

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
BY SPECIAL MESSENGER

Date:

JUL 29 1942

To:

Honorable Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
Assistant Secretary of State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS DIVISION
JUL 29 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 8 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
JUL 29 1942
MR. BERLE

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From: J. Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subject: Communism and Trade Unions in Guayaquil, Ecuador

There is being transmitted herewith a memorandum obtained from a confidential reliable source on Communism and Trade Unions in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

This information is also being furnished to the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

Enclosure

cc - Director of Naval Intelligence
Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

cc - Brigadier General Hayes A. Kroner
General Staff

Chief, Military Intelligence Service
War Department, Washington, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS DIVISION
JUL 29 1942

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Confidential File

MEMORANDUM

COMMUNISM AND TRADE UNIONS IN GUAYAQUIL, ECUADOR

In Guayaquil and the Province of Guayas there exists a large number of Labor Unions. Due primarily to the adoption of a labor code, copied from the Mexican code, they have been able to gather considerable strength during the past few years. Throughout these Unions there is evidence of Communistic influence but no evidence of organizers from Communist Russia. The influence of Communism is manifested by the tendency of the Union members to call each other "Comrade" and by the prominent display of the insignia of Communist Russia on buildings throughout the city.

Laborers have voluntarily adopted Communism, it is reported, without any understanding of its principles; however, there has not been any evidence of representatives from Russia working among the natives. The condition of the laborers in Ecuador has been compared with the condition of the laborers of pre-Revolution Spain, and similarity of conditions among those in Ecuador and among those of Spain before the Revolution has caused considerable concern on the part of capitalists. They realized that the Unions are rapidly gaining strength, becoming more demanding in their claims, and will soon become a powerful and dangerous force.

The laborers of this region are largely Indians, Negroes, and Mestizos. They have long lived under poverty-stricken conditions and are almost wholly illiterate. The illiteracy, class distinction, low morals, and extremely low standards of living prevalent in this region contribute to the willingness of these workers to follow any leader who promises deliverance from the intolerable conditions under which they live.

The present leader of the Communists in Guayaquil is Enrique Gil Gilbert, an author who recently won a small measure of fame with his book, "Nuestra Pan." He is ably assisted in this capacity by an unscrupulous and degenerate cripple named Joaquin Gallegos L. and by a strong-armed Lieutenant named Pedro Saad. This group of men has openly discussed the reprisals and executions they intend to carry out when Communism becomes the dominating force in Ecuador. They have openly boasted of executing all the bankers in Guayaquil except Carlos Julio Arosemena of the Banco de Descuento, intimating in this way that he is connected with the Party. The leading organization of the Communist

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Party in Guayaquil is the Labor Union, Asociacion Obrera Rafael Baldez, with eighty-five members in the Canton of Milagro. This organization was formed on February 17, 1926. A list of the Unions in this Canton which are strongly Communistic is as follows:

- Asociacion Ferroviaria Guayaquil and Quito - formed December 8, 1939.
- Comite Sindical de Peluqueros - formed September 20, 1924, 25 members.
- Federacion Obrera del Milagro - formed May 3, 1928.
- Sindicato de Panaderos - formed November 27, 1934 - 25 members.
- Sindicato de Obreros y Trabajadores Agricolas del Ingenio "San Carlos," 400 members, formed March 30, 1936.
- Sindicato de Obreros y Trabajadores Agricolas y Azucareras del Ingenio "Adelina Maria," -formed March 29, 1939.
- Sindicato de Trabajadores del Ingenio "Valdez," - formed March 6, 1941.
- Sindicato de Obreros del Ingenio Rocafuerte - formed September 5, 1941.
- Sociedad Mutua de Beneficencia de Naranjito - formed January 23, 1937 - 25 members.
- Union Obrero del Milagro - formed March 11, 1938 - 40 members.

Another Union reported to be definitely Communistic is that of the Comite de Empresa Trabajadores de Cemento Nacional, which was formed December 13, 1940. In the Province of Guayas alone there probably exists at least one hundred twenty-five small Labor Unions. The exact organizational set-up supervising the activities of all these Unions is not clear, and it is doubtful if their efforts are well coordinated; but the fact that they exist, are rapidly gaining power, and are permeated with Communistic tendencies makes them a force to be reckoned with as soon as the right leader appears.

Besides the Communistic outlook, the dissatisfied workers offer a fertile field for Axis agents who wish to create disorder within Ecuador.