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~~(S//NC/CIA-IUO/NF)~~ SUBJ: ARENA PARTY ATTEMPTS TO PROVOKE A MILITARY COUP

Central Intelligence Agency

29 December 1984

Doc Number [redacted] (b)(3) NatSecAct

SOURCE [redacted]

~~(S//NC/CIA-IUO/NF)~~ DIST: 29 DEC 84

COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJ: ARENA PARTY ATTEMPTS TO PROVOKE A MILITARY COUP

DOI:

SOURCE:

[redacted]

TEXT:

THE NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENA) PARTY HAS BEEN PROVOKING FOURTH BRIGADE COMMANDER, LT. COL. SIGFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ INTO ATTEMPTING A MILITARY COUP IN EL SALVADOR. [redacted] ARENA PARTY DEPUTY, JUAN ANTONIO ((MARTINEZ)) VARELA, AND SEVERAL ARENA PARTY LEADING FIGURES INCLUDING ARTURO ((MASON)), JULIO ((RANK)), TITO ((SACA)), BILLY ((KORN)) AND BOBBY MURRY ((MEZA)) PERSONALLY MET WITH LT. COL. OCHOA IN MID-DECEMBER. THEY TOLD OCHOA THEY HAD INSIDE INFORMATION THAT PRESIDENT JOSE NAPOLEON ((DUARTE)) PLANNED TO PROMOTE VICE-MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY, COLONEL CARLOS REYNALDO ((LOPEZ)) NUILA TO THE RANK OF GENERAL AND TO MAKE HIM MINISTER OF DEFENSE AS SOON AS GENERAL CARLOS EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA RETIRED IN EARLY 1985.

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2. [redacted] LT. COL. OCHOA IS VERY MUCH

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UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE ARENA PARTY AND THAT HE IMMEDIATELY
BEGAN TO SOLICIT ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER MILITARY COMMANDERS TO
STAGE A COUP D'ETAT OVER THE ISSUE OF WHAT HE PERCEIVED AS AN
EXCESSIVE INTERFERENCE BY PRESIDENT DUARTE IN THE INTERNAL
AFFAIRS OF THE SALVADORAN MILITARY. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] THERE IS NO SUBSTANCE TO THE ARENA
RUMOR AND THAT VIDES HIMSELF HAD RECEIVED THE ASSURANCE OF
PRESIDENT DUARTE THAT NO ATTEMPT WOULD BE MADE TO FORCE THE
PROMOTION OF LOPEZ NUILA AT THIS TIME.

3. [REDACTED] GENERAL VIDES ALSO TOLD OCHOA
THAT LOPEZ NUILA WOULD NOT BE PROMOTED AT THIS TIME. HOWEVER,
LT. COL. OCHOA CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THE ARENA STORY AND BEGAN TO
CONTACT OTHER RIGHTIST MILITARY OFFICERS TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR A
COUP PLAN. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] COLONEL
JUAN RAFAEL ((BUSTILLO)) WAS APPROACHED INDEPENDENTLY BY ARENA
PARTY LEADERS OFFERING TO SUPPORT HIM IF HE WOULD ATTEMPT A COUP.

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[REDACTED] COL. BUSTILLO WENT TO GENERAL VIDES CASANOVA
AND REPORTED THIS APPROACH AND WAS TOLD THAT HE SHOULD IGNORE
ANEUVER BY THE ARENA PARTY AND THAT THE RUMORS

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THAT PRESIDENT DUARTE INTENDED TO MAKE LOPEZ NUILA A GENERAL
WERE FALSE. [REDACTED] COMMENT: IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT COL.
BUSTILLO AND PRESIDENT DUARTE HAVE HAD STRONG DIFFERENCES OF
OPINION IN THE PAST YEAR. COL. BUSTILLO IS A LOYAL MILITARY
OFFICER, HOWEVER, AND WOULD NOT ATTEMPT ANY COUP AGAINST THE
PRESIDENT UNLESS SPECIFICALLY ORDERED TO DO SO BY GENERAL VIDES
CASANOVA. GENERAL VIDES AND COL. BUSTILLO ARE CLOSE PERSONALLY
AND HAVE CONSIDERABLE MUTUAL PROFESSIONAL RESPECT.)

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4. [REDACTED] IF THE RUMOR OF LOPEZ NUILA BEING
PROMOTED TO GENERAL BY PRESIDENT DUARTE HAD BEEN TRUE, THE
MILITARY COMBAT OFFICERS, INCLUDING CHIEF OF THE JOINT GENERAL
STAFF, COLONEL ADOLFO ONCECIFERO ((BLANDON)), WOULD HAVE

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SUPPORTED A COUP ATTEMPT.

[REDACTED]

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COLONEL BLANDON WILL REPLACE GENERAL VIDES CASANOVA AS THE
MINISTER OF DEFENSE WHEN THE LATER RETIRES IN 1985.

[REDACTED]

COLONEL BUSTILLO, ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF

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GENERAL VIDES CASANOVA, WILL BECOME THE CHIEF OF THE JOINT GENERAL
STAFF REPLACING COLONEL BLANDON.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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