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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4071

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 03 SAN SALVADOR 12311

NODIS **DECAPTIONED**

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PINS, PGOV, MCAP, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: MOD VIDES VOICES COMMANDERS' CONCERNS TO
- DUARTE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 12213

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Oscar Olson, Senior
Reviewer**

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY

I MET, SEPTEMBER 18, THE SECOND DAY IN A ROW, WITH
MINISTER OF DEFENSE VIDES CASANOVA ON SALVADORAN
OFFICER CORPS' PERCEPTIONS AND COMPLAINTS ABOUT
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) MACHINATIONS,
UNFAIR TREATMENT UNDER THE LAW, UNFAIR AMNESTY
PROPOSALS, GOES' PAYMENTS TO WITNESSES, CIVILIAN
EFFORTS TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE SECURITY FORCES AND
DISSATISFACTION WITH VICE MINISTER OF PUBLIC
SECURITY LOPEZ NUILA. VIDES PLANNED TO RECOMMEND TO
PRESIDENT DUARTE LATER THE SAME DAY THAT HE CONSIDER
MOVING LOPEZ NUILA TO A HIGH RANKING CIVILIAN
POSITION, AND THAT PROGRESS ON CREATING A DISTINCT
PUBLIC SECURITY SERVICE CONTINUE, INVESTIGATIONS OF
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HUMAN RIGHTS CASES OF MILITARY OFFICERS CONTINUE BUT
WITHOUT UNDUE PUBLICITY AND ACCORDING TO LAW, BUT
CORRUPT CIVILIANS BE PROSECUTED AS WELL. THE KEY
OFFICERS, SOME OF WHOM ARE IMPLICATED IN CELEBRATED
HUMAN RIGHTS CASES, ARE SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THEIR
GRIEVANCES WITHIN THE PARAMETERS OF THE
CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM AND ARE LIKELY TO GET SOME
SATISFACTION, ALTHOUGH SIGNS OF DISCONTENT WITHIN
THE ARMED FORCES ARE UNLIKELY TO DISAPPEAR. END
SUMMARY.

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3. VIDES AND LARIOS MEET WITH AMBASSADOR

I MET AGAIN ON SEPTEMBER 18 WITH GEN. CARLOS EUGENIO VIDES CASANOVA, THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, WHO DISCUSSED HIS PRESENTATION OF HIS OFFICERS' COMPLAINTS TO THE PRESIDENT ON SEPTEMBER 17. HE PREVIEWED WITH ME HIS RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE GIVEN TO DUARTE IN A FOLLOW-UP MEETING LATER ON SEPTEMBER 18 AND I WAS ABLE TO MODERATE HIS RECOMMENDATIONS. GEN. RAFAEL LARIOS, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, WAS PRESENT AT THE MEETING.

4. PDC IS THE THREAT

VIDES RELATED THAT THE ASSEMBLED OFFICERS ALLEGED THAT THE RULING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) WANTS TO WEAKEN THE ARMED FORCES (ESAF). VIDES SAID SOME OFFICERS FEAR THE PDC MAY CUT A DEAL WITH THE FMLN/FDR HARMFUL TO THE ARMED FORCES. ACCORDING TO THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, MANY OFFICERS VIEW THE
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SITUATION IN BLACK AND WHITE TERMS: EITHER THE ARMED FORCE MUST ACT TO PROTECT ITSELF OR THEY (THE OFFICERS) WILL FIND THEMSELVES CAUGHT IN A REPLICATION OF THE ARGENTINE CASE. VIDES NOTED THREE COMMON COMPLAINT AREAS EMERGING FROM THE GROUP:

- PURCHASE OF WITNESSES: THE GOES IS ALLEGEDLY
 - WILLING TO PAY \$80,000 TO A WITNESS IN THE ROMERO CASE AND A NEW WITNESS IN THE LAS HOJAS CASE CLAIMS COL. GONZALEZ ARAUJO WAS PRESENT AT THE MASSACRE CONTRARY TO THE FACTS AND OTHER TESTIMONY.
- UNFAIR AMNESTY PROPOSAL: AMNESTY WILL APPLY TO
 - THE GUERRILLAS WHO HAVE MURDERED AND SLAUGHTERED BUT NOT ESAF MEMBERS IMPLICATED IN HUMAN RIGHTS CASES.
- UNEQUAL TREATMENT UNDER THE LAW: MILITARY
 - OFFICERS ARE BEING INVESTIGATED AND PROSECUTED WHILE CORRUPT CIVILIAN OFFICIALS ARE NOT.

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5. A CASE IN POINT: THE SECURITY FORCES

VIDES EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT THE OFFICERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING WERE DISTURBED ABOUT THE INCREASING INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY

FORCES FROM THE MILITARY FORCES, AND WERE PIQUED
PERSONALLY ABOUT VICE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4072

SECRET SECTION 02 OF 03 SAN SALVADOR 12311

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SUBJECT: MOD VIDES VOICES COMMANDERS' CONCERNS TO

COL. CARLOS REYNALDO LOPEZ NUILA. THEY OPINED THAT
PRESIDENT DUARTE CREATED THE SECURITY FORCES AGAINST
THE WISHES OF THE ESAF, AND CLAIMED THE INTENT WAS
TO DIVIDE THE UNIFORMED SERVICES AND PUT THE
SECURITY FORCES UNDER THE CONTROL OF A CIVILIAN
MINISTRY. THE OFFICERS VOICED THEIR OPPOSITION TO
THE CONSTRUCTION NOW UNDERWAY OF THE SEPARATE POLICE
COMPLEX AND ACADEMY AND THE LATEST DIVERSION OF \$9.3
MILLION IN MAP FUNDS FOR THE POLICE, INCLUDING
PROVISION OF THREE HELICOPTERS TO THE SECURITY
FORCES, RATHER THAN TO THE AIR FORCE WHICH COULD
PROVIDE DIRECT SUPPORT TO THE POLICE WITH THE
HELICOPTERS. THEY CLAIMED THAT THE MINISTRY OF
JUSTICE'S SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU) IS

CONTROLLED BY LOPEZ NUILA AND IS AIMED SOLELY AT MILITARY OFFICERS. MUCH CRITICISM WAS FOCUSED AT LOPEZ NUILA, WHO HAS NEVER BEEN POPULAR AMONG THE OFFICER CORPS.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS CASES AS SOURCE OF DISCONTENT

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VIDES SINGLED OUT OFFICERS IMPLICATED IN HIGH PROFILE HUMAN RIGHTS CASES AS THE MAJOR INSTIGATORS OF DISCONTENT AND THE CRITICISMS DETAILED ABOVE. HE HIGHLIGHTED THAT MANY OF THE IMPLICATED OFFICERS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT FOLLOWING AMONG THE OFFICER CORPS. VIDES WENT THROUGH A LIST OF CASES (LAS HOJAS MASSACRE, ARCHBISHOP ROMERO ASSASSINATION, MIGUEL ANGEL RIVAS DISAPPEARANCE, LA LAGUNA NECK-CUTTING, AND DISAPPEARANCE OF SANTA ANA LABOR LEADERS) AND PAIRED UP IMPLICATED OFFICERS AND UNITS WITH THE CASES. DESCRIBING THE PERSONAL INTER-RELATIONSHIPS, HE WAS ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED OFFICERS AND KEY UNITS HAVE COME TOGETHER IN THEIR DISCONTENT ABOUT THESE CASES. VIDES ADDED THAT ROBERT D'AUBISSON AND FORMER COL. SIGIFREDO OCHOA PEREZ ARE FOSTERING DISCONTENT AMONG THE OFFICERS

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7. PERSONNEL CHANGES MAY AUGMENT UNCERTAINTY

VIDES WAS PREOCCUPIED ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF HIGH LEVEL CHANGES IN THE MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE. HE MENTIONED THAT GEN. ADOLFO BLANDON, CHIEF OF STAFF, HAD PERSONAL AND HEALTH PROBLEMS; THAT GEN. RAFAEL FLORES LIMA, VICE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, BADLY WANTED TO RETIRE; AND THAT THE OFFICER CORPS WAS DEMANDING LOPEZ NUILA'S OUSTER. THE DEPARTURE OF ALL THREE OF THESE OFFICERS WITHIN A SHORT TIME FRAME COULD HAVE DESTABILIZING CONSEQUENCES. HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SUCH CHANGES COULD FREE UP PRESSURES BY ALLOWING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENTS AND
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TRANSFERS.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS TO DUARTE

IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS SEPTEMBER 17 MEETING WITH THE OFFICERS, VIDES MET WITH THE PRESIDENT AND RECOUNTED THEIR COMPLAINTS. A SECOND VIDES-DUARTE MEETING WAS SCHEDULED FOR THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 18. VIDES PREVIEWED HIS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESIDENT WITH ME. I WAS ABLE TO SHAPE HIS RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESPECT TO CONTINUING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS OF MILITARY OFFICERS AND ON THE NECESSITY TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THE POLICE AS A DISTINCT ORGANIZATION. BUT HE DID NOT FEEL HE COULD BACK OFF FROM A PROPOSAL TO REMOVE LOPEZ NUILA (WHOM HE LIKES AND ADMIRES) WITHOUT SIGNIFICANTLY WEAKENING HIS OWN CONTROL OVER THE ARMED FORCES. HIS PROPOSALS TO PRESIDENT DUARTE WERE TO BE:

- CONTINUE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS
 - OF MILITARY OFFICERS ACCORDING TO THE LAW;

- STOP "PROPAGANDA" ABOUT SPECIFIC CASES INVOLVING
 - MILITARY OFFICERS, ESPECIALLY BY ATTORNEY GENERAL
 - GIRON FLORES, UNTIL THE CASES ARE COMPLETE AND
 - PRESENTED TO THE COURTS FOR TRIAL AND STOP
 - PAYMENTS TO WITNESSES (THIS PRIMARILY CONCERNS
 - PAYMENTS TO A WITNESS IN THE ROMERO CASE
 - CURRENTLY RESIDING IN THE U.S. AND TO THE

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SUBJECT: MOD VIDES VOICES COMMANDERS' CONCERNS TO

- ERRONEOUS TESTIMONY OF THE RECENT WITNESS
- AGAINST COL. GONZALEZ ARAUJO IN THE LAS HOJAS
- CASE.);
-
- PROSECUTE CIVILIAN OFFENDERS AS WELL AS MILITARY
- ONES, PARTICULARLY IN CASES OF CORRUPTION;

- REMOVE LOPEZ NUILA, BUT GIVE HIM A MINISTRY,
- E.G. JUSTICE, OR AN EMBASSY;

- CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY
- FORCES UNDER A NEW VICE MINISTER AND DUARTE
- ASSURE ESAF THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND TO MOVE
- CONTROL TO A CIVILIAN MINISTRY.

9. COMMENT

THIS PROBLEM IS NOT GOING TO GO AWAY EASILY. LOPEZ
NUILA MAY HAVE TO BE REPLACED SO AS TO SAFEGUARD AND
CONTINUE THE EVOLUTION OF A PROFESSIONAL POLICE
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FORCE. DUARTE WILL BE RELUCTANT TO REMOVE LOPEZ
NUILA, BOTH BECAUSE OF ADMIRATION FOR LOPEZ NUILA
AND NOT WANTING TO YIELD TO PRESSURE. LOPEZ NUILA'S
DEPARTURE WOULD HURT OUR EFFORTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS,
UNLESS DUARTE WOULD APPOINT HIM TO ANOTHER IMPORTANT
POST WHERE HE COULD EXERCISE INFLUENCE IN THIS AREA,
SUCH AS MINISTER OF JUSTICE OR OF THE PRESIDENCY.
VIDES MAY HAVE LARIOS, WHO INCIDENTLY IS LOPEZ
NUILA'S COUSIN, IN MIND FOR THE VICE MINISTER OF
PUBLIC SECURITY SLOT, ALTHOUGH GENERAL GOLCHER MAY
BE THE ARMED FORCES CANDIDATE.

10. THE GUATEMALA PEACE PLAN IS AN IMPORTANT
ELEMENT IN THE ARMED FORCES' MALAISE. MOST OFFICERS
BELIEVE THAT THE SANDINISTAS AND THE FMLN/FDR WILL
IN THE END BENEFIT MORE FROM THE PLAN THAN WILL
SALVADORAN DEMOCRACY AND SECURITY. THE OFFICERS
STRESS THEIR WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT
DUARTE'S COMMITMENT FOR FULL SALVADORAN COMPLIANCE

BUT BELIEVE A NEGOTIATED CEASE-FIRE IS NOT CONSTITUTIONALLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE THE SALVADORAN CONSTITUTION DOES NOT PERMIT ANY NON-GOVERNMENTAL FORCE TO OCCUPY TERRITORY NOR TO MAINTAIN ARMS. THE OFFICERS FEAR THE AMNESTY WILL FREE GUERRILLA PRISONERS WHILE MILITARY REMAIN IN JAIL; AND THAT THE RETURN OF REFUGEES WILL FAVOR THE FMLN. OFFICERS SUSPECT THAT THOUGH SUPPORT FOR THE FMLN MAY SUBSIDE FOR AWHILE THAT THE SANDINISTAS WILL RENEW SUPPORT AFTER THE SANDINISTAS HAVE ATTAINED THEIR GOALS OF DISMANTLING THE DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE AND REMOVING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES.

11. LOPEZ NUILA TOLD DCM SEPTEMBER 19 THAT THE
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IMMEDIATE CRISIS AS IT CONCERNS HIM IS BEING PROVOKED BY ARCE BATTALLION COMMANDER STABEN WHO IS FEELING THE HEAT ON THE ROMERO CASE. SEVERAL KEY SINFONICA TANDAMATES ARE SUPPORTING STABEN.

12. GIVEN THIS SITUATION, GIRON FLORES SHOULD CONTINUE VIGOROUSLY TO INVESTIGATE THE HIGH PROFILE HUMAN RIGHTS CASES, BUT WITH LESS PUBLICITY UNTIL THE CASES ARE READY TO GO TO TRIAL.

13. AT PRESENT, I BELIEVE THAT THE KEY OFFICERS ARE TURNING TO VIDES CASANOVA AND THE ARMED FORCES AS AN INSTITUTION TO BROKER AN ACCOMODATION WITH THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, RATHER THAN SEEKING TO OVERTHROW DUARTE.

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