



United States Department of State


Washington, D.C. 20520

February 9, 1990

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am forwarding to you the answers to the questionnaire submitted to the Department by the Congressional Task Force on the investigation into the killings of the Jesuits in El Salvador. I regret the delay in response and hope you find this information helpful in your efforts to monitor the investigation.

Sincerely,

  
Janet G. Mullins  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure: As stated.

The Honorable  
Joseph Moakley,  
Chairman, House Rules Committee,  
House of Representatives.

Questions appearing in the December 21, 1989 Moakley letter  
to Secretary of State Baker on the Jesuit murders.

(Ambassador William Walker is responding to these questions)

Overview of the Investigation:

1 Q. Please summarize the procedures established in the Salvadoran Constitution and in the Salvadoran law for the investigation and prosecution of a crime such as the murders of the Jesuits, including:

- a. the role of the local justice of the peace;
- b. the role of the judge;
- c. the role of the Attorney General;
- d. the role of external organizations, such as the FBI, that might be available to provide technical assistance; and
- e. the role of the Special Investigative Unit (SIU)

1 A.       1a. See attached Criminal Procedures Brief.  
          1b. See attached Criminal Procedures Brief.  
          1c. See attached Criminal Procedures Brief.  
          1d. For evidence to be admissible in a court proceeding it has to be presented by an auxiliary organ of the court; Auxiliary organs of the court are the public security forces. The President named the SIU an auxiliary organ of the court for the investigation of the Jesuit murders. The FBI and any other foreign police organizations provide technical assistance to the SIU during the course of the investigation. Any evidence, if it would have been discovered by the foreign police authority, would have no standing as evidence in a Salvadoran court proceeding. However, the judge can take notice of the evidence as an indication of the direction the investigation should take. He can then direct the SIU to confirm through their own procedures the credibility of the evidence and submit it to the court.

          1e. The SIU has no role established in the Salvadoran Constitution. The law creating the Commission of Investigations (CIHD) provides for the establishment of an investigative unit, the SIU, to investigate crimes of a national nature. The authority to present evidence derives from the parent organizations, the security forces, from where most of the SIU investigators were detailed.

2 Q. Please describe the authorities and responsibilities of the armed forces in a case where military personnel are suspected of committing a crime such as the murders of the Jesuits. For example, is the military required or at least authorized to conduct an independent investigation in such a case? Also, what steps must be taken before a military officer may be formally charged with, or stand trial for a civil crime?

2 A. The authorities and responsibilities of the Armed Forces in a criminal proceeding as the Jesuit murders are limited. The military code of justice is not designed nor prepared to prosecute members of the Armed Forces for murder. When there is evidence of culpability of murder by members of the military, those accused are subject to the civilian judiciary for prosecution. In special circumstances the military can convene an honor board to review evidence before turning the accused over to the civilian authorities. The security forces investigate instances of alleged wrongdoing by military members in their function as auxiliary organs of the civilian judiciary. If evidence of criminal activity by military members is discovered by an honor board or by the security forces acting as auxiliary organs, those individuals are turned over to the civilian judiciary for handling. In the Jesuit case the Armed Forces offered its cooperation to the civilian authorities in providing information and making its members available to investigators. A military officer may be formally charged with a crime after the judge verifies that a crime has been committed and determines that there is sufficient evidence to tie the accused to the crime. When the civilian judicial proceeding reaches the plenary phase, the military member must be dismissed from the armed forces.

3 Q. Please describe in detail the steps that have been taken pursuant to the procedures listed in questions 1 and 2 to investigate the killings of Jesuits, including:

- a. The position/identity of the principal investigatory persons involved;
- b. A chronology of the investigatory steps taken;
- c. A description of any investigatory actions taken by the Armed Forces, and the identity of those within the Armed Forces who have taken responsibility for any investigation that is being conducted;
- d. The position/identity of those charged with preparing a prosecution of th case; and
- e. A list of planned future steps.

3 A. a. The principal agency investigating the Jesuit murders is the SIU; The Director of the SIU is Lt. Col. Manuel Antonio Rivas Mejia.

b. See SIU document on chronology of investigatory steps taken. Provided to Jim McGovern week of January 22.

c. The Armed Forces did not nor is it now conducting an investigation. The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Col. Rene Emilio Ponce has cooperated fully and has responded to every request made by the SIU. See above SIU chronology.

d. The Attorney General's Office has responsibility for prosecuting the case of the Jesuit murders. Also there is proviso in Salvadoran law for a private prosecutor. Most of the major cases have seen the aggrieved party hiring a private prosecutor. We understand that the Jesuits are considering this option. While we have heard rumors of many candidates we are not aware that a final decision on a candidate or whether to pursue a private prosecutor has been made.

e. The next steps are with the court. The case is in the instructional phase, roughly equivalent to our grand jury. The defendants are under provisional detention. The investigation continues under the guidance of the judge. Under the law he has up to 120 days to decide whether to take the case to a formal trial, determine the charges, or release the defendants. The 120 day time limit is often exceeded mainly due to procedural delays.

4 Q. What roles are other countries and foreign agencies playing in the investigation?

4 A. The role of other countries and foreign agencies is that of guarantors of the credibility of the process. Other government's agencies, with international credibility will be able to certify the results of the investigation and/or call attention to any failings that may result.

5 Q. Please describe the role of the US Embassy in the investigation including:

- the name of the individual who has primary responsibility for monitoring the investigation.
- Any written summary or chronology of events leading up to the murders and the subsequent efforts to investigate the crime.
- Specific actions and statements by the U.S. Ambassador and other U.S. Government officials aimed at finding those responsible for the crime.

5 A. The role of the Embassy has been to monitor the investigation and bring to bear any and all assets from all representative agencies to collect information pertaining to the crime. The Embassy established a task force, headed by the DCM Mr. Dieterich, with representatives from the political section, DAO, MILGRP, ECON/R, and Legal Office. There were daily meetings and daily reports to Washington on progress.

The legal officer is also program officer for the US funded Special Investigative Unit which was charged with investigating the case. As such he kept abreast of developments in the case.

Attached is a compilation of the Ambassador's statements regarding the murder of the Jesuits and the investigation.

6 Q. Please list all US Government agencies that are assisting in the investigation -- including the agency which has primary responsibility for coordinating the US role.

6 A. U.S. Government agencies and sections represented within the Embassy who assisted in the Jesuit murder investigation and continue to monitor progress of the court proceedings include: 1. Political section; 2. Military Group; 3. Defense Attache's Office; 4. Econ/R; 5. Drug Enforcement Administration; 6. Narcotics Assistance Unit; 7. The Federal Bureau of Investigation; and 8. Legal Office. The Deputy Chief of Mission is overall coordinator for the US effort.

**Military Units:**

1 Q. What unit or units of the Salvadoran Armed Forces and/or security forces had responsibility for the area in and around the University of Central America campus on November 15/16? Please name the commanding officers of those units, including the names of the officers above them in the chain of command.

1 A. The night of November 15/16 the Zone Commander of the area including the UCA was Col. Guillermo Alfredo Benavidez Moreno. Under his command were elements of the Atlacatl Battalion, DM 7 and DM 6, the Treasury Police, and the National Police. These units were taken out of their normal command structure and placed under the direct command of Col. Benavides. The Command structure for Benavides is not clear as the commands were established in response to the offensive begun on November 11. Benavides would probably have reported directly to the High Command either to the Chief of Operations or the Deputy Minister of Defense Col. Zepeda.



2 Q. It has been reported that uniformed members of the armed forces conducted a search of the Pastoral Center, where the Jesuits were living at the University, on the evening of November 13, two days prior to the murders.

- Which unit conducted the search?
- Who commanded the unit?
- For what purposes was the search conducted?
- Did the unit that conducted the search submit an oral or written report subsequent to the operation and, if so, to whom?
- What was the substance of the report?

2 A. A unit from the Atlacatl conducted the search of the UCA on November 13. The lieutenant in charge of the detail was Lt. Ricardo Espinoza Guevarra. The search was conducted in response to information that arms might be cached on the UCA and that guerrillas were reported to be using the campus and firing upon army patrols and into nearby residential areas. I do not know if a written report was made. The soldiers soon became the focus of the criminal investigation and their declarations were taken by investigators from the SIU.

3 Q. It has been reported that on April 19, the former commander of the First Brigade and now Vice-Minister of Defense publicly accused the Central American University of planning FMLN strategies, of being a haven for terrorists, and of complicity in the assassination of the (previous) Attorney General (reported in the local press on April 20). Other reports indicate that the Crusade for Peace, associated with ARENA, wrote President Cristiani on July 3, urging that he arrest and punish through summary justice the "terrorist hordes" commanded by Rev. Ignacio Ellacuria and Rev. Segundo Montes.

- a. Are the accounts accurate?
- b. Were other public threats made against the priests prior to their murders? Who made them and when?
- c. Have these or other critics of the Jesuits been questioned?

3 A. a. The former commander of the First Brigade and the current Vice-Minister of Defense reportedly did accuse the UCA of planning FMLN strategies. We have no knowledge of a letter from the Crusade for Peace to President Cristiani urging the arrest and punishment of Ellacuria and Segundo Montes.

b. A number of individuals in Salvadoran society made allegations against the Jesuits. We do not have a chronology of when they were made and by whom.

c. These persons were not questioned because the focus of the investigations quickly was directed at the Atlacatl and Col. Benevides. However, the Embassy has protested these statements to the government.

4 Q. It has been reported that on Saturday, November 11, 1989, at 2300 hours most Salvadoran radio stations were required to carry, via a nationwide hookup, broadcasts of Radio Cuscatlan (the radio station of the Armed Forces of El Salvador). It has also been reported that Radio Cuscatlan received and then broadcast calls from Salvadoran citizens threatening the lives of various individuals, including the Jesuits in general and Father Ellacuria in particular.

- a. Is this accurate?
- b. If so, why were such threats broadcast?
- c. Has anyone been reprimanded for permitting this to

happen?

4 A. a-b. In the first hours of the FMLN offensive, there was massive destruction and confusion within San Salvador. Thousands of citizens fled from their homes in panic in the face of the FMLN attack. Many family members were stranded from each other not knowing whether their loved ones were alive or dead. Phone call radio shows were established to allow Salvadorans to report their safety and whereabouts to their family and loved ones. However, some anonymous Salvadoran citizens began to abuse these shows and call in threats against individuals. When the State Department was alerted to this, the Embassy asked the government to curtail these shows and it responded.

c. No. Because the original purpose of these broadcasts was legitimate and the abuses were committed by unknown private individuals in the midst of broadcasts on the open air.

5 Q. It has been reported that Father Ellacuria returned to El Salvador from Spain on November 13, 1989, and that he was questioned by soldiers before being allowed back on the UCA campus.

- a. Is this accurate?

- b. Has any effort been made to determine which soldiers interrogated Father Ellacuria and their reasons for doing so?

- c. If so, what has been learned?

5 A. - a. No, this does not appear to be entirely accurate.

- b. Even according to the Jesuit report on the investigation there is no claim that Father Ellacuria was interrogated by the soldier. We believe that the soldier only remarked that in fact it was Father Ellacuria that was in the car.

- c. The incident is irrelevant, so far, in the investigation of the case.

6 Q. The U.S. trained Atlacqtl Battalion was reported to have been patrolling part of the neighborhood adjacent to the UCA on November 15.

- a. Has the Commander of the unit been questioned by any military or civilian authorities? If so, by whom?

- b. Has any effort been made to determine which soldiers were patrolling the area and what they saw?

- c. If so, what has been learned?

6 A. - a. Yes. The Commander of the unit, Lt. Ricardo Espinoza Guerra has been questioned by SIU investigators.

- b. Yes we have identified which soldiers were patrolling around the UCA the night of November 15. Currently available evidence seems to suggest that they were responsible for killing the priests.

- c. We have learned who may be responsible for the murders.

7 Q. Has the commander of the First Brigade been questioned about the announcement heard near the Archdiocese offices on November 17. It has been reported that through a megaphone it was announced: "Ellacuria and Martin-Baro have fallen. We will continue killing communists." Seconds later, the same voice over the microphone identified itself as belonging to the First Brigade.  
- If the commander was interviewed, what did he say?

7 A. The commander had not been interviewed before evidence arose suggesting his involvement. By November 17 it was public information that the priests had been killed. Neither the timing nor the source of the statements, if known, would help solve the crime.

8 Q. It has been reported that the area around the University was under a curfew that extended from 1800 November 15 through 0600 November 16.

- Is this accurate?

8 A. - Yes, this is accurate.

## The Investigation in General:

1 Q. Please describe whether members of the Salvadoran security forces have been questioned or have presented formal testimony in the Jesuits case? In such cases, please indicate the rank and unit of the individual involved; the date on which the questioning took place or when the testimony was presented; whether the individual was placed under oath; whether a transcript of the statement was prepared; and whether the individual was given a lie detector test.

- If lie detectors were administered, how many were given and by whom?

1 A. A break down of declarations taken from not only the security forces but also the military units that were stationed around the UCA on the evening of November 15/16 was provided to Mr. McGovern from the staff of the Committee overseeing the Jesuit investigation. Specifically there were two key interrogations of members of the security forces. These interrogations were initiated because of allegations stemming from an alleged letter from junior military officers implicating the Director of the Treasury Police Col. Heriberto Hernandez and Capt. Chavez Garcia, head of the CEAT, a SWAT unit, with the murders of the Jesuits. Both officers were interrogated by investigators from the SIU and voluntarily submitted to polygraph exams. Both denied involvement in the murders of the Jesuits and their polygraph exams supported the truth of their declarations.

The SIU began to take declarations from members of all of the military units that were stationed near the UCA the night of November 15/16. Every soldier was not questioned because the results of the interrogations soon revealed that the Atlacatl was a likely suspect. Once this was determined all effort focused on interrogating members of this unit.



2 Q. Please describe the efforts that have been made to match fingerprints and ballistics evidence taken from the scene of the crime with the fingerprints and weapons of security forces units known to be in the vicinity of the University at the time of the murders.

- Some reports have indicated that photographs of boot-prints were taken at the scene of the murder. Is this accurate? If so, what has been learned?

2 A. Yes, impressions of boot-prints were taken from the UCA by the SIU. Also the SIU conducted extensive testing of ballistic and handwriting samples. These tests eventually led to the identification of the Atlacatl as the perpetrators of the murders.

3 Q. It is reported that a judge in charge of the investigation, Ricardo A. Zamora, had recorded only two testimonies by November 30 because of his case load.

- a. How much time is he devoting to the investigation?
- b. What assistance is he receiving from the Salvadoran Government or the U.S. Government?
- c. Have efforts been made to alleviate Judge Zamora's caseload?
- d. What security protections have been afforded Judge Zamora since his assignment to the case?

3 A. - a. Judge Zamora initially was relieved of his caseload so he could devote all of his time to the Jesuit investigation. Now that the case is in judicial system he is devoting three days out of five to this case.

- b. USG representatives have spoken with the President of the Supreme Court and directly with Judge Zamora about possible assistance, including security assistance he might require. At this moment he has not requested any additional support from the USG.

- c. See a above.
- d. As stated in b, Judge Zamora has declined.

4 Q. When did the SIU investigators arrive at the Pastoral Center on November 16? What were their first steps? When did they secure the crime scene?

4 A. SIU investigators arrive at the crime scene at approximately 0830. Their first steps were to secure the crime scene which was accomplished by approximately 0845.

5 Q. Were civilians questioned regarding the murders of the Jesuits, especially resident of the neighborhood?

- a. If so, by whom?
- b. If so, what do they know?

5 A. -a. Civilians were questioned about the murders by investigators from the SIU. Little information of value was derived from these interviews.

6 Q. Has the husband of the slain cook been interrogated as to what he saw and heard on the evening of the murders?

- If so, what did he say? If not, why not?

6 A. The husband of the slain cook has been questioned by SIU investigators. He claims that he saw nothing and when he heard the shooting he hid under the bed where he stayed until morning.

FMLN Involvement:

1 Q. Please describe, in detail, any evidence or theories which point to FMLN involvement in the murder of the Jesuits.

- Has evidence been found at the scene of the crime which implicate the FMLN? If so, please describe it.

1 A. Since these questions were formulated the alleged perpetrators of the crime have been identified. Initially there were no definitive clues which would have led investigators to exclude any possible suspect, including the FMLN. Therefore, although the investigation did focus on the military, and elements of the military now are believed to be guilty, no suspects were eliminated from the scope of the investigation at the initial stages of the investigation.

Mr. and Mrs. Cerna

1 Q. Please provide a chronology of events surrounding the interrogation of Mr. Jorge Cerna and Mrs. Lucia Barrera de Cerna, including:

- a. the date and location of each interview;
- b. a list of those, U.S. and Salvadoran, who were present at each interview;
- c. a transcript of each interview (including any transcript associated with the polygraph tests); and
- d. a copy of any written statements signed by Mr. or Mrs. Cerna.
- e. Have either of the Cernas been determined "not credible: as witnesses in this case by the Salvadoran or U.S. authorities?

1 A. - a. The interviews with the Cernas took place at FBI headquarters in Miami, Florida between November 27 and December 1, 1989. One preliminary interview was conducted by the FBI on November 24 in the Hotel Radisson.

-b-d. Questions concerning those who were present during the questioning, access to transcripts of the sessions including the polygraph tests, and written statements should be directed to the FBI.

- e. A determination of credibility would necessarily have to be made by those who interviewed Mrs. Cerna and administered the polygraph exams. The FBI would be a better source to ask for such determinations.

2 Q. The Cernas both reported they could see men wearing camouflage uniforms in the moonlight.

- Was the moon visible in San Salvador that evening? To what extent?

2 A. The moon was full the night of November 15/16 with an intermittent overcast sky.



3 Q. The Cerna family has testified that they saw uniformed men wearing caps (capuchas) with visors. Do any units of the Salvadoran Armed Forces wear such headgear?

3 A. Most units of the Salvadoran military wear some form of headgear, many to include variations with a visor. Mrs. Cerna was unable to identify with any certainty the type of headgear or visor that she allegedly saw on the evening of November 15/16. Therefore we are unable to try to match the headgear with any worn by Salvadoran military units.

ARENA:

1 Q. The December 11 issue of Newsweek magazine reports that U.S. officials have information that Roberto D'Aubuisson threatened some of the Jesuits by name the night before the killings.

- a. If this report accurate?

- b. If so, has the information been transmitted by U.S. officials to the appropriate law enforcement officials in El Salvador?

- c. Please describe efforts by the Salvadoran authorities to investigate the possible involvement of D'Aubuisson in the killings, including whether testimony has been solicited from D'Aubuisson.

1 A. - a. We do not comment on alleged intelligence information.

- b. Mr. D'Aubuisson was interviewed more than once by Embassy officers; During these discussion the alleged report was raised. It is not known if the Salvadoran authorities are aware of the Newsweek story.

- c. See above. During one such meeting D'Aubuisson offered to provide his declaration, even to taking a polygraph if requested, on allegations that such a meeting where he supposedly threatened the lives of the Jesuit priests took place.

**GENERAL:**

Please describe the current state of the Salvadoran judicial system.

El Salvador's criminal justice system has always been seriously flawed. Since 1979, this already fragile system has been further disrupted and weakened by the political and economic upheavals caused by the civil war.

As a result, criminal investigations drag on and the accused may spend years in prison awaiting trial. The courts often cannot reliably prosecute criminals, nor provide those arrested with speedy and fair trials.

Nevertheless, some progress has been made under the leadership of Supreme Court President Gutierrez. Gutierrez has created a system of circuit lawyers, and relieved corrupt judges of their duties. Also, significant reforms of the antiquated penal codes have been passed by the Legislative Assembly.

What are the greatest obstacles and problems that remain in reforming the judicial system?

The following factors contribute to problems in the judicial system:

- 1) a five-man jury system whose selection procedures and processes have been strained to the breaking point;
- 2) unwieldy laws of evidence that create an excessive reliance on confessions to obtain convictions;
- 3) a lack of modern investigative and forensic equipment and expertise;
- 4) consistent shortage of funds;
- 5) intimidation of judges, prosecutors, jurors, and witnesses;
- 6) antiquated and wholly inadequate administrative systems and office equipment;
- 7) judges and court officers who only work half days and spend the rest of their time in other pursuits;
- 8) a workload which has resulted in an immense backlog of cases still awaiting trial.

In June, the Assembly proposed reforms to the penal code described as anti-terrorist legislation. However, President Cristiani vetoed this legislation because he believed that certain provisions were too vaguely worded and could lead to restrictions on civil liberties and freedom of the press.

The Administration is urging that the new laws and reforms to the penal code drafted by the Revisory Commission, absent these noxious provisions, be enacted as soon as possible.

## CRIMINAL PROCEDURES BRIEF

The subject of this brief is to outline the judicial procedures followed in El Salvador when evidence is discovered to indicate a crime, specifically a felony, has taken place. Who has the responsibility/authority to investigate and prosecute?

### Competent Judge

- o The key person in the initiation of criminal proceedings and oversight of an investigation into a possible crime is the competent judge. For felonies, the competent judge is the Judge of First Instance of one of the Criminal Courts or a Justice of the Peace.
- o Judicial Competency (read jurisdiction) is determined by four criteria: 1. territory (venue); 2. hierarchy; 3. gravity (felony or misdemeanor); and 4. subject matter. All four criteria have to be addressed to establish the appropriate judicial competency.

### Initiating the Process

- o The criminal process can be initiated in two ways:
  1. Denuncia/Acusacion: A denuncia/acusacion can be written or verbal and presented either before a Judge of First Instance or a Justice of the Peace. The requisites for a denuncia/acusacion are found in articles 125-127 of the code of Penal Procedure (CPP).
  2. Iniciacion de Oficio: When it comes to the attention of a competent judge that a crime has been committed under his jurisdiction, he can initiate an investigation on his own authority. Again, the competent authority is a Judge of First Instance but also can be a Justice of the Peace. If a Justice of the Peace initiates the investigation he has twelve days to notify the competent Judge of First Instance of his action.
- o The responsibility to initiate an investigation is not discretionary. Rather, Art. 130 of the CPP obliges the competent judge to proceed with an investigation once he has been apprised of the commission of a crime.
- o Art. 140 of the CPP establishes the obligation of an auxiliary organ (police auxiliary organ (police authorities) to inform a competent judge of the commission of a crime.

## Role of the Fiscal

o Art. 132 of the CPP obliges the Fiscal to prepare an informativo when he becomes aware of the commission of a crime either de oficio or is advised by agents of an auxiliary organ. The informativo outlines a prima facie case; the fiscal or his agents are required to work with the auxiliary organs to develop a case and prepare evidence for presentation in the competent court.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PHASE

o The Instructional Phase of a criminal proceeding begins when the competent judge becomes apprised of the commission of a crime either by a denuncia/accusation or de oficio. The judge, using an auxiliary organ to investigate and the Fiscal to prepare the prosecution, builds the evidentiary basis to support an allegation of a criminal act. This phase will normally last 90 days or under extraordinary circumstances can be extended to 120 days.

o The competent Judge's first act is to determine the identity of the victim.

o The auxiliary organs, responsible to the Deputy Minister of Defense for Public Security come under the judge's purview for the course of the investigation.

o The auxiliary organs, at the direction of the judge, investigate the circumstances of the case, develop proof, and identify suspects who are subject to arrest and interrogation. A suspect can be detained for 72 hours before formal charges have to be levied. The 72 hour period begins at the time the suspect is available to the judge. CPP Art. 244.

o At the end of the 90/120 day period the judge decides whether to dismiss the proceedings for lack of sufficient evidence or proceed to the plenary phase.

## Plenary Phase

o The Plenary is the stage of the proceedings when the State, the Fiscal, presents its case that a crime has been committed and attempts to establish the guilt of the accused. The accused, if indigent, have the right to representation by the procuraduria. The Plenary phase ordinarily lasts 15 days or, extraordinarily, can be extended to 3 months.

o A trial by jury is provided for except in those cases where a fine can be levied or incarceration would be for less than 3 years.

o Conviction can be voted by a majority of the jurors.

Statement made by Ambassador William G. Walker on the Deaths of the Jesuits (November 16, 1989)

The murder of Father Ignacio Ellacuria, the Rector of the Central American University, four of his Jesuit colleagues, and well as three others who lived at their religious residence, is an act --a crime-- of such repugnance that to say I condemn or deplore it seems inadequate. It is a barbaric act, that has not only brought shame to El Salvador, but will leave a gaping hole in this country's intellectual and academic community.

I do not know who did this. I have difficulty in imagining what sort of animals would, in cold blood, execute five priests, and other innocents. I understand that President Cristiani and his administration have condemned this outrage. I expect that his government will take every possible effort to find out who carried out this crime, and punish those responsible. I know that the demand for a complete and impartial investigation will come from the people and political leadership, not only of the United States, but of the society of democratic nations.

I say again that we do not know committed this heinous crime. The history of atrocious deaths in El Salvador has come from the extremes of right and left. The brutality of the current FMLN offensive will make investigation of this act difficult. Nevertheless, it should-- it must-- be carried out. Until there are facts, I think it incumbent upon all of us --my diplomatic colleagues as well as professional journalists-- to demonstrate caution before coming to conclusions as to those responsible.

I will make an additional point: whoever did this, whether from the right or the left, is doing the work of the FMLN. They are traitors to their country, for in committing these acts of treason they do great harm to the democratic process and damage the cause of the elected and constitutional government.