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Office of the Legal Attache
Embassy of the United States

San Jose, Costa Rica

October 31, 1944

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VIA DIPLOMATIC POUCH

JTP:AOO
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Director, FBI

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4-28-83
225,212

RE: MEXICAN EMBASSY
San Jose, Costa Rica
FOREIGN POLITICAL

Dear Sir:

On October 23, 1944, Cesar Ortiz (Tinoco), a Mexican citizen who is staff representative of the Associated Press in San Jose, Costa Rica, told Mr. William Gaudet, representative of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs in San Jose, and Lieutenant Commander Willard H. Carr, attached to the Embassy here, that there were rumors in the streets that the Cortesistas, the Opposition political party, planned an uprising for Wednesday, October 25, 1944. Regarding Ortiz, refer to the report of John Thompson Plunket dated August 24, 1944, at San Jose, Costa Rica, entitled: "CESAR ORTIZ (TINOCO); COSTA RICA - SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES - R". (S)(u)

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On the following day, October 24, 1944, the American Embassy in San Jose received a telegram from the American Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, advising that reports were current in Tegucigalpa that political troubles could be expected in Costa Rica. The source of these reports in Tegucigalpa was said to be the Mexican Ambassador at that place. (S)(u) PER STATE LETTER (DATE 11/14/84)

On October 25, 1944, the writer had occasion to confer with Colonel Daniel Gallegos, Sub-Secretary of Public Security of the Costa Rican Government, and the subject of Communism came up in the course of the conversation. Colonel Gallegos confided to the writer that he believed that the Mexican Embassy in San Jose is in close contact with the Communist Party of Costa Rica, the Vanguardia Popular, and that many of the party activities are directed by the Mexican Embassy. He stated, further, that several days before, an item had appeared in a Mexico City newspaper, "Excelsior", stating that the political situation in Costa Rica was confused and that disturbances could be expected. Gallegos pointed out that no despatch containing the information could have been sent out of the country without going through local censorship, and he concluded therefrom that the rumor was inspired by the Mexican Government, or sent through the Mexican diplomatic pouch. (S)(u)

Gallegos further said that the Honduran Minister in San Jose, General Jose Maria Zepeda, who is also an employee of the Department of Public Security, had been advised by the Honduran Government that reports were current in Tegucigalpa that trouble could be expected in Costa Rica, and that

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Letter to the Director

Re: [Mexican Embassy] San Jose, C. R. (S)

San José, Costa Rica

October 31, 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

the Mexican Embassy in Tegucigalpa was the source of these rumors. From these instances, [Colonel Gallegos] drew the conclusion that the Mexican [S] Government, through its diplomatic agencies, is interested in creating a state of confusion in this country. (S)

It may be mentioned parenthetically that the only group in Costa Rica who would benefit by such rumors would be Vanguardia Popular, as the threat of a Cortesista revolt has always been a factor tending to discourage [President Picado] from breaking with the Communists (S) (S)

An attempt was made to check the actual source of the reports spread by Ortiz. Commander Carr questioned him in this regard, and Ortiz stated that he obtained the reports from a "prominent Cortesista". However, Mr. Gaudet advised that Ortiz told him at the time of the original report that he had obtained the information from a "prominent diplomatic source." (S) (u)

On October 30, 1944, [Colonel Gallegos] again mentioned the matter to the writer and stated that on the morning of October 30th he talked with [President Picado] concerning this matter, and that [the President] stated [S] that he knew that Mexican Ambassador Roberto Córdova is a close friend of Manuel Mora (Valverde), leader of the Vanguardia Popular, and also of ex-President Calderón Guardia, whom the Vanguardia Popular strongly supports. [Pres- [S] ident Picado] is reported to have said that he felt that the Mexican Embassy and Vanguardia Popular work together very closely and that Vanguardia receives many of its instructions through the Mexican Embassy (S)

While it is felt that this information is too vague at the present time to warrant the submission of a report, a case is being opened and further investigation will be conducted. This letter is being written at this time as it is felt that this information may be of interest to the Bureau and the other Central American offices, as indicating possible liaison between Mexican diplomatic representatives and the Communist Party. (S) (u)

It may also be pointed out that the Mexican Embassy in San Jose has been entrusted with the handling of Soviet interests in Costa Rica since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Costa Rica and Russia in May of 1944. (S) (u)

CC - Mexico
Tegucigalpa
Guatemala
San Salvador
Managua

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Very truly yours,

JOHN T. PLUNKET, L.A.