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Human Rights in El Salvador

by Tait Robinson

Between 1979 and 1991 El Salvador was embroiled in a civil war that claimed over 70,000 lives. Longstanding socio-economic inequality between the rich and poor led to government-backed human rights abuses dispensed by the military. These ranged from denials of freedom and civil liberties to village massacres.

Left-wing rebels, most prominently the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), were the lone source of resistance against the government and military death squads. The assassination of leading human rights campaigner Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980 precipitated a decade of increased political violence, social turmoil and human rights violations.

The U.S. effort to ameliorate El Salvador's internal strife instead exacerbated the problems. Providing the Salvadoran government with financial and non-personnel military resources only fueled further violence between military and guerrilla forces.

U.N. intervention in 1990 resulted in the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), which facilitated formal peace accords in 1992 and observed democratic elections two years later. The rest of the 1990s were characterized by successful political and social rebuilding, and today El Salvador is a relatively prosperous democratic success story among developing countries.

General Resources

Robert Armstrong and Janet Shenk. 1982. *El Salvador, the Face of Revolution*. Boston: South End Press.

This book provides a historical overview of El Salvador and its people. It examines the El Salvadoran political climate within the broader context of that of Central America. Examines the internal and external political struggles and military conflicts during the period 1979-1992, and associated violence (guerrilla warfare, massacres, etc.) and human rights violations. Discusses the United States' role and key Salvadoran (Duarte, FMLA, Romero) and American (Reagan administration) political figures.

Cynthia Arnson. 1982. *El Salvador, a Revolution Confronts the United States*. Washington, D.C.; Amsterdam: Institute for Policy Studies; Transnational Institute.

Provides a historical foundation of political and social events leading up to and through the early part of the Cold War. Examines regional political and economic relationships, and key political figures. Specifically looks at the U.S. /El Salvador relationship up to the early part of El Salvador's civil war and the beginning of human rights violations. Serves as an early referential "point" to the "counterpoint" of later studies; i.e. what was known at the time, compared to what happened.

Cynthia Arnson (ed.). 1999. *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*. Washington, D.C.; Stanford, Calif.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Stanford University Press.

Comparative analysis with particular focus on El Salvador concerning relevant political issues, political reform, power-sharing, security reform, overview of U.S. involvement and related issues, key political and military figures involved in conflict resolution and negotiations, Alfredo Cristiani, negotiated settlement, elections, current political figures and state, search for truth and justice through conflict resolution, U.N. involvement and that of the the international and regional communities.

John A. Booth. 1991. "Socioeconomic and Political Roots of National Revolts in Central America." *Latin American Research Review*. 26(1): 33.

Abstract: Discusses the historical roots of political and social conflict. Looks at the relationship between agricultural-export development and the emergence and consolidation of authoritarian regimes. Also discussed is the importance of the military in the political arena and the role of U.S. policy, insofar as authoritarian regimes are allowed to persist. Revolutionary challenges/movements against the old order during the 1970's and 80's, and resulting peace processes bringing an end to regional conflicts are examined. Patterns of political and economic development are highlighted. El Salvador is integrated into all of the above discussions/analyses.

John A. Booth And Richard Bayer. 1998. "Civil Society, Political Capital, and Democratization in Central America." *Journal of Politics*. 60(3): 780-800.

Analyzes how civil society--and citizen activity in organizations--promulgates successful governance and democratic norms. A comparative analysis of the levels of democracy in Central American countries is performed. In El Salvador, the violent and confrontational activities by guerrilla groups and death squads are not necessarily benign forms of activism. El Salvador is of a lower democratic level than other Central American countries.

Central America Information Office. 1982. El Salvador, Background to the Crisis. Cambridge, Mass.: Central America Information Office.

Provides a comprehensive history of El Salvador, and the economic, political, social and military factors that contributed to the emergence of civil war in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Emphasis is given to post-WWII political and economic conditions as predictors of violence. Key political figures and emerging guerrilla groups are discussed.

Aviva Chomsky; Aldo Lauria-Santiago. 1998. *Identity and Struggle at the Margins of the Nation-State: The Laboring Peoples of Central America and the Hispanic Caribbean*. Durham N.C.: Duke University Press.

This book is concerned with labor, race, nation, gender and the intersections of political, cultural and socioeconomic history. It is a comparative and International working-class history of national identity and ethnicity. There is discussion of agrarian influences and internal transformation (in El Salvador and other Central American countries) as a result of non-war factors. It includes several useful tables and provides ample references to related literature.

Martin Diskin. 1985. Agrarian Reform in El Salvador: An Evaluation. San Francisco, CA: Policy Institute for Food and Development .

Discusses wide range of social, political and economic aspects of agrarian reform, and its relevance to war and unrest in El Salvador. Attention given to Duarte and Archbishop Romero.

Topics of discussion include: Junta-declared reform, bank nationalism, expropriated landlords, production cooperatives, power groups, first and second phase agrarian reform, opposition and U.S. involvement in peasant unions. Also discussed is land reform's relationship to increased armed opposition, and passage of a reform-decree preceding Romero's assassination.

James Dunkerley. 1982. *The Long War: Dictatorship and Revolution in El Salvador*. London: Junction Books.

Complete history of El Salvador throughout the emergence of civil war in the early 1980's. Specific topics include: rise of the landed oligarchy, 1930's crisis, redefining the military, a failure to modernise, "repression with reform," rise of the Left, internal crisis, the impact of Nicaragua, revolution and reaction, civil war. A complete chronology of events, a glossary of key historical figures and major organisations, and a glossary of key opposition figures is also provided.

William H. Durham. 1979. *Scarcity and Survival in Central America: Ecological Origins of the Soccer War*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

A data-based documentation of the argument that population density does not always explain resource scarcity. Includes some comparative analysis of El Salvador and other Central American nations. Discusses certain ecological factors that may lead to war and dispute, particularly in poor countries.

Richard R. Fagen. Ed. 1979. *Capitalism and the State in U.S. -Latin American Relations*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

This book highlights U.S. policies and relations towards Latin America within the specific context of capitalism as a prevailing force. Capitalism influenced U.S. regional policies in Central America, including El Salvador in the years preceding its full blown civil war. Regional economic development, democratization processes, social movements, national identity and regional equality within a capitalist context are reviewed. U.S. capitalist interests are seen as a major driving force of U.S. policy at this time, the short and long term effects of which were not then realized.

G. Flores. 2005. "She Walked from El Salvador: Caring for an Immigrant Nation." *Health Affairs (Project Hope)*. 24(2): 506.

Abstract: Living in a diverse nation inevitably requires working closely with people from a variety of backgrounds. In medicine it means that physicians must care for patients whose race, ethnicity, and language are often different from their own. What does this do to the sensitive, often complicated interactions that take place between a doctor and a patient? Does the preponderance of non-black, non-Hispanic physicians in a country that is increasingly black and Hispanic explain the poorer health outcomes that are frequently seen in these populations? Glenn Flores, a pediatrician from the Medical College of Wisconsin, explores the varieties and effects of physicians' attitudes in a short story about a recent El Salvadoran immigrant and her infant daughter. Attitude matters.

Mayra Gómez. 2003. *Human Rights in Cuba, El Salvador and Nicaragua: A Sociological Perspective on Human Rights Abuse*. New York: Routledge.

This book is a comparative analysis of internal and international factors affecting human rights abuse patterns in Central America. Insofar as international factors are concerned, the bulk of these come back to U.S. involvement and policy towards Central America, particularly with respect to El Salvador in terms of sanctioned atrocities. It is found that international factors (including governments and NGOs) can substantially influence the nature and frequency of human rights abuses. The conduct of human rights advocates and the resultant state-changes in abuse methods are also analyzed.

John L. Hammond. 1998. Fighting to Learn: Popular Education and Guerrilla War in El Salvador. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Popular education played a vital role in the twelve-year guerrilla war against the Salvadoran government. This book is a study of its pedagogy and politics. Popular education brought literacy to poor rural communities and to peasant combatants in the guerrilla army. Popular education taught people skills, raised the morale that sustained them in unequal combat, and helped create a well-bonded organizational network. Salvadoran students and teachers coped with the hardships of war and organized civilian communities politically to support a guerrilla insurgency. Poorly educated peasants overcame an imbued sense of inferiority to teach each other and work together in a common struggle. It offers both a detailed account of a historical moment and a broad theoretical discussion of the relationship between education, community organizing, and the political process.

Aldo Lauria-Santiago. 1999. An Agrarian Republic: Commercial Agriculture and the Politics of Peasant Communities in El Salvador, 1823-1914. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Aldo Lauria-Santiago and Leigh Binford. 2004. Landscapes of Struggle: Politics, Society, and Community in El Salvador. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Eric Popkin. 2003. "Transnational Migration and Development in Postwar Peripheral States: An Examination of Guatemalan and Salvadoran State Linkages with Their Migrant Populations in Los Angeles." *Current Sociology*. 51(3-4): 347.

Article examines politically motivated migration from El Salvador and Guatemala to the U.S. . The author argues that the post-war nature of these countries' insertion into the global economy call for close ties between natives and immigrants. The Salvadoran immigrant hometown organizations are more organizationally developed; greater interaction/collaboration with government officials, and a greater degree of democracy. Government policies that attempt to channel remittances will contribute little to productive development at the local level in the absence of state-supported macroeconomic policies aimed at reducing the socioeconomic disparities.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe I. Bourgois. 2004. Violence in War and Peace. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

This work is an anthropological compilation of articles and commentary from academics. Included are specific chapters pertaining to El Salvador: "From The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War (Mark Danner); "The Continuum of Violence in War and Peace: Post-

Cold War Lessons from El Salvador (Philippe Bourgois). Within the comparative context of other works, there are many similarities, differences, and lessons to be discerned.

Mitchell A. Seligson and Vincent McElhinny. 1997. "Low Intensity Warfare, High Intensity Death: The Demographic Impact of the Wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua." In Demographic Diversity and Change in the Central American Isthmus. Edited by Anne R. Pebley and Luis Rosero-Bixby. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

This work is a comparative demographic analysis of the impact of war. El Salvador's civil war is examined in a political and social light, within the broader context of demographic movement and change factors. Topics include: migration patterns, death tolls, statistical analysis, and socio-economic factors. Guerrilla and military groups, and their movements, are also examined as factors affecting post-war demographics.

Antonio Ugalde, Et Al. 2000. "The Health Costs of War: Can They Be Measured? Lessons from El Salvador." *BMJ*. 321(169).

Policy making is affected during periods of political violence: conflicting agency approaches, parallel health systems organized during war, international funding-agency conflicts, policy making conflicts. Traditional indicators (infant/maternal mortality, malnutrition, disease rates) are insufficient to measure impact of war. Selective primary care may improve these indicators even if general health status of population deteriorates. Agencies focusing on post-conflict rehabilitation tend to overlook effects of war that are less visible and more difficult to assess.

William M. LeoGrande. 2000. *Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America 1977-1992*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: UNC Press.

Abstract: In this remarkable and engaging book, William LeoGrande offers the first comprehensive history of U.S. foreign policy toward Central America in the waning years of the Cold War. From the overthrow of the Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua and the outbreak of El Salvador's civil war in the late 1970s to the final regional peace settlements negotiated a decade later, he chronicles the dramatic struggles--in Washington and Central America--that shaped the region's destiny. For good or ill, LeoGrande argues, Central America's fate hinged on decisions that were subject to intense struggles among, and within, Congress, the CIA, the Pentagon, the State Department, and the White House--decisions over which Central Americans themselves had little influence. Like the domestic turmoil unleashed by Vietnam, he says, the struggle over Central America was so divisive that it damaged the fabric of democratic politics at home. It inflamed the tug-of-war between Congress and the executive branch over control of foreign policy and ultimately led to the Iran-contra affair, the nation's most serious political crisis since Watergate. This book provides an extensive account of what gave rise to El Salvador's civil war, human rights violations that occurred during it, and its subsequent history. Focus is given to U.S. policy, including relations, motivations, and outcomes. Describes how El Salvador's--and Central America's, in general--present and future states are inextricably linked to U.S. involvement.

Key Actors

Jose Angel Moroni and David E. Spencer Bracamonte. 1995. Strategy and Tactics of the Salvadoran FMLN Guerrillas: Last Battle of the Cold War, Blueprint for Future Conflicts. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Abstract: An analysis of the Salvadoran FMLN guerrilla movement based on captured documents, interviews, and personal combat experience. This book examines the military organization, strategy, and tactics of the Salvadoran FMLN guerrillas during their efforts to overthrow the government. It is largely based on the authors' personal collections of guerrilla documents captured in the war, interviews with former and captured guerrillas, and personal combat experience during one of the fiercest wars fought in the Western hemisphere in the 20th century. The book describes the guerrilla tactics from a technical point of view, and their evolution during the war in El Salvador. Based on information acquired through personal combat experience, describes the strategy and tactics that proved most effective for the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in El Salvador for two decades and that have been adapted by other guerrilla operations in Latin America and elsewhere. Examines the general organization of the movement, force categories, special select forces, urban combat, defense, logistics, support, sanctuary, and other aspects. Annotation c. Book News, Inc., Portland, OR (booknews.com) This book offers an in-depth analysis of the FMLN during El Salvador's civil war, with particular tactical and strategic emphasis, as well as its role in the future.

Jose Napoleon and Diana Page Duarte. 1986. Duarte: My Story. New York: Penguin Group.

Abstract: After a period as military-appointed president, Duarte became El Salvador's elected leader in 1984 and is now making strides in turning the country into a true democracy. Amid the morass of conflicting information about the situation in El Salvador, Duarte's straightforward and unpretentious autobiography helps clarify the relationship between right, left and center (the latter led by Duarte himself), as well as the delicate relationship between San Salvador and Washington. His account of the laborious, frequently dangerous but ultimately successful struggle to win the allegiance of the Salvadoran army forms the core of the narrative. The book also includes an account of the investigation into the murder of the Maryknoll sisters, the story of his daughter's kidnapping by guerrillas and an analysis of the devastating effect of the "discovery" by the American media of El Salvador as a hot issue. Most readers interested in Central America will find this autobiography by El Salvador's president an insightful view into his own personality, but more importantly, into the politics of the region. This sometimes frank and self-effacing memoir offers valuable interpretations as to the role of the oligarchy and military, the nature of political repression, the interconnected world of social and political leaders, the source of guerrilla leadership, and the unfortunate interventions by the United States. Duarte captures many of the misconceptions which official Washington has about El Salvador, providing a worthwhile Latin American account of a middle-class professional's conversion to politics. Highly recommended. Roderic A. Camp, Latin American Studies Dept., Central Coll., Pella, Iowa. This book is an autobiography published before El Salvador's civil war was over, and well before peace came to the nation more than 6 years later.

Robert S. Pelton, Robert L. Ball and Kyle Markham . 2004. Monsignor Romero: A Bishop for the Third Millennium. South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press.

Abstract: Monsignor Romero: A Bishop for the Third Millennium is a collection of speeches given in honor of the late archbishop by distinguished visitors to Notre Dame." As the title implies, this book examines Romero's role as a model bishop for the new millennium. It places particular emphasis on his commitment to human rights, his innovative implementation of the option for the poor, his dedication to the Church, and his views of the role of

the laity. It is also an inspirational account of Romero's deep and abiding faith that seemingly insoluble problems can be resolved by following the Spirit.

Oscar A. Romero. 2004. *Violence of Love*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Abstract: Three Short Years transformed Archbishop Oscar Romero from a conservative defender of the status quo into one of the church's most outspoken voices on behalf of the oppressed. Though silenced by an assassin's bullet, his spirit--and the vital challenge of his life--lives on.

David E. Spencer. 1996. *From Vietnam to El Salvador: The Saga of the FMLN Sappers and Other Guerrilla Special Forces in Latin America*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated.

Abstract: Spencer provides a history of the FMLN guerrilla special forces--known collectively by the acronym FES--in El Salvador. Trained in Cuba and Vietnam and utilizing techniques taken from the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army, the FES terrorized the armed forces of El Salvador from 1981 to 1992. After reviewing their training, Spencer examines the major operations of the special forces and gives an in-depth discussion of their tactics and methods. He concludes with a look at the special forces groups in other Latin American countries. A former political and public affairs advisor to the Salvadorian military examines the guerrilla war and warriors of the liberation front in that country. His topics include their generation from models in Cuba and Vietnam, special forces techniques and operations, training, equipment, the various factions of the front and their coordination, and the influence they have had on other Latin American struggles. Annotation c. by Book News, Inc., Portland, Or.

Michael Useem and Warren Bennis. 1999. *The Leadership Moment: Nine True Stories of Triumph and Disaster and Their Lessons for Us All*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

This book chronicles nine true stories of feats of leadership. One chapter is devoted to Alfredo Cristiani, who helped transform El Salvador's decade-long civil war into a negotiated settlement.

Stephen Andrew Webre. 1979. *Jose Napoleon Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party in Salvadoran Politics, 1960-1972*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press.

This book chronicles Duarte's rise to political power in the years preceding El Salvador's civil war.

The United Nations

Americas Watch Committee. 1992. *El Salvador: Peace and Human Rights: Successes and Shortcomings of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)*. New York, N.Y.: Americas Watch.

Provides a pre-election analysis of success and failures of ONUSAL, the U.N. observer mission to El Salvador. Looks at current and competing parties in El Salvador, and a brief look ahead. Main focus is on U.N. efforts to ameliorate effects of human rights violations at the hands of guerrilla groups; how this was done, and how the positive outcomes/effects might have been enhanced.

Americas Watch Committee and Human Rights Watch. 1992. El Salvador. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Article looks at the role of the U.N. Observer Mission (ONUSAL) in El Salvador, and specifically looks at its success and failure in dealing with human rights violations in light of the political climate. Suggests reasons why certain programs worked and why certain programs did not work, and the prospects of similar success/failure in future interventions in other countries. Sheds light on the current pre-election political state in El Salvador.

Cynthia Arnson; Cynthia G. Brown; Americas Watch Committee; Human Human Rights. eds. 1994. El Salvador: Darkening Horizons: Human Rights on the Eve of the March 1994 Elections. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch/Americas.

Abstract: As El Salvador winds up the campaign for presidential, legislative, and municipal elections scheduled for March 20, 1994, no issue represents a greater threat to the peace process than the rise in political murders of leaders and grassroots activists belonging to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). These assassinations, which became more frequent, brazen, and selective in the fall of 1993, have continued into the new year. They have raised fears that notorious death squads which sowed terror in the 1980s have been reactivated if, in fact, they were ever disbanded. Several of these squads have publicly claimed credit for death threats, which have then been followed by abductions, attacks, or murders.

Cynthia Arnson; David Holiday; Juan E. Mendez; Americas Watch Committee; Human Rights Watch. 1993. El Salvador, Accountability and Human Rights: The Report of the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador. New York, N.Y.: Americas Watch.

An assessment of the veracity and utility of the Commission of Truth as a starting point for future remedial action and redress. Examines the findings of the commission and speculates how it might be used to ensure a certain level of accountability on the part of the Salvadoran government and those accused of committing human rights violations. The report may also be used as a tool for identifying future violations and implementing corrective action. Includes examination of some key political figures and groups.

Susan Burgerman. 2001. Moral Victories: How Activists Provoke Multilateral Action. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Abstract: In the 1980s, security forces and paramilitary organizations killed, abducted, or tortured an estimated 80,000 Salvadoran citizens. But such abuses were curtailed when peace talks, largely motivated by international human rights activism, led to interventions by United Nations observers who raised the degree of respect for human rights. Includes a detailed comparative study of human rights abuses in El Salvador and Guatemala from 1980 to 1996. Lays out the mechanisms by which the United Nations and transnational human rights activists have intervened in civil wars and successfully linked international peace and security with the promotion of human rights. The meaning of state sovereignty has changed over the past two decades to allow for more aggressive action in support of international moral standards.

Ingrid Kircher and Martha Doggett. 2005. Role of Human Rights in Peace Agreements: El Salvador. International Council on Human Rights Policy. Belfast, March 7-8. Paper available at http://www.ichrp.org/paper_files/128_w_04.doc.

Human rights played a central, if not unprecedented, role in the Salvadoran peace process. The United Nations was crucial in negotiating, and monitoring implementation of, the agreements. Social injustice and human rights violations played an important role in triggering and perpetuating the conflict, making it necessary for any substantive negotiations to address the root causes of the violence. The final peace accord of January 1992 included many provisions with a direct bearing on human rights. The agreements provided for an Ad Hoc Commission to purge the military of human rights violators and a Truth Commission to investigate past abuses; the replacement of military security forces by a new National Civilian Police; constitutional reforms to de-politicize the judicial system and enhance its independence; and the creation of an ombudsman's office.

Felice D. Gaer. 1995. "Reality Check: Human Rights Nongovernmental Organisations Confront Governments at the United Nations." *Third World Quarterly*. 16(3): 389.

Article explores the dichotomy between U.N. dependency on human rights information supplied by NGOs, and government resentment of NGO reports and activism. Governments often seek to limit access and participation of NGOs and challenge their own legitimacy, and that of their findings. The role of NGOs in El Salvador, with respect to the Salvadoran government and the U.N. , is explored. The following are also examined: Commission on Human Rights (Resolution 1235), Resolution 1503, ONUSAL, ECOSOC NGO committee, U.N. -appointed rapporteurs. General description of role/effects of U.N. field operations (peacekeeping operations) in El Salvador is provided.

Bill Hutchinson and Netlibrary Inc. 1998. *When the Dogs Ate Candles*. Niwot, Colo: University Press of Colorado.

Lawrence Michael Ladutke. 2004. *Freedom of Expression in El Salvador: The Struggle for Human Rights and Democracy*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

This study covers the 1992 peace accords, which include the removal of human rights abusers from the military, the creation of a truth commission, and the demilitarization of public security. Some emphasis is also given to Alfredo Cristiani and negotiated settlement. It also discusses the troubling indications that the government is once again reducing the space available for freedom of expression, including the undermining of the Office of the Human Rights Counsel, the hostile attitude of President Francisco Flores, and the evidence of internal espionage. Later chapters focus on police reform. The book concludes by presenting some suggestions for increasing freedom of expression in transitional societies such as El Salvador.

United States, Congress House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere. 1994. *The Peace Process in El Salvador: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session, March 16 and 23, 1993*. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office.

United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere. 1993. *Toward Peace in El Salvador: The Final Steps: Hearing before the*

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, House of Representatives, One Hundred Second Congress, First Session, October 30 and November 6, 1991. U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office. 0160401488.

Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2000. *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press.

A distinct type of democratic transition emerged from years of sustained popular mobilization by the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). That mobilization succeeded in transforming the political and economic interests of the country's ruling oligarchy. After decades of political exclusion and repression of the left, many elites became convinced that the only way to end the war and rebuild the country's infrastructure to support an export economy would be to allow the left to participate in the formal political process. In return, the armed left had to surrender its vision of creating a revolutionary state in El Salvador. The FMLN agreed to disarm, demobilize, and accept electoral politics as the only legitimate means to attain state power. These simultaneous transformations on the left and the right, together with a number of favorable domestic and international conditions, led to the historic signing of the Peace Accords between the FMLN and the government of El Salvador in January 1992. Also provides history of state repression, electoral fraud, guerrilla history (in 1980, five groups united to form the Marxist-Leninist insurgent group FMLN). Insurgents battled the U.S. -backed Salvadoran military for 12 years to a stalemate, forcing the country's economic and political elite to accept a negotiated settlement.

Violations During the Civil War

Americas Watch. 1990. "El Salvador: Impunity Prevails in Human Rights Cases." New York. Available on microfiche at LOC No. FICHE B 195:102.

Abstract: Despite a decade of promises by government officials to bring to justice those responsible for gross violations of human rights in El Salvador, the impunity of military officers and death squads members remains intact. Although thousands of cases of political killings, torture, and disappearances of civilians at the hands of government forces have been documented, to date, no officer has been convicted of a politically motivated human rights abuse in El Salvador. Six officers have been charged in connection with two recent massacres but have yet to be tried. The following is a status report on nine human rights cases in which prosecutions are still pending. Despite their particular visibility and significance both internationally and within El Salvador, each case is a story of the denial of justice. The way in which each case has unraveled -- investigations never completed or never initiated, trials that never occur, the persecution of witnesses or judicial officials -- sheds light on the impunity of the armed forces and death squads which allows such gross abuses to continue. This article examines the legal impunity of alleged violators of human rights. Violations were rife on the part of the military and guerrillas during the civil war. Topics and key figures include: Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Kidnapping for profit, Massacre at San Francisco, Bombing at FENASTRAS Office, Seven Young Men Killed in Cuscatancingo, Rocketing at Corral de Piedra, Killings of Members of the Press, Mauricio Pineda Deleón, B. Roberto Navas, Luis Galdámez, Slayings of Jesuits.

Americas Watch. 1992. "El Salvador: The Massacre at El Mozote, the Need to Remember." <http://www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/e/elsalvdr/elsalv923.pdf>.

Examines lessons and implications of El Mozote Massacre. Includes the following: introduction to the massacre, when the massacre became known, lack of press coverage, U.S. press accounts, perpetrators, guerrilla groups (Morazan), National Civil Police, Reagan administration response, Congressional Hearings, Atlacatl Battalion and U.S. policy, U.S. government response to massacres, "official story," and current status of the case. The largest mass killing during the war, it fueled the growth of the guerrilla movement.

Americas Watch Committee. 1991. *El Salvador's Decade of Terror: Human Rights since the Assassination of Archbishop Romero*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

A comprehensive account of human rights violations. Documents the civil war between an armed insurgency and the military-backed government--including related actors and groups--and explains how it precipitated a decade of political violence that cost tens of thousands of civilian lives. Impact of U.S. policy and general relations is examined.

Americas Watch Committee; Helsinki Watch and Rights Lawyers Committee for International Human. 1985. "In the Face of Cruelty": The Reagan Administration's Human Rights Record in 1984. New York, NY 36 W. 44th St., New York 10036: Americas Watch Committee. Out of print.

This article takes a look at U.S. policy towards El Salvador specifically in 1984. It examines actions taken towards El Salvador in light of the fact that it was a re-election year for the Reagan administration. The article discusses policy initiatives that ultimately led to human rights violations in El Salvador.

Americas Watch Committee; Helsinki Watch; Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights; 1984. Failure: the Reagan Administration's Human Rights Policy in 1983. New York, N.Y. 36 W. 44th St., New York 10036: Americas Watch. Out of print.

Examines U.S. foreign policy towards El Salvador during Reagan's first term. Particularly looks at U.S. policies as being indirectly violative of human rights, in terms of promulgating new, and exacerbating existing, problems. Discusses the advisory and financial-support role of the U.S. , especially from a legal perspective. Looks at the prospects and implications for similar future U.S. policy methods.

Americas Watch Committee and Watch Human Rights. 1990. El Salvador. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

Examines cases of human rights violations throughout 1990. Specifically looks at the judicial trend to rule in favor of the accused in terms of accountability. Looks at reasons why this is the case, and how these decisions are arrived at in light of seemingly insurmountable evidence to the contrary. The political, social and judicial culture is balanced together as a whole in light of a history of war and violations, and ultimately leads to different standards and motivations for authoritative punishment.

Americas Watch Committee and Human Rights Watch. 1991. *El Salvador*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

Looks at the Jesuit trial, what gave rise to the associated perpetrated human rights violations. Discusses the political and social climate when the violations occurred, as well as during the trial. Examines the longstanding effects of the human rights violations on judicial proceedings future political developments (i.e. potential future democratic elections).

Americas Watch Committee and Human Rights Watch. 1992. *El Salvador*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

Particular focus of this article is on the long-term political and social effects of the El Mozote massacre on the Salvadoran people and government. Contains references to other related works that have been published by different organizations, authors and academics. Looks at El Mozote within the greater context of related human rights violations that likely occurred as a result of the El Mozote massacre, as perpetrated by guerrilla groups that likely formed as a result of the El Mozote massacre.

Americas Watch Committee and Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights. 1984. *Free Fire: A Report on Human Rights in El Salvador, August 1984, Fifth Supplement*. New York, N.Y.: Americas Watch Committee: Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights. Out of print.

A 1984 examination of current human rights violations at the hands of warring guerrilla and military groups in El Salvador. Includes discussion of the effects of U.S. involvement and policy, from the related political and economic standpoints. Discusses the rise and scope of current violations and the potential for future civil and political strife.

Americas Watch Committee. 1988. *Human Rights in El Salvador on the Eve of Elections, 1988*. New York, NY 36 W. 44th St., New York 10036: Americas Watch Committee.

Assesses human rights violations in El Salvador, from their gestation in the late 1970's to their widescale implementation as a form of political persecution and repression up through 1988. Romero, Duarte, El Mozote, FMLN and ARENA are examined. Political parties' engagement in human rights violations and their impact on elections is provided.

Americas Watch Committee. 1985. *The Continuing Terror: Seventh Supplement to the Report on Human Rights in El Salvador*. New York: Americas Watch Committee.

Examines the state of human rights and human rights violations in El Salvador up through 1985. The report precedes direct U.N. involvement, looks at U.S. foreign policy. Provides a look at guerrilla groups and tactics in terms of carrying out human rights violations as a matter of policy. Discusses prospects for future U.N. action.

Cynthia Arnson. 1993. *Crossroads: Congress, the President, and Central America, 1976-1993*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Examines the struggles over formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy towards Central America. Examines then-recently declassified information requests stemming from the

Freedom of Information Act. Discussion of the Salvadoran policy debates is carried through to the end of the Bush administration. Other points of emphasis include: Central America and the Post-Vietnam Congress, Congressional discovery of Central America (1976-80), the Reagan Offensive (1981), Congressional responses (standoffs, half-measures; 1982), Reagan's more active role (1983), driving policies (1984), presidential triumph (1985-86), policy collapse (1987-88), the Bush years (1988-92), major political figures, conclusion and epilogue.

Cynthia Arnson and David Holiday. 1991. El Salvador and Human Rights: The Challenge of Reform. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

Provides overview of then-recent national history, specifically political persecution. Looks at civil war, human rights violations, current political state, prospects for elections including potential people and parties. Examines the influence of the U.S. and the role of the U.N. to date. Looks at political and social issues that need to be addressed (including redress of human rights violations) and future prospects.

Cynthia Arnson; Aryeh Neier; Susan Benda. 1984. As Bad as Ever: A Report on Human Rights in El Salvador, January 31, 1984 (Fourth Supplement). New York, N.Y.; Washington, D.C.: Americas Watch Committee; American Civil Liberties Union.

An assessment of human rights violations in El Salvador couched within a somewhat comparative context of civil liberties violations in the U.S. . Looks at similarities and differences and the prospects of remedial action; from accusation to judicial and civil accountability. Article is also of interest due to its publication; it came out before many of the more widespread human rights violations occurred later in the 1980's.

A. J. Bacevich and Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis. 1988. American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador. Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's.

The book examines El Salvador as being a test case for assessing the effectiveness of U.S. counter-insurgency strategy. From a policy perspective, discusses how the Pentagon and State Department conducted themselves in/towards El Salvador. The book asserts that El Salvador represented an experiment to attempt to reverse the record of American failure in waging small wars--comparisons to Vietnam are rife--through a concerted effort to defeat an insurgency by providing training and military support without committing American troops to combat.

Leigh Binford. 1996. The El Mozote Massacre: Anthropology and Human Rights. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Discusses reduction of cultural distance in human rights reporting. Topics include: the make-up of the El Mozote community and subsequent massacre, the El Salvadoran oligarchy and guerrilla make-up, U.S. involvement and cover-up, political repression and survival in northern Morazan. Discusses the role of a judiciary--from investigation to judgment--even as part of a reformed military arm. Historical and anthropological analysis is provided, specifically focusing on social and economic trends towards civil war.

Raymond Bonner. 1984. Weakness and Deceit: U.S. Policy and El Salvador. New York, N.Y.: Times Books.

Book is based on the author's experiences/research in El Salvador from 1981-1982. Also referenced are documents and cables released under the Freedom of Information Act. Provides social and political history and perspectives. By 1982, El Salvador was the fourth-largest U.S. aid recipient due to fears of Marxist attitudes in Central America. Discusses the attitudes of both Washington agencies and Congressional committees pertaining to publicized human rights violations, insofar as the formulation and implementation of policy is concerned. Topics include: death squads, Salvadoran military, guerrilla groups, political figures. A comprehensive real-time analysis of U.S. foreign relations in a third world country during a civil war with no end in sight.

Cynthia G. Brown. 1982. July 20, 1982 Supplement to the Report on Human Rights in El Salvador. New York, N.Y.; Washington, DC: Americas Watch Committee; American Civil Liberties Union.

Examines civil rights and political tensions in the aftermath of the El Mozote massacre and Archbishop Romero's assassination. Duarte's election in 1980 serves as a backdrop to growing social unrest and guerrilla violence. A look at more widespread human rights violations that were occurring on a larger scale and in a more organized fashion. This took place in the early stages of U.S. involvement and well before U.N. intervention.

Holly Burkhalter; Aryeh Neier; Americas Watch Committee. 1985. Managing the Facts: How the Administration Deals with Reports of Human Rights Abuses in El Salvador. New York, N.Y.: Americas Watch Committee.

An examination of some of the processes and considerations taken into account by the Reagan administration with respect to human rights violations in El Salvador. Specifically, how an administration deals with potential conflicts of interest or priority among competing internal and external organizations. Sifting through potential propaganda is necessary to determine credible information that can be relied upon, particularly during a time of war.

Martin Diskin. 1983. *Trouble in Our Backyard: Central America and the United States in the Eighties*. New York: Pantheon Books.

This book provides a comprehensive review of foreign relations between the United States and Central America, highlighting key historical and political events that occurred independent of, and in relation to, one another. Focuses on the buildup to financial and political trouble that emerged in Central America in the early 1980's, specifically as it pertains to the role played by the U.S. . Highlights key role players in the U.S. and Central America.

Martin Diskin and Kenneth Evan Sharpe. 1986. The Impact of U.S. Policy in El Salvador, 1979-1985. Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California.

This book examines the influence of U.S. policies towards El Salvador during the first six years of its civil war. Topics cover the ousting of General Carlos Romero as president, the rise of the FMLN, U.S. responses to Duarte's election in 1980, the U.S.'s stance as a supporter of the Salvadoran government in the face of French and Mexican recognition of the FMLN as a political force, the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), Duarte's reelection in 1984. The Reagan administration's methods and support is couched against the disparate reality of the

political and social reality in El Salvador. Overall short and long-term implications of the impact of U.S. policy is provided.

Mark Engler. 1999. *The Battle for Human Rights in El Salvador (1975-1999)*. Available upon request at http://www.democracyuprising.com/articles/older/es_hr.php.

An analytical history of human rights in El Salvador. The author examines rhetorical statements and practical commitments made in the name of rights, thereby attempting to elucidate the changing content, tone, and spirit of the Salvadoran human rights discourse over the past twenty years. The author offers a periodization of human rights in El Salvador, delineating three stages in the formation of rights discourse. The liberal discourse formed in El Salvador--especially with the contributions of international monitoring groups and the U.S. State Department--effectively denounced the Salvadoran government's violation of civil and political rights. A rights discourse also developed from the vision of many martyred Salvadorans, giving rise to a more socially--and economically-oriented language that is especially important today, as the country reconstructs and transforms itself. Also discussed are recent battles against neoliberalism its effects on second and third generation rights; further evidence of the politicized nature of different rights claims.

James Goldston; Jemera Rone; Human Rights Watch. *A Year of Reckoning: El Salvador a Decade after the Assassination of Archbishop Romero*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

There are thousands of cases of death squad killings in El Salvador, yet Salvadorans are at a loss for justice since virtually none of the responsible parties have been brought to trial. Impunity prevails due to a largely complicit judiciary and executive branch of government. Internal and external political or social pressure has little effect. The 1987 Amnesty Bill exemplifies the corruption and remains a primary problem for future trials of justice. Specific U.S. -Salvadoran relations within this scope involve extraditions which may or may not eventuate.

Michael T. Klare; Cynthia Arnson; Institute for Policy Studies. 1981. *Supplying Repression: U.S. Support for Authoritarian Regimes Abroad*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Policy Studies.

This book contains a vast amount of data tables delineating U.S. aid and corporate sales to foreign countries in the areas of military and police training, narcotics control, and arms transfers. Related historical and current political analysis is provided. It is suggested that U.S. corporations and governmental agencies are involved in the supply of repressive technology and techniques to many of the world's more authoritarian regimes. It is further asserted that Congressional measures in 1974 to restrict arms and training assistance to foreign police forces were unsuccessful.

Lawyers Committee for Human Rights. 1989. *Underwriting Injustice: Aid and El Salvador's Judicial Reform Program*. New York, NY: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights.

El Salvador's judicial reform program was inhibited by the passing of an amnesty law in 1987 that granted virtual impunity to purported human rights violators during the nation's civil war. Internal and international political forces have not been effective in turning perceived culpability into trials for justice. USAID's role in this process is examined, as are current and potential future obstacles to further judicial reform.

Aryeh Neier; Juan Méndez; Americas Watch Committee; American Civil Liberties Union. 1983. July 19, 1983, Third Supplement to the Report on Human Rights in El Salvador. New York, N.Y.; Washington, D.C.: Americas Watch Committee; American Civil Liberties Union.

A report of civil rights and civil liberties violations at the hands of government, military, and guerrilla groups during the early years of El Salvador's civil war. Discusses the current and future implications of increasing human rights violations throughout the nation. Discusses the potential role of outside organizations and foreign intervention as methods of abatement.

United States, Congress, House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign and Service Library of Congress. Congressional Research. 1993. Comparison of U.S. Administration Testimony and Reports with 1993 U.N. Truth Commission Report on El Salvador: Report. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office.

A comprehensive U.N. -sponsored review of the war in El Salvador between 1980 and 1991. Looks at the following: mandate, methodology, applicable law, chronology of violence (including cases and patterns), violence against opponents by agents of the state, murders of Jesuit priests, extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, massacres of peasants by armed forces, death squad assassinations, FMLA violence, execution of mayors, murders of judges, abductions, recommendations, and epilogue. Also provides comprehensive list and descriptions of people and places.

United States Congress, House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Human Rights and International and Affairs United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere. 1988. Human Rights and Political Developments in El Salvador, 1987: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations and the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundredth Congress, First Session, September 23 and 29, 1987. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office, U.S. G.P.O.

United States Congress, House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Human Rights and International; Affairs United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere. 1990. El Salvador at the Crossroads: Peace or Another Decade of War: Hearings before the Subcommittees on Human Rights and International Organizations, and on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred First Congress, Second Session, January 24, 31, and February 6, 1990. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office, U.S. G.P.O.

United States Congress, House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere. 1989. From Duarte to Cristiani: Where Is El Salvador Headed? Hearing before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred First Congress, First Session, Thursday, July 13, 1989. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office, U.S. G.P.O.

Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Explores the reasons that individuals participated in the rural insurgency. Success of the FMLN (and similar armed insurgent groups) was largely due to the high level of support it received from “campesinos” - a person engaged in agricultural activities. Campesinos provided the foundation of the rural insurgency at great risk to their lives, and incurred disproportionate levels of suffering. Author argues that traditional explanations of revolutionary mobilization--class struggle, political opportunity structures, solidarity among peasant communities, relative deprivation are incomplete. Author's alternative explanation: civilian supporters chose to contribute to the insurgency mainly for the participatory moral/affective benefits. Also discussed are local landlords, mid-level FMLN commanders, military officers, members of the government, members of the United Nations mission in El Salvador, and workers with various government agencies and NGO's.

Websites

Human Rights Watch. <http://hrw.org/doc/?t=americas&c=elsalv>.

Site is devoted to expanding human rights knowledge and awareness, providing a comprehensive list of reports, briefings, papers, books, maps and other general information on El Salvador, generally, and human rights, specifically. Contains links to “Americas Watch” material, which closely followed the civil war and documented most major developments as they pertained to human rights violations. Contains a vast amount of information on El Salvador, and numerous links and references to television films/programs about the country. Many of these are focused on the civil war and human rights violations. Contains specific information on political figures, parties, guerrilla groups, etc. Provides much historical and current information and reference material.

U. S. Department of State. 2003. *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002*.
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18331.htm>.

United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador.
http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/onusal.htm.

A complete history of ONUSAL, from its creation to its status as a “Completed Peacekeeping Operation.” Also includes links to its Background, Mandate, Facts and Figures, Maps, and a comprehensive list of related United Nations documents. UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN EL SALVADOR ONUSAL (July 1991 -- April 1995) ONUSAL was established in July 1991 to verify implementation of all agreements between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional, including a ceasefire and related measures, reform and reduction of the armed forces, creation of a new police force, reform of the judicial and electoral systems, human rights, land tenure and other economic and social issues.

United States Institute Of Peace. http://www.usip.org/library/truth.html#el_salvador

Contains general information about human rights violations, and past and present peace keeping initiatives, in El Salvador. Contains numerous links to related sites and publications. Has a complete digital archive of the U.N. -mandated "Commission on the Truth for El Salvador," which examines all aspects of civil war from 1979-1991.