



Intelligence Information Report

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DATE DISTR. 13 January 1972

COUNTRY El Salvador/Panama

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SUBJECT Visit by Leftist Salvadoran Students To Panama

ACQ

SOURCE

[Redacted]

1. [Redacted] a group of twenty-five Salvadoran students visited Panama at the invitation of the Panamanian National Guard which paid all expenses relative to the visit. The main activities within the official program prepared for the Salvadorans were a visit to the Miraflores School in the Canal Zone on 14 December 1971, a visit to the "Rio Hato" military base on 15 December 1971 for a discussion session with General Omar Torrijos, celebration at Chiriqui of the second anniversary of General Torrijos' return to Panama, and a trip to Colon. [Redacted] Comment: There is no Miraflores School in the Canal Zone. Miraflores probably refers to the Miraflores Locks of the Canal.)

2. The Salvadoran student group consisted of fifteen students from the National University of El Salvador (UES), seven students from the University of Central America (known as "Catholic University"), and three secondary school students. Eleven of the fifteen students from the UES were members of the Communist-controlled University Action Front (FAU), and all three secondary school students were members of the Communist Party of El Salvador Youth Movement (JCS). Shortly after arriving in Panama, Rolando Orellana, a member of the JCS executive committee, contacted Ramiro Vasquez Chambonet, a leader of the Panamanian Communist Youth Organization, and arranged for a meeting of representatives of the Salvadoran and

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Panama Communist Youth movements.

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3. On the morning of 15 December 1971, Orellana, Manuel Ramirez Franco, Secretary General of the FAU, Rene Riveral Ayala, Propaganda Secretary of the FAU, Rodolfo Salinas, Organizational Secretary of the FAU, and Alberto Riveral Steves, a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist-dominated Association of Secondary School Students (AES), met with Ramiro Vasquez, Conrado Gutierrez, and Pedro Pereira Arosmena, all representatives of the Panamanian Communist Youth Organization. In the course of discussion, the Panamanians made the following points:

A. A movement for Panamanian national unity is building up on the basis of conflict with the United States over the Panama Canal issue.

B. Panamanian leftist organizations support General Torrijos, though they view him as merely a liberal military leader and not a socialist.

C. Fundamentally, Panamanian Communists consider the Torrijos government to be a transitional government which is useful in achieving the ultimate goal of a socialist regime in Panama.

D. General Torrijos is much influenced by leftist demands, and particularly by the demands of the Panamanian Communist Party.

E. It may not be in Panama's best interests to have a violent confrontation with the U.S. over the Panama Canal issue.

F. Panama must achieve general international support for its demands with respect to the Panama Canal.

4. It was intended that FAU representatives should meet with representatives of the Panamanian Front for University Reform (FRU) in order to prepare and sign a joint communique which would have dealt mainly with the Panama Canal issue. However, the meeting did not take place because the FRU representatives had already left Panama en route to Cuba. It was agreed that FRU representatives should visit San Salvador at the end of December 1971 in order to prepare and sign the joint FAU/FRU communique. It was also tentatively agreed that FAU should organize at the UES a "solidarity week with Panama."

Comment: As of 7 January 1972, Panamanian students have not yet arrived in El Salvador to prepare the planned FAU/FRU communique.)

5. [redacted] Dissem: Embassy, Defense Attache at San Salvador. Sent to CINCOS, CINCLANT, [redacted]

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