

URGENT
ACTION

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EXTERNAL (for general
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AI Index: AMR 29/12/81
Distr: UA

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- UA 32/81

Torture/"Disappearance"

11 February 1981

EL SALVADOR: 20 academics detained
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AI is seriously concerned for the safety of about twenty Salvadorian academics detained by uniformed army troops at 11 a.m. on 10 February in San Salvador. The twenty academics are all members of the *Consejo Superior Universitario* (Supreme University Council) of the National University of El Salvador. Among those detained were Lic. Miguel Parada, interim rector of the National University, Jorge Gomez Arias, bursar of the *Casa de Estudios*, and Ricardo Ernesto Calderon, secretary general of the *Casa de Estudios*. The Supreme University Council was meeting in regular session in a private college in San Salvador when troops burst into the meeting. Although the Salvadorian authorities have acknowledged these detentions, there are strong fears that they may be tortured or may "disappear".

Lic. Miguel Parada's predecessor as rector of the National University, Felix Ulloa Martinez, was machine-gunned on 28 October 1980 in San Salvador and died from his wounds the following day.

The teaching sector has been a target of repression both under the Romero regime and under the present government. During 1979, 33 teachers, all members of the teachers' union *Asociacion Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños "21 de Junio"* (*ANDES 21 de Junio*), National Association of Salvadorian Educators "21 June", were killed by uniformed and plainclothes members of the security forces. This year, persecution intensified: from January to October 1980 at least 90 teachers were murdered by security forces in El Salvador. In the same period at least 19 primary and secondary (both public and church) schools have been raided by the security forces, and on 26 July 1980 the army carried out a military occupation of the National University, during which 22 students were killed. As a result of this persecution, many teachers have gone into exile and 85% of schools in the west of the country (departments of La Union, San Miguel and Usulután) have reportedly been closed.

The human rights situation in El Salvador has deteriorated sharply in recent months. AI is seriously concerned and fears a further increase in summary executions, torture and abduction by government forces as civil conflict continues between guerrillas and the government. Of some 8,000 Salvadorians estimated to have been killed during the past year, many are known to have been the victims of extrajudicial execution by the security forces. Peasants and young people appear to have been particular targets. Sources in El Salvador state that nearly 3,300 peasants were among those killed for political reasons in 1980. Between 14 and 30 January 1981 at least another 144 people were killed.

Despite government claims that those killed by its forces are guerrillas and guerrilla sympathizers, victims of torture and death in the hands of the security forces were not generally shown to have any direct involvement in armed guerrilla activity.

For further background information, please refer to circulars AMR 29/56/80, AMR 29/57/80 and AMR 29/58/80.

(The above information may be used when answering questions from the press and public.)

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/express letters expressing concern at the arrest of these 20 academics and requesting the authorities to ensure that their physical safety will be guaranteed.

Appeals from students/academics/universities are particularly urged.

Appeals to: Inge José Napoléon Duarte
Presidente
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

Colonel Rafael Flores Lima
Jefe de Estado Mayor del Ejército
Calle Concepción
Final Pasaje Merazo
San Salvador, El Salvador
(Army chief of staff)

A limited number of appeals is requested; please organize a few appeals per UA group.

Copies of appeals should be sent to the Salvadorian diplomatic representative to your country.

FINAL DATE FOR ACTION: 11 March 1981

STOP PRESS - *We have just received the names of eight more of the detainees:*

- Ana de Guzman, director of University of Western Salvador
- Lic. Catalina de Merino, secretary of University Welfare
- Lic. Luis Guzman, secretary of University planning
- Dr Saul Ramirez, Dean of Faculty of Odontology
- Dra. Margarita Monge, Dean of Faculty of Chemistry & Pharmacy
- Dr. Roberto Calderon, Dean of Faculty of Law
- Lic. Carlos Henriquez, Dean of Faculty of Economy
- Eduardo Cana Lazo, Dean of Faculty of Engineering