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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY

SUBJECT

Ecuador

Secret Meeting of Conservative Party Leaders

ar 1949 DATE DISTR.

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED

<u> 25X1X6</u>

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Conservatives were present:

Cims.

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF IN

10.00 , 4\APK 77 Auth: \Jule \hate Date: 12/05/78

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

On 30 January 1949 a secret meeting of Ecuadoran Conservative leaders was held in the home of Jacinto Jijon y Caamano in Quito. At this meeting the following

> Manuel Sotomayor y Luna, Vice President of the Republic Dr. Manuel Elicio Flor Alfonso Barba Ruque Rode Julio Flores Alfonso Chacon Moscoso Ortiz Bilbao Ernesto Espinosa Alejandro Ribadeneira



- 2. This meeting appeared to be the second of its nature and was conducted in a secret manner, all precautions being taken against outsiders and among the principals themselves to avoid any information leaks.
- 3. The main topic of the meeting concerned the possibility that Sotomayor would be prevented from assuming the presidency should President Galo Plaza lose his position either by force or resignation. Jijon y Caamano opened the discussion by telling of certain confidential letters he had received from Conservative Party contacts in Guba which were concerned with the Ecuadoran Minister of Government, Eduardo Salazar Gomez, who was at that time visiting in Cuba. These letters implied that Salazar was using his visit to Cuba to obtain support for himself from Cubans and other Latin Americans in the event of a revolution in Ecuador. The implication was that Salazar anticipated a short term for President Plaza and wanted to be in a position to take over his government.
- 4. Considerable discussion followed the reading of these letters. Those present granted that Salazar was one of the most influential men in Ecuador politically. He was believed to have a private fortune and was recognized as a very able and very ambitious person. The group was unable to decide whether Salazar was deceiving the President and working toward his own ends; whether he was not deceiving the President but actually collaborating with him; or whether Plaza, knowing he will not be able to serve his full term, is aiding and abetting Salazar to take over his place at the opportune moment in order to prevent Sotomayor, an arch-Conservative, from becoming President. Although the Constitution for the A decision real records

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of Ecuador provides that the Vice President become President in the event the President leaves his office for any reason, the Conservatives feel that Plaza would go to great lengths to prevent Sotomayor from assuming that high office. They also agreed that, should Salazar actually betray or appear to betray Plaza, he would obtain the support of many of the political and military elements which are now conspiring against the government.

- 3. During the discussion mention was made that Salazar, as Minister of Government, was planning to create a strong military force out of the Policia Rural. The present leaders of this new organization, Major Alban and Major Armendariz, like Salazar, are members of the Masonic Order and would therefore be loyal to him.
- 6. In concluding their conference the Conservatives stated that, should Sotomayor be denied his rightful ascension to the presidency, the attitude of the Conservative Party would be:
 - a. It would fight with every available means, even if it meant civil war;
 - b. It would not allow Sotomayor to be pashed aside nor would it permit any man to occupy the presidency whose police would be opposed to the Party's philosophy.
- 7. Jijon y Caamano stated that all the money the Conservatives had available would be used to defend the ideals of the Party and that many people would follow their lead. He further added that, if Plaza is thinking of betraying the Conservatives, he wan consider himself no longer in power.
- 8. It was also resolved that all present should make every effort to find out whether Plaza was cooperating with Salazar or whether Plaza was being betrayed. It was stated that the Conservative Party would never support the Minister of Government, who was expected to return to Quito in early February.
- 9. It was decided that those present would meet again the following week to hear a report from Rafael Leon Larrea, who was to come to Quito from Guayaquil to report on a special mission which had been entrusted to him.

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