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Document [redacted] Subject: : BELIEF OF SALVADORAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE THAT HE HAS SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO EFFECT THE REMOVAL OF A POLITICAL OPPONENT WHO IS A KEY ARMY COMMANDER [redacted]

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EXCLUSIVE DISSEMINATION TO ADDRESSEES LISTED AT END OF REPORT

-----DIST : 4 JANUARY 1983

COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR
SUBJ : BELIEF OF SALVADORAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE THAT HE HAS SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO EFFECT THE REMOVAL OF A POLITICAL OPPONENT WHO IS A KEY ARMY COMMANDER

DOI : [redacted]

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SOURCE : [redacted]

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TEXT: 1. ON 3 JANUARY 1983, GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)),

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MINISTER OF DEFENSE, REAFFIRMED HIS INTENTION TO TRANSFER ABROAD LTC. SIGFRIEDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDER OF CABANAS DEPARTMENT, BECAUSE OF OCHOA'S OUTSPOKEN OPPOSITION TO GARCIA AND HIS CLOSE ALIGNMENT WITH ROBERTO ((D'AUBUISSON)), HEAD OF THE NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENA) AND PRESIDENT OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. GARCIA HAS DECIDED TO ASSIGN OCHOA AS MILITARY ATTACHE TO URUGUAY, REPLACING COL. ARISTIDES ((TOVAR)) MOLINA, WHO RECENTLY RETURNED TO EL SALVADOR.

2. ON 2-3 FEBRUARY 1983, GARCIA AND HIS CLOSE ALLY, COL. RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA, CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF, PRIVATELY DISCUSSED PLANS FOR TRANSFERRING OCHOA WITH THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS, SOME OF WHOM SUPPORTED THE DECISION, WHILE NONE EXPRESSED OPPOSITION: GENERAL EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GUARD; LTC. JAIME ERNESTO ((FLORES)), COMMANDER OF SAN MIGUEL DEPARTMENT; LTC. MIGUEL ALFREDO ((VASCONCELOS)), COMMANDER OF USULUTAN DEPARTMENT; LTC. DOMINGO ((MONTERROSA)), COMMANDER OF THE ATACATL BATTALION;

LTC. OSCAR RODOLFO ((CAMPOS)) AMAYA, COMMANDER OF THE CAVALRY REGIMENT; COL. ANTONIO ((LOPEZ)) NUILA, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL POLICE; LTC. RAMON ANTONIO ((MORALES)) RUIZ, COMMANDER OF LA UNION DEPARTMENT AND COL. FRANCISCO ((MORAN)), DIRECTOR OF THE TREASURY POLICE.

3. WHILE GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA EXPECT SOME ADVERSE REACTION TO THE TRANSFER OF OCHOA, THEY REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT THEY HAVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO CONTROL ANY OPPOSITION WHICH MAY DEVELOP IN THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. HOWEVER, BOTH GARCIA AND FLORES LIME EXPECT A SUBSTANTIAL PROTEST FROM D'AUBUISSON, SUPPORTED BY ARENA MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

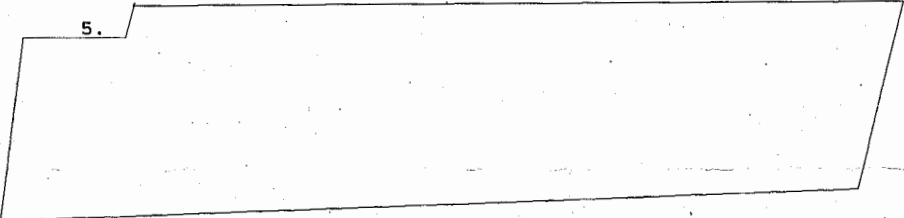
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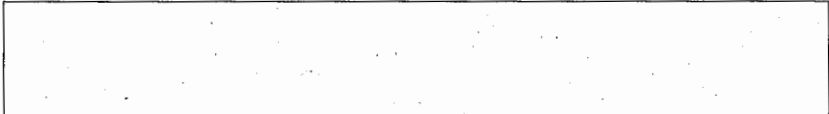
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4. GARCIA PLANS TO REPLACE OCHOA WITH LTC. RENE EMILIO ((PONCE)), SUBDIRECTOR OF THE TREASURY POLICE, BASED ON PONCE'S LOYALTY TO GARCIA AND PROFESSIONAL ABILITIES. PONCE WILL BE REPLACED BY LTC. JUAN CARLOS ((CARRILLO)) SCHLENKER, CURRENTLY EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF CUSCATLAN DEPARTMENT. THESE AND OTHER PERSONNEL TRANSFERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON 6 JANUARY IN A MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ORDER. FLORES LIMA IS CONFIDENT THAT GARCIA WILL ACCEPT HIS PREFERENCE TO REMAIN AS CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF, DESPITE GARCIA'S DESIRE THAT FLORES LIME FILL THE SUBSECRETARY OF DEFENSE POSITION LEFT VACANT BY THE CAPTURE OF COL. ADOLFO ((CASTILLO)).

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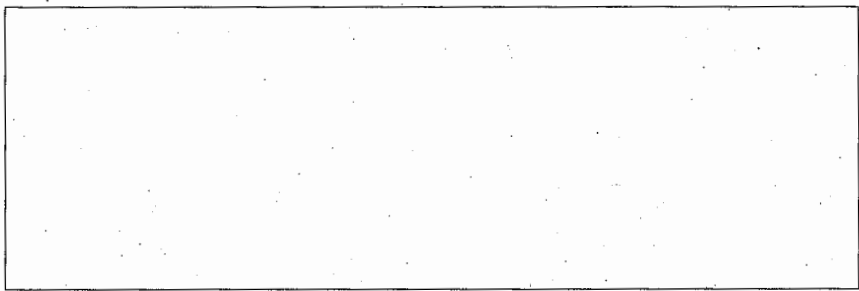


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