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Security Information

29 April 1953

2003

REPLY TO: DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT : Comments on NIE-84 for Guatemala, dated 24 April 1953.

1. It may be misleading to assume that all effective opposition to the present Guatemalan Government is in Guatemala City, since collaborators of the opposition Comite Pro Liberacion de Guatemala operate and circulate effective propaganda in the provinces, since conservative landowners who reside outside of the capital are engaged in efforts to organize internal and external opposition, and since officers and men of the provincial garrisons, underpaid and resentful of a less favored status, constitute a potential force for armed revolt.

2. The Army's continued complete loyalty to the Arbenz regime cannot be taken for granted in view of the following factors:

a. Only a relatively few high ranking officers, notably the Chief of Armed Forces and his assistants, the Minister of Defense and his assistants and chiefs, and officers of the General Staff are well paid. Among the rank and file, up to and including the grade of Lieutenant Colonel, pay has been in arrears for as much as six months. Some officers are not receiving pay appropriate to their rank - Lieutenant Colonels receiving Captain's pay, and many, attempting to live and support families on from \$150-200 per month, this in arrears, find that they cannot make ends meet. The known presence of Government informers within the ranks and sudden changes of assignment for security reasons cause unease and discontent, while the extra duty required to forestall revolution is considered an added burden.

b. [ ]  
[ ] respectively, have both expressed strong anti-Communist sentiments, and [ ] has stated that he hopes to organize armed revolt in May.

3. Although other Central American and Caribbean nations would probably not feel themselves in a position to invade Guatemala without justification and might well be defeated in any such attempt by a united Guatemala, a revolution in Guatemala might well provide an insurgent government which could be recognized and supported by expeditionary forces from the several Latin American countries who oppose Arbenz and his Government.

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