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TOR: 142203Z MAR 90

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CITE SAN SALVADOR 35039

[REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: [REDACTED] ARCHBISHOP OF SAN SALVADOR'S REACTION
TO RECENT FMLN PROPAGANDA DIRECTED AT CHURCH

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3. ON 22 JANUARY 1990, THE FARABUNDO MARTI NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (FMLN) SENT AN EIGHT-PAGE, OPEN LETTER SIGNED BY THE GENERAL COMMAND, TO RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN EL SALVADOR. THE LETTER WAS ON FMLN LETTERHEAD. IN THE LETTER, THE FMLN STRESSED THAT THE CHURCH AND THE FMLN PURSUED A COMMON GOAL, THAT IS, TO LOOK OUT FOR THE COMMON MAN AND TO FIGHT FOR PEACE. THE FMLN EMPHASIZED THAT THE CHURCHES HAVE MADE GREAT CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE AREAS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC FREEDOM, AND TO THE SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO THE CIVIL WAR. THE GENERAL COMMAND POINTED OUT THAT IT HAS PRESENTED SEVERAL PROPOSALS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF EL SALVADOR, BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS RESPONDED WITH MORE REPRESSION, SUCH AS THE FENASTRAS BOMBING, WHICH FORCED THE FMLN TO LAUNCH THE NOVEMBER 1989 OFFENSIVE

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Approved for Release
NOV 1993

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO WERE KILLED. THE GOVERNMENT RESPONDED BY BOMBING CIVILIAN TARGETS AND KILLING HUNDREDS OF INNOCENT PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE SIX JESUIT PRIESTS. THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES ARE AN INVITATION TO WAR. THUS, THE FMLN MUST CONTINUE ITS MILITARY OFFENSIVE, ALTHOUGH IT WANTS TO END THE WAR TO AVOID GREATER SOCIAL, HUMAN, AND MATERIAL COST. GROUPS PURSUING THE SAME CAUSE MUST UNITE THEIR RESOURCES. ALTHOUGH DIFFERENT CHURCHES HAVE DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SCRIPTURE, THEY STILL WORK TO HELP THE POOR. THE FMLN GENERAL COMMAND ENCOURAGES THE CHURCHES TO CONTINUE TO USE THEIR RESOURCES TO WORK TOWARD PEACE, AND TO ENCOURAGE THE GOVERNMENT TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE FMLN TO END THE WAR.

4. ON 5 FEBRUARY, IN A GENERAL NEWSLETTER TO PRIESTS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN EL SALVADOR, ARCHBISHOP OF EL SALVADOR ARTURO ((RIVERA Y DAMAS)) RESPONDED TO THE FMLN MEMORANDUM DIRECTED AT THE CHURCH. IN REFERENCE TO THE DOCUMENT, THE ARCHBISHOP SAID HE WANTED EVERYONE TO BE QUITE CLEAR ON WHAT HE, AS THE PASTOR OF THE ARCHDIOCESE, THOUGHT ON THE SUBJECT. HE WROTE THAT THE DOCUMENT WAS PROPAGANDA; THAT IT SOUGHT TO WIN SYMPATHY FOR THE FMLN'S CAUSE IN THE WAKE OF THE KILLINGS OF THE JESUIT PRIESTS; AND THAT THE METHOD THE FMLN USED WAS NOT CHRISTIAN. THE ARCHBISHOP ADDED THAT THE MARXIST-LENINIST IDEOLOGY OF THE FMLN GENERAL COMMAND IS IN CRISIS WORLDWIDE. IT HAS NOT BEEN EFFECTIVE IN NICARAGUA, AND IN EASTERN EUROPE IT IS BEING COMPLETELY RESTRUCTURED. THE ARCHBISHOP SAID THE CHURCH BELIEVES THAT BUILDING INSTITUTIONS MORE HUMANE, MORE JUST, AND MORE RESPECTFUL OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN IS IMPORTANT. HOWEVER, HE SAID ONE MUST ALSO BE AWARE THAT EVEN THE BEST, MOST IDEAL SYSTEMS CAN QUICKLY BECOME INHUMANE, IF THE INHUMANE INCLINATIONS OF MAN ARE NOT CORRECTED.

[REDACTED]