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E.O. 12065: RDS-2 5/16/99 (DEVINE, FRANK J.) OR-M  
TAGS: PGOV, PINR, PINS, SHUM, ES  
SUBJ: POLITICAL ASSESSMENT - EL SALVADOR

REF A) STATE 38873; B) SAN SALVADOR 2496

- 1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)
- 2. POLITICAL ASSESSMENT TEXT FOLLOWS:

INTRODUCTION

LONG-TERM STABILITY -- TO WHICH THE DEPARTMENT'S  
INSTRUCTION FOR A POLITICAL ASSESSMENT ADDRESSED ITSELF --  
IS A MOOT QUESTION IN EL SALVADOR. INSTABILITY IS ALREADY  
UPON THE COUNTRY. THE MOST ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE  
SITUATION ARE:

1. A STAGNANT, MILITARY-DOMINATED SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT,  
WITH STRESSES BEGINNING TO APPEAR WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE  
MILITARY AND WEALTHY OLIGARCHIES THAT HAVE DOMINATED THE  
COUNTRY FOR OVER FORTH YEARS.

2. A GROWING SPECTRUM OF LEFTIST OPPOSITION WITH

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POLARIZATION UNDERMINING THE MODERATE ELEMENTS AND  
STRENGTHENING RADICAL AND EXTREMIST TENDENCIES.

3. A FALTERING ECONOMY WITH THE POLITICAL/SECURITY  
SITUATION EXACERBATING BASIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT IN

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior Reviewer

IN THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS, THE MISSION'S JOINT RESOURCES HAVE BEEN FOCUSED ON THE ELEMENTS OUTLINED IN THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS, POINTING OUT THE PERTINENT FACTORS IN EACH SECTOR AS WE SEE THEM. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS ARE NOT TIDILY UNIFORM. IN THIS RESPECT THEY REFLECT THE COMPLEX REALITY OF THE PRESENT SITUATION HERE.

#### I. BROAD DEVELOPMENTS

THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS OF EL SALVADOR ARE LONG-STANDING: OVER-POPULATION, SCARCITY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AND A STAGNANT GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE BUILT-UP TENSIONS WITHIN THE COUNTRY CAN STILL BE EASED BY A SERIES OF ADJUSTMENTS ALONG THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL FAULTLINES OF THE COUNTRY OR WHETHER A CATAclysmic UPHEAVAL HAS BECOME VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE.

WITH A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY 4.5 MILLION IN AN AREA ROUGHTLY EQUIVALENT TO THAT OF MASSACHUSETTS, POPULATION DENSITY IS 550 PER SQUARE MILE, ONE OF THE GREATEST IN THE WORLD. WITH A 3.3 PECENT GROWTH RATE, OVERPOPULATION IS INCREASING. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN SOME MIGRATION TO THE CITIES, IT HAS NOT BEEN ON THE SCALE OF MANY OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, AND THE RATE OF RURAL POPULATION GROWTH IS CLOSE TO THAT OF THE URBAN AREAS.

AGRICULTURE HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE THE MAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED  
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AVAILABILITY OF ARABLE ALND, ITS EXTREMELY UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION, AND -- DESPITE DIVERSIFICATION -- AN OVER-RELIANCE ON COFFEE WITH ITS CYCLICAL EFFECTS, AGRICULTURE CANNOT PROVIDE ADEQUATE EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME FOR THE GROWING RURAL POPULATION. RURAL POVERTY IS A MAJOR PROBLEM. SOME LIMITED ATTEMPTS AT LAND REFORM ARE TAKING PLACE, BUT EVEN A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFICIENTLY EXECUTED PROGRAM COULD NOT SOLVE THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

OUTSIDE OF AGRICULTURE, THE COUNTRY HAS FEW NATURAL RESOURCES. HYDROELECTRIC AND GEOTHERMAL POWER IS BEING DEVELOPED TO THE POINT THAT WITHIN A FEW YEARS EL SALVADOR CAN BE A NET EXPORTER OF ELECTRICITY. IT IS, HOWEVER, COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON IMPORTS FOR ITS FOSSIL FUEL SUPPLY.

EL SALVADOR HAS SHOWN ENTREPRENURIAL CAPABILITY

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AND DESPITE LOW EDUCATION AND SKILLS, THE WORK FORCE HAS  
PROVEN RELATIVELY INDUSTRIOUS AND CABABLE. LIGHT  
INDUSTRY HAS DEVELOPED IN RECENT YEARS, BUT IS NOT IN  
ANY WAY SUFFICIENT TO ABSORB THE AVAILABLE WORK FORCE.

EXACERBATED BY CURRENT POLITICAL PROBLEMS, THE  
ECONOMIC OUTLOOK IS POOR. THE EFFECTIVE UNEMPLOYMENT  
RATE HAS STOOD AT OVER 30 PERCENT AND THE INFLATION  
RATE HAS BEEN DOUBLE DIGIT SINCE APRIL 1977. THE  
FLIGHT OF CAPITAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES BECAUSE OF THE  
SECURITY SITUATION AND THE DRYING UP OF INTERNATIONAL  
FINANCING BECAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES AND RELATED  
PROBLEMS SERIOUSLY INHIBIT DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMY.

SINCE THE MID-30S, EL SALVADOR HAS BEEN CONTROLLED  
BY A SUCCESSION OF MILITARY GOVERNMENTS IN AN ALLIANCE  
WITH THE POWERFUL -- AT FIRST LARGELY HEREDITARY (THE  
SO-CALLED "FOURTEEN FAMILIES") BUT INCREASINGLY DIFFUSE --  
ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY. IN RECENT YEARS,  
THE RESULT HAS BEEN OPPRESSIVE, STAGNANT GOVERNMENT,  
INSENSITIVE TO THE WIDESPREAD SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC  
PROBLEMS, AND BASICALLY OPPOSED TO PROGRESSIVE CHANGE.  
THE CONSTITUTION, ELECTIONS, THE POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM

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AND OTHER TRAPPINGS OF DEMOCRACY ARE FACADE, BEHIND  
WHICH THE DE FACTO MILITARY AND ECONOMIC RULERS  
OPERATE.

THE RESULTING TENSIONS HAVE REACHED THE POINT  
WHERE THEY CAN NO LONGER BE CONTROLLED AS PREVIOUSLY  
BY THE RULING ELITE. SOCIALIST, COMMUNIST, AND OTHER  
LEFTIST MOVEMENTS AND IDEOLOGIES HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE  
ROOT, AND RADICAL ELEMENTS HAVE ORGANIZED INTO TERRORIST  
GROUPS AND POPULAR POLITICAL FRONT ORGANIZATIONS WHICH  
ARE GROWING IN SIZE AND EFFECTIVENESS. IN ONE OF THE  
MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, THE LABOR UNION MOVEMENT --  
UNDER GROWING INFLUENCE FROM THE RADICAL LEFT -- HAS  
SHOWN AN INCREASING SELF-AWARENESS, UNITY, AND WILLINGNESS  
TO RESORT TO CONFRONTATIONAL TACTICS THAT MAKES IT A  
FORCE WITH WHICH TO BE RECKONED. THE PREDOMINANT CATHOLIC  
CHURCH, ONCE AT LEAST A TACIT PARTNER IN THE GOVERNING  
CLASS, NOW FINDS ITSELF SPLIT INTO CONSERVATIVE AND  
LIBERAL FACTIONS WITH THE LATTER UNDER ARCHBISHOP  
ROMERO ENJOYING CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC SUPPORT AND OFFERING  
PROBABLY THE MOST TELLING CRITICISM OF AND RESISTANCE  
TO THE GOVERNMENT.

THE STRAINS APPEAR TO BE TRANSLATING THEMSELVES  
INTO THE HEART OF THE GOVERNING ALLIANCE. THUS, THERE

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ARE DIVISIONS WITHIN BOTH THE MILITARY AND THE WEALTHY  
OLIGARCHY WHILE THE TWO PARTNERS TEND TO REGARD EACH  
OTHER WITH GROWING SUSPICION.

THE EMERGING PICTURE IS ONE OF A FRAGMENTING  
SOCIETY. ANY SOLUTION OF THE COUNTRY'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC  
PROBLEMS WOULD BE DIFFICULT EVEN IF THERE WERE POLITICAL  
UNITY AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS. WITHOUT THEM, THE  
GENERAL OUTLOOK FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE IS GRIM. CONFRONTED

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WITH THIS SITUATION, THERE ARE INCREASING VOICES IN  
THE MAJOR SECTORS OF SOCIETY CALLING FOR MODERATION  
AND ACCOMMODATION. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THEY ARE  
TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE, A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE ALREADY  
BY-PASSED BY EVENTS.

## II. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP

WHILE SOME RELATIVELY IMPORTANT POSITIONS IN THE  
GOES ARE PRESENTLY OCCUPIED BY CIVILIANS (I.E., VICE  
PRESIDENT, MINISTERS OF PLANNING AND FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
AND PRESIDENTS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND SUPREME  
COURT), ULTIMATE POWER AND CONTROL OF THE GOES RESIDE  
IN ITS MILITARY LEADERSHIP. THE GREATEST PERCEIVED  
STRENGTHS OF THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP OF EL SALVADOR HAVE

1) COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE ELECTORAL MACHINERY AND THE FORCE AND DETERMINATION TO INSURE THE OUTCOME OF ANY ELECTION;

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2) THE COHESIVENESS AND DISCIPLINE OF THE MILITARY, PARTICULARLY ITS OFFICER CORPS WHICH FOR OVER 47 YEARS HAS OFFERED ITS MEMBERS OPPORTUNITY FOR UPWARD MOBILITY AND HAS REWARDED SOME WITH HIGH GOVERNMENT POSITIONS AND CONCOMMITANT ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES.

3) THE DESIRE OF THE "WEALTHY ELITE" TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO THROUGH SUPPORT FOR AND MANIPULATION OF THE GOVERNING MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT.

AS HAS BEEN NOTED ABOVE, THE LAST TWO FACTORS OF STRENGTH HAVE SUFFERED SOME DEGREE OF EROSION. THE MILITARY DOES HAVE ITS "CONSERVATIVE" AND "LIBERAL" FACTIONS, THOSE ADVOCATING A STRONGER HAND TO PRESERVE THE STATUS QUO AND THOSE WILLING TO MAKE SOME ACCOMMODATIONS WITH THE CHANGING TIMES. THE WEALTHY ELITE SUFFERS FROM THE SAME SYNDROME. AT THE SAME TIME, THE MILITARY INCREASINGLY APPEARS TO BELIEVE THAT IT CAN AND SHOULD GOVERN THE COUNTRY MORE INDEPENDENTLY OF ITS OLD PARTNERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND THE WEALTHY ELITE ARE SUSPICIOUS THAT THE MILITARY CAN NO LONGER BE TRUSTED NECESSARILY TO ACT IN THE FORMER'S INTERESTS.

MAJOR WEAKNESSES OF THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP ARE:

1) LACK OF TRULY BROAD, POPULAR SUPPORT OR EFFECTIVE POLITICAL PARTY APPARATUS; IN RECENT YEARS THE GOVERNMENT HAS ONLY BEEN ABLE TO HOLD POWER BY RESORTING TO MASSIVE ELECTORAL FRAUD AND REPRESSION.

2) LEADERSHIP CENTERED IN THE MILITARY AS AN INSTITUTION WITH NO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT, ENJOYING WIDESPREAD PERSONAL POLITICAL AND POPULAR SUPPORT;

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3) APPARENT INABILITY OR UNWILLINGNESS TO COPE WITH OPEN TERRORISM, GRADUAL DETERIORATION OF THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION AND RISING DISSATISFACTION AMONG VIRTUALLY EVERY SECTOR OF SALVADORAN SOCIETY.

KEY INDIVIDUALS IN THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP ARE:

1) PRESIDENT CARLOS HUMBERTO ROMERO: TRADITIONALLY THE PRESIDENT IS THE MOST POWERFUL SINGLE FIGURE IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GOES. HOWEVER, ROMERO HAS LITTLE POPULAR SUPPORT OUTSIDE OF THE MILITARY INSTITUTION AND SOME SEGMENTS OF THE WEALTHY ELITE. HE IS CRITICIZED (EVEN BY HIS SUPPORTERS) AS AN INDECISIVE, INEFFECTIVE PRESIDENT, ALTHOUGH IT IS ALSO RECOGNIZED THAT ON OCCASION FORCEFUL ACTION COULD HAVE DISASTROUSLY EXACERBATED THE SITUATION. INVARIABLY, RUMORS CIRCULATE THAT HE WILL BE OVERTURNED OR VOLUNTARILY RELINQUISH THE PRESIDENCY, BUT THOSE RUMORS MAY HAVE LITTLE BASIS IN FACT.

2) COL. JOSE IRAHETA, SUBSECRETARY OF DEFENSE: A TOUGH, STRONGWILLED, AMBITIOUS OFFICER RESPECTED BY MUCH OF MILITARY OFFICER CORPS, HE IN EFFECT RUNS THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND DOES PLAY A KEY ROLE IN CENTRAL LEADERSHIP. IRAHETA WOULD PROBABLY BE VERY WILLING TO OVERTURN THE PRESIDENT AND TAKE CHARGE OF THE COUNTRY HIMSELF. BARRING THAT, HE WOULD MOST LIKELY SUPPORT WHATEVER GROUP APPEARED TO BE IN POSITION TO CONTROL THE GOES.

3. COL. ROBERTO ESCOBAR GARCIA, MINISTER OF LABOR: ESCOBAR HAS SPENT MORE OF HIS MILITARY CAREER SERVING IN GOVERNMENTAL POSITIONS AND OBTAINING DEGREES IN HIGHER EDUCATION THAN HE HAS AS A SOLDIER. HE IS PERSONABLE, OUTGOING AND HAS BEEN FREQUENTLY MENTIONED AS ROMERO'S

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SUCCESSOR. HOWEVER, IN HIS CONCERTED EFFORT TO AVOID ALIENATING ANY IMPORTANT GROUP OF SALVADORAN SOCIETY HE IS ALSO VIEWED AS AN INDECISIVE AND INEFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR WHO HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP, MUCH LESS STATESMENSHIP. THE RECENT SERIES OF LABOR PROBLEMS, WHICH HE DID LITTLE OR NOTHING TO RESOLVE MAY HAVE DIMINISHED HIS STATURE WITHIN THE GOES

4. VICE PRESIDENT JULIO ERNESTO ASTACIO: AS A CIVILIAN, ASTACIO CANNOT BE CONSIDERED A KEY DECISIONMAKER, BUT HE HAS MANAGED TO CARVE ENOUGH OF A ROLE FOR HIMSELF SO THAT HE IS SOMETIMES MENTIONED IN CONNECTION WITH ANY POSSIBLE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE OR IN THE 1982 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. HIS FUTURE ROLE HOWEVER, IS MORE LIKELY TO DEPEND ON HIS FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS FROM WITHIN THE MILITARY, RATHER THAN ANY INDEPENDENT POLITICAL BASE HE IS CAPABLE OF BUILDING.

5. FOREIGN MINISTER JOSE ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ PORTH AND PLANNING MINISTER DR JOSE EDUARDO REYES: THESE TWO MEN RIVAL ASTACIO AS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL CIVILIANS WITHIN THE GOES. BUT AS WITH ASTACIO, THEIR POSITIONS AND THEIR POLITICAL FUTURE DEPEND UPON THEIR TIES WITH THE RULING ELITE.

### III. NATURE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF OPPOSITION FORCES

THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) IS THE LARGEST OF THE CONVENTIONAL OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES AND HAS COME CLOSEST TO MAINTAINING SOME SEMBLANCE OF  
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CONTINUING STRUCTURE. IN RECENT YEARS IT HAS SUFFERED FROM FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, INEFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP, AND A LOSS OF POPULAR FOLLOWING TO THE MORE RADICAL "POLULAR" GROUPS. ITS FORMERLY MOST CHARISMATIC LEADER, NAPOLEON DUARTE, HAS BEEN IN EXILE IN VENEZUELA SINCE 1972 AND IT IS QUESTIONABLE IF HE OR OTHER EXILED PARTY LEADERS COULD RETURN AND TAKE UP AS BEFORE. THE PDC'S ORIENTATION IS GENERALLY MODERATE AND ITS LEADERSHIP IS ATTEMPTING TO INITIATE A DIALOGUE WITH THE GOES WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO A DEMOCRATIC OPENING.

THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT (MNR) IS A SMALL, LEFTIST GROUP COMPRISED MAINLY OF INTELLECTUALS AND DOMINATED BY ITS SECRETARY GENERAL PROFESSOR GUILLERMO MANUEL UNGO. ITS EFFECTIVENESS AS AN OPPOSITION FORCE LIES MAINLY IN THE ABILITY OF ITS MEMBERSHIP TO PROVIDE IN-DEPTH ANALYTICAL CRITICISM OF GOES POLICIES AND ITS POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE BOTH QUALIFIED PERSONNEL AND POLICY

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THE NATIONALIST DEMOCRATIC UNION (UDN) IS A  
FRONT GROUP OF THE MOSCOW-ORIENTED COMMUNIST PARTY  
OF EL SALVADOR (PCES), WITH ITS RANK AND FILE DRAWN  
FROM THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED LABOR UNIONS. ITS MEMBER-  
SHIP PROBABLY DOES NOT EXCEED 500 AND IT IS NOT  
CONSIDERED A SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL FORCE AT THE PRESENT  
TIME.

THE PDC, MNR, AND UDN FORMED THE NATIONAL OPPOSI-  
TION UNION (UNO) IN THE LATE 1960S AND EARLY 1970S,  
APPARENTLY WINNING THE 1972 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION BUT  
DENIED THE VICTORY BY FRAUD. THE COALITION NO LONGER  
IS ACTIVE, BUT THE THREE CONSTITUENT PARTIES STILL  
COOPERATE TO A LIMITED DEGREE.

THE MOST ACTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE GOES IS CONCENTRATED  
IN THE THREE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS PRESENTLY OPERATING  
IN EL SALVADOR AND THEIR POLITICAL FRONT ORGANIZATIONS.  
THEY ARE: A) THE FARABUNDE-MARTI POPULAR LIBERATION  
FORCES (FPL) AND ITS FRONT GROUP, THE POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY  
BLOCK (BPR); B) THE ARMED FORCES OF NATIONAL RESISTANCE  
(FAG), THE ACTION ELEMENT OF THE NATIONAL RESISTANCE



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ACTION (FAPU); AND C) THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (ERP), WITH ITS FRONT GROUP, POPULAR LEAGUES - 28 (LP 28) OF THESE THREE, THE FPL-BPR IS PROBABLY THE MOST DANGEROUS BECAUSE OF ITS SUPERIOR NUMERICAL STRENGTH (THE BPR HAS 60,000-100,000 MEMBERS WITHIN ITS COMPOSITE ORGANIZATIONS AND IS STILL GROWING) AND ITS PROVEN ABILITY TO CARRY OUT SOPHISTICATED TERRORIST ACTIONS, PARTICULARLY ASSASSINATIONS.

THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT GROUP IS THE FARN/RN WHICH TOGETHER WITH ITS FAPU FRONT GROUP, PROBABLY NUMBERS 12,000-15,000 INDIVIDUALS. DURING THE PERIOD MARCH 1978 THROUGH MARCH 1979, THE FARN/RN CARRIED OUT A SERIES OF KIDNAPPINGS WHICH NETTED THEM APPROXIMATELY SIXTEEN MILLION DOLLARS. IT WAS ALSO SUCCESSFUL IN ATTAINING WORLD-WIDE PUBLICITY VIA ITS MANIFESTOS, PUBLICIZED BY SELECTED NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO STATIONS AS PART OF THE PRICE FOR THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES.

THE ERP IS BELIEVED TO BE THE SMALLEST OF THE THREE TERRORIST GROUPS, CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 500 INDIVIDUALS. ITS FRONT GROUP, THE "POPULAR LEAGUES - 28" IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE A VIABLE ORGANIZATION. THE ERP DIFFERS FROM THE FPL AND FARN IN THAT WHILE IT HAS ALSO CARRIED OUT SEVERAL KIDNAPPINGS, IT SPECIALIZES IN BOMBINGS, ASSASSINATIONS, AND SIMILAR ACTS OF RANDOM TERRORISM. BASED ON THEIR RECENT ACTIVITIES, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THEY ARE BECOMING MORE SOPHISTICATED IN THEIR MODUS OPERANDI.

A RECENT AND OMINOUS DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN THE WILLINGNESS TO THESE THREE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS TO COORDINATE, AT LEAST ON AN AD HOC BASIS, THEIR ACTIONS AGAINST THE GOES. MOST FREQUENTLY THIS HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF IN THE COORDINATION OF THEIR PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS

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WHICH LARGELY HAVE BEEN PEACEFUL. HOWEVER, THIS AD HOC COORDINATION COULD EASILY BE EXTENDED TO VIOLENT ACTIONS SUCH AS ASSASSINATIONS AND KIDNAPPINGS.

ELEMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE TRACE

IV. ATTITUDES, SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS, COHESION AND  
LOYALTY OF THE ARMED SECURITY FORCES

A. THE ARMED FORCES:

1. THE OFFICER CORPS:

(A) ATTITUDES: DURING THE PAST 18 MONTHS,  
THE CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ASSUREDNESS OF THE OFFICER  
CORPS HAS BEGUN TO CRUMBLE. SENIOR GRADE OFFICERS WHO  
VIEW HEAVY-HANDED REPRESSION AS THE ONLY ANSWER TO THE  
COUNTRY'S ILLS ARE OPENLY DISCONTENTED. MIDDLE GRADE  
OFFICERS ARE HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME UNDERSTANDING THE  
ALLEGED "INACTION" OF THE ROMERO REGIME IN DEALING  
WITH THE RADICAL-MILITANT LEFT AND CONSEQUENTLY ARE  
BEWILDERED AND DISTRESSED. THE JUNIOR OFFICER CORPS  
SUFFERS FROM ANXIETY AND DISTRUST AS A RESULT OF THE  
PERCEIVED INABILITY OR UNWILLINGNESS OF THEIR SUPERIORS  
TO OFFER EITHER SHORT OR LONG TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE  
COUNTRY'S INCREASINGLY SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL  
PROBLEMS.

(B) SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS: SOME SENIOR  
OFFICERS ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH STRICTLY MILITARY ISSUES  
(AGING INVENTORIES, ETC.) AND WITH THE ARMY'S LOSS OF  
RESPECT BOTH HERE AND ABROAD; OTHERS ARE UNAWARE OF THE  
ISSUES LET ALONE THE SOLUTIONS. THEY ALL SEEK PERSONAL  
AND PROFESSIONAL GAIN AND AS A GROUP WOULD PREFER A STRONG  
MILITARY RESPONSE TO PROBLEMS IN LIEU OF SOCIAL CHANGE.  
THE MIDDLE GRADE (MAJORS AND LIEUTENANT COLONELS) OFFICER  
CORPS IS NOT A STRONG GROUP. THEY ARE REMOVED FROM

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TROOP COMMAND AND PERFORM STAFFFUNCTIONS WHILE WAITING  
TO BE PROMOTED. THE LIEUTENANTS ARE MORE AWARE OF THE  
SOCIAL ILLS OF THE COUNTRY AND ARE CONCERNED WITH  
SOLUTIONS AND NOT JUST PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL GAIN.  
THEY ARE TAKING A LONG RANGE VIEW AND APPEAR TO BE MORE  
SYMPATHETIC TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE LABOR FORCE AND  
PEASANT WORKERS. ALTHOUGH THE LEFT HAS HAD SOME SUCCESS  
AMONG THE JUNIOR OFFICERS, IT HAS YET TO MAKE ANY SERIOUS  
INROADS IN THE OFFICER CORPS AS A WHOLE.

(C) COHESION AND LOYALTY: AFTER 18  
MONTHS OF TEETERING ON THE BRINK WITH THE ROMERO  
ADMINISTRATION, IT STILL APPEARS LIKELY THE ARMED

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FORCES WOULD REMAIN UNITED AND LOYAL IN THE FACE OF  
A MASS UPRISING. COUP PLOTTING, HOWEVER, SEEMS TO BE  
INCREASING. MILITARY LOYALTY IS TO THE INSTITUTION  
NOT THE MAN. HENCE IF THE PROSPECTS APPEARED  
FAVORABLE FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF ROMERO BY A MORE  
CHARISMATIC MILITARY FIGURE, MANY OFFICERS WOULD NOT  
NECESSARILY SEEK TO PRESERVE THE ROMERO REGIME.

2. THE ENLISTED CORPS:

(A) ATTITUDES: THE ENLISTED CORPS IN  
THE PAST WAS OBLIVIOUS TO POLITICAL/SOCIAL ISSUES.  
WITH THE EMERGENCE OF RADICAL POLITICAL GROUPS, BPR  
AND FAPU, CONSCRIPTS ARE NOW ENTERING THE ARMED FORCE  
WITH A NEW FOUND POLITICAL AWARENESS OF THE ISSUES.

(B) SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS: FORCIBLY  
CONSCRIPTED FROM YOUNG MEN OF PEASANT BACKGROUNDS, MOST  
ENLISTED MEN ARE FAR MORE FAMILY GROUP ORIENTED THAN THE  
OFFICER CORPS. ACTIONS WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT THEIR  
FAMILIES WILL INFLUENCE THEIR REACTION. THE ARMED  
FORCE HAS TEMPERED THIS PROBLEM BY NEVER ASSIGNING A  
DRAFTEE TO THE BRIGADE NEAREST HIS HOME (E.G., THOSE  
DRAFTED IN SANTA ANA ARE ASSIGNED TO SAN MIGUEL).

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ALTHOUGH THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH IS MORE APPARENT

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AMONG THE ENLISTED MEN IT IS CONSIDERED DOUBTFUL THAT THEY WOULD RALLY TO A RELIGIOUS LEADER.

(C) COHESION AND LOYALTY: COHESION IS BASED ON FEAR OF REPRISAL AND A GROWING SENSE OF BELONGING TO A GROUP. THE SHORT TENURE (1 YEAR) OF ENLISTED MEN, A COMMUNICATIONS GAP BETWEEN OFFICERS AND MEN, LACK OF A PROFESSIONAL NCO CORPS, WEAK ESPRIT DE CORPS, AND INTRA-UNIT RIVALRIES ARE JUST SOME OF THE WEAKNESSES OF THE SYSTEM. THEY WOULD MOST LIKELY FOLLOW ORDERS IN THE CASE OF AN UPRISING OF THE MASSES BUT THERE ARE SOME DOUBTS.

B. THE SECURITY FORCES: THE GUARDIA NACIONAL AND POLICIA DE HACIENDA ARE MORE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (I.E., CAREER RATHER THAN CONSCRIPTION) THAN IS THE ARMED FORCES. THEIR RESPONSE TO A MASS UPRISING WOULD PROBABLY REFLECT THAT PROFESSIONALISM RATHER THAN SIMPLY LOYALTY OR COHESION WITHIN THE SERVICE. PROFESSIONALISM, HOWEVER, FAILS TO CONCEAL SOME DISSENT WITHIN THOSE SERVICES FROM GOES ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS DIRECTED AGAINST LABOR AND THE CAMPESINOS.

THE NATIONAL POLICE ARE SO RACKED WITH CORRUPTION  
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THEY WOULD BE LIKELY TO PROFFER THEIR SERVICES TO THE FACTION OR GROUP MOST LIKELY TO CONDONE THEIR CONTINUING CORRUPTION. THE UNITY AND COHESIVENESS OF THE ORGANIZATION IS MINIMAL AS ALSO IS ITSEFFECTIVENESS.

C. IN SUMMATION, THE RELIABILITY OF THE ARMED AND SECURITY FORCES CAN NO LONGER BE CONSIDERED ABSOLUTE. THEY HAVE NOT REACHED THE POINT OF MUTINY. BUT MORE THAN A FEW DEFECTIONS COULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE RANKS. IN ADDITION, INTERNAL DIVERSIONS ARE GROWING AND COULD ERODE SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT ROMOERO TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT A MILITARY INDUCED CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT WHICH MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT SPLIT THE ARMED FORCE INTO WARRING FACTIONS IS A POSSIBILITY.

V. ORIENTATION AND INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA

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THE SALVADORAN PRESS, RADIO , AND TELEVISION ARE  
SUPPORTERS OF THE POLITICAL/BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (ANEP) OF  
WHICH MEDIA LEADERS FORM A PART. IN THEIR VIEW, THE  
PRINCIPAL FUNCTION OF THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER IS TO  
SUPPORT POLICIES DICTATED BY THE PHILOSOPHY OF FREE  
ENTERPRISE. CONSEQUENTLY, ALL MASS COMMUNICATION MEDIA,  
WITH THE EXCEPTIONS OF THE ONLY TRULY OPPOSITION NEWS-  
PAPERS, LA CRONICA, AND THE CHURCH'S PAPER, ORIENTACION,  
DO NOT PUBLISH ANYTHING CONTRARY TO THE GOVERNMENT'S  
POLICY AS LONG AS THE GOVERNMENT DEFENDS, OR AT LEAST  
TOLERATES, THE PRINCIPLES OF PRIVATE BUSINESS. THERE  
HAVE BEEN SOME INSTANCES WHEN THE GOVERNMENT ADOPTED  
POLICIES CONTRARY TO ANEP'S INTERESTS. IN THOSE CASES,  
THE NEWS MEDIA -- AND ANEP -- OPPOSED THE GOVERNMENT  
AND WON.

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FOR A SMALL COUNTRY, THE SALVADORAN NEWS MEDIA  
ARE SURPRISINGLY WELL DEVELOPED AND SOPHISTICATED.  
MOST DAILIES AND MAJOR RADIO STATIONS SUBSCRIBE TO  
THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICES. FOR THE MOST PART,  
NEWS MEDIA OWNERSHIP IS CONSERVATIVE, SELF-CENSORED,  
AND LARGELY PRO-U.S. THE MAJOR EXCEPTIONS TO THE LATTER POINT  
ARE THE VOCIFEROUS ANTI-U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY STANDS OF DIARIO  
DE HOY, AND ORIENTACION, THE FORMER BECAUSE THE POLICY  
GOES TOO FAR, THE LATTER BECAUSE IT DOES NOT GO FAR  
ENOUGH. ORIENTACION ON OCCASION EVEN USES A MARXIST  
SLANT IN DESCRIBING THE U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY  
AS "IMPERIALIST" OR "CAPITALIST". LA CRONICA OCCASIONALLY  
WRITES ANTI-U.S. DIATRIBES, BUT ALSO FREQUENTLY  
PUBLISHES ICA MATERIALS. ITS MAIN AUDIENCE IS UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS AND LABOR. ITS MAIN INCOME IS FROM PAID "OPPOSITION"  
ANNOUNCEMENTS -- USUALLY FAR LEFT ORGANIZATIONS -- WHICH  
AT TIMES FILL THE PAPER.

IN TERMS OF INFLUENCE, RADIO (SIXTY STATIONS IN  
ALL) IS BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT FORCE IN SHAPING PUBLIC  
OPINION. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION RADIO  
RECEIVERS IN EL SALVADOR. FIVE SIZEABLE RADIO NEWS  
CHAINS COVER THE COUNTRY, BRINGING THE NEWS FASTER, AND  
AT TIMES WITH A GREATER DEGREE OF ACCURACY, TO THEIR  
LISTENERS THAN DO THE OTHER STATIONS. ON AN AVERAGE  
DAY OF APPROXIMATELY 15 BROADCASTING HOURS, ONE MILLION  
SALVADORANS LISTEN TO THE RADIO. ALTHOUGH THE LISTENING  
AUDIENCE IS LARGE, THE MEDIUM IS NOT BEING USED TO ITS  
FULL POTENTIAL; POOR PROGRAMMING IS THE FREQUENT FARE

SECOND IN TERMS OF INFLUENCE IS THE LOCAL PRESS WITH ITS FIVE DAILY NEWSPAPERS IN THE CAPITAL CITY (TOTAL CIRCULATION 250,000 COPESES DAILY). GIVEN THE HIGH ILLITERACY RATE, THE READERSHIP DOES NOT EXCEED HALF A MILLION, OR TWO READERS PER COPY. DISTRIBUTION AND NEWSPAPER COSTS ARE ALSO FACTORS WHICH LIMIT THE NUMBER OF NEWSPAPER READERS.

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THE LAST INFLUENTIAL MEDIA FORCE IS TELEVISION, WHICH HAS THREE CHANNELS. THERE ARE SOME 100,000 TV SETS IN THE COUNTRY WITH AN AVERAGE OF FIVE VIEWERS PER SET, REACHING APPROXIMATELY ONE HALF MILLION PEOPLE DAILY. PROGRAMMING IS WEAK AND PRIMARILY GEARED TO MAKE MONEY. TV SOAP OPERAS AND IMPORTED U.S. SERIES FILL MOST TV TIME. THERE ARE NO NEWS PROGRAMS WORTH MENTIONING WHICH REFLECTS BOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REALITIES FOR TV HERE.

THE MANIPULATION OF THE NATIONAL NEWS BY THE MEDIA IS A FACT OF LIFE. MEDIA FEED THEIR READERS, LISTENERS, AND VIEWERS "VERSIONS" OF EVENTS WHICH OFTEN DO NOT REFLECT THE FACTS. THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS OR NEWS STORIES IS ESPECIALLY LOW. THE MEDIA AUDIENCE IS ALMOST EQUALLY CRITICAL AND SUSPICIOUS OF NEWS VERSIONS WHICH ARE BEING FED BY THE OLIGARCHIC PRIVATE SECTOR. THIS FACT WAS ESPECIALLY NOTICEABLE DURING THE LAST WAVE OF LABOR STRIKES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

#### VI. ORIENTATION AND POLITICAL CAPABILITY AND POTENTIAL OF LABOR GROUPS

ANY DISCUSSION OF POLITICAL CAPABILITIES MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT ONLY TEN PERCENT OF EL SALVADOR'S ESTIMATED 750,000 NON-AGRICULTUREAL WORKERS ARE UNIONIZED. (RURAL UNIONS ARE NOT RECOGNIZED BY SALVADORAN LAW.) THE POTENTIAL FOR LABOR GROUPS TO ASSUME A SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL ROLE IS THUS CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THIS COMPARATIVELY LOW LEVEL OF UNIONIZATION. HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THQY LABOR UNIONS ARE WHOLLY WITHOUT INFLUENCE SINCE AT LEAST SOME OF THEM IN KEY

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SECTORS HAVE SHOWN AN ABILITY TO DISRUPT VITAL PUBLIC SERVICES OF THE ECONOMY AND OTHERWISE CAUSE DISLOCATIONS IN CERTAIN NON-AGRICULTURAL SECTORS. A RECENT SERIES OF SUCCESSES ACHIEVED THROUGH STRIKES HAS BOOSTED LABOR MORALE AND CONFIDENCE TO AN UNPRECEDENT LEVEL, ENCOURAGING MORE MILITARY UNIONISM.

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OF EL SALVADOR'S APPROXIMATELY 76,000 UNIONIZED WORKERS, APPROXIMATELY 71,000 ARE DIVIDED AMONG THE FEDERATION OF UNIONS OF CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION WORKERS - FESINCONSTRANS (31,000 WORKERS), GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF UNIONS - CGS (14,000 WORKERS), AND THE LARGELY COMMUNIST UNITED CONFEDERATION OF SALVADORAN WORKERS - CUTS (26,000 WORKERS). CUTS WAS FORMED IN NOVEMBER 1977 BY THE UNION OF TWO LABOR DEFERATIONS WITH TIES TO THE MOSCOW-ORIENTED COMMUNIST PARTY OF EL SALVADOR (PCES), FUSS AND FESTIAVTSCES, WITH THE LEFTIST BUT NOMINALLY NON-COMMUNIST NATIONAL LABOR FEDERATION OF SALVADORAN WORKERS (FENASTRAS). UNIONS MOSTLY AFFILIATED WITH FENASTRAS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE

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WAVE OF LABOR DISTURBANCES IN MARCH 1979 THAT INCLUDED  
A 23-HOUR ELECTRIC POWER BLACKOUT CAUSED BY THE STRIKING  
ELECTRIC WORKERS' UNION.

IN TERMS OF POTENTIAL POLITICAL CAPABILITIES,  
FESINCONSTRANS WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE THE EDGE OVER THE  
OTHER TWO, AT LEAST IF ONE LOOKS AT LABOR ORGANIZATIONS  
PER SE. FESINCONSTRANS IS DEMOCRATIC IN ITS ORIENTATION

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AND HAS HAD A LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE AMERICAN  
INSTITUTE OF FREE LABOR DEVELOPMENT (AIFLD). IT APPEARS  
TO BE THE FASTEST-GROWING FEDERATION, DRAWING MANY  
MEMBERS AWAY FROM CGS. IT HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING  
WELL-MANAGED AND ADMINISTERED AND, THANKS TO A DUES  
CHECKOFF SYSTEM THAT TAKES THREE PERCENT OF A MEMBER'S  
BASE PAY, IS RELATIVELY INDEPENDENT FINANCIALLY.

WHILE IT HAS NOT GONE OUT OF ITS WAY TO ANTAGONIZE  
THE GOES AND APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SCRUPULOUS IN  
EXHAUSTING LEGAL REMEDIES BEFORE RESORTING TO STRIKES,  
FESINCONSTRANS HAS NOT HESITATED TO USE STRIKES AS A  
MEANS OF ACHIEVING ITS DEMANDS. FESINCONSTRANS COULD  
FIND AN ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF STRENGTH IN THE FUTURE IN  
ITS RECENT CONFEDERATION WITH THE RURAL CO-OPERATIVE ORGANI-  
ZATION UNION COMUNAL SALVADORENA (UCS) IN THE NATIONAL  
CENTRAL OF WORKERS (CNT). THUS, IF IT CONTINUES ITS  
PRESENT GROWTH IT COULD WIELD INCREASING POLITICAL  
STRENGTH IN THE FUTURE. THIS POTENTIAL HAS IN A SENSE  
ALREADY BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY (PDC), WHICH HAS SOUGHT TO ENLIST ITS SUPPORT FOR  
A "POLITICAL OPENING".

BECAUSE OF THE RECENT SUCCESSES SCORED BY ITS  
FENASTRAS COMPONENT, IT MIGHT BE ASSUMED THAT OVER THE  
SHORT TERM AT LEAST, CUSTS MAY BE THE LABOR CONFEDERATION  
TO WATCH IN TERMS OF POLITICAL CAPABILITIES OR AT  
LEAST IN ABILITY TO DISRUPT VITAL SERVICES. HOWEVER,  
THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT RECENT TACTICS  
(TAKEOVER OF FACTORIES, TAKING OF HOSTAGES) EMPLOYED  
BY FENASTRAS AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH THE ANTI-GOES  
LEFTIST ORGANIZATIONS BPR AND FAPU COULD CAUSE A  
BACKLASH AGAINST THE CONFEDERATION AS A WHOLE. ALSO,

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THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE TWO COMMUNIST LABOR FEDERATIONS WITHIN CUTS ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH FACT THAT FENASTRAS PERMITTED BPR AND FAPU TO INTERVENE IN THE MARCH 1979 LABOR DISPUTES.

THE WEAKEST IN TERMS OF POLITICAL CAPABILITIES IS THE CGS, WHICH IS CONSIDERED DEMOCRATIC IN ORIENTATION AND HAS HAD A LONG ASSOCIATION WITH AIFLD. HOWEVER, NOT ONLY HAVE SOME OF ITS LEADERS BECOME TOO CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE GOES BUT ALSO CGS REPORTEDLY RELIES ON A SUBSIDY FROM THE GOES TO MEET ITS OPERATING EXPENSES.

ASIDE FROM THE MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATION, THE STRONGEST LABOR GROUPS CAN BE SAID TO BE WITHIN THE LEFTIST POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY BLOC (BPR). THE TEACHERS' ORGANIZATION "ANDES 21 DE JUNIO" IS THE PREDOMINANT UNION AMONG TEACHERS AND THE CAMPESINO ORGANIZATION FECCAS-UTC WHILE TECHNICALLY ILLEGAL UNDER SALVADORAN LAW WHICH DOES NOT RECOGNIZE RURAL UNIONS, HAS SHOWN RISING VISIBILITY AND GROWTH IN THE LAST YEAR. BPR AND FAPU PENETRATION AND INFLUENCE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT ARE PROBABLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INCREASED MILITANCY THAT HAS MARKED RECENT UNION ACTIVITY.

#### VII. ATTITUDES AND POTENTIAL IN TIMES OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRESS OF YOUTH AND STUDENT GROUPS

THERE ARE NO NATION-WIDE YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS OR NATIONAL YOUTH MOVEMENTS AS SUCH IN EL SALVADOR. HOWEVER, THERE ARE FACIONAL POLITICAL YOUTH GROUPS SUCH AS THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC YOUTH (JDC), THE SALVADORAN COMMUNIST YOUTH (JCS), AND THOSE GROUPS PRESENT AT HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY LEVELS WHICH ARE SUBORDINATE TO SUCH POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS AS THE POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY BLOC (BPR) OR THE FRONT FOR UNIFIED POPULAR ACTION

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(FAPU) .

THE GOVERNMENT HAS TRIED THROUGH ITS MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO FORM YOUTH GROUPS WHICH CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH SPORTS, DANCE, AND CHORAL MUSIC. HOWEVER, IT

THE MOST ACTIVE POLITICAL GROUPS WHICH SUPPORT  
POPULAR MOVEMENTS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL ARE: THE  
REVOLUTIONARY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT MOVEMENT (MERS),  
WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THE BPR; AND THE REVOLUTIONARY  
ASSOCIATION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (ARDES), WHICH IS  
SUBORDINATED TO FAPU. AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL, STUDENT  
GROUPS INCLUDE: THE REVOLUTIONARY UNION 19 (UR-19),  
A BPR AFFILIATE; THE REVOLUTIONARY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS  
FRONT SALVADOR ALLENDE (FUERSA) WHICH IS ASSOCIATED  
WITH FAPU; THE LIBERATION LEAGUE, ALSO BELONGING TO  
FAPU; THE UNIVERSITY ACTION FRONT (FAU), WHICH IS  
A DEPENDENCY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY; AND , THE UNIVERSITY  
REVOLUTIONARY FRONT (FUR-30), WHICH IS PART OF THE BPR  
AND FUNCTIONS AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (UCA),

THE FACTIONS ARE NOT STRONG IN MEMBERSHIP; THEY  
DO NOT REPRESENT MORE THAN TEN PERCENT OF THE TOTAL  
STUDENT POPULATION. HOWEVER, THEIR INFLUENCE GOES  
BEYOND NUMERICAL STRENGTH BECAUSE THEY IN EFFECT  
DECIDE AND ACT IN THE NAME OF THE TOTAL STUDENT  
POPULATION. THE MEMBERS OF THESE STUDENT MOVEMENTS  
ARE NOW EXPERTS IN THE ART OF AGITATION, EFFECTIVELY  
USING LEADFLETS, LOUDSPEAKERS, AND POSTERS, AND  
ORGANIZING DEMONSTRATIONS.

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THE MARXIST-LENINIST PHILOSOPHY IS THE IDEOLOGICAL  
BASE FOR THE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS. ALL OPPOSE THE  
GOVERNMENT AS "BOURGEOIS" OR "FASCIST", AND SUPPORT  
THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT REVOLUTIONARY PROCESF. DURING THE  
PRESENT TIMES OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRESS, THE  
STUDENT GROUPS HAVE GAINED MOMENTUM AND HAVE BECOME  
MORE INFLUENTIAL AND VOCAL THAN IN THE PAST. THEY  
ALSO EXERT AN INFLUENCE ON CAMPESINO ORGANIZATIONS  
(E.G., FECCAS-UTC) THROUGH THEIR COMMON "PARENT"  
ORGANIZATIONS, THE BPR AND FAPU. ALL TOGETHER THEY  
POSE A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS, DESTABILIZING FORCE IN

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THELOCAL POLITICAL SITUATION.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (SPECIFICALLY THE LIBERAL-LEFTIST ELEMENTS) IS IN A PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING AND/OR STRENGTHENING ITS YOUTH ACTIVITIES. THE ATTITUDE OF SUCH EXISTING PAROCHIAL YOUTH GROUPS REFLECT THE STANCE OF THE CHURCH WHICH IS MARKED BY INCREASINGLY RADICALISM AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT SENTIMENTS.

VIII. ORGANIZATION ORIENTATION AND INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS AND INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS

EL SALVADOR IS OVERWHELMINGLY CATHOLIC -- OVER 95 PERCENT CLAIMED AFFILIATION -- BUT THE CHURCH IS POOR AND HAS A SHORTAGE OF PRIESTS. FOR MANY YEARS THE CHURCH EXERTED ONLY MINIMAL INFLUENCE IN NATIONAL POLITICS AND WAS GENERALLY CONSIDERED AT LEAST A TACIT PARTNER OF THE RULING ELITE. HOWEVER, IN RECENT YEARS, A SMALL GROUP OF YOUTH PRIESTS, INCLUDING A FEW FOREIGNERS, BEGAN TO SPEAK OUT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, LAND REFORM AND OTHER CHANGES WITH POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS.

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THEY WERE INSPIRED BY VATICAN II AND THE DECLARATION OF  
MEDELLIN. SINCE 1977, THE CHURCH-STATE CONFRONTATION  
IN EL SALVADOR HAS BECOME A MAJOR ISSUE, WITH THE FACTION  
OF THE CHURCH UNDER ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO FREQUENTLY  
IN OPEN OPPOSITION TO THE GOES AND PRESIDENT ROMERO.

EARLY IN 1977 THE GOES, OR ELEMENTS WITHIN IT,  
AND SOME RIGHTWING GROUPINGS ENGAGED IN A PROGRAM OF  
HARASSMENT OF THE CHURCH AND ITS CLERGY, INCLUDING  
THE KILLING OF TWO PRIESTS. THE PGRAM OF HARASSMENT  
CULMINATED WITH THE RIGHTIST WHITE WARRIORS' UNION  
(UGB) THREAT TO KILL ALL JESUITS IN EL SALADOR UNLESS  
THEY LEFT THE COUNTRY WITHIN 30 DAYS. THE JESUITS  
DID NOT DEPART BY THE JULY 20, 1977 DEADLINE AND THE  
THREAT WAS NOT CARRIED OUT.

SINCE PRESIDENT ROMOER TOOK OFFICE JULY 1, 1977,  
HARASSMENT OF THE CHURCH HAS DIMINISTED SOMEWHAT, BUT  
THE CHURCH MAINTAINS THAT THE GOES CONTINUES SYSTEMIATIC-  
ALLY TO PERSECUTE AND EVEN KILL ITS LAY LEADERS,  
PARTICULARLY THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH SO-CALLED CATECHIST  
GROUPS. TWO PRIESTS HAVE BEEN KILLED SINCE PRESIDENT  
ROMOERO TOOK OFFICE. HOWEVER, ONE OF THEM WAS APPARENTLY  
KILLED WHILE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING AS AN ARMED TERRORIST.

BRIEF ATTEMPTS AT CHURHC-STATE DIALOGUE HAVE BEEN  
UNDERTAKEN FROM TIME TO TIME BUT LITTLE OR NO SUCCESS  
HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. THE ARCHBISHOP HAS INSISTED ON  
TERMINATION OF HARASSMENT OF THE CHURCH AND ITS PERSONNEL  
AS A PRECONDITION FOR ANY DIALOGUE. ALONG WITH THE  
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) AND THE PRIVATE  
BUSINESS SECTOR, THE CHURCH HAS EXPRESSED A WILLING-  
NESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE GOES TOWARD A "POLITICAL  
OPENING" BUT THIS REMAINS LITTLE MORE THAN A VAGUELY  
AGREED UPON CONCETP LACKING ANY IMPLEMENTAION.

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THE CHURCH, HOWEVER, SUFFERS FROM A SCHISM IN ITS  
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VIEWS. ARCHBISHOP ROMOER LEADS  
THE FACTION LEANING TOWARD LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND HE  
APPEARS TO HAVE MAJORITY SUPPORT AMONG THE CATHOLIC  
CLERGY AND LAITY. THE PAPAL NUNCIO AND THE MAJORITY  
OF THE HIERARCHY, INCLUDING MOST OF THE OTHER BISHOPS  
OF EL SALVADOR, SUBSCRIBE TO A MORE CONVENTIONAL  
PASTORAL THEOLOGY. THIS FACTION ELECTED BISHOPS MARCO  
RENE REVELO AND PEDRO APARICIO Y QUINTANILLA TO BE  
VOTING DELEGATES AT THE PEUBLA CONFERENCE OF THE  
LATIN AMERICAN EPISCOPATE, WHILE ARCHBISHOP ROMOERO

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ATTENDED AS AN AUTOMATIC DELEGATE BY FIRTUE OF  
HIS POSITION, BUT WITHOUT A VOTE. THE CONSERVATIVE  
GROUP FEARS THAT THE CHURCH HAS ASSUMED TOO OVERT A  
POLITICAL ROLE AND WOULD PREFER THAT IT RETURN TO ITS  
MORE TRADITIONAL CONCERSN.

HOWEVER, THE ARCHBISHOP IS CLEARLY THE  
DOMINANT CHURCH FIGURE IN THE COUNTRY. ALTHOUGH  
PROBABLY SELECTED ORIGINALLY AS AN UNIMPOSING, OBSCURE  
FIGURE, HE HAS DEVELOPED INTO A CHARISMATIC LEADER OF  
THE MASSES -- BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE THE CHURCH --  
WITH A FLAIR FOR ARTICULATING THEIR CAUSE. HE HAS ALSO  
GAINED INTERNATIONAL PROINENCE, AS EVIDENCED BY THE  
FACT THAT MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT AND THE  
U.S. CONGRESS HAVE NOMINATED HIM FOR THE NOBEL PEACE  
PRIZE. HIS ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO ACT AS A  
PRACTICAL POLITICAL LEADER ARE LESS CERTAIN, AND  
DETRACTORS HAV BEGUN DISPARAGINLY TO REFER TO HIM  
AS THE "AYATOLLAH" OF EL SALVADOR.

#### IX. ATTITUDES AND INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC, RACIAL OR RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

EL SALVADOR IS A REMARKABLY HOMOGEONOUS COUNTRY  
ETHNICALLY, RACIALLY, AND RELIGIOUSLY. THE INDIAN,  
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JEWISH, AND "TURCO" COMMUNTIES QUALIFY AS MINORITIES  
BUT ARE OF RELTIVELY LITTLE IMPORTANCE. THE INDIAN  
COMMUNITY IS LARGEST IN NUMBERS, BUT IS ECONOMICALLY,  
SOCIALLY, AND POLITICALLY INACTIVE. THE JEWISH  
GROUP IS VERY SMALL, BUT SOME INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS HAVE  
CONSIDERABLE ECONOMIC INFLUENCE. THE "TURCOS" MAKE  
THE CLOSEST APPROACH TO BEING SIGNIFICATN MINORITY.

THE LABEL "TURCO" ITSELF IS MISLEADING AS THE  
GROUP IS PREDOMINANTLY MADE UP OF SECOND AND THIRD  
GENERATION PALESTINIANS WHOSE ANCESTORS IMMIGRATED  
TO EL SALVADOR FROM TURKISH DOMINATED PALESTINE PRIOR  
TO WORLD WAR I AND THEREFORE CAME BEARING TURKISH  
PASSPORTS. MOST ARRIVED AS IMPOVERISHED IMMIGRANTS  
AND HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY WORKED THEIR WAY UP THE SOCIO-  
ECONOMIC SCALE THROUGH DRIVE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL  
ABILITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR AND  
TEXTILE INDUSTRY. AN INDICATION OF THEIR SUCCESS IS  
THAT THEY NOW MAKE UP A SIZABLE SEGMENT OF EL SALVADOR'S  
NEWLY WEALTHY.

X. EXTERNAL INFLUENCES INCLUDING SOVIET ACTIVITIES

U.S. INFLUENCE HAS, OF COURSE, BEEN HISTORICALLY DOMINANT IN THIS COUNTRY. AT THE PRESENT TIME, OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY IS A MAJOR FACTOR. CRITICS CONDEMN IT AS INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND AS DEBILITATING THE GOES IN ITS LEGITIMATE SUPPRESSION OF SUBVERSIVE GROUPS THAT ARE DESTABLIZING THE COUNTRY. UNDOUBTEDLY SUBVERSIVE GROUPS HAVE TO A CERTAIN EXTENT BENFITED FROM THE U.S. POLICY AND HAVE SOUGHT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT. CONVERSELY, IT HAS CLEARLY PROVIDED HOPE, ECOURAGEMENT, AND SOME REAL PROTECTION TO THOSE SEEKING JUSTICE AND AN IMPROVEMENT  
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OF THEIR COUNTRY'S IMAGE. NOT SURPRISINGLY, BOTH THOSE LEGITIMATELY AND THOSE HYPOCRITICALLY BENEFITING FROM THE POLICY CRITICIZE IT AS NOT BEING FORCEFUL AND ACTIVE ENOUGH.

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AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

SOVIET INFLUENCE AND INFILTRATION ARE LIMITED.  
EL SALVADOR HAS NO RELATIONS WITH ANY OF THE COMMUNIST BLOC COUNTRIES; THE ONLY SOVIET EMBASSY IN CENTRAL AMERICA IS IN COSTA RICA. THE SOVIET UNION DOES CONTRIBUTE FINANCING TO THE MOSCOW-ORIENTED POLITICAL PARTIES AND LABOR UNIONS, E.G., THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF EL SALVADOR (PCES) AND (PROBABLY THROUGH THE PCES) TO ITS FRONT PARTY THE NATIONALIST DEMOCRATIC UNION (UDN), AND THE TWO COMMUNIST LABOR FEDERATIONS, FUSS AND FESIAVTSCES, THAT FORM PART OF CUTS. THE TERRORIST GROUPS AND THEIR LARGER POPULAR FRONT AFFILIATES HAVE REFUSED SOVIET FINANCIAL SUPPORT AS COMPROMISING AND UNNECESSARY. THEY HAVE BEEN WILLING TO ACCEPT SOME TRAINING IN IDEOLOGY AND SUBVERSIVE TACTICS.

MOST OF THE DIRECT SUPPORT, HOWEVER, HAS COME THROUGH CUBA. FOR EXAMPLE, FROM LATE 1978 UNTIL MARCH 1979, SOME 50 MEMBERS OF THE FPL RECEIVED TRAINING IN CUBA IN COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY AND GUERRILLA WARFARE. AS OF YET THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF CUBAN FINANCIAL SUPPORT OR WEAPONS DELIVERIES.

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#### CONCLUSION

WHERE DOES IT ALL LEAD? IT IS TEMPTING TO SAY THAT ONE SURE THING IS THAT PRESENT TRENDS CANNOT CONTINUE WITHOUT A VIOLENT UPHEAVAL OF SOME KIND. HOWEVER, IN THE LAST DECADE THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER PEAKS OF TENSION AND INSTABILITY THAT HAVE PASSED WITHOUT MAJOR OR DRASTIC CHANGES. ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL TOWARD CHAOS IS GAINING MOMENTUM, WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO PREDICT HOW LONG THE PRESENT SITUATION MAY STUMBLE ALONG UNDER ITS OWN MOMENTUM.

BARRING A CONTINUATION OF THE STATUS QUO, THERE ARE THREE RATHER OBVIOUS TURNS THE SITUATION COULD TAKE:

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF A HARSHLY REPRESSIVE RIGHTIST REGIME EITHER THROUGH A COUP OR THROUGH SEMI-LEGAL CHANGES IN CURRENT GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL AND/OR OPERATIONS.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A LEFTIST GOVERNMENT AFTER THE DOWNFALL OF THE MILITARY REGIME THROUGH A COMBINATION OF ITS OWN INEPTNESS AND ACTION OF LEFTIST POPULAR AND TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS.

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF A MODERATE, MORE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT -- POSSIBLY CIVILIAN -- THROUGH A GRADUAL PROCESS OF DIALOGUE AND ACCOMMODATION LEADING TO FREE OR PARTY FREE ELECTIONS.

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF U.S. POLICY, PARTICULARLY AS IT REGARDS HUMAN RIGHTS, ONLY THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE  
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IS DESIRABLE. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, HOWEVER, IF THIS IS STILL A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE OR IF IT MAY HAVE ALREADY BEEN BY-PASSED BY THE PROCESS AND EXTENT OF POLARIZATION.

3. IF THE DEPARTMENT DEEMS APPROPRIATE, PLEASE PASS TO USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS, CANAL ZONE.  
HOWARD

NOTE: DELETE ROGER CHANNEL - PER MR. BROWN INR  
(REQUESTED BY SAN SALVADOR 2682)

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