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## THE UNITED FRUIT COMPANY

Cortesía de: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Fruit\\_Company#cite\\_ref-14](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Fruit_Company#cite_ref-14)

### REPUTATION

The United Fruit Company was frequently accused of bribing government officials in exchange for preferential treatment, exploiting its workers, paying little by way of taxes to the governments of the countries in which it operated, and working ruthlessly to consolidate monopolies. Latin American journalists sometimes referred to the company as *el pulpo* ("the octopus"), and leftist parties in Central and South America encouraged the company's workers to strike. Criticism of the United Fruit Company became a staple of the discourse of the [communist](#) parties in several Latin American countries, where its activities were often interpreted as illustrating [Vladimir Lenin](#)'s theory of capitalist [imperialism](#). Major left-wing writers in Latin America, such as [Carlos Luis Fallas](#) of Costa Rica, [Ramón Amaya Amador](#) of Honduras, [Miguel Ángel Asturias](#) and [Augusto Monterroso](#) of Guatemala, [Gabriel García Márquez](#) of Colombia, and [Pablo Neruda](#) of Chile, denounced the company in their literature.

The business practices of United Fruit were also frequently criticized by journalists, politicians, and artists in the United States. [Little Steven](#) released a song called "Bitter Fruit" in 1987 in which lyrics referred to a hard life for a company "far away" and whose accompanying video, depicted orange groves worked by peasants overseen by wealthy managers. Although the lyrics and scenery are generic, United Fruit (or its successor Chiquita) was reputed to be the target.<sup>[5]</sup> In 1950, [Gore Vidal](#) published a novel "Dark Green, Bright Red", in which a thinly fictionalized version of United Fruit supports a military coup in a thinly fictionalized Guatemala.

Diane K. Stanley, a former U.S. diplomat and the daughter of a Welsh-born employee of the United Fruit Co. in Guatemala, argues in the book *For the Record: The United Fruit Company's Sixty-six Years in Guatemala*, published in 1994, that the negative perception of the company's influence in Guatemala is largely undeserved, and could be due in part to the unwillingness of left-wing journalists and writers to critically examine the legacy of the administrations of Presidents [Arévalo](#) and [Arbenz](#). According to her:

*Most accounts about the banana company have also failed to describe the significant contribution that United Fruit made to Guatemala's human and economic development. In addition to providing employment to tens of thousands of workers and paying them the nation's best rural wages, the Company also offered its employees excellent medical care, rent-free housing, and six years of free schooling for countless children. By clearing and draining thousands of acres of jungle that are today among the country's most productive farm lands, United Fruit converted Guatemala into a major banana producer, thereby ending the country's unhealthy dependence on its exports of [coffee](#). The Company's pioneering work in eliminating [malaria](#) and other tropical diseases early in the 20th century also demonstrated that Guatemala's sparsely inhabited coastal areas offered rich, previously unexploited agricultural zones. Ultimately, the taxes and salaries that the United Fruit Company paid, and the millions of dollars of foreign exchange earnings that it annually generated, impacted in an important way on Guatemala's economy.<sup>[6]</sup>*

Stanley also argues that while the company did orchestrate "an effective media campaign against the Arbenz government, it is clear that the [Eisenhower](#) administration was intent on ousting what it considered to be a Communist beachhead that threatened U.S. national security. Spurred on by [John Foster Dulles](#),

his vehemently anti-Communist secretary of state, President Eisenhower would have moved to depose Arbenz even if the United Fruit Company had never operated in Guatemala."<sup>[7]</sup>

The integrity of John Foster Dulles's "anti-Communist" motives have been discredited, since Dulles and his law firm of [Sullivan & Cromwell](#) negotiated the land giveaways to the United Fruit Company in Guatemala and Honduras. John Foster Dulles's brother, Allen Dulles, also did legal work for United Fruit and sat on its board of directors. Allen Dulles was the head of the CIA under Eisenhower. In a flagrant conflict of interest, the Dulles brothers and Sullivan & Cromwell were on the United Fruit payroll for thirty-eight years.<sup>[8][9]</sup> In fairness to the Dulles brothers, recent research has disclosed other passengers on the United Fruit gravy train:

John Foster Dulles, who represented United Fruit while he was a law partner at Sullivan & Cromwell - he negotiated that crucial United Fruit deal with Guatemalan officials in the 1930's - was Secretary of State under Eisenhower; his brother Allen, who did legal work for the company and sat on its board of directors, was head of the CIA under Eisenhower; Henry Cabot Lodge, who was America's ambassador to the UN, was a large owner of United Fruit stock; Ed Whitman, the United Fruit PR man, was married to Ann Whitman, Dwight Eisenhower's personal secretary. You could not see these connections until you could - and then you could not stop seeing them.<sup>[10]</sup>

## HISTORY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

The United Fruit Company (UFCO) owned vast tracts of land in the Caribbean lowlands. It also dominated regional transportation networks through its International Railways of Central America and its Great White Fleet of steamships. In addition, UFCO branched out in 1913 by creating the Tropical Radio and Telegraph Company. UFCO's policies of acquiring tax breaks and other benefits from host governments led to it building [enclave economies](#) in the regions, in which a company's investment is largely self-contained for its employees and overseas investors and the benefits of the export earnings are not shared with the host country.<sup>[11]</sup>

One of the company's primary tactics for maintaining market dominance was to control the distribution of banana lands. UFCO claimed that hurricanes, blight and other natural threats required them to hold extra land or reserve land. In practice, what this meant was that UFCO was able to prevent the government from distributing banana lands to peasants who wanted a share of the banana trade. The fact that the UFCO relied so heavily on manipulation of [land use](#) rights in order to maintain their [market dominance](#) had a number of long-term consequences for the region. For the company to maintain its unequal land holdings it often required government concessions. And this in turn meant that the company had to be politically involved in the region even though it was an American company. In fact, the heavy-handed involvement of the company in governments which often were or became corrupt created the term "[Banana republic](#)" representing a "servile dictatorship".<sup>[12]</sup> The term Banana Republic was coined by American writer O. Henry.<sup>[13]</sup>

UFCO had a mixed record on promoting the development of the nations in which it operated. In Central America, the Company built extensive railroads and ports and provided employment and transportation. UFCO also created numerous schools for the people who lived and worked on Company land. On the other hand, it allowed vast tracts of land under its ownership to remain uncultivated and, in Guatemala and

elsewhere, it discouraged the government from building highways, which would lessen the profitable transportation monopoly of the railroads under its control. UFCO had also destroyed at least one of those railroads upon leaving its area of operation.<sup>[14]</sup>

In 1954, the democratically elected Guatemalan government of Colonel [Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán](#) was toppled by U.S.- backed forces led by Colonel [Carlos Castillo Armas](#)<sup>[15]</sup> who invaded from [Honduras](#). Assigned by the Eisenhower administration, this military opposition was armed, trained and organized by the U.S. [Central Intelligence Agency](#)<sup>[16]</sup> (see [Operation PBSUCCESS](#)). The directors of United Fruit Company (UFCO) had lobbied to convince the [Truman](#) and Eisenhower administrations that Colonel Arbenz intended to align Guatemala with the [Soviet Bloc](#). Besides the disputed issue of Arbenz's allegiance to Communism, UFCO was being threatened by the Arbenz government's agrarian reform legislation and new Labor Code.<sup>[17]</sup> UFCO was the largest Guatemalan landowner and employer, and the Arbenz government's land reform included the expropriation of 40% of UFCO land.<sup>[18]</sup> U.S. officials had little proof to back their claims of a growing communist threat in Guatemala,<sup>[19]</sup> however the relationship between the Eisenhower administration and UFCO demonstrated the influence of corporate interest on U.S. foreign policy.<sup>[16]</sup> [United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles](#) was an avowed opponent of Communism, whose law firm [Sullivan and Cromwell](#) had represented United Fruit.<sup>[20]</sup> His brother [Allen Dulles](#) was the director of the CIA, and a board member of United Fruit. United Fruit Company is the only company known to have a [CIA cryptonym](#). The brother of the Assistant Secretary of State for InterAmerican Affairs [John Moors Cabot](#) had once been president of United Fruit. Ed Whitman, who was United Fruit's principal lobbyist, was married to President Eisenhower's personal secretary, [Ann C. Whitman](#).<sup>[20]</sup> Many individuals who directly influenced U.S. policy towards Guatemala in the 1950s also had direct ties to UFCO.<sup>[17]</sup> The overthrow of Arbenz, however, failed to benefit the Company. Its stock market value declined along with its profit margin. The Eisenhower administration proceeded with [antitrust](#) action against the company, which forced it to divest in 1958. In 1972, the company sold off the last of their Guatemalan holdings after over a decade of decline.

Even as the Arbenz government was being overthrown, in 1954 a [general strike](#) against the company organized by workers in Honduras rapidly paralyzed the country and thanks to the United States' concern about the events in Guatemala, was settled more favorably for the workers in order to gain fuller leverage for the Guatemala operation.

Company holdings in [Cuba](#), which included sugar mills in the [Oriente](#) region of the island, were [expropriated](#) by the 1959 [revolutionary government](#) led by [Fidel Castro](#). By April 1960 Castro was accusing the company of aiding [Cuban exiles](#) and supporters of former leader [Fulgencio Batista](#) in initiating a seaborne invasion of Cuba directed from the United States.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Castro warned the U.S. that "Cuba is not another Guatemala" in one of many combative diplomatic exchanges before the failed [Bay of Pigs invasion](#) of 1961.

## BANANA MASSACRE

One of the most notorious strikes by United Fruit workers broke out on 12 November 1928 on the Caribbean coast of Colombia, near [Santa Marta](#). On December 6, [Colombian Army](#) troops allegedly under the command of General [Cortés Vargas](#), opened fire on a crowd of strikers gathered in the central square of the town of [Ciénaga](#). Estimates of the number of casualties vary from 47 to 2000. The military justified

this action by claiming that the strike was subversive and its organizers were Communist revolutionaries. Congressman [Jorge Eliécer Gaitán](#) claimed that the army had acted under instructions from the United Fruit Company. The ensuing scandal contributed to [President Miguel Abadía Méndez's Conservative Party](#) being voted out of office in 1930, putting an end to 44 years of Conservative rule in Colombia. The first novel of [Álvaro Cepeda Samudio](#), *La Casa Grande*, focuses on this event, and the author himself grew up in close proximity to the incident. The climax of [García Márquez's](#) novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is based on the events in Ciénaga, though the author himself has acknowledged that the death toll of 3,000 that he gives there is greatly inflated.<sup>[21]</sup>

General Cortés Vargas, who issued the order to shoot, argued later that he had issued the order because he had information that U.S. boats were poised to land troops on Colombian coasts to defend American personnel and the interests of the United Fruit Company. Vargas issued the order so the US would not invade Colombia. This position was strongly criticized in the Senate, especially by [Jorge Eliécer Gaitán](#), who argued that those same bullets should have been used to stop the foreign invader.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

The telegram from Bogotá Embassy to the U.S. Secretary of State, dated December 5, 1928, stated: "I have been following Santa Marta fruit strike through United Fruit Company representative here; also through Minister of Foreign Affairs who on Saturday told me government would send additional troops and would arrest all strike leaders and transport them to prison at [Cartagena](#); that government would give adequate protection to American interests involved."<sup>[22]</sup>

The telegram from Bogotá Embassy to Secretary of State, date December 7, 1928, stated: "Situation outside Santa Marta City unquestionably very serious: outside zone is in revolt; military who have orders "not to spare ammunition" have already killed and wounded about fifty strikers. Government now talks of general offensive against strikers as soon as all troopships now on the way arrive early next week."<sup>[23]</sup>

The Dispatch from US Bogotá Embassy to the US Secretary of State, dated December 29, 1928, stated: "I have the honor to report that the legal advisor of the United Fruit Company here in Bogotá stated yesterday that the total number of strikers killed by the Colombian military authorities during the recent disturbance reached between five and six hundred; while the number of soldiers killed was one."<sup>[24]</sup>

The Dispatch from US Bogotá Embassy to the US Secretary of State, dated January 16, 1929, stated: "I have the honor to report that the Bogotá representative of the United Fruit Company told me yesterday that the total number of strikers killed by the Colombian military exceeded one thousand."<sup>[25]</sup>

The Banana massacre is said to be one of the main events that preceded the [Bogotazo](#), the subsequent era of violence known as [La Violencia](#), and the guerrillas who developed during the bipartisan [National Front](#) period, creating the ongoing armed conflict in Colombia.

## INFORMACION DE LA CIA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS

### KNOWN CIA CRYPTONYMS

Cortesía de: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CIA\\_cryptonym#Known\\_cryptonyms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CIA_cryptonym#Known_cryptonyms)

1. AEFOXTROT: Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, a Soviet defector.
2. AELADLE: Anatoliy Golitsyn, a Soviet defector.
3. AMBIDDY-1: Manuel Artime.[7]
4. AMBLOOD-1: Luis Torroella y Martin Rivero, a CIA agent.[8]
5. AMCLATTER-1: Bernard Barker, one of the Watergate burglars.[9]
6. AMBUD
7. AMCLEOPATRA[10]
8. AMCOBRA[10]
9. AMCROW[10]
10. AMCRUZ or AMCRUX?[10]
11. AMFOX[10]
12. AMGLOSSY[10]
13. AMHALF[10]
14. AMJUDGE[10]
15. AMLASH: Plan to assassinate Fidel Castro associated mainly with Rolando Cubela. AMLASH has been referred to as a "basically one-person Cubela operation".[11]
16. AMLASH-1: Rolando Cubela Secades, a Cuban official involved in plot to kill Fidel Castro in 1963.
17. AMOT: Cuban exile informants of David Sánchez Morales.[12]
18. AMPALM-4[13]
19. AMQUACK: Che Guevara, Argentinian (later Cuban) guerrilla leader.
20. AMTHUG: Fidel Castro, Prime Minister of Cuba 1959-1976.[14]
21. AMTRUNK: A CIA plan by New York Times journalist Tad Szulc initiated in February 1963, also called the "Leonardo Plan," that was "an attempt to find disgruntled military officials in Cuba who might be willing to recruit higher military officials in a plot to overthrow Castro",[15] as well as to overthrow the Cuban government "by means of a conspiracy among high-level ... leaders of the government culminating in a coup d'etat".[11] AMTRUNK has also been described as a "CIA-DIA Task Force on Cuba",[16] and as "a plodding bureaucratic effort" that "had worked for months to identify Cuban leaders who might be able to stage a coup".[15]
22. AMWHIP-1: Business associate of Santo Trafficante, Jr. who was in contact with Rolando Cubela (AMLASH) in 1963.[17]
23. AMWORLD: A plan initiated June 28, 1963, to overthrow the Castro regime in a coup on December 1, 1963 (C-Day), that would have installed Juan Almeida Bosque, a top ranking Cuban military officer, as the new head of state.[13][18] Some Cuban exiles referred to C-Day as "Plan Omega".[19]
24. DBACHILLES: 1995 effort to support a military coup in Iraq.[20]
25. DBROCKSTARS: Iraqi spy ring recruited by the CIA shortly before the 2003 invasion of Iraq.[21]
26. HTAUTOMAT: Photointerpretation center for the Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance aircraft project.
27. HTKEEPER: Mexico City
28. HTLINGUAL: Mail interception operation 1952-1973.
29. HTNEIGH: National Committee for Free Albania (NCFa) [1949-mid1950s]
30. HTPLUME: Panama

31. JMADD: CIA air base near city of Retalhuleu, Guatemala 1960-1961
32. JMATE: CIA Air operations office for the Bay of Pigs Invasion 1961
33. JMBELL: CIA office (location unknown) 1961
34. JMBLUG: John Peurifoy, U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala.
35. JMFURY: Preparatory strikes against Cuban airfields before Bay of Pigs Invasion 1961
36. JMGLow: CIA Washington 1961
37. JMTIDE: CIA air base in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua 1961
38. JMTRAX: CIA covert air base/training camp in Guatemala 1960-1961
39. JMWAVE: CIA station in Miami (that operated against Cuba).
40. JMZIP: CIA office (location unknown) 1961
41. KMFLUSH: Nicaragua
42. KMPAJAMA: Mexico
43. KMPLEBE: Peru
44. KUBARK: CIA Headquarters, Langley
45. KUBASS: CIA Directorate of Science and Technology (DS&T)[22]
46. KUCAGE: CIA Overseas Paramilitary / Propaganda Operations
47. KUCLUB: CIA Office of Communications
48. KUDESK: CIA Counterintelligence department
49. KUDOVE: CIA Deputy Director for Operations (DDO)[22]
50. KUFIRE: CIA Foreign Intelligence Staff[22]
51. KUGOWN: CIA Psychological and Paramilitary Operations Staff[22]
52. KUHOOK: CIA Paramilitary Operations Staff[22]
53. KUJAZZ: CIA Office of National Estimates[22]
54. KUJUMP: CIA Contact Division[22]
55. KUKNOB: CIA Office of Scientific Intelligence (OSI)[22]
56. KUMONK: CIA Office of Political Analysis (OPA)[22]
57. KUMOTHER: James Jesus Angleton, head of CIA counter intelligence.
58. KUPALM
59. KURIOT: CIA Technical Services Division.[22]
60. KUSODA: Center for CIA Security.].[22]
61. KUTUBE: CIA Foreign Intelligence Staff.].[22]
62. LCFLUTTER: Polygraph, sometimes supplanted by truth drugs: Sodium Amytal (amobarbital), Sodium Pentothal (thiopental), and Seconal (secobarbital) to induce regression in the subject.
63. LCPANGS: Costa Rica
64. LNHARP: United States Government
65. LIENVOY: Wiretap or intercept program.
66. LINCOLN: Ongoing operation involving Basque separatist group ETA.
67. LIONIZER: Guatemalan refugee group in Mexico.
68. LITEMPO: Spy network, operated between 1956–1969, to exchange information with Mexican top officers.[23]
69. LITEMPO-2: Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, President of Mexico 1964-1970.[24]
70. LITEMPO-8: Luis Echeverría, President of Mexico 1970-1976.[24]
71. MHCHAOS: Surveillance of antiwar activists during the Vietnam War.
72. MKCHICKWIT: Identify new drug developments in Europe and Asia and obtain samples, part of MKSEARCH.

73. MKDELTA: Stockpiling of lethal biological and chemical agents, subsequently became MKNAOMI.
74. MKNAOMI: Stockpiling of lethal biological and chemical agents, successor to MKDELTA.
75. MKOFTEN: Testing effects of biological and chemical agents, part of MKSEARCH.
76. MKSEARCH: MKULTRA after 1964, mind control research.
77. MKULTRA: Mind control research. MKULTRA means MK (scientific projects) and ULTRA (top classification reference, re: ULTRA code breaking in World War II. Renamed MKSEARCH in 1964.
78. ODACID: United States Department of State/U.S. embassy
79. ODEARL: United States Department of Defense
80. ODENVY: Federal Bureau of Investigation
81. ODOATH: United States Navy
82. ODOPAL: Counterintelligence Corps, United States Army
83. ODUNIT: United States Air Force
84. ODYOKE: Federal government of the United States[13]
85. PBFORTUNE: CIA project to supply forces opposed to Guatemala's President Arbenz with weapons, supplies, and funding; predecessor to PBSUCCESS.
86. PBHISTORY: CIA project to gather and analyze documents from the Arbenz government in Guatemala that would incriminate Arbenz as a communist.
87. PBJOINTLY: Operation that built a tunnel from the American sector of Berlin, to the Russian sector.
88. PBPRIME: the United States[13]
89. PBRUMEN: Cuba
90. PBSUCCESS: (Also PBS) CIA covert operation to overthrow the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954.
91. POCAPON: Taketora Ogata, Japanese politician in the 1950s.
92. PODAM: Matsutarō Shōriki, Japanese businessman and politician.
93. QJWIN: European assassin.[25] Also described as an "assassin recruiter".[26]
94. QKCIGAR: United States Government
95. QKELUSION: West German Social Democratic Party (SPD)[22]
96. QKENCHANT: CIA program associated with E. Howard Hunt (1918–2007), who with G. Gordon Liddy and others, was one of the White House's "plumbers" — a secret team of operatives charged with fixing "leaks".[27]
97. QKFLOWAGE: United States Information Agency
98. SMOTH: UK Secret Intelligence Service (MI6)
99. TPBEDAMN: U.S. operation to counter communist subversion in Iran with propaganda and bribes.
100. TPAJAX: Joint US/UK operation to overthrow Mohammed Mossadeq, Prime Minister of Iran.
101. TPCREDO: Italy
102. TPROACH: Yugoslavia
103. TPTONIC: National Committee for Free Europe (NCFE)
104. ZRRIFLE: An assassination plot targeting Fidel Castro

#### UNIDENTIFIED CRYPTONYMS

AEBARMAN, AEFOX, AEROPLANE, AVBLIMP, AVBRANDY, AVBUSY, CABOUNCE, CLOWER, ECJOB, ESGAIN, ESODIC, FJDEFLECT, GOLIATH, HBDRILL, HOPEFUL, JUBATE, JUBILIST, LCPANES, LICOZY, LPHIDDEN, ODIBEX, ODEUM, PBCABOOSE



## OPERATIONS AND PROJECTS

1. ALERT: U.S. civil defense exercise 1954 to 1962.<sup>[28]</sup>
2. APPLE: Agent team seen in 1952 by CIA/OPC as best bet to successfully continue BGFIEND Project aimed to harass/overthrow Albanian communist regime. Team was arrested, communists controlled radio ops for 16 months, luring more agents into Albania in 1953, and trying and executing original agents in 1954 to suddenly end BGFIEND.<sup>[29]</sup>
3. [AQUATONE](#): Project name for [Lockheed U-2](#) reconnaissance aircraft project, succeeded by CHALICE.
4. ARGON: satellite-intelligence mapping project 1962 to 1964.<sup>[28]</sup>
5. [ARTICHOKE](#): Anti-interrogation project. Precursor to MKULTRA.
6. [AZORIAN](#): Project to raise the [Soviet submarine K-129](#) from the Pacific Ocean.<sup>[30]</sup>
7. BGGYPSY: Communist.
8. BIRCH
9. BLACKSHIELD: A-12 aircraft reconnaissance missions off Okinawa.<sup>[28]</sup>
10. BLUEBIRD: mind control program
11. BOND: Puerto Barrios, Guatemala.
12. BYEMAN: A retired control system covering certain overhead collection systems, including CORONA and OXCART. Transferred to TALENT and KEYHOLE.
13. CAMTEX: Undercover FBI operation targeting [Carlos Marcello](#) (CAMTEX, for Carlos Marcello, Texas). According to informant Jack Ronald Van Laningham, in 1985 Marcello admitted he was responsible for having President Kennedy assassinated.<sup>[31]</sup>
14. CATIDE: [Bundesnachrichtendienst](#)
15. CHALICE: Second name for the Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance aircraft project. Preceded by [AQUATONE](#).
16. CHARITY: Joint CIA/OSO-Italian Naval Intelligence information gathering operation against Albania (1948–1951).
17. [CHATTER](#): Identification and testing of drugs to be used in interrogations and the recruitment of agents.
18. CHERRY: Covert assassination / destabilization operation during Vietnam war, targeting Prince (later King) [Norodom Sihanouk](#) and the government of Cambodia. Disbanded.
19. [CONDOR](#): 1970s CIA interference in Latin American governments, some allege in the coup and assassination of [Salvador Allende](#) in Chile.
20. [CORONA](#): Satellite photo system.
21. DTFROGS: El Salvador
22. [ECHELON](#): Worldwide signals intelligence and analysis network run by the [UKUSA Community](#).
23. ESCOBILLA: Guatemalan national.
24. ESMERALDITE: Labor informant affiliated with [AFL](#)-sponsored labor movement.
25. ESQUIRE: [James Bamford](#), author of "The Puzzle Palace".
26. ESSENCE: Guatemalan anti-communist leader.
27. FDTRODPINT : Afghan tribal agents, formerly known as GESENIOR, reactivated in the 1990s by the CIA to hunt [Mir Aimal Kasi](#) and later [Osama bin Laden](#).<sup>[32]</sup>
28. FIR
29. FJGROUND: [Grafenwohr](#), West Germany paramilitary training ground.
30. FJHOPEFUL: Military base.
31. FPBERM: Yugoslavia
32. [FUBELT](#): Project to prevent [Salvador Allende](#) rise to power, and to promote a military coup in Chile.



33. GANGPLANK: KYP, Greek Central Intelligence Service (1952–1974)
34. GESENIOR: Afghan tribal agents working with the CIA during the [Soviet war in Afghanistan](#). Later called FDTRDPINT.<sup>[32]</sup>
35. GPFLOOR: [Lee Harvey Oswald](#), J.F. Kennedy's assassin.
36. GPIDEAL: [John F. Kennedy](#), US president.<sup>[33]</sup>
37. GRALLSPICE: [Sergei Popov \(bioweaponeer\)](#), Soviet defector.
38. [GUSTO](#): Project to design a follow-on to the Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. Succeeded [RAINBOW](#). Succeeded by [OXCART](#).<sup>[34]</sup>
39. HBFAIRY: France
40. HTCURIO: American or U.S. [Not Government]
41. [IAFEATURE](#): Operation to support [UNITA](#) and [FNLA](#) during the [Angolan civil war](#).
42. IDIOM: Initial work by Convair on a follow-on to the Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. Later moved into [GUSTO](#).<sup>[35]</sup>
43. IVY BELLS: Monitoring of a Soviet communications cable lying on the bottom of the Sea of Okhotsk.<sup>[28]</sup>
44. Project JBEDICT: Tripartite Stay-Behind project.
45. JENNIFER: Document control system for Project AZORIAN.<sup>[36]</sup>
46. KEMPSTER: Project to reduce the [radar cross section](#) (RCS) of the inlets of the [Lockheed A-12](#) reconnaissance aircraft.
47. KMHYMNAL: Maine-built motor sailer JUANITA purchased by CIA to use as floating, clandestine, propaganda broadcast facility in Mediterranean/Adriatic (1950–53).
48. KEYHOLE: Compartment created August 1960 for satellite intelligence.
49. LANYARD: Satellite intelligence 1963.<sup>[28]</sup>
50. LEMON
51. LNWILT: US Counterintelligence Corps (CIC)
52. LPMEDLEY: Surveillance of telegraphic information exiting or entering the United States.
53. MAGPIE: US Army Labor Service Organization
54. MATADOR: Project to recover section of Soviet submarine K-129 dropped during Project AZORIAN. Cancelled after Soviet protest.<sup>[37]</sup>
55. MOCKINGBIRD: Recruitment of American journalists for CIA work.<sup>[28]</sup>
56. [MONGOOSE](#): "Primarily a relentless and escalating campaign of sabotage and small [Cuban exile](#) raids that would somehow cause the overthrow of Castro," which "also included plans for an invasion of Cuba in the fall of 1962".<sup>[38]</sup>
57. MURKIN: [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) assassination files.<sup>[39]</sup> Cryptonym possibly based on Martin Luther King.
58. OAK: Operation to assassinate suspected South Vietnamese collaborators during [Vietnam war](#).
59. [OXCART](#): [Lockheed A-12](#) reconnaissance aircraft. Succeeded [GUSTO](#).<sup>[34]</sup>
60. PANCHO: [Carlos Castillo Armas](#), President of Guatemala, also RUFUS.
61. [PAPERCLIP](#): US recruiting of German scientists after World War II.
62. [PHOENIX](#): Vietnam covert intelligence/assassination operation.
63. PINE
64. [RAINBOW](#): Project to reduce the [radar cross section](#) (RCS) of the Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance aircraft.<sup>[40]</sup> Succeeded by [GUSTO](#).
65. QKWAVER: Egypt
66. RUFF: Satellite imagery intelligence codeword.
67. RUFUS: [Carlos Castillo Armas](#), President of Guatemala, also PANCHO.

68. RYBAT: Indicates that the information is very sensitive.
69. SARANAC: Training site in Nicaragua.
70. SCRANTON: Training base for radio operators near Nicaragua.
71. SGCIDER: Germany
72. SGUAT: CIA Station in Guatemala
73. SHERWOOD: CIA radio broadcast program in Nicaragua begun on May 1, 1954.
74. SKILLET: Whiting Willauer, U.S. Ambassador to Honduras.
75. SKIMMER: The "Group" CIA cover organization supporting [Castillo Armas](#).
76. SLINC: Telegram indicator for PBSUCCESS Headquarters in Florida.
77. STANDEL: [Jacobo Arbenz](#), President of Guatemala.
78. [STARGATE](#): Investigation of psychic phenomena.
79. SYNCARP: The "Junta," Castillo Armas' political organization headed by Cordova Cerna.
80. TALENT: Codeword created in the mid-1950s for the Lockheed U-2.
81. THERMOS: Unclassified codeword used in lieu of [RAINBOW](#)<sup>[41]</sup>
82. THROWOFF/2: Albanian ethnic agent/radio operator employed by Italian Navy Intelligence/CIA in several early Cold War covert operations against Albania. Was captured, operated radio under communist control to lure CIA agents to capture/death, tried in 1954, death sentence commuted, freed after 25 years. CIA paid his son \$40,000 in 1996.<sup>[42]</sup>
83. OPERATION TILT: The CIA's name for "an operation put together by John Martino, who was fronting for his boss Santo Trafficante and his roommate [Johnny Roselli](#)".<sup>[43]</sup> OPERATION TILT used "some of the same people working on the CIA-Mafia plots in the spring of 1963 ... [and] involved sending a Cuban exile team into Cuba to retrieve Soviet technicians supposedly ready to defect and reveal the existence of Soviet missiles still on the island".<sup>[44]</sup>
84. TRINE: Signal intelligence codeword.
85. TROPIC: Air operations flown over North Korea, China, and the Soviet Union by CAT pilots during the 1950s.<sup>[28]</sup>
86. TSS: CIA [Technical Services Staff](#).
87. UMBRA: Particularly sensitive communications intelligence.
88. UNIFRUIT: [United Fruit Company](#) Note: unlikely to be a cryptonym as such.
89. VALUABLE: British MI-run Albanian operations 1949 to 1953.
90. VENONA: Interception and decoding of Soviet messages 1940 to 1948.<sup>[28]</sup>
91. [WASHTUB](#): Operation to plant Soviet arms in Nicaragua.
92. WBFISHY: British Foreign Office
93. WSBURNT: Guatemala
94. WSHOOFS: Honduras
95. WTF: WikiLeaks Task Force
96. ZAPATA: [Bay of Pigs Invasion](#) 1961.



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## 10. Guatemala 1953-1954

### While the world watched

#### from William Blum's

#### *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II*

To whom do you turn for help when the police are assaulting you? The old question.

To whom does a poor banana republic turn when a CIA army is advancing upon its territory and CIA planes are overhead bombing the country?

The leaders of Guatemala tried everyone--the United Nations, the Organization of American States, other countries individually, the world press, even the United States itself, in the desperate hope that it was all a big misunderstanding, that in the end, reason would prevail.

Nothing helped. Dwight Eisenhower, John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles had decided that the legally-elected government of Jacobo Arbenz was "communist", therefore must go; and go it did, in June 1954.

In the midst of the American preparation to overthrow the government, the Guatemalan Foreign Minister, Guillermo Toriello, lamented that the United States was categorizing "as 'communism' every manifestation of nationalism or economic independence, any desire for social progress, any intellectual curiosity, and any interest in progressive liberal reforms."

Toriello was close to the truth, but Washington officials retained enough contact with reality and world opinion to be aware of the inappropriateness of coming out against nationalism, independence or reform. Thus it was that Secretary of State Dulles asserted that Guatemalans were living under a "Communist type of terrorism" ... President Eisenhower warned about "the Communist dictatorship" establishing "an outpost on this continent to the detriment of all the American nations" ... the US Ambassador to Guatemala, John Peurifoy, declared that "We cannot permit a Soviet Republic to be established between Texas and the Panama Canal" ... others warned that Guatemala could become a base from which the Soviet Union might actually seize the Canal ... Senator Margaret Chase Smith hinted, unmistakably, that the "unjustified increases in the price of coffee" imported from Guatemala were due to communist control of the country, and called for an investigation ... and so it went.

The Soviet Union could be excused if it was somewhat bewildered by all the rhetoric, for the Russians had scant interest in Guatemala, did not provide the country with any kind of military assistance, did not even maintain diplomatic relations with it, thus did not have the normally indispensable embassy from which to conduct such nefarious schemes. (During this period, the height of McCarthyist "logic", there were undoubtedly those Americans who reasoned: "All the better to deceive us!")

With the exception of one occasion, the countries of Eastern Europe had as little to do with Guatemala as did the Soviet Union. A month before the coup, that is, long after Washington had begun preparation for it, Czechoslovakia made a single arms sale to Guatemala for cash, something the Czechs would no doubt have done for any other country willing to pay the price. The weapons, it turned out, were, in the words of the *New York Times*, "worthless military junk". *Time* magazine pooh-poohed the newspaper's report and cited US military men giving a better appraisal of the weapons. It may be that neither *Time* nor the military men could conceive that One member of the International Communist Conspiracy could do such a thing to another member.

The American propaganda mill made much of this arms transaction. Less publicized was the fact that Guatemala had to seek arms from Czechoslovakia because the United States had refused to sell it any since 1948 due to its reformist governments, and had pressured other countries to do the same despite Arbenz's repeated pleas to lift the embargo.

Like the Soviets, Arbenz had reason to wonder about the American charges. The Guatemalan president, who took office in March 1951 after being elected by a wide margin, had no special contact or spiritual/ideological ties with the Soviet Union or the rest of the Communist bloc. Although American policymakers and the American press, explicitly and implicitly, often labeled Arbenz a communist, there were those in Washington who knew better, at least during their more dispassionate moments. Under Arbenz's administration, Guatemala had voted at the United Nations so closely with the United States on issues of "Soviet imperialism" that a State Department group occupied with planning Arbenz's overthrow concluded that propaganda concerning Guatemala's UN record "would not be particularly helpful in our case". And a State Department analysis paper reported that the Guatemalan president had support "not only from Communist-led labor and the radical fringe of professional and intellectual groups, but also among many anti-Communist nationalists in urban areas ...

Nonetheless, Washington repeatedly and adamantly expressed its displeasure about the presence of communists working in the Guatemalan government and their active participation in the nation's political life. Arbenz maintained that this was no more than proper in a democracy, while Washington continued to insist that Arbenz was too tolerant of such people--not because of anything they had done which was intrinsically threatening or offensive to the US or Western civilization, but simply because they were of the species communist, well known for its infinite capacity for treachery. Ambassador Peurifoy--a diplomat whose suit might have been pinstriped, but whose soul was a loud check--warned Arbenz that US-Guatemalan relations would remain strained so long as a single communist remained on the public payroll.

The centerpiece of Arbenz's program was land reform. The need for it was clearly expressed in the all-too-familiar underdeveloped-country statistics: In a nation overwhelmingly rural, 2.2 percent of the landowners owned 70 percent of the arable land; the annual per capita income of agricultural workers was \$87. Before the revolution of 1944, which overthrew the Ubico dictatorship, "farm laborers had been roped together by the Army for delivery to the low-land farms where they were kept in debt slavery by the landowners."

The expropriation of large tracts of uncultivated acreage which was distributed to approximately 100,000 landless peasants, the improvement in union rights for the workers, and other social reforms, were the reasons Arbenz had won the support of Communists and other leftists, which was no more than to be expected. When Arbenz was criticized for accepting Communist support, he challenged his critics to prove their good faith by backing his reforms themselves. They failed to do so, thus revealing where the basis of their criticism lay.

The party formed by the Communists, the Guatemalan Labor Party, held four seats in Congress, the smallest component of Arbenz's ruling coalition which commanded a total of 51 seats in the 1953-54 legislature. Communists held several important sub-cabinet posts but none was ever appointed to the cabinet. In addition, there were Communists employed in the bureaucracy, particularly in the administration of land reform.

Lacking anything of substance they could accuse the Guatemalan left of, Washington officials were reduced to condemnation by semantics. Thus, communists, unlike normal human beings, did not take jobs in the government--they "infiltrated" the government. Communists did not support a particular program--they "exploited" it. Communists did not back Arbenz--they "used" him. Moreover, communists "controlled" the labor movement and land reform--but what type of person is it who devotes himself in an under-developed country to furthering the welfare of workers and peasants? None other than the type that Washington calls "communist".

The basic idea behind the employment of such language--which was standard Western fare throughout the cold war--was to deny the idea that communists could be people sincerely concerned about social change. American officials denied it to each other as well as to the world. Here, for example, is an excerpt from a CIA report about Guatemala, prepared in 1952 for the edification of the White House and the intelligence community:

Communist political success derives in general from the ability of individual Communists and fei-low travelers to identify themselves with the nationalist and social aspirations of the Revolution of 1944. In this manner, they have been successful in infiltrating the Administration and pro-Administration political parties and have gained control of organized labor ... [Arbenz] is essentially an opportunist whose politics are largely a matter of historical accident ... The

extension of [communist] influence has been facilitated by the applicability of Marxist 'cliches' to the anti-colonial and social aims of the Guatemalan Revolution.

The first plan to topple Arbenz was a CIA operation approved by President Truman in 1952, but at the eleventh hour, Secretary of State Dean Acheson persuaded Truman to abort it. However, soon after Eisenhower became president in January 1953, the plan was resurrected.

Both administrations were pressured by executives of United Fruit Company, much of whose vast and uncultivated land in Guatemala had been expropriated by the Arbenz government as part of the land reform program. The company wanted nearly \$16 million for the land, the government was offering \$525,000, United Fruit's own declared valuation for tax purposes.

United Fruit functioned in Guatemala as a state within a state. It owned the country's telephone and telegraph facilities, administered its only important Atlantic harbor, and monopolized its banana exports. A subsidiary of the company owned nearly every mile of railroad track in the country. The fruit company's influence amongst Washington's power elite was equally impressive. On a business and/or personal level, it had close ties to the Dulles brothers, various State Department officials, congressmen, the American Ambassador to the United Nations, and others. Anne Whitman, the wife of the company's public relations director, was President Eisenhower's personal secretary. Under-secretary of State (and formerly Director of the CIA) Walter Bedell Smith was seeking an executive position with United Fruit at the same time he was helping to plan the coup. He was later named to the company's board of directors.

Under Arbenz, Guatemala constructed an Atlantic port and a highway to compete with United Fruit's holdings, and built a hydro-electric plant to offer cheaper energy than the US-controlled electricity monopoly. Arbenz's strategy was to limit the power of foreign companies through direct competition rather than through nationalization, a policy not feasible of course when it came to a fixed quantity like land. In his inaugural address, Arbenz stated that:

Foreign capital will always be welcome as long as it adjusts to local conditions, remains always subordinate to Guatemalan laws, cooperates with the economic development of the country, and strictly abstains from intervening in the nation's social and political life.

This hardly described United Fruit's role in Guatemala. Amongst much else, the company had persistently endeavored to frustrate Arbenz's reform programs, discredit him and his government, and induce his downfall.

Arbenz was, accordingly, wary of multinationals and could not be said to welcome them into his country with open arms. This attitude, his expropriation of United Fruit's land, and his "tolerance of communists" were more than enough to make him a marked man in Washington. The United States saw these policies as being inter-related: that is, it was communist influence--not any economic or social exigency of Guatemalan life--which was responsible for the government's treatment of American firms.

In March 1953, the CIA approached disgruntled right-wing officers in the Guatemalan army and arranged to send them arms. United Fruit donated \$64,000 in cash. The following month, uprisings broke out in several towns but were quickly put down by loyal troops. The rebels were put on trial and revealed the fruit company's role in the plot, but not the CIA's.

The Eisenhower administration resolved to do the job right the next time around. With cynical glee, almost an entire year was spent in painstaking, step-by-step preparation for the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman. Of the major CIA undertakings, few have been as well documented as has the coup in Guatemala. With the release of many formerly classified government papers, the following story has emerged.

Headquarters for the operation were established in Opa Locka, Florida, on the outskirts of Miami. The Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza lent/leased his country out as a site for an airstrip and for hundreds of men--Guatemalan exiles and US and Central American mercenaries--to receive training in the use of weapons and radio broadcasting, as well as in the fine arts of sabotage and demolition. Thirty airplanes were assigned for

use in the "Liberation", stationed in Nicaragua, Honduras and the Canal Zone, to be flown by American pilots. The Canal Zone was set aside as a weapons depot from which arms were gradually distributed to the rebels who were to assemble in Honduras under the command of Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas before crossing into Guatemala. Soviet-marked weapons were also gathered for the purpose of planting them inside Guatemala before the invasion to reinforce US charges of Russian intervention. And, as important as arms, it turned out, hidden radio transmitters were placed in and around the perimeter of Guatemala, including one in the US Embassy.

An attempt was made to blow up the trains carrying the Czech weapons from portside to Guatemala City; however, a torrential downpour rendered the detonators useless, whereupon the CIA paramilitary squad opened fire on one train, killing a Guatemalan soldier and wounding three others; but the convoy of trains made it safely to its destination.

After the Czech ship had arrived in Guatemala, Eisenhower ordered the stopping of "suspicious foreign-flag vessels on the high seas off Guatemala to examine cargo". The State Department's legal adviser wrote a brief which concluded in no uncertain terms that "Such action would constitute a violation of international law." No matter. At least two foreign vessels were stopped and searched, one French and one Dutch. It was because of such actions by the British that the United States had fought the War of 1812.

The Guatemalan military came in for special attention. The US ostentatiously signed mutual security treaties with Honduras and Nicaragua, both countries hostile to Arbenz, and dispatched large shipments of arms to them in the hope that this would signal a clear enough threat to the Guatemalan military to persuade it to withdraw its support of Arbenz. Additionally, the US Navy dispatched two submarines from Key West, saying only that they were going "south". Several days later, the Air Force, amid considerable fanfare, sent three B-36 bombers on a "courtesy call" to Nicaragua.

The CIA also made a close study of the records of members of the Guatemalan officer corps and offered bribes to some of them. One of the Agency's clandestine radio stations broadcast appeals aimed at military men, as well as others, to join the liberation movement. The station reported that Arbenz was secretly planning to disband or disarm the armed forces and replace it with a people's militia. CIA planes dropped leaflets over Guatemala carrying the same message.

Eventually, at Ambassador Peurifoy's urging, a group of high-ranking officers called on Arbenz to ask that he dismiss all communists who held posts in his administration. The president assured them that the communists did not represent a danger, that they did not run the government, and that it would be undemocratic to dismiss them. At a second meeting, the officers also demanded that Arbenz reject the creation of the "people's militia".

Arbenz himself was offered a bribe by the CIA, whether to abdicate his office or something less is not clear. A large sum of money was deposited in a Swiss bank for him, but he, or a subordinate, rejected the offer.

On the economic front, contingency plans were made for such things as cutting off Guatemalan credit abroad, disrupting its oil supplies, and causing a run on its foreign reserves. But it was on the propaganda front that American ingenuity shone at its brightest. Inasmuch as the Guatemalan government was being overthrown because it was communist, the fact of its communism would have to be impressed upon the rest of Latin America. Accordingly, the US Information Agency (USIA) began to place unattributed articles in foreign newspapers labeling particular Guatemalan officials as communist and referring to various actions by the Guatemalan government as "communist-inspired". In the few weeks prior to Arbenz's fall alone, more than 200 articles about Guatemala were written and placed in scores of Latin American newspapers.

Employing a method which was to become a standard CIA/USIA feature all over Latin America and elsewhere, as we shall see, articles placed in one country were picked up by newspapers in other countries, either as a result of CIA payment or unwittingly because the story was of interest. Besides the obvious advantage of multiplying the potential audience, the tactic gave the appearance that independent world opinion was taking a certain stand and further obscured the American connection.



The USIA also distributed more than 100,000 copies of a pamphlet entitled "Chronology of Communism in Guatemala" throughout the hemisphere, as well as 27,000 copies of anti-communist cartoons and posters. The American propaganda agency, moreover, produced three films on Guatemala, with predictable content, and newsreels favorable to the United States for showing free in cinemas.

Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York, a prelate possessed of anti-communism, a man who feared social change more than he feared God, was visited by the CIA. Would his Reverence arrange CIA contact with Archbishop Mariano Rossell Arellano of Guatemala? The Cardinal would be delighted. Thus it came to pass that on 9 April 1954, a pastoral letter was read in Guatemalan Catholic churches calling to the attention of the congregations the presence in the country of a devil called communism and demanding that the people "rise as a single man against this enemy of God and country", or at least not rally in Arbenz's defense. To appreciate the value of this, one must remember that Guatemala's peasant class was not only highly religious, but that very few of them were able to read, and so could receive the Lord's Word only in this manner. For those who could read, many thousands of pamphlets carrying the Archbishop's message were air-dropped around the country.

In May, the CIA covertly sponsored a "Congress Against Soviet Intervention in Latin America" in Mexico City. The same month, Somoza called in the diplomatic corps in Nicaragua and told them, his voice shaking with anger, that his police had discovered a secret Soviet shipment of arms (which had been planted by the CIA) near the Pacific Coast, and suggested that the communists wanted to convert Nicaragua into "a new Korean situation". A few weeks later, an unmarked plane parachuted arms with Soviet markings onto Guatemala's coast.

On such fare did the people of Latin America dine for decades. By such tactics were they educated about "communism".

In late January 1954 the operation appeared to have suffered a serious setback when photostat copies of Liberation documents found their way into Arbenz's hands. A few days later, Guatemala's newspapers published copies of correspondence signed by Castillo Armas, Somoza and others under banner headlines. The documents revealed the existence of some of the staging, training and invasion plans, involving, amongst others, the "Government of the North".

The State Department labeled the accusations of a US role "ridiculous and untrue" and said it would not comment further because it did not wish to give them a dignity they did not deserve. Said a Department spokesperson: "It is the policy of the United States not to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations. This policy has repeatedly been reaffirmed under the present administration."

*Time* magazine gave no credence whatsoever to the possibility of American involvement in such a plot, concluding that the whole exposé had been "masterminded in Moscow".

The *New York Times* was not so openly cynical, but its story gave no indication that there might be any truth to the matter. "Latin American observers in New York," reported the newspaper, "said the 'plot' charges savored of communist influence." This article was followed immediately on the page by one headed "Red Labor Chiefs Meet. Guatemalan Confederation Opens Its Congress".

And the CIA continued with its preparations as if nothing had happened.

The offensive began in earnest on 18 June with planes dropping leaflets over Guatemala demanding that Arbenz resign immediately or else various sites would be bombed. CIA radio stations broadcast similar messages. That afternoon, the planes returned to machine-gun houses near military barracks, drop fragmentation bombs and strafe the National Palace.

Over the following week, the air attacks continued daily--strafing or bombing ports, fuel tanks, ammunition dumps, military barracks, the international airport, a school, and several cities; nine persons, including a three-year-old girl, were reported wounded; an unknown number of houses were set afire by incendiary explosives. During one night-time raid, a tape recording of a bomb attack was played over loudspeakers set up on the roof of

the US Embassy to heighten the anxiety of the capital's residents. When Arbenz went on the air to try and calm the public's fear, the CIA radio team jammed the broadcast.

Meanwhile, the Agency's army had crossed into Guatemala from Honduras and captured a few towns, but its progress in the face of resistance by the Guatemalan army was unspectacular. On the broadcasts of the CIA's "Voice of Liberation" the picture was different: The rebels were everywhere and advancing; they were of large numbers and picking up volunteers as they marched; war and upheaval in all corners; fearsome battles and major defeats for the Guatemalan army. Some of these broadcasts were transmitted over regular public and even military channels, serving to convince some of Arbenz's officers that the reports were genuine. In the same way, the CIA was able to answer real military messages with fake responses. All manner of disinformation was spread and rumors fomented; dummy parachute drops were made in scattered areas to heighten the belief that a major invasion was taking place.

United Fruit Company's publicity office circulated photographs to journalists of mutilated bodies about to be buried in a mass grave as an example of the atrocities committed by the Arbenz regime. The photos received extensive coverage. Thomas McCann of the company's publicity office later revealed that he had no idea what the photos represented: "They could just as easily have been the victims of either side--or of an earthquake. The point is, they were widely accepted for what they were purported to be--victims of communism."

In a similar vein, Washington officials reported on political arrests and censorship in Guatemala without reference to the fact that the government was under siege (let alone who was behind the siege), that suspected plotters and saboteurs were the bulk of those being arrested, or that, overall, the Arbenz administration had a fine record on civil liberties. The performance of the American press in this regard was little better.

The primary purpose of the bombing and the many forms of disinformation was to make it appear that military defenses were crumbling, that resistance was futile, thus provoking confusion and division in the Guatemalan armed forces and causing some elements to turn against Arbenz. The psychological warfare conducted over the radio was directed by E. Howard Hunt, later of Watergate fame, and David Atlee Phillips, a newcomer to the CIA. When Phillips was first approached about the assignment, he asked his superior, Tracy Barnes, in all innocence, "But Arbenz became President in a free election. What right do we have to help someone topple his government and throw him out of office?"

"For a moment," wrote Phillips later, "I detected in his face a flicker of concern, a doubt, the reactions of a sensitive man." But Barnes quickly recovered and repeated the party line about the Soviets establishing "an easily expandable beachhead" in Central America.

Phillips never looked back. When he retired from the CIA in the mid-1970s, he founded the Association of Retired Intelligence Officers, an organization formed to counteract the flood of unfavorable publicity sweeping over the Agency at the time.

American journalists reporting on the events in Guatemala continued to exhibit neither an investigative inclination nor a healthy conspiracy mentality. But what was obscure to the US press was patently obvious to large numbers of Latin Americans. Heated protests against the United States broke out during this week in June in at least eleven countries and was echoed by the governments of Ecuador, Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile which condemned American "intervention" and "aggression".

*Life* magazine noted these protests by observing that "world communism was efficiently using the Guatemalan show to strike a blow at the U.S." It scoffed at the idea that Washington was behind the revolt. *Newsweek* reported that Washington "officials interpreted" the outcry "as an indication of the depth of Red penetration into the Americas". A State Department memo at the time, however, privately acknowledged that much of the protest emanated from non-communist and even pro-American moderates.

On 21 and 22 June, Guatemalan Foreign Minister Toriello made impassioned appeals to the United Nations for help in resolving the crisis. American UN Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge tried to block the Security Council from discussing a resolution to send an investigating team to Guatemala, characterizing Toriello's appeals as

communist maneuvers. But under heavy pressure from UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, the Council was convened. Before the vote, while Lodge worked on the smaller nations represented on the Council, Eisenhower and Dulles came down hard on France and Great Britain, both of whom favored the resolution. Said the President of the United States to his Secretary of State: "The British expect us to give them a free ride and side with them on Cyprus. And yet they won't even support us on Guatemala! Let's give them a lesson."

As matters turned out, the resolution was defeated by five votes to four, with Britain and France abstaining, although their abstentions were not crucial inasmuch as seven votes were required for passage. Hammarskjold was so upset with the American machinations, which he believed undercut the strength of the United Nations, that he confided that he might be forced "to reconsider my present position in the United Nations".

During this same period, the CIA put into practice a plan to create an "incident". Agency planes were dispatched to drop several harmless bombs on Honduran territory. The Honduran government then complained to the UN and the Organization of American States, claiming that the country had been attacked by Guatemalan planes.

Arbenz finally received an ultimatum from certain army officers: Resign or they would come to an agreement with the invaders. The CIA and Ambassador Peurifoy had been offering payments to officers to defect, and one army commander reportedly accepted \$60,000 to surrender his troops. With his back to the wall, Arbenz made an attempt to arm civilian supporters to fight for the government, but army officers blocked the disbursement of weapons. The Guatemalan president knew that the end was near.

The Voice of Liberation meanwhile was proclaiming that two large and heavily armed columns of invaders were moving towards Guatemala City. As the hours passed, the further advance of the mythical forces was announced, while Castillo Armas and his small band had actually not progressed very far from the Honduran border. The American disinformation and rumor offensive continued in other ways as well, and Arbenz, with no one he could trust to give him accurate information, could no longer be certain that there wasn't at least some truth to the radio bulletins.

Nothing would be allowed to threaten the victory so near at hand: A British freighter docked in Guatemala and suspected of having arrived with fuel for Arbenz's military vehicles, was bombed and sunk by a CIA plane after the crew had been warned to flee. It turned out that the ship had come to Guatemala to pick up a cargo of coffee and cotton.

A desperate Toriello pleaded repeatedly with Ambassador Peurifoy to call off the bombings, offering even to reopen negotiations about United Fruit's compensation. In a long cable to John Foster Dulles, the foreign minister described the aerial attacks on the civilian population, expressed his country's defenselessness against the bombings, and appealed to the United States to use its good offices to put an end to them. In what must have been a deeply humiliating task, Toriello stated all of this without a hint that the United States was, or could be, a party to any of it. The pleas were not simply too late. They had *always* been too late.

The Castillo Armas forces could not have defeated the much larger Guatemalan army, but the air attacks, combined with the belief in the invincibility of the enemy, persuaded Guatemalan military officers to force Arbenz to resign. No Communists, domestic or foreign, came to his aid. He asked the head of the officers, Army Chief of Staff Col. Carlos Diaz, only that he give his word not to negotiate with Castillo Armas, and Diaz, who despised the rebel commander as much as Arbenz did, readily agreed. What Diaz did not realize was that the United States would not be satisfied merely to oust Arbenz. Castillo Armas had been groomed as the new head of government, and that was not negotiable.

A CIA official, Enno Hobbing, who had just arrived in Guatemala to help draft a new constitution (sic) for the incoming regime, told Diaz that he had "made a big mistake" in taking over the government. "Colonel," said Hobbing, "you're just not convenient for the requirements of American foreign policy."

Presently, Peurifoy confronted Diaz with the demand that he deal directly with Castillo Armas. At the same time, the Ambassador showed the Guatemalan general a long list of names of some leaders, requiring that Diaz shoot them all within 24 hours.

"But why?" Diaz asked.

"Because they're communists," replied Peurifoy.

Although Diaz was not a communist sympathizer, he refused both requests, and indicated that the struggle against the invaders would continue. Peurifoy left, livid with anger. He then sent a simple cable to CIA headquarters in Florida: "We have been double-crossed. BOMB!" Within hours, a CIA plane took off from Honduras, bombed a military base and destroyed the government radio station. Col. Castillo Armas, whose anti-communism the United States could trust, was soon the new leader of Guatemala.

The propaganda show was not yet over. At the behest of the CIA, Guatemalan military officers of the new regime took foreign correspondents on a tour of Arbenz's former residence where they could see for themselves rooms filled with school textbooks published in ... yes, the Soviet Union. The *New York Times* correspondent, Paul Kennedy, considered to be strongly anti-Arbenz, concluded that the "books had been planted" and did not bother to report the story. *Time* made no mention of the books either, but somehow came upon the story that mobs had plundered Arbenz's home and found "stacks of communist propaganda and four bags of earth, one each from Russia, China, Siberia and Mongolia." *Time's* article made it clear enough that it now knew of the American role in Arbenz's downfall (although certainly not the full story), but the magazine had nothing to say about the propriety of overthrowing a democratically elected government by force.

Castillo Armas celebrated the liberation of Guatemala in various ways. In July alone, thousands were arrested on suspicion of communist activity. Many were tortured or killed. In August a law was passed and a committee set up which could declare anyone a communist, with no right of appeal. Those so declared could be arbitrarily arrested for up to six months, could not own a radio or hold public office. Within four months the committee had registered 72,000 names. A committee official said it was aiming for 200,000. Further implementation of the agrarian reform law was stopped and all expropriations of land already carried out were declared invalid. United Fruit Company not only received all its land back, but the government banned the banana workers' unions as well. Moreover, seven employees of the company who had been active labor organizers were found mysteriously murdered in Guatemala City.

The new regime also disenfranchised three-quarters of Guatemala's voters by barring illiterates from the electoral rolls and outlawed all political parties, labor confederations and peasant organizations. To this was added the closing down of opposition newspapers (which Arbenz had not done) and the burning of "subversive" books, including Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, Dostoyevsky novels, and the works of Guatemala's Nobel Prizewinning author Miguel Angel Asturias, a biting critic of United Fruit.

Meanwhile, John Foster Dulles, who was accused by Toriello of seeking to establish a "banana curtain" in Central America, was concerned that some "communists" might escape retribution. In cables he exchanged with Ambassador Peurifoy, Dulles insisted that the government arrest those Guatemalans who had taken refuge in foreign embassies and that "criminal charges" be brought against them to prevent them leaving the country, charges such as "having been covert Moscow agents". The Secretary of State argued that communists should be automatically denied the right of asylum because they were connected with an international conspiracy. The only way they should be allowed to leave, he asserted, was if they agreed to be sent to the Soviet Union. But Castillo Armas refused to accede to Dulles's wishes on this particular issue, influenced perhaps by the fact that he, as well as some of his colleagues, had been granted political asylum in an embassy at one time or another.

One of those who sought asylum in the Argentine Embassy was a 25-year-old Argentine doctor named Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Guevara, who had been living in Guatemala since sometime in 1953, had tried to spark armed resistance to the invading forces, but without any success. Guevara's experience in Guatemala had a profound effect upon his political consciousness. His first wife, Hilda Gadea, whom he met there, later wrote:

Up to that point, he used to say, he was merely a sniper, criticizing from a theoretical point of view the political panorama of our America. From here on he was convinced that the struggle against the oligarchic system and the main enemy, Yankee imperialism, must be an armed one, supported by the people.

In the wake of the coup, the United States confiscated a huge amount of documents from the Guatemalan government, undoubtedly in the hope of finally uncovering the hand of The International Communist Conspiracy behind Arbenz. If this is what was indeed discovered, it has not been made public.

On 30 June, while the dust was still settling, Dulles summed up the situation in Guatemala in a speech which was a monument to cold war speak:

[The events in Guatemala] expose the evil purpose of the Kremlin to destroy the inter-American system ... having gained control of what they call the mass organizations, [the communists] moved on to take over the official press and radio of the Guatemalan Government. They dominated the social security organization and ran the agrarian reform program ... dictated to the Congress and to the President ... Arbenz ... was openly manipulated by the leaders of communism ... The Guatemalan regime enjoyed the full support of Soviet Russia ... [the] situation is being cured by the Guatemalans themselves.

When it came to rewriting history, however, Dulles's speech had nothing on these lines from a CIA memo written in August 1954 and only for internal consumption no less: "When the communists were forced by outside pressure to attempt to take over Guatemala completely, they forced Arbenz to resign (deleted). They then proceeded to establish a Communist Junta under Col. Carlos Diaz."

And in October, John Peurifoy sat before a congressional committee and told them.:

My role in Guatemala prior to the revolution was strictly that of a diplomatic observer ... The revolution that overthrew the Arbenz government was engineered and instigated by those people in Guatemala who rebelled against the policies and ruthless oppression of the Communist-controlled government.

Later, Dwight Eisenhower was to write about Guatemala in his memoirs. The former president chose not to offer the slightest hint that the United States had anything to do with the planning or instigation of the coup, and indicated that his administration had only the most tangential of connections to its execution? (When Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's memoirs were published in the West, the publisher saw fit to employ a noted Kremlinologist to annotate the work, pointing out errors of omission and commission.)

Thus it was that the educated, urbane men of the State Department, the CIA and the United Fruit Company, the pipe-smoking, comfortable men of Princeton, Harvard and Wall Street, decided that the illiterate peasants of Guatemala did not deserve the land which had been given to them, that the workers did not need their unions, that hunger and torture were a small price to pay for being rid of the scourge of communism.

The terror carried out by Castillo Armas was only the beginning. It was, as we shall see, to get much worse in time. It has continued with hardly a pause for 40 years.

In 1955, the *New York Times* reported from the United Nations that "The United States has begun a drive to scuttle a section of the proposed Covenant of Human Rights that poses a threat to its business interests abroad." The offending section dealt with the right of peoples to self-determination and to permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources. Said the newspaper: "It declares in effect that any country has the right to nationalize its resources ..."

## [Citations](#)

William Blum's Homepage: [http://members.aol.com/bblum6/American\\_holocaust.htm](http://members.aol.com/bblum6/American_holocaust.htm)