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Director of  
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# National Intelligence Daily

*Wednesday  
12 January 1983*

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EL SALVADOR: Status of Military Dispute

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*A peaceful resolution of the power struggle between Defense Minister Garcia and rightist Army Field Commander Ochoa seems likely--the two may meet today--but military unity has been damaged and Garcia's future is in doubt. (S)*

No further military support for Ochoa is evident, and all senior officers reportedly agree that he has to accept transfer to a foreign post. Nevertheless, Garcia now is considering resigning for the sake of military unity. ~~(S NF NE OCT)~~

Comment: Although many officers sympathize with Ochoa, even his closest supporters cannot ignore his serious breach of military discipline. Ochoa thus appears increasingly likely to relinquish his post and accept a foreign assignment after some compromise with Garcia. (S)

Such an arrangement could entail Garcia's retiring on schedule next month and stepping down as head of the armed forces. This would save face for both officers and allow the military to reach consensus on a new leader. (S)

The political battle ultimately is a test between moderates led by Garcia and hardliners led by Assembly leader D'Aubuisson. Garcia's departure would be a personal victory for D'Aubuisson, but it would not enable his followers to consolidate their power. (S)

Ochoa's rebellion--and subsequent exile--will serve to weaken the small extremist clique in the military. The officer corps is likely to choose another pragmatist as defense minister in an effort to strengthen the unity of the armed forces. ~~(S) CIA, NSA-~~

#### DIA Comment

DIA does not agree that the present crisis is a "test between moderates . . . and hardliners." Rather, it is the result of a number of factors, including military politics associated with officer-class affiliation; a growing feeling within the officer corps that Garcia has served his time; and a conviction that changes are necessary both in the military personnel organization and in the prosecution of the war. The probable outcome will reinforce the military's tradition of deliberative negotiated consensus, avoiding extreme positions, and preserving a centrist conservative organization. ~~(S NF)~~

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