

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY: Guatemala

SUBJECT: Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia

PLACE ACQUIRED

25X1AC

REPORT NO.

DATE DISTR. 31 March 1948

NO. OF PAGES

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 25X1X

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1. It has been reported that Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia, Guatemalan Military Attache accredited to the Embassy in Chile and at present on leave in Guatemala City, may soon be named Chief of Staff of the Guatemalan Army. The present Chief of Staff, Colonel Carlos Aldana Sandoval, is rumored to be slated for the cabinet position of Minister of Communications and Public Works.
2. Colonel Peralta has also been mentioned in connection with the vacancy created by the withdrawal of Colonel Oscar Morales Lopez as Guatemalan Military Attache in Washington. However, Colonel Arana, Chief of the Armed forces, holds a high opinion of Colonel Peralta, whose military abilities, sterling personal qualities, and lack of political ambition are recognized and appreciated in Guatemalan Army circles. Arana may find it more advantageous to use Peralta at home rather than send him off on a foreign assignment.

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**Comment:** Peralta entered the Escuela Politécnica as a cadet in 1926. Upon graduation he studied in the Military School in Santiago, Chile. He was Sub-Director of the Escuela Politécnica from 1940 until early in 1944. He was Jefe Político and Comandante de Armas in the Departamento de Totonicapán in June, 1944, when he was approached by militarists then preparing the coup d'état culminating in the successful revolution in October of that year who desired to postulate his candidacy as president of Guatemala. Colonel Peralta declined the offer, and upon the overthrow of the Force Government in October, 1944, was designated Military Attache to Mexico, a post he held until January, 1945, when he was named Military Attache to Chile. He is now on official leave from this post, having arrived in Guatemala on 22 January from South America. Colonel Peralta visited the United States in 1940 as one of the Guatemalans designated by the Chiefs of Staff of Latin American countries at the conference inaugurated at that time by General Marshall. He accompanied the then Chief of Staff of the Guatemalan Army and former director of the Escuela Politécnica, General Rodolfo A. Mendocza, now deceased.

Document No. 903  
 NO CHANGE in Class.   
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 Class. CHANGE TO TS S C  
 Auth: DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77  
DDA REG. 77/1763  
 Date: 16 27 1978 25X1A 017

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