

REPORT

OF THE

SUBCOMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE  
COMMUNIST AGGRESSION IN  
LATIN AMERICA

TO THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNIST AGGRESSION  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
EIGHTY-THIRD CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

UNDER AUTHORITY OF

H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438



Printed for the use of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression

---

UNITED STATES  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

**SUBCOMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE COMMUNIST AGGRESSION IN  
LATIN AMERICA**

**PATRICK J. HILLINGS**, California, *Chairman*

**ALVIN M. BENTLEY**, Michigan

**THOMAS J. DODD**, Connecticut

**PATRICK McMAHON**, *Consultant*

**MARGARET ROBEY**, *Clerk*

## COMMUNIST AGGRESSION IN LATIN AMERICA

### INTRODUCTION

The Subcommittee on Latin America was established by the House Select Committee on Communist Aggression to make a special study of Soviet intervention in the affairs of Western Hemisphere Republics.

Congressman Patrick J. Hillings, of California, was named chairman of the subcommittee, and Congressmen Alvin M. Bentley, of Michigan, and Thomas J. Dodd, of Connecticut, members. The subcommittee conducted public hearings in Washington on September 27, 28, 29, and October 8, and in Los Angeles, Calif., October 14 and 15. Congressman Michael A. Feighan, of Ohio, a member of the full committee, participated in the Washington hearings. Also participating was Mr. Patrick McMahon, consultant to the committee, who was assisted by Mr. William F. Price and Miss Margaret Robey.

The hearings were preceded by two factfinding trips to Central and South America by Chairman Hillings and Mr. McMahon, accompanied on one occasion by Mr. David Keyser, a staff member.

On these factfinding trips, Congressman Hillings and the staff members met in executive session with United States diplomatic representatives, local officials, and private citizens in the countries visited. Considerable confidential information was obtained in these sessions which could not be brought out in the public hearings, but which has been invaluable to the subcommittee in arriving at its conclusions. Countries visited were Mexico, Guatemala (both before and after the June revolution which upset the Communist government), El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil.

The purpose of this report is to summarize as briefly and emphatically as possible the subcommittee's conclusions and observations. The hearings themselves, which will be published at an early date, contain a wealth of evidence to sustain this report.

Those who testified in the public hearings were President Carlos Castillo Armas, President of Guatemala, who liberated the country from the Communists; three young officers of President Castillo's Liberation Army, Raul Midence Rivera, Lionel Sisniega Otera, and Mario Lopez Villatoro; Ambassador John E. Peurifoy, formerly to Guatemala, now to Thailand; former Ambassador William O'Dwyer, to Mexico; former Ambassador John D. Erwin, to Honduras; Raymond G. Leddy, officer in charge, Central America and Panama Affairs, Department of State; Mr. Leo Carillo, Spanish-American actor who is intensely interested in Latin American affairs; and Mr. Gene Fuson, reporter for the San Diego Union.

The subcommittee desires to draw particular attention of the Members of Congress to the interesting and illuminating statements

presented at the hearings by President Castillo, Ambassador Peurifoy, and Mr. Leddy. It also calls special attention to exhibit No. 1, a State Department white paper, which gives an excellent factual analysis of the manner in which a few Communists, directed from Moscow, seized control of the Republic of Guatemala. These documents will be included in the publication of the full hearings.

#### CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of irrefutable evidence, accumulated in public hearings and in its executive sessions in Latin America, the subcommittee has arrived at a number of conclusions which it feels constrained to call to the attention of Congress and the public.

The seriousness of many of these conclusions cannot be emphasized too greatly. They are—

(1) United States foreign policy and public opinion have been often negligent in consideration of one of the most vital areas of the world, our neighboring Republics in Latin America.

(2) While we have focused our attention on developments in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, thousands of miles away, the Kremlin has been making alarming progress right next door to us in Central America.

(3) The recently overthrown government of President Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala was completely Communist controlled. The Communists had control of all important branches of government, educational system, the press and radio, the labor unions, and the agrarian reform movement.

(4) The Communists in control of Guatemala were acting under direct orders and instructions from the Kremlin.

(5) For nearly 10 years Moscow had been using Guatemala as its beachhead in the Western Hemisphere. Communist agents from Guatemala were continuously and aggressively intervening in affairs of neighboring Central American Republics in a conspiracy to gain domination of all Latin America.

(6) This active intervention in the affairs of Western Hemisphere Republics by a Euro-Asiatic power constitutes a flagrant violation of the Monroe Doctrine and is in direct conflict with the treaties existing between the United States and our Latin American Republics.

(7) As recently as last April, the Communists, using Guatemala as the springboard, attempted to overthrow the existing Governments of Honduras and Nicaragua in a move to gain control of all Central America.

(8) The successful revolution led by Colonel Castillo last June was one of the few clear-cut victories for the West in the cold war, and a serious reversal to the Kremlin's plans.

(9) Nevertheless, that victory is by no means a final one. The Communists are still extremely active throughout Latin America.

(10) They are now concentrating their energies on Honduras, where more than 100 skilled Guatemalan Communist agitators fled after the revolution, and where they are now seeking to take advantage of unsettled political conditions resulting from recent elections.

(11) They have also made considerable headway in Chile, taking advantage of serious economic difficulties in that country, and are infiltrating labor unions, teachers' organizations, and intellectual circles.

Brazil, which has the largest Communist Party in South America, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Costa Rica are other potential danger spots.

(12) Fed by Red propaganda a virulent feeling of "anti-Yanquism" is developing in nearly all Latin American countries. This is partly the result of our own too often ineffective attempts to counter Communist propaganda.

(13) There is a real need for improving our relations with governments and the peoples of Latin America, and strengthening the co-operative effort to protect the Western Hemisphere from Soviet aggression.

(14) Finally, and most important, the continuous intervention by the Soviet Union in the affairs of our Latin American neighbors constitutes a real and serious menace to the security of the United States.

#### THE COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY IN GUATEMALA

One of the most alarming, and at the same time most fascinating aspects of the subcommittee's study of Guatemala, was the way a small handful of determined, ruthless, well-organized Communists seized control of a nation of almost 3 million people.

At the time the Communists commenced their push for power in Guatemala, as testified by Lionel Sisniega Otero, there were only two men in the entire country who today can be identified as active Communists, Jorge Garcia Granados and Enrique Munoz Meany.

Prior to 1944 Guatemala had been ruled for generations by a succession of dictators, some of them benevolent, some completely ruthless. In that year the last of the dictators, Jorge Ubico, was forced out of office in a coup d'etat, engineered by a group of young army officers, students, intellectuals, and professional and businessmen. They installed as the provisional president, Gen. Federico Ponce Viades. Within a few months General Ponce appeared to the young revolutionaries to be assuming dictatorial power in his own right and he was deposed after a short, bloody revolution. A junta was set up composed of two young army officers, Maj. Francisco Javier Arana and Capt. Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, and a civilian, Jorge Toriello.

The junta promised to hold free elections and, much to the surprise of everyone, they did. It was at this juncture that the small nucleus of well-organized Communists went to work. The Communists had not played a prominent part in the coup that overthrew Ubico nor in the revolution that ousted Ponce. But immediately after the downfall of Ubico, the Communists commenced working on the young idealistic intellectuals whose political philosophies had not yet crystallized. They persuaded the revolutionary parties to nominate as their candidate for the Presidency a Guatemalan professor, Juan Jose Arevalo, who for many years had been living in exile in Argentina and who preached a vague doctrine which he termed "spiritual socialism."

Arevalo was elected by an overwhelming majority. As President Castillo testified before the subcommittee, "None of us knew then that Arevalo was a Communist. But we know it now."

Arevalo's first act on assuming the Presidency was to bring to Guatemala trained Communist agitators from all over Latin America. From Chile he brought the well-known Latin American poets and professed Communists, Pablo Neruda and Cesar Godoy Urrutia, to



organize the young Guatemalan intellectuals into Communist cells. Also from Chile he brought Virginia Bravo Letelier, a well-known woman Communist, who is now directing propaganda activities from East Berlin. He placed her in charge of reorganizing the Guatemalan educational system.

Most important, he invited from Mexico the top Communist labor organizer in the Western Hemisphere, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, to organize the Guatemalan labor movement.

During the reigns of the successive dictators no free democratic labor movement was permitted to exist in Guatemala. Attempts to organize the workers were ruthlessly suppressed. Immediately after the overthrow of Ubico, a young Guatemalan intellectual, Victor Manuel Gutierrez, who later became one of the Communist leaders of the country, commenced organizing a teachers' union.

Lombardo Toledano accepted the invitation of Arevalo. He proceeded to organize the workers of Guatemala into Communist-controlled unions with amazing efficiency and dispatch. He placed them under the leadership of Gutierrez, who was converted to the Communist cause.

Meanwhile, Arevalo pushed through the new congress a Labor Code which facilitated Lombardo's task. The Labor Code provided:

1. That whenever 10 or more employees of a firm formed a union, the employer was forced to recognize it as the spokesman for all of the workers. That was regardless of whether the firm employed 10, 100, or 5,000 workers.
2. All labor disputes were referred to a special set of courts, known as the labor courts.
3. Whenever more than one union was organized within a single company, the labor court had the authority to designate the "legal union."
4. All strikes were referred to the labor court to decide whether or not they were "legal." If the strike was declared "legal," the employer was compelled to pay full wages to his workers all the while that they were on strike.

Immediately on passage of the Labor Code, President Arevalo proceeded to staff the labor courts with judges who were either Communists or Communist sympathizers, most of whom were handpicked by Gutierrez. The subcommittee was informed that prior to the revolution only one single dispute had ever been decided against the union by a labor court. Whenever a jurisdictional dispute arose between two or more unions, the court decided in favor of the Communist-controlled union.

With the help of the Labor Code and the labor courts, Lombardo Toledano and Gutierrez had little difficulty in organizing the workers of Guatemala into Communist-controlled unions. Before long it was virtually impossible for a worker to hold his job without belonging to such a union and obeying the dictates of his Communist union leaders.

At that time Arevalo took three other important steps: He placed Communists in control of all the Government's propaganda outlets, the information offices, the Government-owned newspapers, and the Government-owned radio. He appointed as head of the Social Security Institute, Alfonso Solorzano, a young Guatemalan Communist, who returned from exile in Mexico, where he had served as private secretary to Lombardo Toledano. And he infiltrated the Guatemalan

foreign service with Communists who acted as couriers, carrying instructions from Moscow, via the various Soviet and Czech embassies, to Guatemala and other Latin American countries.

Meanwhile Senorita Bravo, with the help of Gutierrez, was doing an efficient job in communizing the country's educational system. The teachers' union was turned over to the leadership of a professed Communist, Raphael Tischler. Communists were appointed to key posts in the Department of Education. It became virtually impossible for a teacher to hold his job unless he taught the Communist doctrines.

Thus early in President Arevalo's regime, the Communist movement, still largely under the leadership of foreign Communists, secured control of the labor movement, educational system, public information, social services, and the foreign service. They controlled all of the fields in which public opinion was shaped and political power organized.

The Communist leaders lost no time in organizing their political power. Using their control of the labor unions as a weapon they quickly gained dominate positions in all of the major political parties. Without the support of the Communist-controlled labor unions, it was virtually impossible for a candidate to be elected to public office except in a few sections of the country. In order to gain that support the candidates were compelled to pledge acceptance of the Communist Party line. Toward the end of Arevalo's term the Communists had secured complete control of Congress and every important segment of the Government and all of the major social institutions of the country.

Nevertheless opposition was already developing among all classes of Guatemaltecos against the Communist policy of the Arevalo government. The leader of the opposition was the chief of staff of the Guatemalan Army, Colonel Arana, who had been a member of the revolutionary junta. Colonel Arana was vigorous and outspoken in his criticisms of President Arevalo's policies. By 1949 he emerged as the outstanding candidate for the Presidency.

Under the Guatemalan Constitution President Arevalo could not succeed himself. He and his Communist advisers selected as his successor Colonel Arbenz, who had also served on the revolutionary junta. Despite the firm Communist control over the political organizations, Colonel Arana's popularity among all classes of Guatemala was so strong that it was generally conceded that he would have been elected had a free election been held.

No such election, however, was held. In July 1949, Colonel Arana was ambushed at Lake Amatitlan by a group of men armed with submachineguns, rifles, and revolvers, and murdered. His chauffeur, although seriously wounded, managed to escape and make his way back to Guatemala City where he took asylum in the Embassy of El Salvador. As President Castillo testified before the subcommittee, the chauffeur identified as the leader of the assassins Capt. Alfonso Martinez, a member of Congress. He also identified Francisco Morazan, an Honduran adventurer, Carlos Bracamonte, and several others.

The day following Arana's assassination one of the top Communist labor leaders, Carlos Manuel Pellecer, in a public speech, which was reported in the Government press, literally took credit for it in behalf of the Communist party.

With Arana eliminated, the election of Arbenz was assured. Opposition meetings were broken up. Ballot boxes were stuffed. All election disputes were referred to the supreme elections tribunal of which 2 of the 3 members were avowed Communists.

Immediately after his election Arbenz rewarded Martinez by appointing him Secretary to the Presidency, a post which has Cabinet status. Later he was promoted to Chief of the National Agrarian Department, the second most important civilian position in the Government. Morazan first became the new President's personal bodyguard, later his secretary. Bracamonte and others who were identified in the assassination of Arana, were appointed to various lucrative Government positions.

After the election of Arbenz the Communists, who hitherto had operated pretty much in the background, came out into the open. They organized the official Communist Party of Guatemala. They published an official party newspaper bearing the hammer and sickle emblem. All pretense was dropped. The Guatemalan Government, for all practical purposes, was completely controlled and directed from Moscow.

#### COMMUNIST LEADERS OF GUATEMALA

During the early stages of the Communist conquest of Guatemala, the leadership was provided by foreign Communists and a few Guatemalans who had been trained abroad: Arevalo, himself, who had spent years in exile in Argentina and Chile; Antonio Ovando Sanchez, a Guatemalan who had trained in Moscow; Solorzano, who was indoctrinated by Lombardo in Mexico; three Salvadoran exiles, Max and Abel Cuenca and Luis Marmol Chicas; Blas Rojas, the Cuban Red leader; the Chileans, Cesar Godoy Urrutia, Pablo Neruda, and Virginia Bravo Letelier; Louis Saillant and Maurice Carrone, French Communist labor leaders; Elberto Torres and Armando Flores Amador, from Nicaragua; Pedro Geoffrey Rivas of Costa Rica; and many others.

This concentration of leadership in the hands of foreigners and foreign-trained Guatemalans, in itself, is convincing evidence of the foreign or international character of the conspiracy to seize control of that country.

However, the foreign Communists lost no time in training and indoctrinating a tough, efficient cadre of homegrown leftists, who gradually assumed leadership of the Guatemalan Communist movement. Early in Arevalo's administration an indoctrination school, Escuela Claridad, was established in Guatemala City under the direction of Abel Cuenca. However, when some of the non-Communist revolutionary groups protested, the school was closed and the training shifted to clandestine "study groups" under the tutelage of the foreign Communists who were then being reinforced by the arrival of scores of "comrades" from Spain.

The abler and more ardent of the young graduates from the "study groups" were sent to Moscow and various Iron Curtain countries for further training, then moved into leadership posts of the party as it gradually emerged from the underground and came out in the open.

By the time of Arbenz' election, so effective was the Communist training program that local Reds not only took over direction of the conspiracy in their own country, but scores of Guatemalan agitators



commenced infiltrating neighboring countries, spreading the Marxist doctrines among the workers and peasants.

Three of the Communist leaders of Guatemala are deserving of some individual attention in this report, because of their ability, their intense ambition, and their wholehearted concentration in the Communist cause. Whether they remain in exile in neighboring countries or attempt to return secretly to Guatemala, political observers believe they will figure prominently in the continuing Communist program to intervene in the Western Hemisphere. They are:

Jose Manuel Fortuny, the secretary general of the Communist Party of Guatemala (the name was later changed to the Guatemalan Labor Party), who reportedly was rewarded for his successes by the Kremlin last November, and made a member of the Cominform. At the age of 38, Fortuny is one of the elder statesmen of the Guatemalan Communist movement, which for the most part is made up of men still in their twenties or early thirties. Fortuny was born of lower-middle-class parents; studied law at San Carlos University but never received his degree. He became active in politics about the time of the 1944 revolution; in 1945 was elected to Congress as a member of one of the large revolutionary parties. He first became identified with the Communist movement in 1947, when he organized the Vanguardia Democratica, the forerunner of the Communist Party of Guatemala, and became its secretary general. Fortuny is known to have visited Moscow on at least two occasions, in 1949 and in November 1953, both times for prolonged stays.

Carlos Manuel Pellecer Duran, 34, the firebrand of the Guatemalan labor movement. Pellecer served in the Guatemalan legation to Paris, from 1945 to 1948, after a short period at the Legation in Moscow, in early 1945. While at the Paris Legation Pellecer arranged the transfer of scores of Spanish refugees to Guatemala, and is known to have contributed heavily to the Greek Communist guerrillas, who were trying to seize power in that country. He attended a Communist Youth Conference in Warsaw, then returned to Guatemala and became active in labor-union activities, though still holding a Government post. He was reappointed to the Paris Legation in 1949, but the French Government refused to accept his credentials because of his Communist activities. The British Government did likewise when the Guatemalan Government sought to transfer him to London. He returned to Guatemala to become the top aide to Gutierrez in the labor movement and the No. 1 Communist agitator in his country. A fiery orator, Pellecer invariably spiced his speeches with vitriolic attacks on the United States. He is regarded as inordinately ambitious, and is said to have clashed on several occasions with Fortuny and Gutierrez. According to testimony before the committee, Pellecer was a free spender, plentifully supplied with funds, and sported a smart Cadillac convertible for his personal use. When addressing labor meetings, however, he discreetly abandoned the Cadillac for a somewhat dilapidated jeep.

Victor Manuel Gutierrez Garbin, 32, is said to be the real brains of the Communist movement in Guatemala. Gutierrez was born of Spanish stock and during his youth was a devout Catholic, as his mother still is. But somewhere along the line, apparently shortly after the revolution, he became converted to Marxism, and soon became one of the Kremlin's ablest and most devoted disciples in the Western

Hemisphere. Gutierrez is a quiet, soft-spoken man, and is described by those who know him as coldly, brilliantly intellectual. Thus Gutierrez, the thinker and planner, supplemented Fortuny, the organizer and administrator, and Pellecer, the fiery agitator, to make up the team that controlled the Government, and the social institutions of Guatemala, throughout the Presidency of Jacobo Arbenz.

#### COMMUNIST TACTICS IN GUATEMALA

Under the triumvirate of Fortuny, Gutierrez, and Pellecer, and their foreign mentors, the Communists in Guatemala developed a new technique for subverting a country, a technique which the Comintern has recognized and termed the "Guatemalan way," and which is being adopted by the Communist parties throughout Latin America.

The studies of the House Select Committee on Communist Aggression of Communist intervention in several countries of Europe and Asia, as well as Latin America, demonstrates that while the basic strategy of the Kremlin never deviates from the long-range goal of gaining complete political control, nevertheless, the tactics used to achieve that end are tailored to local conditions.

The principal tactic employed by the Communists in achieving their gains in Europe and Asia was the overwhelming threat of the Red army, which was either in actual occupation of, or adjacent to, the countries marked for subversion. In Asia the tactic was large-scale shipment of military supplies and technicians to the Communist forces of China, North Korea, and Indochina.

But in Latin America, 6,000 miles away from the Soviet fatherland, the might of the Red army could not be effectively employed.

The unique feature of the "Guatemalan Way" was that it achieved the subversion of a sovereign nation without the threat of military force, and without the assistance of military supplies. (The \$10 million Polish arms shipment was not made until after the Communists had gained complete domination of the country.)

The key features of the success of the Communists in Guatemala was that they (both the foreigners and the native-born) succeeded at the outset in identifying themselves with the most extreme nationalistic elements in an area which, since the end of World War II, has been engulfed in a swelling tide of nationalism, and that they became the most vocal champions of long-needed, legitimate social and economic reforms.

There is considerable irony in the fact that these members of an international conspiracy, subservient to the Soviet Union, were able to cloak themselves with the mantle of local nationalism—despite the fact that many of their leaders were foreigners. But with cynical disregard for the basic dogmas of their Marxist philosophy, they became the loudest and most eloquent advocates of Guatemalan nationalism, and the most vigorous denouncers of "foreign imperialists"—by whom, of course, they meant the United States.

In the same way, they captured the reform movement. No group spoke as loudly or as frequently as did the Communists for higher wages, better working conditions, more education, land redistribution, and better standards of living. Moreover, unlike most of the non-

Communist advocates of reform, the Communists always had a specific plan to advance.

Thus, the Communists were able at an early stage to gain popularity with the masses and acceptance by the extreme nationalists, and they used these to gain control of the labor movement and to infiltrate the political parties.

And once firmly in control, they proceeded with typical Communist cynicism to pervert the social and economic reforms they had been preaching into mechanisms to exploit the very people they were intended to help.

These basic tenets of the "Guatemalan Way," identifying themselves with nationalism and legitimate social and economic reform, are now being employed by the Communists in Chile, in Honduras, in Bolivia, in Ecuador, in Costa Rica, in Mexico, and everywhere throughout Latin America that they dare to have meetings in public.

But if the fundamental tactics in Guatemala differed from those of the Communists in Europe and Asia, there were two areas, at least, in which the behavior patterns were identical—in the ruthless suppression of opposition, and in the thorough and methodical indoctrination of all susceptible classes, especially the very young.

The subcommittee was impressed at the fact that among the hundreds of Guatemalan Communists who took asylum in various embassies after Colonel Castillo's revolution, were not only teachers of the secondary and primary schools but even teachers of the kindergartens. And among the piles of Communist propaganda literature seized by Castillo's forces, were thousands of copies of a child's fairy tale, printed in Spanish in the Soviet Union, and pointing up, of course, a Communist moral.

One typical propaganda technique used among the children of Guatemala had a familiar ring to the subcommittee members. It was related by Mr. Lionel Sisniega Otero, in an interview with the subcommittee in Guatemala. Mr. Sisniega told how the teachers would order the children to stand, to close their eyes, and to pray: "Please God, give us bread."

Then the teachers would say: "Open your eyes, children. Now, where is the bread?" And of course there was no bread in their hands.

Then the teachers would bid the children to close their eyes again, and say: "Please, Arbenz, give us bread." And, as Mr. Otero related, men would bring baskets of bread into the room and pass it among the children.

If we simply substitute the name "Stalin," for "Arbenz," the story is a very familiar propaganda tactic used in the Iron Curtain countries.

The subcommittee was impressed at the technical excellence of the propaganda material, most of it printed in the Soviet Union in the Spanish language, which was distributed throughout Guatemala and neighboring Republics, by the Guatemalan Communists. Castillo's forces captured thousands of copies of pictorial magazines, women's magazines, school textbooks, and other Communist literature at the headquarters of the labor unions and at the Guatemala post office. It was all neatly packaged and bore the Soviet Union post mark. It was obvious to the subcommittee that the Soviet Union has been spending millions of dollars in its propaganda campaign in Central America alone.

Another effective Soviet propaganda tactic was the bringing of hundreds of young Guatemalan officials and students to Russia and various Iron Curtain countries, for indoctrination "tours," and to attend Communist-sponsored conferences. In many instances the airplane passage was paid in Prague by the Czechoslovakian Government.

The subcommittee also has testimony to the effect that commercial motion-picture houses in Guatemala were coerced into displaying Soviet-produced films. And at least one Russian propaganda film, the "Bacteriological Warfare," was displayed in the public schools throughout the country in a calculated effort to stir up hatred and suspicion against the United States.

#### SUPPRESSION OF THE ANTI-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION

The sickening feature of the study of what happened in Guatemala was the evidence of the utter savagery with which the Government suppressed the opponents of Communism.

In the early phase of Arevalo's tenure in office, opposition was quietly but firmly suppressed, the press was effectively intimidated. It is estimated that President Arevalo suspended the constitution on at least 20 different occasions, and during those periods the secret police raided homes without warrants, made arrests without charges, and imprisoned or expelled from the country men and women without the formality of trial.

After the murder of Arana, the suppressive measures became increasingly ruthless. Torture was used not only for the purpose of forcing confessions, but in many instances simply as an instrument of intimidation. Shortly before Castillo's revolution a reign of terror was instituted by the Guardia Civil and the secret police, which equaled in viciousness and intensity, if not in magnitude, those which have occurred so frequently behind the Iron Curtain. Victims were tortured for hours, savagely beaten, subjected to the most unspeakable forms of mutilation, and then killed. Even in death the Communist torturers sought to strip their victims of all human dignity, simply tossing their naked bodies into shallow unmarked graves.

It was testified before the subcommittee that more than 200 bodies of mutilated victims have been recovered thus far, and more than 150 additional persons, known to have been arrested by the secret police, are still missing.

The subcommittee hearings will contain substantial detail of the methods used by the torturers. The files contain scores of photographs of the mutilated bodies of the victims. Grisly as this evidence is, the subcommittee commends it to the attention of Congress not only so that we can better know the nature of the thing we are fighting, but also so that we can better appreciate the heroism of the people who resisted such intimidation, and rose up to become the first nation in history to throw off the yoke of a firmly entrenched, completely communized police state.

#### COMMUNIST PLOT TO SEIZE ALL CENTRAL AMERICA

The subcommittee is convinced that the case of Guatemala cannot be treated as an isolated series of incidents, within the borders of a small, neighboring republic. Any attempt to do so would seriously



underrate the menace that Guatemala under the firm control of the Kremlin, represented to the security of the Western Hemisphere. And it would equally underrate the importance of Colonel Castillo's dramatic victory in liberating his country.

As Mr. Raymond G. Leddy, of the State Department, testified, in his excellent analysis of the Guatemalan case:

The Communist penetration of Guatemala could be accurately evaluated only as one portion of Communist activity everywhere \* \* \*. The vast international network of Communist aggression does not minimize the role assigned by it to the Central American beachhead; on the contrary it highlights the special significance of the Communist campaign in Guatemala as particularly aimed against the United States.

Mr. Leddy's choice of the word, "beachhead," was well taken. It is clear that from the very beginning the men in the Kremlin who pulled the strings regarded Guatemala as just that—their first firm beachhead in the Western Hemisphere after years of unceasing activity and successive disappointments. For nearly 10 years Communist agents from Guatemala fanned out into the neighboring Central American and Caribbean Republics, in a continuing program to stir up unrest, infiltrate the labor and agrarian movements, and to agitate against established governments.

Just as the Guatemalan diplomatic service was used to convey instructions from the Soviet Union to Guatemala, via the Soviet and Czech Embassies, so too was it used to transmit orders to Communist leaders of other Latin American nations. Because of his Red activities, Oscar Bone, Guatemalan Ambassador to Panama was declared "persona non grata," by that Government and expelled from the country. Guatemalan Ambassador Gabino Santizo Roman was expelled from Nicaragua, for bringing Communist propaganda into that country under diplomatic seals. Another Guatemalan diplomat, Alfredo Chocano (later chargé d'affaires in Washington) was expelled from both Nicaragua and Honduras. Four Guatemalan consuls, Raul Perez, Jose Maria Aguilar Muniz, Alphonso Cabrera Letona, and Pedro Diaz Marroquin were expelled from Honduras.

In 1952 Communist infiltration from Guatemala had become so flagrant that El Salvador closed its borders to all travel to and from that country, rounded up more than 1,000 Guatemalans and expelled several hundred. A high security official of El Salvador estimated that more than 2,000 specific incidents of intervention in the internal affairs of his country, by Guatemalan Communists, had occurred within a single year. It was obvious to all informed observers that the Kremlin was seeking to expand its Guatemalan beachhead in a plan to control, first all of Central America; then all of Latin America, and ultimately, all of the Western Hemisphere and the world.

That, as Mr. Leddy puts it, was the place that Guatemala occupied in "the very large and very intricate tapestry," of Communist aggression.

Late in 1953, however, three developments were taking place that apparently caused the Kremlin to speed up its plans in a quick bid for immediate control of Central America—the "grand coup," that failed. The developments were—

1. The increasing efforts of the United States, working through the Organization of American States, to build up a hemispheric wall against the Guatemalan Communists.



2. The activities of Col. Castillo Armas, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where he was organizing his revolution.

3. A delicate, and potentially explosive political situation was unfolding in Honduras.

Under the Constitution of Honduras President Juan Manuel Galvez, who had vigorously suppressed communism, could not succeed himself, and he resisted efforts by his supporters to amend the constitution to enable him to do so. The Nacionalista Party, of which he was a member, and which had controlled the country's politics for more than a generation, split into two factions. One supported the candidacy of former President Tiburcio Carias. The other supported Gen. Abraham Williams.

As a result of the split in the dominant party, the Libralistas saw their first chance to capture the presidency in more than 20 years. Soon the country became a hotbed of rumors, the conservatives charging that the Libralistas were dealing with the Communists for financial and popular support, and the Libralistas charging, in turn, that the Carias faction was scheming to steal the election. In addition there was growing unrest among the working classes, whose living standard was among the lowest in the hemisphere. The situation looked ripe for Communist mischief-making.

However, next door to Honduras was President Anastasio Somoza, in Nicaragua, a confirmed opponent of communism. Somoza had—and still has—a small but a tough and well-trained army, and it was considered unlikely that he would tolerate a Communist coup next door to him in Honduras.

So, according to information given the subcommittee, as early as November 1953, two plots, clearly related to each other, commenced to take shape in Guatemala. The first was by a group of Nicaraguan exiles, Communists, and Central American adventurers to assassinate Somoza and seize control of Nicaragua. The second, by the Communist labor movement, to foment a general strike in Honduras, obviously with the intent of unseating the government there.

The fact that these two plots were instigated by the Communists in a carefully calculated plan to seize control of all Central America, was the studied opinion made available to the subcommittee by some of the most reliable political observers in Central America.

Here are some of the events they related to substantiate that view:

In January 1954 the men, later identified with the conspiracy to assassinate Somoza, left Guatemala for Costa Rica, where the new president, Jose Figueres Ferrar was reportedly friendly to the Communist government of Guatemala, and openly hostile to Somoza.

In February 1954 Alphonso Martinez, second ranking member of the Arbenz government went to Prague to negotiate what later became the notorious \$10 million Polish arms shipment.

Throughout the early months of 1954, a steady stream of Communist agitators flowed from Guatemala to Honduras to agitate among the agricultural workers. The chief of police of El Salvador told the committee consultant last March that the Communist pressure on his country from Guatemala had virtually ceased, and they were throwing everything they had into Honduras and Costa Rica—especially the former.

In mid-March two German seamen, former submarine officers, reported that they had seen a late model World War II type German

submarine refueling in the port of San Jose, Guatemala. The report was passed on to United States Ambassador to Nicaragua, Thomas E. Whalen, who notified United States naval authorities. Only the United States, Britain, Russia, and possibly Poland are operating that type of submarine. No United States or British submarines were operating in that area at that time.

Between March 30 and April 10 an unidentified submarine was seen by hundreds of persons at various times, along a stretch of Nicaraguan coast. On some occasions it was reported signaling by blinker to the shore. A few days later, searching the area, a patrol of Nicaraguan troops uncovered a cache of rifles, revolvers, submachine guns and ammunition. The weapons were identified as Russian and Czech manufacture, by an ambassador from a European country who had served in embassies behind the Iron Curtain. United States military attachés in Nicaragua confirmed the identification. Several cigarette butts, identified as a popular Guatemalan brand, were found in the pit where the arms were buried.

On April 1, at the time the submarine was maneuvering off the Nicaraguan coast, some 20 conspirators crossed the border from Costa Rica to Nicaragua, for the purpose of killing Somoza. Three carefully planned ambushes were set up. Each time Somoza, through the sheepest of good fortune, avoided the ambush by a last-minute change in his plans. The night of the first ambush, two of the leaders of the assassination conspiracy were seen and later identified by several persons, dining with the Guatemalan Ambassador at a restaurant close to the scene. A police patrol blundered into the third ambush, shots were exchanged and all except one of the conspirators were eventually arrested. The one who escaped took refuge in Guatemala. Two of those captured signed confessions in which, according to the Nicaraguan authorities, they implicated high officials of both Guatemala and Costa Rica.

Despite the fiasco in Nicaragua, the Communists proceeded with their plan to tie up the economy of Honduras, though the expected revolution never did materialize. Beginning early in May they struck one after another of the plantations of the United Fruit and the Standard Fruit companies, whose operations constitute a major portion of the country's economy. Competent United States authorities estimate that more than \$3 million was spent in maintaining the strikes. Since the Honduran workers had no formal unions, no treasuries, it was obvious that the money came from outside the country. And the Communist unions in Guatemala publicly boasted that they were supporting the strikes in Honduras, morally and financially.

Some observers attach considerable importance to the fact that the Polish arms shipment (the *Alfhem* shipment) which reached Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, at the height of the strikes, had originally been destined for Puerto Cortez, Honduras. They theorize that had the attempted assassination of President Somoza and the revolution in Nicaragua come off as planned, the *Alfhem* would have docked at Puerto Cortez and the arms used to touch off a revolution in Honduras.

Had the plot to assassinate President Somoza succeeded, observers believe that a Communist or pro-Communist government would have been set up in Nicaragua. In that case a coup or a revolution would certainly have been attempted in Honduras. This would have

given the Communists control of 3 of the 5 Central American Republics, and enable them to apply strong pressure on El Salvador and Costa Rica (which was at that time openly manifesting its friendship for Guatemala). Just the sheer luck that prompted President Somoza to change his plans at the last moment, 3 times in 2 days, averted a situation which would not only have embarrassed the United States diplomatically, but which would have represented a most dangerous threat not only to our own national security but to the security of the entire hemisphere.

Although the planned revolution in Honduras was averted—at least for the time being—Communist activity in that country is being maintained at a high level. More than 100 Guatemalan Communists are reported to have crossed into Honduras since Castillo's revolution, and are agitating among the agricultural workers. A situation of extreme tension has resulted from the recent elections. Under the constitution a candidate for the Presidency must poll a majority of the votes cast to be elected. Although the Liberalista candidate led by a heavy plurality, he just fell short of winning a majority, polling about 48 percent of the votes cast.

This throws the choice for the new President to Congress, which also appears to be split 3 ways, with the Nacionalistas (supporting Tiburcio Carias) controlling about 25 seats; the Liberalistas (supporting Dr. Villeda Morales), 18; and the Reformistas (supporting General Williams), 13. If the new Congress fails to agree on a candidate within 20 days, the issue is referred to the supreme court, which is still dominated by judges who were appointed by former President Carias.

Although the Liberalista candidate, Villeda Morales, denies he is a Communist, and professes to be a friend of the United States, he is reported to have received Communist support in the elections. And, according to the testimony of former United States Ambassador John D. Erwin to Honduras, Morales fraternized freely with Guatemalan Communists and holds pronounced left-wing views.

#### THE LIBERATION OF GUATEMALA

In its study of Communist aggression in Latin America the subcommittee found considerable cause for concern and even alarm.

But to the members this was more than offset by the inspiration and the hope that was engendered by the liberation of Guatemala from Red control by the forces of Col. Castillo Armas.

Since the beginning of World War II and the Soviet seizure of the Baltic States, the world has watched one free nation after another disappear behind the Iron Curtain. In June of this year for the first time we saw one reappear—the Republic of Guatemala.

This meant far more to the subcommittee members than just the elimination of a serious threat to our security. It also meant that 10 years of the most intensive propaganda by a Moscow-controlled government had failed to convince the majority of Guatemalan people, and that the most ruthless reign of terrorism had failed to cow them. When the opportunity presented itself, the people of Guatemala cast their lot with freedom and democracy, and overthrew their Communist leaders.

The subcommittee found inspiration and hope in the courage and the determination of those Guatemalans who joined in Colonel Castillo's revolutionary movement, the members of the underground movement within the country as well as the members of the liberation army. We feel our entire Nation will find equal inspiration, when the facts are fully appreciated.

When Colonel Castillo's forces invaded Guatemala June 18, to touch off the revolution, his strength was reported as 2,000 men. Actually, as testified before the subcommittee, he had only 250 fairly well-equipped troops of little or no military experience and training, supported by 2 obsolete bombers. Arrayed against this small force was the Guatemalan Army of nearly 10,000 trained troops—the largest and best equipped army in Central America.

It is true that Castillo and his forces counted heavily on a well-organized conspiracy within the army (the present Guatemalan Ambassador to Washington, Lt. Col. Jose Luis Cruz Salazar, played a key role in this conspiracy); that the conspirators managed to prevent the bulk of the Guatemalan forces from taking the field against Castillo; and that in the end it was the army that forced the resignation of President Arbenz and his Communist government.

Nevertheless on a half-dozen previous occasions revolutions had been launched against the Arbenz and Arevalo governments, on the basis of army conspiracies which failed to materialize. And up to the last day of the revolution, no one was certain which way the army would jump.

So, when they crossed the border into Guatemala, every one of Castillo's followers fully recognized the heavy odds they were facing. And they further realized that the price of failure would mean not only death to all who were captured, but hours of the most painful and ignominious torture as well.

The revolution had been preceded by months of careful preparation and propaganda. Agents from Castillo's headquarters in Honduras moved freely across the border into Guatemala, organizing the underground, making preparations to sabotage strategic railroads and bridges, and distributing anti-Communist propaganda. A clandestine, anti-Communist radio was operated, at times within the very limits of Guatemala City—despite fact that it was the object of 24-hour-a-day search by virtually the entire secret police force. Scores of the anti-Communist leaders were captured and, as described above, subjected to the most brutal tortures and finally killed. But new recruits sprang up to fill their places and the work continued undiminished.

Two of the young anti-Communist leaders who testified before the subcommittee directed the operations of the clandestine radio, Mario Lopez and Lionel Sisniega Otero. The members were impressed not only by the tremendous risks these two young men undertook, but also by the excellence and the high dramatic quality of their propaganda broadcasts, several of which were replayed from tape at the Washington hearings. The subcommittee is making these tapes available to the Voice of America, and calls the attention of the officials of that organization to the testimony of Lopez and Sisniega. We in the United States still have much to learn about propaganda techniques, and it seems apparent that Lopez, Sisniega, and their



colleague, Jose Tohran (whom the subcommittee interviewed in Guatemala City) can teach us much from their experience.

The hearings in Washington brought out a story that illustrates, first hand, the courage of those who opposed the Communist regime in Guatemala. The third young Guatemalan witness, Raul Midence Rivera, told how his cousin, Mario Sandoval, had been tortured and imprisoned for almost 2 years after taking part in an uprising in Salama. His brother-in-law was arrested, tortured, emasculated, and killed; yet Midence continued his work in the underground until forced to flee the country to avoid arrest, last May, when he joined the liberation forces and took part in the revolution.

The story of the fierce resistance against Communist oppression by our neighbors in the small Republic of Guatemala, as recorded in the subcommittee's hearings, certainly encourages hope that, given the opportunity and leadership, other Iron Curtain countries may eventually take similar action to throw off the Kremlin's yoke. And in sheer gallantry and courage, the anti-Communist uprising by Castillo and his followers constitutes one of the bright pages in the history of the Americas.

#### GUATEMALA'S CURRENT PROBLEMS

Nevertheless, as encouraging as the overthrow of the Red regime in Guatemala was, it would be a serious error for the United States to regard the Communist conspiracy in Latin America as finally crushed.

Evidence presented to the subcommittee establishes that the Communists are still active in Guatemala, although the top leaders have fled the country into exile in neighboring republics.

The government of Castillo Armas is faced with an exceedingly grave economic situation. Before they abandoned their posts, the Communist officials of the Arbenz regime stripped the treasury, and even destroyed thousands of essential documents and records, in an effort to leave nothing but chaos for the new administration. The new Government has inherited the wreckage of years of Communist misrule, during which a heavy internal debt was piled up. It has inherited a bankrupt treasury. Thousands of Federal workers remain unpaid. A serious unemployment situation has developed. The Communists are staging hunger strikes among the unemployed.

The subcommittee was gratified at the announcement by the Foreign Operations Administration that it is moving to assist the new Government with a \$6.5 million program. That seems a modest sum, in view of the amounts of aid that our Government has been distributing in recent years to countries thousands of miles away. Nevertheless, it should greatly assist the new Guatemalan Government to meet its current emergency. It is hoped that the program will be effected with maximum speed by FOA, so that the benefits will be felt in Guatemala at the earliest possible time and that, if the FOA and Department of State find additional aid is necessary, ways will be quickly found to make it available.

In his testimony, which was played from tape recording at the Washington hearings, President Castillo told the subcommittee that he feels his Government has made a pledge, "not only to Guatemala, but to the world."

We are committed to show the world that Guatemala, by democratic ways, can advance the welfare of all our people, far beyond what was achieved under communism.



The subcommittee feels that the United States has a definite interest in helping President Castillo's Government to fulfill that commitment.

#### IMPORTANCE OF LATIN AMERICA TO UNITED STATES SECURITY

The importance of Latin America to the United States, in peace as well as in war, is so self-evident as to need little discussion here. Traditionally as well as geographically, the 160 million people of the Latin American Republics are our closest friends. They are the source of our largest and most profitable foreign trade, exports as well as imports. From these countries we receive large volumes of raw materials that are essential to our industrial production and to maintaining our standards of living.

Now, with the ominous drift of events in southeast Asia, it appears that we may soon be dependent on Latin America, as never before, for the strategic minerals and materials essential to our security and our prosperity.

In no other area of the world can the United States, in the interest of its own security, so ill afford the existence of a Communist beachhead.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that despite the loss of Guatemala the Kremlin is stepping up its activities throughout Central and South American and the Caribbean Republics (and the colonies of the European powers). The situation in Chile is so tense that the Government was recently forced to declare martial law. Red agitators are working openly in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico; in British Honduras, in British Guiana, in Trinidad, and in the French island of Martinique.

The subcommittee was pleased to note increasing attention by the United States press toward events in Latin America, which have not always commanded the attention they deserve of the United States public. There is still much to be desired, both in acquainting the people of the United States in the problems and developments in those countries, and in better informing the Latin American people of our own problems and policies. Misunderstandings will always crop up among friends, but in the critical times we now are facing, misunderstandings between the United States and the nations of Latin America must be held to the absolute minimum.

The subcommittee hopes that increased travel within the hemisphere will make for better understanding. It has found that the various programs undertaken by the Government to provide scholarships to enable Latin American students to attend our universities have more than paid off through the good will created.

But the job of building up better mutual understanding and good will is one which cannot be done by the Government alone. The press and various private interests must play their proper roles.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the subcommittee is convinced that all of the observations and conclusions in this report are accurate, it does not feel that its study of Communist attempts to penetrate Latin America is complete. Because of the limitations of time, personnel, and funds, it was necessary to focus attention on the more critical areas. Moreover,

even in Guatemala, on which for obvious reasons the subcommittee directed most of its attention, the situation is a fluid one. Conditions can change very rapidly.

For these reasons the subcommittee earnestly recommends that the House Select Committee on Communist Aggression be authorized to continue this special study on Communist intervention in the Western Hemisphere in the 84th Congress.

In advancing this recommendation, the subcommittee wishes to observe, with gratitude, that the subcommittee and staff received the fullest cooperation from the government of Castillo Armas in making this study. Our neighbors in Latin America are naturally sensitive to any suspected interference on the part of the United States in their internal affairs. However, it has been our experience that once the objectives of our study are explained, the friendly governments of the Western Hemisphere will willingly cooperate in the subcommittee's activities, which have only one objective: To determine the extent of the intervention in the affairs of American Republics that has already taken place by a nonhemispheric power, the Soviet Union.

The subcommittee also recommends to Congress and the committees responsible, that we reexamine the distribution of the huge amounts of money that this Government is appropriating to assist other countries in their fight against Communist aggression.

The subcommittee does not suggest any new vast foreign aid program. The subcommittee does, however, feel that the sums that are being appropriated might be more effectively distributed in the light of our own national security.

During recent months there has been considerable evidence of increased interest in Latin America by the United States Government. Nevertheless the fact remains that to this critical area we have devoted less than 1 percent of the billions of dollars in grants that we have appropriated since the end of the war to help friendly nations in their fight against the Communist conspiracy. That bald fact has certainly not improved our relations with our "good neighbors."

It would not require a vast diversion of funds from other areas to effectively assist the Latin American Republics in their development programs. A relatively small amount of money wisely spent, to assist in the construction of highways, port facilities, irrigation systems, sanitation facilities, disease-control programs, and schools, would, in the opinion of most informed observers with whom we talked, work economic miracles.

If the United States would assist Latin America in overcoming these basic obstacles, their governments would soon be able to maintain reasonably safe standards of living for their people and to hold out to them hope for continuing progress. Even more important, the Latin American governments would then be able to offer their people a real incentive for maintaining democratic institutions.