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A CHRONOLOGY OF THE JESUIT ASSASSINATIONS

THE INVESTIGATION AND RELATED EVENTS
NOVEMBER 11, 1989 - MAY 16, 1990

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NOVEMBER 1989

- 11/11 FMLN offensive begins at 8:00 pm; a group of guerrillas flee through the UCA grounds after setting a bomb off at the gate in order to force it open; ten minutes later soldiers arrive and the situation is under control. (Official Statement from Jesuit Provincial)
- 11/11 Government radio airs accusations and death threats against Ellacuria, Segundo Montes, Archbishop Rivera, Bishop Rosa Chavez, UNTS leaders and Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez. (Radio Cuscatlan) Callers make statements such as, "Ellacuria is a guerrilla, his head should be cut off!" (Proceso 11/29/90)
- 11/12 Soldiers visit the Jesuit House early in the morning and collect the bomb left the night before. (Jesuit Provincial)
- 11/13 According to his testimony, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Colonel Rene Emilio Ponce, orders military displacement in the zone which includes the UCA, to be coordinated by Colonel Guillermo Alfredo Benavides Moreno; the displacement begins to function in the afternoon. A section of commandos of the Atlacatl Battalion, 135 troops, are sent to reinforce the zone under the command of Lt. Espinoza Guerra and arrive at the military school at 4:00 pm. (Proceso 1/24/90)
- 11/13 The displacement includes not only soldiers of the Atlacatl but also troops from the Treasury Police, National Police and other military detachments. The zone includes the High Command, Ministry of Defense, National Intelligence Center, Military School, home of senior military officers and the UCA. (Moakley Report)
- 11/13 The Commando Unit of the Atlacatl Battalion ordered to the zone interrupts a special ten-day training course after only two days due to the offensive. Training was conducted by the Green Beret unit later trapped in the Sheraton Hotel during the offensive. The three lieutenants and two sergeants of the Commando Unit had been trained at Fort Benning. (Moakley Report)
- 11/13 Soldiers of Atlacatl Battalion search the Jesuit House at 7:00 pm just hours after Ignacio Ellacuria returns from Spain. They continue searching other offices of the campus. Father Ellacuria invites them to return tomorrow during daylight hours but they do not come. (Jesuit Provincial) The search operation is commanded by Lt. Espinoza Guerra (a 1977 graduate of the Jesuit High School, Externado San Jose). (Proceso 1/24/)
- 11/13 Just before entering the UCA, Lt. Hector Ulises Cuenca Ocampo of the National Intelligence Center radios Espinoza and tells him to wait until he (Cuenca) joins the unit. (Moakley Report)
- 11/14 Heavy military presence all around the area of the UCA; the two entrances to the campus are guarded by soldiers. (Jesuit Provincial)

11/15 Area continues militarized. At mid-morning an unidentified military officer visits the Jesuits and says there will be "a lot of movement" in the afternoon or evening. (Carta A Las Iglesias) At 10:00 pm troops are patrolling the area; curfew began at 6:00 pm. (Jesuit Provincial)

11/15 Thirty Armed Forces commanders meet in the High Command from 7:30-10:30 pm to discuss the critical situation. They decide on the use of airpower, heavy artillery and cavalry units in the capital and on a plan to assassinate guerrilla leaders and destroy rebel command centers; the UCA is cited as a "launching point" for guerrilla operations. "This may have created the atmosphere that led Benavides to order the killings," according to the MIAMI HERALD. The meeting ends with a prayer, holding hands and President Cristiani is called in at 10:30 pm to approve the operations personally. (MH 2/4/90)

11/15 At 10:15 pm Lt. Espinoza receives an order by radio to gather his troops together in the Military School; Espinoza has not identified the source of the order. (Moakley Report)

The following account is taken from the declarations of seven of the accused; Colonel Benavides's declarations have not been made public:

11/15 At 11:00 pm, according to declarations of the accused, Colonel Guillermo Alfredo Benavides, Director of the Military School, meets with Lt. Mendoza Vallecillos in the Operations Center and then calls Lt. Espinoza and Lt. Guevara Cerritos. He reportedly tells them, "We are going all the way..This is a situation in which it's them or us; we are going to begin with the leaders.. Within our sector we have the university and Ellacuria is there." He says to Espinoza, "You have searched the place and your people know it; use the same displacement as before and you have to eliminate him and I don't want witnesses; Lt. Mendoza is going with you as head of the operation so there won't be any problems." Espinoza says, "This is very serious" and Benavides replies, "Don't worry, you have my support." Espinoza organizes his company inside the Military School; Patrols 2,3,4 and 6 are present; 1 and 5 had left previously so two other patrols of 15 men each from the Atlacatl Battalion are added as replacements. Espinoza calls Zarpate Castillo (of the 3rd Patrol), Molina Aguilar (of the 4th) and Gonzalez Rodriguez (6th) and two sub-sergeants and tells them they are going on a "delicate mission"... "to look for some priests inside the UCA..who are leaders of the delinquent terrorists."

11/16 At approximately 1:00 am:

The troops paint their faces, prepare equipment, then board two beige Ford pickups; Lt. Mendoza Vallecillos comes out with an AK47 and asks who can handle the weapon; all agree "Pilijay" and it is given to him. Thirty-six troops are ready to leave but not everyone fits in the trucks so some stay behind. They drive close to the UCA and are joined by 20-25 more Atlacatl soldiers; they all walk to the UCA.

They force open the gate on the south side of the campus and enter near the Jesuit residence, leaving a security post near the entrance. The two lieutenants, accompanied by a group of soldiers heads toward the south side of the complex, surround the rooms and begin to beat on the doors and windows. Another group heads toward the north side, led by Sgts. Perez Vasquez and Molina Aguilar; they break the glass door into the Pastoral Center, enter the first floor and begin to burn documents. The sergeants break down a wooden door into the library.

On the other side of the complex "Satanas" beats on the door of the house with a piece of wood for ten minutes when "a white man dressed in pajamas (Segundo Montes) opens the door and says to stop beating on the doors and windows because they understand what will happen. Satanas pulls Segundo Montes into the garden. At the other end of the building, the sleeping quarters, Piliyay tries to force the door leading to the living room. A man wearing a beige dressing gown (Father Ellacuria) comes and says, "Wait, I am going to open it but don't be creating this disorder." At the same time Lt. Mendoza moves around the outside corridor of the house. In one of the rooms he sees a woman sitting on a bed, covering another woman. It is the cook and her daughter who had asked to spend the night there because it would be safer. At about 1:30 am Sgt. Oscar Solorzano Esquivel "Hercules", Satanas and another soldier pull the Jesuits out of their rooms. Fathers Ellacuria, Martin Baro, Juan Ramon Moreno and Amando Lopez begin to go to the garden. Only Martin Boro is dressed in day clothes. Hercules and another soldier go inside the building leaving the five priests outside guarded by Satanas and Piliyay. They are afraid the priests will overpower and disarm them so Satanas orders them face down on the ground. In this moment, Martin Boro shouts, "This is an injustice, this is an abomination!"

The two lieutenants are inside; Espinoza calls to Satanas and asks, "What are you waiting for?" Satanas returns to the Jesuits and gives Piliyay the order to shoot, "Fast, Fast, do it fast!" Piliyay discharges his AK 47 at Fathers Ellacuria and Martin Boro; Satanas shoots his M-16 at Montes, Moreno and Amando Lopez. Their brains are destroyed. Espinoza orders Corporal Cotta Hernandez to put the bodies inside. He drags the body of Father Moreno into the room of Jon Sobrino but at that moment the others are beginning to leave so he follows, leaving the other four bodies where they are. Meanwhile in the other wing of the building Sgt. Zarpate Castillo shoots Elba Julia and Marisela, according to his testimony, one bullet at a time "to be sure they were dead and wouldn't complain." But they do not die immediately; Satanas hears some noises in the room, sees the two women and orders Pvt. Sierra Ascencio to shoot them again with his M-16.

Father Joaquin Lopez y Lopez, the only Salvadoran priest, is still alive. He is the oldest of all of them. At this moment he comes into the corridor, sees the bodies and returns inside. A soldier shouts at him, then shoots him. Corporal Perez Vasquez says in his testimony, "I went to that room to search and when I passed by the man who had just been shot, I felt him grab my foot and I shot four times."

The soldiers regather in the park in front of the chapel. Lt. Guevara Cerritos shoots one bengal light and another lieutenant orders Corporal Cotta Hernandez to shoot another as a signal for everyone to leave. As they leave they destroy the windows of the cars parked in the lot. Another group of soldiers simulates a shootout with the FMLN, with anti-tank rockets, grenades and machinegun fire. One patrol stays another hour; Piliyay stays with them. At the gate they put up a sign saying, "The FMLN Executed the Opposition Spies. Victory or Death FMLN." As they are leaving Lt. Mendoza sees that one of Espinoza's soldiers is carrying a briefcase. They return to the Military School, Espinoza looks immediately for Colonel Benavides and says, "I am indignant about what has happened." Benavides says, "What happened? Are you worried?" "I don't like what has been done." "Be calm, don't worry. You have my support. Trust me." "I hope so, colonel."

(This reconstruction was compiled from the declarations by PROCESO 1/24/90)

2:30 am: Heavy gunfire and at least two bombs heard. A witness who is inside the campus sees about thirty uniformed men shooting at the Romero Chapel and the Jesuit House. (Jesuit Provincial)

The assassinated are:

Father Ignacio Ellacuria, Rector
Father Martin Boro, Vice-Rector
Father Segundo Montes, Director of IDHUCA
Father Amando Lopez, Coordinator of Philosophy Department
Father Juan Ramon Moreno, Asst. Dir. of the Pastoral Center
Father Joaquin Lopez y Lopez, Director of "Fe y Alegria"
Elba Ramos, cook for the Jesuit House
Marisela Ramos, 15, her daughter

- 11/16 Between 5-6:00 am, the Atlacatl Unit leaves the Military School to rejoin the Battalion, located on the northern perimeter of the capital, near the First Brigade. (Moakley Report)
- 11/16 At 6:00 am, according to the Moakley Report, three members of the National Intelligence Department (DNI), who witnessed the crime from a nearby building, visit the site then report to their superiors. (Moakley Report)
- 11/16 Abdulio Lozano Lopez, husband of Elba Ramos, is the first to arrive at the house. (Lawyers' Committee)
- 11/16 5:30 am: the witness, her family and UCA security guards discover the bodies. Jorge Cerna informs the other Jesuits living in a house just off the campus. (Lawyers' Committee)
- 11/16 6:30 am: Jesuit Provincial informed of the events, goes to the UCA and finds the eight bodies. The Pastoral Center is ransacked partially burned... "some kind of flammable liquid was thrown over books, documents and computers that was still burning at 8:00 am." A sign is left near the back entrance that says, "The FMLN executes opposition spies.. Victory or Death FMLN." Jesuits estimate the entire operation must have taken at least 1/2 hour. (Jesuit Provincial)
- 11/16 8:00 am: meeting of high-level intelligence officers in the DNI-CIA building; a junior officer brings news of the death of Ellacuria; everyone claps and cheers. (WP 2/6/90, MH 2/4/90)
- 11/16 Maria Julia Hernandez, other Tutela Legal workers, the Archbishop and the press arrive at the scene of the crime.
- 11/16 "There is no doubt that Cristiani cannot stay in power.. This crime removes any credibility his government may have had." (RV)
- 11/16 At about 8:30 am the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) arrives, "seals off the area, gathers evidence and begins to interview possible witnesses. Autopsies are performed on the victims." (US Embassy)
- 11/16 Ferman Cienfuegos offers condolences in the name of the FMLN General Command and calls on the North American people to demand an end to aid and a change in US policy. (RV)

- 11/16 Government radio.. "The communists kill all those who don't serve them..The government and armed forces condemn these assassinations...committed by the FMLN in an attempt to destabilize democracy."
- 11/16 "They are the same ones who assassinated Msr. Romero and for whom 70,000 assassinations aren't enough." Archbishop Rivera y Damas at the site of the crime. (TV 12)
- 11/16 Jesuit Provincial Jose Maria Tojeira: "They were assassinated with lavish barbarity, for example they took out their brains." (AP)
- 11/16 "All the sacrifices and tears and blood shed during the long dark night by innocent people like Padre Ellacuria are not in vain..All the effort of a people who have fought for justice is coming to fruit..The hardest night comes before the most beautiful dawn..These are historic moments." (RV)
- 11/16 "This should not serve as a reason for more bloodshed..Their sacrifice must signify the end of the violence." Archbishop Rivera y Damas (TV 6)
- 11/16 Government radio network condemns the "cowardly, savage, irrational assassinations" as an attempt to "destabilize the democratic process"..."There is international repudiation of the FMLN."
- 11/16 First Brigade loudspeaker heard shouting to the troops, "Ignacio Ellacuria and Martin Boro are dead, we will continue killing communists..We are the soldiers of the First Brigade." Archbishop Rivera and Bishop Rosa Chavez hear the loudspeakers and report the incident to the government. (UNO MAS UNO 11/17)
- 11/16 Archbishop Rivera y Damas receives death threat saying, "You're next." (Churchworkers)
- 11/16 Senator Cristopher Dodd: "The US government cannot continue paying for these barbarities." (CNN)
- 11/16 CODEHUCA: "an act of desperation and barbarity by the Armed Forces." (RV)
- 11/16 In Washington, Foreign Minister Pacas Castro condemns the assassinations as a "desperate act of the ultraleft." (DH 1/17)
- 11/16 Radio Venceremos reports that one witness survived and has identified the assassins as uniformed soldiers. (RV) Diario Latino says the Jesuit House was searched by "authorities" on Monday November 13. (DL 11/16)
- 11/16 FMLN General Command issues statement charging the "death squads of the Armed Forces" with carrying out the executions "ordered by President Cristiani and the High Command." (RV)
- 11/16 US Ambassador William Walker says, "It is difficult for me to imagine what kind of beasts would assassinate six priests and other innocent victims in cold blood..This is a criminal act of such repugnance that to say we condemn and deplore it would be inadequate." (LPG 11/17/89)
- 11/16 CNN News to El Salvador censored during reports of the massacre. (CNN)

- 11/16 President Cristiani condemns the assassinations which "complicate the critical situation" and were carried out by "groups who want to block the dialogue process"; he has ordered a full investigation but says it is unfortunate that a witness who survived "hasn't been available for our investigators to question." (CIN)
- 11/17 First Brigade deserter, Cesar Joya Martinez tells U.S. press that the First Brigade and all other military installations and security forces "have the necessary apparatus to carry out assassinations..The modus operandi (of the Jesuit killings) is typical of the death squads." (RV)
- 11/17 Joaquin Villalobos: "It was a bad calculation on the part of the Armed Forces and Cristiani...They understood the high political cost but believed it would be worth the price...During the night of the 15th-16th they raided houses and offices of the popular movement with the intention of eliminating the political opposition; almost everyone had taken precautions and was in hiding but the Jesuits remained in their house because Cristiani had assured them a few days earlier they would be safe." "They thought they were going to win the war that night and they wanted to assure the political stability of the country..Cristiani knew and probably the U.S. Ambassador knew...and believed it was necessary to control the country...But it reversed on them and will provoke the total isolation of the government...It was their suicide, a serious error." "Why were they killed? "They contributed enormously to the education of our people, to the political debate, to an understanding of the need for political pluralism...The Armed Forces and the oligarchy don't support intelligence, reason or debate." (RV)
- 11/17 ANEP (National Association of Private Enterprise) condemns the assassinations and congratulates the Armed Forces on their "professional attitude" in avoiding greater loss of life; calls on the national and international press to "be objective to avoid confusion which the enemies of the homeland take advantage of." (DH 11/17/89)
- 11/17 U.S. Ambassador Walker says four US pathologists are coming to the country to examine the bodies; the US is "looking for witnesses and will guarantee their security", he says..."The guerrillas have the responsibility to end the violence..They don't have any popular support." (TV 12)
- 11/17 "US pathologists view the bodies and review the autopsy reports. In a preliminary assessment, they conclude the SIU is performing a competent investigation and that the autopsies are thorough and professional." (US Embassy Report)
- 11/18 Private service held in the UCA for friends, co-workers and families of those slain. The Chapel is badly damaged, photos of Archbishop Romero full of bullet holes. (Interview)
- 11/18 Press receives copy of letter written by the Attorney General to the Pope, asking that he remove Bishops Rivera and Rosa Chavez "for their own safety." He also denounces the "popular church." (Letter)
- 11/18 State Department spokesperson: "Unfortunately when someone tries to take power by bullets instead of by ballots sometimes innocent people are affected." (DL)
- 11/18 Maria Julia Hernandez: "There is more than sufficient evidence to determine who is responsible." (TV 12)

- 11/18 The Jesuit community will wait only weeks for a complete investigation.. "We will not allow this crime to go unpunished for ten years like the assassination of Archbishop Romero." (TV 12)
- 11/19 Archbishop Rivera y Damas: "The assassins are from the Armed Forces or close to them." During the Sunday Homily he denounces the "irresponsible campaign in the media" against the Jesuits, particularly Ellacuria which led up to the assassinations. He says Cristiani and the High Command "have publicly sworn their commitment to investigate," and also condemns the "excessive force" used by the Armed Forces in response to the offensive. (TV 12)
- 11/19 Mass and burial service presided over by the Archbishop; Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez says, "There is no pardon from God for this crime." President Cristiani, Ambassador Walker, Ruben Zamora, Humberto Centeno and hundreds of others attend the service. Walker says "there is no concrete proof" of responsibility for the massacre. (TV 12)
- 11/20 Lucia Barrera de Cerna returns to the UCA for the first time after staying with relatives in another part of the city. She relates her testimony to Maria Julia Hernandez of Tutela Legal and is advised to seek refuge in an embassy. She goes immediately to the Spanish Embassy and sends a note for her husband and child to join her. (Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights)
- 11/20 Maria Julia Hernandez says the investigation is "advancing rapidly." (TV 12)
- 11/22 "FBI agent arrives to provide technical assistance to the SIU and to receive a briefing on the investigation." (US Embassy Report)
- 11/22-23 Witness Lucia Barrera de Cerna testifies to the Attorney General and members of the Special Investigation Commission, then leaves for Miami accompanied by diplomats, her husband Jorge and her 4 year old daughter Gerardina. The family is held in Miami by the FBI until December 3rd. (Lawyers' Committee)
- 11/23 "Embassy is advised that a possible eye-witness to the murders, Lucia Barrera de Cerna, is leaving El Salvador for the US for security reasons, with the assistance of the French and Spanish Embassies. Embassy legal officer and FBI agent accompany Mrs. Cerna to Miami in a French military aircraft, after State Department arranges air clearance and immigration authorization. Party is met by French and Spanish consuls and local Jesuits. The Jesuits express concerns about security and it is agreed to meet the next day, after the Cernas have completed immigration documentation." (US Embassy Report)
- 11/23 During Embassy press conference Ambassador Walker announces the findings of the three forensics experts. Dr. Richard Kirschner, C. Swan and Dr. J. Fitzpatrick determined the victims were not tortured and were killed with high power bullets. (DH 11/24/89)
- 11/24 - 12/1 "The SIU Director (Lt. Col. Manuel Antonio Rivas Mejia) and polygrapher arrive in Miami. Mrs. Cerna and her husband are questioned at FBI headquarters by the SIU Director and FBI agents. The Cernas give contradictory versions of what they may have heard and/or seen the night of the murders. After the interviews the Jesuit community assumes responsibility for the Cernas." (US Embassy Report)

11/25 The Attorney General says there is "no indication as to whether the assassinations were carried out by the army, terrorists or private persons." (EM) The Jesuit Provincial accuses the Attorney General of "spending more time trying to discredit witnesses" than in conducting a serious investigation. (RV)

11/28 Tutela Legal issues official report of the Archdiocese:

1. The operation lasted at least one hour.
2. There was a large group of uniformed soldiers; the witness saw a group of approximately five uniformed persons at the same time she heard shooting, glass breaking, doors opening and closing; five persons entered by one door (on the west side of the building); others entered the door on the north east side and still another group entered the Pastoral Center which was searched and burned with flame throwers.
3. Military Intelligence was well acquainted with the premises which had been meticulously searched by uniformed soldiers on November 13.
4. The location was heavily guarded with permanent posts in the Torre Democracia, Colonia Militar Manuel Jose Arce, north gate of the UCA, around the periphery of the campus, in La Ceiba de Guadalupe and in the area of Jardines de Guadalupe.
5. In spite of the militarization of the area, the curfew and the heavy gunfire from within the UCA, "the Armed Forces did not respond as it would have in the case which means knowledge of the operation on the part of the troops located in the within the radius of security of the High Command the the Colonia Militar." "All evidence..establishes that those responsible..were members of the military belonging to the Armed Forces." (Tutela Legal)

11/29 Father Jon Sobrino: "I hope that those who now promise an investigation in order to give an appearance of normalcy and democracy also investigate why there have never been or could have been serious investigations in El Salvador before...That this will not be a coverup to distract attention from the 70,000 cases that must be investigated...or an excuse to say things are better in El Salvador....Who in the world has really worked for an investigation of El Mozote or Sumpul or more recently, the October 31 assassination of ten unionists in broad daylight ?" (Sobrino Paper 11/29/89)

11/30 "The Embassy establishes a task force to formally coordinate on going US Government assistance to the Jesuit investigation." (US Embassy Report)

DECEMBER 1989

12/1 Dr. Miguel Francisco Estrada, Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration, will replace Dr. Ellacuria as Rector of the UCA. (DL 12/1)

12/1 General Maxwell Thurmond meets with the High Command and reportedly says, "There is only one way out of this..if some of your people were involved in the Jesuit murders, cough them up." (NYT 1/21/90)

12/1 "Ambassador Walker, accompanied by US Southern Command General Commander General Thurman, stresses the importance of a thorough investigation into the Jesuit killings to the Salvadorean military high command." (US Embassy Report)

12/3 Bishop Rosa Chavez: "There are names of people implicated..If they want to tell the truth it can be known." (TV 12)

- 12/3 "Young Officers' Letter" accuses Treasury Police Commander Hector Heriberto Hernandez with responsibility for ordering the assassinations, Captain Alfonso Chavez Garcia of carrying out the order. (Letter)
- 12/3 Lawyers' Committee interviews Lucia Barrera de Cerna in Miami; the family is taken to another city, under the care of the Jesuits.
- 12/4 Colonel Hernandez denies the charges and accuses the FMLN of assassinating the Jesuits.. "They entered the UCA that day before before the curfew..They could have been former students, it's possible..They are just trying to divide the government..We are trying to save El Salvador, not to endanger the country..The extremists are discrediting a large number of officers." (TV 12)
- 12/4 "Embassy officials meet with Roberto D'Aubuisson to discuss media reports of his possible responsibility for the killings. He denies any involvement and promises full support for the investigation, including his willingness to be polygraphed." (US Embassy Report)
- 12/5 Special Investigations Unit asks High Command to provide a list of the troops who searched the UCA on December 13. (Moakley Report)
- 12/6 Proceso: "Due to the circumstances in which it occurred, the assassination of the Jesuits has become a critical test for the viability of democracy in El Salvador...A democracy which is not only ritual elections..but also means satisfaction of the material needs of the popular majority, it also implies..respect for human rights, an efficient legal system and institutional subordination of the Armed Forces to the civilian power...The uncovering of this case puts all these elements in play." (Proceso 12/6/89)
- 12/6 Colonel Ponce denies any connection between the assassins and the Armed Forces "as an institution".."We are willing to be investigated." (TV 12)
- 12/7 Attorney General "laments" the decision "of some Bishop" not to allow a representative of the Church to participate in the commission to investigate the assassinations. (TV 2) He accuses the Church of "blocking the investigation." (TV 6,12)
- 12/8 The Archbishop says the Attorney General is "biased".."He seems to be defending those accused of the crime"..."There are very serious things blocking the investigation." (TV 12)
- 12/8 Colonel Elena Fuentes says the government "has a special interest in uncovering these crimes committed by the FMLN."(Jesuits and the FENASTRAS bombing.) (DH 12/8/89)
- 12/8 "The killings were part of an effort to discredit the Government and the Armed Forces," says President Cristiani. He reports that investigators from Scotland Yard, the FBI, Spain and Costa Rica are assisting the Special Investigations Unit and announces the government will offer a \$250,000 reward to any person who "unconsciously or against their will" participated in the crime; the person and his family group will be provided with security in another country and will be exonerated. During the past week the FBI has been investigating the Armed Forces, now has a list of names of all soldiers who were in the area. He says that Colonel Hernandez and Captain Chavez are both "willing to be investigated." (TV 12)

- 12/10 Paul Tipton, President of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities writes to Secretary of State James Baker saying, "We have been reliably informed that the US Ambassador to El Salvador, William Walker, and other members of the Embassy staff have been asserting to reporters and others in El Salvador that the testimony of the witness is of no value. We further understand from very reliable sources that a US official said Tutela Legal...had instructed the witness to fabricate her testimony. Neither assertion of Ambassador Walker is true...(His) apparent participation in efforts to discredit the testimony of this courageous witness is a shocking betrayal of the responsibilities of our official representative in El Salvador...(and).. raises serious questions regarding the commitment of this administration to the objective of a fair, thorough, and impartial investigation of the murders." (Letter)
- 12/10 Archbishop Rivera y Damas accuses the US Embassy of not providing protection promised to the witness, Lucia Barrera de Cerna; says she was "aggressively and violently" interrogated in Miami.. "She vacillated and withdrew her declaration made in El Salvador..Now that she is free from the pressures of her "protectors" she has returned to the truth"; according to the Archbishop the Jesuits will issue a report with the names of the people who threatened the witness, including the threat of deportation. He also responds to charges made by the Attorney General that the Church is blocking the investigation, saying, "Let's be serious.. We are not blocking the investigation;" he says he was not in the country when Auxiliary Bishop Rosa Chavez made the decision not to allow Church participation in the government investigation commission but he supports the decision..the Vicar General and Rosa Chavez, "acted wisely and prudently." (TV 6,12)
- 12/10 "The SIU completes interviewing all officers commanding units in the University area the night of the killings." (US Embassy Report)
- 12/11 "The SIU establishes a hotline for anonymous callers having information on the murders." (US Embassy Report)
- 12/11 "The SIU identifies the army unit that had conducted a search of the University on November 13, three nights before the murders. The unit is part of the Atlacatl immediate reaction battalion and was under the temporary operational control of Colonel Guillermo Benavides, Director of the Military Academy." (US Embassy Report)
- 12/11 "The SIU begins polygraphing soldiers from the units stationed in the area the night of the crime. It also identifies the lot number of the bullets used in the murders." (US Embassy Report)
- 12/11 Lucia Barrera story released in US and Salvadoran press. DIARIO DE HOY reports that she "changed her testimony three times" and has had six lie detector tests..."She was upset and confused in spite of efforts by the FBI to calm and reassure her"; Jesuit Provincial Jose Maria Tojeira says, "She was in the hands of the FBI during many days and we have solid proof that she was mistreated...Personally I think she was psychologically tortured"; the article quotes Ambassador Walker as saying U.S. policy could be threatened, "if the mystery that surrounds the assassinations is not resolved"; responding to the Archbishop's charges yesterday he says, "It hurts me that the Archbishop does not believe that the Government of the United States and he are in the same search for the truth." (DH 12/11/89)
- 12/11 Attorney General Colorado is "surprised" by the Archbishop's charges.."The Spanish Ambassador can testify as to how she was treated here..I don't know how she was

treated in the U.S."; he questions the motives of the Catholic hierarchy saying, "I know the Bishop has a brother in the guerrilla"; announces that he will call Fidel Chavez-Mena, Maria Julia Hernandez and possibly the Archbishop to make declarations this week. (TV 6)

- 12/11 State Department issues statement saying the Archbishop "was misinformed" about the treatment of the witness..."She was well-treated." (TV 6)
- 12/12 Vice-Minister of Security Colonel Montano says Colonel Ponce has given a sworn declaration to the Attorney General on the case and that Colonel Heriberto Hernandez "has been investigated." (YSU) He also alleges that the FMLN is responsible for the crime, "They knew they were defeated by November 16 so they carried out the assassinations." (TV 12) He accuses Maria Julia Hernandez of "counseling the witness to say the assassins were military" and accuses the Bishops of "sympathy with the terrorist left." (DH 12/13/89)
- 12/12 Jesuits of El Salvador release statement deploring the investigation and the treatment of the witness by U.S. officials.."We especially thank the churches, governments, academic institutions, the press and endless numbers of friends who have supported the Jesuits before, during and after the crime..We are convinced that without this solidarity, the assassination of our brothers would have fallen into the anonymous impunity that has characterized so many crimes in our country..We wish to thank the Archbishop..for his support in this case. Without his technical help at the time of the investigation and his spiritual words, the sad road we have had to take since the unjust deaths of our brothers would have been much more difficult." (Communique)
- 12/14 Maria Julia Hernandez summoned to court to give sworn testimony on the case. She later tells the press, "I could only testify to what I saw and heard at the site of the crime...The Church presented its official document which concluded that elements of the Armed Forces were implicated." Instead of being questioned about the crime she was interrogated about her investigation.."I took two bullet shells lying next to the body of Father Ellacuria and two from the room where the employees were..The Attorney General says this is a crime." (TV 12)
- 12/14 The Attorney General will ask the Bishop's Conference (CEDES) to investigate the Bishops and Maria Julia Hernandez for "obstructing justice"; he lambasts the attitude of the Church and says there are no "important indications" as to responsibility for the assassinations. (TV 12)
He says the fact that Maria Julia Hernandez affirmed she had "collected objects" without legal authority is a crime.."Everyone knows that the scene of a crime is sacred...This added to the strange attitude of the Bishops..leads one to assume intent to block the investigation." (DH 12/15/90)
- 12/15 Asked if she is afraid for her life, Maria Julia replies, "All Salvadorans live in unstable conditions due to the circumstances here in El Salvador." Her declaration yesterday was taken in the presence of Judge Dr. Ricardo Zamora and Saul Zelaya Castillo and Carlos Figeac of the Attorney General's office. (EM)
- 12/15 Dr. Fidel Chavez-Mena did not appear to testify today. (TV 6)
- 12/15 "The SIU reports having conducted 147 interviews of soldiers and having run over 300 ballistics tests on the weapons of soldiers who were near the University on November 16." (U.S. Embassy Report)

- 12/16 One month since the assassinations; Radio Venceremos comments, "Instead of investigating the crime they are attempting to discredit the witnesses.. They are not going to punish this crime.. It is a crime of the government.. Even if Hector Heriberto Hernandez were to be tried he is only one of the Tandon.. Staben, Guzman Aguilar, Fuentes,... They are all guilty." (RV)
- 12/16 Thirty-day Mass held in the UCA Chapel; the new Rector of the UCA, Father Francisco Javier Estrada thanks the hundreds of participants "for your courage in coming today." Archbishop Rivera presides over the Mass. (TV 12)
- 12/16 Two Spanish detectives will arrive in the country Monday to pursue the investigation "at the request of the government." (TV 12)
- 12/16 "The police officials sent by the Spanish Government to monitor the investigation depart El Salvador. They report that the SIU is conducting an objective, professional and thorough investigation." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 12/16 The Archbishop warns that the "laws of the Church" could be applied against the Attorney General if he continues threatening the Church and "creating a smokescreen" around the assassinations." (Sonora)
- 12/18 MAC Deputy Guillermo Lacayo returns from government mission to the U.S. saying the issue of the Jesuits is primary.. "Religious sectors are giving false information.. Aid will be discussed in January and they are going to demand an end to military aid; he says there are two hypothesis about the assassinations, one is that the extreme right is responsible, the other is the FMLN.. Neither of these possibilities can be discarded." (TV 6)
- 12/19 Meeting arranged by Armed Forces investigators between the Jesuits (Padres Tojeira and Estrada) and Colonel Ponce "in an effort to reduce tensions." Colonel Carlos Aviles, educated by the Jesuits, participates in the meeting. (Moakley Report) Aviles, head of Psychological Operations for the High Command, previously served as head of the Special Investigations Unit. (Moakley Report)
- 12/20 Colonel Carlos Armando Aviles, Head of Psychological Operations for the Armed Forces, informs his friend U.S. advisor Major Eric Buckland that Colonel Benavides is a suspect in the case. Buckland fails to inform his superiors. (MH 1/16/90) Aviles allegedly tells Buckland the information is only to be used "in case of emergency. According to Buckland, Aviles says his information is based on a conversation with Col. Lopez y Lopez, another ex-director of the Special Investigations Unit who was assigned early in December to assist Lt. Col. Rivas in the investigation. According to Aviles, Benavides approached Rivas early in the investigation and said, "I did it.. What can you do to help me? What can we do about this?" (Moakley Report)
- 12/20-30 During a ten-day period Major Buckland informs two people of what he knows, information to be used "only in case of emergency." (Moakley Report)
- 12/20-22 "A member of the U.S. Military Group in El Salvador receives third hand information implicating Colonel Benavides as the intellectual author of the murders. The U.S. military officer does not pass the information to his superior officer." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 12/22 "Colonel Aviles, Father Tojeira and Father Estrada receive a full and detailed briefing on the progress in the investigation." (U.S. Embassy Report)

- 12/22 Editorial in DIARIO DE HOY criticizes the Bishops as a result of the investigation.. "What's Happening With THOSE Bishops?".. "Why are "these people" listened to when they are only trying to discredit the Armed Forces?.. Why do they threaten to excommunicate the Attorney General simply because he hasn't taken part in the campaign to discredit the Armed Forces? Which genocidal terrorists have been threatened with excommunication?.. We have had enough damage by the Catholic Church...of using the pulpit to preach hatred and violence..of confusing the humble people with their insane preaching." (DH 12/22)
- 12/27 Conservative Bishop Romeo Tovar Astorga returns from Rome where he met with the Pope; he says there is an "enormous disinformation campaign." "It is a mistake," he says, "to reduce all the deaths to the case of the Jesuits." (TV 6,12)
- 12/27 Jesuit Superior General Peter Hans Kolvenbach arrives in the country for a three day private visit. (TV 12) "He meets with President Cristiani and receives a briefing from the SIU." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 12/28 "We don't want political bishops", says the Attorney General in another letter attacking the Bishops, this time to CEDES.. "We don't want reports of death or judges who lack scientific proof, who issue sentences on the basis of suspicions.. We don't want the Church to be mixed up in social conflicts.. There is a subtle link in the Church from evangelization to consciousness-raising to politization." (DH 12/28/89) On 12/31 the paper continues the publication of the letter: "They are not investigators.. As of this date the teams of the FBI, Spanish, Canadian police have been unable to arrive at definite conclusions.. How could the Archbishop, only three days after the crime, accuse someone? It is not his field, his jurisdiction or his mission.. Maria Julia Hernandez is not a competent authority.. She does not have the right to have taken four bullet shells from the site of the crime." (DH 12/31)
- 12/28 "An FBI polygraph expert performs quality control checks on the SIU's polygraph tests." (U.S. Embassy Report) The ballistics experts find similarities between the bullets found in the UCA and those belonging to the Atlacatl troops. (Moakley Report)
- 12/30 Air Force General Juan Rafael Bustillo says "The Church is unfortunately misled...especially Bishops Rivera and Rosa Chavez. Those two gentlemen are mistaken in their mission as pastors... They play the role of useful fools for the FMLN." (TV 6)

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- 1/2 "The Milgroup officer tells his superior of the information he received implicating Colonel Benavides. Colonel Menjivar, the Milgroup Commander, with an Embassy political officer, report this information to Salvadoran Chief of Staff Colonel Ponce." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/2 Major Eric Buckland reports his conversation with Colonel Aviles to his superior, Colonel Milton Menjivar, the head of the U.S. MILGROUP.(MH 2/4/90) Menjivar and another U.S. official confront Ponce with the information. Ponce calls Aviles into a meeting of the High Command; Aviles denies the charges of passing the information and is submitted to a lie detector test.
- 1/2 According to the Moakley Report, Major Buckland confides to his superior officer, Colonel William Hunter, his conversation with Aviles; Hunter immediately reports to

Menjivar and Menjivar, without notifying the Ambassador or Deputy Chief of Mission, but in the company of a political officer, goes directly to Colonel Ponce with the information; Ponce demands to know the identity of the source. Aviles and Buckland are summoned to the High Command; Aviles admits talking with Buckland but denies saying anything about the alleged conversation with Lt.Col. Rivas saying, "If I had known this, would I have risked my career telling it to the Major?" (Moakley Report)

- 1/2 Scotland Yard detectives arrive in the country.
- 1/2 President Cristiani says there have been "great advances" in the investigation, now focusing on the Armed Forces.. "For the first time in our history a scientific investigation is being conducted." Colonel Ponce has provided a list of all military personnel in the area on the night of the crime and ballistics tests have been performed on their weapons.. "FMLN participation has been discounted." (TV 6,12, EM, DL, DH)
- 1/2 "President Cristiani reiterates that the focus of the SIU's investigation is on the military." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/2 Ambassador Walker tells Congressional investigators "there is no evidence to implicate the military" and asserts that the killers "could have been guerrillas dressed in army uniforms." (NYT 1/21)
- 1/3 "The prosecutors and judge assigned the case begin to review the SIU's evidence." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/3 Colonel Menjivar makes a presentation to the High Command about the accusations; Deputy Chief of Mission Jeffrey Dietrich meets with Cristiani and makes the same presentation. Buckland writes a sworn declaration which is presented to the Minister of Defense and the High Command. An Embassy official meets with Col. Rivas who denies any conversation with Benavides. Colonel Lopez y Lopez also denies any conversation with Rivas or Aviles on the subject. (Moakley Report)
- 1/5 Eight members of the military are formally arrested. (TV 12)
- 1/5 Major Buckland is given a lie detector test by the FBI; Aviles also tested by Salvadoran authorities; results demonstrate a certain degree of "deception" in both cases. (Moakley Report)
- 1/6 Major Buckland leaves for the U.S. where he takes additional lie detector tests. (Moakley Report)
- 1/6 "Scotland Yard sends a team to review developments in the investigation." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/7 Cristiani goes on national television and in a brief, 4 minute address says the case of broken; he announces that an Honor Commission of the Armed Forces "will determine the exact circumstances of the assassinations and uncover the truth in all its magnitude." The Criminal Investigations Unit has concluded that "some elements of the Armed Forces" were involved... "The Armed Forces will not allow any of its members to impune its professionalism and its morale." The President repeats the reward offer and says, "I want the world to know that I have no commitment to anyone except the Salvadoran people." (National Network)

- 1/7 "President Cristiani announces that the SIU has developed evidence implicating members of the Atlacatl unit in the murders. Two officers and 45 enlisted men in the unit are ordered confined to barracks. President Cristiani also announces the formation of a special military honor board to review the SIU's evidence." (U.S. Embassy)
A reporter calls Colonel Ponce just before Cristiani's speech to confirm rumors that 45 soldiers and five officers of the Atlacatl Battalion have been detained; Ponce won't confirm or deny the story but admits some troops have been asked to stay in the barracks, "to be available to the Investigations Commission." They are believed to be the troops who participated in the search of the Jesuit House on November 13.
(Interview)
- 1/7-13 Honor Commission meets to review the evidence. Moakley investigation unable to determine exactly what occurs during this week. (Moakley Report)
- 1/8 Cristiani confirms detentions of five officers and five soldiers. (TV 12)
- 1/8 Spokesperson for the White House expresses "satisfaction" with the progress..."We are very content..Cristiani has shown great courage." (YSU)
- 1/8 Rector of the UCA says he is confident of Cristiani's goodwill but that it is essential for him to take the next step and make the names public. (YSU) "This is transcendental but still incomplete..We don't have the authors of the crime, we only know they belong to the institution..It is nothing new until we have the names and prosecution of those responsible." (TV 12)
- 1/8 Husband of slain employee, Julia Ramos, says, "It is important that it be uncovered...but if they investigate or not it really doesn't matter." Ramos has returned to work at the UCA in spite of concerns for his safety; he was on the premises the night of the massacre as both his wife and daughter were slain. (TV 6)
- 1/8 Assembly President Valdivieso says the crime was not "institutional..It's worth it to purify the army in order to save it." (YSU, TV 6)
- 1/8 Attorney General again cites Fidel Chavez Mena and Bishop Rosa Chavez to appear and present declarations, both because of statements they have made implicating the military. (TV 6)
- 1/8 Minister of Defense Larios says, "No comment." (TV 12)
- 1/8-10 "Staff members of the House Task Force on the Jesuit murders investigation visit El Salvador." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/9 "A U.S. Department of Justice expert provides quality control on the SIU's ballistics tests." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/9 WASHINGTON POST..."It is laudable..although doubtful they will be prosecuted." (1/9/90)
- 1/9 In Bonn, Archbishop Rivera says, "The fact that he has uncovered to a certain point those guilty..is something we must celebrate.. There have been many crimes that have been forgotten." (DL 1/9)
- 1/9 Minister of Information, Mauricio Sandoval says 115 members of the armed forces have been interviewed, 103 civilians; he says the case will be resolved within 72 hours

"as long as there are no obstacles." Seven or eight persons carried out the operation, "in the presence of uniformed personnel." The victims were not tortured; 230 bullet casings were found from AK 47's, M-16's, M-60 grenade launchers and Low anti-tank weapons. According to the report one group assassinated the Jesuits, another killed Julia and Marisela Ramos with different weapons. Sandoval does not reveal any names. (TV 6,12, YSU, EM, DL)

1/9 An unidentified military officer says the army supports the investigation but that all information will come from the Presidential Palace because, "We don't want interested parties to jeopardize the investigation..or anyone to think the army is exerting pressure." (DH 1/10/90)

1/9 "The Church is not interested in knowing who they are only to know the truth but because it would mean the end of impunity in El Salvador," says Bishop Rosa Chavez. "It could be the basis for the purification(of the Armed Forces) and for justice in the country." He recognizes Cristiani's courage and says he has the support "of a good number of military officers." (TV 6,12)

1/9 "Auxiliary Bishop Msgr. Rosa Chavez publicly states that he and the Catholic Church are satisfied with the progress in the investigation." (U.S. Embassy Report)

1/9 Attorney General Colorado says, "Tutela Legal hasn't helped at all...We had to eliminate the damage done in order to arrive at a scientific conclusion." (TV 6,12)

1/9 DIARIO DE HOY comments on the investigation as "demonstrating the will of the government to reestablish law and order...This proves that the supreme authorities and the Army...are removed from abuses and attacks that have been committed by individuals and groups who act outside the law...These actions...are however a result of the atrocities and the climate of barbarity let loose by the terrorism. In the two decades since the formation of the first subversive movements, with the indirect but decisive participation of the universities and certain sectors of the clergy (we have suffered) civil disobedience, lack of respect for the law...and attacks against morals...It would be absurd to differentiate morally between one class of terrorism and another." (DH 1/9/90)

1/10 President Cristiani meets briefly with the press and says the Atlacatl troops are not under arrest but "concentrated" in the barracks for the investigation. He gives no names and tells reporters, "You have to understand this is a very delicate case." (TV 6)

1/10 Senators Christopher Dodd and John Warner meet with the President, Ponce and others. Dodd says, "No one has given me any names..Ponce and other say they are not afraid..It is impossible for me to believe that two lieutenants and 45 soldiers are responsible..This must be investigated completely." (TV 6,12)

1/10 Retired Colonel Ochoa Perez says, "The military who gave the orders to commit this Machiavellian crime must be discovered..The material and intellectual authors must be punished." (TV 6)

1/11 Reuters reports that Colonel Alfredo Benavides, Director of the Military School is under investigation. (DL 1/11/90)

1/11 Dr. Fidel Chavez Mena presents a sworn declaration; says he has no concrete information..."I just made hypothetical political statements." (TV 6)

- 1/11 "Supreme Court President Mauricio Gutierrez publicly applauds the investigation and assures that the accused will receive a fair trial. If found guilty they will be punished, whether they are civilians, military or influential people, he is reported saying in a local journal." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/12 Dr. Miguel Francisco Estrada, Rector of the UCA, clarifies his position on the progress of the investigation. "It is positive," he says, in that it is a step forward toward justice, "an indispensable requirement for peace." It proves that Cristiani has more than just "good intentions" and shows that the Armed Forces wishes to comply with its "primary mission...to protect the citizenry even when the transgressors are members of its own body." The investigation is not yet complete however.. "It will be complete when the names of the intellectual and material authors are known and they receive the full weight of the law." He suggests the President intervened in the case because of international pressure, the threat of U.S. aid cuts, his own "ethical disposition" and because the crime "compromises the identity and essence of the army, created to defend citizens, not to assassinate them." (EM 1/12/90)
- 1/12 Reporters wait all day for an announcement from the President; late in the afternoon Secretary of Information Mauricio Sandoval says, "the time frame (72 hours) was taken too literally." He denies rumors of military pressure or a coup d'etat. (YSU)
- 1/13 Extrajudicial declarations are taken from the eight men in custody. (DL 1/22/90)
- 1/13 LOS ANGELES TIMES reports that two colonels have been "confined to base", Colonel Benavides and Colonel Carlos Armando Aviles, head of Psychological Operations, who allegedly leaked Benavides' name to the Embassy. Aviles had just been promoted to Military Attache in Washington on January 1st but that order has been cancelled. Apparently Benavides spoke to Aviles, Aviles to U.S. officials and U.S. officials confronted Ponce with the information. An "embarrassed and furious" Ponce ordered Aviles to submit to a lie detector test which he failed. The article reports tensions within the military as "extremely high".."The grounding of Aviles illustrates that within the military there were sharp divisions opening up...very sharp divisions." (MH 1/13/90)
- 1/13 President Cristiani gives a four-minute pre-taped television and radio address to "reveal the results of the investigation." He says the following persons have been "placed at the disposition of the judicial system":
- Colonel Guillermo Alfredo Benavides Moreno, 44
Director, Military School "General Gerardo Barrios"
 - Lt. Jose Ricardo Espinosa Guerra, 28
Company Commander of a commando unit of the Atlacatl Battalion
 - Lt. Yussy Rene Mendoza Vallecillos, 26
Section Commander, Military School 1st Lt.
 - Gonzalo Guevara Cerritos, 27
Member of Commando Unit Atlacatl Battalion
 - Sgt. Antonio Ramiro Avalos Vargas, "Satanas", 21
Member of Commando Unit
 - Sgt. Tomas Zapata Castillo, 28
Member of Commando Unit
 - Corporal Angel Perez Vasquez, 30
Member of Commando Unit
 - Pvt. Oscar Mariano Amaya Grimaldi, "Pilijay", 26
Member of Commando Unit

Pvt. Jorge Alberto Sierra Ascencio (who deserted in December)
Member of Commando Unit

He says the investigation was conducted by the Special Criminal Investigation Unit with the assistance of investigators from the U.S., Spain, Great Britain and Canada "who worked with total freedom..and have examined the data impartially and professionally..responding to the demand of the Salvadoran people for application of the law." Cristiani, flanked by Minister of Defense Larios, Chief of Staff Colonel Ponce, Vice-Ministers of Defense and Security, Colonels Montano and Zepeda and Colonel Gilberto Rubio says the Armed Forces Honor Commission has reviewed the case and it will now go to the criminal court. (National Network)

- 1/14 NEW YORK TIMES reports "widespread rumors of a coup last week were checked by the U.S. Embassy." Officials of State and Defense "attempted to squelch rumors" that a U.S. advisor knew about the planning of the assassinations saying, "There is no evidence that a U.S. military officer had advance knowledge." The unnamed officer has been sent back to the U.S. and is reportedly being interrogated by U.S. officials. According to the report, the officer knew about the involvement of Colonel Benavides but did not report it to the U.S., "because it was already known by the Salvadorans." (NYT 1/14/90)
- 1/14 "Colonel Benavides did not give the order and probably never even knew about it," says Radio Venceremos. "He is charged because the massacre occurred in a sector under his responsibility that night but he is an institutionalista, not an officer who has participated in repressive actions...This was not a personal decision but part of premeditated counterinsurgency operations..Benavides will eventually be released and sent to exile." (RV)
- 1/15 Rosa Chavez: "They insist it was simply a group of members of the Armed Forces that have stained the honor of the institution.. It is difficult for us to accept this assertion...It is not enough to punish just a few..We must see who really are the enemies of the people and of the nation." (TV 12)
- 1/15 Criminal Court Judge Ricardo Zamora will hear the case against the accused; if he decrees sufficient merit to proceed with the prosecution they will lose their military status and be sent to Mariona Prison to await trial. Zamora is the Judge because he was on duty the night of the crime. (EM 1/15/90)
- 1/15 ARENA President Armando Calderon Sol says the investigation should go "all the way" but that the institution should not be implicated. He implies that a thorough investigation would go "all the way to the FMLN"..."It has the ramifications of a conspiracy between members of the military and the FMLN." (TV 6)
- 1/15 Foreign Minister Pacas Castro announces that the visit of Cristiani to the U.S., scheduled to begin tomorrow will be postponed, allegedly because the UN Secretary General is in Moscow. Cristiani will depart on January 30.."The postponement doesn't have anything to do with the assassinations." (YSU)
- 1/16 Vice-President Merino responds to the "conspiracy theory" saying, "it is illogical that the government or military would have been involved in such a crime that could destabilize the government..The motives must be understood and the theory of a conspiracy studied..Perhaps the crime was not committed in coordination with the FMLN but the effects are the same." (YSU)

- 1/16 Exactly two months after the crime eight members of the Armed Forces appear in court at 3:30 pm under very tight security. Colonel Juan Carlos Schlenker of the National Guard escorts Colonel Benavides. Benavides testifies for two hours and twenty minutes, and reportedly denies all charges, both extrajudicially and judicially. Judge Ricardo Zamora receives declarations from one of the other officers before everyone leaves at 7:30 pm. The Judge has three days to determine if there is sufficient evidence to bind the accused over for trial. (YSU, Sonora, TV 6, 12)
- 1/16 "This is not an isolated case but the product of an ideological conception," says Archbishop Rivera, "others could be implicated. We'll see if things continue with the same spirit." (TV 12)
- 1/16 Cristiani holds press conference for several international reporters and informs them that the two lieutenants have accused Benavides of ordering the assassinations, that no officers of higher rank will be charged with knowledge of the crime... "I think most of it is covered." The motive, he says "is unclear".. "The killings stemmed from a feeling shared by many in the army that the Jesuits were helping the rebels.. These guys could have felt that they were part of the offensive." A Latin American diplomat says, "Benavides is the scapegoat.. He's the one who is taking responsibility.. but there was a top man who knew about it and ordered it." (NYT 1/18/90)
- 1/17 The investigation "is a question of national survival", says DIARIO DE HOY.. "President Cristiani deserves support to prosecute those responsible, not the government or the Armed Forces." (DH 1/17/90)
- 1/17 At 10:30 am the courthouse is surrounded by troops as soldiers and officers who did not present declarations yesterday are again brought under heavy guard; press prohibited from entering the premises, "under orders from above". The prosecuting attorneys are: Saul Zelaya, Eduardo Pineda, Alvaro Campos, Ricardo Zelaya, Jorge Figiac, Julio Cesar Murcia, Sotero Consuett Diaz and Mario Umana. Defense attorneys are listed as Jose Oscar Caballero, Adafredo Salgado, Euligia Rodriguez and Raul Mendez. Colonel Benavides is reportedly held at the National Guard, the others in the National Police. (DH 1/18, TV 6, 12 1/17)
- 1/17 No one has raised the issue but Attorney General Colorado assures the press that the extrajudicial confessions were obtained "without the use of torture"... "They had physical examinations before they went to court... I have the impression that the material authors received orders.. It is very difficult for a little soldier to say "I'm going to kill so and so" .. It is a delicate point." (TV 12)
- 1/18 "Salvadoran Attorney General Colorado announces that his office will act as the official prosecutors of the military personnel implicated in the murders of the Jesuits." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/19 Vice-President Merino denies rumors of a coup.. "This is totally false.. The actions of the President are supported by the government and the Armed Forces, though, he admits, "some members of the army could be concerned about the detentions of their fellow officers." (TV 2)
- 1/19 Judge Zamora declares sufficient merit for the provisional detention of the nine accused. He sets an embargo of \$8000 on the property of Colonel Benavides, approximately \$3000 on each of the others. Arrest warrant is issued for the soldier who deserted in December. Defense attorneys expected to file appeals. (TV 6, 12) According to the formal charges the assassinations were "planned and directed from the Military

School" and the action was carried out by a commando unit formed for the special mission. Pvt. Oscar Mariano Amaya Grimaldi received the AK47 used to execute the victims; another soldier was given the M16 for the "coup de grace." (DL 1/19)

- 1/19 "The judge announces that there is sufficient evidence to hold all eight prisoners under provisional arrest for the next stage in the judicial process." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/19 Lieutenant Guevara Cerritos is accused of making the sign left on the gate based on a handwriting analysis. (EM 1/19)
- 1/19 According to the declaration of Lt. Yussy Mendoza he received orders from Colonel Benavides on the night of the 15th to accompany the other two officers on an operation. Between 11:00 -12:00 pm he was called to Benavides's office and told, "You will accompany Espinosa on a mission." Lt. Jose Ricardo Espinosa Guerra said he received orders at 11:00 pm and was told by Benavides, "This is a situation in which it's them or us..We are going to begin with the leaders.. Inside our sector we have the UCA and Ellacuria is there..You carry out the search..Your people know this place..Use the same plan as the day of the first search (November 13)..You have to eliminate him and I don't want any witnesses..Lt. Mendoza is going with you as head of the operation." Espinosa said, "This is a serious problem," and Benavides replied, "Don't worry, you have my support." Sgt. Tomas Zapata Castillo admitted he shot the two women while the others killed the priests.."I shot the women until I was sure they were dead so there wouldn't be any groaning." Corporal Angel Perez Vasquez, Pvt. Oscar Mariano Amaya Grimaldi and Pvt. Jorge Alberto Sierra Ascencio allegedly killed the priests. The judge has 90-120 days to collect evidence and determine if the accused will face a jury trial or be released. (DH 1/20)
- 1/19 Jesuit Provincial Jose Maria Tojeira says, "the process is insufficient..We believe serious elements are missing, the intellectual authors..It is a little strange that one colonel would order a crime like this, more than anything because he (Benavides) is a circumspect man..Technically the investigation has been good...There is proof with ballistics tests against those who carried out the act." (TV 6)
- 1/19 Father Miguel Estrada, Rector of the UCA believes the investigation is "positive" but not concluded.."It lacks the intellectual authors..who must be punished." (YSU) "A real investigation that goes all the way to the intellectual authors would be a great gift to the Salvadoran people...peace with justice." (TV 12)
- 1/19 "The Judge acted in accordance with the law but now must investigate all the way to discover the intellectual authors," says Maria Julia Hernandez. "This is an historic case which could demonstrate that justice can work in El Salvador." (Sonora)
- 1/20 Dr. Ruben Zamora says the investigation is "not finished".."One colonel could not have carried it out alone...and the problem is more fundamental than taking one colonel to court..There must be a real clean-up." (YSU, TV 12)
- 1/20 The declaration of Corporal Angel Perez Vasquez is published by DIARIO LATINO; Perez, a member of the 4th Company of the Atlacatl Battalion, says he received orders from Lt. Mendoza. He says he passed one body..."He grabbed my leg so I shot him four times." (DL 1/20)
- 1/22 Defense attorneys present appeal, based on irregularities in the extrajudicial confessions. According to the law, even under the state of siege extrajudicial confessions must be taken within 72 hours of detention and in this case eight days

passed. The accused were arrested on January 5, the declarations dated January 13. The attorneys also state that a lawyer should have been present during the process.. "They are not 'clean' and have no merit", he says. Benavides should not be detained because he has denied the charges and the only evidence against him, aside from the declarations of the other accused, is that he was zone commander. Accused cannot testify against each other under Salvadoran law. The judge has three days to rule on the appeal. (TV 6,12, EM, DL 1/22)

- 1/22 "Defense attorneys file writ of habeas corpus demanding that the eight be released on the ground that the provisional detention order was improperly filed. In addition, the release of Colonel Benavides is demanded on the additional ground that he has been implicated by accomplices and under Salvadoran law the testimony of co-conspirators is inadmissible as evidence against other co-conspirators." (U.S. Embassy Report)
- 1/22 DIARIO LATINO publishes declaration of Sgt. Tomas Zarpata Castillo, member of the 8th Company of the Atlacatl Battalion. Zarpata says he shot the women, "until I was sure they were dead and weren't groaning." (DL 1/22/90)
- 1/24 Lt. Gonzalo Guevara Cerritos also accuses Benavides of giving the orders. (DL 1/24/90)
- 1/24 Colonel Ponce denounces continuing speculation on the case, saying if anyone has proof it should be submitted to the judge, "or be quiet and stop trying to discredit the Armed Forces.. This is dishonest, irresponsible and illegal." (EM 1/25)
- 1/25 Prosecuting attorneys oppose the defense appeal; in the case of Benavides the opinion of the prosecution is "sufficient circumstantial evidence" for provisional detention. (EM 1/25)
- 1/25 Declaration of Lt. Jose Ricardo Espinoza Guerra, company commander of the Atlacatl Battalion accuses Benavides of ordering "the elimination" of the Jesuits. (DL 1/25)
- 1/26 Roberto D'Aubuisson interviewed by the press for the first time in two months. He says he "laments" the assassinations but "it was an isolated action"... "There is nothing more to investigate.. It is not convenient to continue investigating the Armed Forces." (YSU)
- 1/26 President George Bush admits there is "some evidence" that Cristiani does not completely control the armed forces. (YSU)
- 1/26 Pvt. Oscar Mariona Amaya Grimaldi admits participating in the assassinations of three of the priests and of carrying the AK47. (DL 1/26/90)
- 1/27 Lt. Yushy Rene Mendoza Vallecillos accuses Colonel Benavides of ordering the killings in his testimony. (DL 1/27)
- 1/29 At 9:30 am Judge Zamora announces his decision to deny the defense appeal; he also says a new witness, a woman has been called to testify. (Sonora) He says the 72 hour time limit was not violated because the accused were not officially detained during the first days but were held under military arrest. The accused will not be transferred to prisons to await trial but will continue detained in various military installations. Zamora says he will call witnesses during the 90-120 day judicial investigation period. (TV 12)

- 1/29 Interviewed in Spain, Father Jon Sobrino says the investigation is creating "strong divisions" within the Armed Forces. (TV 12)
- 1/29 President Cristiani admits there are declarations but "no technical evidence" against Benavides. (LPG 1/29/90) He announces that all international investigators have left the country, "very pleased with the progress of the investigation." Colonel Aviles is not under arrest but is being interrogated... "His transfer to Washington has been suspended." (Sonora)
- 1/29 Colonel Mauricio Vargas says the investigation has caused "a lot of pain in the institution.., but building democracy is more important than an individual." (TV 12)
- 1/29 According to Colonel Ponce's declaration he ordered the formation of a "Security Command" to operate from the Military School under the responsibility of Benavides, beginning the afternoon of the 13th. (DL 1/29/90)
- 1/30 President Cristiani leaves for the U.S. saying he "cannot speculate on whether there will be further steps taken." (TV 6)
- 1/30 Jesuit Provincial Jose Maria Tojeira says the UCA will name a lawyer to represent the institution as the victim in the investigation and to demand indemnities for the physical destruction. (TV 6)
- 1/30 "The memory of the Jesuits deserves more than an investigation conducted only for the purpose of assuring U.S. aid," says Ruben Zamora. "They are only doing it for the aid and that is offensive to their memory..This case must establish a precedent so that it doesn't happen again." (TV 6) "It is positive that officers have been charged..but hardly likely that Benavides could have made this decision..The Director of the Military School does not have responsibility for troops much less an elite battalion like the Atlacatl... We don't agree with D'Aubuisson.. His statement that the case is closed sounded like a coverup." (Sonora)
- 1/30 DIARIO LATINO begins publication of the Lawyers' Committee report on the witness, Lucia Barrera de Cerna. (DL 1/30)

FEBRUARY 1990

- 2/1 Judge Zamora is interviewing an average of two witnesses a day; a defense attorney says the witnesses, soldiers, are presenting contradictory statements.. "Some have said that their fellow soldiers never left the military barracks during that day." A total of 180-200 witnesses are scheduled to be interviewed. (LPG 2/2/90)
- 2/1 Cristiani gave "strong assurances" in Washington that the investigation will continue "even if it implicates more senior officers." (LAT 2/2/90)
- 2/4 MIAMI HERALD (2/4) and WASHINGTON POST (2/6) publish stories on the deteriorating relations between the U.S. military advisors and the Salvadoran military stemming from the assassinations. According to the HERALD, top military commanders held two meetings within hours of the massacre, one from 7:30 pm-10:30 pm on the night of the 15th of November. Thirty commanders including Ponce, Bustillo and Benavides met to review the critical situation and decided on the use of aircraft, heavy artillery and armored battalions in the capital and on a plan to assassinate guerrilla leaders and destroy rebel command centers. The UCA was cited as a "launching point" for guerrilla operations.. "This may have created the atmosphere that

led Benavides to order the killings." Cristiani was called at 10:30 pm to authorize the use of airpower and artillery in the capital. He gave his authorization.

At 8:00 am on the 16th, a meeting of intelligence officers in the building shared by the CIA and DNI (National Intelligence Center) was interrupted by a junior officer with news of the assassination of Ellacuria.. "Everyone clapped" according to the HERALD, and "cheered", according to the POST. Not until January 2 did U.S. advisor Major Eric Buckland, a close friend of Colonel Carlos Aviles, inform the Embassy that Benavides was being accused of ordering the operation. "The Salvadorans view the U.S. trainers as spies", says the POST. "If the deteriorating relations continue it could circumscribe U.S. influence and in the long run jeopardize U.S. willingness to provide military aid." (WP 2/6/90)

- 2/7 Colonel Ponce says Benavides and the seven others in custody remain on active duty, are receiving salaries and are in the custody of the National Police. (TV 6,12)
- 2/8 Defense attorneys are "very concerned with the slowness of the Judge" in taking declarations from witnesses. The court has a list of 200 persons to interview. (LPG 2/8/90)
- 2/8 Forty-five members of the Atlacatl Battalion cited to testify have not appeared. (TV 12) A later report indicates the soldiers may be "brought by force" to present declarations. (Sonora)
- 2/8 During a Congressional hearing Bernard Aronson admits there was a meeting of high level officers on the night before the killings; Senator Thomas Harkin requests an investigation of that meeting. (TV 12)
- 2/9 Colonel Ponce rejects any link between the Armed Forces as an institution and the assassinations, saying that the meetings were "daily and routine beginning November 9th".. "They are still trying to politicize the case..The work meeting cannot be related in any way to the case..Speculation that the Armed Forces as an institution are involved must be ended." (TV 12) "The speculations are a maneuver of the communists." (DH 2/10/90)
- 2/10 Maria Julia Hernandez says, "Only part of the truth is known about the assassinations..It is impossible that one colonel could have ordered the operation." (YSU) The Jesuit massacre was "an act of weakness and panic...a military operation not a death squad action." (DL 2/10/90)
- 2/11 Fifteen Congressmembers and their staff assistants arrive at 2:00 pm at Ilopango Airport. The delegation, led by Rep. Joe Moakley represents the Congressional Task Force on the assassinations established by Congressman Tom Foley. They are met by Ambassador Walker and other Embassy officials. Walker assures the press that the meeting of the High Command on November 15th was "routine." (TV 12)
- 2/12 The delegation visits the UCA to meet with Rector Miguel Estrada and Jesuit Provincial Jose Maria Tojeira. They visit the site of the massacre and place flowers on the tombs. Tojeira reconstructs the crime. (TV 12) Father Estrada says the UCA is "partially satisfied" with the investigation "but the problem is the intellectual authors..The investigation is focusing on the material authors and that is not enough." (YSKL) Tojeira discusses the treatment of the witness in the U.S. saying he was "too naive" in trusting the Embassy to accompany her to Miami and turn her immediately over to the Jesuits.. "I was very surprised to learn the FBI held her for eight days..That was not

our agreement." He also tells the delegation that 217 troops were in the area of the UCA on the night of the crime, 47 inside the campus. (Sonora)

2/12 The delegations meets for two hours with Colonels Ponce and Zepeda. Ponce later says, "We talked clearly and honestly about our position..The Armed Forces is open to investigation..Anyone who has evidence should present it...The Congressmembers know the progress of the Armed Forces..They know the criteria of the institution." (TV 12)

2/13 Congressmembers meet with President Cristiani for two hours, then with Archbishop Rivera y Damas, Bishop Rosa Chavez and Maria Julia Hernandez. After the meeting in the Archdiocese Rosa Chavez says, "We believe military aid should be conditioned on human rights..and that the investigation must continue..It was not just the order from one colonel..There are things to discover, they have not investigated deeply enough." (TV 6,12)

2/13 Delegation of rectors of Jesuit universities in the United States and members of the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights arrives in the country. (TV 12)

2/14 Congressional delegation holds press conference before departing the country. Joe Moakley reads the statement citing the objectives of the trip:

1. To determine whether the investigation has led to the identification of all those responsible for the crime.
2. To ascertain whether it is likely that they will be brought to justice.
3. To gauge the overall climate of respect for human rights in El Salvador.
4. To assess prospects for an end to the war and a lasting peace.

The statement says that the investigation has been characterized by "good police work" but it is not over.."Important leads and allegations remain to be fully investigated..namely reports which suggest that the intellectual authors of the murders have not been identified and suggestions that there may have been a cover-up of this crime by some in the armed forces..We join with our Ambassador in insisting that these specific allegations must be thoroughly investigated."

"With respect to the next phase of the judicial process, we fear that presently available evidence may be insufficient to bring all the murderers to justice. We are deeply concerned about this prospect..and strongly support current as well as possible new efforts by the United States to assist in every possible way the Salvadoran Government in its investigatory and judicial efforts."

"With respect to the overall climate of respect for human rights, we have strong concerns. First, we condemn..in the strongest possible terms..the FMLN offensive and the needless bloodshed that resulted. In prosecuting the offensive, the FMLN is guilty of serious violations of human rights and caused a serious setback to the prospects for a peaceful settlement to the war."

"With regard to the Salvadoran armed forces...a central question for the task force is whether the human rights problem in El Salvador..including the Jesuit killings..are the actions of a few renegade military figures or whether, in fact, they stem from attitudes and actions that go to the very heart of the armed forces and other major institutions in this country. Encouraging genuine change in these institutions remains the greatest challenge facing El Salvador; a challenge that despite enormous investments of money and effort, has not yet been fully met. Given the tragedy of the Jesuit case, it is

particularly important that the armed forces be able to distinguish as an institution between those who take up arms against the Government and those whose religious and political convictions simply place them at odds with the Government."

"Lastly, with respect to prospects for peace, we believe that the way to end the fighting is through negotiations. Both here in El Salvador and in the United States, the Congress is being urged by some to end military aid to El Salvador or condition aid on peace negotiations between the Salvadoran Government and the FMLN. We strongly urge the opening of honest dialogue that can lead to an end to the fighting and to peace with freedom and justice for all Salvadorans." (Statement 2/14/90)

- 2/14 ARENA Deputy Gloria Salguera Gross denounces the delegation as "intervening in internal affairs..The Democrats are only acting in their own interests..It is unjust to condition aid..and incorrect for five million Salvadorans to suffer because of one deplorable act." (TV 6)
- 2/14 The U.S. Jesuit delegation will meet with President Cristiani, Colonel Ponce, Judge Zamora, the Attorney General, the Supreme Court and the Special Investigations Unit. (TV 12)
- 2/15 President Cristiani says the Congressional visit was "positive" and adds, "There is no evidence to suggest the involvement of other military officers in the assassinations." (TV 12)
- 2/16 Ambassador Walker says the Congressmembers were "satisfied with their investigation." "I am optimistic that the economic and military aid will not be cut...It is important that the truth comes out." (TV 12)
- 2/16 Four soldiers from the Atlacatl Battalion appear in court to give declarations after two citations were ignored. According to one of them, "The Colonel didn't know about it before but now we are ready." A defense attorney notes "irregularities and changes" in the statements." (TV 12)
- 2/16 Three months after the assassinations, a death squad, the "Grupo Anti-Comunista Salvadorena", "GAS", issues a communique "condemning to death" fifteen persons, among them seven already assassinated including five of the Jesuits. Each person on the list is presented with an alleged pseudonym and political responsibility:
- Ignacio Ellacuria: "Ricardo", International Political Commission
 - Ignacio Martin Boro: "Josue or Manuel", Commission of International Support
 - Segundo Montes: "Rafael or Samuel", Communications Commission
 - Juan Ramon Moreno: "Colocho", Medical Commission
 - Amando Lopez: "Roberto", National Political Commission
- (The name of Amando Lopez is repeated and Joaquin Lopez is omitted.)
- Dr. Hector Oqueli Colindres, assassinated on January 12 is on the list as FMLN commander Dimas Rodriguez, killed in combat on December 10. The other eight names are of FMLN political and military leadership. "Many of these criminal terrorists have already died and now can no longer harm our Salvadoran people who were victims of the genocide of November 11th last year." (DL 2/17/90).
- 2/19 Three more soldiers of the Atlacatl Battalion appear in court to present declarations; all say they were positioned in the "Torre Democracia" on the night of the killings and deny seeing any vehicles in the area "due to lack of visibility." (TV 6) Torre

Democracia is the highest building in the country and looks down on the UCA; there was a full moon that night.

- 2/19 Fourteen of the fifty Atlacatl soldiers cited have presented declarations to date. (TV 12)
- 2/19 Seven Danish parliamentarians are in the country to study the situation in general and progress on the Jesuit case in particular. (TV 6)
- 2/21 Colonel Mauricio Vargas says the Armed Forces "is very sorry to see one of its members compromised..but we have turned him over to the courts." (DH 2/22)
- 2/22 WASHINGTON POST reports the Embassy is "uncomfortable" about the preferential treatment Colonel Benavides is receiving; he is said to be living in a luxury apartment inside the National Police Headquarters and is not confined..He has reportedly been seen at the elegant beach hotel owned by the Armed Forces. (WP/TV 12)
- 2/22 Rector of the UCA says the University has given up the idea of participating in the investigation. Miguel Estrada also confirms that the troops who are now presenting declarations to the court "are giving different testimonies than they did in their extrajudicial declarations." (TV 6)
- 2/23 Ruben Zamora says if the information published in the WASHINGTON POST is true "it points out a fundamental problem..The impunity that the Armed Forces enjoys must end." (TV 12)
- 2/28 Secretary of State James Baker testifying before House Finance Committee says the U.S. Government is "indignant" about the preferential treatment given to Colonel Benavides.."We are dealing with the Salvadoran Government on this." (TV 6)

MARCH 1990

- 3/3 Judge Zamora says the case will not be moved to Santa Tecla as requested by the defense.."Only the Supreme Court can order a change of venue." (DL 3/3) According to a court employee, interviews of witnesses continue but "many" of the soldiers subpoenaed have not appeared and "there are no new elements" in the case. (EM 3/3)
- 3/4 Senator Edward Kennedy calls for a suspension of all aid to the country until human rights are respected and the Jesuit case resolved. (DH 3/5)
- 3/5 Four additional witnesses have presented declarations, all members of the National Police who were on duty in the area of the UCA November 15-16. They "had no additional information or evidence to offer," according to a defense attorney who says the case will be dismissed for lack of evidence. (TV 6)
- 3/7 Rumors circulate that Judge Zamora has been assassinated; dozens of reporters converge on the courthouse but the Judge is alive and well. He says he has not been pressured and has not requested security..."God will protect me." According to the radio report, lawyers involved in the case have requested salaries of \$200,000 and guarantees of sanctuary in the U.S. if necessary. (YSU)
- 3/7 Press receives a death squad communique addressed to political parties, churches, unions, associations and diplomatic missions. The document, allegedly written on February 13 at a meeting of death squad members from all fourteen departments of the country, reads: "We are observing the crisis in the Armed Forces and in our beloved

ARENA party..a crisis leading to vacillation and recognition of stupidities like human rights..and prosecution of members of the Armed Forces..The officers and troops charged in the Jesuit case must be released before Holy Week or we will take action against all persons in and out of the government involved in the case." The communique is signed by the General Command of the Death Squads, Aquiles Baires, Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez and the Comite Pro-Salvacion. (Sonora 12:30 pm)

- 3/9 President Cristiani declares the death squads "have no reason to exist..We believe justice must flourish..This threat will not set back our efforts." (TV 6)
- 3/12 The threats are "absurd" says Colonel Ochoa Perez.."The government will not submit to this blackmail." (DL) The threats "are an attempt to discredit the Armed Forces." (TV 12)
- 3/16 Human Rights Commission says the amnesty proposed in the Assembly for members of the military is "unjustifiable" if it includes the San Sebastian or Jesuit massacres. PDC leader Roberto Viera insists any amnesty "must not include the Jesuit case..That would be a grave error..The case is important for the political life of the country..for peace and justice." (EM)
- 3/20 Of 200 witnesses in the case, 75 have been interviewed, including soldiers, neighbors and UCA security guards; no new evidence has been provided according to court officials. (LPG)
- 3/21 Auxiliary Bishop Rosa Chavez has sent his declaration to Judge Zamora as requested by the Attorney General's office. (TV 12)
- 3/22 Defense formally presents petition requesting change of venue, arguing that the UCA is in the legal jurisdiction of the Santa Tecla court. Defense attorney Mendez says the Judge should declare himself unqualified and withdraw from the case; he has 24 hours to rule on the petition. (TV 12)
- 3/24 Interviewed by the WASHINGTON POST, Cristiani says he doubts Colonel Benavides will be prosecuted and says he feels "frustrated" that the Colonel is living in a luxury cell "but the Armed Forces have their rules." (TV 12/ WP)
- 3/25 "Segundo Montes" City inaugurated in Meanguera, Morazan. (DL)
- 3/26 Jesuit Provincial Jose Maria Tojeira says it is "not believable" that only Benavides gave the orders.."There are more people implicated..There was a group of high military officers who promised to support him." According to Tojeira, Benavides' official diary notes a "guerrilla attack" against the Theology Building of the UCA at 12:30 am on the night of the massacre, two hours before the events occurred. (TV 12)

APRIL 1990

- 4/4 Colonel Ponce denies that Benavides has ever left the jurisdiction of the Fourth Criminal Court and says the military "is not taking a position" on the case..The institution "has initiated a rigorous cleanup of troops and paramilitary..It is the permanent moral responsibility of the institution to remove elements that commit abuses." (EM)
- 4/4 Associated Press reports the White House is "hardening its attitude" toward El Salvador as a result of "difficulties" with Congress, especially "liberals" concerned about the

Jesuit case. Aid could be conditioned on a resolution of the murders, overhaul of the legal system and a cleansing of the Armed Forces. (EM/AP)

4/17 Jose Maria Tojeira says defense attorneys are still attempting to move the case to Santa Tecla.. "It's political," he says.. "The move could be beneficial to the accused..with less press coverage and different judges." (TV 6)

4/18 Attorney General insists on the change of venue.. "The appropriate judge is in the jurisdiction." (TV 6)

4/22 In the U.S., CBS program "Sixty Minutes" features a segment on the case. Retired Colonel Sigifredo Ochoa Perez says he does not believe Col. Benavides planned the assassinations.. "No, I don't think so. Knowing him he is not a man who could make or conceive of a move as big as this. Benavides acted under orders. He didn't act alone."

Ed Bradley: "The Army says he misunderstood the orders, do you believe this?"

Ochoa Perez: "No, I think it was all planned beforehand."

Bradley: "He had help from other senior officers in the Salvadoran military?"

Ochoa: "Yes."

Bradley: "And they planned the murders?"

Ochoa: "I believe so, yes." (TV 12/CBS)

(later)

Ochoa: "A group of commanders stayed behind (after the meeting on the night of the 15th). It seems each was responsible for a zone in San Salvador. They gave an order to kill leftists, just as Benavides did. I'll say it again. Benavides obeyed, it wasn't his decision."

Bradley says no other top commanders have been investigated and specifically refers to Colonel Zepeda.. "Just five months before the murder of the Jesuits, according to a State Department document, Zepeda claimed the Jesuits..were planning guerrilla strategy. According to that same State Department document Zepeda probably was one of the officers to whom Benavides reported."

Bradley also says, "It stunned us to find out that the American Embassy had given Colonel Ponce an audio tape of our interview with Ambassador Walker to help him prepare for us. So Ponce knew the questions we were likely to ask. Is the U.S. Embassy in cahoots with the army of El Salvador?"

Several Jesuits, Lucia Cerna, Ambassador Walker and Congressman George Miller are also interviewed. The segment closes with an earlier interview of Martin Boro.. "There is some environment of the possibility of being killed any moment of the day and the possibility of being involved in a violent clash at any moment. And you have to count on that." (CBS)

4/23 Channel 12 news plays the segment featuring Ochoa Perez. (TV 12)

- 4/24 State Department declines to comment on questions raised by "Sixty Minutes" surrounding the conduct of Ambassador Walker. The Council of Hemispheric Affairs demands Walker be called before Congress to explain his actions, saying the Moakley Report "will not be complete without an interview with Walker." (EM/AP)
- 4/24 "We are evaluating what he said," Minister of Defense Larios responds to Ochoa's charges.. "The case is in the courts and anyone who has additional information should present it.. This does not affect the Armed Forces.. The case is under the responsibility of the civilian authorities." (TV 12)
- 4/24 "The statements were very daring," says Deputy Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes.. Colonel Ochoa has a reputation for being very spontaneous.. He could have problems explaining what he said." (TV 12)
- 4/25 Boston GLOBE and HERALD reveal that the military personnel accused in the case were all trained either in the U.S. or by North American soldiers in El Salvador, with the exception of Benavides. (TV 12) Four were trained in Georgia and North Carolina, four by U.S. trainers in the country. The information was provided to Moakley by Carl Ford, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Affairs. (DL)
- 4/25 "Unidentified military officer" accuses Ochoa of "damaging the image of the army and the country.. endangering military aid.. and supporting the international left." (DH)
- 4/25 DIARIO LATINO publishes entire transcript of "Sixty Minutes." (DL)
- 4/25 Colonel Ochoa releases a statement in response to criticisms: "The attitude of some bad elements of the Armed Forces must not be allowed to be used against the Institution.. It is proper to cleanse the ranks.. In proposing this necessary cleanup I am responding to a historical necessity.. It is not the person who points out the evil who is creating the damage but the one who acts against humanitarian principles.. When I referred to those who executed the order to assassinate the Jesuits, they were doing this: complying with orders.. I haven't done anything more than say publicly what the people say and express in whispers... It is assumed that some information exists and that it is in the hands of certain sectors who for one reason or another have not provided that information to the corresponding authorities." (EM 4/26)
- 4/25 House Foreign Affairs Committee votes to support a 50% cut in aid and a total cut if the government does not conduct a broad investigation of the case and carry out serious negotiations. (TV 6)
- 4/25 Judge Zamora rejects the petition of the Attorney General for a change of venue and requests the Treasury Police to remit two of the accused for interviews, Gonzalo Guevara Cerritos and Jose Ricardo Espinoza Guerra. (LPG)
- 4/25 The Judge's ruling states that according to the National Geographic Institute, the Military School lies within the jurisdiction of San Salvador. (TV 12) The ruling also charges the nine accused with "crimes against the public order" and theft of \$5000 (the award money presented to Ellacuria in Spain, just before he returned to El Salvador.) Members of the Honor Commission, named by President Cristiani early in January to determine the existence of sufficient evidence against the accused to prosecute the case, are subpoenaed to appear before the Judge, a legal move that reportedly "surprises" the defense. (DL, DH)

- 4/25 Members of the Honor Commission, previously unknown, are: Colonel Juan Vicente Equizabal Figueroa, Major Jose Roberto Zamora Hernandez, Captain Juan Manuel Grijalva Torres, Rodolfo Parker (civilian), Antonio Augusto Gomez Zarate (civilian), General Rafael Villamariona (Air Force) and Colonel Israel Machuca (National Police), also members of the Commission will be permitted to submit notarized written statements. All will be asked to explain the evidence which led them to accuse Benavides. (LPG 4/26)
- 4/25 Colonel Carlos Aviles is back on active duty in the High Command, responsible for Psychological Operations. (TV 12)
- 4/25 In Washington, Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus issues a Staff Memorandum on the Atlacatl Battalion; the report charges the Battalion with responsibility for four massacres and six other specific cases since its founding in 1981. (Report)
- 4/26 President Cristiani says Ochoa's statements are not important.. "Speculations don't help..to the contrary they obstruct the legal process." (TV 12)
- 4/26 Attorney General Colorado will ask Judge Zamora to subpoena Ochoa. (TV 12)
- 4/27 "Because of the Jesuit case many members of Congress believe there has been no progress on human rights," says Cristiani..."This is a mistaken perception..It is part of the FMLN strategy to weaken the Armed Forces." (DH 4/28)
- 4/30 Moakley Report released in Washington. The Task Force concludes that the investigation is "at a standstill" with "little possibility of justice..The lack of a continuous process together with certain aspects of Salvadoran law make it unlikely that justice will be served." The failure is "symptomatic of profound institutional problems in the exercise of justice." The report suggests Colonel Benavides would never have been arrested if a U.S. officer had not informed the Embassy of his involvement. Task Force members say they are "disillusioned" by the failure of the investigation unit and the judge to pursue the case but congratulate Cristiani for his "sincere effort." (EM 4/1)
- 4/30 In Washington, Ambassador Salaverria criticizes the "paternalistic" attitude of Congress saying, "We have our own convictions and only the judge can respond to this case. It is in his hands." (TV 6)
- 4/30 Ambassador Walker says he is concerned with the investigation and shares the opinion that "not much has been done".."They must work day and night...Judge Zamora has to do more..There are others in the military who must be subpoenaed..Ochoa, for example believes there are others involved..The greatest weakness here is the administration of justice..Everyone agrees many changes are necessary..There is not enough pressure from the political parties..." (TV 6)
- 4/30 Defense attorneys present another appeal for change of venue, saying the judge's denial was "based on international law, not applicable here." (TV 6) No crime was committed in the Military School, according to the attorneys, and the UCA is located in the jurisdiction of Santa Tecla. (TV 6)

MAY 1990

- 5/1 Armed Forces publishes statement "emphatically and energetically" rejecting the charges of retired Colonel Ochoa Perez as "irresponsible and biased...an effort to sow confusion and mistrust..to involve senior members of the High Command in the Jesuit

case..We demand that Colonel Ochoa and anyone else who has information present it to the corresponding courts and not try to gain political points based on alleged charges that add to the scheme of disinformation which is being developed in a systematic way by the marxist leninist terrorists, both nationally and internationally..We condemn these irresponsible statements as an effort to undermine the institutionality of the state..only favoring the dark and nefarious interests of the enemies of democracy." (TV 6,12, LPG, DH)

- 5/1 Secretary of State James Baker testifies before Senate Appropriations Committee; says aid could be cut.."Our assistance will be affected by the form in which this case is conducted..The Salvadoran Government understands this." (EM)
- 5/1 Captain Jose Alfonso Chavez Garcia of the Treasury Police, killed in action today in the capital, was mentioned in the "Young Officers' Letter" in December as responsible for the murders along with Colonel Hector Heriberto Hernandez. (Letter)
- 5/1-2 FMLN conducts "mini-offensive" in the capital and six departments "as a response to the impunity of the Armed Forces in human rights", including the "standstill and coverup" in the Jesuit case. (Sonora)
- 5/2 Colonel Ochoa releases a statement defending his position; says his objective is "justice..not to blame anyone..I am not the one responsible for any cut in military aid." (TV 12)
- 5/2 Ochoa's statement reads: "As a Deputy I have the right to express what I feel and equally, as a citizen and as a military man my duty is to the Armed Forces..I accompanied the soldiers and never thought of personal enrichment when I was on active duty, as has occurred with other officers, though certainly not all." "As a soldier I am concerned about the situation of the Armed Forces..I have never mentioned names and have only demanded justice..I can't accept that a decision of this nature came from one person acting alone and I believe there is a conspiracy against the Institution." "The field officers, who fight every day, are worthy of praise but I must be critical of those who have taken advantage of the Institution and then shout to the heavens as if I were the one undermining the institutionality of the state..The case must be investigated fully..They shouldn't be making ridiculous demands and looking for a confrontation with me..I don't want it..I'm not against anyone in particular." Ochoa says he knows who was in the meeting (when the Armed Forces document denouncing him was written) "and even who said that President Cristiani must remove me from CEL...I have the responsibility given to me by the President and I will stay as long as he wishes." (EM)
- 5/2 "Young Officers' Letter" released to the press supporting Colonel Ochoa's charges, expressing "sadness and indignation" at the situation of the Institution and the repercussions of the acts of a "small group of corrupt officers." In reference to the Jesuit case the letter, signed by "Young Officers, Domingo Monterrosa Lives", says the officers intuitively knew what had occurred when they heard the news but thought the repercussions would be minimal "because the priests were militants of the FMLN"; nevertheless "we judged it to be an irrational and senseless act because it is one thing to fight openly against the terrorists and another against the ideologues." "The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Cristiani) doesn't know the activities of the High Command and in this case, from the beginning, a great deal of information has been kept classified from the President..One of our classmates, implicated in the case was threatened that he would be accused of being a member of the FMLN unless he complied with the superior order..It must be on record in his declaration..The pressures

against the young officers implicated have continued while the superior officer is peaceful in his detention, with many comforts for which Colonel Carrillo, one of those who from the beginning, along with Colonels Ponce and Montano, opposed (the arrests), is responsible."

The letter points out two cases of "betrayal" by the U.S. Embassy, the first involving Colonel Carlos Aviles Buitrago "who on his own account investigated the extenuating circumstances of the case and in an informal way, gave the clue of those responsible. Then the recent case of the CBS program where Ambassador Walker alerted the High Command of information about the case.."

On the possible aid cuts and Colonel Ochoa, the letter continues, "They are trying to blame an ex-officer and commander as responsible for discrediting the institution..because of his statements on CBS..Is it a secret that Colonel Benavides' superior officer in all his operations and under the rules of our institution is Colonel Zepeda, then the Minister of Defense? The question is who besides Colonel Benavides was involved in the operation, who was in the meetings at 3:00 and 5:00 pm in the office of Colonel Zepeda, not only Colonel Benavides but also other officers of the lowest graduation class." "The Ochoa case must be given more attention...He has said what many of us cannot express because we would be sanctioned.. Beginning May 1st we will be attentive to the events surrounding the Ochoa and Jesuit cases, which must result in an end to protectionism of superior officers who commit abuses, issuing orders that are violations of the laws of our country." The letter names "the group" of corrupt officers as Ponce, Montano, Fuentes, Carrillo, Rubio, Majano Araugo, Hernandez, Staben and Zepeda.. "The weight of the law must fall on them in this case..." (DL 5/4/90)

5/2 Judge Zamora issues a statement saying the Moakley Report will be included in the official records of the case. Zamora will subpoena Colonel Carlos Aviles and "possibly the U.S. advisor". A member of the Honor Commission, subpoenaed last week, does not appear today as scheduled. (TV 12) Government Secretary of Information, Mauricio Sandoval, says the case will go to trial in 90 days. (LPG 5/3)

5/3 President Cristiani says the Letter "lacks any credibility." (TV 12)

5/3 Channel 12 television news "apologizes" for reading portions of the Letter last night, saying it was "an error".. "The letter came to us anonymously.. We offer our most sincere apologies and hope that this not be misinterpreted." (TV 12)

5/3 High Command "emphatically rejects" the authenticity of the Letter and says it is "grey propaganda".. "There is no person or group of persons who take responsibility for the publication of this statement which has propagandistic tendencies that support the FMLN..." (TV 12, DH 5/4)

5/4 Bernard Aronson is interviewed on satellite television by Salvadoran journalists and acknowledges "frustration" in Washington about the case but confirms continued support of the Cristiani Government. Aronson says the case was "a terrible and inexcusable crime.. There have been too many crimes like this during the past ten years and it seems that no one has been punished.. The case "is the test of fire for the government.. It is encouraging that the accused will be tried in 90 days as President Cristiani announced but there are certain aspects of Salvadoran law that make it difficult to find someone guilty of a conspiracy.. We don't understand why this exists and why the Assembly doesn't change it, but this cannot be an excuse." (LPG)

- 5/4 Judge Zamora issues a press release on "progress" in the investigation. He reports that the registration book from the Military School containing information on the night of November 15-16 has been "misaid". Two members of the Honor Commission subpoenaed to appear in court (Dr. Antonio Augusto Gomez Zarate and Rodolfo Parker Soto) did not appear. Four cadets who were on guard duty in the Military School the night of the crime are "out of the country" and unavailable to present declarations; three of them are "studying" in the U.S., the fourth in Panama. The three in the U.S. are Cesar Moises Rivera Perez, Raul Galan Hernandez and Wilfredo Aguilar Alvarado. Erick Othmaro Granados Moran is said to be in Panama. (TV 12, LPG) DIARIO DE HOY says the "loss" of the registration book will "impede the investigation of the case..which is being exploited by the left and other sectors." (DH 5/4)
- 5/4 Vice-Minister of Public Security, Colonel Montano, says Col. Ochoa "may have some followers" in the institution, "but not many".. "He has a heroic but also negative record." The Letter, he says "has no credibility..It could be from the left or perhaps from someone who is out of the Armed Forces and wants to return." (TV 6)
- 5/5 Colonel Zepeda says he wants to present a declaration to the judge "because of media reports that involve him." (LPG)
- 5/5 A "source" in the Attorney General's office says the case will go to trial soon, "since the witnesses who have not given statements are not responding to the subpoenas." (EM)
- 5/5 The loss of the registration book is "unusual" says Maria Julia Hernandez, and an example of the "lack of will to prosecute the case..We are very concerned that the case is not advancing as it should be..Colonel Ochoa's statements confirm what we have said from the beginning..Ochoa is a military man, he knows the institution very well." (TV 12)
- 5/5 The disappeared book "is a problem for the courts" says Colonel Ponce and the situation of the four cadets outside the country is "normal", according to the Chief of Staff who says they have been away since January. (TV 12)
- 5/6 Auxiliary Bishop Rosa Chavez calls on the military to "examine its conscience..to discover errors which have contributed to the war." The Letter, "whether or not it is authentic".. "raises issues which must be examined." (TV 12)
- 5/7 NEW YORK TIMES says recent setbacks in the case, including the loss of crucial evidence, "make it more difficult to investigate other senior officers"... "The obstructions could bring the U.S. Congress to cut aid." According to the TIMES, not only the registration book is missing, but also Benavides' personal diary. (Sonora)
- 5/7 Ochoa's statements were "foolhardy", says Colonel Zepeda, and "a danger to the High Command of the Armed Forces." The Colonel says his name "has been mentioned" in relation to the case but he has never been asked to testify. (DH)
- 5/7 The charges are "absurd", says Zepeda,.. "I was one of the first to be interested in investigating the case..It is absurd that they are trying to involve me..We have adversaries, enemies in this conflict..I totally reject the charges..Everyone knows the Vice-Minister does not have direct relations with troops..My responsibility is administrative and advisory..I didn't have any relation to Benavides or the Military School except on administrative issues." Zepeda says the objective of the "Sixty

Minutes" segment was "to support a cut in aid" and informs the press that he has sent a note of protest to CBS for implying he was involved in the assassinations. (TV 12)

- 5/7 President Cristiani insists the "disappearance" of the log book and Benavides's diary "must be investigated" and the four missing cadets "must be called to testify." (EM)
"What's the difference if they come from Suchitoto or the United States to testify?" (YSU)
- 5/7 Minister of Defense Larios assures the press he knows nothing about the missing books and says the cadets "will return the moment they are called..It's all completely normal." (TV 6,12)
- 5/7 In a press statement, Judge Zamora says the case is not ready to go to trial; it is still in the preliminary phase.. "There are witnesses to be interviewed..It cannot be done precipitously." (Sonora)
- 5/7 Zamora has a long meeting with Embassy officials. (EM/AP)
- 5/8 Supreme Court rejects charges of the Moakley Commission that the case is at a standstill.. "The careless and irresponsible charges that the case is held up are false." (EM)
- 5/8 WASHINGTON POST says the case is "paralyzed." (Sonora)
- 5/8 The possible promotion of Colonel Ponce to Minister of Defense and retirement of Colonel Zepeda "could seriously affect the negotiations," according to a statement from the FMLN General Command, by "breaking the chain of responsibility for the Jesuit assassinations." (DL)
- 5/8 A legal source tells Associated Press that the case "could go to trial at the end of the year" and "there is little possibility Benavides will be convicted." If the Judge works hard, he says, "and there are no problems", it could happen by the end of 1990. Benavides apparently mentioned the diary in his extrajudicial declaration but later denied its existence in his judicial statement.. "The court has never seen the diary." (EM/AP)
- 5/8 State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher reports that the Department has asked the Embassy to confirm the disappearance of evidence and warns that the loss "endangers the efforts to broaden the investigation and could have an impact on the prosecution of those who are implicated." He says the four cadets are on "routine" study tours and will return to El Salvador May 24th.. "Salvadoran authorities have offered to bring them back sooner if necessary." Boucher says the U.S. has been "assured" by Cristiani that all the "clues" will be investigated and the process "resumed." Asked when it was "interrupted", he says he "doesn't know". He concludes, "The U.S. hopes that Cristiani, the judicial system and the Armed Forces comply with promises to investigate in depth the case that has created a strong sentiment in Congress supporting a cut in aid." (DL)
- 5/8 White House spokesperson Marlin Fitzwater reports that President Cristiani met last night with White House advisor John Sununu in Costa Rica "at the request of President Cristiani." Sununu warned Cristiani that the Jesuit investigation "is a serious matter for the U.S."..and the trial "will have a significant impact..Opposition to aid is increasing due to the Moakley Report." Fitzwater says Cristiani is "proceeding energetically" and

the U.S. "has taken his word." (Sonora) This is the first time a high level U.S. official has publicly made the connection between the case and continued aid. (DL)

- 5/8 DIARIO LATINO begins publication of the Moakley Report; PROCESO (publication of the UCA) publishes entire document.
- 5/8 Judge Zamora subpoenas two of the cadets from the Military School, Jose Wilfredo Aguilar Alvarado (Fort Benning) and Erick Otmaro Granados Moran (in Panama). (Sonora) Subpoenas also issued for two members of the Honor Commission, Major Jose Roberto Zamora Hernandez and Captain Juan Manuel Grijalva Torres; second subpoenas issued to the two civilian members who failed to appear last week, Rodolfo Parker and Antonio Augusto Gomez Zarate. (TV 12)
- 5/9 WASHINGTON POST publishes first interview with Colonel Benavides, conducted by Evans and Novak. The article entitled, "Jesuit Assassinations...Who Gave the Order?", says Benavides was "calm" throughout the 2 1/2 hour interview and responded "without hesitation" to questions. He denied having ordered the three lieutenants to assassinate the Jesuits and says he was "surprised" when he learned of the events; he "believed it was the work of the guerrillas." He was "surprised" again on January 6th when he was presented with the letter written by a U.S. officer (Major Buckland) stating that Colonel Aviles had informed him that Benavides ordered the assassinations. Aviles told Benavides he never made the accusation "but the letter prevailed" after the testimonies of Yushy Mendoza, Jose Espinoza and Gonzalo Cerritos. "Benavides does not believe the lieutenants acted on their own accord, nor does he believe there is a conspiracy in the army against him...If he was lying, he is a first-rate artist..The statements appear to be of a simple man, calm and without imagination." Benavides suggested that the three lieutenants will withdraw their accusations against him. (DL/WP)
- 5/9 Colonel Montano says he agrees with the POST. "In my personal opinion I believe Benavides is innocent and that he was hit hard by the deaths of the Jesuits..He has been condemned without a trial..I was present when he was told that he would be detained..He collaborated and made himself available for the investigation..I noted that he received the news that he would have to make a declaration with a great deal of surprise and categorically denied his participation." (LPG 5/10) "Supposedly they are looking for someone high in the Armed Forces," he says, but "you can't blame the owners of a factory for the mistakes of the workers." (TV 6)
- 5/9 Judge Zamora receives a copy of the Moakley Report in Spanish; issues second subpoenas for Lt. Col. Juan Vicente Equizabal and Major Roberto Zamora. (DL) Attorney General's office presents second formal petition for change of venue. (DH 5/10)
- 5/10 "The only person who can determine the guilt or innocence of Colonel Benavides is the judge," says Cristiani, calling for an end to speculation on the case from everyone "including members of the government." "We have freedom of expression here but these statements only impede the investigation.. We will continue our policy of not expressing any opinions on his guilt or innocence." (TV 12) The President also says the Moakley Report is "biased"... ""The case is not at a standstill..The Report contains many speculations which are sometimes treated as facts..This impedes the legal process." The Report "is only a report on the current situation..The final report will come at the end of the legal process." (TV 12)

- 5/10 Asked about his meeting with Presidential Advisor John Sununu, the President responds, "He made it clear that the assassination of the Jesuits was in the atmosphere, especially at the level of the Congress and Senate and that they are waiting for the development of the legal process..I explained what is happening now and what is to follow..I also informed him of the speculations that are occurring." (LPG 5/11)
- 5/10 The President has ordered a full investigation of the missing books and says the cadets have either returned to the country or will be here today to present declarations. (DL)
- 5/10 Defense attorneys denounce "foreign pressure..directing the course of the case." Attorney Carlos Mendez says Judge Zamora "is showing that he does not have autonomy..It is no secret that he meets with people from the U.S. to analyze the case." Legal assistant for the defense, Eulogio Barahona also deplors the "North American intervention," saying, "It is as though Salvadorans pressured the United States to tell us finally who killed Kennedy." Mendez says Benavides is an officer with a clean service record, of "irreproachable conduct." And, "They made a public scandal about the absence of the four cadets, but all third year cadets are sent to continue their weapons study in the exterior." (EM)
- 5/10 Colonel Elena Fuentes denounces the "international campaign to discredit the military institution..which, for ten years has protected our right to enjoy the democracy we have now." (TV 6)
- 5/11 Two of the cadets, Jose Wilfredo Aguilar Alvarado and Erick Otmoro Granados Moran, testify today from 9:00 - 1:00. According to a court source they deny having been on duty the night of November 15-16 in the Military School, "which contradicts the investigation commission..Either they are lying or the commission is lying," says the reporter. (TV 12)
- 5/11 The Supreme Court is not "violating the autonomy" of Judge Zamora by releasing his reports as court communiques. (LPG)
- 5/12 Noted jurist Francisco Lima says the investigation is opening up "little by little" due to pressure from the U.S. (TV 12)
- 5/14 In Paris, Archbishop Rivera y Damas reveals that he and Bishop Gregorio Rosa Chavez were on a list of persons to be "eliminated" on the night of November 15-16, along with other persons who denounce human rights violations. He says both he and the Bishop have "repeatedly" received death threats. (TV 12)
- 5/14 The two civilian members of the Honor Commission, Rodolfo Parker Soto and Dr. Antonio Augusto Gomez Zarate appear in court today after receiving second subpoenas. They deny that the Commission interrogated the accused in January. Court sources say Colonel Machuca presented his written sworn testimony to the court on May 11. (TV 12)
- 5/14 According to the testimonies of the civilian members of the Honor Commission, the Commission worked from January 5-12 but did not interrogate anyone, "only exhorted everyone to tell the truth." The Commission visited the UCA "to be certain of the events" but did not conduct an investigation and did not elaborate a written report of their work. Colonel Machuca's written testimony was received last week but General Villamariona has yet to submit a statement. (TV 12) In Colonel Machuca's statement he reportedly says the Commission "only reviewed documentation." (YSU)

- 5/15 Cadets Cesar Moises Rivera Perez and Raul Galan Hernandez appear in court today to present testimonies; no information available on their statements. (TV 6,12)
- 5/15 Jose Maria Tojeira expresses the dissatisfaction of the Jesuits with the progress of the case and says he disagrees with Benavides's declaration of innocence.. "There is sufficient proof to involve him..He wrote false information in his diary and made no effort to investigate..I believe Colonel Montano must provide evidence and promote a serious investigation..We maintain our theory that it was not only Benavides but someone with more power." "The investigation stopped in January," he continues.."They said, that is as far as it goes..The Special Investigation Unit has stopped its work..This situation reflects the interests of someone that the investigation go no further." (TV 6) "There is no willingness to go further with the case..The missing books, the problem of the cadets, the behaviour of the Honor Commission ..demonstrate that someone is trying to prevent any progress..They are attempting to blame the judicial system, which has made mistakes, but more powerful forces are responsible...Without further pressure from the U.S. the case will be forgotten." (TV 12)
- 5/15 A third communique from "Young Officers" is dated May 15 and released May 17. The letter accuses Colonels Ponce, Zepeda and Montano and General Larios, "supported by other commanders" of blocking the investigation and of ordering the execution of Captain Alfonso Chavez Garcia, the Treasury Police officer accused in the first "Young Officers Letter" of leading the operation against the Jesuits. According to the communique, Chavez did not die in combat on May 1st but was killed by a special forces team "as part of a plan to erase all clues that can lead to those truly responsible and at the same time to exonerate the officers who have been falsely involved." The letter calls for the immediate resignation of the hierarchy. (Letter)
- 5/16 Six months after the assassinations, Minister of Defense General Larios sends a letter to Judge Zamora expressing the "firm" support of the Armed Forces in efforts to "clear up" the case and the willingness of the institution to "cooperate" in facilitating declarations of any member of the military or civilian who works for the institution. He asks that all documentation or requests regarding the case be sent directly to him. (LPG)
- 5/16 Demonstrations in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, New York and Washington to protest the assassinations and demand an end to military aid. (Sonora)
- 5/16 Colonel Ochoa Perez has been subpoenaed to appear in court. (DL)
- 5/16 Although prosecutors and some members of the Honor Commission have stated that the Commission did not write a report, President Cristiani says he has the report "and will turn it over to the Judge if it is requested." (DH 5/17)
- 5/16 Statement from Supreme Court says all four cadets denied they were on duty the night of November 15-16. (YSU)
- 5/16 Supreme Court President Dr. Mauricio Gutierrez Castro, in Spain for a seminar assures the press that the Court wants the case resolved.."The process is continuing honestly and rapidly," he says, but "excessive pressure can prejudice the case." (DH 5/17)
- 5/16 "How are the police going to continue looking for evidence if their boss (Colonel Montano) says the accused are innocent?", asks Ruben Zamora. (TV 12)