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TO: DIRNSA, DEPT OF STATE, DIA, TREASURY DEPT,
ZEN/WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM, ZEN/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
STAFF, ZEN/CIA OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS,
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PA.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.
REOORT CLASS ~~SECRET~~ WWINTEL [redacted]
COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR
SUBJECT: CRITICISM OF THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES HIGH
COMMAND BY JUNIOR AND MID-LEVEL OFFICERS DUE
TO INCONCLUSIVE WAR AGAINST INSURGENTS AND
HIGH COMMAND INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICAL MATTERS.

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1. JUNIOR AND MID-LEVEL OFFICERS OF THE SALVADORAN
ARMED FORCES HAVE STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE MILITARY HIGH
COMMAND IN RECENT WEEKS REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR
AGAINST SALVADORAN INSURGENTS AND FOR THE HIGH COMMAND'S
PREOCCUPATION WITH NATIONAL POLITICS. THE STRONGEST
COMPLAINTS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED AGAINST MINISTER OF DEFENSE,
GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)), AND CHIEF OF STAFF,
COLONEL RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA. TWO OF THE STRONGEST
CRITICS OF THE HIGH COMMAND ARE LTC. SIGFRIEDO ((OCHOA))
PEREZ, COMMANDER OF CABANAS DEPARTMENT, AND JOSE DOMINGO
((MONTERROSA)), COMMANDER OF THE ATLCATL BATTALION.

2. FIELD OFFICERS SUCH AS OCHOA AND MONTERROSA BELIEVE
THAT THE HIGH COMMAND IS PAYING TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO
THE WAR EFFORT AND ARE OVERLY INVOLVED IN POLITICAL MATTERS,

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INCLUDING THE POLITICAL AMBITIONS OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE OFFICERS COMPLAIN THAT A SUCCESSFUL END TO THE WAR IS STILL NOT IN SIGHT, DESPITE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ARMED FORCES. THEY ALSO WANT THE ARMED FORCES TO BE LED BY AN OFFICER WITH GREATER FIELD EXPERIENCE AND CLOSER TIES TO BATTLEFIELD OFFICERS.

3. GARCIA AND FLORES HAVE ALSO BEEN ACCUSED OF ISOLATING FELLOW MILITARY OFFICERS FROM THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS BY MAKING DECISIONS THAT DIRECTLY AFFECT THE ARMED FORCES WITHOUT CONSULTING THE SALVADORAN OFFICER CORPS. THE JUNIOR AND MID-LEVEL OFFICERS REGARD THIS AS A HIGH-HANDED ABRIGATION OF CHAIN-OF-COMMAND.

4. ADDITIONALLY, FIELD-GRADE OFFICERS, PRIMARILY THOSE AT THE LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEVEL, ARE ALSO CONCERNED OVER THE HIGH COMMAND'S INVOLVEMENT IN SALVADORAN POLITICS, PARTICULARLY THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GARCIA AND PRESIDENT ALVARO ((MAGANA)). THESE OFFICERS REGARD MAGANA AS A LAME DUCK PRESIDENT WHO HAS LITTLE REAL POWER AND WHO IS UNABLE TO EFFECTIVELY LEAD THE COUNTRY. THE OFFICERS ARE CONCERNED THAT, AS MAGANA WAS SELECTED AND SUPPORTED BY THE HIGH COMMAND, HIS FAILURE AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE WILL REFLECT DIRECTLY ON THE ARMED FORCES. THERE IS ALSO DISCONTENT AMONG FIELD-GRADE OFFICERS OVER THE HIGH COMMAND'S STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM.

5. ANOTHER GRIEVANCE WITHIN THE OFFICER CORPS, PARTICULARLY AMONG MORE MODERATE FIELD-GRADE OFFICERS, IS A CONTINUING CAMPAIGN ON THE PART OF THE NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENAL) TO DISCREDIT THE HIGH COMMAND, ESPECIALLY GENERAL GARCIA. AS PART OF THE CAMPAIGN, ARENA OPERATIVES ARE ATTEMPTING TO LURE OFFICERS WITH RIGHTIST TENDENCIES TO JOIN THE PARTY'S EFFORTS TO OUST GARCIA. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL LIEUTENANT COLONELS, AREAN HAS OFFERED RIGHT-WING OFFICERS CIVILIAN POSITIONS (IN ADDITION TO THEIR MILITARY POSITIONS) AS GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES TO LARGE PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED SALVADORAN CORPORATIONS. OFFICERS SERVING ON SUCH BOARDS RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL 1,000 COLONES PER MONTH, PLUS PRIVATE AUTOMOBILES, PAID TRIPS ABROAD AND OTHER BENEFITS. COLONEL OCHOA CURRENTLY SERVES ON ONE SUCH BOARD.

6. DESPITE OFFICER DISCONTENT WITH THE HIGH COMMAND, THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE DANGER OF A COUP, NOR IS THERE ANY CURRENT PLAN TO FORCE GENERAL GARCIA TO RESIGN. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] IF GARCIA PERSISTS IN EXCLUDING FIELD-GRADE OFFICERS FROM THE CHAIN OF COMMAND AND IF HE FAILS TO ASSIGN AN EXPERIENCED BATTLEFIELD OFFICER TO THE HIGH COMMAND, THE SITUATION COULD WORSEN RAPIDLY WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.)

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REPORT CLASS S E C R E T - WARNING NOTICE - INTELLIGENCE

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