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E.O. 12065: GDS 3/26/86 (MILLSPAUGH, ROBERT) OR-P
TAGS: ASEC PINS PINT ES
SUBJ: (U) ARCHBISHOP'S ASSASSINATION: PEACEFUL PROCESSION

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 26 A PROCESSION OF ABOUT 10,000 PEOPLE ACCOMPANIED THE ARCHBISHOP'S BODY ON A HALF DOZEN BLOCK JOURNEY THROUGH DOWNTOWN SAN SALVADOR, FROM THE BASILICA TO THE CATHEDRAL. THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE. SECURITY FORCES IN THE AREA OF THE BASILICA, WHO KEPT WELL AWAY FROM PROCESSION ITSELF, DISCOURAGED SOME PEOPLE FROM JOINING ON GROUNDS OF POSSIBLE DANGER, BUT THERE WERE NO SECURITY FORCES

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IN SIGHT AT THE CATHEDRAL AND ACCESS TO LATTER AREA WAS

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3. PROCESSION INCLUDED MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY, THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND SOME BANNER CARRYING MEMBERS OF EXTREME LEFT GROUPS.

4. THE CATHEDRAL HAD BEEN OCCUPIED BY BPR FOR A NUMBER OF DAYS. SHORTLY BEFORE THE PROCESSION'S ARRIVAL, THE CROWD OF A FEW HUNDRED IN FRONT OF IT WATCHED BPR FOLD UP AND PUT AWAY ITS BANNERS. LATER, AN LP-28 BANNER WAS HUNG BY THE FRONT ENTRANCE.

5. EMBOFF AT THE CATHEDRAL WITNESSED ONLY ONE SHOWING OF EMOTION BY THE CROWD, A BRIEF ROUND OF APPLAUSE AS THE COFFIN WAS CARRIED UP THE CATHEDRAL STEPS.