

Date: Thursday, August 22, 1991 10:49 am
From: CRM03(HARRISJ)
Subject: El Salvador Depositions

On August 20 Mark Rondon from the El Salvador desk at State told me that the USEmbassy in San Salvador formally presented the executed letter rogatory on the Jesuit murders to El Salvador's Foreign Ministry -- which refused to accept it. According to Rondon, the ES FM felt it is suspicious that all of the transcripts are authenticated by (among other things) a Justice Department seal from the "Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Administration," noting that some have the signature of "Michael Roper" over that title, and others have "Robin Ford." Rondon wanted us to check whether the DAAG had changed during the time the depositions were taken. The ES FM also said that CNN reporter Carol Buckland did not sign the transcript of her deposition on the penultimate page, as the other witnesses had done, so they questioned whether her statement was valid. I told Mr. Rondon that Robert Ford, Michael Roper, Stephen Colgate, and Roger Cooper are all DAAGs for Admin, equally authorized to do Justice certification forms. I also told him that Ms. Buckland was instructed to review the transcript and sign it, and I know she did check it (for she made some changes, which are initialled), but evidently she just neglected to sign the thing. I added that this is of no legal significance whatsoever, since it is her oath, not her signature, which triggers perjury prosecution, and she was unequivocally sworn in at the deposition. Moreover, she did sign an affidavit attesting to the accuracy of the transcript, and that affidavit is included in the package. I also said that if the Embassy wants to return Ms. Buckland's transcript we will attempt to get her signature on it. Rondon said State did not want to do that, and said he would inform the Embassy and call me if there is further news.