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Document: CIAA -0000 464775 Subject: TRANSFERS IN THE SALVADORAN HIGH COMMAND DESIGNED BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE TO STRENGTHEN HIS PERSONAL POSITION
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TO: IMMEDIATE DIRNSA, DEPT OF STATE, DIA, ZEN/WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM, ZEN/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STAFF,
ZEN/CIA OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS, USCINCSO QHTS PANAMA.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.
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DIST: 8 FEB 83
COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJ: TRANSFERS IN THE SALVADORAN HIGH COMMAND DESIGNED BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE TO STRENGTHEN HIS PERSONAL POSITION

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TEXT: 1. WITH THE PRIME OBJECTIVE OF REINFORCING HIS PERSONAL POSITION IN THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES, GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)), MINISTER OF DEFENSE, ISSUED AN ORDER ON 7 FEBRUARY 1983 WHICH TRANSFERRED VARIOUS OFFICERS IN KEY STAFF AND COMMAND ASSIGNMENTS. THE KEY TRANSFERS AND GARCIA'S INTENTIONS IN EACH CASE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. COL. RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA, CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF, IS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER HIS ASSIGNMENT,

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EFFECTIVE 10 FEBRUARY, AS SUB-SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. FLORES LIMA FEARS THAT HE WILL NOW BE VIEWED AS DIRECTLY SUPPORTING GARCIA'S ATTEMPT TO REMAIN IN OFFICE, WHICH FLORES LIMA CONSIDERS WILL BE STRONGLY OPPOSED BY MANY KEY MILITARY OFFICERS. FLORES LIMA SAID THAT GARCIA WILL SOON LAUNCH A PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE HIS IMAGE AND FLORES LIMA WILL BE FORCED ACTIVELY TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH ACTIVITIES AS ESCORTING GARCIA ON VISITS TO MILITARY COMMANDS AND APPEARING WITH HIM AS HIS AIDE IN PRESS CONFERENCES. FLORES LIMA SAID HE WILL OBEY GARCIA'S ORDER, BUT PROBABLY WOULD REQUEST AN ASSIGNMENT AS A MILITARY ATTACHE IN A NEARBY COUNTRY WITH ONE TO TWO MONTHS.

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B. GARCIA HAS ASSIGNED COL. MARIO ADALBERTO ((REYES)) MENA, SECOND BRIGADE COMMANDER, TO CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF, PRIMARILY BECAUSE HE CONSIDERS REYES WILL FAITHFULLY AND FIRMLY FOLLOW HIS ORDERS. DURING THE RECENT CONFRONTATION BETWEEN LTC. SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ AND GARCIA, REYES, ALTHOUGH GENERALLY CONSIDERED POLITICALLY NEUTRAL, WAS OUTSPOKEN IN FAVOR OF GARCIA REMAINING IN OFFICE AND CONDEMNED OCHOA'S REBELLION. REYES IS DESCRIBED BY FLORES LIMA AS PROFESSIONALLY ILL PREPARED AND OF VERY LIMITED ABILITY.

C. GARCIA HAS REASSIGNED COL. OSCAR ((CASANOVA)), DIRECTOR OF THE ARMED FORCES STUDY CENTER (CEFA), TO COMMAND THE SECOND BRIGADE AT THE REQUEST OF AND AS A FAVOR TO GENERAL CARLOS EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, WHO IS RELATED TO OSCAR CASANOVA.

D. IN TRANSFERRING COL. NAPOLEON ((ALVARADO)) AS COMMANDER OF SAN VICENTE DEPARTMENT TO CHIEF OF THE TERRITORIAL FORCES, GARCIA IS RELEGATING ONE OF THE MOST INCOMPETENT MILITARY COMMANDERS TO A MINOR ROLE. WHILE THIS MOVE IN ITSELF WILL BE WIDELY APPROVED IN THE ARMED FORCES, GARCIA IS REPLACING ALVARADO, A CLOSE ALLY, WITH ONE OF HIS MOST LOYAL AND TRUSTED COLLEAGUES, LTC. JOSE ALEJANDRO ((CISNEROS)), COMMANDER OF THE AHUACHAPAN DEPARTMENT.

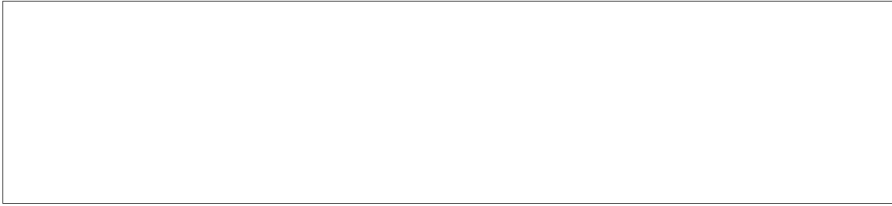
E. THE ASSIGNMENT OF COL. REINALDO ((GOLCHER)), ARMED FORCES G-2, AS DIRECTOR OF THE ARMED FORCES STUDY CENTER WAS PROMPTED BY GARCIA'S SUSPICION OF GOLCHER'S PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP WITH GENERAL JAIME ABDUL ((GUTIERREZ)), CURRENTLY UNASSIGNED, WHO IS A LONG-TIME GARCIA RIVAL AND POLITICAL ENEMY. FURTHER, GARCIA CONSIDERS THAT GOLCHER IS PASSING SENSITIVE INFORMATION TO GUTIERREZ. FLORES LIMA FAVORED THE REMOVAL OF GOLCHER, WHOM HE DISTRUSTS FOR THE SAME REASON. FLORES LIMA FIRMLY ENDORSED GARCIA'S DECISION TO REPLACE GOLCHER WITH LTC. CARLOS ALFREDO ((RIVAS)), CURRENTLY A MILITARY ATTACHE IN MEXICO. RIVAS, WHO PRECEDED GOLCHER AS THE G-2, IS A TRUSTED CONFIDANT OF BOTH GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA AND THEY CONSIDER HIM AN EXPERT IN INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS.

2. [REDACTED] THESE TRANSFERS WILL BE VIEWED BY GARCIA'S MANY OPPONENTS IN THE ARMED FORCES AS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF HIS INTENTIONS TO REMAIN IN OFFICE. ACCORDINGLY, A CONFRONTATION, IN WHICH KEY COMMANDERS WOULD ATTEMPT TO FORCE GARCIA'S RETIREMENT, COULD OCCUR AT ANY TIME. AT THIS POINT, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT SUCH A MOVE BY THE MILITARY AGAINST GARCIA WOULD INCLUDE PRESIDENT ALVARO ((MAGANA)) AND THE GOVERNMENT.)

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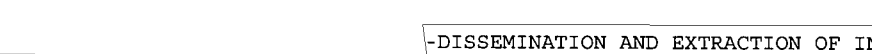
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