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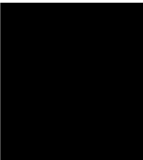
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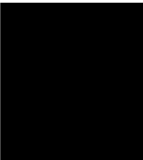
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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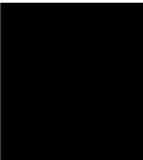
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COUNTRY **Guatemala**

SUBJECT **Discussion of Communist Influence in Government**

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1. The government of Guatemala is a coalition made up of four parties, of which the Guatemala Labor Party (PGT) is the true Communist organization. Its leaders are Gutierrez and Fortuny. Gutierrez also heads the Labor Confederation. I talked with individuals of various political beliefs, and all agree that these two men are able, intelligent, and very hard working. There appears to be no question of their personal honesty, while other members of the government regime are involved in graft. This is one of the sources of their strength and public esteem. Ramon Blanco, a newspaper editor opposed to the regime, admits the honesty of these men and said that he had never heard anything to the contrary about them. During the course of our stay in the country we made several efforts to obtain interviews but were refused on each occasion.
2. Although the Communists actually have the smallest party numerically, they are the strongest politically and most influential upon President Arbenz's policy. There is the only one of the four parties which is not comparatively new. The other leaders have had little political organizational training.
3. At an early date Arbenz learned that the Communists were the only group that could organize mass demonstrations, etc., which other parties were incapable of doing. Arbenz himself, a military officer, had little political experience and was baffled by the complexities of politics. He therefore has leaned on the only people in his regime who have political knowledge. When Arbenz was nominated for President, he did not know how to conduct his campaign. Gutierrez became a self-appointed secretary, arranged the itinerary to the best political advantage, and wrote speeches for the candidate. This position gave him access to the President and opportunities to formulate his thinking.
4. Gutierrez, Fortuny, and Señora de Arbenz are a trio which controls the government. She enjoys reading Communist literature, which Gutierrez and Fortuny encourage. While they influence her greatly, it is not believed that she is actually a Communist, but more of a fellow traveler who influences the President.

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5. Leaders of other parties seem to be resting on their laurels after the presidential election, while the Communists are hard at work and carefully disciplined. They have only four seats in the legislature, but one of these is the presiding officer, which post is like the US Vice President. The Communists are careful not to place their members in government positions but endeavor to have their people in the administration of the Land Reform Program.
6. To control the President is to control the government, which for the present the Communists do. There have been reports that Arbenz is upset by Communist influence in his government, but he has nowhere to turn for the present. On any subject of government policy the Communists are always ready with a program, a bill, or a well-organized argument which it is difficult to combat.
7. My impression of the general viewpoint in Guatemala is that there is no danger of an early Communist coup to seize the government. The Communists leaders are intelligent and believe that they would not be best served by seizing power. In that case Guatemala would be alone in Latin America, and the US probably would not permit a "Czechoslovakia" in Guatemala. Such a move would force action against them which could not be resisted. The major danger in Guatemala is simply the strong influence of the Communists upon the established government.

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