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## Interview with Romeo Espino

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Extracts from an Interview with General Romeo Espino  
21 July 1986

I joined the military right after I graduated from college in 1937 and I stayed until August 16, 1981. That's a long time. I was a pln ledr, a company leader, a battalion commander, I became a brigade commander, an area commander, vice commander of the army, and then I became vice chief of staff and then chief of staff for 9 years and 4 months. 1972-1981.

. . . . .

CBC: So you were involved in the Huk rebellion from the very early days?

RE: Yes. Yes.

CBC: Were you assigned at any time with AFWESPAC and their intelligence group?

RE: No, no, but I was in intelligence so I was always in contact with intelligence people and that's how I came in contact with Ed Lansdale and Bohannan.

CBC: When did you meet Lansdale?

RE: In 46. He was with intelligence; I was in intelligence . . . we used to meet very often.

. . . . .

I left intelligence work in 1954.

CBC: You were in intelligence work during the Magsaysay campaign?

Re: Yes. Part of it.

. . . . .

(THIS WHOLE INTERVIEW WAS ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS AND TIME WASTING.)

RE: I thot Ed was a real intelligence pro. He was quiet, soft-spoken, he went about his objectives in a quiet and thorough way.

He always told us what to do. When we started in 45 we were all very new in intelligence. We used to talk about objectives and how to get about his objectives. He was more concerned with combat intelligence and sometimes with . . . it's been so long! I had high regard for Ed . . . and I was happiest when he made general.

(Long question about Manahan and how EGL had him make contact with Taruc. Do you know Joe Tinio?)

RE: Yes.

CBC tells about the report. Supplies to Taruc. Why?

RE: I think he was trying to get into his good graces so he could be utilized for our own needs.

CBC: How would that work? It would seem that Taruc might use those radios to say a Philippine battalion combat team is moving in on your position right away.

RE: You have to take a gamble sometimes. His objective was a long term objective. In fact, I did not know about these things.

CBC: I'm still not sure how this would work.

RE: Have you checked with Tinio?

CBC: No, it was just a report I've seen.

. . . .

RE: (He (EGL) was an operator.

. . . .

Well, you see that eventually Taruc came over to our side. Almost whole-heartedly.

That's a long time ago.

. . . .

CBC: Tell me what your feeling was, general, about the participation of the Americans in the elections of 1951 and 1953?

RE: I have a very liberal feelings about what you do, for knowing your politics, a country has to think of its own interests, and uh you have got to . . . America's interests have got to be protected, and you can not be blamed, they say you take this side or that side, wherever your natural interests lie. I don't hold it against you to think of your own self-interests.

. . . .

TERMINATE EFFORTS AT TRANSCRIPTION AT THIS POINT.