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COUNTRY Gustonella

SUBJECT Secret Anti-Communist Attitudes of Two Pro-Government Leaders/Land Reform Progress/Caribbean Legion

PLACE ACQUIRED Guatemala

ACQUIRED BY SOURCE Oct 53 and earlier

DATE (OF INTO)

Oct 53 and earlier

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE quatemalan capitalist.

Source is one of Gustemala's foremost landowners. He owns a large coffee plantation and several thousand acres of cattle and lumber land. Be is a member of the Association of Guatemalan Agriculturalists (AGA) and is anti-Arbenz. He is an elderly man, however, and does not identify himself with the younger AGA members, who advocate violent action to everthrow the government.

1. On 1 May 52 I had a private conversation with is now (late 1953) Number Two man in the Guatemalan armed forces. During our talk he quietly stated that that day he had tried unsuccessfully to persuade President Arbenz to take an exposed position on a balcony, where there would have been a chance for the opposition to assassinate him. _ then said that even had Arbenz been shot it would not have done such good, since that was needed was to dispose of at least 100 Communists. However, he pointed out that the anti-Communist officers were unable to do snything so long as the Army and the country as a whole were so prosperous. My opinion is that if the coffee market were ever to collapse 5 I would be among those who would seek the government's overthrow.

- 2. Jorge Toriello is another secretly anti-Communist opportunist who would join a revolutionary movement if Guatemala came upon bad times. One day in 1951, while in his cups, he made several derogatory remarks to me about Arevalo, who was then president. Incidentally, Toriello several years ago made a deal with Arbenz that Toriello would succeed Arbens in the presidency. However, there is no longer any chance of this, since Toriello has become rather feeble-minded, and no longer wields much power.
- 3. Commist strength in the rural sections of Guatemala is increasing as the land reform program is implemented. I have had 10 thousand acres of land confiscated and in dealing with the workers I have found them controlled by the Commists, even though in their hearts they still favor the system as it was before.
- 4. The Caribbean Legion now has approximately 100 men in Guatemala. These men are all heavily armed, and are under the command of three Cubans.

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