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On Coordination Call: [REDACTED]

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UNIT

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ANALYST

03-02-89

[REDACTED]

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DATE

UNIT

PRODUCTION OFFICER

El Salvador

Military Human Rights Cases

COUNTRY

SUBJECT

1 The Salvadoran military continues to be charged with human rights
 2 abuses, even though the armed forces have significantly improved their
 3 human rights record since the early 1980s. The government arrested an Army
 4 major this week following allegations that he ordered the killing of 10
 5 civilians last September. A military board investigating the incident has
 6 learned that the major planned the operation targeting ten suspected rebel
 7 collaborators, and subsequently arranged the cover-up. Meanwhile, the
 8 Catholic Church's human rights office, which in the past has demonstrated
 9 an antimilitary bias, has accused government troops of raping and killing
 10 two rebel medical personnel and murdering three wounded insurgents during
 11 raid last month. Chief of Staff Ponce, however, is satisfied that the
 12 guerrillas were killed defending a field hospital, according to attache
 13 reporting, and has not ordered any further investigation. [REDACTED]

14 **Comment:** The accused major probably will face disciplinary action
 15 because senior military officials appear disinclined to intervene. The
 16 military is eager to avoid any additional negative fallout from the
 17 controversial human rights case. Although the circumstances of the attack
 18 against the field hospital remain unclear, rebel support groups probably

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'9 will use the incident to criticize the armed forces and the government. (C

20 NF)

Sources:

1. B&A C NF
2. IIR 6 829 0494 89 011652Z Mar 89 C
- 3.