

SUBJ: SALVADORAN MILITARY REACTION TO EXCHANGING PRISONERS FOR
PRESIDENT DUARTE'S KIDNAPPED DAUGHTER AND RELATED PLANNING

DOI: 25 - 26 SEPTEMBER 1985

TEXT: 1. DURING MEETINGS WITH OFFICERS FROM THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES JOINT GENERAL STAFF (EMCFA) ON 24 SEPTEMBER 1985 AND WITH SALVADORAN BRIGADE COMMANDERS ON 25 SEPTEMBER, PRESIDENT JOSE NAPOLEON ((DUARTE)) RECEIVED SOLID SUPPORT FOR HIS PLAN TO RELEASE PRISONERS CURRENTLY IN THE CUSTODY OF THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RELEASE OF HIS DAUGHTER INES GUADALUPE ((DUARTE)) DURAN. THE ONLY EXPRESSION OF DISSENTION CAME FROM FOURTH BRIGADE COMMANDER COLONEL SIGFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ. OCHOA SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT GIVE IN TO THE DEMANDS OF THE KIDNAPPERS. EMCFA CHIEF GENERAL ADOLFO ONECIFERO ((BLANDON)) SUBSEQUENTLY REMARKED THAT HE HAD TAKEN OCHOA ASIDE AFTER THE SESSION AND WARNED HIM THAT HIS POSITION WAS UNWISE BUT OCHOA SEEMED UNIMPRESSED. (COMMENT: OCHOA PROBABLY BELIEVED HIS HARDLINE POSITION WOULD MEET WITH WIDE SUPPORT WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES. HE NOW FINDS HIMSELF VIRTUALLY ISOLATED, HOWEVER.)

2. GENERAL BLANDON ALSO STATED PRIVATELY THAT ONCE INES DUARTE IS RELEASED, THE ESAF PLANS TO LAUNCH A MAJOR OFFENSIVE OPERATION IN CHALATENANGO AND NORTHERN CUSCATLAN DEPARTMENTS. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE ESAF HAS CONCLUDED THAT POPULAR LIBERATION FORCES (FPL) GUERRILLAS, WHO THE ARMY BELIEVES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KIDNAPPING OF INES DUARTE, ARE BASED IN THOSE AREAS. HE ADDED THAT THE EMCFA IS CONSIDERING COORDINATING THIS OPERATION WITH THE HONDURAN ARMY TO PREVENT GUERRILLAS FROM RETREATING ACROSS THE BORDER TO REFUGEE CAMPS IN HONDURAS.