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~~(S//NC/CIA-IUO/OC/NF)~~ SUBJECT: MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS IN THE AREA OF "EL BOLSON LA PILAS"

Central Intelligence Agency

09 March 1985

(b)(1)
(b)(3) NatSecAct

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~~(S//NC/CIA-IUO/OC/NF)~~ WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASS S E C R E T--WNINTEL--NOFORN-- NOCONTRACT--ORCON. DIST: 8 MARCH 1985 COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR/HONDURAS SUBJECT: MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS IN THE AREA OF "EL BOLSON LA PILAS"

SOURCE [redacted]

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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TEXT: 1. ON 23 FEBRUARY 1985 COLONEL SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE FOURTH INFANTRY BRIGADE OF THE SALVADORAN ARMY WITH HEADQUARTERS AT EL PARAISO (1406N 8904W), DEPARTMENT OF CHALATENANGO, MET WITH THE COMMANDING OFFICERS AND STAFFS OF THE SEVENTH AND TWELFTH

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BATTALIONS OF THE HONDURAN ARMY TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE COOPERATION IN MILITARY OPERATIONS, THE MEETING WAS HELD AT EL POY (1422N 8913W), CHALATENANGO. AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE WAS REACHED WHEREBY TWO FOURTH BRIGADE ANTI-TERRORIST INFANTRY BATTALIONS (BIAT) WOULD CONDUCT COUNTERGUERRILLA SWEEP OPERATIONS INTO THE AREA OF CHALATENANGO REFERRED TO AS "EL BOLSON LAS PILAS." COLONEL OCHOA IS HOPEFUL THAT THE OPERATION WILL BEGIN ON 8 MARCH. [REDACTED] COMMENT: "EL BOLSON LAS PILAS" IS PART OF THE AREA OF EL SALVADOR CLAIMED BY HONDURAS. ANY TIME SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES ENTER THE AREA HONDURAN FORCES GO ON THE ALERT. THE SEVENTH AND TWELFTH BATTALIONS OF THE HONDURAN ARMY HAVE SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE HONDURAN DEPARTMENTS OF OCOTEPEQUE AND LIMPIRA, BOTH OF WHICH BORDER CHALATENANGO DEPARTMENT.)

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2. THE OPERATIONAL PLAN IS TO HAVE THE BIAT CURRENTLY ON SECURITY DUTY IN LA PALMA (1419N 8910) AREA, ALONG WITH THE BIAT WHICH IS TO RELIEVE IT, PROCEED TO MIRAMUNDO (1421N 8900W). AT MIRAMUNDO ONE BIAT WILL TURN TOWARD THE AREA OF LA MONTANITA (1422N 8908W) AND THE OTHER TOWARD LAS PILAS (1422N 8906W). THE BIAT WORKING THE LAS MONTANITAS AREA WILL TURN EAST AND SEARCH THE AREA OVER TO LAS PILAS. THE BIAT WHICH GOES TO LAS PILAS WILL TURN EAST AND SEARCH THE AREA TO THE HONDURAN BORDER.

3. FOLLOWING THE SWEEP OPERATION FROM LAS MONTANITAS TO LAS PILAS, THE BIAT WILL RETURN TO LA PALMA TO ASSUME SECURITY DUTIES FOR THE AREA. THE BIAT WHICH GOES TO THE HONDURAN BORDER WILL TURN SOUTHEAST AND CONTINUE OPERATIONS ALONG THE BORDER TO THE AREA OF LOS NARANGOS (1413N 8858W). AT LOS NARANGOS, THIS BIAT WILL TURN SOUTH AND PROCEED TO DULCE NOMBRE DE MARIA (1409N 8901W), WHERE THE OPERATION WILL TERMINATE. THE BIAT WILL THEN RETURN TO THE FOURTH BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS. DURING THE BORDER SWEEP FROM LAS PILAS TO LOS NARANGOS, THE BIAT WHICH RETURNS TO LA PALMA WILL ESTABLISH AMBUSH POSITIONS NORTHEAST OF THE NORTHERN TRUNK HIGHWAY BETWEEN LA PALMA AND TEJUTLA (1410N 8906W) IN AN EFFORT TO INTERCEPT ANY GUERRILLAS WHICH TRY TO ESCAPE TO THE SOUTHWEST. [REDACTED] COMMENT: "IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE HONDURANS, THE TWO BIATS WILL NOT HAVE AIR OR HEAVY WEAPONS SUPPORT.)

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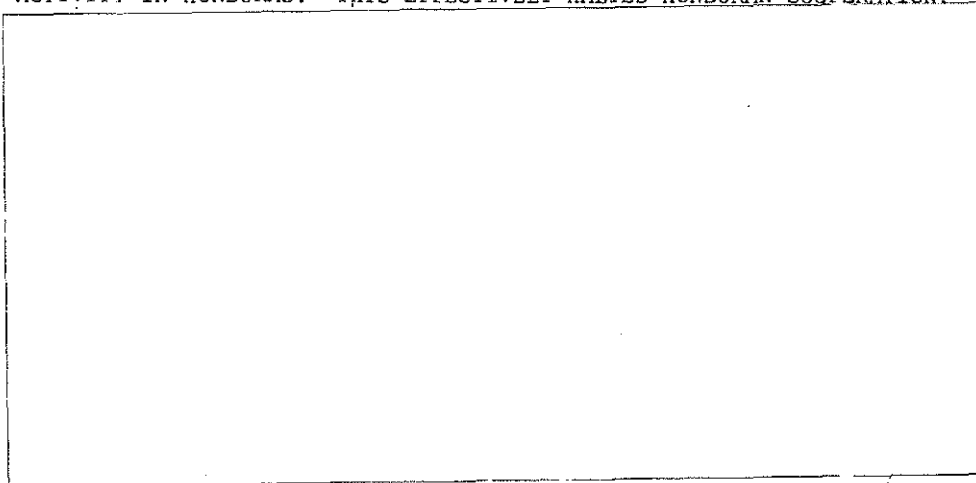
4. ANOTHER MEETING OF THE TWO SIDES IS PLANNED FOR 5 MARCH, DURING WHICH OPERATIONAL DETAILS ARE TO BE WORKED OUT. THE SALVADORAN SIDE IS HOPEFUL THAT THE HONDURAN ARMY

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WILL PLACE BLOCKING FORCES ALONG THE BORDER FROM APPROXIMATELY 1431N 8905W TO APPROXIMATELY 1424N 8906W. HOWEVER, THERE ARE TO BE NO CROSS BORDER OPERATIONS BY EITHER ARMY.

5. [REDACTED] COMMENT: IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF RECENT EFFORTS TO REINSTITUTE COOPERATION BETWEEN HONDURAN AND SALVADORAN MILITARY FORCES ALONG THE BORDER WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. THE LAST JOINT MILITARY OPERATION IN 1982 RESULTED IN A SURGE OF SALVADORAN TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN HONDURAS. THIS EFFECTIVELY HALTED HONDURAN COOPERATION.



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