trujillo's attention. Additionally, Arévalo's government faced numerous plots in 1948 and 1949, so it is possible that Guatemalan officials never verified Coronado Lira's participation in one of these plots. Still, available sources confirm that the exile did receive economic assistance from not only from Somoza but Trujillo. In September 1953, an informant of First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City Andrew Wardlaw described a meeting with Trujillo in which the dictator

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<sup>323</sup> Carlos Salazar, hijo, "MEMORANDUM," con Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez a Telésforo R. Calderón, 14960 "Asunto: Cuestiones relacionadas con el viaje del Lic. Luis Coronado Lira a nuestro país," Ciudad Trujillo, 17 mayo 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

<sup>324</sup> Carlos Salazar, hijo, "MEMORANDUM," con Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez a Telésforo R. Calderón, 14960, Ciudad Trujillo, 17 mayo 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

mentioned having given money to Coronado Lira “to buy arms.” Trujillo complained to the informant that the exile had not pursued any plot against Arévalo’s government and instead “used [this] money . . . to finance” a global trip.<sup>325</sup> Though Trujillo criticized Coronado Lira for not having orchestrated a coup, it is likely the exile utilized such funds to raise regional support against Arévalo’s government. Well into the early 1950s, Coronado Lira continued to network throughout the Caribbean Basin and lobby on behalf of notable plots against the Guatemalan governments.<sup>326</sup>

### **C. Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, 1948**

The formation of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network culminated in late 1948 during Manuel Melgar de la Cerda’s conspiracy. The exile not only requested multiple dictators to support a plot to invade Guatemala but implored one dictator, Trujillo, to lobby another dictator, Carías. As when debating Ponce’s solicitation earlier in the year, Trujillo reached out to Somoza to contact Carías. Melgar’s solicitation and the dictators’ responses brought the three regimes together against Arévalo’s government. Such maneuverings prove that, by the end of 1948, a loosely-formed network composed of Dominican, Nicaraguan, and Honduran dictators and their officials patronized and shared intelligence on Guatemalan exiles’ machinations.

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<sup>325</sup> Andrew B. Wardlaw to Rudolph Schoenfeld, William Krieg, and John Calvin Hill, Jr., Office Memorandum, 18 September 1953, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Guatemala 2, Box 3, Folder “350: Guatemala, Aug. – Dec. 1953.”

<sup>326</sup> See “General: Operational-Specific: Calligeris Organizations (w/Attachments),” Document 0000917034, 20 March 1954, CIA FOIA; “El Diputado Guatemalteco Arenas Prepara Aquí una Junta Anticomunista,” *Excelsior* 13 abril 1954, with William P. Hudson, Second Secretary to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, to Secretary of State, Despatch 1724 “Subject: Visit of Exiled Guatemalan Deputy to Mexico,” Mexico City, 23 April 1954, 714.00/4-2354, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 714 “Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Guatemala, 1950-1954” (hereafter DF714), M1527, Roll 2.

Melgar represented the typical Guatemalan exile whose connections and prominence in Ubico's regime enabled him to network in the Caribbean Basin and lobby for economic assistance against Arévalo's government. Under Ubico, Melgar at various times served as the Minister of the Treasury and Public Credit, Subsecretary of Public Education, Minister of Agriculture, and Secretary to the President.<sup>327</sup> As with Ubico's other protégés, Melgar found himself expelled by the end of 1944.<sup>328</sup> Though no U.S. or Dominican report identifies him as a prominent dissident involved in alleged coup plots between 1944 and 1948, Arévalo's government did include Melgar on a list of notorious exiles, such as Ponce, excluded from a general amnesty at the end of 1947.<sup>329</sup>

Initially, Melgar's solicitation for Trujillo's aid conformed to the methods employed by other exiles over the previous years. In October 1948, the exile asked Dominican Chargé d'Affaires in Mexico City Rafael Damirón Díaz to present a confidential memorandum to Trujillo.<sup>330</sup> The memorandum referenced the tropes that proliferated throughout the anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology. Melgar blamed "Soviet inspiration," believed the region's governments needed to join against the rise of communist regimes in the Americas, and feared that Guatemala was a base for "subversive forces" and "international communism."

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<sup>327</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, Ciudad de México, 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz, Encargado de Negocios ad interino de la República Dominicana en la Ciudad de México, a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052 "Fechas extremas 1948-1956, Ref. Antigua 2339" (en adelante Caja IT 2904052), Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

<sup>328</sup> William C. Affeld, Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to U.S. Embassy in Managua, 22 October 1944, NARAI, RG84, US Embassy Managua, Box 6, Folder "800: 1944."

<sup>329</sup> Milton K. Wells, Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 2774 "Subject: Guatemalan Government Announces that Majority of Political Exiles Will Be Permitted to Return," Guatemala City, 23 December 1947, 814.00/12-2347, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 2.

<sup>330</sup> Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

Melgar's memorandum also seemed to borrow from the petitions delivered to Trujillo with its praising the Dominican dictator as a leading anti-communist leader in the Caribbean Basin who held off the Cayo Confites expedition. "The Dominican Republic understands, from its own experience, these criminal assaults," the exile wrote, "The Republics of Central America and the Caribbean have a duty to fight, at all cost, in order that . . . there exist governments [throughout the Americas] that support these advanced peoples in americanidad against communism."<sup>331</sup>

For two reasons, this exile's conspiracy stood out from others brought to the Dominican dictator. First, the venture required no direct assistance from Trujillo, a matter Melgar repeatedly made clear, assuring that he already had "adequate armaments and sufficient money." In January 1949, Melgar's allies would move into Esquipulas on the Guatemalan-Honduran border during a local religious pilgrimage. There, the exile would make contact with fellow counter-revolutionary groups inside Guatemala. Thanks to their having raised sufficient funds on their own, these forces would arm themselves and launch their plot.<sup>332</sup> Melgar even claimed that influential Guatemalans, including colonel José Enrique Ardón Fernández from the Guatemalan Army and Guatemalan Catholic leader José Calderón Salazar, already supported the proposal.<sup>333</sup>

Second, Melgar's principal reason for reaching out to the Dominican dictator was to obtain the Honduran dictator's assistance. The exile understood that others "ha[d] solicited from [Cariás] support and perhaps something more, consisting in ammunition and money," but Melgar

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<sup>331</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, Ciudad de México, 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

<sup>332</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, Ciudad de México, 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

<sup>333</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, "PERSONAS QUE RESPONDEN DEL MEMORANDUM ANEXO," 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

believed the Honduran dictator refused these requests due to a lack of “seriousness” in those plots. In contrast, Melgar swore that his forces had acquired the necessary armaments and funds to pursue their conspiracy, all of which the exile was more than willing to put before the Dominican and Honduran dictators.<sup>334</sup> Melgar explained to Trujillo:

. . . we only need for the government of Honduras to permit us to pass through its border and, within [Honduran] territory, the necessary storage of the armaments that we have[,] as well as the hospitality and guarantees to the military leaders that must move from Honduras to Guatemala at the appointed time.<sup>335</sup>

Thus, the exile summarized his solicitation:

We consequently request of the government of the Dominican Republic that, standing upon its good relations of close friendship with the government of Honduras, [Trujillo] carry out a gesture before señor Tiburcio Carías Andino, President of that country, to the effect that [Carías] gives his consideration to the project and opens the border to us for PASSING AND STORAGE only, in the understanding, as has been said, that the revolution would have its start in Guatemalan territory and with forces also Guatemalan.<sup>336</sup>

Melgar recognized that both Trujillo and Carías’ regimes opposed Arévalo’s government and hoped that one dictator could vouch for the exile to receive the aid of another.

Melgar’s memorandum achieved at least part of its intended goal, for the dictators did share intelligence and lobby each other on behalf of the venture. On October 1, Damirón Díaz forwarded the exile’s memorandum.<sup>337</sup> Ten days later, Trujillo ordered Dominican officials to

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<sup>334</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, Ciudad de México, 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente “1948-1949, Código 5/c.”

<sup>335</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, Ciudad de México, 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente “1948-1949, Código 5/c.”

<sup>336</sup> Manuel Melgar de la Cerda, Ciudad de México, 29 septiembre 1948, con Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente “1948-1949, Código 5/c.” Capitalization in original.

<sup>337</sup> Rafael Damirón Díaz a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 232, Ciudad de México, 01 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente “1948-1949, Código 5/c.”

send a coded message about the exile not to Carías but to Somoza.<sup>338</sup> Although the Dominican dictator never explained his reasons for reaching out to his Nicaraguan compatriot, it is likely that Trujillo, as during Ponce's solicitation, wished for additional information from a more experienced regional anti-communist proponent against the Guatemalan Revolution. On October 25, Nicaraguan Ambassador in Ciudad Trujillo colonel Guillermo Rivas Cuadra hand-delivered Somoza's response to Dominican general Federico Fiallo, one of Trujillo's military and intelligence advisers. Regarding "the proposition of Melgar," the Nicaraguan dictator told his ally, "I am following up with [the] President [of] Honduras [regarding] permission to pass. If [I] obtain [the] results, I will notify [you] immediately."<sup>339</sup> The three dictators were not only sharing intelligence on Melgar but lobbying each other to endorse the exile's proposal.

The exile's conspiracy reveals the links established among the dictators within the span of a single year. No records have been located regarding Carías's response, so it is possible the Honduran dictator did not endorse Melgar's plot or Melgar was not able to pursue his plan. Notwithstanding this, the zone of contact and collaboration now incorporated discussions and meetings between exiles, multiple dictators, and their officials sharing intelligence on and support of Guatemalan exiles' ventures to overthrow Arévalo's government.

#### **D. General Roderico Anzueto and Colonel Arturo Ramírez, 1949**

Intelligence-sharing played a central role in the emerging network, epitomized in the 1949 plots of general Roderico Anzueto and colonel Arturo Ramírez. Lobbied by Anzueto, Trujillo ordered Dominican Ambassador in Mexico City Joaquín Balaguer to meet with

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<sup>338</sup> Anastasio Somoza a Embajada Nicaragüense en Ciudad Trujillo, Managua, 25 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

<sup>339</sup> Anastasio Somoza a Embajada Nicaragüense en Ciudad Trujillo, Managua, 25 octubre 1948, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2904052, Expediente "1948-1949, Código 5/c."

Nicaraguan Ambassador in Mexico City Alberto Sevilla Sacasa. The Dominican ambassador then reached out to the Honduran ambassador in Mexico City whose response reshaped Balaguer's opinion of Anzueto and bolstered the image of Ramírez instead. Such intelligence-sharing offers an important glimpse into the links among and goals of members of the network.

In early 1949, Anzueto began meeting with Dominican Consul in San Francisco José Aybar in order to build a potentially beneficial relationship with Trujillo. On January 25, Aybar wrote to the dictator following a luncheon where Anzueto claimed to be “a great admirer and friend” of Trujillo and opponent of Arévalo's “communist regime.” The exile even offered to mediate between the dictator and the Archbishop of Guatemala, who was allegedly preparing his own plot against the Guatemalan government.<sup>340</sup> Over the next months, Aybar served as an intermediary between Trujillo and Anzueto and reported in mid-July that the exile was in Puebla de Los Ángeles in Mexico plotting a conspiracy.<sup>341</sup>

Interested in the proposal, Trujillo in September 1949 ordered Balaguer to meet with Sevilla Sacasa to discuss Anzueto, marking this as the third time in two years that the Dominican

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<sup>340</sup> José E. Aybar a Rafael Trujillo, 25 enero 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349. There is little work on the Catholic Church's opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution due to the lack of critical research on Guatemalan anti-communism during the Guatemalan Revolution. Scholarship on Archbishop Mariano Rossell y Arellano and the Catholic Church's opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution has centered on Rossell y Arellano and the Catholic Church's activities during Arbenz's government. See Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 210-213, 287-288; Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside*, 175; Emelio Betances, *The Catholic Church and Power Politics in Latin America: The Dominican Case in Comparative Perspective* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 69-70; Carlota McAllister, “Rural Markets, Revolutionary Souls, and Rebellious Women in Cold War Guatemala,” in Joseph and Spenser, *In from the Cold*, 357-358. On Rossell y Arellano's support for Castillo Armas in the early 1950s, see Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 221, 250. The best analysis of Rossell y Arellano's Catholicism and opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution is Holden. The best study on the Catholic Church during the Guatemalan Revolution is Carlos Roberto Montenegro Ríos, “La iglesia católica y la Revolución guatemalteca de 1944-1954,” tesis inédita, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, 2004.

<sup>341</sup> Abelardo R. Nanita, Secretario Particular del Presidente de la República, a José Enrique Aybar, Núm. 3824, Ciudad Trujillo, 31 enero 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349; José E. Aybar a Telésforo R. Calderón, San Francisco, 20 julio 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349.

dictator solicited advice on Guatemalan exiles from Somoza or Somoza's officials. Coming away from the meeting, Balaguer held a favorable opinion of Anzueto's plan. On September 5, Balaguer told the Dominican dictator that the exile's plot was ready to commence. According to Anzueto and confirmed by Sevilla Sacasa, the exile had raised funds, acquired armaments, and held important contacts, both inside and outside of Guatemala, to pursue the coup. Reassured by his Nicaraguan counterpart, the Dominican ambassador endorsed providing "some funds" to Anzueto, "not to exceed \$10,000," that would be "returned after the [conspiracy's] triumph." Together, Balaguer and Sevilla Sacasa suggested that the exile "travel discreetly to [the Dominican Republic] to finalize the details of the plan." Between Sevilla Sacasa's advice and Anzueto's modest request for assistance, the Dominican ambassador concluded, "It is evident that with little effort there would precipitate the fall of [Arévalo's] already tottering regime."<sup>342</sup>

This intelligence-sharing on Anzueto's plot soon expanded to include a subsequent meeting between Balaguer and the Honduran ambassador in Mexico City that recast Balaguer's opinion of Anzueto. On September 8, Balaguer again wrote to Trujillo after Sevilla Sacasa delivered instructions for Anzueto's travels to the Dominican Republic. However, the exile did not wish to leave. Taken aback, the Dominican ambassador had insisted upon another meeting, whereupon Balaguer confessed to Trujillo, "I was able to come to the conclusion that what [Anzueto] desires is principally to be provided with some funds, and that, for him, the other question [on the plan itself] is secondary." The ambassador admitted that the exile's hesitation to meet with Trujillo altered the venture's appeal and led Balaguer to turn to his Honduran counterpart for additional advice. At that point, the Honduran ambassador explained that the

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<sup>342</sup> Joaquín Balaguer, Embajador Dominicano en la Ciudad de México, a Rafael Trujillo, No. 802, Ciudad de México, 05 septiembre 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903961 "Fechas extremas 1948-1951, Ref. Antigua 270" (en adelante Caja IT 2903961), Expediente "1948-1950, Código 5/c."



exile had “received on a certain occasion money from General Carías for the same purposes that [Anzueto] now attempts, and that after having wasted the sum that was put to [Anzueto’s] disposal [Anzueto] did not realize the agreed upon operation.”<sup>343</sup> Discouraged by the exile’s reluctance and the information on Anzueto’s previous dealings with Carías, Balaguer suggested cutting contact with this exile.

Knowing that the Dominican dictator was interested in sponsoring a coup, the Honduran ambassador vouched for a familiar exile, colonel Arturo Ramírez. Although Trujillo and other Dominican officials had networked with Ramírez during the invasion conspiracy, Balaguer had not been included in these discussions and required an introduction by the Honduran ambassador. In their meetings, Ramírez soon divulged his plans for a coup plot in January 1950. Whereas Anzueto had hesitated to travel to the Dominican Republic, Ramírez gladly agreed to make this trip and meet personally with the Dominican dictator. Furthermore, the exile had the support of both Carías and the United Fruit Company, even while requesting \$100,000 from Trujillo.<sup>344</sup> Ramírez’s solicitation for economic assistance may appear large, but Balaguer insisted on keeping contact.<sup>345</sup> Near the end of the year, Dominican Chargé d’Affaires in San Salvador Arturo Calventi met with Chief of Staff of the Salvadoran Army colonel Marco Antonio Molina, who recommended Ramírez as a viable leader for an upcoming plot.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> Joaquín Balaguer a Rafael Trujillo, No. 837, Ciudad de México, 08 septiembre 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903961, Expediente “1948-1950, Código 5/c.”

<sup>344</sup> Joaquín Balaguer a Rafael Trujillo, No. 837, Ciudad de México, 08 septiembre 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903961, Expediente “1948-1950, Código 5/c.”

<sup>345</sup> Arturo Ramírez a Joaquín Balaguer, Ciudad de México, 21 diciembre 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903961, Expediente “1948-1950, Código 5/c.”

<sup>346</sup> Arturo Calventi, Encargado de Negocios ad interino de la República Dominicana en San Salvador, “MEMORANDUM DE CONVERSACION CON EL CORONEL MARCO ANTONIO MOLINA, JEFE DE ESTADO MAYOR DEL EJERCITO DE EL SALVADOR,” Ciudad Trujillo, 29 noviembre 1949, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903956 “Fechas extremas 1948-

The meetings among Dominican, Nicaraguan, and Honduran officials regarding Anzueto and Ramírez's machinations demonstrate the important role of intelligence-sharing within the network. Anzueto lobbied Dominican officials for meetings and economic assistance, so Trujillo ordered Balaguer to reach out to Sevilla Sacasa. Balaguer utilized the network's intelligence-sharing to meet not only with Sevilla Sacasa but with the Honduran ambassador who opposed any patronage for Anzueto. Due to the Honduran ambassador's suggestions, Balaguer began a relationship with Ramírez. As when dealing with Melgar, officials from three different regimes employed the network's intelligence-sharing to evaluate exiles' conspiracies.

#### **E. Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas and the 1950 Base Militar Attack**

The Caribbean Basin anti-communist network and Guatemalan exiles, many of whom had benefitted from the network's patronage over the previous years, played a key role in supporting colonel Carlos Castillo Armas's earliest attempts to undermine the Guatemalan Revolution. The links between Castillo Armas and the network emerged as early as January 1950, months before the attack on the Guatemalan Army's Base Militar. Before Castillo Armas's attack brought him a regional reputation, Somoza, Trujillo, and other Guatemalan exiles already knew of him.

Castillo Armas's plan began to take shape in the winter of 1949-1950. Many of major Francisco Arana's supporters and military colleagues in the Guardia de Honor [Honor Guard] revolted in July 1949 following a failed coup plot and Arana's death.<sup>347</sup> Castillo Armas did not

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1953, Ref. Antigua 2270" (en adelante Caja IT 2903956), Expediente "Salvador, 1949-1952, Código 5/c."

<sup>347</sup> On Arana's death, see Piero Gleijeses, "The Death of Francisco Arana: A Turning Point in the Guatemalan Revolution," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 22.3 (October 1990): 527-552; Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 50-71.

participate in the Guardia's revolt, despite his rank as one of Arana's better-trained officers, so the Guatemalan government, while arresting military officers loyal to Arana, released Castillo Armas.<sup>348</sup> The colonel began working with dissidents from the elite and the Guatemalan Army, believing he could capture the Guatemalan Army's Base Militar in Guatemala City with a handful of supporters and initiate a larger uprising.<sup>349</sup> He felt confident in his support from both former military officers and those still within the Guatemalan Army. Speaking to a U.S. source, he claimed that the "main problem troubling him was the matter of arms" but "was . . . thinking of contacting SOMOZA or TRUJILLO for these arms." Castillo Armas "realized that other Guatemalans had probably contacted SOMOZA and TRUJILLO for this purpose on previous occasions and had met with no success" but alleged that "those men had no standing or power in Guatemala and that this must have been known to SOMOZA and TRUJILLO."<sup>350</sup>

Castillo Armas did make contact with Nicaraguan, Dominican, and even Salvadoran officials, so reported Dominican Chargé d'Affaires in San Salvador Arturo Calventi on meeting with Castillo Armas, the Nicaraguan ambassador in San Salvador, and Chief of Staff for the Salvadoran Army colonel Marco Antonio Molina. The list of "materials" that would be "needed" for the attack was pretty extensive, and Castillo Armas said he would also give it personally to Somoza. The Nicaraguan dictator, however, declined the meeting.<sup>351</sup> Although Somoza would

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<sup>348</sup> Gleijeses, from interview with Guatemalan Army major Carlos Paz Tejada, *Shattered Hope*, 67-68; "Guatemala (w/ Attachment)," Document 0000915053, 13 January 1950, CIA FOIA.

<sup>349</sup> Gleijeses, from interviews with Guatemalan anti-communist Eduardo Taracena de la Cerda and Guatemalan Army lieutenant Manuel Antonio Montenegro Morales, *Shattered Hope*, 81-83; "Memorandum From the Acting Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division, Central Intelligence Agency ([name not declassified]) to the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (Helms)," Document 7, Washington, 17 March 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 15-16; Document 0000915053, 13 January 1950, CIA FOIA.

<sup>350</sup> Document 0000915053, 13 January 1950, CIA FOIA. Capitalization in original.

<sup>351</sup> Arturo Calventi a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 7, San Salvador, 24 enero 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903956, Expediente "Salvador, 1949-1952, Código 5/c."

soon emerge as a leading patron of Castillo Armas, it is probable that Somoza was waiting for events in Guatemala to calm following Arana's death and the Guardia's revolt. Along this line, Molina explained that the Salvadoran military attaché in Guatemala City had put a visit on hold due to the "internal political situation."<sup>352</sup> Both the need to evaluate Castillo Armas and the risk of another political setback motivated this caution.

Unable to thoroughly vet Castillo Armas or exchange intelligence on the Guatemalan, Molina, the Nicaraguan ambassador in San Salvador, and Calventi turned him away. In a conclusion that hearkened back to Sevilla Sacasa and Paíno Pichardo's evaluation of Ponce in early 1948, the officials "consider[ed] the petition excessive and with [a] cost ris[ing] to approximately a million dollars."<sup>353</sup> In fact, the three officials came to a conclusion, based on Castillo Armas's experience and petition, that reflected how the network's members had judged various coup plots. They worried that Castillo Armas's "movement lack[ed] a firm base" of support and thought best "to make contact with some [Guatemalan] military official" at the very least, but neither the military nor any civilians could speak to the Guatemalan's chances of success. For these reasons, the members of the counter-revolutionary network denied Castillo Armas's request.<sup>354</sup>

Castillo Armas was not the only exile to lobby the network to support the Base Militar attack. After the Guardia revolt, Arévalo's government arrested and exiled various dissidents, including José Luis Arenas. Arenas led the Partido de Unificación Anticomunista [Anti-Communist Unification Party, or PUA], not truly an organized political party but a significant

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<sup>352</sup> Arturo Calventi a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 7, San Salvador, 24 enero 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903956, Expediente "Salvador, 1949-1952, Código 5/c."

<sup>353</sup> Arturo Calventi a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 7, San Salvador, 24 enero 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903956, Expediente "Salvador, 1949-1952, Código 5/c."

<sup>354</sup> Arturo Calventi a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 7, San Salvador, 24 enero 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903956, Expediente "Salvador, 1949-1952, Código 5/c."

organization of protest against Arévalo's government.<sup>355</sup> Abroad, he traveled the Caribbean Basin and met with Mexican anti-communists and Dominican Ambassador in Mexico City Héctor Incháustegui Cabral.<sup>356</sup>

Furthermore, the Base Militar attack received support from Guatemalan exiles connected to the network. In November, a Consejo Supremo del Movimiento Revolucionario Anticomunista [Supreme Council of the Revolutionary Anti-Communist Movement] emerged, led by Castillo Armas, Guatemalan anti-communist leaders José Luis Arenas and Guillermo Dávila Córdova, and Guatemalan exiles colonel Arturo Ramírez and colonel Enrique Ardón. Arenas was now connected to the network, Ramírez had links with Dominican and Honduran officials, and Ardón had supported Melgar's conspiracy. In two manifestos, the leaders tapped into the anti-communist ideology and identified themselves with Castillo Armas. With the "MANIFIESTO AL PUEBLO DE GUATEMALA [MANIFESTO TO THE PEOPLE OF GUATEMALA]," they defended having "to take up arms to save the country from the hands of COMMUNISM that has taken root in Guatemala with the dominion of arevalismo." The Council's leaders warned that communism's "tragic claws" aimed to "destroy the religious and humanitarian sentiments" of Guatemala and "convert Guatemala into a forward base of operations for international communism" against "American democracy."<sup>357</sup> The

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<sup>355</sup> See Richard Patterson, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City, to Secretary of State, No. 329, Guatemala City, 21 July 1949, 814.00/7-2149, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 2; Collins D. Almon, CIA Station Chief at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, to Milton K. Wells, First Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, Memorandum, 14 September 1949, with Milton K. Wells to Secretary of State, No. 516 "Subject: Political Prisoners Released," Guatemala city, 20 September 1949, 814.00/9-2049, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 2.

<sup>356</sup> Héctor Incháustegui Cabral a Telésforo R. Calderón, No. 1355, Ciudad de México, 26 septiembre 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903349 "Fechas extremas 1947-1950, Código 658."

<sup>357</sup> El Consejo Supremo del Movimiento Revolucionario Anticomunista, "MANIFIESTO AL PUEBLO DE GUATEMALA," noviembre 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo "3348, Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950." Capitalization in original.

“MANIFIESTO AL EJERCITO DE GUATEMALA [MANIFESTO TO THE ARMY OF GUATEMALA]” declared, “All the world’s armies agree through their weapons with the United Nations’ decision, to fight COMMUNISM . . . in the Asian Continent.” Referencing the Korean War, the Council warned “great armies in these moments spill their generous blood in order to contain and destroy the invasion of communist forces, that threaten to run over the old world to take on the American democracies.” The Council ended their call with a direct plea, asking that the Guatemalan Army “put itself on guard and prepare itself to combat and eradicate the communism that already finds itself in our land, uniting and making common cause with the Guatemalan people, whose cause our movement embodies.”<sup>358</sup>

Following the attack’s failure and a self-proclaimed ‘escape’ in mid-1951, Castillo Armas went to Tegucigalpa in exile.<sup>359</sup> He soon became head of other exiles there and traveled between the region’s dictators. In January 1952, CIA officials reported his receiving funds from both the UFCO and the Peruvian dictatorship, though historian Piero Gleijeses presents Somoza as Castillo Armas’s chief patron.<sup>360</sup> The majority of reports reinforce Gleijeses’s observation that Somoza served as the primary intermediary between the exile and the Caribbean Basin anti-

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<sup>358</sup> El Consejo Supremo del Movimiento Revolucionario Anticomunista, “MANIFIESTO AL EJERCITO DE GUATEMALA,” noviembre 1950, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903348, Legajo “3348, Oficios y Correspondencia, 1950.”

<sup>359</sup> On Castillo Armas’s ‘escape,’ see Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 83.

<sup>360</sup> “Memorandum From the Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division, Central Intelligence Agency (King) to the Deputy Director for Plans, Central Intelligence Agency (Wisner),” Document 2, Washington, 11 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 3; Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 230. No scholarship has identified the Peruvian dictatorship under Manuel Odría as a regional anti-communist proponent against Arévalo or Arbenz’s governments, but further scholarship into the links between Odría and Caribbean Basin dictatorships might reveal such networking due to numerous references emerge regarding ties between Caribbean Basin dictatorships and the Peruvian dictatorship.

communist network.<sup>361</sup> The Agency also noted former Honduran dictator Tiburcio Carías and the UFCO as pledging support to Castillo Armas.<sup>362</sup>

By 1952, the network's members and Castillo Armas were already in dialogue and employed their intelligence-sharing when the exile and Somoza began to prepare a new plot. In January 1952, Dominican Ambassador in Managua César Pina Barinas heard from the Nicaraguan consul in Chile that U.S. Ambassador in Managua Thomas Whelan was lobbying Truman to invite Somoza to the United States.<sup>363</sup> On April 26, Military Attaché of the Venezuelan Embassy in Managua major Roberto Pulido-Guerrero met with Dominican Consul in Managua Alvaro Logroño Batlle to share information about a “golpe de estado” to begin in May “to bring down the communist government of President Arbenz in Guatemala.” Pulido-Guerrero explained that “the head of the movement [was] Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, who [was] in Tegucigalpa, and that the stated movement [was] being planned carefully.” The Venezuelan military attaché had met with Arenas and “attribute[ed] importance to this intent to overthrow Arbenz,” as well as “a high probability of success.”<sup>364</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> Document 7, Washington, 17 March 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 13-14. Also see the documents between Carlos Castillo Armas, Anastasio Somoza, and Anastasio ‘Tachito’ Somoza in 1953 in *La Democracia Amenazada: El Caso de Guatemala* (Guatemala: Secretaría de Propaganda y Divulgación de la Presidencia de la República, 1954).

<sup>362</sup> “Cable to OPC/OSO from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000915068, 23 January 1952, CIA FOIA; “Cable to State, Army, Navy, Air, JCS, SECDEF, ATSA from Central Intelligence Agency,” Document 0000915067, 24 January 1952, CIA FOIA. Carías continued to support Castillo Armas during Operation PBSUCCESS, Guillermo Flores Avendaño, *Memorias, 1900-1970*, 2da tomo (Guatemala: Editorial del Ejército, 1974), 448.

<sup>363</sup> César Pina Barinas a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, No. 122-A “Asunto: Viaje del Presidente Somoza a Estados Unidos,” Managua, 28 enero 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352 “Fechas extremas 1952-1953, Código 658” (en adelante Caja IT 2903352), Carpetilla “1, 1951-1953, Nicaragua.”

<sup>364</sup> Álvaro Logroño Batlle, Cónsul General Dominicano en Managua, a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, No. 49 “Asunto: El Agregado Militar de la Embajada de Venezuela en Managua, Mayor Roberto Pulido-Guerrero, visita este Consulado General,” Managua, 26 abril 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja

## **F. Conclusion**

By 1952, this regional conflict would begin to influence U.S. policy toward Guatemala. The network's members already utilized their intelligence-sharing, allowing Castillo Armas and Somoza to prepare a new venture. As the State Department, White House, and CIA considered possible measures to overthrow Arbenz's government, U.S. officials would take notice of how Caribbean Basin regimes supported the exile. The transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution would soon meet the international Cold War when this emerging plot became the CIA's Operation PBFORTUNE.



## VI. Chapter 5: Before Operation PBFORTUNE, Early 1950s

In July 1952, U.S. officials posted in Caracas, Guatemala City, Mexico City, and Panama City received instructions from the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs on a new “semi-covert” project. The Bureau’s various departmental directors were distributing newspaper articles from Mexico City’s *El Excelsior* and Panama City’s *La Hora* that discussed the “communist situation in Guatemala.” As the directors explained, the U.S. embassies in Latin America hopefully would “by appropriate and discreet means be able to obtain the reproduction” of the articles in local newspapers. Of course, the Bureau wished that no evidence would implicate the U.S. government in disseminating these materials, but public affairs officials could work with Latin American editors and journalists to republish the articles.<sup>365</sup> These instructions were quickly realized. In Panama City, U.S. Ambassador John Wiley already knew which newspapers would republish.<sup>366</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Caracas Fletcher Warren managed to have the two original articles, and a few others, reprinted in Venezuelan newspapers in September.<sup>367</sup> Whereas historians have presented the Bureau in 1952 as led by Latin Americanist experts who respected the non-interventionist ideal, those officials had actually implemented a propaganda project designed to denounce Guatemalan communism. Before Operation PBFORTUNE, the State Department was already engaging in interventionist activities in opposition to Arbenz’s government.

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<sup>365</sup> The letters were drafted by Edward Clark but signed by Rollin Atwood and Roy Rubottom. See Rollin S. Atwood, Director of the Office of South American Affairs, to Fletcher Warren, U.S. Ambassador in Caracas, 03 July 1952, 714.001/7-352, NARAII, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3249; Roy R. Rubottom, Jr., Director of the Office of Middle American Affairs, to William O’Dwyer, U.S. Ambassador in Mexico City, 03 July 1952, 714.001/7-352, NARAII, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3249.

<sup>366</sup> John C. Wiley, U.S. Ambassador in Panama City, to Roy R. Rubottom, Panama City, 15 July 1952, 714.001/7-1552, NARAII, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3249.

<sup>367</sup> Fletcher Warren to Rollin S. Atwood, Caracas, 30 September 1952, 714.001/9-3052, NARAII, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3249.

This chapter examines how in the early 1950s U.S. officials, Guatemalan exiles, and members of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network established the foundation for Operation PBFORTUNE. The State Department under Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Edward Miller, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Mann, and other Latin Americanist officials approved a new U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala that retained the public image of the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal while allowing direct intervention to encourage opposition against Arbenz's government. Guatemalan exile doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla, Somoza, and Trujillo built relationships with U.S. president Harry Truman's military aides, general Harry Vaughan and colonel Cornelius Mara. Guatemalan exiles and the network indirectly shaped U.S. policy toward Guatemala as the CIA considered how the network's members already supported Guatemalan exile colonel Carlos Castillo Armas. At that point, Somoza utilized his relationships to lobby for a 1952 visit. Seemingly disparate, these events together would lead into the discussions surrounding Operation PBFORTUNE.

Alongside its taking into account the actions of Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators, this chapter challenges the literature's presentation of Miller, Mann, and the staff of the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs as devoted adherents to the non-intervention ideal. Scholarship has focused upon the Dwight Eisenhower Administration's policies toward Guatemala, only briefly touched upon Operation PBFORTUNE in 1952, and inadvertently overlooked important shifts in the early 1950s regarding the State Department and CIA's policies toward Guatemala.<sup>368</sup> Richard Immerman, Bryce Wood, and Stephen Rabe have emphasized how Miller, Mann, and

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<sup>368</sup> See Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 101-132; Wood, 132-190; Gleijeses, "The Death of Francisco Arana," 549-550; Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 117-133, 223-231; Cullather, 24-33; Beisner, 569-586; Grow, 1-27.

their fellow Latin Americanist officials opposed any plot that would have undermined the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal.<sup>369</sup> Instead, this chapter finds that the international Cold War increasingly shaped these officials' interpretations of events in Guatemala. Emphasizing the growing strength of communism in Guatemala under Arbenz's government, Miller and Mann by 1951 led the State Department in turning away from the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal.

#### **A. The State Department, Guatemala, and the International Cold War, Early 1950s**

By 1952, Latin Americanist officials in the State Department came to define Arbenz's government as a communist threat to U.S. national security and inter-American solidarity. Officials since the mid-1940s had debated the extent of communist penetration in Guatemala but believed in 1950 that the new government under Arbenz would alleviate U.S.-Guatemalan tensions and that the Guatemalan Army functioned as a reliable anti-communist institution. Escalating importance placed upon Cold War-related events, such as the Korean War, and Arbenz's policies, especially Decree 900's Agrarian Reform in May 1952, ended these expectations.

Anti-communism heavily influenced U.S. policy toward Guatemala in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Piero Gleijeses in *Shattered Hope* argues that anti-communism emerged as an important but often unclear factor as the Cold War escalated. Into the late 1940s, officials' perceptions of communist influence of Guatemala best reflected their generally "confused analysis of the country," as when one official remarked that they between 1947 and 1951 frequently debated whether Arévalo's government "w[as] communist, crypto-communist, under

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<sup>369</sup> Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 122; Wood, 157-159; Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 48-49.

communist influence[,] or not communist at all.”<sup>370</sup> While in 1950 it probably would not have opposed a coup that originated within Guatemala, the State Department did not actively conspire against Arévalo’s government.<sup>371</sup>

The perceptions of and debates among Latin Americanist officials, most notably Miller and Mann, epitomized the State Department’s increasing focus on communist influence in Guatemala. Secretary of State Dean Acheson focused upon Cold War conflicts in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Robert Beisner describes how Acheson “usually did little more than stick his head in Miller’s office to see how things were going [in Latin America]. For most countries in the [Western] hemisphere, Miller, desk officers, and envoys in the field did the work.”<sup>372</sup> For these reasons, Miller and Mann’s opinions and leadership of the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs heavily shaped U.S. policy toward Guatemala in the early 1950s.

At the turn of the decade, the two Latin Americanists worried about events in Guatemala but did not believe the country was under communist domination. Miller at the end of 1949 had “expressed his serious concern over the increasingly hostile attitude of the Guatemalan Government toward U.S. business interests there” and “the radical leftists tendencies of many Guatemalan officials.” One official claimed, “Miller stated his interest in working out some plan for letting the Guatemalan Government realize in no uncertain terms that the Department does not intend to stand by, blind to its interests, with a policy of inaction.”<sup>373</sup> When the Guatemalan president asked for the removal of U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Richard Patterson, Miller

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<sup>370</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 122; Gleijeses, from interview with Kenedon Steins, Political Officer at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, 15 October 1983, *Shattered Hope*, 120-121.

<sup>371</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 127-133.

<sup>372</sup> Beisner, 573.

<sup>373</sup> Murray M. Wise to Willard F. Barber, Office of American Republic Affairs, and Edward G. Miller, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, “Subject: Plan for Dealing with Guatemalan situation,” 01 August 1949, 814.00/8-149, NARAI, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 2.

criticized Arévalo's action.<sup>374</sup> In a September 1949 briefing, he emphasized the poor treatment of U.S. businesses in Guatemala, the lack of common ground between their respective delegations at the United Nations (UN), and the Guatemalan government's not having signed the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, or Rio Treaty.<sup>375</sup>

As requirements for any improvement in relations, the State Department expected the Guatemalan government to support U.S. Cold War-oriented policy at the UN regarding the Korean War, endorse the Rio Treaty, and encourage domestic anti-communist sentiment. The Guatemalan government's position on the Korean War became an important issue. Officials at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City in mid-1950 organized a visit by Miller to Guatemala.<sup>376</sup> During their meeting, Miller repeatedly touched upon the Korean War, and the Guatemalan president on multiple occasions "gave categoric [sic] assurances that Guatemala's international position [was] one of support of the United States and the United Nations." Arévalo's response not only assured Miller; the official assumed that the president's position would give indirect support to the country's moderates.<sup>377</sup> Mann, too, endorsed this affirmation.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Richard C. Patterson, Jr., 27 July 1949, NARAII, RG59, "Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Edward G. Miller, Subject File: 1949-1953" (hereafter EGM), Box 7, Folder "Guatemala."

<sup>375</sup> Ismael González Arévalo, Guatemalan Ambassador in Washington, Frank Linares, Counselor at U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, James E. Webb, Undersecretary of State, Edward G. Miller, Jr., Willard F. Barber, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Murray M. Wise, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Guatemalan Ambassador Calls on the Under Secretary," 16 September 1949, 814.00/9-1649, NARAII, RG59, DF814, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>376</sup> Milton K. Wells, "The Chargé in Guatemala to the Secretary of State," Guatemala City, 14 May 1950, 611.14/5-1450: Telegram, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950: The United Nations, The Western Hemisphere, Volume II* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976) (hereafter *FRUS 1950*), 888.

<sup>377</sup> Milton K. Wells, "The Chargé in Guatemala (Wells) to the Department of State," Guatemala [City], 07 July 1950, 110.15 MI/7-750, in *FRUS 1950*, 905, 907.

<sup>378</sup> Thomas C. Mann to Willard F. Barber, "Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Middle American Affairs (Mann) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Barber)," [Washington,] 14 July 1950, 611.14/7-1450, in *FRUS 1950*, 908-909.

Developments regarding the Rio Treaty proved equally promising. The State Department had blamed anti-U.S. sentiment and Guatemalan communists for the government's refusal to ratify the Rio Treaty.<sup>379</sup> Since 1947, U.S. officials had "consistently urged the Guatemalan Government to ratify the Rio Treaty," yet the Guatemalan congress refused.<sup>380</sup> With the outbreak of the Korean War, Guatemalan officials sent the Rio Treaty to the congress with Arévalo's approval, once again earning Mann's endorsement.<sup>381</sup> Though the Guatemalan government issued a reservation on Belize, Chargé d'Affaires in Guatemala City Milton Wells reported that only a few communists expressed their discontent.<sup>382</sup>

Adding to the seeming improvement in relations, the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs interpreted Arbenz's election in November 1950 as beneficial. A May 1950 assessment of U.S.-Guatemalan relations took note of the influential communists inside the Guatemalan government but still repeated Miller and Mann's opinions that recent developments favored moderates or "more responsible elements."<sup>383</sup> Throughout their reports, they believed Arbenz would steer the country back to the "center" and marginalize vocal communists.<sup>384</sup> Even while urging others to

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<sup>379</sup> See Gleijeses, 118-119.

<sup>380</sup> W. J. McWilliams, "Memorandum by the Director of the Executive Secretariat (McWilliams)," [Washington,] 29 May 1950, Under Secretary's Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, Documents, in *FRUS 1950*, 900.

<sup>381</sup> Thomas C. Mann to Willard F. Barber, [Washington,] 14 July 1950, 611.14/7-1450, in *FRUS 1950*, 909.

<sup>382</sup> Milton K. Wells, "The Chargé in Guatemala (Wells) to the Department of State," Guatemala [City], 19 October 1950, 714.001/10-1950, in *FRUS 1950*, 920. Various *FRUS* documents, Gleijeses, and Immerman have touched upon the Belize reservation in Guatemala's ratification of the Rio Treaty.

<sup>383</sup> W. J. McWilliams, "Memorandum," [Washington,] 29 May 1950, Under Secretary's Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, Documents, in *FRUS 1950*, 900.

<sup>384</sup> Thomas C. Mann to Willard F. Barber, [Washington,] 14 July 1950, 611.14/7-1450, in *FRUS 1950*, 908-909; Milton K. Wells, "The Chargé in Guatemala (Wells) to the Department of State," Guatemala [City], 15 November 1950, 714.001/11-1550, in *FRUS 1950*, 922.

maintain a “watchful-waiting” attitude and “reserve judgment,” Wells admitted the election offered some “optimism.”<sup>385</sup>

Such hopes soon dimmed as the Bureau came to characterize the new president as undesirable. Though not defining Arbenz as a communist, officials concluded that communists profited from his election, created communist-led organizations, and occupied important positions, whether in the Guatemalan congress or the Institute of Social Security.<sup>386</sup> In their reports, officials lamented that “the ascending curve of communist influence has not even tended to level off, but has rather continued upward on an accelerated incline.”<sup>387</sup> Once signaling a positive turn, the Korean War and Guatemala’s reservation on the Rio Treaty now exacerbated U.S.-Guatemalan tensions. The State Department contrasted all other Latin American governments’ endorsements of the Rio Treaty against the Guatemalan government’s lone reservation. Expecting contributions to U.S. efforts regarding the Korean War, officials reported that the new government “failed to meet squarely the important issue of Communist infiltration at a time when U.S. blood and treasure [were] being expended in defense against Communist aggression.”<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> Milton K. Wells, Guatemala [City,] 19 October 1950, 714.001/10-1950, in *FRUS 1950*, 920-1; Milton K. Wells, Guatemala [City,] 15 November 1950, 714.001/11-1550, in *FRUS 1950*, 922, 924.

<sup>386</sup> “National Intelligence Estimate,” Washington, 11 March 1952, INR-NIE files, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1033-1034; “Notes from the Under Secretary’s Meeting, Department of State, 9:30 a.m., October 3, 1951,” Under Secretary’s Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, in *FRUS 1951*, 1444-1445. The role of Guatemalan communists in Arbenz’s political orientation is discussed in Gleijeses, 140-143.

<sup>387</sup> “Paper Prepared for the Under Secretary’s Meeting,” [Washington,] 12 June 1951, Under Secretary’s Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, in Ralph R. Goodwin, N. Stephen Kane, and Harriet D. Schwar (eds.), *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951: The United Nations, the Western Hemisphere, Volume II* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1979) (hereafter *FRUS 1951*), 1436.

<sup>388</sup> “Policy Statement Prepared in the Department of State,” Washington, 02 May 1951, 611.14/5-251, in *FRUS 1951*, 1423, 1425, 1434-1435. On the issue of ‘gratitude’ in U.S. policy

By early 1952, the State Department juxtaposed Guatemalan communism with international communism and the Soviet Union as detrimental to Cold War-oriented goals and possible threats to U.S. national security. Officials warned Arbenz's government about persons in Guatemala linked to international communism. The president ignored these recommendations while communists shaped his government's policies, published pro-Soviet materials, and organized communist parties. Reviewing hemispheric relations, U.S. officials noticed the only country not a signatory to the Rio Treaty.<sup>389</sup> In a March 1952 letter, Miller summarized, "No doubt as communism flourishes in Guatemala, it will have increasing influence in neighboring countries."<sup>390</sup>

In deliberations, U.S. officials came to doubt the Guatemalan Army's role as a reliable anti-communist institution and contributor to hemispheric defense. U.S. policy aimed to reinforce the Army as "the most effective bulwark in that country against the spread of Communist influence." Although Guatemala occupied a small role in hemispheric defense, tensions prevented the application of new inter-American defense agreements, such as the Mutual Defense Assistance Act, or Guatemala's taking a position in the Inter-American Defense Board.<sup>391</sup> By 1952, U.S. officials determined that communism would erode the strength of the Army and other anti-communist institutions.<sup>392</sup>

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toward Latin America, see Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba in the American Imagination: Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 175-228.

<sup>389</sup> "Policy Statement," Washington, 02 May 1951, 611.14/5-251, in *FRUS 1951*, 1420, 1432, 1434-1435.

<sup>390</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to George P. Shaw, U.S. Ambassador in San Salvador, 10 March 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 7, Folder "Guatemala."

<sup>391</sup> "Policy Statement," Washington, 02 May 1951, 611.14/5-251, in *FRUS 1951*, 1428-1429; "Paper," [Washington,] 12 June 1951, Under Secretary's Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, in *FRUS 1951*, 1438.

<sup>392</sup> "National Intelligence Estimate," Washington, 11 March 1952, INR-NIE files, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1032.



As these concerns escalated, Arbenz's government implemented the Agrarian Reform program under Decree 900 in May 1952.<sup>393</sup> U.S. officials noted that the project relied upon communist officials and party members to implement the policy and organize peasants. Gleijeses, Nick Cullather, and other scholars present the program as the key moment when U.S. officials, congresspersons, and journalists interpreted Arbenz's government and Guatemala as dominated by communist influence and a Soviet puppet.<sup>394</sup> While Arbenz's government drafted the Reform, the Bureau led the State Department, the military, and the CIA in concluding in the March 1952 National Intelligence Estimate 62 (NIE-62), "The political situation in Guatemala adversely affects U.S. interests and constitutes a potential threat to US security."<sup>395</sup>

#### **B. Miller, Mann, and the New U.S. Cold War-Oriented Policy toward Guatemala**

Even before the Agrarian Reform, Miller and Mann in 1951 approved a new Cold War-oriented policy that allowed for the U.S. government's direct intervention in Guatemalan affairs to encourage opposition to Arbenz's government as long as the image of the U.S. government's adherence to the non-intervention ideal remained intact. A year earlier, Latin Americanist officials hoped that the appearance of U.S. respect for sovereignty would actually assist anti-communist groups in Guatemala.<sup>396</sup> However, Miller and Mann soon changed their minds.

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<sup>393</sup> For a discussion of the Agrarian Reform, see the English-language works by Piero Gleijeses, "The Agrarian Reform of Jacobo Arbenz," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21.3 (October 1989): 453-480; Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 149-70, and Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside*.

<sup>394</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 228, 231-234; Cullather, 24-27.

<sup>395</sup> "National Intelligence Estimate," Washington, 11 March 1952, INR-NIE files, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1031.

<sup>396</sup> W. J. McWilliams, [Washington,] 29 May 1950, Under Secretary's Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, Documents, in *FRUS 1950*, 900; James E. Webb to Harry S. Truman, "Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Webb) to the President," [Washington,] 09 September 1950, 611.14/9-950, in *FRUS 1950*, 913.

Later that year, Mann already believed direct intervention might become a necessary option. In May, Thomas Corcoran on behalf of the United Fruit Company (UFCO) approached him and asked if the State Department would play a role in the November 1950 elections in Guatemala. Mann told the lawyer that “any attempt by the [U.S.] Government to intervene would not only be counterproductive, but would meet with opposition in Guatemala, in the other American republics[,] and in the United States itself.” Corcoran then mentioned that U.S. companies could quietly influence the Guatemalan elections, but Mann doubted that such intervention would remain hidden. Rebuffed, the lawyer attempted one more time to gain his support. Corcoran noted the chance that various groups in the United States might be open to a more aggressive policy. Once again, the Latin Americanist official affirmed his faith in the non-intervention ideal. “I would be surprised,” he retorted, “if a majority of the American public should wish to sacrifice hemisphere [sic] solidarity and the Inter-American system.”<sup>397</sup> At first glance, this conversation cements Mann’s place in the historical literature as a staunch defender of the non-intervention ideal, but his comments show that he at least left the door open for dialogue. At the end of the conversation, he commented that he did not wish “to guess what the policy in the future might be if it were definitely determined [by the State Department] that the Guatemalan Government and people had fallen under the totalitarian control of Communist elements.” Rather than interpreting the non-intervention ideal as sacrosanct or inviolable, he admitted that, in the event of “overriding military considerations,” the Bureau might cast the ideal to the side.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> Thomas Corcoran, Thomas C. Mann, “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Middle American Affairs (Mann),” [Washington,] 15 May 1950, 714.00/5-1550, in *FRUS 1950*, 888-889.

<sup>398</sup> Thomas Corcoran, Thomas C. Mann, [Washington,] 15 May 1950, 714.00/5-1550, in *FRUS 1950*, 888-889.

Such considerations built up in the aftermath of Arbenz's election. The month after the election, Mann, Assistant Officer in Charge of Central America and Panama Affairs Ernest Siracusa, and colonel Cornelius Mara met with Guatemala's representative on the Inter-American Defense Board, colonel Oscar Morales López, to discuss the Guatemalan Army's requests for U.S. armaments. Over the course of the conversation, the two officials reiterated their government's refusal to intervene and noted the Bureau's hopes that Arbenz's election would galvanize moderate groups there. However, they then claimed that the Bureau might take up a "re-consideration" of policy. Coming in the aftermath of Mann's meeting with Corcoran, their explanation seemed to blend the lawyer and the Latin Americanist's positions. In the absence of a "positive stand" by Arbenz's government to halt communist inroads, they hypothesized, "public opinion in the United States and elsewhere in the Hemisphere would probably support a more direct approach to the problem." The U.S. government, of course, would need to "manag[e] the situation in Guatemala skillfully and well" and assess future policies, "possibly with consultation of leading American republics." Whereas Mann earlier had feared that intervention would undermine hemispheric solidarity and the inter-American system, they now saw it as a possible solution before any "real damage can be done within the Inter-American System and to hemispheric solidarity."<sup>399</sup>

Miller, too, was gauging such possibilities. In mid-1951, his colleagues produced a report on developments in Guatemala from March to May.<sup>400</sup> Commenting on the paper, Miller

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<sup>399</sup> Colonel Oscar Morales López, Colonel Cornelius J. Mara, Thomas C. Mann, Ernest V. Siracusa, "Subject: Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Officer in Charge of Central America and Panama Affairs (Siracusa)," [Washington,] 29 December 1950, 714.562/12-2950, in *FRUS 1950*, 928-930.

<sup>400</sup> W. Tapley Bennett, Jr., Office of Inter-American Affairs, to Albert F. Nufer, Director of Office of Middle American Affairs, Thomas C. Mann, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Edward G. Miller, Jr., "Subject: Review of Recent Developments in

proposed the propaganda project that would ultimately be implemented in 1952. Over recent months, the Bureau had been considering initiating the project. The project aimed to implant anti-communist and anti-Arbenz articles in various Latin American newspapers, and the latest events in Guatemala had led him to put the propaganda program up for consideration. The one-time champion of non-intervention thus requested in early June a memorandum “recommending for the approval” from the Under Secretary to move forward with the project and “put the squeeze on the commies in Guatemala.”<sup>401</sup>

By mid-1951, Miller and Mann led the State Department toward intervention in order to encourage local resistance to Arbenz’s government. In June 1951, Mann informed the State Department that the Department of American Republic Affairs “decided that it is advisable to apply certain economic pressures,” ranging from cutting funds for the Inter-American Highway and hospital construction to reducing trade. He warned that the “proposed policy is, in effect, a violation of the Non-intervention Agreement” and “pointed out that these proposed actions would be the first of its kind since the establishment of the Good Neighbor Policy” that had been “a corner-stone of our Latin American foreign policy.” Regarding the public image of the government’s adherence to those principles, he “emphasized that [the U.S. government] should proceed quietly” and warned, “If it became obvious that [U.S. officials] were violating this agreement, . . . other Latin American governments would rally to the support of Guatemala,” “strengthen[ing] the hands of the nationalists and communists.” When others noted that economic pressures would increase unemployment and strengthen communism, he replied “that

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Communist Penetration of Guatemala,” Washington, 07 June 1951, 714.001/6-751, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3249.

<sup>401</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to W. Tapley Bennett, Jr., “Subject: Review of Recent Developments in Communist Penetration of Guatemala,” Washington, 07 June 1951, FW714.001/6-751, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3249.

the situation in Guatemala would get worse instead of better and that the communists would fight in order to retain their power,” for the communists were “well organized and ha[d] arms.” Rather than presenting such a development as detrimental to U.S. policy toward Guatemala, Mann believed economic pressures would affect the “pocketbooks” of Guatemalan anti-communists and “stimulate action against the communists.” He concluded “that the center and right elements in Guatemala will see that it is necessary to get together and clean their own house.”<sup>402</sup>

Miller approved. The following month, he wrote to Deputy Director of the Office of International Trade Loring Macy and outlined how Arbenz’s government remained “unwilling or unable to act against the communists.” He summarized for Macy that the Department “recently saw fit to review its policy towards Guatemala and, as a result, adopted certain measures designed to persuade the government that its best interests do not lie in the perpetuation of its present attitudes.” Policy toward Guatemala now withheld technical and financial assistance, limited armaments sales, prevented U.S. and international loans, and applied economic pressure. As Mann had outlined, the Department would “attempt to insure that at no time will [Guatemalan] officials have any tangible grounds on which to accuse the United States of discriminating against Guatemala for political reasons or of attempting to intervene in her internal affairs.”<sup>403</sup>

This new policy remained in effect in 1952. In February, the Department discussed a request by Arbenz’s government for road-building equipment. The Latin Americanist officials aimed to limit funds, assistance, equipment, and trade to Guatemala “without, however, exposing

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<sup>402</sup> “Notes of the Under Secretary’s Meeting, Department of State, 10:15 a.m., June 15, 1951,” Under Secretary’s Meetings, Lot 53 D 250, in *FRUS 1951*, 1440.

<sup>403</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Loring K. Macy, “The Secretary of State to the Deputy Director of the Office of International Trade, Department of Commerce (Macy),” Washington, 30 July 1951, 611.14/7-3051, in *FRUS 1951*, 1443.

ourselves to charges that we were violating any of our Inter-American commitments.” As had Miller and Mann, Edward Clark of the Office of Middle American Affairs emphasized that officials were “to be selective and relatively cautious in the application of this [new U.S. Cold War-oriented] policy in order to avoid the possibility that Guatemala could document a case in the Organization of American States or elsewhere that we were engaging in economic warfare in violation of our commitments.” Clark summarized, “If the Guatemalans suspect or conclude among themselves that we are not being fully cooperative . . . we will have succeeded entirely in our purpose. However, we should never by our actions give them proof that we are not being cooperative.”<sup>404</sup>

### **C. General Harry Vaughan, Colonel Cornelius Mara, Guatemalan Exiles, and Caribbean Basin Dictators before Operation PBFORTUNE**

Before 1952, Truman’s two military aides general Harry Vaughan and colonel Cornelius Mara were already familiar with the regions’ political divisions and had cordial relationships with Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators. The two aides served important roles in the early 1950s as military advisors on trips through the Caribbean Basin to evaluate military assistance programs in the region. In the process, Guatemalan exile doctor Carlos Padilla y Padilla, Somoza, and Trujillo built advantageous relationships with Vaughan and Mara.

Vaughan and Mara understood regional and U.S.-Guatemalan tensions. While preparing for a visit to Guatemala, Vaughan had discussed local affairs with Latin Americanist official Paul Daniels who asked him to share any observations while in Guatemala. Daniels stressed that the “present political situation in the Central American countries is a little tense” and “the visit

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<sup>404</sup> “Memorandum of Conversation, by Edward W. Clark of the Office of Middle American Affairs,” [Washington,] 05 February 1952, 814.2612/2-552, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1028.

might be construed by countries not sympathetic with the Arévalo government as United States approval of the latter.” Vaughan responded that “he had no intention of making any public statements, which . . . would be especially dangerous at [the] time.”<sup>405</sup> Mara similarly participated in the December 1950 discussion with Mann, Assistant Officer in Charge of Central America and Panama Affairs Ernest Siracusa, and Morales López when Mann and Siracusa highlighted their preoccupations with Guatemala.<sup>406</sup>

In early 1951, Vaughan, Mara, and general Wallace Graham prepared to travel to Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, with the final visit to coincide with Arbenz’s presidential inauguration. For four reasons, Siracusa interjected that the officers should not visit Guatemala. First, Arévalo had recalled U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City Richard Patterson, an issue that vexed the State Department.<sup>407</sup> Siracusa reasoned it would “seem improper for” anyone from the U.S. “President’s personal staff” to visit Guatemala. Second, he feared any “tension” and the “constant possibility of repercussions” following the November 1950 elections. Third, he considered the “trouble” that could follow any honors given by Arbenz to Vaughan and Mara. Siracusa supposed that the “Communist elements” in Guatemala who elected Arbenz feared his welcoming U.S. military officers and would interpret their arrival as proof that Arbenz was “preparing to abandon [the Communist elements] for a more moderate course.” Fourth, Siracusa complained about the Guatemalan government’s position on the Korean War, “We have had

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<sup>405</sup> Major General Harry H. Vaughan, Military Aide to President Harry S. Truman, Paul C. Daniels, Office of American Republic Affairs, James H. Webb, Office of Central America and Panama Affairs, Memorandum of Conversation “Subject: Visit of Army and Air Force Officers to Guatemala,” 20 August 1948, NARAII, RG84, US Embassy Managua, Box 13, Folder “800, Guatemala, 1948.”

<sup>406</sup> Colonel Oscar Morales López, Colonel Cornelius J. Mara, Thomas C. Mann, Ernest V. Siracusa, [Washington,] 29 December 1950, 714.562/12-2950, in *FRUS 1950*, 928-930.

<sup>407</sup> On Patterson’s recall, see Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 117-118, 132.

nearly 50,000 casualties in Korea,” yet the “Guatemalan Government’s attitude toward international Communism is still equivocal.”<sup>408</sup>

Vaughan informed Mann that Guatemalan military officials had invited the aides, but Clark expanded on his colleague’s position. He stressed Arévalo’s “toleration and coddling of the Communists,” Arbenz’s having been “elected with the cooperation and support of the Communists,” and Arbenz’s showing “no official indication [to] reverse the policies of President Arévalo” and mend relations after Patterson’s recall.<sup>409</sup> These protests shaped the final decision as Undersecretary of State James Webb wrote, “Because of the unsatisfactory state of relations between the United States and Guatemala, it is believed that our delegation to the inauguration should be one which meets the minimum demands of protocol without, however, affording the Guatemalan Government grounds for taking offense.”<sup>410</sup> The resulting removal of Guatemala from the itinerary reflected the escalating influence of the Cold War on the Department’s policy.

Additionally, Vaughan and Mara’s itinerary reveals how Padilla had established a relationship with Truman’s two military aides.<sup>411</sup> Padilla had been included as the aides’

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<sup>408</sup> Ernest V. Siracusa, Officer in Charge of Central America and Panama Affairs, to Thomas C. Mann, “Visit to Honduras of Generals Vaughan and Graham Possible Visit to Guatemala,” 03 January 1951, NARAI, RG59, “Bureau of Inter-American Affairs/Office of Middle American Affairs, Subject Files, 1947-1956” (hereafter BIAA/OMAA), Box 3, Folder “Chronological Memoranda, 1951.”

<sup>409</sup> Edward W. Clark, Guatemala Desk Officer, to Edward G. Cale, Deputy Director of Office of Middle American Affairs, “United States Delegation to Inauguration of Colonel Arbenz,” 15 January 1951, 714.00/1-1551, NARAI, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 1.

<sup>410</sup> James E. Webb to Harry S. Truman, Memorandum “Subject: Designation of Capus M. Waynick to head the United States Delegation at the inaugural ceremonies in Guatemala,” 01 March 1951, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence, Missouri (hereafter HST), President’s Secretary’s File (hereafter PSF), Official File (hereafter OF), Box 1435, OF 439, Folder “Guatemala.”

<sup>411</sup> Vaughan had a reputation for participating in controversial political relationships, as when Vaughan in 1949 accepted freezers and perfumes from business officials. See Robert H. Ferrell (ed.), *Truman in the White House: The Diary of Eben A. Ayers* (Columbia, MO: University of



interpreter, but the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa and Honduran Ambassador in Washington Rafael Heliodoro Valle quickly intervened. Heliodoro Valle requested that U.S. officials discourage Truman's military aides from allowing Padilla to serve as translator.<sup>412</sup> One of the officials who sought to distance the State Department from Padilla in 1947, Gordon Reid agreed, "I can see no reason for [Padilla's] accompanying the President's military aide . . . and to be giving the impression that he is a man of influence." He warned that Padilla had "been known to be involved in plots allegedly leading toward the assassination of various presidents," was "not noted for his general honesty, and had "atrocious" English. Reid concluded that the aides "could not receive [Padilla]." Heliodoro Valle "bluntly stated that he had repeatedly hinted to [Truman's military aides] that another person would be more suitable" as an interpreter but "had been unsuccessful in getting [Vaughan or Mara] to take his hint."<sup>413</sup>

Siracusa had to call upon Mara, "I said [to Mara] that a check in our files had revealed information to the effect that Dr. Padilla had long been known for his involvement in revolutionary plots, particularly in Guatemala." Siracusa highlighted "that because of this fact it might be a matter of concern to the Guatemalans that Dr. Padilla was accompanying a group" of officers "who were official guests of a friendly Government." He even suggested that Padilla's presence "might also be [a] cause of embarrassment to Honduras." Mara understood this position

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Missouri Press, 1991), 323; Sean J. Savage, *Truman and the Democratic Party* (Lexington, KT: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 13, 187.

<sup>412</sup> Gordon S. Reid and Rafael Heliodoro Valle, Honduran Ambassador in Washington, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Proposed Visit to Honduras of Generals Vaughan & Graham," 05 January 1951, NARAII, RG59, BIAA/OMAA, Box 4, Folder "Trips, Vaughan and Graham to Hond and Nic, 1951."

<sup>413</sup> Gordon S. Reid to Ernest V. Siracusa, "Carlos Padilla y Padilla," 05 January 1951, with Ernest V. Siracusa to Thomas C. Mann, "Trip to Honduras of Generals Vaughan and Graham," 04 January 1951, NARAII, RG59, BIAA/OMAA, Box 3, Folder "Chronological Memoranda, 1951." Underline in original.

and agreed to Padilla's removal.<sup>414</sup> When meeting at the White House, Vaughan and Mara "said that Padilla had been instrumental in arranging the trip" to Honduras but wished "to avoid embarrassment to the Honduran Ambassador." The aides stated that "they would tell [Padilla] that since the trip had become official due to the invitation of the Honduran Government it had been necessary to make a check on all persons who were going."<sup>415</sup>

Somoza similarly held cordial relationships with the aides. Before arriving in Honduras, Vaughan and Mara visited Managua, whereupon the dictator insisted they return to Managua after finishing their work.<sup>416</sup> During the subsequent trip, multiple Nicaraguan officials greeted Vaughan and Mara, and Somoza took them to a luncheon at Managua's Hotel Majestic and held a reception at the Club Terraza. Siracusa described the officers' time in Managua as "highly successful" and noted, "The personalities of Generals Somoza and Vaughan were most congenial."<sup>417</sup> U.S. Ambassador in Managua Capus Waynick too reported favorably to Truman on the visit.<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>414</sup> Ernest V. Siracusa, Colonel Cornelius J. Mara, Military Aide to President Harry S. Truman, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Trip to Honduras of Generals Vaughan and Graham – information on Dr. Carlos Padilla," 05 January 1951, NARAII, RG59, BIAA/OMAA, Box 4, Folder "Trips, Vaughan and Graham to Hond and Nic, 1951."

<sup>415</sup> Major General Harry Vaughan, Colonel Cornelius J. Mara, Ernest V. Siracusa, Edward W. Clark, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Trip to Honduras of Generals Vaughan and Graham – Dr. Carlos Padilla," 08 January 1951, NARAII, RG59, BIAA/OMAA, Box 3, Folder "Chronological Memoranda, 1951."

<sup>416</sup> Various works have discussed U.S.-Nicaraguan relations and Somoza's establishing cordial relationships with important U.S. officials. See Clark, Jr.; Andrew Crawley, *Somoza and Roosevelt: Good Neighbour Diplomacy in Nicaragua, 1933-1945* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>417</sup> Ernest V. Siracusa, "Visit of Generals Vaughan and Graham and Party to Nicaragua," 30 January 1951, NARAII, RG59, BIAA/OMAA, Box 4, Folder "Trips, Vaughan and Graham to Hond and Nic, 1951."

<sup>418</sup> Capus M. Waynick, U.S. Ambassador in Managua, to Harry S. Truman, Managua, 20 January 1951, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

Trujillo's officials also attempted to build cordial relationships with Vaughan and Mara. He, as did Somoza, had a long history of inviting U.S. military officials to the Dominican Republic and consistently provided a welcoming environment, military decorations, and other amenities to facilitate such relationships.<sup>419</sup> Trujillo in July 1951 had Dominican Ambassador in Washington Luis Thomen award the decoration of the Order of Juan Pablo Duarte to Vaughan in an event included in Dominican propaganda materials in the United States.<sup>420</sup> During negotiations in July 1952 for F-47 planes, Thomen wrote that "Colonel C. J. Mara, member of the Group of Assistants of President Truman, . . . was helping me to hurry up this matter."<sup>421</sup> Trujillo and Thomen, as had Somoza and Padilla, cultivated beneficial relationships with Vaughan and Mara.

#### **D. The CIA, the Caribbean Basin Anti-Communist Network, and Castillo Armas, Early 1950s**

In the early 1950s, the CIA became an important force behind proposals to support indigenous counter-revolutionary movements against Arbenz's government. In analyses, the Agency did not know about the links and intelligence-sharing within the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network but recognized that certain regimes provided aid to Castillo Armas and

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<sup>419</sup> Numerous works have mentioned positive relationships between Trujillo and U.S. military officers, but only Eric Paul Roorda has thoroughly analyzed the origins, details, and cultural dimensions of these relationships. See Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door*; Eric Paul Roorda, "The Cult of the Airplane among U.S. Military Men and Dominicans during the U.S. Occupation and the Trujillo Regime," in *Close Encounters of Empire*, 269-310.

<sup>420</sup> *Dominican Republic: A Bulletin of the Dominican Embassy* 136 (September 1951): 3, in Archivo General y Biblioteca Nacional, San Juan, Fondo Oficina del Gobernador, Tarea 96:20, Caja 1625, Expediente 030.1 "República Dominicana."

<sup>421</sup> Luis F. Thomen a Rafael L. Trujillo, 22 julio 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903984 "Fechas extremas 1952-1953, Código 6," Expediente "Aviones F-47 Compra a EEUU, 1952, Código 6."

Guatemalan exiles. Additionally, Director Walter Bedell Smith and Deputy Director Allen Dulles resembled Miller and Mann, for they also sought projects to strengthen anti-communist opposition in Guatemala without undermining the image of non-intervention.

Before the early 1950s, the CIA focused on what they believed to be conflicts and regions central to the international Cold War and did not invest significant resources or attention toward Guatemala. Reports discussed the Korean War, Soviet capabilities in the world, Chinese communism, Turkey, Italy, Greece, and other areas crucial in the Cold War, and Cullather's redacted but officially commissioned history of the CIA in Guatemala stresses that "Guatemala remained a low priority" before the early 1950s.<sup>422</sup> In 1951 Latin America remained "favorable to US interests" with Guatemala only noted for "pronounced anti-US attitudes in high official circles." Despite communist attempts to encourage isolationist sentiments among Latin Americans, the majority of governments endorsed the Rio Treaty and would side with the United States during the ideological conflict.<sup>423</sup>

Gradually, the Cold War influenced analyses. Cullather finds that, by the time of the Korean War, officials "were more apt to draw parallels [between Guatemala and] Korea, Russia, or Eastern Europe" and became "more apprehensive about Guatemala than their counterparts" in the State Department.<sup>424</sup> In mid-1950, reports highlighted "the rapid growth of Communist activity in Guatemala and the probability that Guatemala may become the central point for the dissemination of anti-US propaganda in Central America and the Caribbean islands."<sup>425</sup>

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<sup>422</sup> Cullather, 15.

<sup>423</sup> "Special Estimate 13, 'Probable Developments in the World Situation Through Mid-1953,' 24 September 1951," Document 71, in Michael Warner (ed.), *The CIA under Harry Truman* (Washington: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 432-433.

<sup>424</sup> Cullather, 9, 17.

<sup>425</sup> "Project Outline Project (Deleted) Guatemala No. LA-3 Type Operational," Document 0000915078, 08 August 1950, CIA FOIA.

Eventually, the Agency concluded with the State Department and military in 1952's NIE-62 that communism aimed to weaken anti-communist institutions such as the Guatemalan Army and threatened U.S. national security and Cold War-oriented goals.<sup>426</sup>

It was the CIA that implemented one of the first programs to intervene in Guatemalan affairs and encourage anti-communist opposition. In August 1950, the Agency's Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) argued that it was "considered necessary and appropriate to commence counter-propaganda." They suggested creating a "psychological warfare program" that would appear "indigenous in its origins" and rely upon "native elements."<sup>427</sup> An operative even enrolled in Guatemala's Instituto de Antropología e Historia [Institute of Anthropology and History]. Since the project received only \$6,000 in funding and produced nothing consequential, this project was far from "the beginning of a sustained effort to deal with [Guatemalan communism] by covert means."<sup>428</sup>

It was also the Agency that became the first U.S. government institution to evaluate the prospects of aiding Castillo Armas. After meeting with Mann in May 1950, the lawyer Corcoran approached Dulles, "but without approval from [the] State [Department], [the] CIA evinced little interest."<sup>429</sup> In late October 1951, the National Security Council's (NSC) Executive Secretary James 'Jimmy' Lay requested that Bedell Smith meet with a representative of the UFCO and other U.S. business interests in Guatemala.<sup>430</sup> The next month, the representative offered "the use

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<sup>426</sup> "National Intelligence Estimate," Washington, 11 March 1952, INR-NIE files, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1031, 1037.

<sup>427</sup> Document 0000915078, 08 August 1950, CIA FOIA.

<sup>428</sup> Cullather, 18.

<sup>429</sup> Thomas Corcoran, Thomas C. Mann, [Washington,] 15 May 1950, 714.00/5-1550, in *FRUS 1950*, 888-889; Cullather, 17.

<sup>430</sup> "Memo to Deputy Director, Plans from Assistant to the Director re: Guatemala 1954," Document 0000915073, 05 November 1951, CIA FOIA. The best English-language discussion of these enterprises in Guatemala during the Guatemalan Revolution remains Gleijeses,

of [U.S. businesses'] facilities and personnel to assist [the] CIA in any program which [the Agency] may contemplate for combating the growth of Communism in Guatemala” and provided Dulles with a contact through the UFCO in New Orleans. Dulles told the representative that his Agency was “very much interested in his proposal.”<sup>431</sup> Soon, Bedell Smith and Dulles brought the proposal to colonel J.C. King, Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division for the Directorate of Operations of the CIA.<sup>432</sup> On November 14, Bedell Smith’s assistant wrote Lay that the representative had “offered the facilities and personnel of [the companies] to assist [the] CIA in any current or proposed operations which we may conduct to combat the growth of Communism in Guatemala.” The assistant confirmed, “[The] CIA is very interested in this offer and will pursue the matter further through direct contact with the officials of the United Fruit Company with whom we are already working in another connection.”<sup>433</sup>

It is probable that Corcoran and the UFCO representative sought out the CIA’s aid to support Castillo Armas. In October 1952, the Agency reported that involvement with the exile originated before March 1952 when the lawyer approached them “for assistance to [the] Castillo Armas and [Guatemalan anti-communist leader Juan] Córdova Cerna movement.”<sup>434</sup> The lawyer had lobbied Mann and Dulles around May 1950, coinciding with Castillo Armas’s maneuvering

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*Shattered Hope*, 86-93. Schlesinger and Kinzer focus on the UFCO’s opposition to the Guatemalan Revolution.

<sup>431</sup> Document 0000915073, 05 November 1951, CIA FOIA. See also “Report re: Guatemalan 1954 Coup,” Document 0000924021, 04 September 1953, CIA FOIA.

<sup>432</sup> Document 0000915073, 05 November 1951, CIA FOIA; “Report,” Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29.

<sup>433</sup> “(Deleted) Memo to James Lay from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000915072, 14 November 1951, CIA FOIA. See also Document 0000924021, 04 September 1953, CIA FOIA.

<sup>434</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29.

for support from the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network.<sup>435</sup> Consequently, it is likely Castillo Armas at his own initiative had already created a relationship with Corcoran and the UFCO.<sup>436</sup> Due to Castillo Armas's relationships with Somoza and Carías, one of the dictators may have introduced the exile or convinced the UFCO to back the exile.<sup>437</sup>

By early 1952, the Agency was analyzing the strength of exiles such as Castillo Armas yet remaining unclear on the links between the exiles and Caribbean Basin regimes. In January 1952, King provided an evaluation of Guatemala for Frank Wisner, Deputy Director of Plans for the CIA. King outlined, "At least three Guatemalan exile groups are plotting against the Arbenz regime." The three leaders, Castillo Armas, colonel Arturo Ramírez, and general Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, were already linked to Caribbean Basin dictators.<sup>438</sup> Still, the Agency did not have accurate information on these links or the exiles' sources of support through the network. In one instance, King correctly identified that the UFCO offered support to Castillo Armas but alleged that the exile's other patron was Peruvian without mentioning Somoza. In another instance, he did not list any sources of support for Ramírez with the exception of "American oil promoters" and placed Ramírez in exile since 1948, not 1945.<sup>439</sup>

With such poor knowledge, the CIA began evaluating Castillo Armas's capabilities following rumors that he planned an important revolt at the end of January. On January 19,

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<sup>435</sup> See "Plans of Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas for Armed Revolt against the Government," Document 0000915075, 23 August 1950, CIA FOIA.

<sup>436</sup> Document 2, Washington, 11 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 3.

<sup>437</sup> See Clarence E. Birgfeld, First Secretary of U.S. Embassy in Bogotá, to Secretary of State, No. 351, Bogotá, 12 November 1951, 714.00/11-1251, NARAII, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 1; J. Leopoldo Romero to Mr. Gerrity, "Subject: Summary of conversation with Lt. Col. Carlos CASTILLO Armas," with Murray M. Wise, Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Panama City, to Secretary of State, No. 375, Panama City, 27 November 1951, 714.00/11-2751, NARAII, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 1; Document 0000915068, 23 January 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>438</sup> Document 2, Washington, 11 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 3.

<sup>439</sup> Document 2, Washington, 11 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 3.

officials reported that he had support from the Guatemalan Army for a revolt in the last days of January but were uncertain whether he was in Honduras, El Salvador, or Mexico.<sup>440</sup> Not surprisingly, the Agency authorized an agent to “locate but not contact Carlos Castillo Armas.”<sup>441</sup> Similar to Caribbean Basin dictators in early 1950, officials gathered more details about the revolt and support inside and outside Guatemala, including weapons in Honduras, support from anti-communist students in Guatemala City, promises of aid from the UFCO, and allies in the Guatemalan Army in such districts as Jutiapa and Quetzaltenango.<sup>442</sup> The CIA soon determined that the exile had the support of Córdova Cerna’s anti-communist organization and some members of the Guatemalan Army, but a Guatemalan Army captain based in Jutiapa explained on January 25 that Castillo Armas delayed the January revolt.<sup>443</sup>

By March 1952, the CIA began to meet with individuals close to Castillo Armas. One official reported conversations with the UFCO representative’s New Orleans contact and an associate of the exile in Mexico City. The contact claimed that Castillo Armas’s movement had “a good chance of succeeding” while admitting “uncertainty as to [the movement’s] plans, resources, requirements, and opposition.” The associate insisted that the exile had “the moral, and possibly some material, support of ex-President Carías of Honduras and the good will of

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<sup>440</sup> “Cable to OSO/OPC from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000915069, 19 January 1952, CIA FOIA; “Revolt against the Guatemalan Government Imminent,” Document 0000136376, 21 January 1952, CIA FOIA. Gleijeses found in his interviews with Taracena that Castillo Armas and his followers in their plot in early 1952 exaggerated their allies in the Guatemalan Army in such districts as Jutiapa, Gleijeses, from interviews with Taracena, 220. CIA officials received information from a Guatemalan Army captain on January 25 that Castillo Armas had followers in the Guatemalan Army in Jutiapa, “Telegram From the CIA Station in [place not declassified] to the Central Intelligence Agency,” Document 4, [place not declassified], 25 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 5.

<sup>441</sup> “Telegram From the Central Intelligence Agency to the CIA Station in [place not declassified],” Document 3, Washington, 22 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 4.

<sup>442</sup> Document 0000915068, 23 January 1952, CIA FOIA; Document 0000915067, 24 January 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>443</sup> Document 4, [place not declassified], 25 January 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 5.



President Gálvez” and alleged that he had “been promised the support of President Somoza of Nicaragua who has offered to send a personal representative with [Castillo Armas] to ask aid of President Trujillo of the Dominican Republic.” The agent commented on March 17 on the “lack of intelligence” on Castillo Armas’s activities and suggested that the exile “prepare a complete Order to Battle to include all details of [the] Guatemalan Government and [the] opposition[‘s] strength.”<sup>444</sup> The next day, orders went out for contacts in Tegucigalpa “to receive [the] first report [on Castillo Armas] and set up [a] secure method of receiving weekly reports through [the] embassy pouch.”<sup>445</sup> On March 22, King concluded that “Castillo [Armas] must be contacted” and requested information on “opposi[tion] forces” against Arbenz’s government; any “opportunity for buying support, particularly [from the Guatemalan] Army[,] Guardia Civil[,] and key gov[ernment] figures;” and “all details required for estimating [the] success of [the] proposed movement [from Castillo Armas] and how we can assist.”<sup>446</sup> In April, the Agency reported further meetings with Castillo Armas’s associates in Mexico City and information on the Guatemalan Army, anti-communist students in Guatemala, and the proposed invasion.<sup>447</sup>

By May 1952, meetings took place between the Agency and the exile’s allies.<sup>448</sup> One official reported meetings with Castillo Armas’s associates at the Westbury Hotel in New York City and that the exile was “willing to delay his movement until he is given the green light.”<sup>449</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Document 7, Washington, 17 March 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 14.

<sup>445</sup> “Cable Providing Contact Instructions for (Deleted),” Document 0000136379, CIA FOIA.

<sup>446</sup> “Cable Requesting Castillo Be Contacted,” Document 0000136381, 22 March 1952, CIA FOIA; “Telegram From the Central Intelligence Agency to the CIA Station in [*place not declassified*],” Document 8, Washington, 22 March 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 17.

<sup>447</sup> “General-Political Matters-Specific-Guatemala,” Document 0000915050, 01 April 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>448</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29.

<sup>449</sup> “(Estimated Pub Date) Meeting at the Westbury Hotel, 10:30 A.M., 2 May 1952, Wit,” Document 0000135837, 05 May 1952, CIA FOIA. This appears to be the first reference in U.S.-

King himself met with another ally at the Hotel Carlton and outlined contacts who would “serve as the cut-out between Castillo Armas” and the CIA while handling “all military matters.”<sup>450</sup> The Agency by May 1952 had already begun evaluating the exile’s sources of support inside and outside Guatemala and links to the network’s members, in spite of their seeming ignorance of the depth of his support from within the Caribbean Basin.

#### **E. Somoza Lobbies for a Washington Visit**

While the CIA established links with Castillo Armas, Somoza lobbied for a visit to Washington. The dictator needed to visit Boston for reasons related to his health but hoped to meet with important U.S. officials, so he employed his connections with Vaughan and U.S. Ambassador in Managua Thomas Whelan.

Somoza relied heavily upon Whelan, knowing from Nicaraguan and Dominican officials that the ambassador was actually soliciting the dictator’s visit.<sup>451</sup> In February 1952, noting Somoza’s imminent visit, Whelan wrote to Miller that the dictator “need[ed] to have a small operation performed.” The ambassador explained that Somoza “would also like to have the red carpet unrolled for him in Washington” and added, “I am told on [the] best of authority that Somoza would rather have a decoration from [the U.S. government] than anything else in the world.” Whelan assured Miller that Commander in Chief of Caribbean Command lieutenant general William Morris, Jr., believed the dictator “was one of the best friends we had and [Morris] thought we ought to be able to cook up some sort of decoration for [Somoza].” The

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based files of Castillo Armas or any participant in Operation PBFORTUNE requesting a ‘green light’ from U.S. officials.

<sup>450</sup> “Memo re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000915046, 23 May 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>451</sup> César Pina Barinas a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, No. 122-A, Managua, 28 enero 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla “1, 1951-1953, Nicaragua.”

ambassador even mentioned, “I know that the Congressmen who have visited me, and who, of course, talked with [Somoza], would not object.” Whelan concluded, “What would be the objection to inviting him to Washington and pinning a decoration on him?”<sup>452</sup>

Miller rejected Whelan’s suggestion, citing a similar suggestion from Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa which had received no encouragement. Miller warned that the dictator “would be up here unofficially[,] and I believe there would be embarrassing consequences if he came to Washington without invitation.” Facing a backlog of requests for visits that were delayed from construction on the White House, Miller opposed even unofficial visits. Instead, he offered alternative accommodations and “some kind of military decoration [from] the Army.” Promising to meet Somoza elsewhere, he assured Whelan of the dictator’s favorable position: “Please bear in mind that I am extremely fond of Tacho [Somoza] and wish that there were more people in high positions in South America who are as friendly to the United States.”<sup>453</sup>

The dictator kept pressing. Claiming “Somoza invited himself,” on April 09 Miller admitted to Acheson that Somoza was headed for the United States.<sup>454</sup> The dictator already lined up the first days of May for the visit. Attempting to accommodate, Miller stressed the informal nature of the visit and only recommended “minimum courtesies due a Chief of State.”<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>452</sup> Thomas E. Whelan, U.S. Ambassador in Managua, to Edward G. Miller, Jr., Managua, 20 February 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>453</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Thomas E. Whelan, 25 February 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>454</sup> Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, to Thomas E. Whelan, Telegram 202, 15 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua;” Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Dean Acheson, Memorandum and “Program for Visit of President Somoza of Nicaragua,” 09 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>455</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Dean Acheson, Memorandum and “Program,” 09 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

Vaughan then intervened. Not content with the ‘unofficial’ status, the aide used his position to upgrade the visit’s prestige and courtesies. On April 7, he handwrote Truman that Somoza “has expressed his intention of coming to Washington to repay the visit of his ‘good friend Senator Truman in 1938.’” While admitting that Somoza was “a ‘dictator’ by some standards,” Vaughan also noted his “firm friend[ship with] the USA and Harry Truman,” concluding that “We should give him some recognition plus a dinner and a ‘kidney medal.’” Vaughan took credit for being considered by the State Department as “an authority (?) on Central America.”<sup>456</sup> Truman showed little interest, “I wish you would discuss Somoza’s [sic] visit with State and Defense. It is going to be rather difficult to take care of him[,] but we will manage it some way.”<sup>457</sup> Vaughan switched to the State Department, asking the same.<sup>458</sup>

Miller and the State Department continued to treat Somoza’s visit as ‘unofficial.’ Siracusa repeated Miller’s preference that the dictator would be classified an ‘unofficial’ guest with the “minimum courtesies due a Chief of State.” Siracusa and Truman’s Chief of Protocol R. D. Muir recommended that Truman meet with Somoza and host a small luncheon on May 2.<sup>459</sup> Miller provided Acheson a memorandum describing a tentative schedule that included Somoza’s meeting with Acheson, Somoza’s meeting with Truman, and Truman’s hosting a small luncheon

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<sup>456</sup> Major General Harry H. Vaughan to Harry S. Truman, 07 April 1952, HST, PSF, Subject File, Foreign Affairs File, Box 161 “‘Mexico, Foot and Mouth Disease’ to ‘Palestine, 1948-1952,’” Folder “N.”

<sup>457</sup> Harry S. Truman to Major General Harry H. Vaughan, 09 April 1952, HST, PSF, Subject File, Foreign Affairs File, Box 161 “‘Mexico, Foot and Mouth Disease’ to ‘Palestine, 1948-1952,’” Folder “N.”

<sup>458</sup> Ernest V. Siracusa to Harry S. Truman, “Subject: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua,” 09 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>459</sup> Ernest V. Siracusa to Harry S. Truman, “Subject: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua,” 09 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

for Somoza on May 2.<sup>460</sup> Recognizing that Acheson did not hold the dictator in the highest regards, Miller reassured the Secretary of State that the program did not include “any entertainment by you.”<sup>461</sup> Acheson seemed persuaded and recommended Truman to show the dictator “the minimum courtesies due a Chief of State.”<sup>462</sup>

Acheson and Miller reminded Whelan of the ‘unofficial’ nature of Somoza’s visit, giving “leeway for additional informal functions by GEN[eral] Vaughan or CONG[ressional] leaders.” Miller stressed the need to not create a precedent, potentially leading to “[a] procession of self-invited guests through WASH[ington] which [would] completely disrupt WASH[ington’s] official and social life.”<sup>463</sup>

But Vaughan did not relent. Calling Miller on April 10, the aide claimed to have “spoken to [Truman] concerning the proposed visit of Somoza,” and that the President had reassured him that, despite “some embarrassing aspects” of the visit, U.S. officials “had to give Somoza the honors due his office.” Skeptical, Miller reached out to his fellow Latin Americanist officials Mann, Siracusa, and Albert Nufer, asking for confirmation of Vaughan’s claims. Miller finally rebuffed the aide, explaining “the importance of differentiating between unofficial and state visits.” While agreeing in principle, Vaughan insisted that the dictator receive “the customary medal of Commander of the Legion of Merit.” The aide’s efforts were to no avail. Miller

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<sup>460</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Dean Acheson, “Subject: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua,” 09 April 1952, NARAII, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>461</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Dean Acheson, “Subject: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua,” 09 April 1952, NARAII, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua;” Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Dean Acheson, “Program for Visit of President Somoza of Nicaragua,” 09 April 1952, NARAII, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>462</sup> Dean Acheson to Harry S. Truman, “Memorandum for the President, Subject: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua,” 18 April 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>463</sup> Dean Acheson to Thomas E. Whelan, Telegram 201, 08 April 1952, NARAII, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.” Capitalization in original.

emphasized the risk of stirring “the wrath of the American press on us and on Somoza.”

Vaughan bowed to this argument.<sup>464</sup>

And yet, in mid-April, Somoza attempted to extend the visit. Frustrated with the dictator’s self-invitation, Miller warned that any extension of Somoza’s time in Washington would conflict with other meetings and pleaded for Whelan to dissuade the dictator.<sup>465</sup> Searching for a conciliatory schedule, John Ohmans of the Office of Middle American Affairs asked if the dictator could follow the original plan.<sup>466</sup> After *The New York Times* on April 20 cited Somoza’s visit as semi-official, Miller complained to Whelan that a clarification was in order: the visit was “personal and unofficial.”<sup>467</sup>

When Somoza’s schedule was finalized, the State Department reported that the dictator would land in Miami on April 28 and, contemplating a five-day tour from Miami to Washington, a meeting with Acheson, Miller, and Whelan was included for May 2. Truman’s luncheon remained scheduled for May 2, including Somoza, Sevilla Sacasa, Acheson, Vaughan, and various Cabinet and congressional officials.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>464</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Thomas C. Mann, Albert F. Nufer, Ernest V. Siracusa, “General Somoza’s Proposed Visit to the U.S.,” 10 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>465</sup> Dean Acheson to Thomas E. Whelan, Telegram 202, 15 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>466</sup> Thomas E. Whelan, John L. Ohmans, Office of Middle American Affairs, Memorandum of Conversation “Subject: Itinerary of General Somoza; Highway Bill,” 17 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, “Records of the Office of Middle American Affairs, Records Relating to Costa Rica and Nicaragua, 1951-1955” (hereafter OMAA/CRN), Box 2, Folder “Nicaragua, General Somoza.”

<sup>467</sup> Dean Acheson to Thomas E. Whelan, Telegram 206, 21 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>468</sup> “Program: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza,” NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua;” R. D. Muir, Acting Chief of Protocol, to Matthew J. Connelly, Appointments Secretary of Harry S. Truman, 23 April 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder “Nicaragua;” “Program: Unofficial Visit of President Anastasio Somoza,” NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

Preparing for the visit, Miller briefed the President and the Secretary of State, assuring them that no “particular topic” would be discussed at the luncheon. Sure, Miller noted, Somoza might lobby for financial assistance or loans for projects such as Nicaragua’s Rama Road. Perhaps, Acheson could relay to the dictator “how much Nicaragua’s consistent support of United States foreign policy is appreciated.” Remarking favorably on Nicaragua’s political situation due to agreements between Emiliano Chamorro’s Conservatives and Somoza’s Liberals, Miller explained that the “working two-party system in Nicaragua, a free press and bi-partisan representation at international meetings, might be commented on as favorable evidence of democratic progress.”<sup>469</sup>

A memorandum by Siracusa and Ohmans detailed the visit, Somoza’s history, and U.S.-Nicaraguan relations. Somoza, the two authors noted, was “an able man with an engaging personality” and “informal, genial, energetic, persuasive[,] and politically astute,” though with “impulsive, vain and egocentric” habits and a “desire for personal gain.” They believed that “the Nicaraguan government is democratic and republican in form” while “President Somoza has run it largely as a one man show.” Somoza’s “methods have often been criticized in the United States and Latin America,” but the dictator “restored order to Nicaragua,” was recently “less repressive,” and allowed “a two party system” and “a free press.” Most importantly, “Nicaragua ha[d] consistently supported United States foreign policy.” Even the “prior occupation of Nicaragua ha[d] left no residue of ill-feeling,” thanks to the dictator’s “great admir[ation] of this country.” Siracusa and Ohmans did warn that “Somoza remains, however, a target for a loosely knit group of revolutionaries and expatriates frequently called the Caribbean Legion.” Reflecting

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<sup>469</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Dean Acheson, “Courtesy Call of General Anastasio Somoza, President of Nicaragua,” 28 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.” Beisner, 573, credits Acheson with providing this memorandum to Truman.

their limited grasp on the efforts of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network, the officials merely shrugged off such a regional conflict.<sup>470</sup> They either did not know or report that Somoza remained a vocal anti-communist proponent against Arbenz's government.

Landing in Miami on April 28, Somoza immediately sent a telegram to Truman with the usual diplomatic pleasantries, bordering on sycophantic, with "warmest wishes for [the President's] personal happiness and the increasing greatness of the United States."<sup>471</sup> The dictator used the same personal tones with Miller.<sup>472</sup> That same day, Miller's friend, former U.S. Ambassador in Managua, and current U.S. Ambassador in Caracas Fletcher Warren sent a message for Somoza, expressing wishes for a quick and healthy recovery.<sup>473</sup> On April 30, Miller returned the pleasantries, even citing the improved weather for the leader's arrival and wishing him the medical attention he needed.<sup>474</sup>

## **F. Conclusion**

Somoza arrived in Washington at a fortuitous moment. Guatemalan exiles, Somoza, and Trujillo had beneficial relationships with Vaughan and Mara; Miller, Mann, and Latin Americanist officials in the State Department had approved a new U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala designed to encourage opposition against Arbenz's government; and CIA officials had met with Castillo Armas's associates. Thanks to Somoza, Whelan, and Vaughan's

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<sup>470</sup> Dean Acheson to Harry S. Truman, "Memorandum by Secretary of State to the President," 717.11/5-152, [Washington,] 01 May 1952, in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1370-1371.

<sup>471</sup> Anastasio Somoza to Harry S. Truman, Telegram, Miami, 28 April 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>472</sup> Anastasio Somoza to Edward G. Miller, Jr., Telegram, Miami, 29 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>473</sup> Fletcher Warren, U.S. Ambassador in Caracas, to Edward G. Miller, Jr., WIROM 519, Caracas, 29 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>474</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Anastasio Somoza, 30 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder "Nicaragua."



maneuvering, the Nicaraguan dictator now had the opportunity to lobby U.S. officials to endorse Castillo Armas and Somoza's conspiracy. Such efforts would serve as the origins of Operation PBFORTUNE.

## VII. Chapter 6: Considering Operation PBFORTUNE, 1952

After months of debates and preparations, the CIA in early September 1952 was ready. Over the previous weeks, contacts and agents had prepared multiple containers labeled as farm equipment to be shipped from New Orleans, Baltimore, and other U.S. ports to Managua.<sup>475</sup> Inside, the packages contained 5,000 blast and fragmentation grenades, 140 light machine guns, 1,000 rifles, 1,500 machine pistols, 30 anti-tank rifles, thousands of rounds of ammunition, and much more.<sup>476</sup> By August 19, officials drew up a memorandum for Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division colonel J.C. King and Deputy Director Allen Dulles's approval.<sup>477</sup> Finally, Bedell Smith on September 9 endorsed the memorandum.<sup>478</sup> The Agency was about to deliver these armaments to Somoza and Castillo Armas, both waiting in Nicaragua to invade Guatemala and overthrow Arbenz's government.

This chapter examines the lobbying and discussions behind the U.S. government's decision to provide assistance to overthrow Arbenz's government in 1952 during Operation PBFORTUNE. Somoza and Castillo Armas presented their conspiracy as conforming to the State Department's Cold War-oriented policy without threatening the public image of the non-intervention ideal. Truman's military aides Vaughan and Mara endorsed the conspiracy, yet Miller's staff and Bedell Smith's CIA debated whether to provide material assistance. In the end, the Agency gave a 'green light' to what would become known as Operation PBFORTUNE.

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<sup>475</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29;

<sup>476</sup> "Memo to Director of Central Intelligence re: Guatemala 1954 Coup (w/Attachment)," Document 0000915023, 19 August 1952, CIA FOIA. Underline in original.

<sup>477</sup> "Chronology Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency," Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 33.

<sup>478</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 30; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 33; Document 0000915023, 19 August 1952, CIA FOIA.

The debates surrounding the Agency's 'green light' have never received a full treatment, for scholars merely note the lack of available sources and gloss over the summer of 1952 when discussing U.S. policy toward Guatemala.<sup>479</sup> Blending newly-declassified CIA reports, never-before-consulted U.S.-based materials, and Dominican files, this chapter reconstructs those months' events. The final result presents Somoza and Castillo Armas as capable agents, Vaughan and Mara as active participants, a cautious State Department, and a CIA ready to act.

#### **A. Somoza in Washington, May 1952**

In a surprisingly uncharacteristic move, Miller never filed a report on Somoza's lobbying, despite the dictator's essential role in the foundation of Operation PBFORTUNE. Only a year later in September 1953 would the official divulge a few comments to journalist Herbert Matthews. In fact, Miller prefaced that the entire affair had "been superconfidential," forcing the journalist to subsequently record the conversation on a note.<sup>480</sup> Though the note contains some discrepancies from official reports, the journalist's reputation as a diligent reporter suggests a fairly accurate account of Miller's remarks.<sup>481</sup> The official repeatedly stressed his ignorance of Somoza's intentions and distanced the State Department from the entire affair. In a light-hearted manner, the dictator had joked, ""Just give me the arms and I'll clean up Guatemala for you in no time,""" as Department officials ""all laughed."" When Somoza "repeated the remark" during

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<sup>479</sup> See "Editorial Note," Document 11, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 20.

<sup>480</sup> Matthews, 262.

<sup>481</sup> See Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Capus M. Waynick, U.S. Ambassador in Bogotá, 17 March 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 4, Folder "Colombia, 1952;" William L. Krieg to Edward G. Miller, Jr., Guatemala City, 01 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 7, Folder "Guatemala." Miller incorrectly reported that the luncheon for Somoza was "a few days" after this meeting and incorrectly included "Colonel Marrow" in attendance at the luncheon, and Beisner, 581, notes other inaccuracies in Matthews's account from Miller on the chronology of events regarding Operation PBFORTUNE.

Truman's luncheon, Miller reiterated, "“Again, everyone took it as a good joke.””<sup>482</sup> The official provided nothing further on the dictator's scheme.

Others, however, shared far more on Somoza's activities. In Washington, Dominican Ambassador Luis Thomen met with both the Nicaraguan dictator and Vaughan. The two confirmed the jovial atmosphere of events and deluge of jokes. At one point during the luncheon, Vaughan had even jested that Somoza could use nuclear bombs to build a canal through Nicaragua. In addition, the dictator described Truman's giving a tour of the renovated White House, interrupting the chefs in the new kitchen, and playing piano.<sup>483</sup> Not only was the president quite proud of the recently completed renovations and prone to giving tours to foreign leaders.<sup>484</sup> Both First Secretary of the U.S. Embassy in Managua Rolland Welch and U.S. Ambassador in Managua Thomas Whelan later commented that Truman and Somoza discussed classified affairs, likely related to the conspiracy, while “alone” in the White House's kitchen.<sup>485</sup>

At such moments, the Nicaraguan dictator pressed Truman, Vaughan, and the State Department on the conspiracy. Departing from his humorous comments, Somoza stated “that he was prepared to take the initiative in overthrowing the present regime in Guatemala.”<sup>486</sup> As

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<sup>482</sup> Matthews, 262-263.

<sup>483</sup> Luis F. Thomen a Rafael L. Trujillo, 05 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903920 “Fechas extremas 1945-1953, Código 1320, 1330” (en adelante Caja IT 2903920), Expediente “1945-1953, Código 1330.”

<sup>484</sup> On the renovations of the White House during the Truman Administration, see Robert Klara, *The Hidden White House: Harry Truman and the Reconstruction of America's Most Famous Residence* (New York, NY: Thomas Dunne, 2013); “The White House Revealed,” HST (online at: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/abierowe/whitehse.htm>). On Truman's informal habits when meeting with foreign leaders, see Sean J. Savage, “Truman in Historical, Popular, and Political Memory,” in Daniel S. Margolies, ed., *A Companion to Harry S. Truman* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012), 9-25.

<sup>485</sup> “(Est. Pub Date) Memo (Deleted) to JCK re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000914985, Estimated 1954, CIA FOIA.

<sup>486</sup> William Kirten, Jr., Naval Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Managua, 181-52 Personal Conversation “Nicaragua – Political – Domestic Affairs,” 28 November 1952, with Rolland

would be consistently reported, the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network's members aimed to provide material support to the exiles under Castillo Armas and dissident Guatemalan military officers for a coordinated invasion over the borders and uprising within Guatemala. Alongside armaments and money, the members offered moral support through the UN, the OAS, and any regional or international venues.<sup>487</sup> Consequently, Somoza argued, the U.S. government's involvement would be indirect, consisting of a "non-critical attitude" and "behind-the-scenes approval" of the conspiracy. Evoking the language of his earlier joke, the dictator insisted that "the Central Americas could clean up the situation."<sup>488</sup>

According to the dictator himself, the lobbying had mixed results. Fearing potential blowback upon his government, Miller stalled discussions on the matter.<sup>489</sup> Throughout his accounts to U.S. and Dominican officials, Somoza criticized the official for vetoing any covert assistance.<sup>490</sup> At one point, the dictator complained that Miller opposed "even moral support to

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Welch, First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Managua, to John L. Ohmans, Managua, 22 December 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

<sup>487</sup> Rolland Welch, Colonel Anastasio Somoza, Jr., Office Memorandum "Subject: The previously proposed plan to promote revolt in Guatemala," 09 March 1953, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

<sup>488</sup> William Kirten, Jr., 181-52, 28 November 1952, with Rolland Welch to John L. Ohmans, Managua, 22 December 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza;" Charles B. Layton, Army Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Managua, to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Department of the Army, CARMA S-2-52 "Subject: Proposed Intervention, Communists Question," Managua, 01 December 1952, with Garrison B. Coverdale, Chief for Collection and Dissemination Division of the Department of the Army, to Special Assistant for Intelligence for Department of State, G-2-CDR "Subject: Proposed Intervention, Communists Guatemala," Washington, 24 December 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

<sup>489</sup> "Memorandum of Interview," Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48.

<sup>490</sup> William Kirten, Jr., 181-52, 28 November 1952, with Rolland Welch to John L. Ohmans, Managua, 22 December 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

take drastic measures in Guatemala.”<sup>491</sup> In contrast, Truman and Acheson were not as adamant. Without committing to the conspiracy, the president, according to Somoza, did express interest and asked for further information.<sup>492</sup> At most, Acheson admitted that the State Department opposed Arbenz’s government, an accurate reflection of many U.S. officials’ sentiments in 1952.<sup>493</sup> Rather, it was Vaughan who stepped forward and committed the U.S. government to the plot. The dictator had indeed asked Truman and Acheson about the “assistance,” that is, the armaments, that Castillo Armas required, but Somoza never claimed to have secured their blessing. Instead, Vaughan affirmed that the U.S. government would provide such “assistance.”<sup>494</sup>

## **B. Somoza, Vaughan, and Mara, May – July 1952**

Spurred on by Vaughan’s affirmation, Somoza nurtured his relationships with Truman’s military aides upon leaving Washington.<sup>495</sup> In New York after the surgery, the dictator discussed

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<sup>491</sup> Charles B. Layton, CARMA S-2-52, Managua, 01 December 1952, with Garrison B. Coverdale to Special Assistant for Intelligence for Department of State, G-2-CDR, Washington, 24 December 1952, NARAIL, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder “Nicaragua: General Somoza.”

<sup>492</sup> Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48; Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, Embajador Dominicano en Managua, a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 21 julio 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958 “Fechas extremas 1939-1952, Ref. Antigua 2270” (en adelante Caja IT 2903958), Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>493</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 21 julio 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>494</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 21 julio 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c;” “MEMORANDUM: Conversaciones con el Dr. Eduardo Zuleta Ángel, en Panamá, del 2 al 5 de octubre de 1952,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>495</sup> Although Clark has hinted at Somoza’s efforts, only Roorda has analyzed how a dictator (Trujillo) employed military decorations and other tools to cultivate relationships with U.S. military officials.

various subjects with Vaughan, who offered Somoza an airplane for the return to Managua.<sup>496</sup>

The aide's actions took the State Department by surprise, for their office was responsible for handling such matters.<sup>497</sup> Not only had Vaughan circumvented the State Department. Akin to his intervention when the dictator was preparing to visit Washington, the aide claimed to act on Truman's orders.<sup>498</sup> Whether in lobbying for Somoza's visit, requesting a plane for the dictator's departure, or offering his government's assistance for the conspiracy, Vaughan continued to use his position to make such arrangements, seemingly all on his own initiative.

For his part, the dictator poured awards and attention upon both of Truman's aides. Before leaving Washington, he mentioned bestowing the Presidential Medal of Merit upon Vaughan and the Cross of Distinguished Service upon Mara.<sup>499</sup> Only the latter, though, was able to fly with Somoza to Managua.<sup>500</sup> There, the dictator boasted of his "close friendship" with Truman and doted on Mara.<sup>501</sup> The aide attended ceremonies at the Club Terraza, visited the Nicaraguan Military Academy, and was the guest of honor at a luncheon.<sup>502</sup> The dictator did not

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<sup>496</sup> Anastasio Somoza to Major General Harry H. Vaughan, Telegram, New York, 21 June 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>497</sup> John L. Ohmans to Thomas E. Whelan, 23 June 1952, NARAIL, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

<sup>498</sup> Robert B. Landry, Air Aide to President Harry S. Truman, to Harry S. Truman, "Memorandum for the President," 24 June 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>499</sup> Anastasio Somoza to Major General Harry H. Vaughan, New York, 23 June 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>500</sup> Major General Harry H. Vaughan to Anastasio Somoza, 25 June 1952, with Major General Harry H. Vaughan to Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa, Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington, 25 June 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua;" Secretary to Robert B. Landry, to Cornelius J. Mara, "Memorandum for Colonel Mara," 3 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua;" Anastasio Somoza to Harry S. Truman, Telegram, Miami, 06 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>501</sup> Rolland Welch, Despatch No. 11 "Subject: Weeka No. 80 – Section I," Managua, 11 July 1952, 717.00(W)/7-1152, NARAIL, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3263.

<sup>502</sup> Rolland Welch, Despatch No. 11, Managua, 11 July 1952, 717.00(W)/7-1152, NARAIL, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3263; Cornelius J. Mara to Oscar Sevilla Sacasa,

limit himself to awarding military decorations. The Guardia Nacional's official publication included various pictures of Mara's speaking with Somoza's family, sitting at the head table with Somoza at the Club Terraza, and receiving from Somoza the Medalla del Servicio Distinguido.<sup>503</sup>

These efforts paid off. As had Vaughan in Washington, Mara unilaterally endorsed the plot. During a cocktail party at Whelan's residence in Managua, First Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Managua Rolland Welch found the dictator and the aide "talk[ing] rather openly of the attempt on Guatemala to be made with Nicaraguan and U.S. backing."<sup>504</sup> At this juncture, the ambassador approached Ohmans, who just happened to be visiting the U.S. Embassy.<sup>505</sup> Surprised by Mara's boldness and claims, Whelan asked the Office of Middle American Affairs representative to speak with the aide.<sup>506</sup> Though Ohmans had not participated in any of the events in Washington during Somoza's visit, his report on Mara's actions accurately recreated the conspiracy's core details. The dictator aimed to remove the "cancerous growth in the

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Nicaraguan Minister of Foreign Relations, 17 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua;" Cornelius J. Mara to Anastasio 'Tachito' Somoza, 18 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua." Capitalization in original.

<sup>503</sup> Rolland Welch, Despatch No. 11, Managua, 11 July 1952, 717.00(W)/7-1152, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3263; *Boletín de la Guardia Nacional*, Managua, julio 1952, with Charles B. Layton to Cornelius J. Mara, Managua, 09 September 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>504</sup> Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48.

<sup>505</sup> Document 0000914985, Estimated 1954, CIA FOIA; Ernest V. Siracusa to Thomas E. Whelan, 27 June 1952, NARAI, RG59, "Bureau of Inter-American Affairs/Office of Middle American Affairs, Subject Files, 1947-1956," Box 4, Folder "Nicaragua: General, 1952."

<sup>506</sup> John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, "Subject: Conversations with Colonel Neil Mara, Assistant Military Aide to the President," 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262. The only work that has referenced Ohmans's July 21 report to Mann is William Kamman, "A Friendly Problem: Washington's Assessment of Anastasio Somoza García," in J. Garry Clifford and Theodore A. Wilson (eds.), *Presidents, Diplomats, and Other Mortals: Essays Honoring Robert H. Ferrell* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2007), 88-89. Kamman did not analyze Operation PBFORTUNE and only noted, "When Somoza visited the United States in 1952, he spoke with various people about Guatemala and what might be done to stop communism."



Americas” and solve “the Guatemalan situation.” Somoza, “without any involvement for the United States,” would “get arms into the hands of the Guatemalan oppositionists to help contribute to the downfall of the present rulers there.”<sup>507</sup> As with Truman, Acheson, Miller, and Vaughan, the dictator presented the conspiracy to Mara as suitable for the U.S. government’s goals.

Inadvertently but not unsurprisingly, Mara unleashed a bureaucratic conflict with the State Department. While in Managua, the aide lambasted the Department’s policy toward Guatemala as “too weak,” “vacillating,” and in need of “strong action.” Mara even called out Miller and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Mann by name for “not acting strongly enough with Guatemala.”<sup>508</sup> Rather than reciprocating in kind, the State Department chose to focus on the aide’s championing the conspiracy without any approval from Washington. Miller, Welch, and others alleged that Mara acted at his own behest. Somehow, they argued, Somoza “sold” Mara on the conspiracy, leading to unsupported claims that the U.S. government was “definitely interested” in the plot.<sup>509</sup>

Returning to Washington, the aide directly lobbied Truman. On July 11, Mara gave the president three memoranda. In one, he wrote, “A gentleman in whom you have confidence advises that the situation in Guatemala has reached such a stage that some positive action is necessary.”<sup>510</sup> Employing the language of Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin regimes who complained that U.S. officials failed to oppose Guatemalan communism, the aide outlined that

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<sup>507</sup> John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, “Subject: Conversations,” 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAII, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262.

<sup>508</sup> John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, “Subject: Conversations,” 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAII, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262.

<sup>509</sup> Matthews, 263; Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48.

<sup>510</sup> Cornelius J. Mara to Harry S. Truman, “Memorandum for the President,” 11 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder “Nicaragua.” This memorandum also appears in HST, PSF, OF, Box 1435, OF 439, Folder “Guatemala.”

the Guatemalan people and Latin American governments “cannot but feel that we condone, if we do not fully approve,” of Arbenz’s government.<sup>511</sup> Mara also took the opportunity to demand once again the State Department “decide on some stringent action and implement it in a sudden move.”<sup>512</sup> In a handwritten note that also evoked the language of Somoza and others who long opposed the Guatemalan Revolution and believed the conspiracy would uphold the image of non-intervention, the aide implored Truman, “[Somoza c]ould clean up the Guatemala regime with 10,000 rifles and one million rounds without ever involving [the] U.S.”<sup>513</sup>

This lobbying further exacerbated the bureaucratic conflict with the State Department. In Washington, Ohmans and Whelan met with Mara, who confirmed his lobbying the president.<sup>514</sup> The aide even shared the memos and note prepared for Truman, though his descriptions of the president’s response were rather vague. During the meeting, the officials could not determine whether Truman endorsed the conspiracy. On a previous occasion, Ohmans recalled, Mara found the president “non-committal.” Whelan, though, remembered the aide’s remarking that “Truman believed Somoza could do it.” Regardless, the officials were told that the president would discuss the matter with the State Department.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>511</sup> Cornelius J. Mara to Harry S. Truman, “Memorandum for the President,” 11 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>512</sup> Cornelius J. Mara to Harry S. Truman, “Memorandum for the President,” 11 July 1952, HST, PSF, OF, Box 1434, OF 432, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>513</sup> Cornelius J. Mara, Handwritten Note, HST, PSF, Subject File, Foreign Affairs File, Box 156 “‘France, General’ to ‘Germany, Military Government in Germany,’” Folder “G.”

<sup>514</sup> John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, “Subject: Conversations,” 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262. Truman and Mara did have an “OFF THE RECORD” meeting at 11:30a.m. on July 12, “Daily Presidential Appointments,” 11:30 a.m., 12 July 1952, HST, Papers of Harry S. Truman Staff Member and Office Files, Matthew J. Connelly Files, 1945-1952, online at “The President’s Day” at [www.trumanlibrary.org/calendar/main.php](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/calendar/main.php).

<sup>515</sup> John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, “Subject: Conversations,” 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262.

Preemptively, Miller and his officials protested Mara's lobbying and blamed the aide for encouraging Truman to endorse the conspiracy. Immediately, he ordered Whelan to return to Managua. There, the ambassador was to make clear the State Department's opposition "in sponsoring a 'covert' aggression on any American State." Miller also lectured on the United States and Nicaragua's memberships in the OAS and the UN.<sup>516</sup> Next, he wrote to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State H. Freeman Matthews about "how potentially dangerous" the aide's actions were and requested that the Deputy Assistant take up the matter directly with Acheson.<sup>517</sup> While Freeman Matthews warned the Secretary of State about Mara's "extravagant ideas," Miller attempted to distance the State Department from the aide's actions.<sup>518</sup> First, he communicated to Whelan that any rumors of assistance for the conspiracy were coming from the Army, that is, Mara, not the State Department.<sup>519</sup> Second, he reprimanded the ambassador for bringing Ohmans or any other officials into the affair. Returning to Managua, Whelan made certain that his embassy remained uninvolved in the plot.<sup>520</sup> From there on out, Miller insisted that Mara "went directly to Truman" with the memos and the conspiracy without the approval or involvement of the State Department.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48.

<sup>517</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to H. Freeman Matthews, Deputy Under Secretary of State, 23 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, with John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, "Subject: Conversations," 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262.

<sup>518</sup> H. Freeman Matthews to Dean Acheson, 25 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, with John L. Ohmans to Thomas C. Mann, "Subject: Conversations," 21 July 1952, 717.00/7-2152, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262.

<sup>519</sup> Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48.

<sup>520</sup> Document 0000914985, Estimated 1954, CIA FOIA.

<sup>521</sup> Matthews, 263. An October 08 CIA report records that an unnamed individual was "sent to Honduras" in "May [19]52 to contact Castillo Armas, advise, and get answers," Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29. Citing a source that remains classified, Cullather writes, "At Vaughan's urging, Truman instructed [Bedell] Smith to follow up," Cullather, 28.

### C. The CIA, the State Department, and the Conspiracy, Mid-1952

While Mara lobbied the president, the CIA developed their contacts with Castillo Armas's organization and allies. As early as June 23, King approved handing off money to unnamed contacts traveling between New Orleans and Guatemala.<sup>522</sup> The recipients of further assistance, however, remained up for debate. There was no consensus behind Castillo Armas, for officials were actually deliberating between two potential exiles. Some vouched for Castillo Armas's plan, with its minimal involvement on the part of the U.S. government.<sup>523</sup> Others recommended armaments and funding for dissidents led by Carlos Simons, a prominent Guatemalan not connected with Castillo Armas.<sup>524</sup> Sometimes, it appeared that the Agency considered encouraging both leaders, as when reports suggested "token assistance" for Castillo Armas to ensure the "continued confidence" of Simons.<sup>525</sup>

Out of these internal discussions, the Agency in early July threw its support behind Castillo Armas. In a recommendation delivered to Deputy Director of Plans Frank Wisner, an

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<sup>522</sup> "Cable to (Deleted) from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000915042, 23 June 1952, CIA FOIA; "Cable re: Funds Transfer," Document 0000136382, 23 June 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>523</sup> "Misc re: Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000915039, 07 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>524</sup> "General-DYCLUCK-Specific-TP-REDUCE (w/Attachments)," Document 0000915040, 25 June 1952, CIA FOIA; "Telegram From the CIA Station in [*place not declassified*] to the Central Intelligence Agency," Document 10, [*place not declassified*], 25 June 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 18-19; Document 0000915039, 07 July 1952, CIA FOIA; "Cable to Operations from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000915032, 09 July 1952, CIA FOIA; "Cable to Operations from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000915030, 09 July 1952, CIA FOIA. The CIA recommended that Simons coordinate with Castillo Armas, but Simons only agreed in September after Operation PBFORTUNE was already in progress. See "Cable to Coperations from (Deleted) re: Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000915031, 09 July 1952, CIA FOIA; "Cable Providing Headquarters Instructions for (Not Readable)," Document 0000136383, 21 July 1952, CIA FOIA; "Cable to Director, CIA from Sr. Rep. Guatemala re: Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000915021, 09 September 1952, CIA FOIA. On similar divisions on Castillo Armas's leadership following Arbenz's resignation in 1954, see Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 351-360.

<sup>525</sup> Document 0000915032, 09 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

official outlined the links between Castillo Armas, Somoza, and Honduran officials.<sup>526</sup> The depth of these connections, though, still remained unclear to the CIA. Somoza and other members of the network had long patronized the exile, among others, without any inducement, yet the official conjectured that the U.S. government's approval could coax "material support" from these anti-communist leaders. With this superficial understanding of the regional dynamics of the opposition to Arbenz's government, the recommendation urged immediate action. In the event of an attack by Castillo Armas without sufficient report, the Agency feared the "elimination of all effective anti-Communist opposition in Guatemala" due to governmental crackdowns and the loss of morale. Armaments, money, agents, and other resources would strengthen Castillo Armas's movement and increase the probability of the Arbenz government's downfall. Of course, officials continued to stress that the U.S. government needed to persuade Somoza, Trujillo, and others to support the exile. Such persuasion would inform Caribbean Basin leaders "that any assistance they give to Castillo [Armas] will not reflect to their discredit."<sup>527</sup>

With this recommendation, a meeting was held on July 10 between leading State Department and Agency officials, including Miller, Mann, Dulles, an official directly under Dulles, and CIA Inspector General Stuart Hedden.<sup>528</sup> In another uncharacteristic move similar to what occurred during Somoza's visit to Washington, neither Miller nor Mann reported on the

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<sup>526</sup> "Memorandum From [*name not declassified*] of the Western Hemisphere Division, Central Intelligence Agency to the Deputy Director for Plans of the Central Intelligence Agency (Wisner)," Document 12, Washington, 09 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 21-22.

<sup>527</sup> Document 12, Washington, 09 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 21-22.

<sup>528</sup> Dulles's official claimed at different times that, although Miller and Mann certainly attended, either Intelligence Adviser for the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs Hobart Spalding and/or Policy Planning Staff official Robert Joyce were also present. See "Guatemala (Handwritten)," Document 0000915033, 10 July 1952, CIA FOIA; "Memorandum From [*name not declassified*] of the Central Intelligence Agency to the Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division, Central Intelligence Agency (King)," Document 21, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 31; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 32.

meeting. Instead, Dulles's official provided both a handwritten memorandum and a later official memorandum. Together, the parties debated three questions the CIA put forward:

1. Does [the State Department] want the change in government envisaged in the Summary?
2. Would [the State Department] like it to be assisted covertly?
3. Would [the State Department] oppose it?<sup>529</sup>

Miller and Mann's responses conformed to their Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala.

The two did want a new regime, even if imposed through force.<sup>530</sup> Nonetheless, they both limited the CIA's involvement to protect the principle of non-intervention. Supposedly, Miller approved the Agency's assistance if "assured of success" and if the U.S. government's role remained "covered up." According to Dulles's official, he added, "It is up to you [the CIA] to decide."<sup>531</sup> Such an endorsement of the Agency did not come from Mann. Bluntly, he opposed any intervention unless offered a "98% certainty of success," no one in Latin America knew of the U.S. government's involvement, and any assistance was restricted to money.<sup>532</sup>

Naturally, these responses caused confusion. Dulles's official reported that Miller and Mann had "not answered clearly[,] but by implication, positively" to the Agency's involvement.<sup>533</sup> An inference of approval was not enough for Bedell Smith, who called Undersecretary of State David Bruce to discuss the matter to review the same questions.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> Document 0000915033, 10 July 1952, CIA FOIA. The questions were directed to "EGM" with "He" for 'Miller.' The official memorandum switches the second and third questions but provide the same answers, Document 21, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 31.

<sup>530</sup> Document 0000915033, 10 July 1952, CIA FOIA; Document 21, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 31.

<sup>531</sup> Document 0000915033, 10 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>532</sup> Document 0000915033, 10 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>533</sup> Document 21, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 31; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 32.

<sup>534</sup> Document 21, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 31; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 32; "Memorandum of Conference," Document 14, Washington, 21 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 23-24.

Despite the Director's involvement, ambiguity persisted. In early October, Bruce would deny having "said anything that could be interpreted as approval."<sup>535</sup> As had Dulles, Bedell Smith interpreted the responses as signifying consent.<sup>536</sup> Four days after meeting with Miller and Mann, the Agency approved material aid.<sup>537</sup> Dulles and Hedden the next day met with a representative of the UFCO and other groups opposed to Arbenz's government. The officials outlined that those groups "should pay the bill" and only expect the CIA to suggest "where the principals might buy the goods" needed.<sup>538</sup>

Within a week, further bureaucratic complications led to a second meeting between the Agency and the State Department. Again, Miller and Mann pressed Dulles regarding the CIA's involvement in the plot. Fortunately, the Deputy Director was well prepared. Opening the meeting, Dulles showed a cable to an Agency contact discouraging relationships with Castillo Armas, focusing on intelligence gathering, and outlining psychological warfare operations.<sup>539</sup> These parameters fell within the objectives and policies approved over the past years by both Miller and Mann, who made clear their approval.<sup>540</sup> Quite understandably then, the debate between the two departments revolved not upon propaganda or opposition to Arbenz's

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<sup>535</sup> "Memorandum for the Record," Document 23, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 34.

<sup>536</sup> Document 21, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 31.

<sup>537</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29.

<sup>538</sup> "Memorandum for the Record," Document 13, Washington, 15 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 22-23.

<sup>539</sup> Document 14, Washington, 21 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 23; Document 0000136383, 21 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>540</sup> Document 14, Washington, 21 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 23. Dulles only refers to Miller and Mann as "the first M" and "the second M." Because Dulles later references the questions that Dulles's official had described as directed to Miller as having been given to "the second M," it appears that Miller was "the second M." Because "the first M" discusses Mara's lobbying on behalf of the conspiracy and because Ohmans's July 21 memorandum to Mann discussed Mara's actions, it appears that Mann was "the first M."

government but the potential dissemination of any knowledge regarding the Agency's involvement in a counter-revolutionary movement.

Here, it was Dulles who took the initiative to lobby in support of the conspiracy. He assured Miller and Mann that the Agency had not yet provided financial assistance, which most likely would come from the UFCO or other groups. Similarly, "utmost care" would be used to either direct Castillo Armas's organization to armaments or delivering hardware. Repeating the fears from the early July recommendation, the Deputy Director cautioned that the collapse of the exile's movement would undermine local opposition to Arbenz's government. He even suggested that "whatever happened in" Guatemala would bring "blame" upon the U.S. government.<sup>541</sup> The bureaucratic conflict between the State Department and Truman's military aides also served Dulles's interests. In the aftermath of Mara's endorsing the conspiracy and lobbying the president, Mann worried that the aide's memos, Somoza's comments, and other recent events would further implicate the U.S. government as behind Castillo Armas's movement. Cleverly, Dulles manipulated the bureaucratic conflict and "suggested that [all of] this again was evidence that[,] if anything happened, there would be plenty of other persons to blame for it."<sup>542</sup>

The CIA pushed forward with material assistance, going beyond the parameters established by Miller and Mann. The following day, Dulles ordered Wisner to develop cover stories, identify suitable ports, and create manifests for shipping armaments.<sup>543</sup> Multiple contacts and agents, including the State Department's Deputy Operations Coordinator J. Lampton Berry,

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<sup>541</sup> Document 14, Washington, 21 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 24.

<sup>542</sup> Document 14, Washington, 21 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 24.

<sup>543</sup> Footnote 2, Document 12, Washington, 09 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 22.



began putting materials together.<sup>544</sup> Approval also came for one contact, under the pseudonym ‘Jacob R. Seekford,’ to head to Managua and help with unloading, storing, and preparing shipments.<sup>545</sup> Even as such efforts ramped up, there remained some confusion or ambiguity. At the end of July, Dulles halted preparations for any further shipments for reasons not made his staff.<sup>546</sup>

At this juncture, Castillo Armas maneuvered by playing upon the Agency’s fears of the collapse of anti-communist opposition to Arbenz’s government and presenting himself as willing to realize the conspiracy without the U.S. government’s assistance. On July 31, the exile informed Seekford that he required submachine guns, pistols, grenades, bombs, mines, and more.<sup>547</sup> This request came right as Dulles stalled operations, but Castillo Armas pursued two tracks to restart the Agency’s assistance. First, the exile cut back on his requests, removing bombers and planes, to make his solicitations more affordable and reasonable. Second, he refused to terminate the conspiracy. Reiterating the ever-present concern among CIA officials that an insufficiently outfitted invasion would simply collapse and weaken local resistance, Seekford warned that the exile would “make the attempt even without such assistance.” The contact joined Castillo Armas in lobbying the Agency that “the best solution [was a] green light to [Somoza] and [the] shipment of materiel to him.”<sup>548</sup>

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<sup>544</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29; “Outline of Events for Initial Hardware Shipment DTROBALO-FTZ NY-Puerto Cabe,” Document 0000915028, 28 July 1952, CIA FOIA; “Packaging and Transportation of Material (w/Attachment),” Document 0000915029, 28 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>545</sup> Document 0000915028, 28 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>546</sup> Document 0000915029, 28 July 1952, CIA FOIA; Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 30.

<sup>547</sup> “Supplement ‘B,’” Document 0000915027, 31 July 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>548</sup> “Conference with Seekford (w/Attachment),” Document 0000915026, 04 August 1952, CIA FOIA.

Castillo Armas's lobbying either succeeded or coincided with decisions already being made by leading Agency officials to give such a 'green light.' Within days, the CIA sent requests to the U.S. Army's Chief of Staff for material assistance to be readied.<sup>549</sup> Throughout August, officials and contacts reported that Bedell Smith and Dulles secured the "green light" to deliver armaments to Somoza and Castillo Armas's organization.<sup>550</sup> After the Director requested recommendations and the memorandum on delivering material assistance, the "green light" was officially approved in early September.<sup>551</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> "Shipment of Foreign Arms & Ammunition Stored at (Deleted) Project – 'Coathanger,'" Document 0000915025, 06 August 1952, CIA FOIA; "Shipment of Foreign Arms and Ammunition Stored at (Deleted), Project – 'Coathan,'" Document 0000915024, 08 August 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>550</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 30; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 32.

<sup>551</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 30; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 33; Document 0000915023, 19 August 1952, CIA FOIA.

## **VIII. Chapter 7: Operation PBFORTUNE, 1952**

Like many, King was furious. Since July, his people had pushed forward with Operation PBFORTUNE. Not only had the Agency invested weeks to obtain what Dulles and Bedell Smith took as approval of the venture. Fearing that any failed conspiracy would bring the wrath of Arbenz's government down upon Guatemala's anti-communist opposition, the CIA had prepared packages of grenades, rifles, and more for shipment. It also deployed agents to coordinate with Somoza and Castillo Armas in Nicaragua. Despite these measures, the Agency was soon caught by surprise. Beginning in September, State Department officials were reporting conversations with Dominican Ambassador in Washington Luis Thomen, Colombian Ambassador Eduardo Zuleta Ángel, and Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa. These Caribbean Basin officials, seemingly without any restraint, had casually remarked about the plot, an uprising organized by regional dictatorships with the U.S. government's understanding and indirect, possibly direct, support. Taken aback at what could become proof of their having knowingly violated the non-intervention ideal, Miller and his associates canceled the operation on October 8, infuriating the Agency. The Department's caution made sense. After all, neither they nor the CIA understood the network's intelligence-sharing or its previous conspiracies against Arévalo's government. Still, King and his contemporaries would never acknowledge that Somoza, Castillo Armas, and the network's members had organized Operation PBFORTUNE's foundation, invested their own resources, lobbied additional allies, and accomplished far more on their own initiative. For many in the United States, blame rested not with the Agency, Truman's aides, or even the State Department. In a racist and paternalistic tone, the chief of the CIA's

Western Hemisphere Division argued, “This confirmed our general belief that no Latin American can be trusted to keep his mouth shut.”<sup>552</sup>

This chapter illustrates that Operation PBFORTUNE represents the moment when U.S. Cold War-oriented policy toward Guatemala intersected with the transnational counter-revolution against the Guatemalan Revolution. With the ‘green light’ to provide assistance for the conspiracy, the CIA’s involvement bolstered regional support and radicalized the actions of Somoza and other members of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network. Most notably, the network’s intelligence-sharing accelerated and expanded as the Nicaraguan dictator and others welcomed more collaborators into the conspiracy and met with State Department officials. Officials feared this invigorated intelligence-sharing jeopardized the image of the U.S. government’s adherence to non-intervention and terminated Operation PBFORTUNE. Though the network’s members had cooperated with Truman’s military aides and the CIA, U.S. officials preferred to blame the aborted operation on “unreliable” latinos.

My purpose is to apply Greg Grandin’s suggestion to investigate the “dynamic nature of counterrevolution” in Latin America and “its ability to draw new political actors into its orbit.”<sup>553</sup> Tying Grandin’s methodological note with Odd Arne Westad’s model for identifying how Third World elites solicited and incorporated the Cold War superpowers’ resources and ideologies, I argue that the network’s intelligence-sharing shaped and encouraged the already prone network members to embrace, if not submit to, CIA support to pursue their long-standing objective.<sup>554</sup> Caribbean Basin officials and Guatemalan exiles were not bystanders of Operation PBFORTUNE but active collaborators who propelled the conspiracy. Therefore, these leaders

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<sup>552</sup> “Memorandum for the Record,” Document 24, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 35.

<sup>553</sup> Grandin, “Living in Revolutionary Time,” 23.

<sup>554</sup> Westad, “The New International History:” 561-564.

Latin Americanized and transnationalized what has been previously presented in the literature as a rather unilateral U.S. action, dictated by Cold War needs and perceptions coming from Washington.<sup>555</sup> This concerted action, by its very nature, was transformative, a watershed not just in the global Cold War but in intra-Caribbean relations as well.<sup>556</sup>

#### **A. The Conspiracy as Operation PBFORTUNE**

The network's intelligence-sharing picked up speed with the earliest discussions between Somoza and leading U.S. officials. While in Washington, the Nicaraguan dictator had first broached the subject after Vaughan's offers of "assistance" for the venture.<sup>557</sup> After informing Thomen regarding this possibility, he waited until July 21 to confirm this "assistance" to Dominican Ambassador in Managua Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi.<sup>558</sup> The wait – two months long – was necessary while Dulles, Hedden, and the Agency secured approval, yet even Somoza's first inquiries showed a gained momentum.<sup>559</sup>

At the same time, Truman's military aides continued encouraging the plot. In early August, Nicaraguan Ambassador in Washington Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa met with them to counteract Miller's negative reactions to Mara's lobbying.<sup>560</sup> Led on by Mara, the ambassador outlined for the State Department that the dictator would only request armaments through either a military assistance program or purchasing weapons from the Department of Defense. Vaughan

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<sup>555</sup> Joseph, "What We Now Know," 7.

<sup>556</sup> Hogan, "The Next Big Thing:" 13.

<sup>557</sup> "MEMORANDUM," AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente "Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c;" Luis F. Thomen a Rafael L. Trujillo, 05 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903920, Expediente "1945-1953, Código 1330."

<sup>558</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 21 julio 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente "Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c."

<sup>559</sup> Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 29; Document 13, Washington, 15 July 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 22-23.

<sup>560</sup> Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 48.

was not only “very much impressed” with these developments; the aide promised to “personally bring it up with General [Omar] Bradley, the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.”<sup>561</sup> While pretending to consider only standard military equipment to appease the State Department’s concerns, the aide’s offer remained wedded to the conspiracy. Over further discussions on Nicaraguan equipment, Mara had received reports from Sevilla Sacasa on the regime’s military needs. Somoza waxed ecstatic, thanking Vaughan for “the necessary backing to realize the project.” Although the dictator never directly stated whether this ‘project’ related to the venture against Arbenz’s government, he did assure Vaughan that the resources represented “a necessary measure in relation to [Nicaraguan] security against the communist threat which intensifies its gravity for the Central American countries of the type which is unfolding in Guatemala.”<sup>562</sup> Of course, Vaughan and Mara were on board. When the State Department canceled Operation PBFORTUNE, Vaughan forwarded Somoza’s poorly translated letter to the CIA. In a response for the aide and approved by Bedell Smith, Wisner admitted that all parties involved “kn[ew] what ha[d] transpired in connection with this matter” and would not speak further.<sup>563</sup> This was not hindsight; Vaughan and the CIA had long recognized the goal behind Somoza’s requests.

In any case, the CIA’s ‘green light’ immediately emboldened its members. In early August, Castillo Armas and his contact ‘Jacob R. Seekford’ had requested approval for Somoza which Dulles promptly confirmed the next week.<sup>564</sup> Before the end of the month, the exile and

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<sup>561</sup> Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa, John L. Ohmans, Memorandum of Conversation “Subject: Call of Ambassador Sevilla-Sacasa,” 08 August 1952, NARAII, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 1, Folder “Nicaragua: Military Assistance Program.”

<sup>562</sup> “Letter to General and Friend re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000915011, 08 October 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>563</sup> “Memo to Major General Harry R. Vaughan Military Aide to the President the Whit,” Document 0000937555,” 16 October 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>564</sup> Document 0000915026, 04 August 1952, CIA FOIA; Document 22, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 32.

the dictator met in Managua.<sup>565</sup> There, Somoza promised the exile “would be given all the support necessary.” Upon reviewing the orders of armaments, Somoza’s son Tachito interjected that the regime could not provide transport planes. According to the CIA official who reported on the meeting, Castillo Armas “stated, as instructed by [the Agency], that all equipment provided would [be] replaced in kind.”<sup>566</sup> As this meeting followed Seekford’s solicitations and Dulles’s approval and was reported by the Agency without protest, the exile’s words rang true. Furthermore, Castillo Armas suggested that a CIA official “work with General Somoza.”<sup>567</sup> Shaped in large part by the exile’s lobbying, the ‘green light’ had brought together the dictator, the exile, and the CIA.

As he had done with Trujillo in July, the dictator informed his allies in the network of the U.S. government’s support. He agreed to help with aircraft as well as armaments, personnel, and bases. And if this were not enough, Somoza also informed the exile that he would be the “liaison” with Trujillo.<sup>568</sup> Over the past years, the two dictators had often exchanged information on exiles, yet Somoza had never before offered such assurances. CIA backing coalesced the network’s members further and increased their resolve.

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<sup>565</sup> The CIA’s September 01 “Intermediate Report” states that Castillo Armas returned on “30 September 1952,” so the editors of the *FRUS Guatemala* volume believed that this meeting’s date actually “should be July 30, 1952, soon after Somoza’s meeting with Colonel Mara.” However, the CIA’s producing a report on September 01 regarding a July 30 meeting is incorrect. Castillo Armas on August 04 lobbied Seekford for the CIA to give Somoza a ‘green light,’ so a meeting between the exile and dictator on July 30 that preceded a request for a ‘green light’ does not make sense. A more accurate timeline for these events would be: Castillo Armas on August 04 lobbied for the ‘green light,’ Somoza received the ‘green light’ in August, the exile and dictator met on August 30, and the CIA official wrote the “Intermediate Report” on September 01 after the meeting. Footnote 2, “Intermediate Report on Military Plans for Guatemala,” Document 16, Washington, 01 September 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 25.

<sup>566</sup> Document 16, Washington, 01 September 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 25-26.

<sup>567</sup> Document 16, Washington, 01 September 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 25-26.

<sup>568</sup> Document 16, Washington, 01 September 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 25-26.

Trujillo still needed verification. On September 5, he ordered his ambassador in Washington to investigate.<sup>569</sup> As the network's members frequently exchanged information on plots against the Guatemalan governments, Thomen responded as his counterparts had since 1948. Led to believe that the U.S. government now endorsed the conspiracy and in a manner consistent with the network's intelligence-sharing, he contacted Miller to discuss the new venture. Meeting on September 11, the U.S. official did note that Thomen referred to "understandings" between the two dictators "with regard to anti-communistic activities in the Caribbean and particularly in Guatemala" which the ambassador wished to corroborate. Like Somoza, Trujillo "wanted to assure [the U.S. government] that the Dominican Republic was ready and anxious to do everything incumbent upon it to engage in anti-communistic activities."<sup>570</sup>

In his report on the meeting, Miller presented himself as upholding the non-intervention ideal. All parties had discussed Arbenz's government, he told the Dominican ambassador, and the State Department saw the "seriousness of the situation." However, Miller supposedly rebuked that "no understandings had been arrived at as to methods of combating communism." He also lectured Thomen on the advantages of non-intervention. If the region's leaders were concerned about events in Guatemala, he suggested turning to the appropriate "inter-American

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<sup>569</sup> Telésforo R. Calderón a Luis F. Thomen, Núm. 33307 "Asunto: Conversaciones entre Acheson y Somoza," Ciudad Trujillo, 05 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente "Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c."

<sup>570</sup> Luis Francisco Thomen, Edward G. Miller, Jr., Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Conversation Between President Somoza and General Trujillo re Anti-Communistic Activities," 11 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 6, Folder "Dominican Republic, 1949-1952."



machinery,” as any other efforts on the part of the U.S. government could bring “long-run damage.”<sup>571</sup>

The Dominican ambassador’s account diverged significantly from that produced by Miller. During the conversation, Thomen had inquired into the U.S. government’s response to “any unexpected movement” against Arbenz’s government. Consistent with the State Department’s Cold War-oriented policy toward the country, Miller looked forward to “a change of regime in Guatemala” to which his government “would offer recognition and support.” The Assistant Secretary of State had also described his government as “absolutely non-interventionist.”<sup>572</sup> For his superiors’ benefit, though, Thomen quoted Miller and included details conspicuously absent from the U.S. official’s report. Following his remarks on non-intervention, the Assistant Secretary of State had “add[ed] immediately as commentary, that: ‘the situation of other countries is probably very distinct’ with respect to the problems of non-intervention.” Miller had then asked, “‘What would be the attitude of [the Dominican government]?’ ‘Would [the Dominican government] recognize the new Government?’”<sup>573</sup>

The Dominican ambassador walked away from the meeting with a response that better resembled those received by Dulles and Bedell Smith rather than that in Miller’s report: unofficial endorsement of the plot. Fulfilling his orders to investigate the Nicaraguan dictator’s claims, Thomen believed Somoza had discussed Arbenz’s government with leading U.S. officials. Without “openly participat[ing] in a plan to overthrow the communist Government of

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<sup>571</sup> Luis Francisco Thomen, Edward G. Miller, Jr., Memorandum of Conversation, 11 September 1952, NARAII, RG59, EGM, Box 6, Folder “Dominican Republic, 1949-1952.”

<sup>572</sup> Luis F. Thomen a Telésforo R. Calderón, 3248 “Asunto: Conversaciones entre Acheson y Somoza,” 12 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>573</sup> Luis F. Thomen a Telésforo R. Calderón, 3248, 12 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

Guatemala,” they would not only “welcome any movement” but “turn a blind eye” while offering “support.”<sup>574</sup> Accurately conveying the State Department’s Cold War-oriented policy, the ambassador warned:

Knowing the duplicity of the people [within the U.S. government] here, it would not be too adventurous to assume that what [U.S. officials] desire is that someone else resolves their problem, overthrowing the Government of Guatemala, but in such a manner that [U.S. officials] could not be accused of being interventionists.<sup>575</sup>

Thomen had been a keen observer of U.S. policy. His analysis dovetailed quite nicely with the actual debates leading to the U.S. government’s approval of Operation PBFORTUNE.

Facing no discouragement, the network’s intelligence-sharing continued to expand. Back in Managua, the Nicaraguan dictator had welcomed the Colombian government’s cooperation.<sup>576</sup> Increasing the number of Caribbean Basin regimes involved, Somoza reached out to Colombian Ambassador Eduardo Zuleta Ángel. Formerly the Colombian Minister of Foreign Relations, he was also a lawyer for the UFCO, now actively pursuing closer relations with the anti-communist governments in the Caribbean Basin.<sup>577</sup> Through the ambassador, Somoza secured important financial support for the conspiracy. During discussions on the venture, Dominican Ambassador in Managua Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi had suggested to Somoza and Zuleta that “Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic carried the heaviest load” while “yankee assistance could be greater than that offered.” Though only a new participant in the plot, Zuleta assured that he could

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<sup>574</sup> Luis F. Thomen a Telésforo R. Calderón, 3248, 12 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>575</sup> Luis F. Thomen a Telésforo R. Calderón, 3248, 12 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.” Underline in original.

<sup>576</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 10 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.” Underline in original.

<sup>577</sup> See Edward G. Miller, Jr., to James Clement Dunn, U.S. Ambassador in Rome, 27 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 4, Folder “Colombia, 1950-1951.”

acquire additional help from the United Fruit Company and the Venezuelan military junta.<sup>578</sup>

This claim reflected the junta's recent cooperation with the Colombian government and growing cooperation with Trujillo's regime.<sup>579</sup>

It was at this juncture that Rodríguez Demorizi became the first to comment on the radicalization of the network's intelligence-sharing and, as had his colleague in Washington, cautioned Trujillo. Castillo Armas was "active" in lobbying for allies while Somoza had approved shipments of planes from the United States. Whereas the Nicaraguan dictator took such events as evidence that the conspiracy stood on a "solid foundation," the Dominican ambassador paused. Remarking on the expansion of the network's intelligence-sharing, Rodríguez Demorizi pointed out that Somoza's including Zuleta "compromise[d] further [Somoza's] moral position against the number of individuals that have been made participants in [the plot]." The Dominican ambassador observed that, "with the intervention of Zuleta," the conspiracy "bec[ame] wider and larger."<sup>580</sup>

State Department officials soon shared Rodríguez Demorizi's concerns. Overlooking his meetings with Dulles, Miller notified U.S. Ambassador in Managua Tom Whelan of his recent conversation with Thomen. In sharp tones, the Assistant Secretary of State blamed the Nicaraguan dictator for "going around representing himself as an authorized agent of Uncle Sam to stamp out communism in the Caribbean" and "using [the U.S. government's] good name in enlisting 'allies' in this cause." Acknowledging the bureaucratic conflict between the State

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<sup>578</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 10 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente "Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c."

<sup>579</sup> Álvaro Logroño Batlle a Virgilio Díaz Ordóñez, No. 49, Managua, 26 abril 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903351 "Fechas extremas 1950-1952, Código 658," Expediente "Guatemala, 1951-1952."

<sup>580</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi a Rafael L. Trujillo, Managua, 10 septiembre 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente "Nicaragua, Sec. Calderón, 1948-1952, Código 5/c."

Department and Truman's military aides, Miller did concede that the "seed which Colonel Mara planted [was] growing into a greater tree than [the State Department] had conceived of."<sup>581</sup> Despite the aide's obvious role in fomenting the plot, Miller's greatest concern fell upon Somoza. The Assistant Secretary of State feared the dictator may "be apt to spread this thesis even more" and "get [the U.S. government] into trouble."<sup>582</sup> Whelan had been aware of these concerns. Having reported on Mara's lobbying on behalf of the conspiracy earlier in the year, the ambassador had already notified the State Department about recent developments. Following his conversation with Castillo Armas about the CIA's support and believing that the U.S. government endorsed the plans, the Nicaraguan dictator had even told Whelan about his working with Trujillo and preparing to reach out to the Venezuelan military junta.<sup>583</sup> The Bureau of Inter-American Affairs and the CIA took note of Somoza's remarks, yet Miller and Mann either never received or ignored Whelan's report.<sup>584</sup>

Other State Department officials took notice of Somoza's intelligence-sharing and Zuleta's involvement. Preparations had begun for Miller to attend the inauguration of Panamanian president José Antonio Remón in early October. After Miller's recent complaints, John Ohmans of the Office of Middle American Affairs notified Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Managua Rolland Welch. Based upon the Assistant Secretary of State's account,

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<sup>581</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Thomas E. Whelan, 17 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>582</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Thomas E. Whelan, 17 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder "Nicaragua."

<sup>583</sup> Thomas E. Whelan to Rolland Welch, "Subject: Memo of Conversation Held with President Somoza," 02 September 1952, with Rolland Welch to Thomas C. Mann, Managua, 03 September 1952, 717.00/9-352, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262.

<sup>584</sup> Rolland Welch to Thomas C. Mann, Managua, 03 September 1952, 717.00/9-352, NARAI, RG59, Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3262; "Telegram From the CIA Station in [place not declassified] to the Central Intelligence Agency," Document 17, [place not declassified], 12 September 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 26-27.

Somoza was telling other Latin American leaders about a “green light from President Truman.”<sup>585</sup> Miller knew that such encouragement had come from Truman’s aides but was implying that the dictator was acting unilaterally and without cause. Consequently, the State Department felt that, if Somoza and Miller were to attend the inauguration in Panama at the same time, rumors would spread that the U.S. government was giving “instructions” to the dictator.<sup>586</sup> Zuleta’s activities only increased Washington’s worries. On September 25, the Colombian ambassador met with Miller’s friend, U.S. Ambassador in Caracas Fletcher Warren, and later delivered a memorandum on Caribbean affairs. Though the memorandum discussed a variety of topics, Warren took notice of an item related to the conspiracy. Over in the Dominican Republic, Trujillo wanted to ensure that the U.S. government had issued a “green light” for the venture against Arbenz’s government.<sup>587</sup> Coming after Thomen’s meeting with Miller and mirroring those made earlier by Castillo Armas and Somoza while lobbying the CIA, the Dominican dictator’s condition made sense.

Following Thomen and Zuleta, Sevilla Sacasa brought the State Department’s full attention upon the conspiracy and the network’s radicalized intelligence-sharing. On September 26, Miller and Ohmans met with the Nicaraguan ambassador. When Sevilla Sacasa referenced Vaughan’s mediation with armaments, the Assistant Secretary of State had no objections. It was the Caribbean Basin regimes’ asking themselves, “[W]hat to do about Guatemala?,” that peaked everyone’s interest. Between telephone conversations and plans to meet in Panama

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<sup>585</sup> John L. Ohmans to Rolland Welch, “Ref: Your letter September 3 Panama ‘good will’ mission,” 12 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder “Nicaragua: Political Relations with Neighbors.”

<sup>586</sup> John L. Ohmans to Rolland Welch, “Ref: Your letter,” 12 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder “Nicaragua: Political Relations with Neighbors.”

<sup>587</sup> Fletcher Warren to Edward G. Miller, Jr., Caracas, 25 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder “Nicaragua: Political Relations with Neighbors.” Capitalization in original.

during the inauguration, they were ready to back up Castillo Armas and ““cut out the cancerous growth in Guatemala.”” Ohmans quickly rushed the ambassador to Mann’s office, where the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State merely “caution[ed]” against taking the U.S. government’s support “for granted.”<sup>588</sup>

In response to this flurry of activities, the State Department decided to officially disavow the U.S. government’s support for the conspiracy. On September 29, Sevilla Sacasa, Mann, and Ohmans met for a second time. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of State warned, “The Department of State d[id] not believe it wise to speak of military adventure against Guatemala participated in by a group of American States.” After all, agreements with the UN and the OAS, in conjunction with leadership in the Korean War, all stood against action in Guatemala, especially an action that was unlikely to remain bound to “secrecy.” While Sevilla Sacasa appeared “obviously disappointed” that there was not even “tacit approval to the suggestion of a military operation,” Mann concluded that Miller would repeat these points to Zuleta in Panama.<sup>589</sup>

## **B. Miller and Zuleta in Panama City, October 1952**

In what had by then become a characteristic in his approach to Operation PBFORTUNE, Miller never filed a report on meeting with Zuleta in Panama City. The two had long carried on a cordial relationship and friendly correspondence dating back to Zuleta’s service as the

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<sup>588</sup> Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa, Thomas C. Mann, John L. Ohmans, Memorandum of Conversation “Subject: Action against Guatemala,” 26 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 8, Folder “Nicaragua.”

<sup>589</sup> Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa, Thomas C. Mann, John L. Ohmans, “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mann),” [Washington,] 29 September 1952, Miller files, lot 53 D 26, “Nicaragua,” in *FRUS 1952-1954*, 1373-1375.

Colombian ambassador in Washington, even referring to each other as ‘tocayo’ due to their shared first name.<sup>590</sup> Admiring the Colombian’s capabilities and anti-communist sentiments, Miller described Zuleta as “one of his country’s most distinguished lawyers” and “one of the outstanding Latin Americans.” In his most glowing review, Miller acknowledged that the ambassador was “an absolutely reliable and trustworthy friend of this country and of the [State] Department, and, despite tendencies toward extreme vanity and pomposity – as well as a congenial tendency towards exaggeration – his work is devoted and unmarked by partisanship.”<sup>591</sup> It was due to this relationship and through this channel that Miller requested a meeting with Zuleta in Panama City.<sup>592</sup> Zuleta agreed, and the two prepared to rendezvous between Tuesday, September 30, and Thursday, October 2.<sup>593</sup>

Though never officially reporting on the meeting in Panama, Miller’s only reference suggests the conflict between his original considerations of the conspiracy, illustrated during his meetings with the CIA, and his later opposition to the network’s radicalized intelligence-sharing. On October 8, Miller told Warren about meeting with Zuleta.<sup>594</sup> To his friend, the Assistant Secretary of State revealed a racist and paternalistic worldview when discussing the network’s intelligence-sharing without mention of Mara and the CIA’s participation in the conspiracy. Miller “ha[d] mixed feelings about this whole business” since it was “good to see some of the

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<sup>590</sup> See the various letters between Miller and Zuleta in NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 4, Folder “Colombia, 1950-1951.”

<sup>591</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to James Clement Dunn, 27 April 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 4, Folder “Colombia, 1950-1951.”

<sup>592</sup> Dean Acheson to Capus M. Waynick, 102, 23 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 4, Folder “Colombia, 1952.”

<sup>593</sup> Dean Acheson to Capus M. Waynick, 109, 26 September 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 4, Folder “Colombia, 1952.”

<sup>594</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Fletcher Warren, 08 October 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 14, Folder “Venezuela, 1949-1952.”

latinos getting together on an anti-communist front.”<sup>595</sup> He did not comprehend the extent of the network’s intelligence-sharing, remained unaware of the numerous attempts by the network’s members to foment uprisings in and conspiracies against the Guatemalan governments, and did not admit that any U.S. officials had encouraged Somoza or other Caribbean Basin officials’ participation in this recent conspiracy. Rather, he interpreted the members’ discussions as the first time Caribbean Basin leaders ever participated in any anti-communist operation or venture, still crediting U.S. officials as the sole architects of a long term anti-communist strategy in the area. Thus, he didn’t oppose the ‘front’ against Arbenz’s government but “this business of a ‘green light’ from Uncle Sam,” which “would be much better if some of the characters involved in this were more discreet.”<sup>596</sup> He had considered the conspiracy if U.S. officials’ participation remained marginal and did not threaten the non-intervention ideal, but the CIA’s ‘green light’ and the resulting intelligence-sharing had unnerved him.

Miller never filed a report on meeting with Zuleta. Once again, he sought to prevent any trail of his office’s involvement in the plot. In early November, Warren wrote that Venezuelan National Security Chief and member of the Caribbean Basin anti-communist network Pedro Estrada had heard of Miller’s seeking more information on events in Guatemala through Sevilla Sacasa and the new Venezuelan Ambassador to Washington, César González.<sup>597</sup> When Estrada canceled his plans to visit Washington, the Assistant Secretary of State confessed that “the less

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<sup>595</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Fletcher Warren, 08 October 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 14, Folder “Venezuela, 1949-1952.”

<sup>596</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Fletcher Warren, 08 October 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 14, Folder “Venezuela, 1949-1952.”

<sup>597</sup> Fletcher Warren to Edward G. Miller, Jr., 03 November 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 14, Folder “Venezuela, 1949-1952.”



[he] kn[ew] about this the better.”<sup>598</sup> As when removing the U.S. Embassy in Managua from the conspiracy, Miller merely emphasized his office’s appearing uninvolved in such schemes.

For his part, Zuleta, a new addition to the network, had no qualms discussing the meeting with Dominican officials. On the afternoon of October 1, the Colombian called upon Dominican Ambassador in Panama City Rubén Suro. Though Suro was unavailable, another official found Zuleta at the hotel El Panamá on October 2 around 2:00a.m. There, the Colombian began describing his “lengthy and intimate conversations” with Miller on the afternoon and evening of October 1. Inebriated, the Assistant Secretary of State had claimed to Zuleta that “the State Department looked upon that concerted action [against Arbenz’s government] with interest and sympathy and encouraged it.”<sup>599</sup> Miller’s remarks matched up with his original considerations, but these words were the product of drinks during the celebrations in Panama. At a lunch at the residence of U.S. Ambassador in Panama John Wiley on the afternoon of October 2, Zuleta held a second conversation with Miller, one that “did not have the euphoria of drinks and drinking” and led to another meeting with Dominican officials on October 3.<sup>600</sup>

Sobered, the Assistant Secretary of State had set forward the State Department’s official opposition to the conspiracy. The U.S. government could not engage in any activities that would be seen as intervening in Guatemalan affairs.<sup>601</sup> As he had done since Mara’s lobbying, Miller did not disapprove of the plot. Rather, he “did not even want any representative of a foreign

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<sup>598</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to Fletcher Warren, 07 November 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 14, Folder “Venezuela, 1949-1952.”

<sup>599</sup> “MEMORANDUM,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>600</sup> Edward G. Miller, Jr., to John C. Wiley, 08 October 1952, NARAI, RG59, EGM, Box 14, Folder “Panama, 1952;” “MEMORANDUM,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>601</sup> “MEMORANDUM,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

Government to inform any of [the State Department's] officials about this matter.”<sup>602</sup> For his part, Zuleta criticized the State Department's hesitance. Repeating the mantra of Caribbean Basin officials who saw themselves as combating communism without the support of the U.S. government, the Colombian announced that “the United States lost Asia; [the United States] had lost Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Ecuador[,] and Peru, leaving in South America only Colombia and Venezuela.” He believed that “panamericanism, in the principles and agreements that give [panamericanism] life, assumes as a basic idea an anti-communist America, for which no measure that seeks to remove communism from America can be refuted as a violation of those principles and agreements.”<sup>603</sup> As had the network's members since the mid-1940s, Zuleta conflated leftist and reformist movements in Latin America with communist-inspired threats while more or less mocking the U.S. government.

Miller and Zuleta's meeting ended with another individual walking away with the impression, as had Dulles, Bedell Smith, and Thomen, that the State Department offered indirect support for plots against Arbenz's government. After lecturing on the non-intervention ideal and agreements with the U.N., Miller admitted that he “could allow that Zuleta personally, as a friend, discuss informally whatever news about the subject.” The Assistant Secretary of State went on, remarking that the decision to terminate Operation PBFORTUNE “was not at all shared by the White House, at which one detects that the tendency is to liquidate the current situation in Guatemala.”<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>602</sup> “MEMORANDUM,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>603</sup> “MEMORANDUM,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

<sup>604</sup> “MEMORANDUM,” AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903958, Expediente “Panamá, 1948-1952, Código 5/c.”

### C. Blaming ‘the Latinos,’ Late 1952 and 1953

In early October, the CIA was attempting to deliver the armaments to Somoza in Managua when the State Department intervened. Even after Mann made known his department’s official disapproval, Bedell Smith on October 04 ordered the Agency “to get the show on the road” and approved deliveries.<sup>605</sup> In Panama City, Tachito brought up the issue of weapons delivery during conversations with Miller, and an agent asked the Assistant Secretary of State to approve a paper for the Munitions Department. Miller took the document to Freeman Matthews and Bruce, went to Acheson, and then sent messages for all shipments to be diverted from Nicaragua to Panama.<sup>606</sup> On October 7, another CIA official in Managua approached Whelan to send a verbal message from the White House to Somoza without the State Department’s involvement, but Whelan refused and notified his superiors.<sup>607</sup>

At this point, the State Department officially terminated Operation PBFORTUNE. On October 8, Miller, Mann, Freeman Matthews, and Bruce met with Wisner, King, and other CIA officials. Wisner explained that his office believed the State Department had approved delivering armaments to Castillo Armas and Somoza for the plot against Arbenz’s government.<sup>608</sup> As evidence, the Agency presented the various meetings and conversations with State Department officials, but those officials repeatedly disagreed. When Wisner referred to the meetings between Dulles and Miller, the Assistant Secretary of State claimed to have stressed how “the risk of

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<sup>605</sup> “Cable to (Deleted) from Director, CIA re: Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000915014, 04 October 1952, CIA FOIA; Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 30; “Cable re: Shipments to Managua and Puerto Cabezas,” Document 0000136384, 06 October 1952, CIA FOIA.

<sup>606</sup> Matthews, 30.

<sup>607</sup> Thomas E. Whelan to Thomas C. Mann, Managua, 12 October 1952, NARAIL, RG59, “Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Records of Deputy Assistant Secretaries of State for Inter-American Affairs, 1945-1956, Subject File: 1945-1956,” Box 4, Folder “Nicaragua, 1947-1952.”

<sup>608</sup> Document 23, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 33.

providing arms was too great but that he had no objection to monetary contributions.” When Wisner brought up Bedell Smith’s conversation with Bruce, Bruce too denied having given approval.<sup>609</sup>

In the midst of this debacle, the two agencies decided to blame Truman’s aides and especially Somoza for the entire ordeal. Miller’s office mentioned the dictator’s claims of having received the U.S. government’s support for the venture, to which the Agency distanced itself.<sup>610</sup> Instead of considering how the CIA’s ‘green light’ had impacted events over the past months, the Agency and the Department focused on the bureaucratic conflict between the State Department and Truman’s military aides. Both offices “agreed that General S[omoza’s] statements could be based only upon remarks made to him by members of the White House staff,” that is, Vaughan and Mara.<sup>611</sup> Consequently, the two departments sidestepped any debate over how the CIA’s ‘green light’ to Castillo Armas and Somoza triggered Caribbean Basin officials’ discussions over the past months. Most importantly, Miller would not be held accountable for having somehow led CIA, Dominican, and Colombian officials to interpret his words as indirect support for the conspiracy, and the CIA avoided criticism for having overreached or for having misconstrued Miller, Mann, and Bruce’s statements.

As King began to criticize Somoza and other Caribbean Basin officials, Castillo Armas deferred in order to ensure the continued support of the CIA. On October 10, King ordered a message to the exile that blamed Somoza’s “indiscretions,” Tachito’s approaching Miller, and Sevilla Sacasa and Thomen’s conversations for having “alerted” the State Department. The chief of the CIA’s Western Hemisphere Division assured Castillo Armas that important officials

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<sup>609</sup> Document 23, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 34.

<sup>610</sup> Document 23, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 34.

<sup>611</sup> Document 23, Washington, 08 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 34.

endorsed the conspiracy in spite of the State Department's orders.<sup>612</sup> In the hopes of future assistance, the exile agreed with King's assessment.<sup>613</sup> Recognizing that the Agency remained an important source of assistance, the exile was certainly not going to disagree.

When discussing Operation PBFORTUNE's cancelation, others would follow King's lead while ignoring the role of any U.S. government agency and targeting Somoza, an easy victim to blame. At the end of 1952, Welch noted Somoza's lack of "secrecy or caution."<sup>614</sup> Edward Clark of the Office of Middle American Affairs soon summarized that the entire affair was "another indication of Somoza's untrustworthiness in matters which should be treated by him on a highly confidential basis." Now, there was "literally no way of knowing to how many people he ha[d] related this same tale."<sup>615</sup> In a later report, Clark characterized the dictator's discussing the conspiracy "rather widely and loosely" as "disturbing" and a "misinterpretation" of conversations with Truman, Acheson, and Miller.<sup>616</sup> As would others, this official ignored or was unaware that certain military aides, the CIA, and even Miller had chosen to help and instead perceived Somoza's sharing intelligence as the dictator's seeming lack of integrity or diplomatic acumen. The official concluded, "Needless to say, and for obvious reasons, no encouragement

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<sup>612</sup> "Memorandum for the Record," Document 26, Washington, 10 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 38.

<sup>613</sup> "Memorandum From Jacob R. Seekford to the Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division, Central Intelligence Agency (King)," Document 29, Washington, 28 October 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 46.

<sup>614</sup> Rolland Welch to John L. Ohmans, Managua, 22 December 1952, NARAII, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

<sup>615</sup> Edward W. Clark to Roy Rubottom, and Thomas C. Mann, "More On Proposed Intervention by President Somoza in Communist Situation in Guatemala," 06 January 1953, NARAII, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: General Somoza."

<sup>616</sup> Edward W. Clark to Rolland Welch, 08 January 1953, NARAII, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder "Nicaragua: Political Relations with Neighbors."

for action of the type proposed by Somoza was given by any of these three officials.”<sup>617</sup> U.S. officials would continue to downplay the role of Truman’s military aides and the CIA in the conspiracy, memorializing Somoza as the instigator of the entire debacle and completely ignoring or not comprehending how the CIA’s ‘green light’ radicalized the network’s intelligence-sharing.

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<sup>617</sup> Edward W. Clark to Rolland Welch, 08 January 1953, NARAI, RG59, OMAA/CRN, Box 2, Folder “Nicaragua: Political Relations with Neighbors.”

## IX. Conclusion

The transnational counter-revolution did not end with the termination of Operation PBFORTUNE, although most in the U.S. government lamented this was the case. Following the 1952 elections, the State Department and the CIA waited as Dwight Eisenhower prepared to take the presidency.<sup>618</sup> In the meantime, the Agency's hopes for improvements in Guatemala dwindled. With the same ignorance that proliferated during their recent venture, CIA officials worried that local anti-communist opposition to Arbenz's government lacked the necessary capabilities for a successful coup, while Somoza and Trujillo would only assist Guatemalan exiles if the U.S. government played a predominant role.<sup>619</sup> Even after their recent experience with overzealous dictators, they claimed at multiple instances that these potential patrons would support Castillo Armas only if the U.S. government offered a "carrot" rather than a "stick" to induce Somoza, Trujillo, and others' participation.<sup>620</sup> Only late in the summer of 1953 would the Eisenhower Administration authorize Operation PBSUCCESS.<sup>621</sup> But Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators did not wait for the approval of the northern colossus.

As it had for almost a decade, the transnational counter-revolution had continued into 1953 without the support or knowledge of those U.S. officials who were, at most, only deliberating whether to attempt a new venture against Arbenz's government. By the early part of the year, Castillo Armas had laid the groundwork for a new plot. In March, the exile networked in Managua with his ardent patron, Somoza. Receiving word of the Guatemalan's activities over

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<sup>618</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 234-246.

<sup>619</sup> Document 31, Washington, 13 November 1953, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 49; "Report Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency," Document 32, Washington, 01 December 1952, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 55.

<sup>620</sup> "Contact Report," Document 72, Washington, 25 November 1953, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 150.

<sup>621</sup> "Memorandum for the Record," Document 40, Washington, 12 August 1953, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 86.

in Nicaragua, Trujillo personally ordered him to head for the Dominican Republic.<sup>622</sup> In Ciudad Trujillo, the Dominican despot offered a memorandum outlining stipulations for any further assistance.<sup>623</sup> Of course, Castillo Armas was more than glad to acquiesce to the demands of such a prominent regional anti-communist proponent against the Guatemalan Revolution.

In mid-May, the exile arrived at the Dominican Embassy in Tegucigalpa to meet with his frequent contact, Ambassador José Paniagua.<sup>624</sup> Alongside him was Guatemalan lawyer and anti-communist leader Juan Córdova Cerna.<sup>625</sup> Having recently been “violently expelled from Guatemala by the communist regime of Jacobo Arbenz,” Córdova Cerna “painted . . . the political situation prevalent in Guatemala” as one of turmoil and chaos.<sup>626</sup> The two proceeded to mimic those exiles that had come before them, denigrating the Guatemalan Revolution and lobbying for armaments. Their “revolutionary movement against the Arbenz regime” was finally “prepared and ready to move forward as soon as the circumstances [would] permit it.”<sup>627</sup> Once again, though, another venture to topple the Guatemalan government hinged upon the largesse of Caribbean Basin dictators. Castillo Armas and Córdova Cerna had, according to the ambassador,

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<sup>622</sup> José A. Paniagua, Embajador Dominicano en Tegucigalpa, a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 120, Tegucigalpa, 16 marzo 1953, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903825 “Fechas extremas 1948-1953, Ref. Antigua 2386,” Expediente “1949-1953, Código 5/c.”

<sup>623</sup> José A. Paniagua a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 14 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352 “Fechas extremas 1952-1953, Código 658” (en adelante Caja IT 2903352), Carpetilla “2, 1952-1953, Guatemala.”

<sup>624</sup> José A. Paniagua a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 14 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla “2, 1952-1953, Guatemala.”

<sup>625</sup> On Córdova Cerna’s anti-communist movement, see Cullather, 34; Document 4, [*place not declassified*], 25 January 1952, *FRUS Guatemala*, 5; Document 20, Washington, 08 October 1952, *FRUS Guatemala*, 29; “Revolutionary Movement in Guatemala,” Document 0000914890, 05 May 1953, CIA FOIA; “Misc Re Guatemala 1954 Coup,” Document 0000914815, 04 September 1953, CIA FOIA.

<sup>626</sup> José A. Paniagua a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 14 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla “2, 1952-1953, Guatemala.”

<sup>627</sup> José A. Paniagua a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 14 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla “2, 1952-1953, Guatemala.”



“emphasized ‘their wish to obtain a quantity of armaments’” from the Dominican despot. With such weapons, the two would finally be “in the happy position to realize their revolutionary movement against the Arbenz regime.”<sup>628</sup>

In what had by now become the custom, Castillo Armas handed over a memorandum for Trujillo, “EL COMUNISMO EN GUATEMALA [COMMUNISM IN GUATEMALA],” that repeated the anti-Mexican, anti-Soviet, anti-communist ideology of Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators. He opened by describing the “communist cells” in Guatemala that had emerged, in “clandestine form, under instructions from the centrals in Moscow and Mexico” during the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico. While in Mexico, those who would spearhead the Guatemalan Revolution and its governments, including Alfonso Solórzano, Jorge García Granados, Carlos Manuel Pellecer, and Enrique Muñoz Meany, had been “carefully indoctrinated in the Marxist disciplines and battle tactics recommended by Lenin.” Upon Ubico’s ouster, these Guatemalans poisoned the country with Mexican and Soviet communism and corrupted the resulting governments. Under the protection of Arévalo and a new Communist Party, “the influence of the Soviet Union” spread. Communists took control of Guatemala’s banking, social security, and other institutions; welcomed Spanish exiles and international communists into their country’s borders; dominated workers’ unions; and allowed congresses to attack “the United States and the democratic countries of America.” Upon taking power, Arbenz continued this process while putting into motion the Agrarian Reform.<sup>629</sup> Castillo Armas may as well have spliced together the writings of colonel Arturo Ramírez, Luis Coronado Lira, general

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<sup>628</sup> José A. Paniagua a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 14 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla “2, 1952-1953, Guatemala.”

<sup>629</sup> Carlos Castillo Armas, “EL COMUNISMO EN GUATEMALA,” 13 mayo 1953, con José A. Paniagua a Rafael Trujillo, Tegucigalpa, 14 mayo 1952, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla “2, 1952-1953, Guatemala.”

Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, Juan Pinillos, and Carlos Padilla y Padilla that had circulated for nearly ten years.

The exile's targeted audience, however, included more than the Dominican dictator alone, for the intelligence-sharing of the counter-revolutionary network remained as active as ever. In spite of Operation PBFORTUNE's abrupt collapse, the network's members kept disseminating information on exiles' conspiracies. Having lobbied various allies throughout the region on behalf of Castillo Armas the previous year, Somoza notified Trujillo of the exile's new plans.<sup>630</sup> While writing the memorandum for Trujillo, Castillo Armas also prepared a "confidential report" for Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. It was Dominican Ambassador Paniagua who commissioned Dominican Secretary Víctor Fernández Jiménez to hand-deliver not only the exile's memorandum for Trujillo but the report for Batista. Over the next couple of days, this Dominican official traveled first to Havana to place Castillo Armas's letter in the hands of Batista's secretary Raúl Acosta Rubio before completing his errand in Ciudad Trujillo.<sup>631</sup> Just as Somoza convinced the Venezuelan military junta and the Colombian government to contribute to Operation PBFORTUNE, Trujillo's officials were reaching out to the Cuban dictator.

These efforts by Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators would, once again, intersect with U.S. Cold War-oriented policy, this time to create Operation PBSUCCESS, topple Arbenz's government, and bring an end to the Guatemalan Revolution. In the Eisenhower Administration, officials insisted upon a bolder strategy, expanding upon the exiles and dictators'

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<sup>630</sup> José A. Paniagua a Telésforo R. Calderón, Cable 120, Tegucigalpa, 16 marzo 1953, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903825 "Fechas extremas 1948-1953, Ref. Antigua 2386," Expediente "1949-1953, Código 5/c."

<sup>631</sup> Víctor A. Fernández Jiménez a Tulio Franco y Franco, Encargado de la Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, "Memorandum Confidencial," Ciudad Trujillo, 18 mayo 1953, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 2903352, Carpetilla "2, 1952-1953, Guatemala."

efforts and putting into motion a plot that went far beyond anything before. The lessons of Operation PBFORTUNE informed the CIA under newly-promoted Director Allen Dulles and the State Department under Allen's brother John Foster. Immediately, the two departments set out to streamline their policies and avoid the bureaucratic conflicts that derailed Operation PBFORTUNE.<sup>632</sup> Colonel J. C. King, agent Jacob R. Seekford, and others contributed to the leadership and organization of Operation PBSUCCESS. At the outset, U.S. officials determined that their resources and investments needed to reinforce pre-existing conditions in the Caribbean Basin. Circumventing Vaughan and Mara's mishaps, the CIA coordinated with the U.S. military to approve military assistance programs with Somoza's Nicaragua, Trujillo's Dominican Republic, and others that exacerbated the regional tensions between these anti-communist regimes and Arbenz's government.<sup>633</sup> While the region's dictators were demanding a unified opposition and placing even greater emphasis upon exile leaders' abilities to convince the Guatemalan Army to defect, the architects of Operation PBSUCCESS went much further.<sup>634</sup> Solicitations of exiles, from general Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes to colonel Roberto Barrios y Peña,

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<sup>632</sup> Memorandum for the Record," Document 51, Washington, 11 September 1953, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 104.

<sup>633</sup> "Memorandum for the Record," Document 54, Washington, 18 September 1953, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 112.

<sup>634</sup> Aurelio Montenegro, Nicaraguan Ambassador in Guatemala City, John E. Peurifoy, U.S. Ambassador in Guatemala City, William L. Krieg, Memorandum of Conversation "Subject: Efforts to Overthrow the Guatemalan Government," Guatemala City, 06 November 1953, with William L. Krieg to Raymond G. Leddy, Officer in Charge of Central America and Panama Affairs, Guatemala City, 10 November 1953, 714.00/11-1053, NARAII, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 2; John Calvin Hill, Jr., Memorandum "Subject: TRUJILLO Drops Interest in Subsidizing Guatemalan Insurrectionist Group," Guatemala City, 03 November 1953, with William L. Krieg to Raymond G. Leddy, Guatemala City, 10 November 1953, 714.00/11-1053, NARAII, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 2.

inundated the CIA, the State Department, and even congressional officials.<sup>635</sup> Ignoring the background of such figures, the Agency pushed Castillo Armas ahead of more experienced exiles. Most strikingly, the heart of the new program was an array of financial assets and psychological warfare aiming to penetrate the Guatemalan Army, erode the morale of soldiers and officers, and induce the very disloyalty necessary for a successful coup.<sup>636</sup> In taking over the counter-revolution, the U.S. government accomplished what dictators and exiles never had.

Yet, as had Operation PBFORTUNE, Operation PBSUCCESS built upon the longstanding regional conflict and the efforts and goals of Guatemalan exiles and Caribbean Basin dictators. Through personal meetings and the distribution of leaflets and newspaper articles in Mexico City and elsewhere, José Luis Arenas, José Calderón Salazar, and Carlos Salazar, Jr., with the CIA's money, encouraged other exiles to back Castillo Armas.<sup>637</sup> Not surprisingly, Arenas and Luis Coronado Lira traveled the Caribbean Basin and met with Cuban, Dominican, Honduran, Mexican, and Nicaraguan officials and anti-communist leaders well-versed in years of these machinations.<sup>638</sup> Their own years of experience in traveling the region to bolster support for conspiracies facilitated their navigating diplomatic difficulties and acquiring

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<sup>635</sup> "Memo to Chief, WH from Seekford Re Guatemala 1954 Coup (w/Attachment)," 0000914813, 08 September 1953, CIA FOIA; "Contact Report," 0000914653, 09 December 1953, CIA FOIA.

<sup>636</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 246-248, 304-308, 339-350; Cullather; "Memorandum for the Record," Document 55, Washington, 25 September 1953, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 113-115.

<sup>637</sup> "Cable to Director from (Deleted) Re Guatemala 1954 Coup," Document 0000916049, 01 May 1954, CIA FOIA; "General-KUGOWN/PBSUCCESS-Specific-Guatemalan Exiles in Mexico (w/Attachment)," Document 0000917348, 16 March 1954, CIA FOIA.

<sup>638</sup> "KUGOWN/Summit-Travel Report J. L. Arenas, Manuel Salazar (w/Attachment)," Document 0000923393, 23 May 1954, CIA FOIA; "El Diputado Guatemalteco Arenas Prepara Aquí una Junta Anticomunista," *Excelsior* 13 abril 1954, with William P. Hudson to Secretary of State, Despatch 1724, Mexico City, 23 April 1954, 714.00/4-2354, NARAII, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 2.

the necessary visas and travel documents.<sup>639</sup> Furthermore, the CIA tapped into the exiles' networking and ideology. Agency officials provided thousands of dollars for an anti-communist meeting in Mexico City, the "Primer Congreso contra la Intervención Soviética en América Latina [First Congress against Soviet Intervention in Latin America]," put together by Jorge Prieto Laurens of the Frente Popular Anti-Comunista de México [Popular Anti-Communist Front of Mexico], a colleague of Arenas and Coronado Lira. At the "Congreso," Guatemalan exiles publicized their efforts with the help of dozens of other Latin American anti-communist delegates.<sup>640</sup> U.S. officials even requested reproducing the falsified Arévalo-Yakubovsky letter.<sup>641</sup>

This propaganda was not the only factor that contributed to Operation PBSUCCESS. Castillo Armas and Córdova Cerna's anti-communist organization within Guatemala remained a cornerstone.<sup>642</sup> Juan Pinillos and Coronado Lira drew close to the Venezuelan military junta.<sup>643</sup> Between Operation PBFORTUNE and Operation PBSUCCESS, Pinillos served as a pivotal link between Castillo Armas, Trujillo, and the Venezuelan junta.<sup>644</sup> This networking continued during the CIA's plot, where Pinillos became the "middle man" between Castillo Armas's allies, Carías,

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<sup>639</sup> Ramón Brea Messina, Embajador Dominicano en Tegucigalpa, a Joaquín Balaguer, Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores, Cable 82, Tegucigalpa, 07 abril 1954, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 3114906 "Embajada Dominicana en Honduras, Fechas extremas 1953-1994, Código 30127" (en adelante Caja IT 3114906); Joaquín Balaguer a Rafael Trujillo, Memorandum 1888, Ciudad Trujillo, 08 abril 1954, AGN, SERREE, Caja IT 3114906.

<sup>640</sup> Jorge Prieto Laurens, *Cincuenta años de política mexicana: Memorias políticas* (México: Editora Mexicana de Periódicos, Libros y Revistas, 1968).

<sup>641</sup> "Cable from Lincoln Requiring Copy of Fabricated Letter," Document 000136058, 01 April 1954, CIA FOIA.

<sup>642</sup> "Telegram From Operation PBSUCCESS Headquarters in Florida to the Central Intelligence Agency," Document 110, in *FRUS Guatemala*, 210-211.

<sup>643</sup> Leonardo Altuve Carrillo, *Yo fui Embajador de Pérez Jiménez* (Caracas: Ortiz e Hijos, 1973), 368-369, 388-389.

<sup>644</sup> Fletcher Warren to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 132, Caracas, 23 December 1953, 714.00/12-2353, NARAII, RG59, DF714, M1527, Roll 2.

and the Honduran government.<sup>645</sup> In an effort to acquire colonel Arturo Ramírez's backing for Castillo Armas, CIA officials promised \$10,000.<sup>646</sup> And, as ever, Somoza, Carías, and Trujillo were ready to throw their support behind any seemingly successful plot to finally halt the Guatemalan Revolution. The CIA trained Castillo Armas's forces in Nicaragua, built bases in Honduras, and hired pilots and planes that resembled the very conspiracies the State Department had opposed in the 1940s. Operation PBSUCCESS depended upon the assistance of these local leaders.<sup>647</sup>

Though the first of its kind, Operation PBFORTUNE would not be the only Latin American Cold War conflict in which U.S. Cold War-oriented policy radicalized an indigenous conflict in the Caribbean Basin. From the early 1950s onward, the State Department and the military provided military assistance and economic aid to dictatorial and military regimes in the Western Hemisphere, including those of Somoza and Trujillo. As these anti-democratic yet self-proclaimed anti-communist leaders utilized such resources to tighten their grasps upon their subjects, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and other countries witnessed a plethora of anti-dictatorial and revolutionary movements that soon found themselves confronting their despots and the U.S. government. When one such movement under Fidel Castro took hold in Cuba, anti-dictatorial groups under José Figueres and Rómulo Betancourt competed with Somoza and Trujillo's ally Batista to shape the outcome. When the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations chose to arm an invasion, the CIA turned to those who had coordinated Operations PBFORTUNE and PBSUCCESS. Ironically, the disastrous Bay of Pigs plot rested upon a diverse assortment of Cuban exiles originally patronized by Trujillo and others. Following

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<sup>645</sup> Altuve Carrillo, *Yo fui Embajador*, 368-369; Flores Avendaño, *Memorias*, 448.

<sup>646</sup> "Instructions for (Deleted) during Mexico Trip in Preparation of Congress," Document 0000923858, 05 March 1954, CIA FOIA.

<sup>647</sup> Gleijeses, 289-294; Cullather, 48-49, 70-71, 79-80.

Trujillo's assassination and a civil war in the Dominican Republic, the Johnson administration approved a military invasion which benefitted Trujillo's protégés and impaired Dominican democracy. When Somoza's dynasty later fell against the pressure of a revolutionary movement, it was the region's military regimes that first funded and trained dissident exiles before the U.S. government assumed responsibility for these 'contra-revolucionarios,' or 'contras.' Operation PBFORTUNE was more than the first CIA operation in the Caribbean Basin during the second half of the twentieth century. It was a template for how, throughout the Caribbean Basin, the combination of regional conflicts over democracy and dictatorship and U.S. Cold War-oriented policy culminated in Latin American Cold War conflicts.

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