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24 AUG 1950

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Source, Operational Data, and Comments:

Source: []

Comments: The Embassy has been orally informed of the contents of this report.

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Subject: Plans of Colonel Carlos
CASTILLO Armas for Armed
Revolt Against the Government

Report No: [] 1045

Date of Information: 23 August 1950

Place Acquired: Guatemala City

Date Acquired: 23 August 1950

Evaluation: A-1

Date of Report: 24 August 1950

Source: Controlled American

1. Colonel Carlos CASTILLO Armas states that he has been working quietly for several months perfecting his plans for an armed revolt which would overthrow the AREVALO government. He states that at the present time he has some of the military zones in the western part of the country committed to him. He said that the important garrison at Quezaltenango was included in these elements. In the capital he said he would be able to count on the Guardia Civil, on the Fort of Matamoras and on part of the Air Force. He said that he had some elements on his side in the Military Base and the Guardia de Honor, the capital's two strongest military garrisons. He said he did not count on these two units themselves being on his side, but that he would expect his men within these units to commit sabotage. As to the Fort of Matamoras he said that it has few men but that it does have a good supply of arms. He said he would be able to have these arms at his disposal.
2. Colonel Carlos CASTILLO Armas said that the proper atmosphere would be created by first having civilian disturbances, probably another series of "minute of silence" demonstrations. He said his plans depend to a great extent on the element of surprise and coordination in several places at the same time. He plans to seize communications immediately. His first big objective would be to take the National Palace. He hopes that the revolt would end successfully in a few hours. However, he states the probability always exists that the Guardia de Honor and the Military Base will recover from the first surprise and start fighting, which might last for some time. He said that his plans call for capturing the leaders of these two military units at the very beginning of the uprising, and he hopes this will disorient the units to such an extent that they will not be able to react quickly.
3. In case the revolt does not succeed immediately, he said it may be necessary for the rebels to withdraw from the capital. He said, however, that most of the western part of the country (which is the most heavily populated area of Guatemala) would be in revolt and that the rebels would reorganize in the west and march back upon the capital.
4. Colonel Carlos CASTILLO Armas is worried about intervention from Mexico and Cuba on behalf of the AREVALO government in case the revolt does not succeed immediately. He said that of course he would not expect intervention in the form of manpower but that it would be quite possible that these two countries

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- 2 -

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might send planes and war materiel.

Comments: It is as yet difficult to say how serious Colonel CASTILLO Armas' plans are. He is a quiet, soft-spoken officer who does not seem to be given to exaggeration. He has little respect for such professional plotters as Colonel Miguel MENDOZA and Jorge TORIELLO. The downfall of most plotters in Guatemala has been that the government, through its various intelligence services, has been able to learn of the plots before they could be brought to the point of execution. It would seem that this is the greatest danger to CASTILLO Armas' plans. If he should be able to avoid this, it is believed that his plans may have more chance of success than any of the attempts tried previously.

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