

UNCLAS 6F

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EL SALVADOR: COMMENTARY ON KILLING OF PRIESTS (TAKE 2 OF 3--005)

///OF THE PRIESTS.

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TEXT A FRIEND OF THE JESUIT PRIESTS, THE FIRST TO ARRIVE ON THE SCENE, SAID THAT HE COUNTED SOME 500 OR 600 BULLET HOLES. HE SAID THAT THESE SHOTS WERE FIRED FROM SOME DISTANCE, WITH A MACHINEGUN SET UP ON A TRIPOD. THE PRIESTS WERE ALSO LATER SHOT IN A GARDEN NEARBY. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION THAT THE SOCIETY OF JESUS RECEIVED FOLLOWING THEIR OWN RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CRIME, WHICH THEY HAVE RELEASED TO THE AUTHORITIES INVESTIGATING THE CASE, THE KILLERS, APPROXIMATELY 30 MEN IN UNIFORM, ARRIVED SHORTLY BEFORE 0230. THEY MACHINEGUNNED THE HOUSE BEFORE ENTERING, DRAGGED THE PRIESTS OUT, PUT THEM IN FRONT OF A WALL THAT IS STILL STAINED WITH BLOOD, AND SHOT THEM. THE PRIESTS WERE ALSO SHOT IN THE HEAD WITH A LONG-RANGE WEAPON; THESE SHOTS WERE FIRED FROM SOME DISTANCE. A LAWYER, HELPING IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THIS CASE AND WHO HAS ASKED TO REMAIN UNIDENTIFIED, SAID THAT THIS WAS DETERMINED BECAUSE THERE WERE NO GUNPOWDER MARKS ON THE VICTIMS.

AT THE TIME THE CRIME WAS CARRIED OUT, A CURFEW WAS BEING OBSERVED THROUGHOUT THE CITY. WORDS INDISTINCT AND THE HOUSE WHERE THE PRIESTS LIVED WAS SURROUNDED BY SOLDIERS. TOGETHER WITH THIS INFORMATION, GATHERED BY SEVERAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROMINENT PERSONS TO PROVE THAT THE MURDER WAS CARRIED OUT BY SOLDIERS, WE MUST STRESS THAT THE HOUSE WAS ALSO SEARCHED BY THE SOLDIERS 2 DAYS BEFORE THE CRIME WAS COMMITTED. A JESUIT PRIEST WHO WAS DESCRIBING THE SCENE SAID THAT ONLY THE AREA PREVIOUSLY SEARCHED BY THE SOLDIERS WAS DESTROYED. HE SAID THAT THE LIBRARY WAS BURNED AND THE ROOMS HAD BEEN RANSACKED. ACCORDING TO THE PRIEST, \$5,000 THAT FATHER IGNACIO ELLACURIA HAD RECEIVED IN BARCELONA -- PART OF AN AWARD GIVEN THE UNIVERSITY -- WERE TAKEN FROM ONE OF THE ROOMS.

THE USE OF LONG-RANGE WEAPONS WOULD ALSO EXPLAIN WHY THE BRAINS OF THE DEAD WERE SCATTERED ABOUT. THIS WAS SEEN BY THE FIRST PERSONS WHO ARRIVED ON THE SCENE. OTHERS SAID THAT THE BODIES WERE DESTROYED BECAUSE AK-47 AND M-16 ASSAULT RIFLES WERE USED IN THE ATTACK. THE BODIES WERE SO UTTERLY DESTROYED THAT ENSALMING WAS NOT POSSIBLE. THIS WAS REPORTED TO ACAN-EFE BY SOCIETY OF JESUS SUPERIOR JOSE MARIA TOJEIRA.

REGARDING THE TWO MURDERED WOMEN, THE COOK ELBA JULIA RAMOS AND HER 15-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER MARISELA, ALL INDICATES THAT THEY WERE MACHINEGUNNED IN THE SMALL ROOM WHERE THEY SLEPT. THERE WAS SO MUCH BLOOD THAT IT SEEPED UNDER THE DOOR, AND A VERTEBRA AND PIECES OF A SKULL CAN STILL BE SEEN UNDER A SOFA IN THE SMALL ROOM. THE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE VICTIMS WERE NOT TORTURED AS EARLIER REPORTS HAD STATED.

MEANWHILE, SALVADORAN PRESIDENT ALFREDO CRISTIANI REPORTEDLY SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE ARMED FORCES HIGH COMMAND HAS NOT RULED OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE KILLERS OF THE SIX JESUIT PRIESTS COULD HAVE BEEN SOLDIERS. THEY HAVE NOT RULED OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT

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SOLDIERS COULD HAVE KILLED THE PRIESTS, AND THEY ARE DETERMINED TO INVESTIGATE THE INCIDENT AND PUNISH THE RESPONSIBLE PARTIES. THIS WAS SAID BY THE SALVADORAN PRESIDENT IN STATEMENTS TO ACAN-EFE AND OTHER FOREIGN NEWS AGENCIES. CRISTIANI, WHO INSISTED ON THE NEED TO AVOID UNFOUNDED CONCLUSIONS, ADDED THAT THE MILITARY DOES NOT THINK IT WILL BE AFFECTED BY SOMETHING DONE BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTION.

WE CAN CLEARLY SEE NOW THAT THERE ARE SOME CONTRADICTIONS. AT THIS MOMENT THERE ARE THREE POSITIONS. THERE IS THE POSITION OF U.S. AMBASSADOR WILLIAM WALKER -- HE IS LIKE AN OSTRICH WITH ITS HEAD BURIED IN THE SAND. THERE IS PROOF THAT RULES OUT ALL DOUBT. HOW CAN 40 MEN IN UNIFORM BE IN A MILITARIZED AREA FOR 60 MINUTES AND NOT HEAR SHOTS BEING FIRED AND BOMBS EXPLODING? WHY DID THE ARMY NOT SEND IN TROOPS TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED ONLY A FEW BLOCKS FROM COLONEL RENE ENILIO PONCE'S OFFICE? THE 40 MEN WERE IN THE AREA FOR A WHOLE HOUR. THEY HAD ALREADY SEARCHED FATHER ELLACURIA'S HOME.

OUR QUESTION FOR WILLIAM WALKER: IF THIS WAS NOT DONE BY THE ARMED FORCES, THEN WHY WERE THEY THERE SEARCHING THE PREMISES FOR A WHOLE HOUR AND EVEN STEALING \$5,000? THEY SEARCHED DRAWER BY DRAWER. THE DISORDER THEY LEFT BEHIND WAS QUITE EVIDENT IN THE CLIPS SHOWN ON TELEVISION. THEY SEARCHED THE AREA FOR AN HOUR TO SEE WHAT THEY, THE MURDERERS, COULD FIND TO STEAL. HOWEVER, AMBASSADOR WILLIAM WALKER SAYS THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW IF THE ARMY COMMITTED THE CRIME.

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