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1981/12/21

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Department of State

EK4901

TELEGRAM

SECRET

AM: DB10607-0428

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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05
NSAE-00 SY-05 PM-09 MCT-02 SYE-00 SP-02 /059 W
-----162065 211854Z /44

P 211817Z DEC 81
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7156

SECRET SAN SALVADOR 9718

E. O. 12065: GDS 12/18/87 [redacted] OR-P
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ES
SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF ARCHBISHOP ROMERO

REF: SAN SALVADOR 8084 (80)

1. (S-ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. A SECURITY FORCE OFFICER WITH WHOM POLOFF IS IN FRE-
QUENT CONTACT TOLD POLOFF IN NOVEMBER, 1980, THAT HE
PARTICIPATED IN A MEETING CHAIRED BY MAJOR ROBERTO D'AUBUISSON
DURING WHICH THE MURDER OF ARCHBISHOP ROMERO WAS PLANNED
(REFTEL). THE OFFICER SAID THAT DURING THE MEETING SOME
OF THE PARTICIPANTS DREW LOTS FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF KILLING
THE ARCHBISHOP. SEVERAL MONTHS AFTER HIS INITIAL REPORT TO POLOFF
THE SAN OFFICER IDENTIFIED THE WINNER OF THE DRAWING (ROMERO'S
ASSASSIN) AS "WALTER" AKA "MUSA."

3. EMBASSY HAS NOW IDENTIFIED THROUGH CROSSCHECK OF OTHER IN-
FORMATION THE "WALTER" MENTIONED BY THE OFFICER AS WALTER ANTONIO
ALYAREZ. ALYAREZ WORKED AT ALMACENES PACIFICO IN SAN SALVADOR,
WHICH ARE EITHER WHOLLY OR PARTIALLY OWNED BY THE MUSA FAMILY.
ALYAREZ DID USE "MUSA" AS AN ALIAS. ALYAREZ APPEARS TO HAVE LIVED IN
THE LA HERMITA SECTION OF APOPA (SAN SALVADOR). ACCORDING TO PRESS
REPORTS SEVERAL GUNMEN TOOK ALYAREZ AWAY FROM A FOOTBALL GAME
ON SEPTEMBER 27, SHOT HIM SEVERAL TIMES AND LEFT HIS BODY ON

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THE ROAD WHICH LEADS TO MARIONA PRISON. HE WAS 27 YEARS OLD AND

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LEFT HIS WIFE, DIMORA, AND A SMALL SON.

4. POLOFF'S SECURITY FORCE CONTACT HAS PROVIDED VERY ACCURATE SENSITIVE INFORMATION IN THE PAST. WE BELIEVE IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THE ASSASSIN OF ROMERO IS NOW DEAD BY UNKNOWN HANDS.
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