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(S//OC/NF) SUBJ: BRIEFINTONG OF OFFICERS OF THE FOURTH BRIGADE ON MEETING OF THE SALVADORAN GENERAL STAFF CONCERNING THE SALVADORAN PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL TO HOLD A DIALOGUE WITH INSURGENT LEADERS

Central Intelligence Agency

16 October 1984

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SOURCE [REDACTED]
CONTEXT [REDACTED]

(S//OC/NF) DIST: 16 OCTOBER 1984 COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR SUBJ: BRIEFINTONG OF OFFICERS OF THE FOURTH BRIGADE ON MEETING OF THE SALVADORAN GENERAL STAFF CONCERNING THE SALVADORAN PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL TO HOLD A DIALOGUE WITH INSURGENT LEADERS

[REDACTED] 1 [REDACTED] LIEUTENANT COLONEL SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ, COMMANDER OF THE FOURTH INFANTRY BRIGADE, BRIEFED HIS OFFICERS ON THE MEETINGS OF THE SALVADORAN GENERAL STAFF HELD ON 9 AND 10 OCTOBER CONCERNING PRESIDENT JOSE NAPOLEON ((DUARTE))'S PROPOSAL TO INITIATE A DIALOGUE WITH THE INSURGENTS ON 15 OCTOBER AT LA PALMA, CHALATENANGO. OCHOA BRIEFED THE OFFICERS ON THE ISSUES WHICH HAD BEEN RAISED BY OTHER COMMANDERS AND MILITARY LEADERS WITH PRESIDENT DUARTE DURING THE 10 OCTOBER MEETING WHEN DUARTE ADDRESSED THE MILITARY OFFICERS. OCHOA WAS NEUTRAL IN HIS PRESENTATION AND DID NOT INDICATE WHETHER HE APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED OF THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION. 2. AMONG THE POINTS OCHOA RELATED TO HIS OFFICERS WERE THE FOLLOWING: A. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NEGOTIATION AND DIALOGUE. B. THE WAR MUST BE FOUGHT ON THE POLITICAL AS WELL AS THE MILITARY FRONT. C. THE PRESIDENT TOLD HIS BRIGADE COMMANDERS THAT, SHOULD HE FAIL TO ADHERE TO THE CONSTITUTION DURING THE DIALOGUE, THEY SHOULD FEEL FREE TO REPLACE HIM. D. CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS WHO WERE BRIEFED BY THE PRESIDENT SUPPORTED HIS PROPOSAL. E. DUARTE SAID THAT THE INSURGENTS ARE NOW LOSING STATUS. F. THE NICARAGUAN ARMY OF SOMOZA LED AN ORGANIZED RETREAT WHICH IS A DIFFICULT MILITARY MANEUVER. THEY LOST THE POLITICAL BATTLE, NOT THE MILITARY WAR. G. THE DOMINO THEORY HAS TWO POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS IN CENTRAL AMERICA. THE COMMUNISTS HAD PLANNED TO TAKE NICARAUGA, THE EL SALVADOR, HONDURAS, GUATEMALA, ETC. THEY THINK IN THE LONG TERM. NOW THAT EL SALVADOR HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN CONFRONT-ING THEM, IT APPEARS THAT THEIR MOMENTUM HAS SLOWED. PERHAPS THE DOMINOS WILL FALL IN THE OTHER DIRECTION AND "EL SALVADOR MAY BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT NICARAGUA." 3. OCHOA TOLD HIS OFFICERS

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THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN QUERIED ABOUT THE SELECTION OF LA PALMA FOR THE MEETING WITH THE INSURGENTS. THERE WAS NO RESPONSE BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE QUESTION CONCERNING LA PALMA AS A MEETING SITE. [REDACTED] COMMENT: LA PALMA IS IN FOURTH BRIGADE JURISDICTION BUT HAS BEEN UNDER INSURGENT CONTROL FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS.)

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