

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08406 01 OF 06 231720Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 SS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-01 PA-01  
OMB-01 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-02 USIE-00 SP-01 SNP-01  
PRS-01 DS-01 P-02 T-01 /038 W  
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P 231700Z JUN 90  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9184  
DIRFBI WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 SAN SALVADOR 08406

FBI FOR MARTY HALE/OLIA

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Oscar Olson, Senior  
Reviewer

E.O. 12356: DECLGOADR  
TAGSIC PREL, PINS, PGOV, KJUS, ES  
SUBJECT: JESUIT CASE -- UPDATE 64

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SUMMARY:  
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1. (C) ON JUNE 4 AND 6, THE MILITARY ACADEMY'S ARCHIVIST AND LT. YUSSHY MENDOZA TESTIFIED THAT COL. HERNANDEZ, THEN-DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY, ORDERED THE BURNING OF ABOUT SEVENTY VEHICLE REGISTERS FROM 1989. HERNANDEZ DENIES THAT HE GAVE SUCH AN ORDER. TWO OF THE CADETS ON GUARD DUTY ON THE NIGHT OF THE MURDERS TESTIFIED THAT THEY SAW NO ONE ENTER OR LEAVE THE MILITARY ACADEMY THAT NIGHT. END SUMMARY.

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THE ARCHIVIST ON THE BURNED REGISTERS:  
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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAN SA 08406 01 OF 06 231720Z

2. (C) ON JUNE 15, JUDGE RICARDO ALFREDO ZAMORA TOLD ASSISTANT LEGAL OFFICER (A/LO) THAT JUAN RENE ARANA, THE MILITARY ACADEMY'S ARCHIVIST, TESTIFIED (ON JUNE 4) THAT LIEUTENANT COLONEL CARLOS CAMILO HERNANDEZ, THEN SUBDIRECTOR OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY, VERBALLY ORDERED THE BURNING OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY'S REGISTERS. ACCORDING TO ARANA, APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY REGISTERS FROM 1989 WERE BURNED AT MIDNIGHT BETWEEN DECEMBER 1 AND DECEMBER 16, 1989,

BY LIEUTENANT YUSSHY RENE MENDOZA, ONE OF THOSE NOW IN CUSTODY IN CONNECTION WITH THE JESUIT CASE, AND FOUR OTHER UNIDENTIFIED CADETS. PROSECUTORS REPORT THAT ARANA TESTIFIED THAT HE RECEIVED THE ORDER TO SET THE REGISTERS ASIDE FROM MENDOZA, WHO SAID THAT HE WAS ACTING UNDER ORDERS FROM HERNANDEZ.

3. (C) ACCORDING TO ZAMORA, ARANA TESTIFIED THAT HE HAS WORKED AS AN ARCHIVIST FOR THE MILITARY ACADEMY FOR SIX YEARS AND HAD NEVER BEFORE RECEIVED AN ORDER TO BURN THE REGISTERS.

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MENDOZA ON THE BURNED REGISTERS:  
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4. (C) ZAMORA ALSO CONFIRMED THAT MENDOZA ADMITTED THAT HE AND FOUR OTHER UNIDENTIFIED CADETS BURNED THE 1989 REGISTERS FROM THE MILITARY ACADEMY, APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY IN ALL. MENDOZA TESTIFIED (ON JUNE 6) THAT THIS WAS DONE ON HERNANDEZ'S ORDER IN AN INCINERATOR, LOCATED CLOSE TO THE ACADEMY'S SOUTH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAN SA 08406 01 OF 06 231720Z

GATE, AT MIDNIGHT BETWEEN DECEMBER 1 AND 16.

5. (C) MENDOZA INSISTS THAT HE BURNED THE REGISTERS IN COMPLIANCE WITH A STANDING ORDER AT THE MILITARY ACADEMY. MENDOZA STATED THAT THE ORDER HAS BEEN IN EFFECT SINCE THE MILITARY ACADEMY BOUGHT COMPUTERS IN 1987 TO RECORD THE INFORMATION IN THE REGISTERS. THE ACADEMY'S DIRECTOR AT THE TIME ORDERED UNIMPORTANT REGISTERS BURNED AT THE END OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY'S SCHOOL YEAR, WHICH CONCLUDES AROUND MID-NOVEMBER.

6. (C) BUT, THE DEFENSE MINISTRY, ACCORDING TO JUNE 19 MEDIA REPORTS, INFORMED ZAMORA IT HAD CONSULTED WITH EMPLOYEES OF THE ACADEMY'S ARCHIVE AND THEY SAID THAT THERE IS NO ORDER, VERBAL OR WRITTEN, TO BURN THE REGISTERS. MENDOZA ALSO TESTIFIED THAT THE 1987 AND 1988 REGISTERS WERE BURNED ACCORDING TO THE STANDING ORDER. HOWEVER, ON JUNE 15, ZAMORA TOLD A/LO THAT HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THAT THE REGISTERS FROM THOSE YEARS WERE ALSO BURNED. MENDOZA SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW IF THE INFORMATION FROM THE 1989 REGISTERS HAD BEEN COMPUTERIZED OR MICROFILMED. MENDOZA ALSO SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW IF THE NOVEMBER REGISTER WAS AMONG THOSE BURNED.

7. (C) REGARDING THE LATE HOUR AT WHICH THE REGISTERS WERE BURNT, MENDOZA ASSERTED THAT, IN THE

MILITARY, ORDERS ARE COMPLIED WITH AS SOON AS THEY ARE RECEIVED OR WHEN TIME ALLOWS. THUS, ON THAT DAY, HERNANDEZ GAVE THE ORDER FOR THE REGISTERS TO BE BURNED AT 1000. MENDOZA SAID THAT HE COMPLIED WITH THAT ORDER AT MIDNIGHT. REGARDING WHY THAT ASSIGNMENT WAS CARRIED OUT BY CADETS INSTEAD OF

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08406 02 OF 06 231721Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 SS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-01 PA-01  
OMB-01 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-02 USIE-00 SP-01 SNP-01  
PRS-01 DS-01 P-02 T-01 /038 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 06 SAN SALVADOR 08406

FBI FOR MARTY HALE/OLIA

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
TAGS: PREL, PINS, PGOV, KJUS, ES  
SUBJECT: JESUIT CASE -- UPDATE 64

ORDERLIES, MENDOZA SAID THAT ONLY CADETS OR OFFICERS WERE USED TO AVOID A SECURITY LEAK.

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HERNANDEZ ON THE BURNED REGISTERS:  
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8. (U) ACCORDING TO JUNE 19 MEDIA REPORTS, COLONEL CARLOS CAMILO HERNANDEZ DENIED IN COURT THAT HE

ORDERED MILITARY ACADEMY REGISTERS FROM 1989 TO BE BURNED WHILE HE WAS SUBDIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMY.

9. (U) HOWEVER, HERNANDEZ'S TESTIMONY REGARDING THE REGISTERS, AS REPORTED IN THE MEDIA, IS CONTRADICTORY. AT ONE POINT, HERNANDEZ ADMITS THAT HE ASKED THE ARCHIVIST WHERE THE REGISTERS WERE KEPT, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAN SA 08406 02 OF 06 231721Z

BUT SAYS HE DID SO ONLY AT THE BEHEST OF BENAVIDES. HERNANDEZ CLAIMS THAT HE GAVE NO ORDER IN RELATION TO THE REGISTERS NOR ANY ORDER TO THE ARCHIVIST.

10. (U) NEVERTHELESS, IN ANOTHER PART OF HIS DISPOSITION, HERNANDEZ TESTIFIES THAT IN THE FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER HE ORDERED THE ARCHIVIST TO GATHER TOGETHER THE 1989 REGISTERS.

11. (U) HERNANDEZ TESTIFIED THAT HE WAS NAMED CHIEF OF STUDIES AND INSTRUCTION AT THE ACADEMY IN AUGUST. AT THE TIME OF THE MURDERS, HE WAS THE INTERIM SUBDIRECTOR AT THE ACADEMY.

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DEFENSE MINISTER ON THE BURNED REGISTERS:  
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12. (U) ACCORDING TO JUNE 8 MEDIA REPORTS, GENERAL RAFAEL HUMBERTO LARIOS, MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND PUBLIC SECURITY SAID THAT THERE WILL HAVE TO BE AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE REASONS FOR ORDERING AND CARRYING OUT THE BURNING OF THE REGISTERS. LARIOS DENIED THAT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE REGISTERS IMPLIED OBSTRUCTION OF THE INVESTIGATION BY THE ARMED FORCES. HE AFFIRMED THAT HE IS THE "REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE ONE MOST INTERESTED IN CLARIFYING THIS SITUATION. WE ARE TRYING TO SUPPORT AND COOPERATE WITH THE JUDGE IN ORDER TO SEE JUSTICE DONE." ALTHOUGH LARIOS DESCRIBED THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY'S REGISTERS AS "ROUTINE," HE ADMITTED THAT THEY WERE NOT DUE TO BE BURNED IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAN SA 08406 02 OF 06 231721Z

NOVEMBER. LATER, GENERAL LARIOS AFFIRMED THAT THERE WAS NO STANDING ORDER TO DESTROY THE REGISTERS.

OCHOA ON THE BURNED REGISTERS:  
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13. (U) JUNE 7 MEDIA REPORTS THAT COLONEL (R) SIGIFREDO OCHOA PEREZ, EXPRESSED HIS INTENSE CONCERN OVER THE BURNING OF A "KEY" PIECE OF EVIDENCE IN THE PROCESS. "I AM CONCERNED," OCHOA IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID, "ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF THE SUBDIRECTOR OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY. IT IS WORRISOME BECAUSE THE JUDGE NEEDS EVERYONE'S SUPPORT SO THAT HE CAN GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS CASE AND JAIL THOSE IMPLICATED IN THIS MURDER, WHOEVER THEY MAY BE." HE ALSO ALLEGED THAT THE VARIOUS WITNESSES AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOR COMMISSION HAD NOT CONTRIBUTED THE EVIDENCE HOPED FOR TO CLEAR UP THE JESUIT CASE.

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THE UNBURNED LOG:  
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14. (C) ON JUNE 15, ZAMORA CONFIRMED THAT MENDOZA ALSO TESTIFIED THAT THE ORDER REGISTER (LIBRO DE ORDENES) WAS NOT AMONG THOSE REGISTERS WHICH HE DESTROYED. THIS ORDER REGISTER CONTAINED THE PAYROLL (NOMINA DE PERSONAL), ARREST ORDERS (ORDENES DE ARRESTOS), DISCHARGE ORDERS (ORDENES DE BAJA), AND OTHER INFORMATION FROM THE PREVIOUS EIGHTEEN MONTHS. ACCORDING TO MENDOZA, HE HAVE THIS REGISTER TO

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08406 03 OF 06 231722Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 SS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-01 PA-01  
OMB-01 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-02 USIE-00 SP-01 SNP-01  
PRS-01 DS-01 P-02 T-01 /038 W  
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P 231700Z JUN 90  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9186  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 06 SAN SALVADOR 08406

FBI FOR MARTY HALE/OLIA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL, PINS, PGOV, KJUS, ES  
SUBJECT: JESUIT CASE -- UPDATE 64

CIVILIANS (PROSECUTORS MAINTAIN THAT THESE WERE INVESTIGATORS FROM THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT) AT THE NATIONAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS ON JANUARY 8. ZAMORA SAYS THAT HE HAS ASKED THE SIU TO BEGIN LOOKING FOR THE ORDER LOG.

15. (C) MENDOZA ALSO SAID THAT THE ACADEMY DID NOT HAVE AN OPERATIONS LOG (LIBRO DE OPERACIONES) BECAUSE THE ACADEMY DID NOT CARRY OUT OPERATIONS. WHAT THE ACADEMY HAD INSTEAD, MENDOZA MAINTAINS, WAS A MISSION DIARY (DIARIO DE MISIONES), KEPT BY THE SECURITY COMMANDO (COMANDO DE SEGURIDAD, S-III) OF THE ACADEMY, IN CHARGE OF TACTICAL OPERATIONS.

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TESTIMONY OF THE COMMANDER OF THE GUARD:  
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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAN SA 08406 03 OF 06 231722Z

16. (C) ZAMORA REPORTS THAT SUB-LIEUTENANT ELIO ERNESTO MUNGUIA TESTIFIED (ON JUNE 11) THAT HE WAS THE COMMANDER OF THE GUARD AT THE ACADEMY'S MAIN GATE FROM 0600 ON THE NOVEMBER 15 UNTIL THE SAME HOUR ON NOVEMBER 16. WALTER ALBERTO MERINO RELIEVED HIM FROM 0100 TO 0500 ON THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 16.

17. (C) DURING HIS TIME ON DUTY, MUNGUIA SAYS, HE NOTICED THAT THE ACADEMY CONTAINED TROOPS FROM THE ATACATL BATTALION, CAVALRY REGIMENT, THE ARTILLERY BRIGADE, AND MILITARY DETACHMENTS SIX AND SEVEN. BUT, HE SAID THAT HE NEVER SAW THEM LEAVE, NOR DID MERINO INFORM HIM OF ANYONE LEAVING OR ENTERING THE ACADEMY.

18. (C) ACCORDING TO MUNGUIA, THERE ARE AT LEAST FOUR DIFFERENT REGISTERS: A DUTY OFFICER'S REGISTER (LIBRO DE NOVEDADES), AN ENTRY AND EXIT REGISTER (LIBRO DE ENTRADAS Y SALIDAS), A REPORTS REGISTER

(INFORMES), AND AN ENTRY REGISTER FOR MILITARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF (LIBRO DE INGRESO DE PERSONAL DE TROPA Y ADMINISTRATIVO).

19. (C) HE ASSERTED THAT THE DEPARTURES OF OFFICERS AND UNITS ON COMBAT MISSIONS AS WELL AS THE DEPARTURES OF UNITS WHICH WERE NOT COMPOSED OF MILITARY ACADEMY PERSONNEL, WERE NOT NOTED IN THE DUTY OFFICER'S REGISTER. INSTEAD, THE DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL WAS INFORMED WHEN SUCH DEPARTURES OCCURRED AND NOTED THEM IN HIS SPECIAL REGISTER (LIBRO DE ENTRADAS Y SALIDAS DE MISIONES DE COMBATES DE LA ACADEMIA Y PERSONAL MILITAR AJENO) DURING THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAN SA 08406 03 OF 06 231722Z

OFFENSIVE. ZAMORA AFFIRMED ON JUNE 15 THAT HE ASSUMES THAT THIS REGISTER WAS DESTROYED BY MENDOZA WITH OTHER 1989 DOCUMENTS.

20. (C) ZAMORA ALSO SAID THAT MUNGUIA CLAIMS THAT HE IS UNAWARE OF AN INCINERATOR ON THE ACADEMY GROUNDS, BUT SAYS THERE IS A DUMP CLOSE TO THE ACADEMY'S SOUTH GATE.

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TESTIMONY OF ANOTHER CADET ON GUARD DUTY:  
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21. (C) ZAMORA SAYS THAT WALTER ALBERTO MERINO TESTIFIED (JUNE 11) THAT HE WAS THE RECEP FOR MUNGUIA DURING THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 15 THROUGH NOVEMBER 16. HE CLAIMS THAT DURING THE HOURS THAT HE WAS ON DUTY NOTHING HAPPENED NOR DID ANYONE ENTER OR LEAVE THE ACADEMY.

22. (C) ACCORDING TO MERINO, THERE ARE A TOTAL OF NINE REGISTERS. THESE REGISTERS WERE LATER TURNED OVER TO A CLERK AT THE SECRETARIAT OF STUDIES OF THE ACADEMY.

23. (C) MERINO SAYS THAT IN ADDITION TO THE MAIN GATE, VEHICLES CAN ENTER THE ACADEMY FROM THE SOUTH GATE, CLOSE TO THE PLAYING FIELD, BUT THIS GATE IS NOT FREQUENTLY USED FOR ENTRY OR EXIT OF VEHICLES. WHEN THIS GATE IS USED, THE SENTRIES THERE MUST INFORM THE COMMANDER OF THE GUARD WHO HAS TO AUTHORIZE THE ENTRY OR EXIT AND LEND THEM THE KEY.

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CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08406 04 OF 06 231723Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 SS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-01 PA-01  
OMB-01 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-02 USIE-00 SP-01 SNP-01  
PRS-01 DS-01 P-02 T-01 /038 W  
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P 231700Z JUN 90  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9187  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 06 SAN SALVADOR 08406

FBI FOR MARTY HALE/OLIA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL, PINS, PGOV, KJUS, ES  
SUBJECT: JESUIT CASE -- UPDATE 64

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CADETS DENY BEING ON DUTY:  
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24. (C) ACCORDING TO A REVISED REPORT FROM THE MILITARY ACADEMY, CADETS NORMAN GILMAR LARRAMA AND GILBERTO VANEGAS ZEPEDA WERE ALSO ON DUTY AT THE ACADEMY'S MAIN GATE ON THE NIGHT OF THE MURDERS. THEY TESTIFIED ON JUNE 13. HOWEVER, ZAMORA TOLD A/LO THAT BOTH DENIED BEING ON DUTY AT THAT TIME AND INSISTED THAT THEY WERE IN THE ENLISTED MEN'S CLUB.

25. (C) ZAMORA TOLD A/LO THAT DAVID KOCH ARANA TESTIFIED (ON JUNE 4) THAT HE WAS THE DEFENSE MINISTRY PAYMASTER AT THE MILITARY ACADEMY. BUT HE MAINTAINED THAT HE KNEW NOTHING AT ALL ABOUT THE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAN SA 08406 04 OF 06 231723Z

JESUIT CASE NOR ABOUT ANY OF THOSE INVOLVED.

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THE DNI MEETING:  
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26. (C) ZAMORA TOLD A/LO ON JUNE 15 THAT HE HAS RECEIVED AN SIU REPORT REGARDING THE NOVEMBER 16, 1989, MEETING AT THE DIRECTORATE OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE (DNI). THE SIU WAS ASKED TO LOOK INTO A REPORT THAT THE DNI MEMBERS APPLAUDED IN CELEBRATION WHEN THEY WERE INFORMED OF THE JESUIT MASSACRE. THE SIU SPOKE SEPARATELY WITH SIXTEEN MEMBERS OF THE DNI WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING BETWEEN 0600 AND 0900. MOST OF THOSE INTERVIEWED GAVE APPROXIMATELY THE SAME STORY: ON NOVEMBER 16, THE DNI WAS MEETING TO DISCUSS THE GUERRILLA OFFENSIVE WHEN CAPTAIN CARLOS FERNANDO HERRERA CARRANZA, THEN CHIEF OF OPERATIONS AT DNI, CAME INTO THE ROOM AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE JESUITS HAD BEEN MURDERED. THERE WAS SOME INITIAL DISCUSSION OF THE CRIME AND THE REPERCUSSIONS THAT IT COULD HAVE, BUT AFTERWARDS THE MEETING CONTINUED NORMALLY. ALL OF THOSE INTERVIEWED EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT THEY CELEBRATED THE NEWS IN ANY WAY.

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OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:  
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27. (C) ZAMORA PROMISED, ONCE AGAIN, TO ASK THE SIU TO LOOK INTO THE MX RADIO TRANSMISSION. COL. AVILES WAS SUMMONED TO TESTIFY JUNE 20, BUT FAILED TO  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 SAN SA 08406 04 OF 06 231723Z

APPEAR. ZAMORA WILL SUMMON HIM TO TESTIFY LATER THIS MONTH.

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COMMENT:  
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28. (C) THE SUPREME COURT, THROUGH ITS ALMOST DAILY INFORMATION BULLETINS ON THE CASE, HAS INSISTED ON CALLING THE CADETS "KEY WITNESSES" BECAUSE THEY CAN SUPPOSEDLY DETERMINE WHO LEFT THE ACADEMY THAT NIGHT. POST BELIEVES THAT THIS IS AN INTERESTING BUT SECONDARY ISSUE AND THAT WHATEVER INFORMATION THEY COULD PROVIDE WOULD ONLY CONFIRM WHAT IS ALREADY

KNOWN IN THAT REGARD.

29. (C) THE SUPREME COURT HAS ALSO REFERRED TO THE REGISTERS AS "KEY EVIDENCE." IN POST'S ESTIMATION, THE REGISTERS MIGHT BE ABLE TO PIN DOWN EXACTLY WHEN THE ATLATL LEFT THE ACADEMY AND WHEN THEY RETURNED. YET, IF MUNGUIA'S TESTIMONY IS ACCURATE, THAT SUCH INFORMATION WOULD ONLY HAVE BEEN NOTED BY BENAVIDES AND NOT BY THE GUARDS, THEN THE REGISTERS WOULD HAVE ONLY LIMITED UTILITY.

30. (C) THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBLE REASONS THE COURT IS PLACING SO MUCH IMPORTANCE ON THESE MATTERS:

-- THE COURT'S PUBLICIST IS GENUINELY NAIVE ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE AND IS WRITING IN THE SENSATIONALIST TRADITION OF SALVADORAN JOURNALISM.

-- THE COURT IS SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE EVENTUAL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08406 05 OF 06 231724Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 SS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-01 PA-01  
OMB-01 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-02 USIE-00 SP-01 SNP-01  
PRS-01 DS-01 P-02 T-01 /038 W  
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P 231700Z JUN 90  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9188  
DIRFBI WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 05 OF 06 SAN SALVADOR 08406

FBI FOR MARTY HALE/OLIA

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TAGS: PREL, PINS, PGOV, KJUS, ES  
SUBJECT: JESUIT CASE -- UPDATE 64

COLLAPSE OF THE CASE. UNDER THIS SCENARIO, THE COURT WOULD ARGUE THAT SINCE KEY EVIDENCE HAS DISAPPEARED AND KEY WITNESSES HAVE BEEN UNCOOPERATIVE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTINUE THE CASE.

-- THE REGISTERS TRULY CONTAINED IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

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NEW AG PROMISES NEW STRATEGY IN CASE:  
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31. (C) ACCORDING TO JUNE 13 NEWS REPORTS, ROBERTO MENDOZA JEREZ, THE NEW ATTORNEY GENERAL, PROMISED A MORE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION BY THE PROSECUTORS AND THE APPLICATION OF A "CERTAIN STRATEGY" IN THE JESUIT CASE. MENDOZA'S REMARKS CAME AFTER A PRIVATE MEETING  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAN SA 08406 05 OF 06 231724Z

WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY, RICARDO ALVARENGA VALDIVIESO.

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COL. PONCE COMMENTS ON THE JESUIT CASE:  
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32. (C) JUNE 7 MEDIA REPORTS THAT COLONEL RENE EMILIO PONCE, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF, SAID THAT "THE SUPREME COURT AND THE TRIAL COURT ARE MAKING GREAT EFFORTS TO SOLVE THIS CASE, AND THE ARMED FORCES HAVE BEEN COOPERATING. I DO NOT KNOW WHO IS SAYING THAT THIS INVESTIGATION HAS REACHED A STALEMATE, BUT THE ARMED FORCES HAVE COOPERATED WHEN REQUESTED. THEREFORE, SAYING THAT THE CASE IS STALEMATED IS MERELY SOMEONE'S PERSONAL OPINION."

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COL. ZEPEDA COMMENTS ON THE JESUIT CASE:  
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33. (C) ACCORDING TO JUNE 14 MEDIA REPORTS, COLONEL JUAN ORLANDO ZEPEDA, VICE-MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AFFIRMED THAT THE ARMED FORCES' CODE OF JUSTICE HAS DONE ITS DUTY IN THE JESUIT CASE. ZEPEDA MAINTAINS THAT A GROUP OF ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL HAS BEEN IMPLICATED AND SURRENDERED TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES AND "THIS IS SUFFICIENT."

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GENERAL VILLAMARIONA COMMENTS ON THE JESUIT CASE:  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAN SA 08406 05 OF 06 231724Z

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34. (C) JUNE 8 MEDIA REPORTS THAT GENERAL VILLAMARIONA, THE AIR FORCE COMMANDER, COMMENTED THAT "THE ARMED FORCES ARE INSISTING ON AN INVESTIGATION WHICH IS CLEAR AND PRECISE AND THAT COMES TO A SERIOUS CONCLUSION, BUT AS OF RIGHT NOW NO ONE CAN BE ACCUSED BEFORE A JURY." REGARDING HIS WORK ON THE RONOR COMMISSION, THE VILLAMARIONA REPORTEDLY SAID "WE APPEALED TO THE CONSCIENCE OF THE ACCUSED AND ASKED THEM TO TELL THE TRUTH. WE IMploRED THEM NOT TO BESMIRCH THE HONOR OF THE MILITARY INSTITUTION." IN REGARDS TO THE MOAKLEY COMMISSION REPORT, HE SAID THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WAS WRITTEN BY THREE CONGRESSIONAL ASSISTANTS AND THAT IT DID NOT TRULY REPRESENT A CONSENSUS OF THE CONGRESS.

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THE ARCHBISHOP'S COMMENTS:  
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35. (C) ACCORDING TO JUNE 10 MEDIA REPORTS, ARCHBISHOP ARTURO RIVERA Y DAMAS SAID THAT THE WAY IN WHICH THE ASSASSINATION OF THE SIX PRIESTS AND THE TWO WOMEN WAS CARRIED OUT "IS NOW CLEAR" AND "ALL WE NEED NOW IS A JURIDICAL CONFIRMATION OF THOSE WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE" FOR THE ACTION. THE ARCHBISHOP CONTINUED THAT RECENT STATEMENTS BY THE ACCUSED MILITARY OFFICERS AND STATEMENTS BY OTHER WITNESSES HAVE CONFIRMED THE BURNING OF KEY EVIDENCE AS WELL AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COLONEL ALFREDO BENAVIDES.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08406 06 OF 06 231724Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 SS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-01 PA-01  
OMB-01 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-02 USIE-00 SP-01 SNP-01  
PRS-01 DS-01 P-02 T-01 /038 W  
-----304007 231732Z /44

P 231700Z JUN 90  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9189  
DIRFBI WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 06 OF 06 SAN SALVADOR 08406

FBI FOR MARTY HALE/OLIA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL, PINS, PGOV, KJUS, ES  
SUBJECT: JESUIT CASE -- UPDATE 64

36. (C) THE ARCHBISHOP ALSO ACCUSED THE ARMY OF A  
"CLEAR ABUSE OF POWER." ACCORDING TO THE ARCHBISHOP'S  
VERSION OF HIS REMARKS, THE ARCHBISHOP CHARGED THAT  
SOLDIERS WERE OSTENTATIALLY PRESENT IN THE COURT  
WHILE ONE OF THE ACCUSED AND OTHER CADETS WHO  
WITNESSED THE BURNING OF THE REGISTERS WERE MAKING  
THEIR DEPOSITIONS. "THIS IS AN CLEAR ABUSE OF  
POWER. WEAPONS HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN TO OBSTRUCT THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, BUT RATHER TO COLLABORATE  
IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF JUSTICE," HE SAID.

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YOUNG OFFICERS COMMENTARY:  
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37. (C) JUNE 12 MEDIA REPORTS THAT THE SO-CALLED  
"COMMAND OF YOUNG OFFICERS OF THE ARMED FORCES"  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAN SA 08406 06 OF 06 231724Z

ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE, ITS FOURTH, DEMANDING THAT THE  
ARMY RESOLVE THE JESUIT AND OQUELI MURDER CASES.  
WITH REGARD TO THE JESUIT CASE, THE COMMUNIQUE STATES  
THAT THE ARREST OF COL. BENAVIDES AND THREE OTHER  
OFFICERS ARE PART OF A "PLOT" BECAUSE AT A  
PROFESSIONAL LEVEL EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THE  
TESTIMONIES OF THE ACCUSED ARE NOT VALID.

"OTHERWISE," THE COMMUNIQUE NOTES, "THE HONOR COMMISSION WOULD HAVE NEVER RECOMMENDED THE CAPTURE OF COL. BENAVIDES AND OF OTHER OFFICERS WHO WERE MERELY FOLLOWING ORDERS."

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NEWSPAPER COMMENTS ON FOREIGN PRESSURE:  
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38. (C) UNNAMED POLITICAL SOURCES QUOTED IN "EL DIARIO DE HOY" NEWSPAPER REFERRED TO GREAT FOREIGN PRESSURE, ESPECIALLY FROM THE UNITED STATES, TO CLARIFY THE JESUIT CASE. "EL DIARIO DE HOY" WENT ON TO EDITORIALIZE THAT MANY PEOPLE IN THE U.S. HAD TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THE JESUIT CASE TO "PROPAGANDIZE AGAINST EL SALVADOR AND MAKE THE SALVADORAN PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT A FEW DELINQUENTS HAVE DONE. NO ONE CAN REMEMBER A CAMPAIGN SO PERSISTENT AND VENOMOUS AS THAT WHICH HAS DEVELOPED REGARDING THE JESUIT CASE," SAY "EL DIARIO'S" SOURCES.  
WALKER

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