



Director of
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Intelligence

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CENTRAL AMERICA: [Redacted]

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//The Insurgent attack on San Salvador yesterday were limited in scope and designed primarily to under the elections. The Salvadoran armed forces' sweep operations near the departmental capitals of San Vicente and Santa Ana have had mixed results. Meanwhile, the cogoverning Christian Democrats are stepping up verbal attacks on National Republican Alliance leader D'Aubuisson. In Guatemala, conciliatory gestures by rightwing leader Sandoval signals the end of resistance to the election of General Guevara.//

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[Redacted]

//The guerrilla [Redacted]

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assaults on three working class suburbs on the northern fringe of the city. A major target was the San Carlos Barracks--headquarters for the Army's First Brigade, but the military was aided in repulsing the assault there when some insurgent mortar rounds failed to explode. The guerrillas also temporarily occupied a radio station, attacked a mayor's office, and apparently damaged severely a telecommunications facility before withdrawing in the face of reinforcements by the armed forces.//

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[Redacted]

Comment: [Redacted] the People's Revolutionary Army, which has claimed responsibility for these actions, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] are probably counting on the attacks to bolster their claim that the government will not be able to provide minimal security even in San Salvador on election day. The fact that the guerrillas concentrated their activities in three neighborhoods where they have long commanded support suggests that they also hoped to boost the morale of their supporters and revive their urban-based front organizations.// [Redacted]

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Salvadoran Military Offensives End

//The Salvadoran Army appears to have had the most success in San Vicente where it forced the guerrillas to abandon a number of camps. [Redacted]

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[redacted] Armed forces disorganization, especially lack of coordination between ground and air units, however, prevented it from making greater headway.// [redacted]

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//Meanwhile, in Chalatenango Department, an insurgent ambush of a military convoy killed and wounded nearly 30 soldiers and 18 civilians. Such attacks, more frequent in recent months, are causing higher attrition among military units.// [redacted]

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Comment: The Army is likely to continue its offensive operations until shortly before the 28 March elections, when it will adopt a static defensive posture to protect polling places and key transportation routes. The insurgents now appear to be planning to take advantage of the expected lull to concentrate on their own offensive activity. [redacted]

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Christian Democratic Concerns

//The Christian Democrats have publicly accused the ultraconservative National Republican Alliance of creating an electoral climate of hatred and have insinuated that party leader D'Aubuisson was involved in the assassination of popular Archbishop Romero in 1980. In a recent communique, they likened D'Aubuisson to Hitler and Mussolini.// [redacted]

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Comment: //The Christian Democrats are worried that law-and-order themes and promises of a swift victory over the insurgents have given D'Aubuisson's party electoral momentum. By raising the Romero assassination, they hope to put him on the defensive on the issue of domestic violence.// [redacted]

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The Christian Democrats--to remain in power and to preserve some of their reform programs--would likely consider a postelection coalition but only with more moderate rightist elements. They now apparently see D'Aubuisson as their major political challenger and continue to suspect that elements in the generally conservative officer corps will abet his electoral effort. [redacted]

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Postelection Tensions Ease in Guatemala

Rightwing leader Sandoval's party has ceased its opposition to General Guevara's election and indicated a willingness to participate in the government. Sandoval may leave the country for a month or so to allow tensions to abate. [redacted]

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Comment: These conciliatory gestures signal the end of resistance to Guevara. Although the President-elect is unlikely to grant a significant role to Sandoval, the longtime nemesis of the Army high command, he may offer government posts to some of Sandoval's followers. [redacted]

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Nicaragua Announces Emergency Decree

The Nicaraguan Government issued a decree yesterday suspending citizens' "rights and guarantees" for a minimum of thirty days. Junta coordinator Daniel Ortega cited the "aggressive plans" of the US in justifying the action and implied that the recent sabotage of two bridges near the Honduran border had US backing. [redacted]

Comment: The measure reflects mounting Sandinista fears about US-sponsored pressure and will offer the regime new opportunities to restrict the activities of domestic moderates. [redacted]

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