



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 TCAE-00
INRE-00 SY-05 SYE-00 DCT-02 AID-07 OC-06 CCO-00
ANAE-00 /073 W

-----094618 261939Z /62

O R 261830Z MAR 80

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7715

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SAN COST
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HIS PM
DIA WASHDC

GA [unclear]

7/26/80

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2198

E.O. 12065: GDS 3/26/86 (MILLSPAUGH, ROBERT) OR-P
TAGS: ASEC PINS PINT ES
SUBJ: (U) ARCHBISHOP'S ASSASSINATION: PEACEFUL PROCESSION

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 26 A PROCESSION OF ABOUT 10,000
PEOPLE ACCOMPANIED THE ARCHBISHOP'S BODY ON A HALF DOZEN BLOCK
JOURNEY THOROUGH DOWNTOWN SAN SALVADOR, FROM THE BASILICA TO
THE CATHEDRAL. THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE. SECURITY
FORCES IN THE AREA OF THE BASILICA, WHO KEPT WELL AWAY FROM
PROCESSION ITSELF, DISCOURAGED SOME PEOPLE FROM JOINING ON
GROUNDS OF POSSIBLE DANGER, BUT THERE WERE NO SECURITY FORCES

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IN SIGHT AT THE CATHEDRAL AND ACCESS TO LATTER AREA WAS

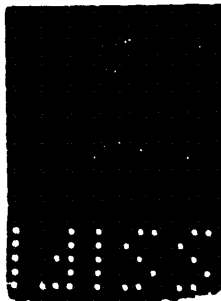
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NOT RESTRICTED.

3. PROCESSION INCLUDED MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY, THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND SOME BANNER CARRYING MEMBERS OF EXTREME LEFT GROUPS.

4. THE CATHEDRAL HAD BEEN OCCUPIED BY BPR FOR A NUMBER OF DAYS. SHORTLY BEFORE THE PROCESSION'S ARRIVAL, THE CROWD OF A FEW HUNDRED IN FRONT OF IT WATCHED BPR FOLD UP AND PUT AWAY ITS BANNERS. LATER, AN LP-28 BANNER WAS HUNG BY THE FRONT ENTRANCE.

5. EMBOFF AT THE CATHEDRAL WITNESSED ONLY ONE SHOWING OF EMOTION BY THE CROWD, A BRIEF ROUND OF APPLAUSE AS THE COFFIN WAS CARRIED UP THE CATHEDRAL STEPS.

6. COMMENT. A BLOCK AWAY FROM THE CATHEDRAL, STORES WERE OPEN AND PEOPLE WERE GOING ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS. SO FAR THE ARCHBISHOP'S DEATH HAS NOT BEEN TRANSLATED INTO A STRONG EMOTIONAL REACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OR IN FAVOR OF THE LEFT. THE REAL TEST, HOWEVER, WILL BE THE FUNERAL, WHICH WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE SUNDAY.
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