

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: The Jesuit Case: Claims of Colonel Guillermo Benavides

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. In mid-April 1991, a [REDACTED] Salvadoran military officer related the following comments of a senior Salvadoran military High Command officer, who allegedly questioned Colonel Guillermo Benavides [REDACTED] after his arrest for involvement in the November 1989 murders of six Jesuit

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priests. According to the senior officer, Benavides said that on the evening of 15 November 1989 he received direct orders to "take care of the Jesuit problem." When the senior officer questioned who issued the orders, Benavides refused to give a name. Benavides said the order unnerved him and he did not know what to do. He claimed he sought advice from then Commander of the Air Force General Juan Rafael Bustillo, who told Benavides that a good soldier follows orders and does not question them. Benavides said he posed the same question to First Brigade Commander Francisco Elena Fuentes, who shrugged and told Benavides to do as he was told. [REDACTED] comment: It is unlikely that Benavides will ever name from whom the order came, because under Salvadoran law identifying those behind the crime would not lessen any prison sentence he may receive or in any way benefit him. Naming the person would only gain Benavides a possible cell mate and a sure enemy.)

3. The senior officer said Benavides also remarked that Major Carlos Camilo Hernandez [REDACTED] was fortunate to be charged only with the relatively minor offense of destruction of evidence.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]