

The guerrillas' last direct effort to disrupt the elections to be held next Sunday is to begin [redacted]. The Dutch journalists killed last week in El Salvador apparently were not murdered. Nicaragua believes a widening conflict in Central America is possible if the Salvadoran insurgents are able to disrupt the elections.

The joint insurgent command headquarters in Nicaragua [redacted] to all insurgent factions outlining precise objectives for the general offensive scheduled to begin [redacted] with a guerrilla attack on the major cities of Usulután and San Francisco. [redacted] San Miguel is to be raided. Then [redacted] San Salvador, Santa Ana, San Vicente, and Chalatenango are to be attacked. [redacted]

The units involved are to commit all their materiel and resources to the offensive in an effort to take and hold positions in the cities or their surrounding lower class neighborhoods. They also are to seek to mobilize as much popular support as possible to aid their operations. [redacted]

Nevertheless, there already has been some scaling down of guerrilla goals. Various units [redacted] will have difficulty carrying out their incursions because of ammunition and manpower shortages. [redacted]

Comment: Recent government offensives have disrupted guerrilla staging areas and supply lines, and many of the scheduled insurgent attacks may be delayed or poorly coordinated and executed. The best chances for insurgent success are in the east, where government forces are weakest, but even there guerrilla victories are likely to be temporary. [redacted]

Death of Dutch Journalists

[redacted] indicates that the four Dutch journalists killed last Wednesday died when the guerrilla band they were accompanying carelessly wandered into an Army ambush. The [redacted] investigation of the incident concludes that the journalists were victims of a military clash and not murdered by the armed forces. [redacted]

Nicaragua Threatens Expanded Conflict

The Sandinistas are developing contingency plans to accelerate a wider conflict in Central America should a US or OAS peacekeeping force be sent to El Salvador. They reason that such an action would indicate a US intention to eventually strike at Nicaragua itself. [redacted]

Comment: Cuba and Nicaragua have been making a coordinated effort to assist the Salvadoran insurgent offensive to disrupt the elections next Sunday. Nevertheless, the Sandinistas believe that if the guerrillas are successful, the US might intervene directly in El Salvador or strike at Nicaragua itself. This view led to the recent declaration of a state of emergency, and Nicaragua probably will focus on the alleged US threat in its presentation to the UN Security Council this week.