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RELEASE IN FULL

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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 AID-07 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 CIAE-00
DODE-00 H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-06 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6446
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PAN/INTAFF

UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 8387

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PINS PINT, ES
SUBJECT: HOMILY FOR NOVEMBER 1

1. SUMMARY: IN HIS HOMILY FOR NOVEMBER 1 BISHOP RIVERA Y DAMAS DISCUSSED GOOD AND BAD NEWS. GOOD NEWS WAS HAD IN THE RELEASE OF DOCTOR MARIO LEVY VAN SEVEREN AND IN POSSIBLE CHRISTMAS BONUSES FOR SALVADOREAN. THE BAD NEWS WAS THE CONTINUING KILLING IN THE COUNTRY. IN PARTICULAR HE ASKED THE AUTHORITIES TO INVESTIGATE AND PUNISH THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLISHING DEATH LIST IN CHALATENANGO. IN ANSWER TO A REPORTER'S QUESTION HE EXPRESSED THE FEAR THAT MANY CIVILIANS WERE DYING AS A RESULT OF MILITARY OPERATIONS. END SUMMARY.
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2. THE HOMILY FOR NOVEMBER 1 WAS DELIVERD BY APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR BISHOP ARTURO RIVERA Y DAMAS AT SAN SALVADOR'S METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL. SOME OF HIS COMMENTS FOLLOW

REVIEW AUTHORITY:
Alan Flanigan, Senior
Reviewer

3. BISHOP RIVERA Y DAMS EMPHASIZED THAT THE EVENTS OF THE PAST WEEK HELD BOTH GOOD AND BAD NEWS. HE EXPRESSED THANKS TO THE SAFE RETURN OF KIDNAPPED DOCTOR MARIO LEVY VAN SEVEREN AND ASKED THE KIDNAPPERS OF OTHER PERSONS TO RELEASE THEIR CAPTIVES. HE FURTHER ASKED THE JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES TO QUICKEN THE PACE OF

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THOSE CURRENTLY IMPRISONED, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT SOMETHING WOULD BE DONE TO TROW LIGHT ON THE FATE OF THOSE WHO HAD DISSAPERED. ANOTHER ITEM OF GOOD NEWS FOR THE BISHOP WAS ANNOUNCED POSSIBILITY OF CHIRSTMAS BONUSES. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THOSE WHO RECEIVE THEM SHOULD THINK OF THE HUNGER AND MISERY EXTANT IN THE COUNTRY.

4. TURNING TO THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE WEEK, RIVERA SAID, THAT "THE SAD NEWS IS ALWAYS THE SAME, MORE MURDERS OR MORE EXECUTIONS". HE RELATED HOW PANIC HAD BROKEN OUT IN CHALATENANGO DUE TO THE APPEARANCE AND CIRCULATION OF LIST OF PEOPLE OSTENSIBLY SENTENCED TO DEATH BY UNKNOWN PARTIES. HE FURTHER NOTED THREATS HAD BEEN MADE AGAINST THE RESIDENCE OF RELOCAION CAMPS AREA. HE DEMANDED THAT THE AUTHORITIES INVESTIGATE THE INCIDENTS AND PUNISH THOSE RESPONSIBLE

5. RIVERA CLOSED THE HOMILY BY EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT HIS WORDS WOULD SOFTEN THE CONSEQUENCE AND SAVE THE LIVES OF THOSE SUSPECTED OF BEING COLLABORATORS (APPARENTLY WITH THE GURERRILLAS). THE BISHOP READ FROM A LETTER HE HAD RECEIVED FROM A PERSON WHO LIVES IN A COMBAT ZONE, "WHAT UNCLASSIFIED

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FAULT DO WE HAVE THAT THE 'POPULAR WAR' IS STALEMATED, OR THAT MILITARY OPERATIONS DO NOT HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT." HE EMPHASIZED HIS CONCERN FORPEACE AND THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON AND STRESSED THAT THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION FOR THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE ACCELERATED.

6. FOLLOWING THE MASS BISHOP RIVERA Y DAMAS ANSWERED A QUESTION POSED BY THE UPI REPRESENTATIVE. REFERRING TO REPORTS THAT 132 DEATHS RESULTED FROM AN ARMY SWEEP IN USULUTAN DEPARTMENT, THE REPORTED ASKED IF "PERHAPS A GREAT NUMBER OF CIVILIANS ARE DYING IN OPERATIONA SUCH AS THIS." RIVERA REPLIED: "YES, IT IS EVIDENT THAT THIS HAPPENS." AT NO POINT, EITHER IN THE HOMILY OR IN THE SESSION WITH THE REPORTED, DID THE BISHOP ACCUSE THE SALVADORAN ARMY OF MURDERING PEASANTS UNDER THE GUISE OF KILLING GUERRILLAS (SEE REF) NOR WAS THERE ANY MENTION OF U.S. TROOPS, MUCH LESS GREEN BERETS, EITHER BY THE REPORTER OR BY THE BISHOP.

7. UPI CARRIED NOVEMBER 2 A SPANISH LANGUAGE ARTICLE REPORTING THAT RIVERA CHARGED THE ARMED FORCES WITH KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE AND THEN LISTING THEM AS GUERRILLA CASUALTIES. BASED ON OUR TRANSCRIPT OF THE HOMILY AND SUBSEQUENT QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD THE UPI STORY IS A DISTORTION. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT THIS IS THE STORY UNDERLYING THE RADIO HABANA ACCUSATION. THE RADIO HAVANA REMARKS ABOUT U.S. GREEN BERETS ARE CUT FROM WHOLE CLOTH. HINTON

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