

~~SECRET~~/RYBAT

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TO	FROM	DATE
<p>Exec</p> <p>DC/B</p> <p>C/P</p> <p>C/R</p>	<p>G/PP. -- Attached interview for SHERWOOD was written in compliance w/instruction to exploit certain passages in GUAT 686.</p> <p><i>good job</i></p> <p>HCS</p> <p>CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM RELEASE AS SANITIZED</p> <p>2003</p>	<p>3 June</p> <p><i>Sherwood Program file</i></p> <p><i>57</i></p>

Interview with an Army officer:

Q : What is the prevailing attitude of army officers concerning the most recent events in our country?

A : The deep distrust against the political intentions of the President, focused upon the arrival of Soviet arms and the disquieting circumstances surrounding this huge shipment, has by no means been alleviated. The statements by the Foreign Minister and by the President were contradictory, evasive and ambiguous. Most officers are convinced that these arms were a Soviet gift, made in exchange for some political commitment by the government, presumably to further communist purposes beyond our borders.

Q : What do you and your brother officers think of the announced arrival of a Soviet military mission and instructor personnel?

A : Foreign Minister Torralba denied it, but most of us believe it nevertheless. This news fits in precisely with the other, well known activities of the regime. But Arbenz and the communist wire-pullers behind him are making a very dangerous mistake. The Army is loyal and disciplined, but it is uncompromisingly anti-communist. It will not carry out orders designed to further communist schemes for trouble at home and abroad, instead of safeguarding the peace and safety of our dear fatherland. If Arbenz embroils his regime into troubles with our neighbors as well as with the U.S., he must not expect us to protect him from the consequences of his reckless policy.

Q : But is your statement not in conflict with the traditional non-political -- or at least non-partisan -- attitude of our Army?

A : Not at all. We cannot close our eyes before developments which violate the constitution which we have sworn to uphold and which endanger the country which we have sworn to defend. Apart from this basic duty of every

soldier, every officer, it would also be wrong to consider the communist activities as just another political party affair which is of no concern to military men. There have been many discussions among our officers recently and their outcome was fairly unanimous -- the army must be alert to the communist danger!

Q : Would you care to tell our listeners what the main arguments used in these discussions were?

A : First of all, the communists -- whether disguised as a "workers" party (PGT) or openly called Communist Party -- should have never been recognized by the authorities as a political party. Article 32 of our constitution expressly forbids admission of parties with foreign and international ties: there can be not the slightest doubt that this means especially the communists. Second, communists owe their loyalty not to Guatemala, but to the Soviet Union -- an attitude to which the Army cannot be indifferent: it makes any communist completely unacceptable as a member of the Armed Forces, let alone as commander-in-chief.

Q : Does the Army consider President Arbenz as a Communist?

A : There is no doubt about it in our ranks. Sure, none of us has seen his membership card -- but does this matter? If a man talks like a communist, surrounds himself with communists, follows communist advice in all matters of foreign as well as domestic policy and accepts secretly arms gifts from the Soviet Union -- what else can he be?

Q : I couldn't agree more. Thank you, Major, for your remarkably frank and enlightening answers. Thanks also to all Army officers and soldiers who think like you and on whom we rely to see our country saved from the communist menace!