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Document: CIAA -0000 350576 Subject: MEETING OF SALVADORAN MILITARY OFFICERS TO DISCUSS THE REMOVAL OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE.

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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. REPORT CLASS ~~SECRET~~ WNINTEL [Redacted]

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COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJECT: MEETING OF SALVADORAN MILITARY OFFICERS TO DISCUSS THE REMOVAL OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE.

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1. ON 9 OR 10 SEPTEMBER 1982, A GROUP OF SALVADORAN MILITARY OFFICERS MET IN A PRIVATE HOME IN SAN SALVADOR TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS IN THE ARMED FORCES AND PLANS TO INFLUENCE THE REMOVAL OF GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)), THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE OFFICERS, ALL LIEUTENANT COLONELS WHO GRADUATED FROM THE MILITARY ACADEMY IN EITHER 1963 OR 1964, HAVE COMBINED TO FORM A SINGLE "TANDA" OR CLASS GROUP. THEY ARE: LEOPOLDO ((HERNANDEZ)), DIRECTOR OF THE MAESTRANZA (ARMORY AND WEAPONS REPAIR DEPOT); ROBERTO ((RODRIGUEZ)) MURCIA, CHIEF OF THE TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT OF THE NATIONAL POLICE; RICARDO ((CIENFUEGOS)), PERSONAL AIDE TO THE CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF; ROBERTO ARMANDO ((RIVERA)),

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COMMANDER OF ARMY DETACHMENT FIVE IN COJUTEPEQUE;
SIGFRIEDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDER OF CABANAS DEPARTMENT;
DENNIS ((MORAN)), CURRENTLY UNASSIGNED; AND LEONEL ((LOBO)),
CHIEF OF AIR FORCE OPERATIONS.

2. THESE OFFICERS UNANIMOUSLY EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE
TO SEE GARCIA REMOVED, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NO FIRM PLANS AT
THIS TIME TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. A PRINCIPAL COMPLAINT IS THAT
GARCIA HAS ISOLATED HIMSELF FROM THE MILITARY COMMANDERS
AND MAKES DECISIONS ON POLITICAL AND MILITARY MATTERS WITHOUT
CONSULTING WITH THE KEY MILITARY LEADERS. OTHER COMPLAINTS
EXPRESSED AGAINST GARCIA WERE FOCUSED ON HIS CONTINUED SUPPORT
FOR OFFICERS WHO HOLD IMPORTANT POSITIONS BUT WHO ARE
INCOMPETENT OR WHOSE PERSONAL REPUTATIONS ARE DAMAGING TO THE
IMAGE OF THE ARMED FORCES. THOSE OFFICERS REGARDED AS
INCOMPETENT OR DISREPUTABLE INCLUDE LTC. NAPOLEON ((ALVARADO)),
COMMANDER OF SAN VICENTE DEPARTMENT; LTC. MAX ((LEVIA)),

COMMANDER OF SONSONATE DEPARTMENT; LTC. ELMER ((GONZALEZ)),
CHIEF OF THE PRESIDENTIAL STAFF; AND COLONEL FRANCISCO
((MORAN)), DIRECTOR OF THE TREASURY POLICE.

3. THE GROUP OF OFFICERS CONSIDERS THAT GENERAL GARCIA
MAY ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER OCHOA PEREZ OR LTC. JOSE DOMINGO
((MONTEERROSA)), COMMANDER OF THE ATACATL BATTALION, INTO
NON-COMMAND ASSIGNMENTS. IN THIS EVENT, THE OFFICERS AGREED
THAT THEY WOULD PROMPTLY GENERATE SUPPORT IN THE OFFICER CORPS
TO OPPOSE SUCH A MOVE BY GARCIA.

4. THE GROUP OF OFFICERS AGREED THAT, AS THEIR IMMEDIATE
OBJECTIVE, THEY WOULD CONDUCT AN INFORMAL OPINION POLL IN THE
OFFICER CORPS AIMED AT DETERMINING IF THERE WAS SUFFICIENT
SUPPORT FOR A FORMAL PROPOSAL BY KEY COMMANDERS FOR THE REMOVAL
OF GARCIA. WHILE THIS OFFICER GROUP HAS EXPRESSED NO OPPOSITION
TO COL. RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA, CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES
GENERAL STAFF, THEY WOULD REQUEST HIS REMOVAL AS WELL IF HE
OPPOSED AN ORGANIZED EFFORT TO REMOVE GARCIA.

5. [REDACTED] THE COMPLAINTS DIRECTED AGAINST
GARCIA BY THIS PARTICULAR GROUP OF OFFICERS INCLUDE THOSE
MOST COMMONLY EXPRESSED IN THE OFFICER CORPS AND ARE CONSISTENT
WITH PREVIOUS REPORTING. HOWEVER, OPPOSITION TO GARCIA WITHIN
THE ARMED FORCES IS NOT SOLELY BASED ON HIS MANAGEMENT OF THE
WAR OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEFICIENCIES. OTHER OFFICERS
WHO CRITICIZE GARCIA ON PROFESSIONAL GROUNDS ALSO OPPOSE HIM
AS A RESULT OF THEIR CLOSE ASSOCIATION AND INVOLVEMENT WITH
ROBERTO ((D'AUBUISSON)), PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
AND LEADER OF THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENA).
D'AUBUISSON IN TURN REPRESENTS INTERESTS DEDICATED TO
STALLING OR MODIFYING THE REFORM PROGRAMS WHICH IS BEING STRONGLY
PROMOTED BY GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA. ACCORDINGLY, THESE
PRO-D'AUBUISSON OFFICERS ARE ALSO OPPOSED TO FLORES LIMA.
LTC. OCHOA PEREZ, WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE OFFICER GROUP DESCRIBED
IN THIS REPORT, IS ALSO PERSONALLY CLOSE TO D'AUBUISSON AND
ACCORDING TO RECENT REPORTS IS OPPOSED TO FLORES LIMA AS WELL
AS GARCIA. OCHOA PEREZ APPARENTLY PREFERRED NOT TO MANIFEST HIS
OPPOSITION TO FLORES LIMA IN HIS DEALINGS WITH THE OFFICER GROUP
DESCRIBED HEREIN.)

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REPORT CLASS S E C R E T - WARNING NOTICE - [REDACTED]

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