

X158B

FACTS ON SALVADORAN GUERRILLA WEAPONS

We don't quarrel with the fact that the Salvadoran guerrillas have managed to capture a portion of their arms on the ground in El Salvador. However, it is misleading to suggest that the Salvadoran guerrillas are no longer depending on outside support through Nicaragua. According to the best information available to us, the Sandinistas continue to provide vital military support to the Salvadoran insurgents including command and control; training centers; and logistical bases for arms, ammunition, and other supplies. From what we know, nearly all the ammunition used by the guerrillas in El Salvador is provided through Nicaragua.

From the best facts we have available to us now, we know that:

- Since FY-81, the U.S. Government has provided 36,242 items of ordnance and communications (rifles, machine guns, pistols, radios) equipment to the Government of El Salvador.
- The Government of El Salvador has reported that since April 1982, 2,699 U.S. supplied ordnance/communications items have been captured by the guerrillas.
- This equates to 7.4% of the ordnance/communications items purchased by the Salvadorans from the U.S. Government.
- A separate tally of weapons captured by the Government of El Salvador from the guerrillas indicates that:
  - 38% of the U.S. weapons captured by the ESAF are confirmed as weapons originally shipped by the U.S. to the Republic of Vietnam for either our forces or the Vietnamese.
  - This report is prepared by U.S. Government sources (Rock Island Arsenal) based on weapons captured in the field by the ESAF or weapons turned in to the ESAF by guerrillas who have surrendered.
- It should be noted that there are additional weapons besides those of U.S. manufacture which have been captured by the guerrillas. These are not included in the two sets of figures above.

- Our ability to track these non-U.S. supplied weapons is limited by the small number of U.S. personnel in El Salvador and the fact that we do not have U.S. personnel in the field with Salvadoran operational units.
- Most importantly, the figures that we do have, reflect the loss rates for U.S. trained units, equipped with ordnance purchased from the U.S. It is clear that in those units the loss rate is extremely low.
- The figures Dr. Ikle used were derived from a classified study prepared by intelligence analysts who estimated the infiltration of weapons in one sector of El Salvador (the South East) during a limited period of time (September 1, 1983 - March 1, 1984). It is an estimate and does not include arms infiltrated overland or by air from Nicaragua or through Honduras or Guatemala.

We have presented our case for the urgency of increased military assistance to the Salvadoran military. In our judgement, that case is sound and the ongoing Presidential election process, about to enter a runoff, requires our support to ensure its security.