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CONCERN BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY  
OF A REDUCTION IN UNITED STATES MILITARY AID TO  
EL SALVADOR

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MINISTER OF DEFENSE GENERAL EUGENIO CARLOS (VIDES) CASANOVA. EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE INSURGENT SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A REDUCTION IN U.S. MILITARY AID. GENERAL VIDES SAID THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE U.S. CONGRESS TO THE U.S. PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL FOR INCREASED AID TO EL SALVADOR WAS EXTREMELY CRITICAL AND THAT HE WAS UNSURE AT THIS TIME ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THIS DELICATE SITUATION. HE SAID THAT THE CONDITIONS SOUGHT BY THE U.S. CONGRESS FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF MILITARY AID WERE TOO RIGID AND COULD BE A CATALYST FOR FURTHER PROBLEMS WITHIN THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES.

2. GENERAL VIDES MENTIONED THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT RODOLFO ISIDRO ((LOPEZ)) SIBRIAN, THE OFFICER IMPLICATED IN THE MURDER OF TWO AMERICANS AND A SALVADORAN, AND THE INSISTENCE BY THE U.S. CONGRESS THAT THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES PURSUE THE PROSECUTION OF THIS OFFICER. GENERAL VIDES AID HE WAS CONSIDERING A MEETING WITH THE JUDGES INVOLVED IN THE CASE TO EXPLAIN THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION AND TO TRY TO ACCELERATE THE PROSECUTION OF THE CASE.

3. THE MINISTER ALSO NOTED THAT THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WOULD BE CRUCIAL FOR THE COUNTRY MILITARILY AND THAT HE HOPED THAT THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS WOULD NOT AFFECT HIS PLANS TO REORGANIZE THE ARMED FORCES.