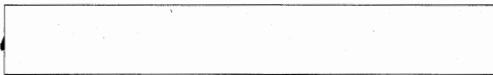


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(b)(1)
(b)(3)

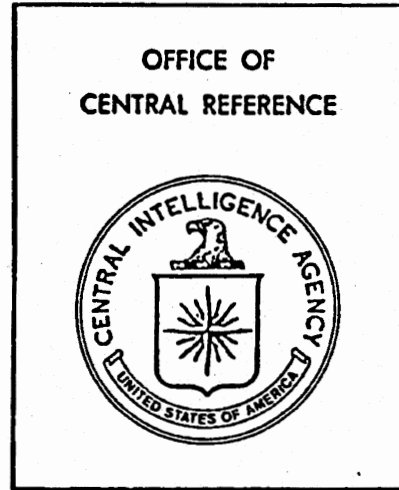
José Guillermo GARCIA Merino
(Phonetic: garSEEah)

EL SALVADOR

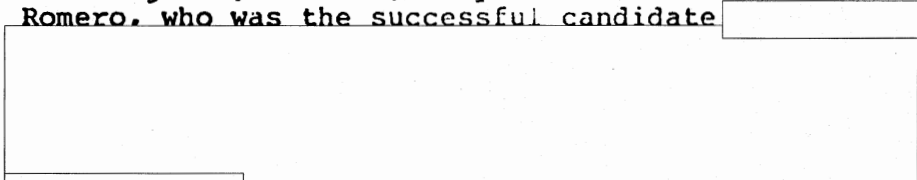
MICROFILMED

Minister of Defense and
Public Security (since
22 October 1979)

Addressed as:
Mr. Minister



Col. José García is one of the most popular and intelligent officers in the Salvadoran Army and has a reputation for honesty and integrity. A moderate, he was considered by the military as a possible successor to President (1971-77) Arturo Molina in 1977; in the long run, however, they decided on Carlos Romero, who was the successful candidate



(b)(1)

he was serving as commander of the Department of San Vicente, a position he had held since July 1978.

(b)(3)

García is anti-Communist and friendly toward the United States.

(b)(1)

he is sympathetic toward the US human rights policy. Local politicians consider him one of the few officers who are seriously concerned about human rights in El Salvador; in the past he has reportedly used his influence to release illegally held prisoners.

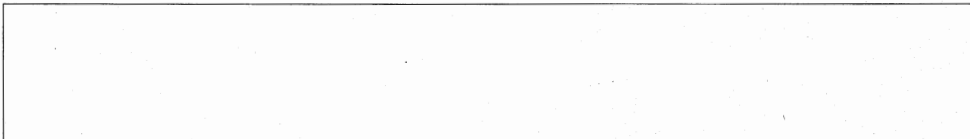
(b)(3)

After enlisting in 1956, García rose rapidly through the ranks. He attended the War College in Mexico during 1966-70 and took an orientation tour of the Panama Canal Zone in 1963. During 1974-77 he was president of the National Telephone Company. García, 46, is married to the former Martha del Carmen Rodríguez and has four daughters.

(b)(3)

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24 October 1979

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(b)(1)
(b)(3)