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INVESTIGATION OF MURDERS OF U.S. NUNS IN EL SALVADOR AT A STANDSTILL

INVESTIGATION INTO THE MURDERS OF FOUR U.S. CHURCHWOMEN IN EL SALVADOR IS AT A STANDSTILL BECAUSE THERE IS INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE AT THIS TIME TO CHARGE ANYONE WITH THE CRIMES UNDER SALVADORAN LAW. THE JUDGE IN CHARGE OF THE OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION HAS STATED THAT THE CASE IS STILL "TECHNICALLY OPEN" BUT THERE IS NOTHING MORE HE CAN DO UNLESS NEW EVIDENCE IS RECEIVED.

[redacted] THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATING COMMISSION APPOINTED LAST DECEMBER IS NOT PURSUING THE CASE ANY LONGER. BALLISTICS AND FINGERPRINT TESTS BY THE FBI RESULTED IN THE ARREST OF TWO NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS ALONG WITH FOUR OTHER NATIONAL GUARDSMEN WHO WERE ON PATROL WITH THEM THE NIGHT OF THE MURDERS. PRESIDENT JOSE NAPOLEON DUARTE HAS OFFICIALLY REQUESTED POLYGRAPH EQUIPMENT AND OTHER ASSISTANCE FROM THE FBI IN AN EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE CASE.

OPINION AMONG U.S. OFFICIALS IS DIVIDED AS TO WHETHER THE SIX SOLDIERS WILL EVER BE PROSECUTED. SOME BELIEVE THAT THE SALVADORANS WILL BE FORCED TO ACT BECAUSE OF PRESSURE FROM THE U.S., WHILE OTHERS BELIEVE THAT SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS WILL STONEWALL ANY FURTHER INVESTIGATION.

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Approved for Release

NOV 1993