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 Authority *State Letter 1/1/82*  
 By *WJ* NARA Date *7/24/88*

DIVISION OF  
 LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

JUN 14 1932

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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2700.

G-2 Report.

DIVISION OF  
 EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
 JUN 16 1932  
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

**COSTA RICA (Population & Social)**

**Subject: Public Order and Safety.  
 Communist Meetings.**

Reference is made to the third paragraph of report No. 1641, May 27th, from this office.

After the close of the mail the undersigned met Colonel Bonilla, Commanding Officer of the 2nd Section of Police of San José on the afternoon of May 27th. Col. Bonilla stated that the Government was considerably worried about these meetings. That the President felt that as long as the meetings were orderly and held within the confines of private meeting places, little could be done to prevent them, provided no doctrines of violence were preached. At the same time, the Government had decided not to issue any permits (required by law) for meetings or parades in public thoroughfares.

Colonel Bonilla further stated that in view of the small size of the hall where the meetings were held, more than one half of those attending - mostly curious - were forced to remain outside in the street. He also remarked that the fire department was being held in readiness to cooperate with the police in quelling disturbances, should necessity arise.

On Saturday evening, May 28th the thing which had been feared happened. The attendance of curious was so great that there were many more people in the street than in the hall. With this as an excuse, the speakers stand was moved from within the building to just outside of it, in the street. Colonel Gonzales Ulloa, Chief of Police, informed those in charge of the meeting that this could not be allowed and requested the speakers to move back into the building. His request, politely made, was not heeded, as a matter of fact it was greeted with jeers from the crowd. After several minutes endeavor to have the speakers withdraw from the street without success, orders were given to break up the meeting and clear the street. The result was a near riot in which clubs were freely used and the police was forced to fire their guns in the air. Bricks and bottles were thrown and a free for all fight ensued. The police were only victors after considerable reinforcements had arrived. The Director of Police received a scalp wound and a policeman had to be sent to the hospital, having been severed out by a bottle thrown at him.

Some sixty persons were arrested and order was restored after about half an hour. The police, taking advantage of the opportunity, confiscated all the files and literature which were found.

From: M.A. Costa Rica Report No. 1643 Date: June 3, 1932.

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After all papers were gone carefully through nothing was found to indicate that the organization has any affiliation or connection with any outside communist organization and it appears that the entire movement is the work of a few local trouble-makers with communist ideas, such as Jaime Cerdas, Manuel Mora Valverde, Luis Carballo and others.

All of those arrested are now at liberty. Some were released the next day, some two or three days later. It is stated that there was nothing on which charges could be lodged against these men. This does not appear, however, to be the case as every one of these arrested could have been tried on disorderly conduct charges. The order for the release of every one clearly shows the wise hand of President Jimenez, who undoubtedly realized that by inflicting punishment on any or all they would have become martyrs in the eye of others. By merely lodging them in jail for a night or so and then releasing them they were shown that the government was in earnest when it stated that it would not permit meetings in public thoroughfares.

Meetings have continued this week both in San José and in Heredia and Alajuela. There have been no more disorders.

On May 31st a statement was published in the press emanating from President Jimenez in which he discussed the disturbance - among other things he said:

"I do not fear communist ideas, nor do I believe that they will thrive in a community as well organized as ours. But, as communism preaches revolution and extermination by means of acts of violence, the police, whose duty it is to safeguard public order, has to do its duty. Not to block communist ideas, but to uphold the law. Just because they are communists they should not be placed as beyond the laws, nor, on the other hand, should I place myself over them because they are communists. If we were to leave the communists at complete liberty to do what they please we might just as well do away with the police force. The fact is that all inhabitants of the republic are obliged to respect authority."

Sources: As stated.

#### IN THE ABSENCE OF THE MILITARY ATTACHE:

The result was a riot in which some were killed and the police was forced to fire their guns at the mob. Attacks and looting were common and a few fire all night around. The police were only relieved after some considerable reinforcements had arrived. The Director of Police received a deadly wound and Alex A. Cohen, he he sent to the hospital, having been severely cut by a bottle thrown at him.

Some thirty persons were arrested and order was restored after about half an hour. The police, taking advantage of the opportunity, confiscated all the files and literature which were found.

From H.A. Costa Rica Report No. 1645 Date: June 3, 1932.