

Notes for JJM meeting with Nancy Dorn, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs

* Last December a source came forward and named two U.S. advisors who might have had some sort of knowledge in the Jesuits' case. Ambassador Walker immediately ordered that the two men -- who had already left El Salvador -- be called back and questioned.

* Based on the transcript and the FBI analysis -- it appears clear that the two Americans had no direct knowledge of anything.

* DoD and State -- apparantly worried that we might criticize them for not turning this over to the judge -- asked us for our advice on what to do.

* Having read over the documents -- there appears to be nothing that reflects badly on the U.S. The two American advisors, in fact, even make it clear that the Ambassador had strict orders for anyone with information to come forward with it to him.

* However, there are a couple of interesting points. First, according to one of the Americans the unit of the Atlactl that actually committed the crime never returned special night goggle equipment that they were being trained with. The Atlactl had the night goggle equipment from November 11-22. Did they keep the equipment because they were asked to by higher-ups? It raises the question of when the operation was planned.

* Second, one of the American officers states that he doesn't believe Benavides could have planned this operation alone.

* None of this stuff is hard evidence and it may or may not be useful to the judge. Quite frankly, we do not know all the judge knows -- and there might be something that is potentially useful -- if not as evidence -- perhaps it might be a basis for more questions.

* State and DoD asked our advice. Our advice that is it should be turned over to the judge -- perhaps with a note saying that there is nothing explosive in these transcripts, but we thought he should have them as background.

* DoD is concerned about the language that one of the officers uses to describe another Salvadoran officer. Specifically, Col. Cerna Flores is called Col. "sleezebucket." DoD believes that this language might make it difficult for some of our military advisors still in El Salvador.

* We are sensitive to that. But, quite frankly, everyone we have talked to in both the US milgroup and the Salvadoran army believe that Cerna Flores is a "sleezebucket." Perhaps, we should be a little more honest in exposing him for what he is -- rather than trying to go out of our way to protect his feelings.

* The bottom line is that members of the Salvadoran Armed Forces murdered six Jesuits and two women. We still are not getting anywhere near the cooperation from the High Command and the rank and file soldier that one would expect from any civilized military. They continue to lie and offer no assistance in clarifying this matter. We still do not know how they arrived at the eight men currently charged! It's crazy. So, while I am sensitive about relations between the US and the Salvadoran military, I do not feel that army deserves a whole lot of respect at this moment.