

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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“Disappearance”

11 November 1988

EL SALVADOR: Andrés MARTINEZ, aged 25
Adán SANTOS, aged 22
Maria Cristina MEJIA, aged 36, daughter of Rufina Figueroa, below
Rufina FIGUEROA, aged 50
Herculano MENDEZ, aged 32

Amnesty International is concerned at the reported unacknowledged detention of the above-named people on 28 and 29 October 1988 and fears that they may have subsequently “disappeared”.

On 28 October 1988, soldiers from the *Segunda Brigada de Infanteria* (Second Infantry Brigade), based in Santa Ana, arrived at the *canton* (hamlet) of San Antonio La Junta, Metapán jurisdiction, Santa Ana department. Posing as guerrillas, according to the villagers, the soldiers detained Andrés Martínez and Adán Santos at their homes. Villagers state that the same soldiers in military uniform had carried out a military operation in the surrounding area some days prior to the arrests.

The soldiers remained in the hamlet overnight, and on the following day, 29 October, detained Rufina Figueroa, her daughter, Maria Cristina Mejia, organizing secretary of the *Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores Agropecuarios* (ANTA). National Association of Agricultural Workers; as well as Herculano Méndez, also a member of ANTA.

All five are believed to be held at the Second Infantry Brigade in Santa Ana and there is concern for their safety. Writs of habeas corpus presented to the courts on their behalf have so far been fruitless.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International has been concerned at the escalation in recent months of human rights violations, including “disappearances”, extrajudicial executions and torture, carried out by all branches of the Salvadorian security forces. These abuses have been carried out by security force personnel both in uniform and in plain clothes. In a number of recent incidents uniformed military personnel have detained people who the “disappeared”, or have summarily executed non-combatant civilians whom they later said had died in combat or had been victims of guerrilla attacks. (See “El Salvador – ‘Death Squads’ – A Government Strategy” of October 1988, AI Index: AMR 29/21/88).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/ express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the reported detention and subsequent “disappearance” of the five above-named people;
- stating that all five were reportedly detained by men identified as members of the Second Infantry Brigade in Santa Ana;
- urging that they be charged with a recognizably criminal offence or released.

APPEALS TO:

Exmo. Sr. José Napoleón Duarte
Presidente de la República de El Salvador
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: Presidente Duarte,
San Salvador, El Salvador
Telexes: 20245 res sal;
20445 cgfa sal; 20522

Dr. Edgard Ernesto Bellosó Funes
Ministro del Interior
Ministerio de Interior
Palacio Nacional
San Salvador, El Salvador

COPIES TO:

Lic. Benjamin Cestoni
Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador
Gubernamental (CDH)
Paseo Gral. Escalón
87 Av. Sur Block 2, No. 226
Col. Escalón
San Salvador, El Salvador

(governmental human rights commission)

Dr Francisco José Guerrero
Presidente de la Corte Suprema de Justicia
Centro de Gobierno "José Simeón Cañas"
San Salvador, El Salvador

Gral. Rafael Humberto Larios
Sr. Vice-Ministro de Defensa y de Seguridad
Pública
Ministerio de Defensa y de Seguridad Pública
Doble Vía a Santa Tecla
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Deputy Minister of Defence and Public Security,
in charge of Treasury Police, National Guard and
National Police)

Telegrams to: Vice-Ministro Defensa,
San Salvador, El Salvador

Telegrams: Ministro Interior,
San Salvador, El Salvador

Comisión de derechos Humanos de El Salvador,
no-gubernamental (CDHES)
Urbanización La Esperanza
Pasaje 1, No. 117
San Salvador, El Salvador

(non-governmental human rights commission)

Cnel. Benjamin Ramos Mendoza
Comandante
Segunda Brigada de Infantería
Santa Ana,
El Salvador

Tel: (503) 411222

and to diplomatic representatives of El Salvador in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Please check with the International Secretariat, or
your section office, if sending appeals after 23 December 1988.