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NR

EL SALVADOR: Renewed Interest in Jesuit Murder Case

The public complaints of two prosecutors who resigned last week from the Jesuit murder case may renew criticism of the government's commitment to punishing the perpetrators. The two men, who publicly accused the attorney general's office of bending to military pressure and obstructing the investigation, are negotiating to represent the Jesuit order as private prosecutors [Redacted]

Two appellate court judges are to review the case and decide whether there is enough evidence to warrant a trial. [Redacted] the Supreme Court President wants the review completed soon after the legislative election in March, although an appellate judge has said he will not give the appeal priority over other human rights cases. [Redacted]

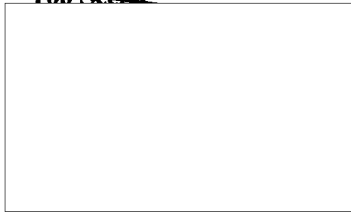
Comment: The prosecutors' public comments may be posturing for their new job with the Jesuits, who believe the government may be covering up higher level involvement. The government and military probably are distressed by the resignations because they hoped the recent killing of US servicemen by rebels and the legislative election would deflect attention from the case. The appeals process may take six months; if the case goes to trial, complex jury selection procedures make it unlikely a verdict will be rendered before yearend [Redacted]

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