

Potential Questions:

*I have heard that*

1. Judge Zamora has said that the remainder of the approx. 45 Atlacati soldiers who participated in the assault have refused to appear and make a statement to him and that he may have to force them to do so. What is the military's attitude toward their refusal to testify?

2. Some of the 45 who participated in the assault were redeployed about 6 am that morning to an area under the control of the First Brigade. Reportedly they went to Mejicanos and Zacamil. They are said to have bragged about what they had done to First Brigade troops, which explains why the First Brigade sound truck went around later that morning (16 Nov) saying: "Ignacio Ellacuria and Martin Baro have fallen. We're going to continue killing communists."

A few days after the killings, Col. Juan Francisco Elena Fuentes, commander of the First Brigade, said publicly that the FMLN killed the Jesuits, yet he apparently knew the military had done it at that point since his psy-op people put out the above message over the sound truck. Did the SIU, Ponce or Embassy question Elena Fuentes or others at the First Brigade about what was said over the megaphone?

Gerna Flores, then head of S-3, Operations, would have been coordinating things in the High Command HQ (he's since been sent to ANTEL, reportedly because he performed so badly). Who ordered the Atlacati troops to Zacamil? at what hour? Was it done by radio and where were they when they got the order?

3. There are said to have been some 20 men at the Wed night meeting: Zone Commanders (special zones for offensive); heads of BIKIs (Rapid Action Battalions); Ponce; Zepeda; Montano; Bustillo; directors of Security Forces. They held nightly meetings during the offensive. They discussed going after the "ringleaders" in each zone. What was said about the Jesuits?

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4. Two Bengal lights were sent up after the murders to signal that the operation was over. For whom was this signal meant? If the men were going back to the Military School immediately, Benavides would have been informed right away.

5. The CIA shares space with ONI and is said to normally attend ONI meetings. At the meeting at 5am when it was announced that Ellacuria was dead and the men cheered: who made the announcement and what was actually said? The version that first circulated is that Guzman Aguilar (head of National Police until recently, reportedly removed because of torture, sent to CR as military attache) came in and said: "Ellacuria was killed resisting arrest." If that is true it means that these military men (and possibly CIA) knew the military had killed the Jesuits at 5 am on Nov 16.

CIA leaked info to Newsweek on D'Aubuisson in late November.

6. There is still no information about other units on duty that night around the UCA. The High Command confirms that there were 219 men in the area. They had to have heard what was going on. What do they have to say? Bernard Aronson told House subcommittees that 150 soldiers have been questioned, yet we only know the contents of the statements of the 7 suspects. According to these statements, the pickup trucks made several trips back and forth from the Military School to the UCA because they couldn't all fit the first time. That means they passed several military posts. What were the men at these posts told about what was going on?

It is known that Benavides had men under his command from Military Detachment #7 (Ahuachapan, Col. R.M. Staben is the commander) and DM #6 (Sonsonate, Col. Juan A. Rodriguez Mendoza is commander).

7. What about charges against the rest of the men who participated in the attack? They are only prosecuting the triggermen. The totality of the crime (attack on the Pastoral Center, machine-gunning of center, ransacking, burning, theft of possessions) has not been addressed in legal action so far. For example, one named Cotta Hernandez who moved the body of Juan Ramon has not been charged.

8. Ponce has made a statement to Judge Zamora. What did he say?

9. What is the Embassy doing to pursue the investigation further? Are they stopping with Benavides?

10. The US Embassy says Cristiani signed the order for the search of the jesuits' residence on Monday evening. Why did they do it and what did they find? (Cristiani has told some foreign correspondents that he signed the order and that the military told him shooting was coming from inside the campus. Yet the search, as we know, focussed on the Jesuits' sleeping quarters and not on potential hiding places for guerrillas on the campus.)

11. Ballistics Testing: First tests were reportedly done on the M16s as though they had been shooting single bullets, which leaves a different mark than if they are on automatic. It was reportedly only after the Aviles/Buckland leak that the SIU tried the weapons on automatic and things started to match up.

12. Who was in possession of the AK47? Was it tested by the SIU? Since an AK47 is not standard issue, this was probably one kept around for special operations (attempt to implicate the FMLN). Does the AK47 belong to the Military School? If not, some advance planning must have been done to have it on the scene that night.

13. The info on Benavides apparently went from Benavides to Rivas (SIU) to Lopez y Lopez (former head of SIU, during the offensive was at Estado Mayor in charge of personnel, now in charge of DR #3, La Union) to Aviles (former head of SIU also) to Buckland. What was Rivas doing with the info? Why didn't US Embassy know? Ponce knew, what was he doing with the info? Were the Atlacatl troops stationed at the school being questioned at that point? Had Ponce talked to Benavides?

14. Benavides' book of operations contains a battle report for 12:30 that night saying the FMLN attacked the Pastoral Center. The FMLN did not attack the UCA, so this appears to be part of an attempt at coverup.