

[REDACTED]

COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJ: CONSIDERATION BY ARMY OFFICERS OF MOUNTING AN
ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AGAINST SAN SALVADOR AUXILIARY
BISHOP GREGORIO ROSA CHAVEZ

DOI: LATE AUGUST 1990

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

TEXT: 1. [REDACTED] CERTAIN SALVADORAN ARMED

[REDACTED]

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FORCES (ESAF) OFFICERS ARE DISCUSSING PLANS TO ASSASSINATE THE AUXILIARY BISHOP OF SAN SALVADOR, GREGORIO ((ROSA)) CHAVEZ. THE OFFICERS ARE CONSIDERING THIS PLAN IN THE EVENT ESAF COLONEL GUILLERMO ((BENAVIDES)), CURRENTLY IN PRISON FOR ALLEGEDLY ORDERING THE KILLING OF SIX JESUIT PRIESTS AND THEIR HOUSEKEEPERS IN NOVEMBER 1989, IS NOT RELEASED FROM PRISON. THE OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT BY ASSASSINATING ROSA CHAVEZ, GOVERNMENT PROSECUTORS CAN BE LED TO BELIEVE THAT THE MURDERERS OF THE JESUITS ARE STILL AT LARGE, AND THAT SINCE BENAVIDES COULD NOT HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE ASSASSINATION OF ROSA CHAVEZ, HE PROBABLY WAS THEREFORE NOT INVOLVED IN THE JESUIT KILLINGS. THE OFFICERS HAVE BEGUN TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON ROSA CHAVEZ'S RESIDENCE, SCHEDULE, MOVEMENTS, AND VEHICLE.

2. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THIS POSSIBLE PLAN IS IN ITS EARLIEST STAGE. NO INFORMATION HAS YET BEEN GATHERED ON ROSA CHAVEZ, AND NO CONCRETE PLANS FORMULATED TO CARRY OUT AN ATTACK AGAINST HIM.)

3. [REDACTED] COMMENT: LIKE THE JESUITS, ROSA CHAVEZ IS VIEWED BY ELEMENTS OF THE EXTREME RIGHT AS AN APOLOGIST FOR THE FMLN, IF NOT AN OUTRIGHT FMLN COLLABORATOR. THIS MAKES HIS SELECTION AS THE TARGET FOR THE INCIPIENT AND BIZARRE PLOT OUTLINED ABOVE A LOGICAL ONE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PLOTTERS. ROSA CHAVEZ HAS TWO BROTHERS WHO ARE FMLN MILITARY COMMANDERS.)

4. (AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: WHILE THE ABOVE MUST BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, A JUNIOR OFFICER DESCRIBING PLOTTING OF THIS NATURE BY AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF OFFICERS AT UNDEFINED LEVELS OF THE OFFICER CORPS LEAVES IMPORTANT QUESTIONS UNANSWERED. AT THIS POINT, WE COULD BE DEALING WITH NOTHING MORE THAN TWO-THREE JUNIOR OFFICERS RELIEVING THEIR FRUSTRATION WITH DAMAGE DONE TO THEIR INSTITUTION BY THE JESUIT CASE WITH FANCIFUL, AND INCREDIBLY STUPID WISHFUL THINKING THAT THE PROBLEM CAN BE DEALT WITH. IT IS DIFFICULT, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE, TO BELIEVE THAT OFFICERS OF RANK OR EXPERIENCE WOULD CONCLUDE THAT IMPLEMENTING SUCH A SCHEME WOULD ALLEVIATE PRESSURE ON THE ESAF. ON THE OTHER HAND, WHY WOULD A GROUP OF JUNIOR OFFICERS GO TO SUCH LENGTHS TO FREE COLONEL BENAVIDES, THE SENIOR OFFICER WHO MOST JUNIOR OFFICERS FEEL HAS BROUGHT THE PROBLEM DOWN ON THEM?)

[REDACTED]