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Director of Central Intelligence

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY

Saturday, 4 March 1989

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Approved for Release

NOV 1993

4 March 1989

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✓ **EL SALVADOR: Allegations of Military Abuses Continue**

Cases of human rights abuses continue to dog the Salvadoran military even though it has made considerable progress in that area since the early 1980s. The police arrested an Army major this week on charges he had ordered the killing of 10 civilians last September. A military investigation said the officer planned the operation in order to eliminate rebel collaborators and subsequently arranged the coverup. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church's human rights office has accused government troops of raping and killing two rebel medical personnel and killing three wounded insurgents during a raid last month. The office has a history of incorrect reporting on alleged Army killings. [REDACTED] Chief of Staff Ponce is satisfied with the military's explanation that the guerrillas were killed defending a field hospital. [REDACTED] and has ordered no further investigation.

Comment: The major's arrest was largely the result of US pressure and growing concern in the military about continued US aid. He probably will face disciplinary action because senior officers are eager to avoid additional negative publicity from the controversial human rights case. The military leadership also is disinclined, however, to investigate allegations of abuse forcefully, despite efforts to inspire better human rights performance. Although the circumstances of the attack against the field hospital remain unclear, rebel support groups probably will use the issue as the core of their campaign against the armed forces and the government. [REDACTED]

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