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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 AOS-00 CIAE-00 PM-06 M-01 INR-10 1-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 AIG-05
PC-01 1076 W

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R 112120Z OCT 79
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4039
INFO GUESGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 7009
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PAN
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 5825

E.O. 12065: GDS 10/10/79 (DEVINE, FRANK J) OR-M
TAGS: PINS PINT SHUM ES
SUBJ: (U) THE ARCHBISHOP AND THE MILITARY

REF SAN SALVADOR 5707

1. (U) IN HOMILY OCT 7, ARCHBISHOPROMERO ATTACKED AND
APPEALED TO SALVADORAN MILITARY RIDICULING OFFICIAL REPORTS
OF SEPT 29 INCIDENT AT CAVALRY REGIMENT WHEN FOUR
CAMPESTINO LEADERS WERE KILLED. (REFTEL. ARCHBISHOP DECEITED THAT HE
TERMED AS ATTEMPT TO DECAPITATE POPULAR ORGANIZATION, CON-
CLUDING THAT FOR HIMSELF STILL GRAVER ASPECT WAS THAT THE
ARMY "IS MAKING ITSELF ACCOMPLICE IN THIS CRIME".

2. (U) ARCHBISHOP THEN QUOTED FROM RECENTLY RELEASED FOURTH
PASTORAL LETTER IN WHICH HE CRITICIZED DEVIATION OF ARMED
FORCE FROM ROLE AS SERVANT OF TRUE NATIONAL INTERESTS TO
"GUARDIAN OF THE INTERESTS OF THE OLIGARCHY THEREBY

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PROMOTING ITS OWN IDEOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC CORRUPTION."

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HE CONTINUED THAT SECURITY FORCES ARE "FUNDAMENTALLY CONVERTING THEMSELVES INTO ORGANISMS REPRESSING POLITICAL DISSIDENTS AND, FINALLY, THE GENERAL STAFF IS UNCONSTITUTIONALLY SUBSTITUTING ITSELF FOR THE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH SHOULD DEMOCRATICALLY DECIDE THE POLITICAL COURSE OF THE COUNTRY."

3. (U) HOWEVER, ARCHBISHOP CLOSED THIS PORTION OF HOMILY ON HOPEFUL NOTE, SAYING HE WOULDN'T "WISH TO THINK ALL OF THE ARMY WAS SO CORRUPT" BUT RATHER THERE WAS STILL HOPE. PERHAPS SACRIFICE OF FOUR CAMPESINO LEADERS WOULD BE INDUCEMENT TO ARMED FORCES TO "VINDICATE THE 'HONOR' OF THE NOBLE MILITARY PROFESSION."

4. (C) COMMENT: SECURITY FORCES AND GOES IN GENERAL FREQUENTLY DRAW ARCHBISHOP'S WRATH, BUT EMBASSY RECALLS NO SIMILAR REFERENCE BY ARCHBISHOP TO MILITARY. HOWEVER, AS EMBASSY POINTED OUT REFTEL, CASE AT HAND WAS PARTICULARLY EGREGIOUS. STILL, ARCHBISHOP LEFT OPEN POSSIBILITY FOR MILITARY TO VINDICATE ITSELF AND RECEIVED CONGREGATION'S APPLAUSE IN DOING SO.
DEVINE

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