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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DIST: 22 NOVEMBER 1989

COUNTRY: GUATEMALA/EL SALVADOR

SUBJ: REQUEST BY THE CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF GUATEMALA FOR
SUPPORT BY ORGANIZED LABOR FOR A PASTORAL MESSAGE
CONDEMNING THE SLAYING OF CLERGYMEN IN EL SALVADOR

DOI: 16 NOVEMBER 1989

[REDACTED]

TEXT: 1. ON 16 NOVEMBER 1989, ISMAEL ((BARRIOS)) RABANALES, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CENTRAL FEDERATION OF GUATEMALAN WORKERS (FECETRAG), RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM MONSIGNOR EFRAIN ((HERNANDEZ)) VALLE, PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR OF THE GUATEMALAN ARCHBISHOP'S CURIA, REQUESTING THAT BARRIOS, AS A LEADER OF ORGANIZED LABOR, ISSUE A DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR A PASTORAL MESSAGE CONDEMNING THE SLAYING IN EL SALVADOR OF SIX CLERGYMEN AND TWO WOMEN WHO WERE PART OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD.

2. HERNANDEZ TOLD BARRIOS THAT GUATEMALAN ARCHBISHOP PROSPERO ((PENADOS)) DEL BARRIO HAD CALLED AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF LATIN AMERICAN BISHOPS AND HAD ASKED HERNANDEZ TO COLLECT EXPRESSIONS OF BACKING FOR A CONDEMNATION OF THE DEED FROM ALL GUATEMALAN SECTORS PRIOR TO THE BISHOPS' GATHERING, TO ADD MORAL WEIGHT AND HELP EXPEDITE THE ISSUANCE OF A JOINT PASTORAL MESSAGE CONDEMNING THESE AND ALL OTHER KILLINGS CONNECTED WITH THE LATEST OUTBURST OF VIOLENCE IN EL SALVADOR AND URGING ALL PARTIES INVOLVED TO IMMEDIATELY RESUME NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CRISIS.

3. HERNANDEZ ALSO TOLD BARRIOS THAT PENADOS HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO CONTACT FIRST OF ALL THE POPULAR SECTORS SUCH AS THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND LEADERS OF THE UNITED LABOR AND POPULAR ASSOCIATIONS (UASP) UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION, SINCE THE SLAIN CLERICS HAD GIVEN THEIR LIVES FOR THE POOR OF EL SALVADOR AND CENTRAL AMERICA. HERNANDEZ, HOWEVER, ADDED THAT BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE ALSO BEING ASKED FOR STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT, ALTHOUGH PENADOS WAS DELIBERATELY EXCLUDING THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL PARTIES FROM HIS REQUEST, TO AVOID A POLITIZATION OF THE BISHOPS' MESSAGE.

4. BARRIOS, IN TURN, AUTHORIZED HERNANDEZ TO QUOTE HIM AS SUPPORTING THE BISHOPS' CONDEMNATION OF THESE CRIMES, AS THE FECETRAG SECRETARY GENERAL, AFTER HERNANDEZ ASSURED BARRIOS THAT THE CONDEMNATION WILL INCLUDE A STRONG DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN THE REGION AND REJECTION OF WHAT BARRIOS

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Approved for Release

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