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R 141435Z JUN 88  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0765  
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Oscar Olson, Senior  
Reviewer

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 SAN SALVADOR 07902

LIMA FOR MCFARLAND

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, ES  
SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY: A PROFILE

1. (U) SUMMARY

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DURING ITS SCHEDULED SESSION ON JUNE 9, THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FILLED THE REMAINING TWO  
POSITIONS ON THE DIRECTORATE WITH THE INCORPORATION  
OF JULIO ADOLFO REY PRENDES AS SECOND VICE PRESIDENT  
AND DOLORES EDUVIGES HENRIQUEZ AS SECRETARY. BOTH  
ARE MEMBERS OF THE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY  
(PDC). RUMORS THAT THE DIRECTORATE WOULD BE EXPANDED  
TO 11 MEMBERS TO ACCOMODATE OTHERS FROM THE PDC OR  
PCN PROVED UNFOUNDED. ALTHOUGH ARENA LEADERS HAD  
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STATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER, THEY  
ALSO SAID PUBLICLY THAT AN INCREASE WOULD MEAN AN  
INCREASE IN THE BUDGET, AS EACH DIRECTOR EARNS 2000  
COLONES (USD400) EXTRA AND IS ALLOWED A SECRETARY AND  
OTHER PRIVILEGES. FOLLOWING IS AN OVERVIEW OF THE  
NEW ASSEMBLY AND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON SOME OF  
ITS KEY MEMBERS. END SUMMARY.

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2. (C) THE DIRECTORATE

THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY, RICARDO ALBERTO ALVARENGA VALDIVIESO, A 56-YEAR-OLD WIDOWER (HIS WIFE DIED ON ELECTION DAY), IS AN ECONOMIST WITH EXPERIENCE IN BOTH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR. A 1969 GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, HE HAS DIRECTED HIS INTERESTS TO PUBLIC FINANCE AND INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE. HE WORKED AT THE TREASURY MINISTRY FOR 14 YEARS AND AT THE ECONOMICS MINISTRY FOR 5, SERVING SOME OF HIS TIME AS VICE MINISTER OF ECONOMY. HE HAS BEEN GENERAL MANAGER OF SEVERAL PRIVATE COMPANIES, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR OF THE SALVADORAN INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION (ASI), AND ECONOMIC CONSULTANT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. HE ALSO SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN INTEGRATION PROGRAM AND AS A MEMBER OF THE CORTE DE CUENTAS (ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO THE GAO). ALVARENGA, WHILE NOT A FOUNDING MEMBER OF ARENA, HAS BEEN A PARTY MEMBER ALMOST SINCE ITS BEGINNING AND WAS ELECTED TO THE ASSEMBLY IN 1985. AS A DEPUTY HE SERVED ON THE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FINANCE COMMISSIONS. ALVARENGA IS VIEWED BY MOST AS A CONFIDENTIAL

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MODERATE WHO HAS NOT BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED IN PARTY POLITICS. HE IS ARTICULATE AND PATIENT AND, IF HE CAN KEEP A HOLD ON MORE IMPETUOUS MEMBERS, SHOULD BE ABLE TO MANAGE THE LEGISLATURE IN A HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL MANNER. FROM THE BEGINNING HE ANNOUNCED THAT SESSIONS WOULD BEGIN ON TIME AND THAT ASSEMBLY EMPLOYEES WOULD KEEP THEIR JOBS, WELCOME NEWS TO ALL.

3. (C) WITH ALVARENGA ON THE GOVERNING BODY ARE EIGHT OTHER DEPUTIES WITH VARYING CAPABILITIES AND AMBITIONS. VICE PRESIDENT SIGIFREDO OCHOA PEREZ, A FORMER ARMY COLONEL, IS A NEW-COMER TO ARENA AND TO POLITICS. HIS POLITICAL AMBITIONS ARE NO SECRET, AND HE HAS QUICKLY ASSUMED A LEADERSHIP POSITION IN THE ASSEMBLY. HE TOOK FOR HIMSELF THE JOB OF DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL, WHICH GIVES HIM DAILY CONTACT WITH ALL ASSEMBLY EMPLOYEES. HE HAS ALSO TAKEN THE LEAD BY INVITING LEADERS OF GROUPS DEMONSTRATING OUTSIDE THE LEGISLATURE TO COME IN AND TALK AND BY STATING PUBLICLY THAT THE ASSEMBLY IS OPEN TO ANYONE WHO HAS A PROBLEM. HE IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THE SECOND VICE PRESIDENT, JULIO ADOLFO REY PRENDES, IS ONE OF EL SALVADOR'S BEST KNOWN POLITICAL LEADERS AND A CONTENDER FOR THE PDC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION. REY PRENDES IS A GIFTED PARLIAMENTARIAN, SLOW TO ANGER, AND ENJOYS THE GIVE AND TAKE OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE.

4. (C) THE REMAINING MEMBERS, WHILE LESSER FIGURES, HAVE CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN THE LEGISLATURE AND IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR. LUIS ROBERTO ANGULO SAMAYOA

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IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR. LUIS ROBERTO ANGULO SAMAYOA IS A BUSINESSMAN-FARMER OF MODEST MEANS AND AN ALLY OF ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON. ANGULO IS HONEST AND DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT PROBLEMS IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. HE IS ALSO QUICK TO EXCITE AND INFLUENCED BY

D'AUBUISSON, HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW. MERCEDES GLORIA SALGUERO GROSS, A WEALTHY SANTA ANA BUSINESSWOMAN, IS OUTSPOKEN AND HONEST. SHE IS STILL ANGRY AT LAND LOST DUE TO AGRARIAN REFORM AND IS A LOYAL SUPPORTER OF FREDY CRISTIANI. SHE CAN BE EXPECTED TO ENGAGE IN HEATED DISCUSSIONS, DURING WHICH SHE MINCES NO WORDS. MAURICIO ZABLAH IS A SANTA TECLA BUSINESSMAN AND  
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MEMBER OF AN INFLUENTIAL BUSINESS FAMILY. ZABLAH TALKS LITTLE AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO REPRESENT BUSINESS INTERESTS IN THE ASSEMBLY. RAUL MANUEL SOMOZA ALFARO IS A SONSONATE LAWYER. HE PARTICIPATED LITTLE DURING THE PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY AND IS BELIEVED TO HAVE STRONG CONNECTIONS WITH SOME ARMY OFFICERS. HIS SON IS MARRIED TO THE DAUGHTER OF VICE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SECURITY GEN. RINALDO GOLCHER.

5. (C) NESTOR ARTURO RAMIREZ, A WORKER FROM MORAZAN, MADE HEADLINES WHEN HE DEFECTED FROM THE PCN, FROM WHICH HE WAS ELECTED, TO ARENA. AS A RESULT THE POLITICAL IMPASSE IN THE ASSEMBLY WAS BROKEN AND THE ASSEMBLY FINALLY INSTALLED. RAMIREZ REPRESENTS ARENA'S 31ST VOTE (THE FINAL LA UNION DEPUTY HAS NOT YET BEEN DECIDED) AND IS CLOSELY WATCHED BY HIS NEW COLLEAGUES. HIS FORMER PCN COLLEAGUES AND THE PDC WOULD LIKE TO LURE HIM AWAY FROM ARENA, AN UNLIKELY EVENT FOR THE MOMENT. ROUNDING OUT THE DIRECTORATE IS FORMER VICE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR DOLORES EDUVIGES HENRIQUEZ. A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF REY PRENDES, "LOLA" WAS REMOVED AS VICE MINISTER FOR ALLEGED CORRUPTION AND GIVEN A JOB AS A PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR. SHE IS CONFLICTIVE AND USUALLY ANGRY, BUT IS A GOOD GRASS ROOTS POLITICIAN. HER SEATING NEXT TO GLORIA SALGUERO GROSS COULD LEAD TO INTERESTING ENCOUNTERS ON THE DIRECTORATE.

6. (C) THE REST OF THE ASSEMBLY  
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THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY ARE A MIXED LOT, REPRESENTING SEVERAL PROFESSIONS AND INTERESTS.  
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SEVEN OF THE SIXTY DEPUTIES ARE WOMEN, TWO OF WHOM ARE FORMER GOVERNORS (MORAZAN AND USULUTAN). SIX DEPUTIES ARE LAWYERS, FIVE ARE TEACHERS, THREE ARE RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS, SIXTEEN ARE BUSINESSMEN OR

ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE. THERE ARE FOUR ACCOUNTANTS, ONE AGRONOMIST, ONE ENGINEER, ONE DENTIST, ONE PSYCHOLOGIST, ONE ARCHITECT, ONE VETERINARIAN, ONE COMMERCIAL PILOT, AND ONE STUDENT. THE REMAINING MEMBERS ARE FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. FLOOR LEADERS WILL INCLUDE ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON AND FREDY CRISTIANI (ARENA), RAFAEL MORAN CASTANEDA AND HUGO CARRILLO (PCN), FORMER ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT GUILLERMO ANTONIO GUEVARA LACAYO AND MAURICIO MAZIER (PDC). ALL ARE EXPERIENCED POLITICIANS AND, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CRISTIANI, VETERAN PARLIAMENTARIANS. (CRISTIANI WAS A SUBSTITUTE IN THE PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY AND PARTICIPATED LITTLE.)

(C) COMMENT

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THE ASSEMBLY IS NOW FULLY FUNCTIONING. OPPOSITION MEMBERS ARE INSTALLED ON ALL COMMISSIONS, AND MEMBERS OF THE DIRECTORATE HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED THEIR SPECIFIC TASKS. ALVARENGA IS A RELATIVE UNKNOWN, BUT HE IS OFF TO A GOOD START. IN A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR, POLITICS WILL PLAY A MAJOR ROLE. TWO CONFIRMED (ARENA AND PCN) AND ONE POTENTIAL CANDIDATE (PDC) ARE MEMBERS AND WILL USE THE ASSEMBLY AS A POLITICAL TOOL. DEBATE SHOULD BE LIVELY, AS ARENA KNOWS THAT IT MUST EFFECT POSITIVE CHANGE OR LOSE THE MOMENTUM IT GAINED IN THE MARCH 20 ELECTIONS. THE PDC MUST PORTRAY ITSELF AS WORKING IN THE INTEREST OF THE

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PEOPLE. THE PCN WILL PLAY A MINOR ROLE, AS ITS SIX VOTES CAN DO LITTLE TO HELP ANYONE. THEY WILL, HOWEVER, BE VOCAL. HIGH ON THE AGENDA ARE REFORMS OF EXISTING LAWS, INCLUDING BANKING AND AGRARIAN REFORM, INVESTIGATION OF CORRUPTION IN GOVERNMENT, ECONOMIC REFORM AND LAWS TO STIMULATE EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTION. IN THE NEXT YEAR ALLIANCES WILL SURELY BE FORMED AND RE-FORMED, ALL VERY MUCH A NORMAL PART OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. IT WILL NOT BE DULL.

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