

12-14-1990

## 200 Salvadoran Soldiers Cross Honduran Border In Retreat

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen>

---

### Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "200 Salvadoran Soldiers Cross Honduran Border In Retreat." (1990). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen/4834>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiCen by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu).

## 200 Salvadoran Soldiers Cross Honduran Border In Retreat

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, December 14, 1990

On Dec. 12, following 40 hours of intense combat with rebel units in Chalatenango department, 200 Salvadoran soldiers retreated across the border into Honduras, marking the largest incursion to date of Salvadoran troops into Honduran territory. The soldiers pertained to the elite Bracamonte Battalion and had received training in the US. Honduran Foreign Minister Mario Carias said that 13 wounded soldiers were transported to hospitals and the rest were being held by authorities. He added that the UN Observer Group for Central America (ONUCA), which monitors border activity between Honduras and Nicaragua, had been notified. Repatriation of the soldiers began Thursday morning and the government said all troops had been returned to Salvadoran territory by that afternoon. Injured soldiers were transported to the military hospital in the capital. A government communique released in San Salvador on Dec. 13 said the incursion was the result of frustrated attempts to evacuate wounded soldiers. "Because it was impossible to evacuate personnel wounded in combat, members of El Salvador's armed forces opted to take them to Honduran territory for medical attention," it said. In a radio interview on Thursday, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) commander German Serrano said the retreat "illustrates the tremendously low morale of the army and the air force." He said, "The air force could not rescue them, so they were abandoned. It's no longer a matter of combat morale. It transcends morale and takes on an aspect of political crisis surrounding the army." Serrano claimed the insurgents inflicted 150 casualties. He said they took 14 prisoners, including three seriously wounded soldiers who were handed over to the Red Cross. Salvadoran Ambassador to Honduras Salvador Trigueros characterized the move as a "tactical retreat." Honduran President Rafael Leonardo Callejas told reporters that rebel usage of surface-to-air missiles put the balance of military power in the region in a precarious situation. He said that the incursion of the Salvadoran soldiers demonstrates that violence in El Salvador has serious repercussions for Honduras. Consequently, he said, the upcoming meeting of Central American presidents will focus on pacification in El Salvador." (Basic data from AFP, 12/12/90; Notimex, AP, 12/13/90)

-- End --