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DISPATCH NO. (HSS-A-114)

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TO : CHIEF, WHD  
FROM : CHIEF OF STATION, [redacted]  
SUBJECT: GENERAL—  
SPECIFIC— Communist Activities

DATE: ~~MICROFILMED~~  
~~NOV 2 1960~~  
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I. General:

- A. In 1932-1933 thousands of Salvadorans were killed in what was known as a Communist uprising. At that time many Communist were killed and many escaped abroad where they are continuing their Communist activities today. The strong reprisals against the Communist twenty years ago, have been strong deterrents to the growth of Communism. In addition, International Communism has since those early days concentrated its activities elsewhere - not in El Salvador.
- B. The present strength of the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCS) is estimated to be between three to four hundred with 30-40 militants (Lasion estimates 50) and real "hard-core" members to be about 15. In considering the individual member of the PCS it must be advised that he is not the intellectual, the well-read, the traveled, the talented Communist one finds in Europe or even a large South American Country.
- C. <sup>Osorio</sup> President OSORIO, while extremely anti-Communist, tolerates Communism in his friends and has exiled certain Communist friends with Government pensions and diplomatic posts in the belief that abroad they can do no harm. At home a Communist who does not knowingly oppose OSORIO can and probably does hold a government job (GALINDO → POHL).
- D. Not until the Government discovered large amounts of Communist propaganda coming into El Salvador from Guatemala did the Government realize the danger of Communism. The influx of such propaganda was first noticed about one year ago when a bundle of propaganda was discovered on the International Railroad of Central

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America coming into El Salvador from Guatemala. More propaganda was discovered on both the train, in trucks and automobiles and on suspicious persons entering El Salvador from both Guatemala and Honduras. In the summer of 1952 the Government began to inspect the baggage of exiled Salvadoran Communists who were landing at Ilopango airport intramit to Guatemala. In this fashion they discovered and confiscated Communist pins, leaflets, books films (BW films printed by Peiping), addressed, etc., from Salvadorans traveling to Communist China and Communist Europe on Guatemalan passports.

- E. One week after President OSORIO and President ARBENZ of Guatemala met on the common border, President OSORIO declared a "State of Siege" at which time he arrested about two hundred "Communist" in the Capital city of El Salvador and about a "thousand" throughout the country. He deported 18 Communists to Costa Rica and kept another forty or fifty in jail. The Government had published "Communist Party Plans for the overthrow of the Government" with photographs of grenades, rifles, pistols, mimeograph machines, etc. purportedly found in the homes of various Communist leaders. Neither the Party Plans nor the amount of arms appeared to the undersign - nor to other Embassy Officials - authentic, logical, sufficient, and dangerous enough to warrant the State of Siege. It appeared to be Government propaganda aimed at explaining its actions to the mass of people. It is believed that the real reason for the Government's action was the fear of the future if Communist propaganda was continued.
- F. The background for today's situation; vis a vis the Communist Party of El Salvador, must include certain political, military, and economic facts. President OSORIO is politically acute; he is sincere; he is progressive and desires greater democracy for his country which he realizes is dependent upon greater literacy and education. OSORIO has permitted the growth and the creation of other political parties, but no other political party threatens the strength of the President's party Partido Revolucionario de Union Democratica. The Army is completely loyal to the President and if there are political machinations within the Army they are in the form of plans for the nomination and election of their respective candidates in the elections to be held in 1956. The Army, itself has various political cliques within it, but to the best of our knowledge all cliques give OSORIO their full support. Economically, the country is very sound with a high degree of employment and wages increasing. In view of strong economy and a stable anti-Communist Government the Communist Party of El Salvador finds very few cracks in the political wall in which to effectively place their propaganda wedges.

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II. Politics:

- A. In August of 1951 it was reported that the Communist would attempt to penetrate the Partido Accion Renovadora (PAR) to such an extent that they would have control, whereby they could elect Communists to the National Assembly. The Communists did infiltrate PAR, but they became so numerous and so vociferous that the members of PAR finally realized what had happened and printed leaflets denouncing the Communists within the Party. PAR practically dissolved thereafter and again the Communists were left without a political front group. The Communists during this time did a lot of talking and planning, but they admitted that it was difficult "under the OSORIO regime" to make political strides, but that they were making great advances in the labor movement. It can be written that the Communist Party today has had no success in either establishing itself as a strong political force nor has it been able to use another political party as its tool.
- B. Within the Government, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Culture and Education are frequently attacked for harboring Communists. It has been reported at various times that Renaldo GALINDO POHL, Minister of Culture and Education is a Communist. Juan Bosch, the Dominican Communist is supposed to have called GALINDO a "reliable comrade." President OSORIO is reportedly aware of GALINDO'S political beliefs, but disregards them since they are friends and GALINDO is not knowingly plotting against OSORIO. The President also believes that GALINDO can be well "watched" where he is and that to discharge him or exile him would make him more dangerous. GALINDO is also accused of creating the INSTITUTO MORAZAN which became dominated by some twenty seven Communists professors. (Please see TSS-803)
- C. While the National University is autonomous, it does receive financial support from the Ministry of Culture and Education. It has been the National University where the Communists have enjoyed their greatest success. The prominent Communist Rodolfo JIMENEZ Barrios was Dean of the School of Economics where he undoubtedly influenced many a student; at least the School of Economics became the most vociferous on behalf of Communism. The Student newspaper OPINION ESTUDIANTIL became the organ of the Communist Party. Each edition of the newspaper (once a week) followed the Communist Party line whether it was an "international editorial" or a local one.

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Mario FLORES MACALL bragged about the newspaper as being completely under the control of the Communist Party. There was no doubt. And it was immediately seized at the time the State of Siege was declared. The Communists Students have been since exiled, jailed, and/or removed from any influence in student circles. JUIENFZ Barrios has lost his position with the University and has been replaced by a adamant anti-Communist. Julio Fausto FERNANDEZ, however, has been recently named Vice-Dean of the School of Humanities. FAUSTO FERNANDEZ is probably Salvador's most intellectual Communist. He recently returned from Chile where he was Counselor in the Salvadoran Embassy. He was accused of smuggling in tax-free cigarettes and stealing government documents. Upon his return to Salvador he vindicated himself with both the Foreign Minister and the President. On 31 January, 1953 FAUSTO FERNANDEZ spoke at the National University at which time he denounced Marxism and declared that he had returned to the Catholic faith. The consensus of opinion among Communists, students, the Army, and the Priests is that he, FAUSTO FERNANDEZ, has not renounced Communism, but is using another tactic (and the only one that would permit him to remain in the good graces of the Government) to further the Communist cause. On or about 16 February, 1953 there appeared on the streets a clandestine Communist leaflet, which is believed by several sources to have been written by FAUSTO FERNANDEZ. It can be said that at the present FAUSTO FERNANDEZ is being discreet and only the future will prove or disprove his own statements.

- D. In the Ministry of Labor, the Communists appear to have had somewhat similar success; although their success was not quite as well known, it was just as dangerous. The Minister Mario Hector SALAZAR has often been accused of being a Communist, but this is believed to be an unfounded accusation based principally on his normal work which has, of course conflicted, with the historical interest of the monied class. Romulo LEAL Leandro, Chief of Labor Inspectors, has been considered a Communist (he was refused a grant to study in the United States on this basis, but given another explanation) and it has come to the attention of this Station on numerous occasions that LEAL'S Inspectors often told labor groups in various industries what policies they could adopt, what they should strike for, and would advise labor groups on government benefits, procedure, etc., while on strike. LEAL was influential in bringing into the Inspector's Department well known leftist and/or Communist. These were J. Antonio PARADA, Napoleon VILLACORTA, J. Alberto VASQUEZ, and Mario SALAZAR Valiente (Not believed to be

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[redacted] related to the Minister). Prior to the declaration of the State of Siege, it was learned [redacted] that there was a certain amount of sabotage of trucks in the Ministry of Labor. A few days after the State of Siege was declared it was reported that SALAZAR VALIENTE was arrested for being the Director of a Communist cell within the Ministry of Labor and that he was responsible for the sabotage of the Government trucks. Some Army officers reportedly asked President OSORIO to discharge Mario Hector SALAZAR for harboring a Communist cell within the Ministry. The cell has been, of course, liquidated and the Minister continues to have the faith of the President and most of his former detractors.

- E. In other branches of the Government there appears to be no Communist influence and no known penetration. The Army has always remained anti-Communist and there have been no reports indicating any Communist in the Army and furthermore no reports have been received that the Communists have been or are planning the penetration of the Army. The Station did receive one report that Dr. Antonio CARRANZA AMAYA (a lawyer and brother to Colonel Rafael CARRANZA AMAYA, Inspector General of the Army) was being used by Tony VASSILIU, a known militant Communist, to obtain information about the Army and possibly to elicit the support of certain Army officers in a move to overthrow the Government. This plan has, for the time being, come to naught.

- Reinaldo*  
F. <sup>02</sup> JURATOR believes that there are several Communists in the Presidential House who are unknown as Communists to the President and consequently, dangerous. He could not give names, but he did state that GALINDO POHL was undoubtedly a Communist. Eunis ODIO, a Costa Rican Communist (or once was) is reported to be the mistress of José Quejigales, the Presidential Press Secretary. This information was passed on to Liaison with no visible results, ODIO continues to write for the various newspapers, but all of her published writings at the present are innocuous. Joaquin CASTRO Cansales or better known by his pen name, Quino Caso, was until a few months ago the Editor of the Government newspaper La Tribuna in which Quino Caso often attacked the United States. He was relieved of this position, however, sometime in October, 1953. At this time the editorial policy of the newspaper became much more sympathetic to the United States. Quino Caso has been described as a Communist and yet described as a person who is against all political movements, Communism, Facism, etc. The truth is not known at this time.

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*reinaldo*

the labor leaders by the Communist. But without his knowledge that he is a creature of the Communist. One report states that GALINDO POHL is behind the rise of JULE. At any rate, he has become an important labor figure over night. Labor unions and their individual members are now more cooperative with the Minister of Labor and with government policy than they have been in the past. Several unions have lost their Communist directors through elections which were held throughout November and December. The rank and file members of the unions have been made aware of Communism by means of Government action and a strong propaganda campaign; consequently, it is known that Labor, in its newly acquired political consciousness has given its support to the Government.

#### IV. Propaganda

- A. Communist propaganda is negligible. Since the State of Siege was declared the 27th of September, 1952 there have been only two instances in which communist propaganda has appeared on the streets of San Salvador. In both cases the propaganda was mimeographed and did not appear to have a large circulation as persons receiving such propaganda were difficult to find (not even JUCULAR could find a copy among his Communist friends) and there were no editorial comments on the appearance of the propaganda. The Law in Defense of the Constitution passed by the National Assembly in December, 1952 makes it illegal to be a Communist, to participate in any Communist activity, or to work on behalf of Communism in any manner. This law and the fairly rigid application of it by the Government has undoubtedly deterred many from promoting in any fashion Communist propaganda. (The Government has in the past failed to recognize the right of Habeas Corpus in those cases of jailed Communists).
- B. Recently there have been two newspaper articles which may have been Communist inspired but this is pure speculation and nothing more. The *Diario de Occidente* of Santa Ana which is edited by one Alfredo PARADA (once exiled for opposition to President OSORIO) published an article that the United States Marines had landed in Guatemala to protect the United Fruit Company. No source or by-line was given. Another article published by several of the newspapers but which seemed to have originated in Honduras, Costa Rica, or Managua stated that the HENRY FORD III Foundation had given five million dollars to fight Communism in Central America.

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- B. On the other hand, anti-Communist propaganda is heavy, daily and in all media of propaganda. Editorials, cartoons, and newspaper articles depicting Communism in its worse light appear every day in the five daily newspapers. The radio does its share of anti-Communist propaganda. There has been close to a "hate campaign" of Guatemalan Communism with the emphasis on Communism.

## V. Summary

- A. In summation, the PCS is ineffective as a political force at the present time. It has not been a political force in the last twenty years, but it has made progress in labor matters and probably at one time controlled more than one half of the syndicates. This is no longer true, however, and the PCS has lost most of its influence among labor by a strong government policy against Communism. In addition, anti-Communist propaganda, by both the Government and private interests, has been effective in weaning labor away from Communist influence.
- B. The new policy of the PCS is to be less overt and more clandestine. The PCS aims to "plant" its members in strategic unions and government offices, to "cooperate", and to await the opportune time before they announce themselves as Communists. It appears that the PCS is almost completely dependent upon the Communist Party of Guatemala for its instructions and directives; consequently the success or failure of the Communists in Guatemala will determine the future policies of the PCS. (This is also the belief and the fear of the Salvadoran Government).
- C. The PCS will produce anti-US propaganda at every opportunity, but at the present they have no organ of propaganda and the two leaflets they have produced since September, 1952 are considered ineffective. The people of El Salvador appear to completely support President OSORIO whom they recognize as dedicated to increasing wages, raising the standard of living, granting better education, and obtaining better food and living quarters for all classes of workers. In addition, the Government has made it clear, that the threat of Communism comes from Guatemala which has made its anti-Communist propaganda quite effective.

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