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Human Rights in Honduras

by Andrea DeGaetani

Honduras' history of human rights violations is rooted in a political culture of militarization. Following a military coup in 1963, Honduras faced strengthened military authority and a decade of harsh military rule. It was also during this time that the United States used the country as a base for Contras fighting leftist Sandinistas in Nicaragua. In 1981 Honduras returned to a parliamentary democracy, electing Roberto Suazo Cordova as president. However, by then the process of militarization had been so heavily funded by the U.S and had made such a significant impact on public policy that little changed for the better. The 1980s, then, were characterized by a major increase in rights violations, as armed forces, having been ousted by civilian government, remained very much in control.

Over the first half of the 1980s, military aid from the U.S—alongside violence and warfare across borders—increased dramatically. Under the authority of General Gustavo Alvarez Martinez and his infamous death squad Battalion 3-16, Honduras broke its tradition of international neutrality by illegally arresting Salvadoran refugees and their supporters. Over the next few years victims came to include laborers, agrarians, and students suspected of leftist activism, all of whom were targets for more severe violations such as extrajudicial murder, torture, and disappearances. Battalion 3-16, backed by the CIA, operated secret detention centers where victims were interrogated, often beaten to death, and then buried in secret burial grounds. While the U.S. is not suspected of playing an active role in these atrocities, it was still a major actor in that it not only funded the Honduran military, but also withheld reports and ignored indisputable evidence of human rights violations.

Faced with criticism for violations in the 1980s, the Honduran and U.S. governments have denied that any wrongdoing took place, and have blamed the Sandinista regime for threatening Honduran stability with propaganda and exaggerated Committee for the Defense of Human Rights reports. For their part, the military's own country reports have allegedly made repeated excuses and under-reported figures. It was not until 1994 that a president was elected who, on behalf of civilians and in response to outside pressure, began to demand accountability for the violations of the 1980s. The army protested this by deploying tanks to the streets, sending death threats to government officials and rights activists, and through on-air propaganda aiming to justify past violations. These were all means to illustrate how powerful the military still considered itself.

Because of its significant role in Honduras' military history, human rights violations, and related political and social instability, the United States is arguably obligated to engage in commissions for reconciliation. The U.S., however, either denies or justifies the violations. At the same time, civilian governance remains weak as officers of the Honduran armed forces continue to hold high government positions. Goals for democratic governance, separation of military and police forces, and minor policy reforms have all been small but encouraging steps toward greater respect for human rights in Honduras. Yet, it seems that political frustration and human rights violations will persist, at least until relevant actors can make efforts to repair the effects of this unfortunate past.

A Legacy

Consuelo Cruz and Rut C. Diamint. 1998. "The New Military Autonomy in Latin America." *Journal of Democracy*. 9(4): 115.

Discusses how government and the armed forces in Latin American countries have remained closely linked even after movements toward democracy. Connects extreme military rule in the 1980s with military entrepreneurship in the 1990s; in Honduras, officers are "deeply involved in commercial ventures."

Andreas E. Feldmann and Maiju Perala. 2004. "Reassessing the Causes of Nongovernmental Terrorism in Latin America." *Latin American Politics & Society*. 46(2): 101.

Abstract: For years, nongovernmental terrorism in Latin America was considered an epiphenomenon of the Cold War. The persistence of this type of political violence in the 1990s, however, not only belied many assumptions about its causes but also led scholars to reexamine the phenomenon. This article investigates the validity of a number of hypotheses by applying a pooled time-series cross-section regression analysis to data from 17 Latin American countries between 1980 and 1995. Findings indicate that nongovernmental terrorist acts in Latin America are more likely to occur in poorly institutionalized regimes characterized by varying degrees of political and electoral liberties, a deficient rule of law, and widespread human rights violations. The analysis also shows that nongovernmental terrorism in the region tends to surface in cyclical waves; but it finds no association between economic performance or structural economic conditions and the incidence of nongovernmental terrorism.

David Gonzalez. 1999. "Rebel War Comes Back to Haunt Honduran Base." *New York Times*. 149(51669): A3.

Abstract: Focuses on the August 1999 assertion from farmers that the El Aguacate military base in Honduras was the home of political prisoners who were tortured and killed. Call from human rights advocates for an investigation on the military base; Honduran political prisoners who disappeared during the 1980s; Speculations on the farmers' assertion.

David Gonzalez. 2002. "Rights Workers in Honduras Still Live in Fear." *New York Times*. 152(52253): A3.

Connects violence against human rights workers in Honduras today with distrust of police force and lingering effects of past impunity for gangs and military violations in the 1970s and 1980s.

Terry Lynn Karl. 1995. "The Hybrid Regimes of Central America." *Journal of Democracy*. 6(3): 72.

Discusses aspects of democratization in Latin America, including Honduras' first presidential election in 1981 and the shifts in power that followed thereafter. Argues that optimism for a true and peaceful democracy in Honduras is low because military impunities linger, repression continues, and domestic forces remain relatively weak.

Donald E. Linger. 1996. "Public Personnel Management and Democratization: A View from Three Central American Republics." *Public Administration Review*. 56(4): 390.

Abstract: Is the success of democratization efforts in developing countries tied to the quality of public administration? Based on an evaluation of three Central American countries (Honduras, Panama, and Costa

Rica), Donald Klingner claims that democratization and public personnel management are closely related. Although each country's development must be viewed in the light of its own conditions, public personnel management in these countries has evolved through a relatively uniform process, in three stages: (1) political patronage; (2) a transition to merit systems marked by passage of a civil service law, creation of an effective civil service agency, and elaboration of effective personnel policies and procedures; and (3) a dynamic equilibrium among the desirable but contradictory objectives that characterize public personnel management in developed countries. Because this process is essentially similar to the evolution of the field in the United States, it is possible that a general evolutionary model can be developed to predict or explain the relationship between democratization and enhanced public personnel management in developing countries.

Scott Leckie. 2003. National Perspectives on Housing Rights. The Hague; New York: Martinus Nijhoff.

Discusses the history of militarization and human rights violations in Honduras, and connects this past to the contemporary housing rights crisis.

Gil Loescher. 1988. "Humanitarianism and Politics in Central America." *Political Science Quarterly*. 103(2): 295.

Ties the current refugee situation in Honduras to history, geopolitics, and border tensions. Refugee policy remains in the hands of the military, making it a national security issue, especially in regards to Salvadoran refugees who are denied rights to work and travel. Many have remained in camps near Honduran military zones subject to harassment.

J. Mark Ruhl. 2004. "Curbing Central America's Militaries." *Journal of Democracy*. 15(3): 137.

Argues that in the 1960s Honduras military achieved political hegemony, but claims that since the turn of the century this has declined because of military downsizing and budget cuts, as well as constitutional reform that separates the military from the police force. The democratization process remains incomplete, however, because the military still has "de facto institutional autonomy."

Chandra Lekha Sriram. 2004. "Confronting Past Human Rights Violations: Justice Vs. Peace in Times of Transition." In *The Cass Series on Peacekeeping*. London; New York: Frank Cass.

Outlines the transition from a military to civilian government by discussing past and future roles of the military in Honduras. Amnesties protecting certain actors in rights violations have impeded justice and were not reversed until 1995. Since then there has been progress in budget and institutional reform, but Sriram says accountability is inhibited by general fear of the military. Democratic progress is slow because military officials and perpetrators of past violations still hold high government positions.

Ginger Thompson and Dan Alder. 2004. "Shuttling between Nations, Latino Gangs Confound the Law. (Cover Story)." *New York Times*. 154(52984): 1.

Abstract: *Focuses on Latino gangs and street violence. How the spread of gangs across Central America, Mexico and the U.S. has set off a crime wave; Perception of the gangs in Honduras and El Salvador as a threat to national security; Counterinsurgency strategies against gangs; Concerns of human rights advocates and community leaders that aggressive measures governments are taking gangs have not solved the problem; How gangs are moving*

north, spreading their gang culture; Background on two gangs in Los Angeles, California; Overview of the problem; Why some gang members are having their tattoos removed; Implications of deporting gang members to their home countries.

NGO Reports

1999. "Mass Graves and Torture Chambers Found at Contra Base." NACLA Report on the Americas. 33(2): 2.

Abstract: Reveals that investigators had found three mass graves and secret prison cells at the former military base at El Aguacate in Honduras. Purpose of El Aguacate military base; Statement issued by Sara Ponce, special prosecutor for human rights on the findings at El Aguacate military base; Charges of Ponce against the Honduran military concerning El Aguacate.

Americas Watch Committee and Human Rights Watch. 1990. Honduras. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch/Americas.

Americas Watch Committee and Human Rights Watch. 1991. Honduras. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch/Americas.

Americas Watch Committee and Center for Justice and International Law. 1994. Honduras: The Facts Speak for Themselves: The Preliminary Report of the National Commissioner for the Protection of Human Rights in Honduras. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Emphasizes the disappearances in Honduras in the 1980s, first by detailing what they entailed, then by citing fourteen specific cases and testimonies from individuals who were involved. Concludes that in spite of general indolence as a response to violations, there were Honduran nationals and media that did much to relay the truth. Makes recommendations regarding victim compensation, prevention of recurrence through land reform, accountability, and guarantees for civilian political control.

Anne Manuel and Americas Watch Committee. 1987. Human Rights in Honduras: Central America's 'Sideshow'. New York, NY: Americas Watch Committee.

Anne Nelson; Jemera Rone and Americas Watch Committee. 1986. Human Rights in Honduras after General Alvarez. New York, NY: Americas Watch Committee.

Responses to Violations: International and National

1985. "Death Squads & Contras." *Newsweek*. 105(5): 38.

Abstract: Hondurans have long suspected that the U.S.-backed contras were more than incidentally connected to the 'death squads' that have harassed and killed hundreds of people inside Honduras. A confidential military report has now confirmed the public's suspicions. The report has drawn a cool response from Honduran human-rights activists. A controversy also surrounds U.S. knowledge of such activities.

1996. "Honduras to Pursue Trial for Officers." *New York Times*. 145(50300): 5.

Abstract: Reports on Edmundo Orellana's, Attorney General of Honduras challenge of an appellate court's ruling that 10 military officers could not be charged in civilian courts for human rights abuses. Details of court's ruling; Praise from President Carlos Roberto Reina; Number of days Supreme Court has to confirm or change ruling; Comments by Orellana.

1988. "Murders Most Foul." *Time*. 131(5): 28.

Abstract: The government of Honduras is on trial in Costa Rica before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. In the landmark case, Honduras has been charged with 'integral responsibility' in the disappearance and presumed murder of citizens by army death squads.

Jay Branegan and William Dowell. 2001. "With Friends Like These." *Time Europe*. 157(20): 47.

Abstract: Discusses relations between the United States and the United Nations. How the U.S. was secretly voted off the U.N. Human Rights Commission, and responded by threatening to withhold dues; Nomination of John Negroponte as U.S. envoy to the U.N.; His career as a diplomat; Questions about his role as U.S. ambassador to Honduras in the 1980s; Opinion that as an envoy, he will need to work against the perception that the U.S. is arrogantly independent on important issues.

Reed Brody and Felipe Gonzalez M. 1997. "Nunca Mas: An Analysis of International Instruments on "Disappearances"." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 19(2): 365.

Abstract: Twenty years after Latin American military dictatorships shocked the conscience of the world by "disappearing" their political opponents, the United Nations and the Organization of American States have adopted standards that seek to prevent and punish this grisly practice. This article reviews the process of the development of these standards and examines the extent to which they respond to the concerns raised by human rights groups and families of the disappeared.

Gill Donovan. 2003. "Jesuits Take Murder Cases to Human Rights Board." *National Catholic Reporter*. 39(13): 7.

Abstract: Reports on the decision of Jesuits in Honduras to take three murder cases to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights due to their frustration over the lack of justice in the country. Presentation of petitions before the commission asking for its intervention in the cases of assassinated Honduras environmental activists.

Robert H. Holden and Eric Zolov. 2000. Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History. New York: Oxford University Press.

Includes: the 1987 Esquipulas II Accords agreed to by the governments of Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua; documentation of Honduras' role in sweat-shop labor in 1996; Ronald Reagan's statement on "The Fear of Communism in Central America," which includes Honduras and the contra bases; and an excerpt from the International Court of Justice in 1986 condemning the U.S. for using Honduras and other countries to fight guerilla warfare and then leaving without helping to ensure stability.

William M. Leogrande. 1984. "Slouching toward the Quagmire." *Nation*. 238(3): 72.

Abstract: Reports on the failure of the strategies used by the U.S. government to solve the political crisis in Central America. Refusal of the El Salvadoran regime to carry out agrarian reforms or curb human rights abuses; Negative impact of the creation of counterrevolutionary in Nicaragua on the political stability in Honduras.

Naomi Roht-Arriaza and Margaret Popkin. 1995. "Truth as Justice: Investigatory Commissions in Latin America (in Symposium: Law and Lustration: Righting the Wrongs of the Past)." *Law & Social Inquiry*. Vol. 20(No. 1): 79.

Abstract: In recent years, Latin American countries have sought to come to terms with prior periods of widespread human rights violations, relying increasingly on investigatory commissions. Investigatory efforts have been undertaken by democratically elected governments that replaced military dictatorships, by U.N. -sponsored commissions as part of a U.N. -mediated peace process, and by national human rights commissioners. This article examines truth commissions in Chile and El Salvador, an investigatory effort in Honduras, and a proposed commission in Guatemala. It compares the achievements and limitations of these commissions within the political constraints and institutional reality of each country, focusing on four major goals: the effort to create an authoritative account of the past; vindication of victims; recommendations for legislative, structural, or other changes to avoid repetition of past abuses; and establishing accountability or the identity of perpetrators.

Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies. 1975. Latin America and the United States: Past, Present and Future. San Diego: San Diego State University Press.

Explains why 1980s human rights violations in Central America incited political activism among U.S. citizens. In 1986, courts rejected the U.S. claim of self-defense in its unethical intervention against Nicaragua, and found the U.S. guilty of violating past treaties and international law. Honduras along with much of Central America was left unstable; Lists and defines the procedures elicited in the 1987 Esquipulas II Accords established by the presidents of Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to ensure "Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America."

Naomi Roht-Arriaza and Lauren Gibson. 1998. "The Developing Jurisprudence on Amnesty." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 20(4): 843.

Connects 1980s increase in violence with militarization sponsored by the U.S. Mentions Battalion 3-16 and the emergence of state terrorism. President Callejas commissioned Leo Valladares to investigate and report on human rights abuses, after which Honduran courts began to prosecute people involved in disappearances; this has been slow because of past amnesty laws. Discusses the role of international law in jurisprudence on amnesties.

Larry Rohter. 1995. "Honduras Confronts Military Atrocities of the 80s." *New York Times*. 145(50282): A10.

Abstract: Presents information on civilian efforts to prosecute the Honduran military for human rights violations during a decade long war. Defiance by commander of armed forces; Central Intelligence Agency's role; What Hondurans discovered; Details on inquiry; Comments from the Director of Central Intelligence, John M. Deutch.

Scott Shane. 2005. "Intelligence Nominee Comes under Renewed Scrutiny on Human Rights." *New York Times*. 154(53130): A13.

Abstract: Discusses the challenges faced by John D. Negroponte, U.S. President Bush's nominee as director of national intelligence. Human rights advocates criticisms against Negroponte; Description of the repeated scrutiny which was faced by Negroponte for his work as envoy to Honduras from 1981 to 1985.

Sarah Wildman. 2001. "Contra Aide." *New Republic*. 224(12): 20.

Abstract: Criticizes President George W. Bush for appointing John D. Negroponte, former U.S. ambassador to Honduras, as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Assertion that Negroponte did not support human rights in Honduras despite obvious government abuses; Comment on Negroponte's support for Nicaragua's anti-Communist Contra rebels; Comment on Negroponte's allegedly amoral approach to politics.

The Role of the Honduran Military

1995. "Honduran Hell." *Progressive*. 59(8): 10.

Abstract: Commends the 'Baltimore Sun' for exposing the United States government's involvement in human-rights violations in Honduras. U.S. President Ronald Reagan's establishment of a death squad; Accounts of the atrocities of the secret army; Death squads as part of government's military and tactical policy.

Amnesty International. 1988. *Honduras: Civilian Authority, Military Power: Human Rights Violations in the 1980s*. London, U.K.: Amnesty International Publications.

Outlines the human rights Covenants to which Honduras is a party. The government not only commits violations in spite of its obligations, but has denied and or made excuses for them. Gives background within a regional context on Honduran military, armed opposition, and the evolution of "death squads." Makes conclusions about specific violations—torture, illegal arrest, disappearances, and intimidation—and recommends a twelve-step program for preventing torture.

Paula Church. 1995. "Honduran Officers Charged with '80s Abuses." *National Catholic Reporter*. 32(2): 8.

Abstract: Reports that Honduran military forces are being held accountable for human rights violations committed during the 1980s. Charges filed; Use of information from United States documents.

Iain Guest; Diane Orentlicher and Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights. 1985. *Honduras, a Crisis on the Border: A Report on Salvadoran Refugees in Honduras*. New York: Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights.

Discusses the crisis that ensued when the Honduran government began to either move Salvadoran refugees from border camps to the interior, or make them repatriate. The author suspects coercion, which would contradict Honduras' long-standing ideal for voluntary repatriation or emigration. The relocation project sparked hostility toward refugees and relief workers; when the project was cancelled, violations did not cease. Details specific incidents on the border, and recommends letting refugees stay where they are, but increasing security.

Cynthia Hanson and Abraham McLaughlin. 1995. "The Honduran Army Sent Tanks into the Streets." *Christian Science Monitor*. 87(175): 2.

Abstract: Reports the deployment tanks by the Honduran Army in Tegucigalpa in support of soldiers implicated in human rights abuses.

Anne Manuel; Juan E. Méndez and Committee Americas Watch. 1989. Honduras--without the Will. New York, NY: Americas Watch.

Debora S. Munczek. 1998. "Short-Term Treatment of a Central American Torture Survivor." *Psychiatry: Interpersonal & Biological Processes*. 61(4): 318.

Abstract: Describes the short-term treatment of Luis, a young Honduran man severely tortured and illegally incarcerated for a year by the country's armed forces. Background on the author's mental health and human rights work in Honduras; Discussion of issues that arise in the treatment of survivors of torture and persecution.

Mark Rosenberg and Philip L. Shepherd. 1986. Honduras Confronts Its Future: Contending Perspectives on Critical Issues. Boulder, Colo.: L. Rienner Publishers.

A compilation of perspectives on issues of human rights, democracy, economic development, and agricultural reform in Honduras. The human rights and social justice focus includes essays on the history of human rights violations in Honduras, human rights in a Central American context, the nature of past crises, and the parameters of human rights protection.

The Role of the U.S. Military

1984. "Honduran Launching Pad." *Progressive*. 48(4): 12.

Abstract: Comments on the U.S. government's transformation of Honduras into a launching pad for attacks on the Nicaraguan government and the Salvadoran rebels. Former ambassador John Negroponte's task of orchestrating the buildup; His familiarity with airpower and his record of disregard for human rights; Claim of Negroponte that the facilities are for contingency use.

Kirk S. Bowman. 2002. *Militarization, Democracy, and Development: The Perils of Praetorianism in Latin America*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

A comparative analysis of Honduras and Costa Rica, Bowman shows how institutionalized military autonomy and Cold-war influence from the U.S. has inhibited development—democratic and economic equality—in Latin America. Militarization has been dramatic and Honduras continues to struggle because of it.

Cynthia G. Brown. 1985. *With Friends Like These: The Americas Watch Report on Human Rights and U.S. Policy in Latin America*. New York: Pantheon.

Explains the militarization of Honduran politics prior to the 1980s beginning with the military coup of 1963. (After the democratic presidential election of 1981, the military still controlled policy.) Describes the role of the United States contras, and the extent to which the militarization process incited mass human rights violations. The author explains that the U.S. ignored and denies wrong-doings, having left Honduras without helping to rebuild the country's political and economic stability.

David Corn. 2004. "Bush's New Iraq Viceroy." *Nation*. 278(18): 6.

Abstract: The author claims John Negroponte, the Bush administration's choice for the first ambassador to Iraq, has a record of downplaying human rights abuses. Like dirty money, tainted reputations can be laundered, as the Administration fervently hopes in the case of John Negroponte. Now U.N. ambassador, Negroponte has been chosen by George W. Bush to be the first ambassador to post-Saddam Iraq. When Bush selected Negroponte to be his U.N. representative in 2001, Negroponte was one of several Iran/ contra figures being resurrected by the Bush crowd. As Honduras ambassador in the early 1980s, Negroponte, a career diplomat, participated in a secret and possibly illegal quid pro quo in which the Reagan Administration bribed the Honduran government with economic and military assistance to support the contras fighting the socialist Sandinistas of Nicaragua. Perhaps more significant, while Negroponte served in Honduras, he denied or downplayed serious human rights abuses by government security forces. These days Negroponte's tenure in Honduras is old news. But his tour of duty there is worth scrutiny, for it raises questions about his credibility and his ability to handle tough situations and inconvenient truths. Negroponte has claimed "there was no effort to soft pedal" abuses in Honduras. Yet in public statements he repeatedly conveyed a misleading appearance, and in the years since he has held tight--in the face of compelling evidence--to the view that the abuses that did occur were merely unfortunate exceptions.

J. Eldridge. 1988. "Honduran Assassinations." *America*. 158(9): 228.

Abstract: The recent increase in human-rights violations raises serious questions about Honduran democracy and about the White House's repeated efforts to extol its virtues.

Tom J. Farer. 1988. *The Grand Strategy of the United States in Latin America*. New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A.: Transaction Books.

This book shows that Honduras illustrates the "tragic consequences" of U.S. democratization policies. Dependency theory explains why Honduras was a prime candidate for U.S. intervention. Hopes for democracy were optimistic but empty, because the U.S. was increasingly aiding a military regime. Military rule ensured consistently weak civilian authority and a polarized society.

Joe Feuerherd. 2005. "Negroponte, Senators Lack Curiosity." *National Catholic Reporter*. 41(25): 7.

Abstract: The article reports on John Negroponte appearing before the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence April 12 for his confirmation hearing to become the nation's first director of national intelligence. John Negroponte, the president's nominee to be the first director of national intelligence, told a Senate committee April 12 that he believes in calling things the way he sees them. Negroponte, however, couldn't find evidence of government- and military engineered human rights abuses in Honduras during his time there.

Michael D. Gambone. 2005. "The United States in Honduras, 1980-1981: An Ambassador's Memoir (Review)." *The Americas*. 61(699).

Abstract: This is an excellent historical account that delivers on its promise to "bring new light to the shadowed corners of U.S. policy in Central America during 1980 and 1981" (p. 3). Arriving at the transition between the Carter and Reagan administrations, the author was ideally situated to observe both the multiple layers of Honduran civil-military relations and, more importantly, the gradual shift of U.S. foreign policy towards confrontation with Sandinista Nicaragua. Besides managing the collective effort of his U.S. charges, Binns also maintained a constant balancing act between often adversarial Honduran civilian and military [End Page 699] leaders. Some of the most interesting passages in the book relate the seemingly endless attempts by Honduran leaders such as National Party candidate Ricardo Zuniga to create leverage by manipulating the policy making

*process in Tegucigalpa and Washington. Importantly, the narrative illuminates the almost constant friction between civilian foreign service officers in Honduras and the military commanders assigned to U.S. Southern Command. The author is pointed in his criticism of the military tendency to supersede both the embassy and U.S. law governing foreign policy and illustrates a trend identified in Dana Priest's recent work, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America's Military* (2003). If there is one weakness in the book, it is the use of what Binns describes as a "heavily annotated diary" format (p. 3). The decision to jump from topic to topic, often without adequate context or analysis, handicaps many opportunities to take a longer view on events in the manner accomplished by other former U.S. policy makers, such as Robert Pastor. Overall, however, *The United States in Honduras* is an important book for any student or lay person interested in a pivotal moment of Cold War and Central American history.*

Tim Golden. 1998. "Honduran Army's Abuses Were Known to C.I.A." *New York Times*. 148(51320): A3.

Abstract: Presents information on a report submitted to the United States (U.S.) Congress concerning the U.S. military support to Honduras in the 1980s. Knowledge of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency about the human rights abuses of the Honduran army; Details on the report.

Robert H. Holden. 1999. "Securing Central America against Communism: The United States and the Modernization of Surveillance in the Cold War." *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs*. 41(1): v+1.

Abstract: The U.S.-sponsored programs of military and police collaboration with the Central American governments during the Cold War also contributed to the surveillance capacity of those states during the period when the Central American state formation process was being completed. Guatemala is used as a case study. Washington's contribution was framed by the conventional discourse of "security against communism" but also by an underlying technocratic ethos in which "modernization" and "security" were higher priorities than democratization. Points to the role of the United States in Central-American state-formation (including that of Honduras) as initiated by activities during the Cold War and capacity-building efforts for intelligence agencies. At the same time, strengthened militaries in the region forged rivalries, such as that between Honduras and El Salvador. These events indicate that democracy was not the priority as the U.S. suggested.

Milton Jamail and Margo Gutierrez. 1986. "Israel in Central America: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica." *MERIP Middle East Report*. 140(Terrorism and Intervention): 26.

Abstract: Discusses the relationship of Israel's military with Honduras and other Central-American countries in the 1980s. Israel has been accused of helping the CIA train the contras, but deny it. They did, however, sell Honduras planes and "bombers" and signed agreements for more "sophisticated" arms sales, of which the United States did not approve.

Marc Lacey. 2001. "Central America Fallout Stalls U.N. Pick. (Cover Story)." *New York Times*. 150(51784): A1.

Abstract: Focuses on foreign service officer, John D. Negroponte, and his diplomatic career. Topic of his nomination to ambassador to United Nations, which is ensnared in the United States Senate over his role as ambassador to Honduras during Reagan administration's effort to back contras' fight against leftist Sandinista government in Nicaragua; Issue of human rights abuses in the region.

Cecilia Menjívar and Néstor Rodríguez. 2005. When States Kill: Latin America, the U.S., and Technologies of Terror. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Includes an essay by Joan Kkruckewitt on “U.S. Militarization of Honduras in the 1980s and the Creation of CIA-backed Death Squads,” and tables showing levels of financial backing from the U.S., human rights violations in the 1980s, and numbers of disappearances documented.

James A. Morris. 1984. Honduras: Caudillo Politics and Military Rulers. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

Details a pre-1980s history of a strengthening “military institutional identity,” beginning primarily with political shifts under the Liberal leader Ramon Villeda Morales in 1957. There was also a series of military coups up until that of 1972, which left the military in power for the next decade. Describes state-society and international relations, constructs of national elections, political sectors, economic development and subsequent crises in the 1980s.