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Objet: Human Rights Groups Release Secret Salvadoran Military Intelligence Document: the "Yellow Book"
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Human Rights Groups Release Secret Salvadoran Military Intelligence Document: the "Yellow Book"

Civil War-Era Catalog of "Enemies," Many Killed or Disappeared, Made Public on International Right to Know Day

Posting Includes Analyses of Case Studies Spotlighting Victims' Fates

National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 485

Posted -- September 28, 2014, in recognition of International Right to Know Day

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Washington, D.C., September 28, 2014 -- Today, In recognition of International Right to Know Day, the National Security Archive has posted online the entirety of the "Yellow Book," an extraordinary documentary record by the Army of El Salvador, illustrating their work targeting citizens considered enemies of the regime during the 1970s and 1980s.

View our promotional video: <http://youtu.be/nDYISuWxnZM>

The 1987 document from the archives of El Salvador's military intelligence identifies almost two thousand Salvadorans who were considered "delinquent terrorists" by the Armed Forces, among them current President Salvador Sanchez Ceren, a former guerrilla leader. Other individuals listed include human rights advocates, labor leaders, and political figures, many known to have been victims of illegal detention, torture, extrajudicial execution, forced disappearance, and other human rights abuses.

Called the Libro Amarillo or Yellow Book, the report is the first-ever confidential Salvadoran military document to be made public, and the only evidence to appear from the Salvadoran Army's own files of the surveillance methods used by security forces to target Salvadoran citizens during the country's 12-year civil war. Accompanying today's posting are related analysis and declassified U.S. documents, gathered through a collaboration between the National Security Archive, the University of Washington Center for Human Rights and the Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG).

View the Yellow Book posting on the National Security Archive's website: <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB485/>

Analysis by the Human Rights Data Analysis Group has determined that approximately 43% of names in the Yellow Book correspond with reports of human rights violations registered by Salvadoran human rights organizations and the U.N. Truth Commission during the period of 1980 to 1992.

The current publication includes three case studies, two featuring recent interviews with survivors of illegal detention and torture who are profiled in the Yellow Book. "To live to see this book, it makes you feel happy to be alive, that they weren't able to kill you," said Hector Bernabe Recinos, a union leader arrested in 1980 who appears in the document, "because the decision to eliminate you had been close."

"For more than twenty years, El Salvador's military establishment has stonewalled victims and their families about its role in human rights abuses committed during the civil war," said Kate Doyle, Senior Analyst of U.S. policy in Latin America at the National Security Archive. "The publication of the Yellow Book is a direct challenge to the military's continued silence and its refusal to release its historical archives relating to that era."

Check out today's posting at the National Security Archive - <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB485/>

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