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PAGE 001 OF 004

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1. IN MID-FEBRUARY 1982 THE GUATEMALAN ARMY REINFORCED ITS EXISTING FORCE IN THE CENTRAL EL QUICHE DEPARTMENT AND LAUNCHED A SWEEP OPERATION INTO THE IXIL TRIANGLE. THE COMMANDING OFFICERS OF THE UNITS INVOLVED HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO DESTROY ALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES WHICH ARE COOPERATING WITH THE GUERRILLA ARMY OF THE POOR (EGP) AND ELIMINATE ALL SOURCES OF RESISTANCE. CIVILIANS IN THE AREA WHO AGREE TO COLLABORATE WITH THE ARMY AND WHO SEEK ARMY PROTECTION ARE TO BE WELL TREATED AND CARED FOR IN REFUGEE CAMPS FOR THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION.

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SECRET

b3  
PAGE 002 OF 008

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2. THE ARMY INITIALLY PLANNED TO ASSIGN THREE FULL BATTALIONS (THREE COMPANIES EACH) TO THE IXIL TRIANGLE FOR THE SWEEP OPERATION, BUT HAS ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS IN FORMING THREE NEW BATTALIONS AND HAS HAD TO MOVE COMBAT UNITS FROM OTHER AREAS INTO EL QUICHE.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] THERE ARE TWO INFANTRY BATTALIONS AND ONE ADDITIONAL COMPANY OF AIRBORNE TROOPS PRESENTLY INVOLVED IN THE SWEEP, AND TWO ADDITIONAL COMPANIES ARE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN THE AREA WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THE MAJORITY OF THE UNITS PRESENTLY OPERATING IN THE IXIL TRIANGLE ARE FROM THE MARISCAL ZAVALA BRIGADE, HEADQUARTERED IN GUATEMALA CITY.

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3. SINCE THE OPERATION BEGAN, SEVERAL VILLAGES HAVE BEEN BURNED TO THE GROUND, AND A LARGE NUMBER OF GUERRILLAS AND COLLABORATORS HAVE BEEN KILLED. (COMMENT: WHEN AN ARMY PATROL MEETS RESISTANCE AND TAKES FIRE FROM A TOWN OR VILLAGE IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE ENTIRE TOWN IS HOSTILE AND IT IS SUBSEQUENTLY DESTROYED.) THE ARMY HAS FOUND THAT MOST OF THE VILLAGES HAVE BEEN ABANDONED BEFORE THE MILITARY FORCES ARRIVE. AN EMPTY VILLAGE IS ASSUMED TO HAVE BEEN SUPPORTING THE EGP, AND IT IS DESTROYED. THERE ARE HUNDREDS, POSSIBLY THOUSANDS, OF REFUGEES IN THE HILLS WITH NO HOMES TO RETURN TO. THE EGP APPARENTLY CAN NOT PROTECT AND FEED SUCH LARGE NUMBERS AND THE

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PAGE 003 OF 004

b3

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REFUGEES, MAINLY IXIL INDIAN PEASANTS, ARE MAKING CONTACT WITH THE ARMY AND OFFERING TO COLLABORATE IN EXCHANGE FOR FOOD AND SHELTER.

A. THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND IS HIGHLY PLEASED WITH THE INITIAL RESULTS OF THE SHEEP OPERATION, AND BELIEVES THAT IT WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN DESTROYING THE MAJOR EGP SUPPORT AREA AND WILL BE ABLE TO DRIVE THE EGP OUT OF THE IXIL TRIANGLE. INDIANS WHO HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN HOSTILE TO THE ARMY ARE NOW COLLABORATING TO THE EXTENT THAT THE ARMY HAS SUCCESSFULLY FORMED A SELF-DEFENSE FORCE OF IXIL INDIANS IN THE TOWN OF SAN JUAN COTZAL TO PROTECT THE TOWN AGAINST ATTACKS BY THE EGP. THE ARMY HAS YET TO ENCOUNTER ANY MAJOR GUERRILLA FORCE IN THE AREA. ITS SUCCESSES TO DATE APPEAR TO BE LIMITED TO THE DESTRUCTION OF SEVERAL "EGP-CONTROLLED-TOWNS" AND THE KILLING OF INDIAN COLLABORATORS AND SYMPATHIZERS. [REDACTED] COMMENTS THE WELL DOCUMENTED BELIEF BY THE ARMY THAT THE ENTIRE IXIL INDIAN POPULATION IS PRO-EGP HAS CREATED A SITUATION IN WHICH THE ARMY CAN BE EXPECTED TO GIVE NO QUARTER TO COMBATANTS AND NON-COMBATANTS ALIKE. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE EGP CAN NOT FACE THE ARMY WHEN IT OPERATES IN LARGE UNIT STRENGTH. IT IS ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT THE ARMY IS TREATING WELL THOSE INDIANS WHO SEEK ITS PROTECTION AND SUCCOR. IT REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED, HOWEVER, HOW LOYAL THE IXIL INDIANS WILL REMAIN ONCE THE ARMY COMPLETES ITS SHEEP AND MOVES ON TO ANOTHER AREA.

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PAGE 4

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