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RELEASED IN FULL

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1981

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:
REP. DON J. PEASE

TO: THE HONORABLE DON J. PEASE
- U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
- WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-0505

REF: YOUR LETTER DATED APRIL 4, 1988

-
DEAR REPRESENTATIVE PEASE:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER DATED APRIL 4, IN WHICH YOU REQUESTED THAT WE INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS VIOLATIONS SUPPOSEDLY INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES. YOUR LETTER STATED THAT YOU HAD NEVER SEEN A "POINT-BY-POINT FACTUAL REBUTTAL" OF THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED ON SOME OF THESE CASES INCLUDED IN AMERICAS WATCH'S MAY 1987 PETITION TO THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE. YOU ALSO ASKED THAT WE PURSUE INQUIRIES INTO OTHER ALLEGED INSTANCES OF WORKERS' RIGHTS ABUSES WHICH OCCURRED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF AMERICAS UNCLASSIFIED

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WATCH'S MARCH 1988 REPORT ON EL SALVADOR.

MEMBERS OF MY STAFF HAVE SPENT SEVERAL MONTHS LOOKING INTO THE CASES CITED IN YOUR LETTER. THEY HAVE FOLLOWED MY INSTRUCTIONS TO CONDUCT FAIR AND IMPARTIAL INQUIRIES TO DETERMINE THE FACTS. AS YOU SUGGESTED, THEY DISCUSSED THESE MATTERS WITH THE APPROPRIATE SALVADORAN AUTHORITIES, BUT THEY ALSO SOUGHT INFORMATION FROM SOURCES WHO WERE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE DETAILS HELPFUL TO OUR

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior Reviewer

INVESTIGATIONS. THEIR INQUIRIES INCLUDED VISITS TO THE LOCATIONS WHERE THE ABUSES ALLEGEDLY OCCURRED AND, IN SOME CASES, THEY CONDUCTED INTERVIEWS WITH THE ALLEGED VICTIMS THEMSELVES.

I BELIEVE THAT THOSE OF MY STAFF WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THIS EFFORT WERE AS THOROUGH AS POSSIBLE IN RECONSTRUCTING THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND FACTS RELATED TO THESE CASES. I AM PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON THESE MATTERS, TOGETHER WITH MY OBSERVATIONS, WHICH I HOPE WILL BE OF USE TO YOU:

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SAN CARLOS COOPERATIVE RAPE/MURDERS

- I DO NOT KNOW ON WHAT BASIS AMERICAS WATCH MAKES THE CLAIM THAT THIS CASE INVOLVES GOVERNMENT-SANCTIONED VIOLATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS. THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE SAN CARLOS COOPERATIVE RAPE/MURDER CASE WAS A COMMON CRIME. SECONDLY, IT IS INCORRECT THAT ALL OF THE SUSPECTS IN THIS CASE WERE RELEASED. THE CASE IS UNCLASSIFIED

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BEING HEARD BY SECOND CRIMINAL COURT JUDGE DR. JESUS HERNAN VELASQUEZ BONILLA IN ZACATECOLUCA, LA PAZ DEPARTMENT. ONE OF THE ACCUSED, MIGUEL ANGEL ZAVALA MIRA, IS IN CUSTODY AND AWAITING TRIAL. ANOTHER PARTICIPANT IN THE CRIME, EMETRIO HERNANDEZ ANGEL, WAS RELEASED FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE. THE THIRD PARTICIPANT, FRANCISCO CANAS RENDEROS, HAS BEEN CHARGED BUT REMAINS AT LARGE.

- THE FACTS OF THIS CASE ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- THIS INCIDENT OCCURRED ON APRIL 8, 1987, AT APPROXIMATELY 1930 LOCAL TIME. ACCORDING TO ONE OF THE VICTIMS, MRS. JOSEFA MARTA MONTANO DE LAINEZ, ZAVALA MIRA AND CANAS RENDEROS FORCED THEIR WAY INTO HER RESIDENCE AND THEN ORDERED EVERYONE PRESENT TO LAY ON THE FLOOR. CANAS RENDEROS THEN SINGLED OUT HERMINIA MONTANO AND COMPELLED HER TO ACCOMPANY HIM TO A NEARBY ROOM. A SHORT TIME LATER, HERMINIA MONTANO RETURNED AND STATED THAT CANAS RENDEROS HAD RAPED HER. A CONFRONTATION DEVELOPED AND ZAVALA MIRA PRODUCED A GRENADE WHICH HE THREATENED TO DETONATE.

- ZAVALA MIRA, CANAS RENDEROS AND HERNANDEZ ANGEL THEN TOOK FOUR MINOR FEMALES HOSTAGE AND LEFT THE LAINEZ RESIDENCE. A FEW MOMENTS LATER, WITNESSES SAW ZAVALA MIRA RETURN TO THE VICINITY OF THE MAIN

BUILDING OF THE COOPERATIVE WHERE HE THREW A GRENADE THROUGH AN OPEN WINDOW OF A HOUSE OCCUPIED BY THE FAMILY OF DANIEL ORTIZ. IN THE ENSUING EXPLOSION, FRANCISCA LUZ MARTINEZ DE ORTIZ, EULOGIO ALVAREZ

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1982

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

GARAY, AND CARLOS GARICA COTO WERE KILLED INSTANTLY. FOUR OTHER OCCUPANTS WERE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED, ONE OF WHOM WAS DANIEL ORTIZ. HE DIED ON APRIL 15, 1987, ONE WEEK FOLLOWING THE ATTACK.

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- THE FOUR MINOR FEMALES, AGED 10 TO 15, WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RAPED, PROBABLY BY ALL THREE MEN. CONTRARY TO AW'S ASSERTION, NONE OF THE VICTIMS OR WITNESSES HAVE EVER MADE STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTING THIS INCIDENT TO ANTI-COOPERATIVE POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT. MOREOVER, THERE IS NOT ONE SHRED OF EVIDENCE IMPLICATING SALVADORAN SECURITY FORCES IN

THIS CRIME. IN THIS CONNECTION, AW ASSERTS THAT THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS BEEN APPLYING PRESSURE TO FORCE THE RELEASE OF ZAVALA MIRA, A FORMER NATIONAL GUARDSMAN. AS STATED ABOVE, ZAVALA MIRA HAS BEEN CHARGED AND IS CONFINED TO SENSUNTEPEQUE PENITENTIARY PENDING TRIAL.

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- I ALSO FIND IMPLAUSIBLE AMERICAS WATCH'S ALLEGATION THAT THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES PRESS OFFICE (COPREFA) WOULD CLAIM THAT THE VICTIMS WERE KILLED BY GUERRILLA LAND MINES WHEN MANY OF THE DETAILS PROVIDED TO THE COURT CAME FROM MILITARY INVESTIGATORS. THE CHIEF MILITARY INVESTIGATOR ON THIS CASE, SUB-SERGEANT SANTOS FUENTES PICAS, IN FACT, WILL BE CALLED TO TESTIFY FOR THE PROSECUTION. MOREOVER, THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS INCIDENT HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THE LOCAL PRESS.

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- I FIND IT CURIOUS THAT AMERICAS WATCH CITES THIS CASE TO BOLSTER ITS ALLEGATIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS ENGAGED IN A SYSTEMATIC AND PREMEDITATED EFFORT TO VIOLATE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' RIGHTS. THE VICTIMS OF THIS CRIME WERE BENEFICIARIES OF AGRARIAN REFORM, WHICH HAS BEEN A CENTRAL OBJECTIVE OF PRESIDENT DUARTE'S ADMINISTRATION. I AM UNAWARE OF ANY CREDIBLE EVIDENCE THAT THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT IS NOW ATTEMPTING TO ROLL BACK AGRARIAN REFORM.

- TO THE CONTRARY, BOTH THE EXTREME RIGHT AND THE RADICAL LEFT HAVE VEHEMENTLY CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT FOR PROCEEDING TOWARD FINAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM. THIS WAS THE CASE IN DECEMBER 1987, WHEN THE THEN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY LED THE FIGHT FOR PASSAGE OF TWO NEW AGRARIAN REFORM LAWS. ONE OF THESE ESTABLISHED A LAND BANK AIMED AT EXPANDING THE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES, WHILE THE OTHER SET UP THE COMMITTEE OF PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS (COC) TO "CONSOLIDATE AND IMPLEMENT" PHASE II OF THE PROGRAM.

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OUR AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (AID) CALCULATES THAT 40,000 NEW BENEFICIARIES WILL BE ADDED TO THE AGRARIAN REFORM ROLLS AS A RESULT OF THESE LAWS.

-
ANTONIO DE JESUS HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ

THERE ARE NO NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ALLEGED KIDNAP/MURDER OF ANTONIO DE JESUS HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ. IN POINT OF FACT, AT THIS JUNCTURE IN THE INVESTIGATION, THERE IS NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE THAT HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS THE VICTIM OF A KIDNAPPING AND WAS LATER MURDERED. I NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SUMMARY OF THE CASE CONTAINED IN YOUR LETTER INCLUDES CERTAIN ASSERTIONS WHICH ARE UNSUPPORTABLE BASED ON AVAILABLE EVIDENCE. AMERICAS WATCH'S BRIEF RENDITION OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ CASE ALSO VARIES FROM THE ALLEGED FACTS PRESENTED IN AMERICAS WATCH'S MAY 1987 PETITION. I WOULD LIKE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- AWW'S MAY 1987 PETITION STATED THAT HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS "ASSASSINATED IN APRIL 1987," AND ASSERTED THAT HIS "DECAPITATED" BODY WAS FOUND BY MEMBERS OF HIS UNION, THE NATIONAL FARMWORKERS ASSOCIATION (ANTA) ON MAY 2, 1987. IN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE U.S. SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE IN OCTOBER 1987, HOWEVER, AW SOUGHT TO CORRECT THE

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1983

UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

ALLEGATION THAT THE VICTIM HAD BEEN DECAPITATED, STATING THAT, "IN FACT, THE NECK HAD BEEN EATEN BY ANIMALS." SUBSEQUENTLY, IN ITS MARCH 1988 REPORT, AW DELETES THE CATEGORICAL STATEMENT THAT HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS "ASSASSINATED" AND INSTEAD SUBSTITUTES THE PHRASE THAT HE WAS "ABDUCTED AND DISAPPEARED." THE MARCH 1988 REPORT THEN GOES ON TO SAY THAT "VILLAGERS REPORTED THAT HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS DETAINED BY SOLDIERS OF THE CUSCATLAN BATTALION" AND THAT "THEY (THE VILLAGERS) LATER FOUND HIS MUTILATED BODY ON MONDAY, APRIL 20, 1987."

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- WHEN AW SUBMITTED ITS MAY 1987 PETITION STATING THAT HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ HAD BEEN ASSASSINATED AND WAS DECAPITATED, THESE FACTS WERE PRESENTED TO THE USTR AND CONGRESS BASED ON THE "THOROUGH, COMPREHENSIVE AND EXHAUSTIVE INVESTIGATION" AW CLAIMED IT HAD CONDUCTED. AW WAS UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE OF THE IMPACT SUCH STATEMENTS WOULD HAVE, GIVEN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S UNSWERVING COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL UNCLASSIFIED

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CONVENTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS. YET, IN ITS MOST RECENT SUBMISSION TO THE USTR, AW DELETES ANY MENTION OF "ASSASSINATION AND DECAPITATION." THIS RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE FACTS HAVE CHANGED? MY RESPONSE IS THAT THE FACTS DEVELOPED THROUGH OUR INQUIRIES REMAIN THE SAME.

- FOR EXAMPLE, BOTH THE 1987 PETITION AND THE MARCH 1988 REPORT ASSERT THAT A GOVERNMENT PROSECUTOR FILED A PETITION ON MAY 16 (14 DAYS AFTER HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ'S REMAINS WERE ALLEGEDLY FOUND AND LATER BURIED IN SAN MIGUEL) CLAIMING THAT HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS "ARRESTED/CAPTURED" BY THE CUSCATLAN BATTALION OF THE THIRD BRIGADE OF THE SALVADORAN ARMY. THE MARCH 1988 REPORT IDENTIFIED THE PROSECUTOR AS CARLOS ANTONIO ELIAS BARRIOS AND NOTED THAT BARRIOS' PETITION MENTIONED THAT THE "BODY HAD BEEN FOUND WITH BULLET HOLES."

- THE EMBASSY OBTAINED COPIES OF THE DOCUMENTS

PREPARED BY BARRIOS IN WHICH HE STATES THAT HE WAS "MADE AWARE" OF THE ALLEGED CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE INCIDENT SUPPOSEDLY INVOLVING HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ. IN OTHER WORDS, ELIAS BARRIOS PREPARED A DOCUMENT WHICH SUMMARIZED TESTIMONY GIVEN BEFORE HIM BY PERSONS WHO PRESUMABLY WERE AMONG THE ANTA MEMBERS INVOLVED IN RECOVERING THE REMAINS PURPORTED TO BE THOSE OF HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ, AND PERHAPS BY OTHERS CLAIMING TO BE WITNESSES. IN POINT OF FACT, BARRIOS HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY ORDERED AN INVESTIGATION. BARRIOS' ALLEGED PETITION WAS ACTUALLY A JUDICIAL REQUEST TO THE FIRST INSTANCE JUDGE IN CIUDAD BARRIOS TO ISSUE ORDERS TO DO THE FOLLOWING:
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-- BEGIN AN OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION;

-- DISINTER THE SUPPOSED REMAINS OF HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WHICH HAD BEEN BURIED IN THE SAN MIGUEL GENERAL CEMETERY;

-- INITIATE INVESTIGATIONS AT THE ALLEGED CAPTURE SITE AND THE LOCATION WHERE THE REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED;

-- ISSUE SUBPOENAS TO WITNESSES;

-- INTERVIEW THE COMMANDER OF THE THIRD BRIGADE TO DETERMINE IF UNITS UNDER HIS COMMAND WERE OPERATING IN THE AREA; AND

-- SUBPOENA THE JUDGE OF SAN LUIS DE LA REINA FOR QUESTIONING ABOUT WHY HE FAILED TO INITIATE A "LEGAL" INVESTIGATION.

- NOWHERE IN THE DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY BARRIOS IS THERE THE ASSERTION THAT HE HAD UNCOVERED CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF THE THIRD BATTALION'S COMPLICITY IN CRIMES AGAINST THE ALLEGED VICTIM, HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ. THE DOCUMENTS ARE MERELY A RECAPITULATION OF TESTIMONY GIVEN TO HIM.

- THERE ARE ADDITIONAL DISCREPANCIES RELATED TO THE CONDITION OF THE REMAINS AT THE TIME THEY WERE RECOVERED, AND REGARDING THE MANNER IN WHICH A

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1984

UNCLAS SECTION 04 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

"POSITIVE" IDENTIFICATION WAS MADE. AWS MAY 1987 PETITION ASSERTED THAT, ALTHOUGH THE REMAINS WERE IN AN ADVANCED STATE OF DECOMPOSITION (AS WELL AS HEADLESS), ANTA MEMBERS AND THE VICTIM'S ALLEGED SPOUSE IDENTIFIED THE REMAINS ON THE BASIS OF ARTICLES OF CLOTHING AND DENTAL WORK. AWS MARCH 1988 REPORT STATES THAT "ANTA LEADERS ... REMOVED HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ'S REMAINS, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE UNABLE TO LOCATE PART OF THE SKULL." FOLLOWING BELOW ARE SEVERAL KEY DETAILS DEVELOPED BY GOES PATHOLOGIST DR. GUILLERMO ARMANDO ALVARADO AND THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT'S (SIU) FORMER FBI FORENSICS EXPERT AFTER THE REMAINS WERE EXHUMED ON MAY 25, 1987:

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- AN INCOMPLETE SKELETON WITH HANDS AND FEET BONES MISSING WAS FOUND IN THE COFFIN AND THE SKELETAL REMAINS WERE DETERMINED TO BE THOSE OF A MAN OF ABOUT 30-40 YEARS OLD (HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS 42);
- CLEAN CRANIAL BONE FRAGMENTS WITHOUT HAIR OR SOFT

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TISSUE WERE FOUND, BUT FORENSICS TESTS FAILED TO ESTABLISH THAT THE SKULL FRAGMENTS MATCHED THE REST OF THE BONES;

-- TWO BONE FRAGMENTS OF A LOWER JAW, ONE CONTAINING THREE TEETH, AND THE OTHER TWO, WERE ALSO DISCOVERED AND IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE BONES BELONGED TO A PERSON OF 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER;

-- TWO LARGE PATCHES OF THICK BLACK HAIR WERE FOUND WITHOUT SKIN ATTACHED, BUT THERE WAS NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE THAT THE HAIR BELONGED TO THE SKULL OR THE INCOMPLETE SKELETON;

-- A PAIR OF BLACK LEATHER SHOES;

-- A PAIR OF DARK GREEN PANTS, CAREFULLY FOLDED AND PLACED IN THE COFFIN, CONTAINING A HANDKERCHIEF WITH TRACES OF MUCOUS AND SLIGHT TRACES OF BLOOD WAS DISCOVERED IN ONE OF THE POCKETS;

-- A BELT MADE OF SYNTHETIC MATERIAL; AND

-- FOUR BONES FROM ANIMALS.

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- ACCORDING TO THE PATHOLOGIST AND THE FORMER FBI FORENSICS EXPERT, A POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION WAS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT FURTHER TESTS. NEVERTHELESS, THEY POINTED OUT THAT THE SKELETON ITSELF WAS THAT OF A MAN OF 30-40, BUT THE SKULL FRAGMENTS AND LOWER JAW BONES BELONGED TO A PERSON OF 60-75 YEARS OF AGE. THE SKULL FRAGMENTS APPEARED TO BE FROM ANOTHER BODY, AND BORE SIGNS OF FRACTURE FROM MULTIPLE STRONG BLOWS

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FROM A BLUNT INSTRUMENT, THOUGH IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE IF THE SKULL WAS FRACTURED BEFORE OR AFTER DEATH. THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE SUGGESTING DECAPITATION OR THAT THE HEAD WAS PULLED OFF. THE SPINAL COLUMN WAS INTACT AND THERE WERE NO SIGNS THAT LARGE OR SMALL ANIMALS HAD GNAWED ON THE BONES OF THE NECK OR ELSEWHERE. THERE WAS ALSO NO EVIDENCE THAT THE HANDS AND FEET HAD BEEN CUT OFF.

- STRANGELY, THE CLOTHING FOUND IN THE COFFIN BORE NO SIGNS OF BIOLOGICAL MATTER WHICH WOULD HAVE DEVELOPED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF DECOMPOSITION.

- BASED ON FORENSIC EVIDENCE, THE PERSON CLAIMING

TO HAVE BEEN MRS. HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ COULD NOT HAVE POSSIBLY MADE A POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION OF THE REMAINS ON THE BASIS OF DENTAL WORK FOUND IN THE COFFIN. THE TWO LOWER JAWBONE FRAGMENTS DID NOT BELONG TO THE INCOMPLETE SKELETON AND, IN FACT, WERE SAID TO HAVE BELONGED TO THE BODY OF A PERSON 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER. IT MUST BE RECALLED AS WELL THAT IT WAS MEMBERS OF ANTA WHO WENT TO THE SITE WHERE HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ'S ALLEGED REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED, AND IT WAS THEY WHO COLLECTED THE REMAINS AND TOOK THEM TO SAN MIGUEL FOR BURIAL. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE WHATSOEVER THAT THESE REMAINS WERE TAMPERED WITH AFTER INTERMENT. ADDITIONALLY, NO ONE HAS OFFERED CONCLUSIVE PROOF THAT THE PERSON WHO CLAIMED TO BE MRS. HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ WAS INDEED HIS WIFE. ANTA DID NOT MENTION THE PRESENCE OF THE ALLEGED SPOUSE IN ITS AFFIDAVITS TO THE SAN MIGUEL

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1985

UNCLAS SECTION 05 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, NOR DID ANYONE CLAIMING TO BE MRS. HERNANDEZ MARTINEZ STEP FORWARD TO "LEGALLY" IDENTIFY THE REMAINS BEFORE COMPETENT JUDICIAL AUTHORITY.

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SANTA ANA THREE

- UNFORTUNATELY, I CANNOT REPORT PROGRESS ON DETERMINING THE WHEREABOUTS OF LUIS ARMANDO LEMUS URRUTIA, EDWIN ERNESTO VARGAS AGUILAR, AND JULIO ERNESTO GARCIA LUCERO. THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT (SIU) AND THE GOVERNMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (CDH) HAVE ACTIVELY PURSUED AN INQUIRY INTO THIS CASE WITH EMBASSY ASSISTANCE FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. A CDH REPRESENTATIVE VISITED EVERY DETENTION FACILITY IN THE SANTA ANA AREA SOON AFTER THE THREE MEN DISAPPEARED ON MAY 1, 1987. WITNESSES WERE INTERVIEWED AND THEIR STATEMENTS WERE TAKEN. SIU AND CDH OFFICIALS HAVE MADE SUBSEQUENT VISITS TO THE UNCLASSIFIED

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AREA. IN ADDITION, THE SUPREME COURT APPOINTED AN ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE TO HEAD THE INVESTIGATION IN RESPONSE TO A HABEAS CORPUS PETITION FILED BY RELATIVES. THE JUDGE AND A CDH OFFICIAL VISITED THE SECOND BRIGADE BUT WERE UNABLE TO FIND THE MISSING MEN. SECOND BRIGADE OFFICIALS DENIED HAVING ARRESTED OR DETAINED THE MEN, EXPLAINING THAT THEY WERE UNDER STRICT ORDERS NOT TO ARREST PARTICIPANTS IN SANTA ANA'S MAY DAY MARCH. SIU AND CDH ARE CONTINUING THEIR JOINT INVESTIGATION.

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JOSE RAUL HENRIQUEZ RODAS

- BASED ON INFORMATION EMBASSY OBTAINED FROM CDH AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, THE SLAYING OF JOSE RAUL HENRIQUEZ RODAS, A MEMBER OF THE FOOD AND CLOTHING UNION FEDERATION (FESTIAVTSCES), APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A COMMON CRIME RESULTING FROM A PERSONAL DISPUTE.

- HENRIQUEZ RODAS WAS TAKEN FROM HIS HOME BY TWO CIVIL DEFENSEMEN AND A NATIONAL GUARDSMAN ON JUNE 29, 1987. HIS REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED BY HIS WIFE AND FRIENDS MORE THAN A MONTH LATER. HENRIQUEZ RODAS WAS, IN FACT, WELL-ACQUAINTED WITH HIS ASSAILANTS. THE TWO CIVIL DEFENSEMEN ARE MRS. HENRIQUEZ'S COUSINS. THE VICTIM, THE TWO CIVIL DEFENSEMEN, AND THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN HAD FORMED A MUSICAL BAND.

HENRIQUEZ RODAS WAS HIMSELF A CIVIL DEFENSEMAN, ALTHOUGH IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER HE BELONGED TO THE SAME UNIT AS HIS IN-LAWS. THERE WERE SERIOUS UNCLASSIFIED

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PERSONAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN MRS. HENRIQUEZ AND THE WIVES OF HER CIVIL DEFENSEMEN COUSINS. THE SLAYING OF MR. HENRIQUEZ RODAS WAS PROBABLY RELATED TO THIS PROBLEM.

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- THIS CASE IS YET ANOTHER IN WHICH THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO US DIFFERS SHARPLY WITH THE PURPORTED "FACTS" CONTAINED IN AW'S REPORT AND PETITION. THE ONLY CONSISTENCIES ARE THE FACT THAT TWO CIVIL DEFENSEMEN AND A NATIONAL GUARDSMAN WERE INVOLVED IN THE CRIME AND THAT, INDEED, MRS. HENRIQUEZ "RECOGNIZED" HER LATE SPOUSE'S KILLERS. THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THIS CASE WERE IN NO WAY RELATED TO A "SYSTEMATIC AND DELIBERATE" GOVERNMENT POLICY TO VIOLATE WORKERS' RIGHTS. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO MY STAFF BY INDEPENDENT SOURCES SUPPORTS THIS CONCLUSION.

RENE ANDRADE PONCE

- THE EMBASSY SOUGHT INFORMATION ON THIS CASE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, THE NATIONAL POLICE (PN), AND CDH, BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS. YOU SHOULD NOTE, HOWEVER, AW'S CLAIM THAT "SWORN TESTIMONY" WAS GIVEN TO TUTELA LEGAL, THE CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND LEGAL AID OFFICE. TUTELA LEGAL ITSELF IS NOT EMPOWERED WITH JUDICIAL AUTHORITY, THEREFORE, DECLARATIONS GIVEN TO TUTELA LEGAL FALL INTO THE REALM OF HERESAY. AGAIN, IN THE SPIRIT OF FAIRNESS, THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION CLEARLY PREJUDICIAL TO THE

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1986

UNCLAS SECTION 06 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

INTERESTS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF EL
SALVADOR SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED FOR THE PURPOSE OF
ADDUCING THEIR CREDIBILITY.

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EULALIO ANTONIO MARTINEZ VASQUEZ

- THE EMBASSY INTERVIEWED SALVADORAN NATIONAL
INDIGENOUS ASSOCIATION (ANIS) LEADER ADRIAN ESQUINO
LISCO APRIL 20 AND JUNE 3 CONCERNING THE MURDER OF
EULALIO ANTONIO MARTINEZ VASQUEZ. ESQUINO LISCO
CONFIRMED THAT MARTINEZ VASQUEZ'S ASSAILANTS WERE
THREE CIVIL DEFENSEMEN. HE ADDED THAT THE CIVIL
DEFENSEMEN PROBABLY ACTED ON BEHALF OF PRIVATE LAND
OWNERS WHO OPPOSE THE GOVERNMENT'S LAND REFORM
PROGRAM. HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS NOT THE FIRST
TIME THAT RECALCITRANT CIVIL DEFENSEMEN AND SOME
LOWER-RANKING ENLISTED MEN HAD COMMITTED ACTS OF
VIOLENCE AGAINST PEASANTS WHOSE COOPERATIVES
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REPRESENT AN ECONOMIC THREAT TO PRIVATE INTERESTS AND
SYMBOLIZE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE.

- ESQUINO LISCO SAID THAT AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE
INCIDENT WAS ABANDONED BECAUSE WITNESSES REFUSED TO
TESTIFY AFTER THEY WERE THREATENED BY THE CIVIL
DEFENSEMEN. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT RELATIONS

BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND PEASANTS IN THE AREA ARE GENERALLY GOOD, POINTING OUT THAT HE HAS PERSONALLY SOUGHT AND RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF BLANDON TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS INVOLVING ANIS MEMBERS AND OTHER PEASANTS RESIDING IN SONSONATE DEPARTMENT.

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CARLOS GUARDADO LOPEZ

- INFORMATION ON THIS CASE WAS PROVIDED TO US BY MEMBERS OF THE SALVADORAN PEASANT CENTRAL (CCS) AND ITS PARENT ORGANIZATION, THE GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF WORK (CGT). NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE FACTS PUT FORTH BY CCS AND CGT IN NO WAY TYPIFY THIS CASE AS PART OF AN ORGANIZED AND CONCERTED GOVERNMENT EFFORT TO SYSTEMATICALLY VIOLATE WORKERS' RIGHTS IN EL SALVADOR.

- ACCORDING TO A REPORT ON THIS INCIDENT PREPARED BY CCS SECRETARY FOR COOPERATIVE MATTERS MERCEDES LIRA BONILLA, GUARDADO LOPEZ WAS INDEED STRANGLLED TO DEATH BY A SOLDIER NAMED LORENZO MORALES, AND A CIVIL DEFENSEMAN IDENTIFIED AS JORGE ESCOBAR MORALES. MS. BONILLA'S REPORT STATES THAT LORENZO MORALES AND ESCOBAR MORALES WERE SEEN IN THE COMPANY OF GUARDADO
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LOPEZ FROM THE EARLY MORNING OF JANUARY 1, 1988, UNTIL NIGHTFALL. IN HER OWN WORDS SHE WRITES THAT "THEY GOT HIM DRUNK BECAUSE THEY HAD SEEN MONEY ON HIM." HER REPORT CONTINUED, STATING: "THEY ROBBED HIM OF 300 COLONES (USDOLS 60), WHICH WAS THE PROPERTY OF THE COOPERATIVE, AND THEN STRANGLLED HIM NEAR A RIVERBANK." THE CORPSE WAS THEN THROWN INTO THE WATER WHERE IT WAS RECOVERED 18 DAYS LATER.

- THIS CASE INVOLVES A ROBBERY/HOMICIDE COMMITTED BY THUGS WHO HAVE YET TO BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL. THIS PREMEDITATED CRIME MUST BE PUNISHED, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH THE AUTHORITIES TO BRING THESE CRIMINALS TO JUSTICE. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, EVEN LOOSELY SUGGESTING THAT GUARDADO LOPEZ WAS MURDERED (NOT "ASSASSINATED") ON DIRECT ORDERS FROM GOVERNMENT OR MILITARY OFFICIALS AS PART OF A "CAMPAIGN OF REPRESSION" AGAINST SALVADORAN TRADE UNIONISTS AND PEASANTS. ACCORDING TO CCS, THE MOTIVE WAS ROBBERY.

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MARIO CRUZ RIVERA AND FELIX ANTONIO RIVERA

- THIS CASE PROBABLY INVOLVES UNCONSCIONABLE BREACHES OF DUE PROCESS, MILITARY DISCIPLINE, AND ESPECIALLY HUMAN RIGHTS. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, THE FIRST SAN FRANCISCO GOTERA (MORAZAN DEPARTMENT) TRIAL COURT, THE GOVERNMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (CDH), SEVERAL

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1987

UNCLAS SECTION 07 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS, THE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS, AS WELL AS A DANISH PATHOLOGIST SPECIALIZING IN FORENSIC EVIDENCE OF TORTURE, GATHERED AT THE GRAVESITE OF MARIO CRUZ RIVERA AND FELIX ANTONIO RIVERA NEAR EL TABLON, MORAZAN DEPARTMENT, ON MAY 24. THE PURPOSE WAS TO CONDUCT A COURT-ORDERED EXHUMATION OF THE CORPSES TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF DEATH. THE VICTIMS WERE TAKEN FROM THEIR HOMES IN EL CARRIZAL VILLAGE BY SOLDIERS ON FEBRUARY 26. THEIR BODIES WERE DISCOVERED LATER.

EXAMINATION OF THE EXHUMED REMAINS REVEALED THE TWO HAD BEEN BADLY MUTILATED, THOUGH THE PATHOLOGIST COULD NOT CONFIRM WHETHER IT OCCURRED BEFORE OR AFTER DEATH.

- THESE CRIMINAL ACTIONS, HOWEVER, APPARENTLY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE VICTIMS' ALLEGED MEMBERSHIP IN THE SALVADORAN ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC INDIGENOUS - ASID. FAMILY MEMBERS TOLD SEVERAL OF THE OBSERVERS ON MAY 24 THAT THE COMMON-LAW WIFE OF ONE OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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VICTIMS FALSELY CLAIMED TO A NEARBY ARMY UNIT THAT THE VICTIMS WERE FMLN GUERRILLAS AFTER SHE WAS BEATEN BY HER HUSBAND. VILLAGERS SAY SOLDIERS TOOK THREE MEN FROM THEIR HOMES. THE THIRD INDIVIDUAL, SEBASTIAN GUTIERREZ, REMAINS MISSING. THIRD BRIGADE COMMANDER RENE EMILIO PONCE TOLD REPORTERS THAT MILITARY DETACHMENT 4 FILED AN AFTER-ACTION REPORT SAYING THE RIVERAS WERE KILLED IN COMBAT.

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- THIS INCIDENT IS BEING TREATED AS A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THE POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OF SOLDIERS IN THE ILLEGAL DETENTION AND SUBSEQUENT TORTURE/MURDERS OF CIVILIANS IS UNCONSCIONABLE. I HAVE URGED SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ARMED FORCES TO CONDUCT A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION LEADING TO THE ARREST AND PUNISHMENT OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THIS HEINOUS CRIME. SUCH AN INVESTIGATION IS NOW UNDERWAY.

- I MUST ADD, HOWEVER, THAT IT APPEARS AW DELIBERATELY MISREPRESENTED THE FACTS OF THIS CASE FOR THE PURPOSE OF LENDING CREDENCE TO ITS ALLEGATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EL SALVADOR. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE VICTIMS' FAMILIES THEMSELVES EXPLAINED THAT THIS TRAGEDY WAS THE HORRIFIC OUTCOME OF AN ACT OF REVENGE BY THE AGGRIEVED COMMON-LAW SPOUSE OF ONE OF THE MEN. AW'S ATTEMPT TO LINK THIS CRIME TO THE ALLEGED MEMBERSHIP OF THE VICTIMS IN ASID IS BOTH CYNICAL AND UNETHICAL.

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HUMBERTO CENTENO
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- THE ASSERTION THAT HUMBERTO CENTENO WAS "FORCIBLY ABDUCTED FROM A PEACEFUL GATHERING" ON MARCH 10, 1988, BY MEMBERS OF AN AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIT IS PATENTLY FALSE. MOREOVER, THE ALLEGATION THAT HE WAS "BRUTALLY BEATEN, KICKED AND JABBED WITH RIFLE BUTTS," OVER A TWO-DAY PERIOD IS PROBABLY A DELIBERATE ATTEMPT AT MISREPRESENTING THE FACTS.

- CENTENO WAS INJURED WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO LEAD MEMBERS OF THE FMLN LABOR FRONT NATIONAL UNITY OF SALVADORAN WORKERS (UNTS) THROUGH A SECURITY CORDON WHICH GOVERNMENT TROOPS HAD ESTABLISHED IN THE VICINITY OF THE LABOR MINISTRY. THE SECURITY CORDON WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE VIOLENT TAKEOVER OF THE LABOR MINISTRY BY SOME 50 UNTS SYMPATHIZERS DURING THE MORNING OF MARCH 10. TWO PRIESTS WERE INSIDE THE LABOR MINISTRY AT THE TIME, AND HAVE CONFIRMED THAT PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEIZURE OF THE FACILITY STATED THAT THE INCIDENT WAS A "TOMA" (TAKEOVER). CENTENO'S GROUP WAS ATTEMPTING TO JOIN THE OTHERS INSIDE THE LABOR MINISTRY AS PART OF A PLAN TO USE THE TAKEOVER FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES. EYEWITNESSES, OTHER THAN THOSE CITED BY AW, SAID THAT CENTENO AND HIS SUPPORTERS PROVOKED A CONFRONTATION WHEN THEY ATTEMPTED TO BREAK THROUGH THE SECURITY CORDON. WHILE FORCE WAS USED AGAINST CENTENO, IT IS CLEAR THAT HIS ACTIONS AND THOSE OF HIS COLLEAGUES PRECIPITATED THE CLASH AND WERE ILLEGAL.

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1988

UNCLAS SECTION 08 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

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- AS FOR THE TWO DAY-LONG SERIES OF BEATINGS ALLEGEDLY METED OUT TO CENTENO, THIS IS WILLFUL DISINFORMATION. THE MELEE BETWEEN CENTENO'S GROUP AND THE AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIT OCCURRED AT APPROXIMATELY 1830 LOCAL TIME. FOLLOWING HIS DETENTION, CENTENO WAS TAKEN TO AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS AT ILOPANGO AIR BASE, ABOUT ONE MILE NORTH OF THE LABOR MINISTRY COMPOUND. AT APPROXIMATELY 2300 LOCAL TIME, CENTENO WAS TURNED OVER TO THE TREASURY POLICE (PH), WHO SUBSEQUENTLY CHECKED HIM INTO SAN SALVADOR'S DIAGNOSTIC HOSPITAL APPROXIMATELY FIVE HOURS (NOT TWO DAYS) AFTER THE BRAWL CENTENO INITIATED WITH THE SECURITY FORCES. DOCTORS AT THE DIAGNOSTIC HOSPITAL EXAMINED AND TREATED CENTENO DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF MARCH 11.

- AT APPROXIMATELY 0900 LOCAL TIME MARCH 11, GOVERNMENT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION EXECUTIVE UNCLASSIFIED

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SECRETARY BENJAMIN CESTONI BRIEFED EMBASSY OFFICIALS ON CENTENO'S CONDITION, NOTING THAT CENTENO HAD DEEP MUSCLE BRUISES IN SEVERAL PLACES ON HIS BODY, BUT THAT DOCTORS FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF BROKEN BONES OR INTERNAL INJURIES. THIS SAME MORNING, MARCH 11, A CDH REPRESENTATIVE WAS SENT TO DIAGNOSTIC HOSPITAL TO MONITOR CENTENO'S CONDITION. THE ATTENDING PHYSICIANS HAD RECOMMENDED THAT CENTENO REMAIN UNDER MEDICAL OBSERVATION UNTIL 1800 LOCAL TIME MARCH 13. CENTENO WAS RELEASED ON MARCH 12 IN THE COMPANY OF HIS SPOUSE AND CDH'S REPRESENTATIVE. THE HOSPITAL BILL WAS PAID BY THE TREASURY POLICE.

- THE MARCH 10 INCIDENT INVOLVING CENTENO BECAME A CAUSE CELEBRE FOR FMLN FRONT GROUPS AND THE PRETEXT FOR VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE STREETS OF SAN SALVADOR MARCH 11, DURING WHICH UNTS AND THE NATIONAL

ASSOCIATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS - ASTTEL PROTESTORS SET ABLAZE AT LEAST 16 VEHICLES, INCLUDING 11 PUBLIC TRANSPORT BUSES. BARRICADES OF FLAMING TIRES WERE ALSO ERECTED IN NORMALLY BUSY INTERSECTIONS. DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES, NO ARRESTS WERE MADE. LATER IN THE EVENING, FMLN URBAN COMMANDOES EXPLODED TWO BOMBS IN THE ZONA ROSA DISTRICT OF SAN SALVADOR DESTROYING ANOTHER 11 VEHICLES.

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- THESE ACTIVITIES WERE ALL PART OF AN FMLN PLAN TO DISRUPT THE MARCH 20 LOCAL AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. CENTENO IN FACT APPEARED ON LOCAL TELEVISION THE MORNING OF MARCH 10 (THE DAY OF HIS DETENTION) AND DENOUNCED THE ELECTIONS AS A "FARCE" UNCLASSIFIED

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ORGANIZED BY THE USG TO "LEGITIMIZE" THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT'S COUNTERINSURGENCY PROGRAM. THIS POSITION, HOWEVER, WAS NOT SHARED BY THE RANK-AND-FILE OF ASTTEL. THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF ASTTEL MEMBERS SUPPORTED THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. ON THE OTHER HAND, ASTTEL'S LEADERSHIP IS NOT ONLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE FMLN CAUSE, MANY ARE FMLN MEMBERS. THIS INCLUDES CENTENO, WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE SALVADORAN COMMUNIST PARTY, ONE OF FIVE GROUPS COMPRISING THE FMLN.

- IT WOULD BE AN ACT OF INTELLECTUAL DISHONESTY TO IGNORE THE VIOLENT AND PRO-FMLN ACTIVITIES OF PERSONS SUCH AS CENTENO WHILE ASSERTING THAT THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTECT ITS CITIZENS AND COMBAT A VICIOUS COMMUNIST INSURGENCY. THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION MAKES A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN "LEGITIMATE UNION ACTIVITY," AND ACTIVITIES INTENDED TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL PURPOSE. VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS, INCLUDING BURNING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION, BUILDING AND HOSTAGE-TAKINGS, BOMBINGS AND OTHER FORMS OF MAYHEM ON BEHALF OF A COMMUNIST INSURGENCY ARE NOTHING MORE THAN ACTS OF TERRORISM AND ARE NOT RECOGNIZED BY THE ILO AS "LEGITIMATE UNION ACTIVITY."

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SAN JOSE AHUACATITAN CASE

- THIS INCIDENT IS ONE OF SEVERAL AW CITES AS PROOF

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1989

UNCLAS SECTION 09 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

OF GOVERNMENT "INTERVENTION AND SUPPRESSION" OF
LEGITIMATE TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES. BUT HERE AGAIN,
THE FACTS PRESENTED BY AW DO NOT IN ANY WAY REFLECT
THE ACTUAL CIRCUMSTANCES INVOLVED.

- THERE WAS NO OCCUPATION OF THE FARM BY 10 MEMBERS
OF A LOCAL CIVIL DEFENSE FORCE. THE MEMBERS OF THIS
CIVIL DEFENSE FORCE ARE ALSO EMPLOYEES ON THE FARM IN
SAN JOSE AHAUCATITAN. THE LIST OF ALLEGED DEMANDS
CONTAINED IN AW'S REPORT AND PETITION ARE ALSO
FABRICATIONS. THE 25 FULL-TIME WORKERS ON THE FARM
(NOT 43) CALLED THEIR STRIKE TO PRESS DEMANDS FOR A
WAGE INCREASE. ACCORDING TO CGT SECRETARY-GENERAL
JOSE LUIS GRANDE PREZA, THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT ARRAY
ITS FORCES -- LEGAL AND MILITARY -- AGAINST THE
WORKERS. A LABOR JUDGE RULED IN FAVOR OF THE
STRIKERS AND THE LABOR MINISTRY REAFFIRMED THE
COURT'S DECISION. DEFENSE MINISTER CARLOS EUGENIO
VIDES CASANOVA ALSO "INTERVENED" ON BEHALF OF THE
WORKERS, ORDERING THE CIVIL DEFENSEMEN/EMPLOYEES OF

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THE FARM TO DESIST FROM THREATENING THE WORKERS. GRANDE PREZA RECENTLY TOLD US THAT THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ANY SUBSEQUENT PROBLEMS.

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SHRIMP WORKERS' STRIKE IN PUERTO EL TRIUNFO

- OUR INQUIRIES INTO THIS CASE INCLUDED A VISIT BY THREE EMBASSY OFFICERS TO PUERTO EL TRIUNFO, USULUTAN DEPARTMENT, ON JUNE 10. THEY MET WITH SGTIPAC SECRETARY GENERAL MAURICIO BENITEZ, AND HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH SOME OF THE MORE THAN 200 STRIKING FISHERMEN AND FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ASSEMBLED FOR THE OCCASION.

- NOT ONE OF OUR INTERLOCUTORS REFERRED TO THE EVENTS OF APRIL 25, 1987, AS A "MILITARIZATION" OF PUERTO EL TRIUNFO. BENITEZ AND HIS FELLOW STRIKERS BLAME THE OWNERS OF PESCA, S.A. FOR PROLONGING THE STRIKE (NOW IN ITS 13TH MONTH) AND FOR DUPING THE NAVY INTO SENDING APPROXIMATELY 100 NAVY SEAMEN TO THE GATES OF PESCA ON THE PRETEXT THAT THE STRIKERS WERE ATTEMPTING TO OCCUPY THE FACILITY.

- THE STRIKERS WERE NOT BEATEN BY THE SEAMEN, AND NO ONE COULD RECALL A TOTAL OF "25 INJURIES" RESULTING FROM THE MINOR FRACAS THAT ENSUED.

- OUR OFFICERS TOURED THE DOCK AREA WHERE SOME 26 BOATS OF THE PESCA FISHING FLEET ARE BERTHED. THE BOATS ARE BEING MAINTAINED BY THE STRIKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. NO WHERE ON THE DOCKS WERE SECURITY FORCES
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PRESENT. THIS HAS BEEN THE CASE SINCE EARLY FEBRUARY. I MUST REITERATE THAT BENITEZ AND OTHER SGTIPAC STRIKERS BLAME THIS CONTINUING SITUATION ON PESCA'S MANAGEMENT, NOT THE GOVERNMENT.

-
- THE FACT IS THAT A LABOR JUDGE DECLARED SGTIPAC'S INITIAL STRIKE AGAINST PESCA TO BE "LEGAL." LABOR MINISTER LAZARO TADEO BERNAL LIZAMA HAS HELD AT LEAST THREE JOINT NEGOTIATING SESSIONS WITH SGTIPAC AND PESCA'S MANAGEMENT. BERNAL LIZAMA HAS TOLD US

PRIVATELY THAT PESCA'S OWNERS HAVE INDEED VIOLATED THE TERMS OF A COLLECTIVE-BARGAINING AGREEMENT CERTIFIED BY THE MINISTRY IN APRIL 1987, AND THAT HE TOO HAS RULED IN FAVOR OF THE UNION. HE ACKNOWLEDGES, HOWEVER, THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO COMPEL PESCA TO HONOR THE AGREEMENT. BENITEZ HAS CORROBORATED MINISTER BERNAL'S STATEMENTS AND NOTED THAT PRESIDENT DUARTE SENT A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO PESCA'S MANAGEMENT IN JANUARY RECOMMENDING AN IMMEDIATE SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE. PESCA REFUSED.

SICAFE CASE

- ON JULY 2 AND 3, 1988, THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)/INTER-AMERICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION OF WORKERS (ORIT), RESIDENT IN EL SALVADOR, VISITED SANTIAGO DE MARIA, USULUTAN

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O 260511Z JUL 88
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1990

UNCLAS SECTION 10 OF 13 SAN SALVADOR 10009

H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

DEPARTMENT, AT OUR REQUEST. HE PERSONALLY INTERVIEWED WORKERS AT THE FARM AND COFFEE PROCESSING PLANT. NONE OF THE WORKERS CORROBORATED THE VERSION OF THE INCIDENT AS DESCRIBED IN AW'S PETITION. THEY RECALLED THAT O/A OCTOBER 30, 1987, THERE WAS A BRIEF CLASH BETWEEN SUSPECTED FMLN GUERRILLAS AND A SMALL DETACHMENT OF TROOPS WHICH WAS PATROLLING IN THE VICINITY OF THE FARM. THE WORKERS NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN FREQUENT SIGHTINGS OF GUERRILLAS IN THIS AREA, AND THE MILITARY HAD CONSEQUENTLY STEPPED UP ITS PATROLS.

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- THE WORKERS STATED THAT A SIZABLE FORCE OF TROOPS DID ARRIVE AT THE FARM FOLLOWING THE INITIAL CLASH, BUT NONE COULD RECALL THAT THIS TOOK PLACE IN THE MIDST OF SICAFE ORGANIZING AMONG THE WORKERS. AS FOR COLONEL MONTANO'S ROLE IN THIS INCIDENT, THE WORKERS RELATED THAT MONTANO URGED THOSE PRESENT TO "DO YOUR DUTY AS LOYAL CITIZENS" AND FURNISH THE ARMED FORCES
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WITH INFORMATION ON GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN THIS AREA. MONTANO AND HIS TROOPS SUBSEQUENTLY DEPARTED TO SEARCH FOR THE SUSPECTED FMLN INSURGENTS.

- UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS INFINITELY MORE LOGICAL THAT COLONEL MONTANO AND A FORCE OF 100 OR MORE SOLDIERS ARRIVED AT THE FARM TO ENGAGE IN A MILITARY OPERATION, RATHER THAN TO INTERVENE IN A LABOR DISPUTE. FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT, WHY WOULD THE MILITARY EMPLOY A COMPANY-SIZED UNIT TO DO SOMETHING THAT A SQUAD OF HEAVILY-ARMED SOLDIERS WOULD BE QUITE CAPABLE OF HANDLING? THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE. THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES WOULD NOT SQUANDER THE MEN AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT ALLEGEDLY USED SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF INTERFERING IN UNION ACTIVITIES. THE INCIDENT THAT AW DESCRIBES IN ITS PETITION DID NOT TAKE PLACE.

-
THE INCIDENT OF DECEMBER 7, 1987, IN USULUTAN

- THIS CASE AS DESCRIBED IN YOUR LETTER RELATES TO AN UNNAMED FARM, LOCATED IN AN UNIDENTIFIED AREA OF USULUTAN DEPARTMENT, INVOLVING 75 SOLDIERS FROM AN UNNAMED UNIT, WHO ALLEGEDLY ATTEMPTED TO KIDNAP "SEVERAL WORKERS" JUST HOURS AFTER A "SUCCESSFUL

STRIKE." WE WOULD BE GLAD TO PURSUE OUR INQUIRIES IF MORE DETAILED INFORMATION CAN BE PROVIDED.

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THE FACTS: GOES IS COMPLYING

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- LIKE YOU, I BELIEVE THAT OUR DISCUSSION WAS USEFUL BUT I ALSO CONSIDER THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO YOU TO HAVE BEEN IN THE REALM OF "COLD, HARD FACTS." AS I STATED DURING OUR CONVERSATION, THE REAL ISSUE IS NOT WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN STEPS TO ENSURE "INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED WORKERS' RIGHTS." ALL AVAILABLE EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT IS MEETING ITS OBLIGATIONS DESPITE LIMITED RESOURCES.

- THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE ENCOURAGING PROGRESS ON LABOR RIGHTS SINCE 1980 WHEN EL SALVADOR'S TRADE UNIONS, ONCE CONSIDERED THE STRONGEST IN CENTRAL AMERICA, BEGAN THEIR COMEBACK FROM THE RAVAGES OF THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS. MORE THAN 350,000 SALVADORAN WORKERS AND PEASANTS BELONG TO TRADE UNIONS, EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATIONS OR PEASANT ASSOCIATIONS. THIS REPRESENTS ROUGHLY 20 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S WORKFORCE. BY COMPARISON, APPROXIMATELY 17 PERCENT OF U.S. WORKERS ARE ORGANIZED. THERE ARE ABOUT 150 TRADE UNIONS, PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATIONS AND PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS CURRENTLY ACTIVE IN EL SALVADOR. SOME 60 ORGANIZATIONS, WITH A COMBINED MEMBERSHIP OF ROUGHLY 50,000, ARE AFFILIATED WITH THE FMLN FRONT GROUP UNTS. UNTS IS DWARFED IN SIZE, HOWEVER, WHEN COMPARED TO THE APPROXIMATELY 270,000-MEMBER DEMOCRATIC LABOR ORGANIZATION NATIONAL UNION OF WORKERS AND PEASANTS (UNOC). SINCE 1980, ONLY ONE SALVADORAN TRADE UNION HAS BEEN DERECOGNIZED FOR "CAUSE."

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1991

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H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

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- MOREOVER, APPROXIMATELY 110 COLLECTIVE-BARGAINING AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE LABOR MINISTRY FOR CERTIFICATION SINCE PRESIDENT DUARTE'S INAUGURATION IN JUNE 1984. OF THE 110, 73 OR ROUGHLY TWO-THIRDS WERE CERTIFIED ON BEHALF OF UNIONS AFFILIATED WITH UNTS OR ITS PREDECESSOR ORGANIZATIONS. THE EVIDENCE CLEARLY SHOWS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT INTERFERING WITH UNIONS EXERCISING LEGITIMATE TRADE UNION RIGHTS.

-
POSSIBILITY OF PROGRESS ON NEW LABOR CODE

- THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT FREELY ACKNOWLEDGES, HOWEVER, THAT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE IN THIS AREA. FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, PRESIDENT DUARTE HAS LED RENEWED EFFORTS TO REWRITE EL SALVADOR'S ANTIQUATED
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LABOR CODE. HIS INTENTIONS ARE TO EXTEND THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE TO PEASANT ASSOCIATIONS AND FARMWORKERS, AND TO BROADEN THE SAFEGUARDS FOR ALL WORKERS AGAINST ARBITRARY FIRINGS AND IN THE AREA OF OCCUPATIONAL

HEALTH AND SAFETY. THIS EFFORT HAS BEEN STALLED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT IS UNWILLING TO MOVE FORWARD A DRAFT LAW WITHOUT THE CONSENSUS OF DEMOCRATIC LABOR ORGANIZATIONS. THE DRAFT BILL WHICH WAS BEING PREPARED HAS BEEN DELAYED BECAUSE OF DISPUTES BETWEEN LABOR LEADERS SUPPORTING DIFFERENT CANDIDATES FOR THE PDC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION. ONE OF THE CANDIDATES, THOUGH A LABOR SUPPORTER, TOOK THE BILL THAT WAS STILL IN DRAFT AND HAD IT SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY. THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT RECOGNIZE THIS BILL AS REFLECTING A LABOR CONSENSUS. THE OTHER CANDIDATE SUPPORTED CONTINUED EFFORTS TO REACH A CONSENSUS DRAFT. WHILE THE SQUABBLE WAS CONTINUING, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS LOST THEIR ASSEMBLY MAJORITY IN THE MARCH 20 ELECTIONS. PRIVATE SECTOR AND DEMOCRATIC LABOR LEADERS HAVE RESPONDED TO SUGGESTIONS THAT THEY MEET TO IRON OUT THE DIFFERENCES. AT MY JULY 4 RECEPTION, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (ANEP) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OSCAR SANTAMARIA EXPRESSED RENEWED WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH DEMOCRATIC LABOR IN DRAFTING A NEW CODE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES. THIS EFFORT WILL INVOLVE RECONCILING PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN NOW THREE SEPARATE DRAFTS, WHICH WERE WRITTEN BY ANEP, UNOC, AND A GOVERNMENT WORKING GROUP.

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- THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING TO WORK WITH THE SALVADORANS TO IMPROVE THE LABOR RIGHTS SITUATION
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DIRECTLY THROUGH PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF LABOR MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND THROUGH OUR EFFORTS TO ASSIST IN IMPROVING THE OVERALL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR. I SHARE YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT LABOR RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND WE ALSO CONDEMN THE PERPETRATORS, WHETHER THEY BE MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES OR THE GUERRILLAS.

FMLN THE REAL VIOLATORS OF WORKERS RIGHTS

- THE BULK OF LABOR RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ARE NOW COMMITTED BY FMLN GUERRILLAS. GUERRILLA VIOLENCE AND SABOTAGE ARE, IN FACT, THE GREATEST EXISTING THREAT TO THE MOST BASIC OF WORKER'S RIGHTS; THE RIGHT TO WORK ITSELF. ON MAY 11, FMLN SABOTEURS DYNAMITED FOUR 15 MEGAWATT TRANSFORMERS AT THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER DAM, COMPLETELY DESTROYING TWO AND DAMAGING TWO OTHERS. BEFORE THE FMLN ATTACK, THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER DAM HAD GENERATED 35 PERCENT OF EL SALVADOR'S ELECTRICAL OUTPUT. NEARLY HALF OF THE THE

DAM'S OUTPUT CAPACITY WAS CUT, DISRUPTING POWER SUPPLIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. MOREOVER, APPROXIMATELY 23 HIGH TENSION TOWERS WERE DAMAGED OR DESTROYED BY FMLN SABOTAGE BETWEEN APRIL 22 AND MAY 31. POWER TO MOST OF EL SALVADOR'S MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS WAS RATIONED FOR UP TO EIGHT HOURS DAILY FROM MAY 11 TO JUNE 15, A PERIOD OF 34 DAYS. FACTORIES, PROCESSING PLANTS AND REFINERIES, COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS, AND OTHER ENTERPRISES HAD TO CURTAIL OPERATIONS.

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1992

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H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

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- THE FMLN CONTINUED TO SABOTAGE THE COUNTRY'S ELECTRICAL POWER GRID DURING A JUNE 15-JULY 4 STRIKE OF APPROXIMATELY 600 OF THE NEARLY 3500 WORKERS OF THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED POWER COMPANY, THE EXECUTIVE HYDROELECTRIC COMMISSION OF THE LEMPA RIVER (CEL).

AT ONE POINT, FROM APPROXIMATELY 1900 LOCAL TIME JULY 1 TO APPROXIMATELY 1600 LOCAL TIME JULY 2, FMLN SABOTEURS SUCCEEDED IN CUTTING POWER TO SEVEN OF EL SALVADOR'S 14 DEPARTMENTS.

- TO ITS CREDIT, EL SALVADOR'S GOVERNMENT GAVE PRIORITY TO SCARCE ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES TO INDUSTRIAL/ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES (AND MEDICAL FACILITIES) IN ORDER TO KEEP WORKERS ON THE JOB AND EARNING A LIVING FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FMLN HAS VOWED TO STEP UP ITS ATTACKS ON THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE DESPITE THE SUFFERING INFLICTED ON SALVADORAN
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WORKERS. CLOSE TO \$2.0 BILLION IN RESOURCES HAVE ALREADY BEEN LOST TO FMLN SABOTAGE AND ECONOMIC WARFARE.

- THESE FACTS ILLUSTRATE MY MAIN THESIS, WHICH IS THAT THE REAL PROBLEMS OF EL SALVADOR RESULT DIRECTLY FROM THE ONGOING ATTEMPT BY THE MARXIST-LENINIST FMLN TO OVERTHROW THE DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED GOVERNMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING A COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP. THIS POINT CANNOT BE DISPUTED. THERE IS AMPLE EVIDENCE THAT THE FMLN'S STRATEGY HAS BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL COMPONENTS WHICH ARE INTENDED TO BRING ABOUT A COLLAPSE OF DEMOCRACY THROUGH WARFARE, ECONOMIC SABOTAGE AND THROUGH THE INFILTRATION AND MANIPULATION OF ALL SECTORS OF SALVADORAN SOCIETY, INCLUDING THE LABOR MOVEMENT.

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UNTS IS ASSISTING THE FMLN IN FIGHT AGAINST GOES

- SINCE NEARLY NINETY PERCENT OF THE CASES CITED BY AW INVOLVE UNIONS AND WORKERS' ASSOCIATIONS AFFILIATED WITH UNTS, THE QUESTION OF GOVERNMENT TREATMENT OF UNTS CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF EL SALVADOR. UNTS IS AN FMLN FRONT GROUP. THIS BECAME CLEAR AS EARLY AS 1985 WHEN CAPTURED GUERRILLA DOCUMENTS REVEALED A STRATEGY TO CREATE A LABOR FRONT TO COMPETE WITH DEMOCRATIC LABOR UNIONS AND TO FOMENT STRIKES AND WORK STOPPAGES "TO PROVOKE A SOCIAL CRISIS" LEADING TO A "POPULAR INSURRECTION."

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- THESE DOCUMENTS EXPLAINED HOW THE THEN LEFTIST LABOR UMBRELLA GROUP MUSYGES WOULD BE REPLACED BY THE COORDINATOR FOR SALVADORAN WORKERS' SOLIDARITY BECAUSE MUSYGES HAD BECOME TOO CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE FMLN. IN JANUARY 1986, UNTS WAS CREATED AND IT ABSORBED CST AND VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE UNIONS WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BELONGED TO MUSYGES. GUERRILLA DEFECTOR MIGUEL CASTELLANOS HAS PROVIDED DETAILED BRIEFINGS HERE AND IN THE U.S. ON HOW UNTS CHANNELS MONEY RECEIVED ABROAD TO THE FMLN. ON JUNE 4, 1987, THE GUERRILLAS' CLANDESTINE RADIO FARABUNDO MARTI BROADCAST AN "UNTS PLATFORM OF THE WORKERS TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS FACING THE FATHERLAND." THIS WAS ONE OF THE INSTANCES OF THE GUERRILLAS BROADCASTING AN UNTS MESSAGE THUS MAKING CLEAR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO.

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- INTERNATIONALLY, THE UNTS AFFILIATE LABOR UNION FEDERATION OF EL SALVADOR (FUSS) IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (WFTU). TWO OTHER UNTS AFFILIATES, FENASTRAS AND FESTIAVCS, HAVE OBSERVER STATUS WITH WFTU. IN ITS LITERATURE, FENASTRAS CALLS THE FMLN ITS "VANGUARD" AND STATES THAT FENASTRAS OPERATES "UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED POPULAR ACTION FRONTS," WHICH IS THE POLITICAL ARM OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NATIONAL RESISTANCE (FARN).

MAKING AN INFORMED JUDGEMENT

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1993

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H PASS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, PHUM, ES
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:

GIVEN THIS EVIDENCE, THESE COLD, HARD FACTS, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONSIDER THE ACTIVITIES OF UNTS IN A POLITICAL VACUUM. UNTS IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ASSISTING THE FMLN IN ITS EFFORT TO OVERTHROW THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT BY FORCE OF ARMS.

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- I HOPE THE INFORMATION WE HAVE PROVIDED TO YOU WILL BE HELPFUL IN MAKING AN INFORMED JUDGEMENT ABOUT THE LABOR RIGHTS SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR, ALTHOUGH I HASTEN TO ADD THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS NOT PERFECT. I HAVE SOUGHT TO DESCRIBE HEREIN THE FACTS, BOTH GOOD AND BAD, AS WE SEE THEM AFTER THOROUGH INVESTIGATION. THE U.S. EMBASSY PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN ESTABLISHING AN AMERICAS WATCH OFFICE IN EL SALVADOR. WE REGRET THAT THE QUALITY OF THEIR EFFORTS HAS FALLEN SHORT. AMERICAS WATCH'S WORKERS' RIGHTS ACTIVITIES WITH REGARD TO EL SALVADOR RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR ABILITY TO DEVELOP FACTS AND PRESENT THEM IMPARTIALLY -- FREE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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POLITICAL BIAS. UNTIL AMERICAS WATCH HAS REFORMED ITS STAFF AND ACTIVITIES, IT IS MY VIEW THAT THE CONGRESS WOULD BE WELL ADVISED NOT TO RELY ON AMERICAS WATCH AS THE BASIS FOR PROPOSED HEARINGS, LEGISLATION OR INQUIRIES. IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, CONGRESS HAS BEEN PLACED IN AN EMBARRASSING AND AWKWARD SITUATION HAVING GIVEN AMERICAS WATCH A PLATFORM FOR WHAT IS CLEARLY A POLITICALLY MOTIVATED ATTACK ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES OF THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT, WHILE IGNORING, OR COVERING UP, THE LABOR ABUSES OF THE FMLN. RELIANCE ON AMERICAS WATCH AS THE SOLE SOURCE OF SUCH ACCUSATIONS IS CLEARLY A MAJOR ELEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

AS I INFORMED YOU DURING OUR VISIT, I WILL HAVE THE MISSION INVESTIGATE THOROUGHLY EACH AND EVERY CASE OF HUMAN RIGHTS OR LABOR ABUSES BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION. THAT SAID, I THINK THE TIME HAS COME TO CEASE AND DESIST IN EFFORTS TO MOVE THE EL SALVADOR DEBATE FROM HUMAN RIGHTS TO LABOR RIGHTS. HAVING HELPED THEM MAKE DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS IN THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE, THE LABOR ISSUE OUTSTANDING IS FMLN LABOR ABUSES. SINCE THERE IS NO APPARENT INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT, I SUGGEST EFFORTS TO INDICT EL SALVADOR BE DROPPED -- WITH THE ASSURANCE THAT WE REMAIN VIGILANT.

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