

Guatemala also has an Israeli-installed computer which monitors electricity and telephone usage and records data on individual movements taken from police checkpoints. A Guatemalan with abnormal power or phone usage is suspected as running a safe house or as an activist. Such suspicion is likely to bring a death squad to the door.²¹⁴ «Israeli advisers work closely with Guatemala's police intelligence (G-2)», according to George Black.²¹⁵

Former junta chief Lucas Garcia, who organized the death squads, said, «We appreciate Israel. We see the Israeli soldier as the best soldier in the world today, and we look to him as a model and an example for us».²¹⁶ However, young Guatemalan officers were reported disgusted at corruption in which their superiors shared arms sales commissions with Israelis.²¹⁷

The Army Transmissions and Electronics School was opened in 1981 by President Lucas Garcia. George Black reports it is «designed, staffed, and funded by Israelis, its sophisticated systems are unprecedented in Central America. At the opening, Moshe Dayan, former Israeli ambassador to Guatemala (no relation to the former defense minister), called Guatemala «one of our best friends».²¹⁸

According to *Time*, the Israelis have sold the Guatemalans «everything from antiterrorism equipment to transport planes. Army outposts in the jungle have become near replicas of Israeli army field camps». Colonel Gustavo Menendez Herrera, based in Huehuetenango, told *Time* his troops «are using Israeli communications equipment, mortars, submachine guns, battle gear, and helmets».²¹⁹ President Efraim Rios Montt told ABC-TV that the coup which brought him into power was so successful «because many of our soldiers were trained by the Israelis».²²⁰

An Israeli military training team is assigned to Guatemala. Guatemalan military police were taught by Israeli advisors in a two-week counterinsurgency course.²²¹

Israelis advised former President Rios Montt in agrarian counterinsurgency, based on Israeli experience in the West Bank.²²² In March 1983, Col. Eduardo Wohlers, director of the «Plan of Assistance to Conflict Areas», pointed to the Israelis as his main source of inspiration: «Many of our technicians are Israeli trained. The model of the kibbutz and the moshav is planted firmly in their minds. And personally I think it would be fascinating to turn our highlands [the home of Guatemala's indigenous people] into that kind of system».²²³

A Catholic priest interviewed by George Black in Guatemala in March 1983, «believes that even the promotion of Catholic-evangelical factionalism in an effort to divide and conquer communities is the result of Israeli advice, based on the successful exploitation of rivalries between Christian, Moslem, and Druze communities in Lebanon».²²⁴

Honduras

Honduras, too, has a computer, but here Israel contributes most directly to the U.S. strategy of regionalizing the war in

Central America. Israeli planes and U.S.-financed runways have made Honduras Central America's main air power threatening FMLN control zones in El Salvador and now the people of Nicaragua as well.²²⁵ In 1981, Israeli military personnel were spotted training pilots at a Honduran base.²²⁶

In July 1982, the Honduran army commander, General Gustavo Alvarez, made a quasi-secret visit to Israel seeking alternatives to American aircraft in case Congress refused to sell them.²²⁷ In December 1982, former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon returned the visit in Honduras at about the same time as President Reagan was there. A high-level Honduran officer told the *Christian Science Monitor*, «Sharon's trip was more positive. He sold us arms. Reagan only uttered platitudes explaining that Congress was preventing him from doing more». The same officer reported that the sales included advanced fighter planes, training, and missiles.²²⁸

Sharon was accompanied by then Air Force chief General David Ivry, who became president of Israel Aircraft Industries on January 1, 1983, and then deputy chief of staff when General Eitan retired in the aftermath of Sabra and Shatila.²²⁹ In May, Honduran General Alvarez made a «semiclandestine» visit to Tel Aviv to purchase «a large quantity» of Kfir jets and electronics devices.²³⁰ Alvarez was recently quoted saying, in relation to Nicaragua and his support for the contras, «Everything you do to destroy a Marxist regime is moral».²³¹ Israeli combat pilots and military instructors are already in Honduras and «everything is paid for by the U.S.A.».²³²

The Honduran Christian Commission for Human Rights published a communique indicating the Israeli-Honduran agreement included \$25 million in military hardware (including twelve Kfirs) and fifty advisers.²³³ Edgardo Paz Barnica, Honduran foreign minister, denied the deal.²³⁴ A Honduran official explained this official silence. «We don't want Nicaragua to react violently as it did on other occasions for less important reasons».²³⁵

The U.S. State Department claims it did not know beforehand that Sharon was going to Honduras, even though Sharon went directly from Washington to Tegucigalpa. However, a high State Department official told the *New York Times*, when asked if the Reagan administration approved of Israeli activities in Central America, «Absolutely. We've indicated we're not unhappy they are helping out. But I wouldn't say we and the Israelis have figured out together what to do».²³⁶

Israeli advisers are serving in Honduras and are involved in the U.S.-sponsored covert operations against Nicaragua's Sandinista government. The Israelis have donated captured PLO weapons to the contras, based in Honduras, with transport paid for by the United States.²³⁷

To be continued....