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SUBJ: DISCUSSION AMONG SALVADORAN BRIGADE AND OTHER
DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDERS CONCERNING DEMANDS MADE BY
THE KIDNAPPERS OF PRESIDENT DUARTE'S DAUGHTER

[REDACTED]

TEXT: 1. ON 25 SEPTEMBER 1985, COMMANDERS OF SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES (ESAF) BRIGADES AND OTHER ESAF DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDERS DISCUSSED THE DEMANDS MADE BY THE KIDNAPPERS OF PRESIDENT JOSE NAPOLEON ((DUARTE))'S DAUGHTER, INES GUADALUPE ((DUARTE)) DURAN. THESE OFFICERS HAD GATHERED AT THE ESAF JOINT GENERAL STAFF (EMCFA) HEADQUARTERS TO RECEIVE A BRIEFING ON THE SITUATION FROM PRESIDENT DUARTE. THIS DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE BEFORE DUARTE ARRIVED.

2. A CONSENSUS WAS REACHED THAT THE INSURGENTS CURRENTLY UNDER DETENTION IN MARIONA PRISON ARE ABLE TO MEET AND PLAN ACTIVITIES WITH COMPLETE SECURITY INSIDE THE PRISON WHERE THEY NO LONGER HAVE TO FEAR ATTACKS BY THE ARMED FORCES. SEVERAL SALVADORAN COMMANDERS COMMENTED THAT THEY WOULD PREFER TO RELEASE THE INSURGENT PRISONERS BECAUSE, NOW THAT THEY HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY IDENTIFIED, IT WOULD BE EASIER TO TRACK THEM DOWN AGAIN. IT WOULD DENY THEM THE SAFETY OF MARIONA TO PLAN THEIR ACTIVITIES AND THERE WAS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY OF CATCHING THEM IN AN AMBUSH OR OTHER MILITARY OPERATION. ALSO DISCUSSED WAS THE FACT THAT THE LAST GENERAL AMNESTY DID NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY.

3. THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDERS ALSO CAME TO AN AGREEMENT THAT IF ANY HARM WERE TO COME TO INES DUARTE, THEY DID NOT WANT TO FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR NOT HAVING SUPPORTED THE PRESIDENT IN HIS PLAN TO FREE INSURGENT PRISONERS TO OBTAIN HIS DAUGHTER'S RELEASE.

4. DURING THIS DISCUSSION, FOURTH BRIGADE COMMANDER COLONEL SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ WAS THE ONLY OFFICER TO EXPRESS STRONG OPPOSITION TO NEGOTIATING WITH THE KIDNAPPERS AND CAPITULATING TO THEIR DEMANDS. OCHOA GAVE DETAILED ARGUMENTS IN AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE THOSE PRESENT TO SUPPORT HIS POSITION. DURING THE SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT DUARTE, MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND PUBLIC SECURITY GENERAL CARLOS EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA ASKED WHETHER ANY OF THE OFFICERS OPPOSED THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER. OCHOA AGAIN WAS THE ONLY OFFICER TO SPEAK, BUT HE DID NOT EXPRESS DIRECT OPPOSITION OR SPEAK AS FORCEFULLY AS HE HAD WHEN ONLY HIS FELLOW BRIGADE AND OTHER DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDERS HAD BEEN PRESENT.

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