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COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR
SUBJECT: SATISFACTION OF MANY MILITARY OFFICERS
WITH ASSASSINATION OF LEADERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY
DEMOCRATIC FRONT (FDR); BELIEF THAT THE
SAME TACTICS SHOULD BE USED TO ELIMINATE OTHER
LEFTIST LEADERS

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. MANY SENIOR AND MIDDLE-LEVEL MILITARY AND NATIONAL
GUARD (GN) OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF
THE SIX LEADERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC FRONT
(FDR) ON 27 NOVEMBER 1980 WAS A POSITIVE ACT. THE CURRENT
MOOD OF THESE OFFICERS IS THAT THE DEATHS OF THESE
FDR LEADERS WILL SOON BE FORGOTTEN, ALTHOUGH SOME SHORT
TERM PROBLEMS CAN BE EXPECTED INTERNATIONALLY. WHILE
THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNING JUNTA (JRG) HAS PUBLICLY
PROMISED THAT AN INVESTIGATION INTO THESE KILLINGS WILL
BE CARRIED OUT, IT IS NOT EXPECTED THAT THIS INVESTI-
GATION WILL BE A SERIOUS ONE OR THAT ANYONE WILL BE
APPREHENDED.

3. MANY MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE STATED THAT THEY
PERSONALLY SUPPORT THE KILLINGS OF THE FDR LEADERS.
THEY BELIEVE THAT IF THESE LEADERS WERE NOT EXTREMIST
TERRORISTS, THEY WERE AT LEAST "USEFUL FOOLS" FOR THE
TERRORISTS AND SO DESERVED TO BE KILLED.

4. THESE MILITARY OFFICERS EXPECT THAT THE U.S.
GOVERNMENT WILL PROTEST THE DEATHS, BUT THEY BELIEVE
THAT THE JRG CAN EXIST WITHOUT U.S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT.
AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) WILL NOT CAUSE THE JRG

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ANY SERIOUS PROBLEMS AS A RESULT OF THE DEATHS AND WILL REMAIN IN THE GOVERNMENT.

[REDACTED]

6. THE GENERAL MOOD AMONG MIDDLE-LEVEL MILITARY OFFICERS IS THAT THE FDR LEADERS WHO WERE KILLED GOT WHAT THEY DESERVED. THERE HAS BEEN GROWING FRUSTRATION WITHIN THE MILITARY THAT THEY HAVE BEEN WASTING THEIR TIME FIGHTING LOW-LEVEL LEFTIST TERRORISTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHILE LEFTIST LEADERS OPERATED OPENLY IN THE CAPITAL CITY. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO CUT OFF THE HEAD OF THE LEFTIST MOVEMENT AS A MEANS TO END THE WAR WITH THE TERRORIST. [REDACTED] IT IS MOST LIKELY THAT MEMBERS OF EITHER THE TREASURY POLICE, NATIONAL POLICE OR THE GN WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF THE FDR LEADERS, SINCE IT IS MEMBERS OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS WHO ARE PRIMARILY INVOLVED IN COUNTERTERRORIST ACTIVITIES DIRECTED AGAINST THE LEFT.)

[REDACTED]

MOST MILITARY OFFICERS WERE HIGHLY PLEASED WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF THE SIX FDR LEADERS. THESE OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT OTHER LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF THE FDR SHOULD BE ELIMINATED IN A SIMILAR FASHION WHEREVER POSSIBLE. THESE FEELINGS WERE EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL MIDDLE-LEVEL ARMY OFFICERS ON 28 NOVEMBER 1980 IN THE PRESENCE OF COL. JOSE G A R C I A MERINO, MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND NICOLAS C A R R A N Z A, SUB-MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND BOTH GARCIA AND CARRANZA INDICATED THAT THEY SUPPORTED THIS LINE OF THINKING. FROM THE COMMENTS OF ALL THOSE PRESENT DURING THIS CONVERSATION, IT WAS CLEAR THAT GARCIA, CARRANZA AND THE OTHER OFFICERS PRESENT ACCEPTED AS A FACT THAT THE MILITARY SERVICES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF THE SIX FDR LEADERS)

[REDACTED]

MANY MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE DECIDED THAT THE ELECTION OF RONALD REAGAN TO THE U.S. PRESIDENCY WILL MEAN THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL NO LONGER TAKE A HARD LINE AGAINST REPRESSION AGAINST THE LEFT IN EL SALVADOR. THERE ARE ALSO MANY OFFICERS WHO ARE PREPARED TO FOREGO U.S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IF NECESSARY AND TO TURN TO ARGENTINA, CHILE, AND GUATEMALA INSTEAD. THEY BELIEVE THAT ANY REDUCTION IN U.S. FINANCIAL SUPPORT CAN BE MADE UP BY PRIVATE INVESTMENT FROM THE SALVADORAN OLIGARCHS CURRENTLY IN EXILE, WHO WILL BE WILLING TO REINVEST IN EL SALVADOR ONCE THEY SEE THAT THE MILITARY IS ACTING FORCEFULLY TO ELIMINATE THE LEFTIST TERRORISTS.)

9. [REDACTED] COMMENT: I AM SURE THAT THIS REPRESENTS ACCURATELY THE FEELING OF MANY OFFICERS. THE CRUCIAL QUESTION IS WHAT POSITIONS DO THEY HOLD AND WHAT INFLUENCE DO THEY WIELD. THERE IS ANOTHER LARGE GROUPS OF OFFICERS WHO REJECT THIS TYPE OF BARBARISM AND WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN A PROFESSIONAL MILITARY.)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]