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INFORMATION REPORT

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 SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY Guatemala REPORT NO. CS-9368
 SUBJECT Revolutionary Movement in Guatemala DATE DISTR. 5 May 1953
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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
 THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
 (FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

SOURCE: Guatemalan professional man with good contacts in anti-Government circles (F).
 Appraisal of Content: 3.

1. The abortive revolt of 30 March 1953, at Salama, Guatemala, was led by Carlos SIMONS and his group, who were prodded into action by a penetration agent of the Guatemalan Government, in the hope that it would bring to light the entire anti-Communist organization existing in Guatemala. Because SIMONS failed to ally himself with the CORDOVA Cerna group, planned poorly, lacked arms, was penetrated, and was motivated primarily by personal ambition, the attempt failed. Although Juan CORDOVA Cerna was not involved, he was arrested on 1 April, tortured for nineteen days, and pushed across the frontier into Honduras on 20 April, but no information compromising the main revolutionary movement is believed to have been disclosed.
2. The possibility of CORDOVA Cerna's arrest had been foreseen and a substitute selected. The new man has taken over the anti-Communist revolutionary movement with Guatemala, but he acts directly under the orders of Colonel Carlos CASTILLO Armas, who has been agreed upon as the military leader. CASTILLO Armas is respected and admired and is patriotically motivated. The CORDOVA Cerna organization remains intact. The men are organized in cells of five throughout the country, and have a total strength of over 50,000. Given the necessary arms, success of the movement is assured because of the determination and careful organization of the group, plus the support promised from part of the Army and police. A minimum of twenty-five per cent of the Army may be counted on, and a majority of the officers who are graduates of the Polytechnic School are out of sympathy with the government. No one can say what percentage of the police are members of the anti-Communist movement, but the number-two man of the police kept CORDOVA Cerna's friends informed while CORDOVA Cerna was under arrest, and told them not to worry. The two guards who helped CORDOVA Cerna across the frontier into Honduras are now being sought by the Guatemalan Government, because they failed to shoot CORDOVA Cerna. The anti-Communist underground organization has located caches of arms belonging to the Guatemalan Government, to be made available to the workers in case of a revolution.

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Careful plans have been laid to prevent such forces loyal to the Guatemalan Government from gaining access to these caches. Not even people close to CORDOVA Cerna have been informed of the names of the Army officers or top members of the police who will support the movement. Only two individuals in Guatemala are fully informed. Great care and discretion have been exercised in keeping this secret.

3. Other Central American countries are anxious to assist any movement aimed at overthrowing the Guatemalan Government, but have thus far hesitated, so as not to find themselves embroiled in charges of violating various international pacts.