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Document: [redacted] Subject: 1. STATUS OF THE ARMED FORCES MAJOR SWEEP OPERATIONC 56516 [redacted] ISO81-7661585A  
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REPORT CLASS ~~SECRET~~  
COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR/HONDURAS  
SUBJECT: 1. STATUS OF THE ARMED FORCES MAJOR SWEEP OPERATION IN MORAZAN DEPARTMENT AFTER FOUR DAYS  
2. EVIDENCE THAT INSURGENT RADIO STATION "RADIO VENCEREMOS" WAS LOCATED 18 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF THE CITY OF PERQUIN IN MORAZAN DEPARTMENT (DOI: 6-9 DECEMBER 1981)

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1. ON 6 DECEMBER 1981, THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES INITIATED A TWO-PHASE, 4,000-MAN SWEEP OPERATION IN NORTHERN MORAZAN DEPARTMENT THAT IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY 24 DECEMBER 1981. [redacted] COMMENT: APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF THE SALVADORAN ARMY IS INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION,

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LEAVING SECURITY FORCES IN THE REMAINDER OF THE COUNTRY VERY THIN.) THE PRIMARY TARGET OF THE FIRST PHASE IS THE AREA SOUTHEAST OF PERQUIN (13-57-30N 88-09-40W) AND NORTH OF THE TOROLA RIVER. THE PRIMARY TARGET AREA OF THE SECOND PHASE OF THE OPERATION WILL BE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY WEST AND SOUTH OF CORINTO (13-48-30N 87-58-20W). OF PARTICULAR INTEREST IN THIS PHASE WILL BE THE VILLAGE OF VARILLA NEGRA (13-46-15N 88-00-50W) WHERE THE INSURGENTS ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN REGROUPING SINCE THE START OF THE OPERATION. THE SECOND PHASE OF THE OPERATION WILL COMMENCE IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION OF THE FIRST PHASE WHICH HAD NOT BEEN COMPLETED AS OF 9 DECEMBER 1981.

2. ON 7 AND 8 DECEMBER 1981, A TOTAL OF 1,400 TROOPS WERE AIRLIFTED BY HELICOPTERS INTO SAN FERNANDO (13-57-40N 88-11-50W), PERQUIN, AND JOATECA (13-53-40N 88-02-40W). THESE TROOPS WERE TO MOVE SLOWLY TO THE SOUTH, ACTING AS A BLOCKING FORCE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TROOPS MOVING NORTH FROM ALONG THE RIO TOROLO BETWEEN COORDINATES 15-50-20N/88-08-40W AND 15-46-20N/88-04-00W. HONDURAS HAS POSITIONED TWO BATTALIONS ALONG THE BORDER NORTH OF PERQUIN IN AN ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THE PRIMARY GUERRILLA ESCAPE ROUTE TO THE NORTH. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: PROVIDING A BLOCKING FORCE AGAINST GUERRILLAS ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE INTO HONDURAS WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH PREVIOUS HONDURAN MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE SALVADORAN ARMY.)

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3. BETWEEN 7 AND 9 DECEMBER, EVIDENCE WAS FOUND OF AN INSURGENT "RADIO VENCEREMOS" BROADCASTING STATION IN A HOUSE AT COORDINATES 88-04-30N 88-04-30W, 18 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF PERQUIN AND 14 KILOMETERS NORTH/NORTHEAST OF SAN FRANCISCO GOTERA (13-41-40N 88-06-20W). A SMALL BOX, ROUGHLY 0.5 METERS SQUARE, FULL OF ASSORTED PAPERS, INCLUDING SOME THAT DEALT WITH RADIO VENCEREMOS, WAS FOUND IN THE HOUSE. ALSO, AT LEAST ONE COIL OF CABLE WAS FOUND NEAR THE HOUSE. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: THE CABLE WAS PROBABLY USED AS CRY WIRE FOR THE BROADCASTING STATION ANTENNA.) ([REDACTED] COMMENT: RADIO VENCEREMOS MADE ITS LAST BROADCAST ON 7 DECEMBER ONE DAY AFTER THE START OF THE OPERATION.)

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4. AS OF 9 DECEMBER 1981, THE HEAVIEST FIGHTING HAD OCCURRED AT EL MOZOTE (13-53-5N 88-06-50W) WHERE 30 TO 35 INSURGENTS AND FOUR SALVADORAN SOLDIERS WERE KILLED. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: THE SALVADORAN SOLDIERS WERE IN HIGH SPIRITS DURING THE OPERATION BECAUSE OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF MEN INVOLVED IN THE SWEEP. THEY BELIEVE THAT LARGE NUMBERS WILL DECREASE THEIR CASUALTY RATE.)

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5. WHILE THE PRIMARY TARGET OF THE FIRST PHASE OF THE OPERATION IS SOUTHEAST OF PERQUIN, THE SOLDIERS WILL MOVE NORTH OF PERQUIN TOWARD THE HONDURAN BORDER. THESE TROOPS WILL LAUNCH FROM PERQUIN (80 SOLDIERS), SAN FERNANDO (80 TROOPS), AND TOROLA (13-54-50N 88-14-00W) WITH 30 TO 40 TROOPS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MOVEMENT IS TO FORCE THE INSURGENTS IN THIS AREA INTO THE HONDURAN BLOCKING FORCE ALONG THE BORDER.

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