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COMMANDER AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENSEC 11786CIAA 434204 MSO83-0238718

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TO: IMMEDIATE DIRNSA, DEPT OF STATE, DIA, WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STAFF,
ZEN/CIA OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS,
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY: EL SAVADOR

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SUBJECT: STATUS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE CABANAS DEPARTMENTAL
COMMANDER AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE

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TEXT: 1. GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)), MINISTER OF DEFENSE,
AND COL. RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA, CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES
GENERAL STAFF, VIEW AS INCREASINGLY SERIOUS THE SITUATION TAKEN
BY LTC. SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDER OF MILITARY
DETACHMENT 2. OCHOA REMAINS AT HIS HEADQUARTERS IN CABANAS
DEPARTMENT WITH HIS TROOPS ON FULL ALERT AND CONTINUES TO

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INSIST THAT GARCIA RESIGN.

2. ON 8 JANUARY, OCHOA PLANS TO ORGANIZE A LARGE DEMONSTRATION IN CABANAS, COMPRISED OF THE POPULACE AND CIVIL DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS. THE DEMONSTRATION WILL STRESS THAT THE ORDERS TO TRANSFER OCHOA AS MILITARY ATTACHE TO URUGUAY WAS A PERSONAL AND POLITICAL MOVE BY GARCIA.

3. ON THE MORNING OF 8 JANUARY, OCHOA CALLED FLORES LIMA AND REQUESTED THAT HE ORGANIZE AND CHAIR A MEETING IN CABANAS OF ALL MILITARY COMMANDERS. FLORES LIMA DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO OCHOA ON THE PHONE BUT HAS NO INTENTIONS OF ASSISTING OCHOA AND REPORTED THIS DEVELOPMENT TO GARCIA, WHO HAS CONTROLLED ACCESS TO CABANAS WITH TROOPS FROM MILITARY DETACHMENT 5, UNDER THE COMMAND OF LTC. ROBERTO ARMANDO ((RIVERA)).

4. GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA REMAIN IN CONTINUOUS CONTACT WITH KEY MILITARY COMMANDERS. ALTHOUGH ALMOST ALL AGREE THAT OCHOA SHOULD HAVE OBEYED GARCIA'S ORDER AND DO NOT SUPPORT OCHOA'S DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY, THE FOLLOWING HAVE CLEARLY STATED TO GARCIA THAT THEY PREFER HE RESIGN: LTC. MIGUEL ANTONIO ((MENDEZ)), COMMANDER OF THE RAMON BELLOSO BATTALION; LTC. DOMINGO ((MONTERROSA)) BARRIOS, COMMANDER OF THE ATLCATL BATTALION; COL. JAIME ERNESTO ((FLORES)), COMMANDER OF SAN MIGUEL DEPARTMENT; LTC. MIGUEL ALFREDO ((VASCONCELOS)), COMMANDER OF USULUTAN DEPARTMENT; AND LTC. NAPOLEON HERSON ((CALITO)) ARBAIZA, COMMANDER OF THE ATONAL BATTALION.

5. FLORES LIMA SAID THAT IT IS CLEAR THAT ALMOST ALL AIR FORCE OFFICERS PREFER THE REMOVAL OF GARCIA AND MANY, SUCH AS LTC. HECTOR LEONEL ((LOBO)) PEREZ, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, ARE PERSONNALLY SYMPATHETIC WITH OCHOA. GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA CONSIDER THAT THE MAJORITY OF ARMY JUNIOR OFFICERS, WHILE PERHAPS NOT SYMPATHETIC TO OCHOA, PREFER THAT GARCIA RESIGN. FLORES LIMA SAID THAT HE AND GARCIA BELIEVE THAT THE RESIGNATION OF GARCIA WOULD LEAD TO THE EVENTUAL DOMINATION OF THE MILITARY BY THE NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENA) AND ITS LEADER ROBERTO ((D'AUBUISSON)), PRESIDENT OF THE CONTITUENT ASSEMBLY. FLORES LIMA SAID THAT ARENA ACTIVISTS ARE CURRENTLY EXPLOITING THE SITUATION TO DEVELOP POPULAR SUPPORT FOR OCHOA AND THE REMOVAL OF GARCIA.

6. FLORES LIMA NOTED THAT WITH THE ADDITION OF THE ARENA EFFORT, HE DID NOT COMPLETELY RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A COUP D'ETAT ATTEMPT BY THE AIR FORCE AND OCHOA'S FORCES. ON 8 JANUARY, FLORES LIMA WAS CONTACTED BY D'AUBUISSON WHO SAID THAT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH GARCIA HAD BEEN COMPLETELY SEVERED.

7. CURRENTLY, THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS HAVE PLEDGED THEIR LOYALTY TO GARCIA AND OPPOSITION TO OCHOA'S PROTEST: GENERAL CARLOS EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD; COL. CARLOS REYNALDO ((LOPEZ)) NUILA, DIRECTOR GENERAL, NATIONAL POLICE; COL. FRANCISCO ANTONIO ((MORAN)), DIRECTOR GENERAL, TREASURY POLICE; LTC. MARIO ENRIQUE ((ACEVEDO)),

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COMMANDER OF MORAZAN DEPARTMENT; LTC. RAMON ANTONIO ((MORALES)) RUIZ, COMMANDER OF LA UNION DEPARTMENT; COL. NAPOLEON ((ALVARADO)) COMMANDER OF SAN VICENTE DEPARTMENT; LTC. JOSE ALEJANDRO ((CISNEROS)), COMMANDER OF AHUACHAPAN DEPARTMENT; LTC. ELMER ((ARAJJO)) GONZALEZ, COMMANDER OF SONSONATE DEPARTMENT; COL. ROBERTO DE JESUS ((MONTERROSA)) BONILLA, COMMANDER OF THE NAVY. ON THE MORNING OF 8 JANUARY, FLORES LIME RECEIVED A CALL FROM GENERAL ((LOPEZ)), THE GUATEMALAN CHIEF OF STAFF, WHO REQUESTED INFO ON THE SITUATION AND EXPRESSED HIS SOLIDARITY WITH FLORES LIMA AND GARCIA.

8. GARCIA PLANS TO CONVENE A MEETING OF ALL COMMANDERS IN SAN SALVADOR ON EITHER 10 OR 11 JANUARY IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THIS CRISIS.

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