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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM~~SECRET~~

20 December 1954

COPY

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Letter from Edward Browder to Director, CIA

1. In a letter addressed to the Director, dated 8 December 1954, one Edward Browder, detained in Mexico City by Mexican immigration authorities, stated that he was in contact with persons involved in a plot against President FIGUERES of Costa Rica. Browder offered to be of assistance in keeping the Agency informed of this revolutionary movement and asked that measures be taken to secure his release from the Mexican authorities and that he be furnished transportation to Guatemala City where the leaders of the movement reportedly plan to meet. A cable, containing a resume of the information in the letter, has been prepared and is being transmitted to [Mexico]. This cable requests [the Mexico City Mission] to keep us advised of Browder's activities and contacts. 16-3

2. Information on file reveals that Browder, whose true name has been reported to be John D. McCormick, has a long history of involvement in revolutionary activity in the Caribbean area. On 28 October [the Mexico City Mission] forwarded photographic copies of a number of letters abandoned by Browder at the time of an earlier escape from Mexican Immigration authorities. These letters reveal that Browder was active in August 1954 in attempting to procure arms for a revolution against FIGUERES. In one of the letters Browder makes false claims regarding procurement of aircraft and arms for the liberation forces in Guatemala and makes false statements to the effect that he flew an airplane for these forces.

3. Browder has a criminal record in the United States and was reportedly indicted by a Federal Grand Jury in 1949 on counts of violating the Neutrality Act and organizing a military force against a friendly power (Venezuela). He was convicted and sentenced to a fine and imprisonment. He was at one time arrested in Mexico on a charge of passing worthless checks.

4. From the information on hand it appears that Browder is an unscrupulous adventurer who is willing to sell his services to the highest bidder. He is also a facile liar and apparently enjoys inflating his reputation as a soldier of fortune. It is recommended that no reply be made to Edward Browder's letter and that no contact be made with him pending receipt of more concrete evidence that he is actually in contact with anti-FIGUERES revolutionaries.

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ACTING CHIEF/WH~~SECRET~~

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