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Document [redacted] Subject: ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL/MILITARY SITUATION OVER
NEXT FEW MONTHS 48131 [redacted] MIDB

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TO: PRIORITY DIRECTOR.

~~WNINTEL~~ INTEL SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL/MILITARY SITUATION OVER
NEXT FEW MONTHS

REF: A. DIRECTOR 326780* (b)(1)
B. [redacted] (b)(3) NatSecAct

1. PER REF A REQUEST, [redacted] OFFERS FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT (b)(1)
OF SITUATION OVER NEXT FEW MONTHS WITH ATTENTION TO CURRENT (b)(3) NatSecAct
STATE OF THE SALVADORAN LEADERSHIP, AS WELL AS OUR VIEWS
ON THE LIKELY COURSE THE LEADERSHIP WILL TAKE IN THE
FORSEEABLE FUTURE. WE BELIEVE THAT REF B CONTINUES TO
CONTAIN VALID COMMENTS ON THE STATE OF THE SALVADORAN
LEADERSHIP, AND ON THE SALVADORAN POLITICAL-MILITARY SCENE
IN GENERAL AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A COMPANION PIECE TO
THIS ONE.

2. THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE SALVADORAN
POLITICAL SCENE CONTINUES TO BE THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT.
MINISTER OF DEFENSE GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA))
IS CLEARLY THE MOST POWERFUL MEMBER OF THE MILITARY AND
HAS PUBLICLY LINKED HIMSELF WITH A CONTINUATION OF THE
REFORMS INITIATED BY THE JRG. GARCIA HAS ALSO CONSISTENTLY
BACKED PRESIDENT ALVARO ((MAGANA)), WHO IN TURN SUPPORTS
GARCIA'S POLICIES. CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH GARCIA IS
THE CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF, COLONEL
RAFAEL ((FLORES)) LIMA. GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA ARE GENERALLY
REGARDED BY THE SALVADORAN OFFICER CORPS AS A TEAM, A
PERCEPTION WHICH WE BELIEVE IS CORRECT.

3. IN OUR VIEW, GENERAL GARCIA AND COLONEL FLORES LIMA
ARE IN NO IMMEDIATE DANGER OF LOSING THEIR POSITIONS IN THE
HIGH COMMAND. NONETHELESS, THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS

WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES WHICH WOULD LIKE TO SEE GARCIA
OUSTED, AND, IN THE CASE OF ONE OFFICER GROUP, FLORES LIMA AS WELL.

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AS WE SEE IT, THERE ARE THREE GROUPS IN THE ARMED FORCES, IMPELLED BY SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT MOTIVES. THESE GROUPS ARE:

A. OFFICER CORPS SYMPATHIZERS OF THE NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENA), PARTY AND ITS LEADER, ROBERTO ((D'AUBUISSON)). THIS GROUP OF OFFICERS WHICH WE CONSIDER POSES THE GREATEST LONG-TERM THREAT TO GARCIA AS WELL AS FLORES LIMA, CONTAINS TWO OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FIELD COMMANDERS IN THE ARMED FORCES, LTC. SIGFRIEDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDER OF CABANAS DEPARTMENT, AND LTC. JOSE DOMINGO ((MONTERROSA)), COMMANDER OF THE ATLCATL BATTALION. COL. NICOLAS ((CARRANZA)), DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGENCY (ANTEL), WHO IS CLOSELY ALLIED WITH D'AUBUISSON AND ARENA, IS VIEWED BY GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA AS THE KEY ELEMENT IN THIS GROUP. ALL ARE PERSONALLY CLOSE TO D'AUBUISSON. THESE OFFICERS OBJECT TO GARCIA'S AND FLORES LIMA'S PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT OF LAND REFORM POLICIES, WHICH THEY FEEL IDENTIFIES THE ARMED FORCES WITH SUCH POLICIES. ADDITIONALLY, THE RIGHTIST OFFICERS ARE CRITICAL OF GARCIA'S HANDLING OF THE WAR AND ARE CONVINCED THAT GARCIA DEVOTES TOO MUCH TIME TO POLITICS AND NOT ENOUGH TO STRATEGY AND SUPPORT FOR FIELD UNITS. ON THE LATTER POINT, THEIR CRITICISM IS MORE AGAINST GARCIA THAN FLORES LIMA.

B. A SECOND GROUP OF ARMY OFFICERS FOCUSES CRITICISM ON GARCIA, RATHER THAN FLORES LIMA, PRIMARILY ON PROFESSIONAL MILITARY GROUNDS. MOST OF THESE OFFICERS SUPPORT THE ECONOMIC REFORMS AND ARE NOT IN ARENA'S ORBIT OF INFLUENCE. IN FACT, MANY VIEW D'AUBUISSON WITH DISDAIN. HOWEVER, THEY ALSO ARE CONCERNED OVER GARCIA'S MANAGEMENT OF THE WAR. THEY COMPLAIN OF GARCIA'S INFREQUENT CONTACT AND EXCHANGES WITH FIELD COMMANDERS. THESE OFFICERS WOULD PREFER A MINISTER OF DEFENSE WITH MORE FIELD EXPERIENCE REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL LEANINGS. THEY ALSO TEND TO SHARE A PERCEPTION THAT GARCIA IS NOT PROSECUTING THE WAR VIGOROUSLY, THAT HE HAS NOT DEvised A COHESIVE NATIONAL STRATEGY, PRIMARILY BECAUSE HE IS DISTRACTED BY HIS EFFORTS TO MONITOR AND INFLUENCE THE POLITICAL PROCESS.

C. A THIRD, BUT SMALLER AND LESS SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION GROUP IS COMPRISED OF JUNIOR OFFICERS WITH LIBERAL SENTIMENTS WHO DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GARCIA IS SUFFICIENTLY COMMITTED TO LAND REFORM AND TO CORRECTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE ARMED FORCES. THESE JUNIOR OFFICERS BELIEVE THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD BE A VANGUARD OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REFORMS, POSSIBLY TO INCLUDE USE OF THE ARMED FORCES IN A CIVIC ACTION ROLE. THE EXTENT OF JUNIOR OFFICER DISSATISFACTION WITH GARCIA IS UNCERTAIN. HOWEVER, THE JUNIOR OFFICERS DO NOT APPEAR ORGANIZED AND THERE ARE NO IDENTIFIABLE LEADERS.

4. THE MOST ORGANIZED OF THE ABOVE THREE GROUPS APPEARS TO BE THE PRO-ARENA FORCE DIRECTED BY CARRANZA, OCHOA AND MONTERROSA. ARENA REPRESENTATIVES, INCLUDING RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS, HAVE ACTIVELY CAMPAIGNED AMONG THE OFFICER CORPS TO INCREASE ANTI-GARCIA SENTIMENT. NONETHELESS, GARCIA IS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY FLORES LIMA WHO ENJOYS CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE IN THE NON-ARENA OFFICER GROUPING. GARCIA IS SHREWD AND WELL INFORMED AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO

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SUCCESSFULLY WEATHER THE CRITICISM. REGARDLESS, VIRTUALLY ALL ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES SEEM TO REALIZE THAT AN ACTUAL MILITARY COUP AGAINST THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE WOULD BE DISASTROUS AND WOULD PROBABLY FORCE AN END TO AMERICAN MILITARY AID. ADDITIONALLY, GARCIA AND FLORES LIMA ARE INCREASINGLY MORE SENSITIVE TO THE PROBLEM. THEY ARE MOVING DECISIVELY TO REINFORCE THEIR POSITION IN THE ARMED FORCES THROUGH A SERIES OF PERSONAL VISITS TO UNITS IN THE FIELD AND BY DIRECT CONFRONTATION OF OPPOSITION OFFICERS, INCLUDING BOTH OCHOA AND MONTERROSA. GARCIA IS ALSO WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES TO UNDERCUT ARENA. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE THAT IF GARCIA MAINTAINS THE WILL TO REMAIN AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE, HIS POSITION WILL REMAIN SECURE FOR THE NEAR TERM. IF, HOWEVER, GARCIA TIRES OF THE INTRIGUES WITHIN THE OFFICER CORPS, HE MAY CHOOSE TO ABDICATE HIS POSITION. IN THIS RESPECT, ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION IN THE PAST GARCIA HAS CONFIDED TO FLORES LIMA THAT HE WAS DISPOSED TO RESIGN HIS POSITION IF DIRECTLY CONFRONTED BY SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION FORCES. GARCIA APPEARS TO HAVE ADOPTED A MORE AGGRESSIVE STANCE LATELY BUT IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE MAY AGAIN BECOME DISPIRITED AND RETIRE. WITH THIS CAVEAT NOTED, IN OUR VIEW IT IS FAR MORE LIKELY THAT GARCIA WILL CONTINUE IN HIS PRESENT POSITION FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

MS ONUE, HE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY ENTIRELY DIVORCE HIMSELF FROM SALVADORAN POLITICS AND JOIN HIS FAMILY PRESENTLY RESIDING IN THE UNITED STATES. IF GARCIA RESIGNS, WE BELIEVE IT IS LIKELY THAT FLORES LIMA WILL ALSO STEP DOWN, MOST LIKELY TO PURSUE PRIVATE BUSINESS INTERESTS IN EL SALVADOR.

6. A PROBABLE SUCCESSOR TO GARCIA FOR THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE POST IS GENERAL ((VIDES)) CASANOVA, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GUARD. VIDES IS WEDELY RESPECTED THROUGHOUT THE ARMED FORCES. HOWEVER, THE MORE ORGANIZED AND FORCEFUL ARENA-LINKED GROUP COULD BE EXPECTED TO PROMOTE COL. CARRANZA.

7. ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE OF THE SALVADORAN LEADERSHIP, PRESIDENT DR. ALVARO ((MAGANA)) CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN IN HIS POSITION UNTIL THE NEXT ELECTIONS. TO DATE, MAGANA HAS BEEN REASONABLY SUCCESSFUL IN KEEPING THE GOVERNMENT ON A CENTRIST COURSE, DESPITE THE CONSIDERABLE MANEUVERINGS OF D'AUBUISSON AND ARENA. EVEN SO, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) IS DISAPPOINTED WITH MAGANA AND FEELS THAT HE IS NOT PURSUING WITH SUFFICIENT VIGOR THE REFORMIST POLICIES INSTITUTED BY THE JRG. ADDITIONALLY, THE PDC FEELS THAT MAGANA HAS FAILED TO FORCEFULLY CONDEMN THE CONTINUING ASSASSINATIONS OF PDC OFFICIALS AT THE HANDS OF RIGHTWING TERRORISTS, MANY OF WHOM ARE MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES. ACCORDINGLY, SOME ELEMENTS OF THE PDC, INCLUDING FORMER PRESIDENT JOSE NAPOLEON ((DUARTE)), ARE DISPOSED TO HAVE THE PDC LEAVE THE COALITION GOVERNMENT AND GO INTO OPPOSITION. OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE PARTY, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THE PDC MUST REMAIN IN THE GOVERNMENT TO RETAIN ITS INVLUENCE. A PDC WITHDRAWAL FROM THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALLOW ARENA TO INCREASE ITS INFLUENCE IN THE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

8. ARENA MAY BE THE MOST COHESIVE OF ALL THE SALVADORAN POLITICAL PARTIES AT THIS TIME AND

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IN OUR VIEW WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE FORCE WORKING TO LIMIT REFORMIST POLICY. SIMILARLY, D'AUBUISSON CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO ENGAGE IN BEHIND-THE-SCENES MANEUVERS TO LURE ARMED FORCES COMMANDERS INTO THE ARENA RANKS, BOTH TO UNDERCUT GARCIA AND TO INCREASE HIS OWN POLITICAL POSITION.

9. NO FILE. [REDACTED] (b)(1)

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CDO COMMENT: *REFERENCES PREDATE CDS STORAGE.