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INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,  
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

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DTG

101737Z SEP 90

FROM

FM [REDACTED]

TO

TO [REDACTED]

CONTROLS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 SAN SALVADOR [REDACTED]

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CITE: (U) [REDACTED]

SERIAL: (U) [REDACTED]

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10 USC § 424

/\*\*\*\*\* THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE \*\*\*\*\*/

BODY

COUNTRY: (U) EL SALVADOR (ES).

SUBJ: IIR [REDACTED] /PART 38 IN JESUIT SERIES -

[REDACTED] (431)(U)

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT  
FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
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DOI: (U) 900905.

REQS: (U) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
25X1, E.O.13526

TEXT: 1. (GNF) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE HIGH COMMAND MEETING ON 891115  
AND AFFIRMED, WITHOUT HESITATION, THAT THE JESUITS WERE  
NOT DISCUSSED. [REDACTED] RESPONDING TO SEVERAL AMERICANS  
WHO SUGGESTED THAT THE SALVADORAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT  
USE ITS CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE TO FACILITATE THE  
INVESTIGATION OF THE JESUIT MURDERS TO INCLUDE

[REDACTED]  
FLATLY DENIED ANY HIGH COMMAND COLLUSION IN THE JESUIT.

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MURDERS.

2. (S/NF) [ ] THE FEELING AND TEMPO OF THE MEETING WAS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO PLANNING THE ASSASSINATIONS WHICH OCCURRED THE NEXT DAY. [ ] ENDED THE MEETING AFTER COL JUAN ORLANDO ((ZEPEDA)), VICE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, ASKED COL DIONISIO ((MACHUCA)), NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR, TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL PRAYER TO GUIDE THE HIGH COMMAND IN ITS DIRECTION OF THE WAR. MACHUCA WAS SELECTED BECAUSE OF HIS WELL KNOWN EVANGELICAL BACKGROUND. [ ] ASKED HOW ANY TE COUDHEEIBME THAT THE HIGH COMMAND WOULD ORDER THE ASSASSINATION OF PRIESTS AND THEN PRAY TO BLESS THE ACT.

3. (S/NF) HAVING SAID THAT, [ ] DISCUSSED COL GUILLERMO ALFREDO ((BENAVIDES)), THE OFFICER ACCUSED OF ORDERING THE EXECUTION. [ ] EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS TOTALLY OPPOSED TO THE MURDERS, BUT HE THOUGHT HE COULD GUESS AS TO WHAT MOTIVATED BENAVIDES TO ORDER THE MURDERS. ACCORDING TO [ ] BENAVIDES WAS VERY UPSET WITH THE JESUITS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL AMERICA (UCA) BECAUSE THEY ALLOWED GUERRILLAS TO SHOOT AT COLONIA ARCE, THE ESAF OFFICER HOUSING AREA LOCATED ACROSS THE ROAD FROM UCA. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, BENAVIDEZ, BELIEVING THAT HIS 13 YEAR OLD SON HAD GONE INTO A CATATONIC SHOCK, PROBABLY BECAME EMOTIONALLY PREOCCUPIED DUE TO THE STRESS HE SUFFERED DURING THIS PERIOD.

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COMMENTS: (S/NF) [ ] BY HIS REMARKS, [ ] APPARENTLY NO LONGER QUESTIONS BENAVIDES' GUILT IN THE JESUIT MURDERS. THIS POSITION IS AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT SINCE THE ESAF HAS "BACK PEDALLED" BENAVIDES' INVOLVEMENT IN THE PAST. ONE SMALL FLAW IN [ ] "MOTIVATION" SPECULATION IS THAT BENAVIDES' SON'S HEALTH HAD SERIOUSLY DETERIORATED PRIOR TO THE OFFENSIVE. HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IT WORSENERD IN 8911. YOUNG BENAVIDES HAS RECOVERED AND HIS AILMENT WAS DETERMINED TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY A VIRUS.

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///IPSP: (U) [ ] ←

///COMSOBJ: (U) 431///

ADMIN

PROJ: (U)

INSTR: (U) [ ] ←

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PREP: (U) [REDACTED]  
ACQ: (U) EL SALVADOR [REDACTED]  
DISSEM: (U) [REDACTED] AMEMBASSY EL SALVADOR.  
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NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
DECL: OADR  
BT  
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