

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: Military Developments

The insurgents apparently are planning a major attack in central El Salvador late this month [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the guerrillas are planning a new operation in the Guazapa Volcans area, following their successful sabotage attacks last month against several key bridges in the east. Guerrilla units [REDACTED] are preparing to move [REDACTED] to the Guazapa area. They have obtained a large quantity of [REDACTED] for the operation. [REDACTED]

Meanwhile, the insurgents are claiming a major victory in an attack earlier this week on the town of Cinquera and a subsequent ambush of government reinforcements. [REDACTED] they killed 90 government soldiers, took 20 prisoners, and captured at least 90 rifles and several heavier weapons. [REDACTED]

The government alleges that the insurgents massacred 100 civilians and 16 captured soldiers in the fighting at Cinquera. Insurgent massacres have occurred occasionally in the past, particularly against members of local civil defense units and their relatives. Such units have often been accused of atrocities against guerrilla sympathizers. [REDACTED]

In another operation, the guerrillas claim to have clashed with an elite government airborne company, killing many of its troops. [REDACTED]

Comment: The insurgents may be planning a series of major sabotage actions in central El Salvador to coincide with attacks on isolated government garrisons. They followed this pattern in the east last month, when they attacked Santa Rosa de Lima and blew up key bridges on the Inter-American and Coastal Highways. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] charges of a massacre at Cinquera may be accurate. [REDACTED] It is not insurgent policy to shoot prisoners but rather to release soldiers and detain officers. The [REDACTED] killing of captured troops in Cinquera may strengthen government efforts to persuade local military garrisons to stand and fight rather than surrender. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

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[REDACTED]