

From Silence to Memory  
Revelations of the Archivo  
Histórico de la Policía Nacional



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Revelations of the AHPN

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Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional  
(AHPN, Guatemala)

# From Silence to Memory Revelations of the AHPN

Foreword by  
Carlos Aguirre

Preface to the English translation by  
Kate Doyle



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Translation of:  
Del Silencio a la Memoria. Revelaciones del Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional/  
Archivo histórico de la Policía Nacional - Guatemala,  
Guatemala : Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional, 2011.  
ISBN: 978-9929-8065-3-5

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Translation by TransPerfect Translations International, Inc.

**ISBN: 978-0-9858204-0-4**  
**ISBN: 978-0-9858204-1-1 (PDF)**

Printed in Guatemala, C.A. by:  
Foto Publicaciones  
20 Avenida 2-53 zona 1, Colonia Las Victorias  
Tel.: (502) 2220-0630 / Fax: (502) 2230-2214  
Print run: 500 copies

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The investigative process enabling the production of this report has been possible thanks to the invaluable support of: The Kingdom of Sweden, the Netherlands, the Swiss Confederation, the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation, (ACCD), the German Social-Technical Cooperation Service (DED), the Government of the Basque Country and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



*Stewart R. Mott Foundation.*

The translation and publication of this book was possible thanks to the University of Oregon Libraries, the Network Startup Resource Center (NSRC), and the generous funding from Phil and Jill Lighty.



**The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the bodies that contributed to its production.**



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## FOREWORD

*“There is no political power without control of the archives, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation.”*

Jacques Derrida

The discovery, in 2005, of the almost eighty million pages of documents belonging to the historical archive of the National Police in Guatemala represented a watershed in that country’s struggles to confront the legacies of several decades of violence, state repression, and human rights violations. For quite a long time, the efforts by victims, relatives, human rights attorneys, NGOs, and other social agents to find out “what happened” and to bring to justice the perpetrators of atrocious acts of violence crashed against a wall of silence and impunity. Those records, now not only recovered but also being made available to those searching for evidence of police and state repression, constitute an invaluable resource in both the search for justice and the recovery of lost memories. The Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional (AHPN) has become an emblematic case of the worldwide effort to preserve what are known as “archives of repression” but also a model of what can be called archival activism: records ought to be considered not inert pieces of evidence but actual carriers of powerful symbolism and weapons in the multifaceted effort to create a more just society, empower hitherto marginalized and silenced individuals and social agents, and promote a culture of transparency and human rights.

The publication in Spanish of the report *Del silencio a la memoria* was unanimously praised as a step forward in both making the work and mission

of the AHPN widely known and offering a synthesis of its potential to understand how systematic state repression worked. The story told in this report is an exemplary case of commitment with the past and the future of a society still recovering from the wounds of violence and social injustice. Making this report available in English will amplify the reach of this story and will allow for increased international attention to the amazing work the AHPN is doing. We are very proud to be able to offer this translation to students, scholars, human rights activists, and everyone else with an interest in the connections between history, memory, archives, human rights, and power.

The University of Oregon signed an agreement with the AHPN in March 2012 to collaborate on a number of projects, including this translation. That agreement came in the aftermath of a series of contacts between University of Oregon faculty members and the AHPN. Stephanie Wood, with financial assistance from Steve Huter, director of the Network Startup Resource Center, visited the AHPN in August 2011 and initiated the growing collaboration that now also includes Gabriela Martínez, Michelle McKinley, and myself. Stephanie has also been working with Kent Norsworthy at the University of Texas, Austin, to see whether we might develop translations or analysis to add the AHPN documents served by UT.

Steve Huter, upon hearing about the story of the AHPN and the potential for a collaboration that would involve dissemination of digital content, the production of a documentary on the AHPN by Gabriela Martínez, and the translation of this report, generously funded two additional trips of UO faculty to Guatemala and underwrote the translation of this book. We want to express our deep appreciation to Steve and the NSRC for their backing.

The translation was carried out by TransPerfect Translations and thoroughly reviewed by me. Matthew Gaitan and his team must be praised for their professionalism and collaborative spirit. The late J. Q. Johnson spearheaded the earliest phases of the digital publication, which was carried forward by Karen Estlund, Katie Moss, and the staff at the new Digital Scholarship Center. This team has prepared the digital files for printing and electronic dissemination. Deborah Carver, Dean of Libraries at the University of Oregon, supported this project from the very beginning and

was instrumental in securing the funding to cover the cost of the print edition of this book, which came from a generous donation by Phil and Jill Lighty. We express our sincere appreciation to Deborah and the Lightys for their critical support.

In Guatemala, the staff at the AHPN contributed in numerous ways to making this project possible. We want to express our recognition to all our friends and colleagues at the AHPN, especially Gustavo Meoño, Alberto Flores, Jorge Villagrán, and Luisa Fernanda Rivas. We are very proud of our on-going collaboration with the AHPN and cannot emphasize enough the importance of the work they are doing. Anna Carla Ericastilla and Marlon García at the Archivo General de Centro América have also contributed to making this collaboration possible. Greg Krupa helped us in various ways during our trips to Guatemala.

Last, but certainly not least, our gratitude to Kate Doyle, one of the most renowned experts in human rights archives, for her support to this project and for agreeing to write the powerful and illuminating preface that you are about to read.

Carlos Aguirre  
University of Oregon





## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Political violence depends on secrets and lies.

During the height of Guatemala's civil conflict in the 1980s, government death squads roamed the streets of the capital in unmarked cars, windows blackened, to hunt their victims. The unidentified agents of army intelligence and the police took thousands of people away to clandestine interrogation centers to torture information out of them. Once it was determined that the prisoners had nothing more to give, they were murdered and their bodies dumped in secret graves. Relatives of the disappeared were left in the dark, reduced to trolling the morgues, hospitals and graveyards, begging the government to tell them something, anything about the fates of their loved ones. Their pleas were met with hostility and silence.

When the archives of the defunct National Police were discovered in 2005, Guatemalans got their first glimpse inside the machinery of state terror. The documents were hidden in plain sight in a cluster of buildings on an active police base in the heart of Guatemala City. Years of neglect had left them in a chaos of disorder. Stacked from floor to ceiling, the old files were rotting away inside the dark and deteriorated spaces, dank and laced with mold, infested with vermin. That the records had survived at all seemed miraculous; their very existence had been denied by the authorities for decades to victims of human rights abuses, families of the disappeared, and human rights defenders. Once revealed, they offered visible evidence of the corrosive effects of the secrecy imposed by the government about its role in killing its own citizens.

Their rescue told a different story: one of civil society in action, intent on the recovery of its history. Personnel from the Human Rights Prosecutor's Office, joined by dozens of volunteers and eventually a staff of almost 200 employees, quickly mobilized to clean, scan, and organize the

estimated eight linear kilometers of records. Governments and institutions from around the world contributed to the project, providing funds, equipment, and technical assistance, as well as the expertise needed to help professionalize the staff. By 2011, some 12 million images of the documents found had been made public without restriction in the archive's reading room and through a bilateral agreement with the University of Texas in Austin, which now hosts the growing digital collection on an open website.

The publication of this report, *From Silence to Memory* – first in Guatemala in June 2011, and now in this fine translation into English by the University of Oregon – is another step in the efforts of the Historical Archive of the National Police (Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional—AHPN) to help make the tale of an American tragedy transparent and accessible. The report's focus is the period of Guatemala's most intensive violence, from 1975-85; along the way, it elucidates the 115-year history of the National Police, its structure and functions, police-military relations, the assignment of police forces in service of the government's counterinsurgency campaign, and the savage repression employed by the state to crush not only the armed opposition groups but political and social activists agitating for the country's future.

The report also explains how an institution charged with fighting crime and guaranteeing public order could be radically re-engineered to become an instrument of terror. The decisive moment came in 1954, when the United States supported a coup against Guatemala's democratically elected president in favor of dictatorship. Military regime leaders built an elaborate anti-communist infrastructure, bestowing new powers on the police to investigate, monitor, detain, and interrogate any citizen under the flimsiest of pretexts. In short order, the importance of the National Police's counter-subversive mission overcame their ordinary law enforcement functions, fatally infecting the culture of the institution.

Precisely how that happened, and why, is the subject of *From Silence to Memory*. Researchers will find here an invaluable guide with which to navigate one of the world's most extensive collections of unexpurgated police files. The report describes the proliferation of special counterinsurgency units within the National Police dedicated to

conducting political investigations, surveillance, interrogation, torture, kidnapping, and assassination during the course of the conflict. It reveals dozens of secret operations, names the officials who ordered and oversaw them, and describes a flow of communications that was strictly controlled between commanders and their subordinates, and then back up the chain of command to the director of the National Police, the Minister of Interior, and the chief of state. Along the way, we learn which units produced what record groups, and how to decipher the significance of dozens of different types of documents – explained with just enough detail to provide any investigator with the confidence necessary for plunging into this sea of information.

For U.S. readers, the report also sheds light on the role played by the United States in molding Guatemala's security apparatus into an enforcer of U.S. interests. In the years following the 1954 coup against President Jacobo Arbenz, Washington sent security experts to redesign the National Police as a weapon in the fight against communism. Declassified documents from U.S. agencies cited in the report detail the technical assistance given during the 1960s and early 1970s to strengthen Guatemala's capacity in surveillance, intelligence, and fingerprinting; U.S. intelligence officers worked with police and military personnel on targeting and capturing suspected subversives; the Agency for International Development (AID) sent cameras so that police could photograph young protesters at demonstrations. Thousands of police agents trained in U.S. schools under AID's worldwide Public Safety Program, until reports of human rights abuses convinced Congress shut it down in 1974.

The Guatemalan documents chronicle the lasting effects of such programs. Investigators from the AHPN found almost one million individual fichas or identity cards created by the Technical Investigations Directorate (Dirección de Investigaciones Técnicas—DIT) and its predecessors, the Detective Corps and Judicial Police. The routine practice of citizen registration turned Guatemala into a surveillance state, with files tracking the politically suspect behavior, activities, and associations of a vast urban population. When the time was right, this store of intelligence was used to conduct counter-subversive sweeps, or “cleansing” operations (operaciones de limpieza), designed to pursue targeted individuals for capture, interrogation,

and sometimes death.

Although the National Police carried out the operations depicted in its records, the police archive makes clear that the army was in control of counterinsurgency strategy in Guatemala. National security doctrine – the legacy of U.S. military assistance programs in the Americas – required a permanent militarization of the state, transforming rebel combatants and unarmed activists alike into “internal” enemies. From 1955-85, the Organic Law that regulated the National Police organized police hierarchy into a military system (with officers ranked as captains, lieutenants, sergeants, etc.); senior army officers regularly occupied the directorship. When political violence in Guatemala City reached its apex under General Oscar Mejía Víctores (1983-86), the police director issued monthly directives to his department heads and unit commanders reminding them of their subordination to officers of the armed forces. The army managed and coordinated police counter-subversive activities operations through special joint operational centers (Centros de Operaciones Conjuntas—COCs); today, records generated by the COCs provide a particularly rich source of information about the conflict.

One of the most astonishing sets of documents found at the AHPN are the countless missing person reports (“recursos de revisión” or “de exhibición personal” in Spanish) filed by families, friends, and colleagues of the disappeared. In the wake of someone’s capture, the reports would begin to arrive at police stations. They might include inquiries sent by an individual’s employer, labor union, professional association, or university; there are terse telegrams sent by human rights organizations and long, eloquent letters composed by grieving parents. The sheer volume of these documents – and the corresponding quantity of denials on the part of police, military, and judicial officials – speaks powerfully to the magnitude of the cover-up engaged by the state. They also provide graphic evidence of the failure of the National Police to carry out their most basic responsibilities: to protect citizens and ensure public safety.

Guatemalan police archive now joins other collections of “repressive archives” in Latin America – in Argentina, Paraguay, and Mexico. Tens of millions of pages of memoranda and letters, staff lists and informant reports,

police logs, radio transmissions, fingerprint files, and photographs are now available in countries hungry to understand the truth about their past. These are files from the secret heart of organized violence. They exist in defiance of the silence long maintained by the region's authoritarian regimes. Together, they help tell the story of the political upheaval that convulsed the hemisphere during the cold war.

They also represent a breakthrough for human rights and justice. The opening of archives has sparked broad public demand across Latin America for information about the history of violence. The demand is tinged with outrage, as people long told that there were no records learn of the buried existence of enormous treasure troves of files. Whether the files are now used in order to recover historical memory or to prosecute perpetrators, they offer Latin Americans a permanent form of reparation: for the families of the dead and disappeared, the human rights defenders, the journalists and lawyers, students, teachers, historians, poets, writers, and artists. They are an affirmation of a terrible history, but also of the fundamental right of all people to know that history, to understand it, and to arrive at some measure of peace.

The report you hold in your hands, *From Silence to Memory*, is Guatemala's contribution to all those interested in questions of truth, memory, and justice. Read it, and you will begin to understand.

Kate Doyle  
December 2012



## PREFACE

In 1999, the Commission for Historical Clarification published the Report titled *Guatemala, Memory of Silence*. The results of these inquiries were set out in twelve moving volumes documenting many of the innumerable human rights violations perpetrated by personnel at the service of the State, entrusted at that time to government officials who deliberately and systematically issued the relevant orders. However, apart from the gravity and the truth of the contents of that Report, those who, in both the private and public sector, have had the duty of publicizing it as widely as possible and bringing it within reach of all our citizens have either given up or carried out that duty with a palpable lack of interest, and have even, in certain cases, sought to disappear and avoid being mentioned in the history of Guatemala.

The discovery, fortuitous and thus all the more important, of the enormous quantity of documents that make up the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) has been decisive in enabling research to continue in a serious, scientific, and impartial manner, thanks to the efforts of those working on the recovery of this collection of documents. It is necessary to highlight the support and accompaniment this process has received from outstanding specialists from various countries, whose abilities are renowned worldwide.

It is for this reason, and to put an end to this silence, that the National Consultative Council (CCN) of the AHPN has lent its support to the publication of the report *FROM SILENCE TO MEMORY, Revelations of the National Police Historical Archive*, which contains valuable records of events evidenced by the rescued documents. These provide details that are crucially important for a true understanding of this plethora of historical texts and their subsequent



systematization and integration into academic works, but which may also constitute pieces of vital evidence if and when cases are brought before the courts of justice. This is feasible because the recovery of the documents available is the result of serious and diligent work to return to the collective memory a collection of events from the last century, and especially from the 1960s on, that brutally cut down thousands of our compatriots, not only throwing the lives of their bereaved families into turmoil, but also shattering the cohesion of entire communities, forcing them to disperse.

The CCN, comprised of members from a range of academic and cultural spheres, takes part in the dissemination of the documents from the AHPN with no further interest than that of encouraging the participation of citizens in general, and anyone who needs to use the information contained therein relating to parts of our history that we all ought to know. This is not only to prevent a recurrence of these events, but to lay a foundation of truth on which to build our collective memory in order to play a part in safeguarding our fundamental rights and to contribute to the enhancement of our human dignity.

Nueva Guatemala de la Asunción, May 2011

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Guatemala National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) wishes to express its recognition of:

- The people of Guatemala, the victims of repression and violence, the relatives of so many who have disappeared for their struggle for truth and justice.
- The Ministry of Culture and Sport
- The Members of the National and International Consultative Councils of the AHPN.
- The international community, without whose political, technical and economic confidence and support this work would not have been possible.

Special thanks to:

- \* The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- \* The Government of Sweden and its Embassy in Guatemala
- \* The Government of the Netherlands and the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands in Guatemala
- \* The Government of Switzerland and its Embassy in Guatemala
- \* The Government of the Basque Country
- \* The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and its Embassy in Guatemala
- \* The Government of Catalonia through the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation (ACCD)
- \* The Embassy of the United States of America
- \* The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- \* The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)

- \* The German Social-Technical Cooperation Service (DED)
  - \* German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) through the Program to Support the Peace and National Reconciliation Process (PCON)
  - \* OXFAM Great Britain
  - \* The Canada Solidarity Committees
  - \* The Swiss Federal Archives
- The expert advisors who contributed so much more to our knowledge:
    - \* Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson, Certified International Archival Advisor
    - \* Kate Doyle and the National Security Archive (NSA)
    - \* Dr. Patrick Ball, Tamy Guberek, Daniel Guzmán, Megan Rice and in general the Benetech Group, Expert Advisors in Quantitative Research
    - \* Ana Cacopardo, Executive Director, Provincial Commission for Memory, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina
    - \* Dr. Antonio González Quintana, Expert Advisor on Access to Information, AHPN
    - \* Jean-Marc Comment, Advisor on Computer Security
    - \* Josef Erwin Oberholzer, Advisor on Restoration and Conservation
    - \* Hugh Daniel, Information Technology Expert
    - \* The American Statistics Association (ASA), especially statisticians Paul Zador and Gary Shapiro
  - The human rights organizations that have supported us through their voluntary workers and countless acts of solidarity.
    - \* The Center for Forensic Analysis and Applied Sciences (CAFCA)
    - \* Security in Democracy (SEDEM)
    - \* The Center for Legal Action on Human Rights (CALDH)
    - \* The Mutual Support Group (GAM)
    - \* Families of the Disappeared, Guatemala (FAMDEGUA)
    - \* The National Human Rights Movement
    - \* Sinergia N'oj
  - To the Guatemalan people, institutions and organizations:

- 
- \* The General Archives of Central America (AGCA)
  - \* Guatemalan Foundation for Forensic Anthropology (FAFG)
  - \* The Myrna Mack Foundation
  - \* The West Guatemala Rotary Club
  - \* The Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLASCO)
  - \* Officers Ana Corado and Olga Estela Trejo and the agents of the Historical Area of the PNC
- 
- Anna Carla Ericastilla, Director of the AGCA and National Director of the AHPN
  - Kate Doyle and Carla Villagrán for their valuable contribution to the construction and publication of this Report
  - Michael Møerth of the CAFCA
  - Christina Elich, former UNDP Program Officer
  - Jean-Pierre Villard, former Swiss Ambassador to Guatemala
  - All the men and women working at the AHPN for their commitment, dedication and efforts while laboring under difficult conditions and constant pressure.

To all: Many thanks!



## PROLOGUE

On November 7th, 1983, Father Augusto Ramírez Monasterio, parish superior of the church of San Francisco el Grande in Antigua Guatemala, was murdered. Those responsible for his death were never identified. In July 2005, a few days after the public announcement of the discovery of the National Police Historical Archive, (AHPN) Father Augusto's family requested information about the recently unearthed documents in the hope that they might be able to find something relating to the event that they had been mourning for over twenty years. As the days passed, dozens of similar requests were received.

At that time, the response that the relatives of Father Ramírez received might well have seemed discouraging. They were told: "*...the thousands of documents we have found are extremely poorly preserved, there is no index to tell us where to look, and we don't yet know how to begin looking, nor how much time it might take to find information...*" The only option was to ask them to keep waiting, although not without asking them what their expectations were regarding the AHPN and what they hoped the documents might tell them. Immediately and clearly, they answered: "*We just want to know why... we just want to know why they killed him.*"

Now, after more than five and a half years of arduous work, there is a topographic inventory that allows us to pinpoint the location of the documents in the AHPN, which have finally been identified, preserved, classified, ordered and described. An archival system is being implemented which meets the highest international regulatory standards in this field. The AHPN has a group of highly qualified people with the skills necessary to identify, process, and analyze documents containing information relating to events that constitute human rights violations. It also possesses cutting-edge technology and know-how that allows the digitization of documents at a rate of two million, eight hundred thousand pages a year. Today it is possible to tell the relatives of Father Ramírez Monasterio that they have a new opportunity to find out whether the AHPN documents can provide the answer they have awaited for so long.

In 1980, with only a few days between the two events, Anastacio Sotz Coy and Vicente Hernández Camey, both rural workers from Comalapa and San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango, respectively, were taken into custody after the bus in which Sotz Coy was traveling, and the motorcycle that Hernández Camey was riding, were stopped at one of the checkpoints that the Army used to set up on the country's roads. Although the residents of the area and witnesses to the events informed the families of what had happened, their mothers, wives, sons and daughters never found out what became of their loved ones.

Now it is possible to know the truth of what happened. Thanks to the work of the more than 150 people who have cleaned, classified, ordered, described, digitized and analyzed over twelve million images, it is now possible to tell the Sotz Coy and Hernández Camey families that, since 1980, the police knew of the fates of these men and deliberately concealed the truth. The documents show this to be so. After thirty years of suffering the unrelenting and agonizing consequences of their forced disappearance and nurturing the hope that maybe, one day, they might learn something of Anastacio and Vicente, we feel that the information provided by the work carried out in the AHPN can be the start of a process of healing those deep wounds.

In 1985, when the Mutual Support Group (GAM) filed a writ of habeas corpus on behalf of 763 victims of forced disappearance, the police responded to the judges presiding that none of those mentioned were being held at any of the country's detention centers. Today, thanks to the documents unearthed in the AHPN, we know that, from 1980, the highest authorities of the National Police instructed all its agencies that under no circumstances whatsoever were they make records of detentions available to the judges in charge of any proceedings relating to writs of habeas corpus. As a consequence, the attempt proved fruitless, facilitating concealment and guaranteeing impunity.

On February 18th, 1984, Edgar Fernando García, student leader and member of the workers' union at the glass factory CAVISA, was captured in the capital city as part of an operation carried out by the National Police. This was the last time his family had news of him and, despite the brave and tenacious struggle led by his mother and his wife, together with the efforts of hundreds of other relatives of missing persons, it took more than twenty-five years and the discovery of the National Police Historical

Archive before the country's legal institutions fulfilled their duty to investigate and uncover what became of Fernando García. Thanks to the documents contributed by the AHPN, accepted for the first time as evidence in a national court, together with the work carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Justice (MP), others of the country's institutions and the victim's family, two former members of the police force were sentenced to forty years in prison for their role in his forced disappearance.

In 2005, when the AHPN was discovered, Mr. Carlos Vielman, Minister of the Interior at the time, announced: *"why waste time with this pile of old papers?"* That is indeed the condition they were found in, stacked in piles on the floor, victims of time, humidity, indolence, infestations and, above all, secrecy and concealment. From the very first moment, the commitment that we who work at the National Police Historical Archive have taken on has not been limited to simply dusting off some "old papers", but rather, over and above all else, to rescue them from secrecy and oblivion in order to penetrate their contents. Guatemalan society has the right to recover the truth, to restore the victims' dignity and to want to know the past so that it can begin to heal. Peoples who are ignorant of their history cannot understand their present and do not know who they are.

This immense legacy of documents possesses incalculable historical value and is now safe from many of the threats that stalked it in the past. However, many years of tireless work lie ahead in order not only to guarantee their preservation, but also to make the Guatemalan State truly realize the vast depths of this treasure that we have only recently begun to plumb. The AHPN is the largest archive of its kind in Latin America, with documents that cover nearly 116 years of the history of the country and of the police institution. Its potential in terms of research is inexhaustible.

A society in which a culture of impunity reigns is incapable of looking at itself in the mirror or of facing the future with its head held high and its conscience calm. The AHPN represents one of the many opportunities we have to transcend our past and construct a different future. It is true that this archive is just one resource among many; however, it is one of the most important. Far more than *"a pile of old papers,"* the AHPN is living memory, part of what we have been, what we are and may also be part of what we want to be, and what we would rather not be.





## INTRODUCTION

The work developed by the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH in Spanish) and in particular its Report *Guatemala, Memory of Silence*, stands out as a milestone in the history of our country's efforts to investigate the violations of human rights that have caused such pain to the Guatemalan people. The CEH came into being as a product of the process of negotiations to achieve a strong and lasting peace. The Oslo Accords of June 23, 1994 state that one of the three goals of the CEH is *"To formulate specific recommendations to encourage peace and national harmony in Guatemala. The Commission shall recommend, in particular, measures to preserve the memory of the victims, to foster a culture of mutual respect and observance of human rights, and to strengthen the democratic process."*

The multiple investigations carried out by the CEH were necessarily based primarily on the testimonies of the surviving victims and their families, since the different State bodies involved hindered, and in many cases impeded access to the files and other documentary sources. For this reason, we would like to acknowledge the incalculable value of the stories of the thousands of people who dared to speak out about the extremely painful experiences that they were forced to keep silent on for so many years.

The CEH declared that *"... historical, individual and collective memory are the basis of national identity. Victims' memory is a fundamental aspect of historical memory, allowing us to salvage values and the struggle for human dignity."* It also remarked that, although the Report *Guatemala, Memory of Silence*, *"must constitute a fundamental point of reference for the historical investigation of Guatemala's past, it does not in itself conclude the investigation and analysis that Guatemalans must undertake regarding the armed conflict, its causes, the*

*scope of the violence and its effects. The CEH report must serve as a platform for the continuation of the investigation.”*

These are precisely the commitments and responsibilities assumed by the team of women and men devoted to recovering the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN in Spanish). This store of documents allows us to continue the investigations that will help to shed light on the events which, as long as they remain shrouded in silence and impunity, represent a fundamental obstacle to achieving true democracy and peace for the Guatemalan people. The aim of the report *From Silence to Memory* is to contribute to the processes that must allow citizens unrestricted access to government files. In other words, to help to make official documents break the silence in order to give value to the rights to remembrance, truth and justice that must form the basis of national reconciliation.

## **1. Background**

In July 2005, delegates from the Institution of the Procurator for Human Rights (PDH) stumbled upon a voluminous archive containing the historical administrative documents of the disbanded National Police (PN). The discovery was sheer chance: while verifying a report relating to the storage of some explosives that posed a potential risk to the populace, the PDH investigators detected the existence of a profusion of documents comprising the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN). The documents were found stacked amid very poor storage conditions on the premises of what once had been the National Police Hospital in Zone 6 of the capital, Guatemala city.

Without delay, the PDH took the necessary steps to safeguard the mountain of documents, obtaining a judicial resolution authorizing unlimited access to the records with the aim of starting an investigation that would enable them to document human rights violations. To this end, a team of investigators was formed, designed initially to search, identify and probe, and resulting in the discovery of the first significant documents, which were related to the organizational structure of the PN and several victims of forced disappearance.

Following this, the team undertook the processing, ordering and compilation of the documentation in accordance with strict archival standards with the support and advice of professionals in the field, a process that continues to this day. At

the same time, the investigation continued, producing results that have made a significant contribution to the files opened by the PDH in the special inquiries assigned to that Institution.

In December 2009, the AHPN achieved legal certainty through the Inter-Institutional Cooperation Agreement between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Culture and Sport. This Agreement, identified by the number 24-2009 and signed by the aforementioned Ministers, establishes “... *the transfer of the National Police Historical Archive to the Ministry of Culture and Sport, which shall be the Institution charged with the safeguarding and preservation of the said archives for the purpose of making them accessible to the citizens as a whole, in accordance with current legislation, through the creation of the Unit for Access to Public Information.*”

On that same date, the Agreement was ratified by means of Ministerial Agreement Number 1052-2009. The change of leadership of the AGCA provided the basis for full entry into the phase of higher development of the AHPN which can be described as a set of proposals and actions aimed at institutionalization, archival stabilization, public access to information and the use of documents from the archive in legal proceedings.

The law enforcement institution’s store of documents, measuring over 7,900 linear meters (nearly five miles) of packages or bundles of documents, contains records dating back as far as the late nineteenth century (1882) and as recent as 1997. The approximately 80 million sheets of paper gathered here, all in the process of being salvaged, have indisputable importance from a historical, cultural and scientific perspective.

From a human rights perspective, this enormous store of documents is especially important, as it comprises a virtually inexhaustible source of information. It makes it possible to investigate the historical period corresponding to the internal armed conflict, during which the National Police was repeatedly identified by both victims and national and international human rights organizations as a body involved in systematic and serious violations that even now remain unresolved.

## **2. The Right to Information, to the Clarification of the Truth, and to Justice**

The Guatemalan State has systematically hidden important information that would allow us to ascertain clearly just how human rights abuses came to be perpetrated against the more than two hundred thousand people who fell victim to massacres, execution without trial, forced disappearance, and torture, not to mention the thousands of others who suffered persecution, displacement and exile. These are acts whose consequences continue to affect a fearful and fragmented population who urgently need to heal the wounds of the past and to begin, through knowledge of the truth and the application of justice, the full exercise of the freedoms and guarantees inherent in a state governed by the rule of law.

Repeatedly, various State bodies denied the existence of any archives or stores of documents that might facilitate the investigation of alleged violations of human rights. Such was the case with the Ministry of the Interior and the National Police during the active period of the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH, Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico), a body which, under the auspices of the United Nations, was charged with demonstrating human rights violations perpetrated during the internal armed conflict.

The serious crimes committed against the Guatemalan people continue to go unpunished as a result of the refusal to make public all the information regarding the activities of the State security agencies, such as the Army, the Presidential General Staff (EMP, Estado Mayor Presidencial, also translated as the Presidential Guard or Presidential High Command), the Army General Staff (EMGE, Estado Mayor General del Ejército), the Regional Telecommunications Center, the National Police and all its operational agencies, as well as information relating to government functionaries, mainly corresponding to the period 1975-1985. It is only recently (frequently more than 25 years after the events in question, and almost 15 years after the end of the armed conflict) that the first steps were taken to bring legal proceedings against offenders from the internal armed conflict, the fruits of which can already be seen in the three sentences handed down for forced disappearance.

Thus far, the greatest progress in the investigation of the recent past are the reports of the Commission for Historical Clarification to be found in *Guatemala, Memory of Silence* and the Interdiocesan Project for the Recovery of the Historical Memory (REHMHI), of the Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala (ODHAG), *Guatemala Nunca Más (Guatemala Never Again)*. Both documents are based primarily on the testimonies of the victims; they unveil the main events within the framework of the internal armed conflict and provide information on the conditions in the Guatemala of that period that made it possible for human rights abuses to take place.

Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the CEH had great difficulty in obtaining the documents necessary to carry out its mandate; its repeated requests for information were systematically rebuffed by the institutions involved. Furthermore, in the case of the PN it was claimed time and again that no documents existed that might be of any use in clarifying these events.

Relatives of many of the victims have searched fruitlessly for any clues that might provide some glimmer of hope of finding out what happened to their loved ones. The multiple demands for an investigation these relatives put before the authorities in question have invariably run into an impenetrable wall of impunity that has denied the majority of victims and their families the right to information, the right to the truth and the right to justice.

It should be pointed out that the Army's repeated blocking of access to files and documents that may reveal relevant information violates the Political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, Article 30 of which declares that: "*all Government documents are public. Anyone interested has the right to obtain, at any time, any reports, copies, reproductions and certifications they request, and to be shown any files they may wish to consult.*"

The same Article proposes the restriction of this right when "*it is a question of military or diplomatic affairs of national-security import.*" Nonetheless, this argument is not valid when used to hide crimes against humanity committed by the State, which violated the legal order by contravening important international agreements on human rights during the course of the internal armed conflict.

The situation has changed little, despite the approval by the Congress of the Republic in 2008 of the Law of Access to Public Information. Those in charge of the armed forces continue to put forward the same argument: national security, as well as the lack or loss of any documents, such as military or other plans relating to the internal armed conflict. In spite of this, Army documents did begin to leak out, either as photocopies or through the internet, such as the “Sofia” Operational Plan (1982) and the “Firmness 83” Plan. In addition, the government set up the Commission for the Declassification of Military Files, aimed at sifting out documents that should and could be made accessible to the public.

Given these circumstances, it is easy to understand the high level of resistance that continues throughout Guatemalan society and that hinders the unavoidable process to reconstruct the social fabric and nurture a culture of peace that is necessary for any national project that aspires to just economic, political, social and cultural development for its people.

Continued impunity for grave violations of human rights and crimes against humanity brings with it serious consequences, as these repressive practices that ignore the bounds of legality and democracy tend to recur when we fail to establish a historical precedent of legal penalization so they may never be repeated. In other words, the Guatemalan State finds itself facing the urgent need to set out, with determination and political will, on the road to uncovering the truth and of access to justice in order to build the foundation for a true reconciliation process.

The results of impunity can be seen in the current statistics on violence: the forced disappearances that are still happening, the corpses with their hands bound and evidence of torture that appear daily, the extreme violence against women or the so-called social cleansing operations, the existence of illegal groups and clandestine security apparatuses which, at the very least, confirm the continuation of these practices and that not infrequently involve members of the armed forces and the current National Civil Police (PNC).

The consequences of all this also have effects for the victims’ families, since many of them continue to stay silent regarding past events, and they are deprived of the possibility of reclaiming their loved ones’ dignity. In other cases, relatives have grown old or died without ever knowing the fate of those who left home one

day never to return, or who were executed on the street without anyone ever being called before the court to answer for their actions.

So, just as the information contained in the AHPN has been opened to the public, it is vital that the files of the other security agencies be placed at the disposal of the victims of repression, and of society as a whole. This is fundamental if we are to offer them the chance to discover what happened, and therefore to comprehend in the fullest sense the horror involved in the violation of their human rights. This measure also opens up the possibility of appreciating of the human value of so many who died or disappeared during this period.

The National Police Historical Archive is a repository of a huge volume of official documents of a governmental and therefore public nature, documents that show in great detail the functioning, hierarchies, routine activities and the collaboration on intelligence work and operations involved in state repression. In addition, it provides information on the way work was coordinated with other the security forces and in particular with the Army.

Therefore it is essential to guarantee to Guatemalan society, the international community, and, first and foremost, the victims and families of victims, the right to know and to have, at last, access to the truth and to justice. This will be of supreme importance insomuch as it allows the healing of the wounds left by the internal armed conflict.

The victims' families have made extensive efforts to uncover the truth and to discover the fates of their loved ones. Since mid-1984, the mothers, wives and children of the disappeared have cried: "*You took them alive, we want them alive!*" The 1990s saw the beginning of the process of exhumation and burial of the victims of the internal armed conflict, amounting to over a thousand forensic-anthropological investigations carried out all over the country, providing one of the means to discover "*the buried truth.*"

Various groups of families, together with human rights organizations, when faced with the ineffectiveness of Guatemala's judicial system, have taken their cases to the national and international courts in order to have those who planned and perpetrated atrocities in the name of the State brought to justice. Certain efforts to prosecute perpetrators have borne positive results—some partially—such



as happened in the trial for the murder of the anthropologist Myrna Mack in September 1990, the massacre at Xamán in 1995, the massacres at Dos Erres and Rio Negro in 1982, and the murder of Monsignor Juan Gerardi two days after he presented the report *Guatemala Never Again* in April 1998.

The present report, now being placed before Guatemalan society and the international community, examines and analyzes the information contained in the official sources of the National Police. As such, it contributes new data and evidence to the efforts already made and published in the reports from the CEH and the REMHI towards the end of the last decade. It also offers support to the tireless struggle by the families of victims and international human rights organizations working for the right to memory, for the clarification of truth and the application of justice in Guatemala.

### **3. Investigation of the AHPN on Human Rights Violations**

With the end of the armed conflict and as part of the provisions of the Peace Accords, in July 1997 the Commission for Historical Clarification was set up with the mission of finding evidence and giving testimony to the human rights violations committed within the framework of the internal armed conflict, preparing the report that was to come out of this investigation, and contributing a series of recommendations regarding the construction of peace, respect for human rights and the preservation of the memory of the victims.

In February 1999, this commission presented the report *Guatemala, Memory of Silence*, which gave a systematic account of the enormous quantity of testimony by victims –and some offenders– of violations of human rights, and particularly crimes against humanity. The commission was able to gather sufficient information to show that acts of genocide had taken place.

As a prelude to an analysis of the causes and effects of the internal armed conflict, work routes were set up in order to compile documentary evidence, remarking that: “*The information provided by the Ministry of the Interior, the National Police and the Judicial Body with respect to the investigations into some cases has been extremely poor, showing a lack of investigation in cases of serious violation of human rights which ought to be prosecuted.*”

For many years, under a mantle of silence, the National Police Archive functioned as a depository for the institution's documents. The State in general, and the PN in particular, denied its existence or offered scant information when requested by the CEH. If the political will had existed on the part of the State, the labor of investigation into their own archives would have been an inevitability.

Once the AHPN was discovered, the possibility of accessing the archive was far from certain, and the necessity of safeguarding the immense store of documents led, on July 12th, 2005, to an application from the PDH for a judicial order allowing an investigation on the grounds of human rights concerns. The application was approved the same day by the Third Civil Court of Common Pleas in accordance with Emergency Provision 58-2005.

Following this, upon realizing that Government authorities were attempting to move the documents to another location, the PHD applied for an injunction that would block the transportation of the store of documents. The same court, constituted in the Special Court of Amparo (Protection), ruled in trial number 68-2005 that the documents should be provisionally safeguarded, meaning that the Ministry of the Interior had to abandon its efforts.

In addition to being supported by a standing constitutional order, the investigations also had the support of the doctrine and regulations of International Law on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, accepted as legal instruments and which all States have an obligation to respect regardless of whether they are signatories or have ratified them, given that they are the innate rights of every human being.

### **3.1 Aims of the Investigation**

The investigation into violations of human rights carried out by the APHN since mid-2009 has pursued various fundamental objectives with the certain knowledge that, without them, there would be no point to safeguarding and preserving the store of documents.

- To contribute to uncovering possible violations of human rights committed by the PN and other State security forces.
- To contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the structures, work systems, operational plans and patterns of activity of the PN.
- To foster and practice respect for the right to substantive information that has been historically denied to the Guatemalan people.
- To consolidate historical memory by uncovering the truth and making it known.
- To assist in the legal proceedings against those shown to be responsible for crimes against humanity based on the documentary record in the AHPN.
- To support the demands for justice on the part of surviving victims of human rights violations and their relatives.
- Reaffirm the importance of the AHPN in the context of the provisions of the Peace Accords.

### **3.2 Time Frame for the Investigation**

In light of the overwhelming number of documents contained in the AHPN, and in order to obtain results from the investigation within a reasonable period, even taking into account the poor condition in which the documents were found, it was necessary to restrict the amount of time in which the investigation was to be carried out.

From a social-sciences perspective, and based on reports on human rights in Guatemala, it is generally accepted that between November 1960 and December 1996, the country lived through an internal armed conflict that had its origin in harsh social and economic inequality, restrictions placed on political participation and expression, and on repeated violations of the Guatemalan people's human rights.

Following the counter revolution and intervention by the United States in 1954, the repressive policies of successive governments fostered the growth of a movement seeking political change by military means. This long confrontation came to an end in 1996 with the signing of the Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace. Although the war between insurgents and the army lasted 36 years, it was decided to concentrate the investigation on the period from 1975-1985, years singled out by the Commission for Historical Clarification as those containing the greatest number of human rights violations.

Presidents Lucas García (1978-1982), Ríos Mont (1982-1983) and Chief of the Armed Forces Mejía Víctores (1983-1986) both widened and deepened the extent of the militarization of the State and its institutions. The security forces, acting under the guise of counter-insurgency policies, employed inhuman methods to achieve their goals, such as forced disappearance, execution without trial, torture, and genocide, all of which are systematically described in numerous eyewitness reports. Because of this, relatives, mothers, sons, daughters, husbands and wives of the victims of repression continue to mobilize in order to discover the fate of those who vanished during this period and to demand that truth and the right to justice be recognized.

The state repression unleashed on the country between the years 1975 and 1985 was aimed at activists in a variety of sectors. The victims of these acts were mainly men and women involved in politics, union organization, student or local movements, rural organizations, the Catholic Church and guerrilla groups. Many of these deeds have been attributed by eyewitnesses and victims' relatives to members of the PN. For this reason, priority was given to this period as the starting point for the first efforts at an investigation. In no way whatsoever does this mean that the other years are any less important a subject for investigation; it is simply that the vast scale of the task makes it necessary to delimit the period to be studied.

### **3.3 Other Technical Limitations**

In addition to defining one period as a priority for study, the investigation on which this report is based was constrained by the technical processes of cleaning,

identifying, classifying, ordering and describing the collections of documents that would enable access to the files in order to discover their contents and determine their usefulness to the investigation.

As of March 15th, 2011, 55 of those collections of documents had been identified as corresponding to a set of documents produced or received by an office of the PN. Furthermore, there are nine special collections, plus a high number of documents of various types such as vehicle license plates, former officers' badges, photographs, printouts, etc.

The progress made in these processes, together with the scanning of the documents, has been extended to the records in the collections belonging to the following PN structures:

- 1) Of the 21 regional police departments, only the documentation for the Department of Quetzaltenango has been processed;
- 2) Of the seven collections corresponding to an equal number of PN precincts in Guatemala city, as concerns the years 1975 to 1985, that of the Fourth Precinct has been worked on completely and in depth, as well as 70% of that of the Second;
- 3) Of the 26 collections remaining, containing documents from other structures, the archival process has been implemented for: The Directorate General, the Chief Inspector's Office, the Bureau of Identification, the Center for Joint Operations (COCP, Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas) and the Department of Criminal Investigation (DIC, Departamento de Investigaciones Criminológicas).
- 4) The penultimate step in the archiving process undergone by the documents is the digital scanning of each sheet of paper. The final step consists in providing access to the documents by means of these same images. As of March 15th, 2011, 12,044,640 (twelve million, forty-four thousand, six hundred and forty) images of the AHPN documents had been scanned.

This means that the list of topics included in this report was chosen while in the middle of a continuous and ongoing effort to process the documents belonging to

the former PN. It includes part of the information that has been systematized and analyzed since the beginning of 2009.

The circumstances surrounding the processes of archiving documents and analyzing information provide the foundations that make it possible for subsequent investigations to build on many of the findings of this report, broadening and even correcting them in view of new information originating in the documents examined as the process of the recovery of the Archive progresses.

### **3.4 Analysis of Acts in Violation of Human Rights**

As a point of departure in the attempt to ascertain whether human rights violations existed, either through direct participation or negligence of duty on the part of State security agencies, it was decided to use the information to be found in the documents emanating from or received by the police body. Research involved the piecing together of fragments of information in such a way that any clue, however insignificant it might have appeared on first sight, upon being placed alongside other data or documents, made it possible to construct a more complete picture of the activities of the PN.

This process employed deductive reasoning. Starting with the information contained in each collection of documents, it went on to define sets of themes grouped around the aim of the investigations. The goal was to establish whether or not the PN and other State security agencies participated in activities that could be considered to be in violation of human rights. Below are details of the different phases of the investigative process:

- a) *Investigations of collections*: conceived as research focused on each collection of documents and the connections they might have to any other collections. The aim of this was to reconstruct hierarchical, operational and coordination structures within the police body.
- b) *Investigation and analysis of specific subjects*: after a stage of systematic exploration lasting around three months, we defined the principal issues relating to the investigation of human rights:

- 1) Mechanisms for coordination between the PN and the Army within the framework of the internal armed conflict.
  - 2) Functions and operations of the PN regarding the popular movement between 1975 and 1985.
  - 3) Functions and operations of the PN regarding revolutionary organizations between 1975 and 1985.
  - 4) The PN as a source of intelligence information within the framework of the internal armed conflict.
  - 5) External advice received by the PN.
  - 6) Participation by the PN in practices that violated human rights.
  - 7) Social control.
- c) *Substantive investigation reports*: the investigation teams for the eight collections of documents worked on wrote substantive reports on the aforementioned issues.
- d) *Spaces for analysis and reflection*: this was the means used by the investigators of the collections to present their research findings and also to exchange information and formulate new questions. During special day-long sessions organized for this purpose, in-depth discussions were held based on one or more of the issues outlined in section b. The investigators revealed the principal discoveries made in the various collections of documents gradually, using targeted questions prepared beforehand with the purpose of encouraging an exchange of impressions relating to the specific issues.

Using the plethora of information and impressions gathered through this process, another team of investigators would proceed to order and analyze the data. From the view point of human rights, priority was given to identifying the mechanisms for coordination between State security agencies and the meticulous description of the practices and activities of the National Police throughout the period under investigation. With the aid of other documentary sources that were compared with those in the AHPN, information was found that made possible the conclusion that the State was involved in practices that were in violation of human rights.

Among these practices violating human rights, those analyzed were principally – though not exclusively – practices that contravened the right to liberty and due

process, as in the case of illegal detention. Likewise, an examination was made of those cases that violated the right to life, health and safety of the person, and particularly of possible executions without trial and forced disappearances.

### 3.5 Investigation Files and Cases

As the investigation teams grew to know, analyze and systematize the information available in the AHPN, they began to associate the data with facts already known beforehand, making it possible to create electronic investigative files on people who were victims of human rights violations. In the AHPN, this type of file was defined as *“the grouping of images of various documents dealing with the same topic or person. These documents may come from different sources.”* It is therefore the association of document images from different sources – spread throughout more than one collection – relating to an act committed against one person identified by a defined place and time.

Rather than the seeking-out of documents related to some predetermined act or person, it has been a case of constructing these files as related data has come to light during the examination of documents. So it is that, when the archive staff discovers a document from the PN containing the name of a person who was a victim of human rights violations, a file is established for that person, and images of new documents containing references to the same event and person are subsequently added, even when these come from other offices within the institution (the PN).

In addition to this is the concept of the *“Investigation Case”* – basically a compilation of several related investigative files. Each case can be *“organized according to events, people, institutions, etc. It is the most global type of grouping, always thematic and collective. Investigation cases can consist of records that come for a number of collections.”* Consequently, all the documents containing information on a given victim go to make up an investigation file, and at the same time these records may form part of an investigation case when the events or behavior patterns involve more than one victim. Therefore, an event of mass disappearance and the *“Death Squad Diary”* can both be referred to as investigative cases.



In the present report, a number of files are put forward as examples of the contributions and the revelations provided by the AHPN documentary sources. Besides the abuses suffered by the victims, there are detailed descriptions of the activities of the PN as the body directly responsible for the events, or at least being implicated by its failure to fulfill its functions.

### **3.6 Criteria for Selection of Documents in the Investigative Process**

Given the sheer volume of documents and the variety of administrative information recorded therein, for the purposes of analysis, selection was limited to those originally produced within the period 1975 to 1985, as already mentioned. On occasion, however, documents from outside this period were analyzed, in the main because they contributed to the clarification of certain events or policies. Also, it was necessary to consult them in order to learn about the background to the evolution of PN structures. These criteria also guide the way in which the aforementioned files and cases are compiled.

To analyze the information, the investigators started by scrutinizing the following collections of documents while they were going through cleaning, identification, classification, ordering and scanning:

- The Directorate General of the PN (Collection GT PN 30)
- Center for National Police Joint Operations (GT PN 51)
- Bureau of Identification (GT PN 49)
- Capital City Second Corps (GT PN 24)
- Capital City Fourth Corps (GT PN 26)
- Quetzaltenango Departmental Police Headquarters (GT PN 09)
- Department of Criminal Investigation (GT PN 50)
- Chief Inspector's Office (GT PN 32)

A variety of criteria were adopted for the selection of documents when these provided information relating to the functions of each structure or when they gave clues to the role that these played. Also considered were those documents containing information on the organization of each law enforcement agency and its relations both internally and with other State security forces. One overarching criterion is to discover the existence of any indication of human rights abuses

and the details of any highly-placed personnel in each of the structures allegedly involved.

When dealing with official documents, it is vitally important to examine the document in terms of where it originated, who its author or authors were and who it was meant for. Of similar importance are any other data, such as handwritten comments or seals, that may help us to understand the administrative procedures of the PN and to make connections between the hierarchical structure and the functionaries who had knowledge of the information recorded.

### **3.7 Criteria for Recording Names Mentioned in AHPN Documents**

In order to write this report, some deep and serious reflection occurred on the question of the suitability or otherwise of including names – whether those of individual members of the National Police, those of the victims, or of anyone else. Legal arguments on the subject formed a fundamental part of the considerations. The final decision made was not to conceal any name appearing in the AHPN documents that would serve to support the contents of this report.

The internal armed conflict and repressive practices were features of a recent period in the history of Guatemala that have had an enormous effect on Guatemalan society that continues right up to the present. Faced with this reality, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the political events that took place between 1960 and 1996 form part of the collective history of the Nation. This must be known in its fullest sense, and no one should have the right to withhold information that has its origin in the acts of the State or its functionaries. This represents a determined vote against any attempts to “*wipe the slate clean*” and start afresh, i.e., the tendency to bury the past and focus only on the future.

For the surviving victims, relatives of victims and other people and institutions with a profound interest in uncovering the truth about these events, it is worth repeating that obtaining knowledge of factual events is a person’s inalienable right, as guaranteed by the Political Constitution of the Republic (Articles 30 and 31).

The documents deposited in the AHPN are public in nature, since they were produced within the administrative framework of a State institution. Thus, in strict accordance with the law, they should be at the disposal of anyone requiring access to them. In addition to the provisions of numerous Articles of the Constitution, we are acting in accordance with the precepts of the Law on Access to Public Information. This reaffirms access to public information as a fundamental human right (Article 46). Article 9, Sections 3 and 4 define *the right of access to public information* as universal in terms of the people of this country and *habeas data* as the application of this right to verify personal data recorded and archived at given public offices.

Although both these legal instruments make mention of restricted access to confidential and reserved information, Article 24 of the Law on Access to Public Information stipulates that no information that may contribute to uncovering violations of fundamental human rights may be marked as confidential or reserved. The same is held to apply to cases of crimes against humanity. The AHPN is the archive of one of the State security services implicated in the repression of the civil population and as such its documentation cannot be termed “*confidential*” or “*reserved*.”

Based on these arguments, the National Police Historical Archive expressly includes in its reports the full names of all actors, both passive and active, mentioned in the documents, whether public officials or state employees (in the case of the National Police or other State bodies, such as the Army), secret collaborators, private citizens who were victims and their relatives, those who made accusations, people with police files, applicants, and so on.

### **3.8 The Utility of Other Human Rights Reports on Guatemala**

Although the main source for the creation of this report has been the findings revealed in the official documents of the AHPN, information and opinions contributed by other national and international sources were also taken into account. In many cases, in order to form a more complete vision of the existence of practices that violated human rights, it was beneficial to cross check information with other documentary sources. Among these we might mention: special reports on the situation of human rights in Guatemala produced by the Inter-American

Commission on Human Rights (CIDH/OEA, Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos), reports from Amnesty International (AI) and the report *The Practice of Forced Disappearance of Persons in Guatemala*, presented in 1988 by the Central American Association of Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared. In the national context, the reports by the Archdiocese of Guatemala's Human Rights Office, *Guatemala Never Again*, published in 1998, and *Era tras la vida por la que íbamos... Reconocimiento a jóvenes del movimiento estudiantil guatemalteco* (It Was Life That We Were After: In Recognition of the Youth of the Guatemalan Student Movement), published in 2004. The contributions of the CEH in the report *Guatemala, Memory of Silence* were invaluable. Also cited are studies published by academics and other institutions that have documented some of the issues discussed in this report.

### **3.9 Contributions from Other Official Archives**

What the CEH described as the “*meager and unsatisfactory*” cooperation on the part of the Army during its investigations continues to be the case with the other efforts, including necessities arising from the investigations done on the AHPN.

In many of the legal procedures involving the victims' relatives or different organizations active on this issue, the complainants have run into an impenetrable wall of supposed State confidentiality. The Ministry of National Defense (MINDEF) has systematically refused to provide information to the authorities under the pretext that it is a question of information classified as secret and that any declassification would represent a threat to national security.

However, the scarcity of alternative information is made up for, to a certain extent, by the exchange of information between the PN and the offices of the Army and Presidential General Staff found in the AHPN. The documents show the planning and execution of joint operations, as well as the dominance of the armed institution over the law enforcement agency. Access to other official sources is necessary in order to advance the ongoing efforts to uncover the truth and discover the fate of the “disappeared,” and also to construct a comprehensive historical record of the internal armed conflict.

Beginning just a few months after the discovery of the archive, the National Security Archive (NSA), a U.S.-based NGO, has worked with the AHPN in a variety of ways. Principally through the work of its analyst Kate Doyle, this institution has made invaluable contributions to the process of restoring the archive, and in the investigation itself, with its advisory, archival, analytical and investigative activities, as well as by supplying information.<sup>1</sup> Certain declassified US Government documents, obtained and made public by the NSA and expressly given to the AHPN, have been an enormous help in the effort to cross-check data from other sources. Particularly interesting are those documents relating to the Army and its activities concerning operational coordination with the PN.

Another auxiliary source is the *Death Squad Diary*, also known as the *Military Diary*. This document was made public by the NSA in May 1999. It contains a list of 184 disappeared persons (some subsequently freed with the aim of forcing them to cooperate with their captors) with dates stretching from August 1983 to March 1985. As successive expert analyses have shown, there is every reason to believe that this document is a record used by a military agency to monitor its political objectives. Given the level of detail of the information it contains, this documents made it possible to compare AHPN records of detentions carried out by the PN with a list of people who figure in the *Diary*.

### 3.10 Quantitative Study

From the very start of the archival and investigative process, the AHPN has received technical and scientific advice from the Benetech Group<sup>2</sup> in the task of

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<sup>1</sup> The National Security Archive (NSA) is an independent non-governmental organization based at The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., which is devoted to the legal collection and study of declassified United States Government documents and offers support to similar processes in other countries. Its mission is to guarantee the right to know, both of societies in general and of victims or their families, of the existence of human rights violations. It has won many awards for its quest for the truth and its publication of documents and analysis.

As it has done in the case of the AHPN, the organization aids in the preservation of and research in the archival collections of police and security forces involved in acts of state repression. In addition, the Director of the Guatemala Project, Kate Doyle, and other members of the NSA, have prepared and delivered expert reports in twelve countries on both declassified US Government documents and those of other nations at the trials of former agents of repressive governments (including cases brought against former presidents).

With respect to Guatemala, Kate Doyle gave expert testimony at the trial of the murderers of the anthropologist Myrna Mack Chang, and before the Spanish judge, Santiago Pedraz, in relation to the Guatemalan military document, the “*Sofia’ Operational Plan*,” in the case involving the genocide perpetrated in Guatemala.

Its support for the PDH and the AHPN has taken the form of advising on a diversity of tasks, including the strategy for establishing public access to the AHPN documents and the creation of both the first report by PRAHPN and the document you are holding.

<sup>2</sup> A non-profit technological organization based in Palo Alto, California, United States. One its most important areas of activity is the Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG), which emphasizes the use of technology to improve people’s lives through the objective and scientific application of statistical science and mathematics, focusing exclusively on human rights.

The Benetech Human Rights Program develops database software, data collection strategies and statistical techniques to help human rights defenders construct evidence-based arguments. This program is directed by Doctor Patrick Ball, who has over 18 years’ experience in the organization and analysis of large-scale human rights projects. Benetech’s technology and analysis have been used by seven truth commissions (Haiti, South Africa, Guatemala, Peru, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and East Timor), the International Criminal Court for the former Yugoslavia, and non-governmental human rights organizations around the world.

statistical exploration. To this end, an investigative project was designed based on the following questions:

- a) How did the chain of command work; who knew, decided, or said what, when, where, how, and in what measure?
- b) What was the relationship between various law enforcement agencies and with other State bodies?
- c) How did the institutional organization of the PN develop during the period under investigation?

The study made it possible to determine what proportion of the events recorded in the AHPN documents and corresponding to the period between 1960 and 1996 constituted suspected violations of the people's rights and which were the most frequent types of violations.

Data were also obtained on the physical condition of the documents, the type of documents in existence, whether they were originals or copies, events of interest that had been reported and the movement or flow of documents.

Given the quantity and the variety of the contents of the documents in the Archive, the AHPN and the Benetech Group thought it appropriate to turn to a probabilistic random sampling method for the quantitative study.

The study of samples is preferable to a census when the study universe is very large, making it impossible to analyze it in its entirety, and because its characteristics may vary if extended over too long a period. The random sampling method also has the advantage of reducing the costs of inquiries as well as making it possible to obtain reliable results in a shorter period of time than if a census had been carried out.

The study universe comprises the 80 million sheets of paper mentioned before. However, systematic recording of data was limited to the years between 1960 and 1996, which is the period of the internal armed conflict. Documents dated outside this range are considered in terms to the percentage ratio between them.

With respect to the procedure, the study has been conducted in a series of stages of random extraction of information which is then codified and scanned. To date,

eleven stages have been completed. A specialized team is responsible for extracting the sample in accordance with the established criteria and procedures and codifying the key elements in each document. In order to ensure the accuracy and uniformity of this process, reliability exercises are periodically done by the codifiers in order to guarantee that those responsible are interpreting similar phenomena in the same way. Another team is in charge of scanning the information.

In August 2009, partial results from the first nine phases (iterations) of the study were published. This first public presentation was carried out under the auspices of the *Joint Statistical Meeting* in Washington, D.C. The event stirred particular expectation due to the novel method used and designed specifically for this study.

Each phase concludes with a review and analysis of the data, measurement of the sample weights and the inferences drawn from the results. It is precisely those results that provide a scientific basis for statistical data such as the following:

- The AHPN contains approximately 31 million documents dated between 1960 and 1996.
- 10.4% of documents do not show the date they were written; 9.6% lack an author; 28.5% lack the recipient. 1.3% (some 400,000 documents) show no author, recipient or date.
- 21% of documents for the years 1960-1996 mention at least one of the following: detention, abduction, torture, assassination, homicide, rape, disappearance.
- In those documents that mention disappearance, abduction, and/or writs of habeas corpus, most contain reports of abduction (400,000 documents), followed by disappearance (250,000 documents) then habeas corpus (75,000 documents).
- Of the 31 million documents from the period 1960-1996, 0.6% (over 175,000 documents), contain evidence of communication between the Army and the National Police.

#### **4. Public Access to AHPN Information**

On March 24th, 2009, after nearly four years of strenuous efforts to safeguard, restore and conserve the National Police Historical Archive, the Service for References to Human Rights Violations (SEREVIDH, Servicio de Referencias sobre Violaciones a los Derechos Humanos) was launched. This event gave relatives of victims, surviving victims, investigators, public bodies and others access to images of the scanned documents.

Beginning with that moment, the hope of finding clues and information about the events that occurred between 1975 and 1985 became tangible, especially with regards to forced disappearances, executions without trial and illegal detentions involving the suspected participation of the PN.

In July of 2009, in accordance with the Law on Archives, the AHPN was placed under the charge of the Ministry of Culture and Sport. Since that change, service to the public has been provided through the Information Access Unit (UAI, Unidad de Acceso a la Información) in accordance with the Law on Access to Public Information (Decree 57-2008).

As the whole point of the AHPN is to provide a public service, the figures on applications for and receipt of information at the UAI are encouraging. From January 2009 to March 15th, 2011, 4,368 applications were received for investigations into specific individuals.

The Ministry of Justice (Ministerio Público or MP) is the body that has made the most applications to the UAI during this period: 1,257 (30%). Next are those of private users, especially relatives of the victims, with 965 (22%). Then a variety of civil organizations with 806 (18%). State institutions have made 433 applications (10%). The National Civil Police (PNC) 321 (7%). The Human Rights Procurator (PDH) 307 (7%). Peace Archives 216 (5%). International institutions and academic researchers, 63 (1%).

In total, images from 38,841 documents from the AHPN have been made available to users, making a total of 156,325 pages. 78% of the documents applied for were able to be located and some information provided for the users; in other words, the investigations in question were successfully. If we take into



consideration the fact that new documents are being processed and examined every day, it is possible that, in the future, the information offered may provide answers to applications that have so far been impossible to satisfy.

## **5. Contributions as Evidence in Legal Proceedings**

In March 2009, following the issuance of a warrant for the same purpose, two people were taken into custody on suspicion of the illegal detention and forced disappearance of the unionist Edgar Fernando García. On February 18th, 1984, the date on which these events occurred, both of these individuals were working as agents of the now defunct National Police.

The warrant for their apprehension was based exclusively on documents provided by the AHPN within the framework of a special inquiry into this case, under the direction of the PDH, in accordance with a ruling from the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ, Corte Suprema de Justicia) based on Decree 51-92. Based on this information, the Ministry of Justice made an application for an arrest warrant to the presiding judge, who believed that the application contained sufficient evidence to issue the warrant.

In July of 2010, the Fourth Court of First Instance for Criminal Acts, Drug Trafficking and Environmental Crimes, which had previous knowledge of the case, ordered a trial against those implicated in the forced disappearance of Edgar Fernando García. At the end of October that year, the two accused were declared guilty of the crime and sentenced to 40 years in prison.

This is the first time that official documents discovered in the AHPN were taken into account as a determining factor in the opening of a legal case and achieving a jail sentence in a case of forced disappearance committed during the internal armed conflict.

The documents in the AHPN are administrative in nature and contain details of the workings and the activities of the PN. For this reason their use is novel in the courts of justice, given that they belong to an institution that disappeared 13 years ago. All this means that the AHPN must also contribute to the presentation and defense of expert testimony.

The designation of one or more expert witnesses is regulated by the Code of Criminal Procedure (Articles 225-237). Therefore, the Ministry of Justice is in need of archival expertise that, among other aims, would enable it to ascertain the authenticity and reliability of documents from the AHPN. It authorizes the confirmation of the document as authentic, as having been genuinely produced or received by the institution, and as belonging to the store of documents handed down by the National Police. The term reliability, on the other hand, refers to the various aspects that make it possible to confirm the evidentiary value of the document. Among these are the coherence between a document and the rules of procedure and legal functions of the institution, the prolonged and repeated use of seals, signatures and other features, and verification of the fact that the institution is linked with the document's contents.

In other words, archival expertise situates one or more documents in their context as part of a set, since an isolated document would lack reliability, even if it were most likely authentic. As with other types of expertise, this is based on the evidentiary value of the documents put forward as evidence in the course of legal proceedings.

It can be justly claimed that, besides the reconstruction of historical memory and the struggle to guarantee the right to have the truth clarified, the AHPN has embarked upon a stage of genuine and meaningful involvement in the country's justice system, providing crucial elements in order to satisfy the demands for justice for the victims. Five and half years after its discovery, the AHPN has achieved the ability to make substantial contributions to the legal process, to uncover facts that were hidden, unpunished, and in violation of international law.



## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The Report *From Silence to Memory* is organized into four chapters. The first, titled “*Structure and Functioning of the National Police, 1975-1985*,” presents some interesting information about the history of the law enforcement institution, reaching back to its origins at the end of the nineteenth century. After this there is an analysis of the legal bases, the structure and the functioning of the National Police that prevailed during the period in question, so that, through a description of the functions assigned to the police force by law, the reader can form an idea of the tasks formally required of this institution. In addition, there is an introduction to the different types of documents or documentary types that exist in the AHPN and which were consulted most often for the purposes of this investigation.

Chapter II, “*Relations between the State Security Forces*,” examines the origin of the work done jointly by the Guatemalan State security agencies within the framework of the counterinsurgency strategy. This includes the role played by the government of the United States in advising and training the PN with the object of guaranteeing the effectiveness of the inter-institutionally coordinated work. There is a description of the institutional structures created both inside and outside the National Police and linked to joint efforts at the operational level. Facts are presented about security plans and operations that figure among the principal mechanisms of coordination, as well as the implications on the chain of command that such coordination had for the various State security agencies.

Chapter III, “*The Role of the National Police in the Context of the Internal Armed Conflict, 1975-1985*,” offers a detailed description of the activities and behavioral patterns of the National Police during the period investigated. A description is given of the procedures implemented for the mass registration and creation of records on the population, the surveillance and control of people, and

the structures set up for the persecution of the political opposition, in the form of both armed resistance movements and civilian protest groups. Lastly, there is an analysis of how the PN came to control an intelligence network that, in the context provided, constituted the main source of information for the centralized work being carried out by the security forces.

Chapter IV, "*Investigation Files*," presents seven examples of investigation based on the compilation of scanned files about nine individuals. Using this group of cases, it is possible to show the circumstances in which human rights violations occurred where the National Police may have been either directly or indirectly involved. The characteristic features that can be shown by means of archival analysis are: systems of monitoring and surveillance for leaders and prominent figures in the political opposition; impunity and an arbitrary approach to the investigation of crimes, to learning the truth and in the application of justice; a high degree of subordination of the PN to the requirements and orders of the Army; concealment by both institutions; excesses committed by the security forces in the implementation of counterinsurgency policies and operations; omission and acquiescence by the authorities concerning crimes and violations of human rights, among other issues.

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# CHAPTER I

## STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, 1975-1985

For the purposes of the processes of investigation and the writing of this Chapter, the contents of the archive documents have been scrupulously respected, avoiding all interpretation or value judgments. In the quotes from the records of the National Police Historical Archive (AHPH) the information is presented exactly as in the records themselves, including the names appearing there. Consequently, in many of the documents referred to, there are definitions and assessments made by the law enforcement authorities of themselves, although in numerous cases these judgments do not correspond to reality.

This chapter comprises four sections: before focusing specifically on the period from 1975 to 1985 and dealing with the information compiled respecting the structure and functioning of the National Police (PN), it is a good idea to reproduce in the first section some information regarding the historical development of this institution. We proceed to analyze the functions and structure that the Organic Law of 1955 and other regulations conferred on the National Police, which provide the legal framework that will, later, allow us to make an assessment of how, between 1975 and 1985, the PN's actions conformed to or deviated from its mandate. There follows a description of the main types of documents in the Historical Archive of the PN that were used for human rights investigations and which were fundamental to the creation of the Report *From Silence to Memory*. Lastly, there is an explanation of the two categories of classification applied by the PN to some of their documents: *confidential* and *secret*.

### 1. Details of the History of the Police Institution

Although there are historical references to certain groups or contingents in charge of public order in Guatemala city since before independence, in the spheres of the Ministry of the Interior and the National Police, December 12th, 1881 is considered to be the starting point for the history of the institution. In fact, up to now, the oldest document discovered in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) goes back to 1882.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> GT PN 24 S001 22.10.1882, Book No. 10499 Agents' Service Book [Digital reference 2795458. Internal AHPN registration 27163].

The first attempts at organizing a public force were made in the capital through the recruitment of residents for a neighborhood watch. From the birth Republic of Guatemala until the Liberal Reform, there were a variety of types of law enforcement bodies, but none of these achieved a definitive institutional status. At various times, the task of organizing such institutions was delegated to regional and local functionaries. At other times, an emphasis was placed on the organization by citizens of a night watch under the direction of local officials.

In support of this, a series of legislative decrees was issued, but each was short-lived, owing to the ongoing political instability of the country.

During the administration of Rafael Carrera (1844-1848 and 1851-1865), a more or less permanent nighttime police force known as “los serenos” was set up, together with another force for daytime duties.

Up to this point, they were police contingents charged with maintaining order and safety within the city limits, particularly in Guatemala city. Some regionally important cities set up their own watch initiatives when this need was not being met by their municipal sheriffs (*alguaciles*) and deputies.

The impact of the Liberal Reform (from 1871 on) also reached as far as the formation of institutionalized security agencies. The first to appear was the Civil Guard (*Guardia Civil*), created in 1872 on the orders of the provisional President, Miguel García Granados. It was still a body for security and order created specially for operations in the capital city, but its structure was more complex, comprising more than 300 members from the commandant to the soldiers, and even including a surgeon and two buglers.<sup>2</sup> The service if offered was in operation 24 hours a day.

In 1881, Justo Rufino Barrios created the Security, Health and Public Beatification Police (*Policía de Seguridad, Salubridad y Ornato*), substituting the Civil Guard, by means of the Government Accord of September 12th. From the beginning, it operated according to formal regulations that also defined admissions requirements and a hierarchical structure headed by the director and sub-director, together with four sections assigned to different sectors of the city. It began its institutional existence under the auspices of the Ministry of

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<sup>2</sup> Persons playing the bugle, a small trumpet used for military signals.

War and, following multiple reassignments, in 1886 it was definitively placed under the Ministry of the Interior and Justice, emphasizing its civilian nature.

That same year saw the institution's establishment in Quetzaltenango, beginning a slow process of expansion, taking until 1924 to achieve coverage of at least the regional administrative centers and some other towns such as Coatepeque or Asunción Mita, which stood out due to their importance in the coffee-growing and border regions, respectively.

Gradually, the Security Police split into two branches – one rural, the other urban. The latter, from 1900 on, included a mounted section. During the same period, 1894 saw the creation of the Revenue Guard (Guardia de Hacienda), whose duties were not restricted to merely pursuing financial crimes, but extended to any violation of the law.

In 1900, the Secret Police was created as an investigative unit within the institution. It was the first version of a body that would undergo multiple restructurings and renamings throughout the twentieth century. Added to this, during various periods, the State set up criminal investigation offices parallel to the PN, such as the Judicial Department during the 1950s and 1960s, which was subordinated to the Directorate General of National Security (DGSN, Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional).

In 1925, the law was updated to reflect the character the police had developed over the preceding 40 years or more. By means of Presidential Decree 901, the "*National Police Statute*" ("*Ordenanza de la Policía Nacional*"), the body took the name NATIONAL POLICE, since it now had operations throughout the country. In addition, it was attributed a "*purely civil nature*" and the function of serving as an agent for justice, to cooperate in investigations and inquiries required by judges and courts. Its formal presence throughout the Republic was in the form of police stations.

Another novelty was the introduction of the Identification Service, whose task it was to create anthropometric and fingerprint files on all detainees, beginning the creation of a data bank on individuals with a history of crime. This service came to be known subsequently as the Identification Bureau (Gabinete de Identificación), without ever being named as such in any legal



texts.<sup>3</sup> Also important was the creation of the Investigation Section (Sección de Investigación), which was to a certain extent extraordinary, as it was decided that it should have its own set of regulations.

At the same time the Rural Police was consolidated by means of decree on April 18th, 1927, making it responsible for control of the highway system and, in general, of preventing and pursuing illegal acts in the extra-urban regions. The members of this body were provided with motorcycles to patrol the highways.

The Statute underwent its first reform in 1940, although the changes were not substantial. Following this, during the revolutionary period between 1944 and 1954, its name was changed once more from the National Police to the Civil Guard,<sup>4</sup> though its structures and functions remained the same. Substantial changes came, particularly in terms of human resources, with the refusal of admission to many who had served under the Ubico dictatorship. An additional function consisted of assisting in the maintenance of revolutionary achievements, particularly during the first few months. The Secret Police, in turn, became the Judicial Guard.

The National Police, as it was known during the period under investigation, was structured and organized in 1955 by President Carlos Castillo Armas, who passed the corresponding Organic Law that remained in place until its dissolution on July 15th, 1997. Within the framework of this law, the Corps of Detectives was created as a criminal investigation agency. This underwent numerous changes and did not become relevant until the 1970s. In 1954, Castillo Armas had equipped the Judicial Police with similar features, but of a more secret nature.

Although during these 42 years there were additional laws passed and minor reforms to the aforementioned law, it can be said that, in general, the PN maintained a remarkable continuity in terms of its structure and functioning. This constitutes the central topic of this chapter and, notwithstanding the focus on the years 1975 to 1985, many of the issues from this period have their legal basis in the law passed in 1955 and its subsequent reforms.

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<sup>3</sup> Curiously, in no law or regulation was the term "Bureau" ("Gabinete" in the original) used. In the PN Statute of 1925, Decree 901, the *Identification Service* was created; in the Organic Law of the PN, Decree 332, the body was incorporated into the Department of Investigation and Information as the identification section; and in the Internal Regulations of 1978 it was named the Department of Identification. See: GT PN 35 S001 06/12-13/1978, Book of General Orders, General Order No. 071, Book Number 10504 [Digital Reference 736310. Internal AHPN registration 26935]. However, the cards containing personal data and fingerprints invariably bore the heading "*Identification Bureau*." The Chief signed as Bureau Chief and the stamps also used this name.

<sup>4</sup> Revolutionary Government Accord of 11/15/1944.

## 2. Established Legal Functions

This Report is the result of a long and exhaustive investigation that continues to develop. In order to determine whether the PN committed acts that were in violation of human rights during the internal armed conflict, it is vital to clarify as precisely as possible the legal foundation on which the police is required to base its activities. Further, it is essential to have a critical understanding of these foundations and their scope as provided for in the corresponding legislation. As the police is a security agency with the function of preventing and pursuing the crimes set forth in the Penal Code, the method of verification must necessarily involve an assessment of the activities documented, in specific situations and cases. All of this, however, must take place within the general framework of service to the State and the attributions and competencies for which it was legally empowered.

It is for this reason that attention is given to the legal precepts governing the functioning of the PN, as this constitutes the first step in the judging, by means of analysis of PN documents, whether the activities of the police officers were always within the bounds of the law, or, conversely, whether there is evidence of any activities that ought to be considered to have violated the institutions regulations and to be contrary to the protection and respect of the human rights of any possible victims.

### 2.1 The Constitution of 1965 and the Founding Statute of 1982

In the ten years between 1975 and 1985, the years on which this Report bases its analysis, the operation of the Guatemalan state was governed according to two judicial texts. The first was legally established by a National Constituent Assembly which enacted the Constitution of September 15th, 1965, a fundamental law that came into force on May 5th, 1966. The second appeared after the break with the constitution that followed the coup d'état of March 23rd, 1982, when the Governing Military Junta passed the Founding Statute of Government, bypassing the constitutional order. The *de facto* governments based their actions on this statute until January 14th, 1986, when the current Political Constitution of the Republic took effect, after being adopted by decree of the National Constituent Assembly in 1985.

The constitutional order of 1965 stipulated that it was the duty of President of the Republic “*to promote the defense and security of the Nation together with*

*the preservation of public order.*”<sup>5</sup> In the Founding Statute of Government the text was changed slightly, although it preserved as an executive function of the Governing Military Junta the fundamental principle of “*Providing the defense of the national territory and the preservation of public order.*”<sup>6</sup> In both cases, the main agencies to which these tasks were delegated were the Army and the National Police, respectively.

Although in 1965 a guarantee was given regarding the freedom to form political parties with democratic regulations and principles, at one and the same time it prohibited the formation of “*parties or entities that promote communist ideology, or that, by virtue their doctrinal tendencies, encourage actions or international links that threaten the sovereignty of the State or the bases of the democratic organization of Guatemala.*”<sup>7</sup> This in itself constitutes a violation of the rights of activists on the behalf of unions, popular and student movements and other sectors by labeling as “communist” any position that involved questioning the regime.

Likewise, the section on constitutional guarantees, after granting the right to free association, declares, “*the organization or functioning of groups acting in concert with or subordinated to international entities that promote the communist ideology or any other totalitarian system is prohibited,*”<sup>8</sup> this despite the fact that the very same section forbids “*any kind of discrimination by virtue of [...] political opinions.*”<sup>9</sup>

Following the coup on March 23rd, 1982, the Governing Military Junta immediately suspended all party political activity.<sup>10</sup> With this act, which was afterwards confirmed in the Founding Statute of Government, they repealed the Law on Elections and Political Parties in force at the time.<sup>11</sup> As freedom of association was concerned, the Statute essentially kept to the provisions of the Constitution of 1965. In the second part of the paragraph in question, the junta emphasized that: “*the law prohibits, without exception, the organization and functioning of groups, associations or bodies acting in concert with, or in subordination to any totalitarian system or ideology, and all those who would threaten in any way the principles and methods of pluralistic democracy.*”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Constitución de la República de Guatemala: decretada por la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente en 15 de setiembre de 1965* (Guatemala: Publicaciones del Ministerio de Gobernación, 1965), Article 189, paragraph 1.

<sup>6</sup> “Estatuto Fundamental de Gobierno,” Decree No. 24-82 of the Governing Military Junta of 04/27/1982, Article 26, numeral 1, *Diario de Centro América*, 04/28/1982, pp. 1454-1463.

<sup>7</sup> *Constitución de la República de Guatemala*, Article 27.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* Heading II, Chapter I, Article 64.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Heading II, Chapter I, Article 43.

<sup>10</sup> “Proclama del Ejército de Guatemala al Pueblo,” Governing Military Junta, 03/23/1982, point seven, *Diario de Centro América*, 03/25/1982, p. 876.

<sup>11</sup> “Estatuto Fundamental de Gobierno,” Article 112.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 23, numeral 6.

Both texts provided for a broad range of actions that could be taken against political opposition groups. The Statute even omits the term “*communist*,” increasing the scope for classification of any person, organization or act as antagonistic to the regime in power.

While these dispositions were not directly linked to the legal functions of the PN, it is necessary to mention them, as it formed part of the country’s security forces and, as such, was involved in ensuring compliance with the aforementioned prohibitions. Any action that contravened these would constitute a breach of public order.

With the coup d’état led by Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia in 1963, the constitutional order that had been in place since 1956 was broken. Subsequently, a Constituent Assembly enacted a new constitution in 1965. Just as in 1956, together with the new Constitution, a separate law of (equal) constitutional rank was passed, the Law of Public Order,<sup>13</sup> which was to be applied in any state of exception and entailed the suspension or restriction of constitutional guarantees.<sup>14</sup> This law, which was to remain in force while the Founding Statute of Government held sway and which continued to have validity even in the Political Constitution of 1985, is a legal instrument that regulates the extraordinary powers of the Executive Branch in the event of exceptional circumstances.

## 2.2 The Organic Law of the National Police

In order to regulate the structure and functioning of the PN, in June 1955, President Carlos Castillo Armas issued an Organic Law governing the institution.<sup>15</sup> While the fundamental law of the nation was overhauled on five occasions between 1956 and 1985 (three constitutions enacted by constituent assemblies and two government statutes imposed by heads of State outside the framework of the constitution), the Organic Law of the National Police remained in force for over four decades. It underwent numerous minor reforms that made no profound changes to its fundamental nature. This fact is significant given that the documents in the institution’s Historical Archive also show this continuity in functioning and hierarchical organization – revealing an institution barely touched by political events and the successive changes of government.

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<sup>13</sup> Decree 7, 11/30/1965, Law on Public Order, partially reformed by Decree 89-70 of the Congress.

<sup>14</sup> Exceptional states are those of prevention, alert, public calamity, siege, and war.

<sup>15</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Presidential Decree No. 332, 06/28/1955.

The aforementioned Organic Law changed the name of the Civil Guard to the National Police, conceiving of the latter as a “*State institution of a civilian nature*,”<sup>16</sup> answerable directly to the Executive Branch through the Minister of the Interior. In judicial matters, i.e., in terms of operational support for investigations, citations, arrests, etc., it was to be “*subordinate to the courts of the republic*.”<sup>17</sup>

The law determined the following functions of the PN:

- a) Maintain public order
- b) Protect life, the safety of persons and their goods
- c) Prevent crimes and other infractions of the law and pursue and apprehend transgressors
- d) Comply with the orders received from public powers
- e) Demand compliance with the law in terms of the functions appropriate to them
- f) Cooperate in investigations and inquiries into crimes and provide details of apprehended criminals to the appropriate courts.
- g) Fulfill all functions with respect to prevention, suppression or simple enforcement entailed in the policing service.<sup>18</sup>

In the Law these functions can be summed up, for the most part, as a general mandate related to the prevention and suppression of crimes and misdemeanors. The precise duty of the Police was to uncover crimes committed, carry out necessary procedures, particularly those relating to the crime scene, determine the location of the occurrence, and inform the authorities of the Judicial Body with respect to the events.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding events affecting people, the members of the PN had an obligation to provide any aid necessary “*as long as there is a hope of saving the victims*.” In these situations, it was irrelevant whether the event in question was a crime or an accident.<sup>20</sup>

The Organic Law also made it explicit that “*All detentions must be effected in strict accordance with the law*,” meaning either in possession of the appropriate warrant or *in flagrante delicto* while a crime was in progress, according to the schedule stipulated by the law, if it was being committed in a private place or

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., Article 1.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., Article 3.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Article 2.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Chapter XII, Prevention and Suppression of Crimes and Misdemeanors, Articles 101-103.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Article 104.

at the home of the accused. In sum, it had to be carried out in such a way as to prejudice “*as little as possible the person and his reputation.*”<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, PN agents were under orders to be aware of the movements of people in the sector in which they were on duty, “*observing the type of people who frequent the establishments,*” and “*keep watch on people and houses giving cause for suspicion.*”<sup>22</sup>

In order to carry out its functions, the Organic Law established that the PN would be provided with the following structures:

**Table I.1**

Agencies of the National Police 1955

No.	Agencies
1	Directorate General
2	Subdirector General
3	Inspectorate General
4	Secretariat General
5	Central Departments <sup>23</sup>
6	District Headquarters
7	Corps, Stations and Substations
8	The Detective Corps
9	Training Department
10	Public Relations and Disclosure Department
11	Special and Confidential Services
12	Regional Stations
13	Departmental Police
14	Ambulatory Police
15	Preventive Police
16	Traffic Police
17	School Police
18	Health Police
19	Motorized Police
20	Mounted Police
21	Penitentiary Police <sup>24</sup>

Source: Presidential Decree 332, Organic Law of the National Police

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Articles 107 and 108.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., Article 110.

<sup>23</sup> The central departments were those of Investigation and Information, Personnel, Training, Supplies, Traffic, and Transport. See “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 20.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., Article 14.

Under the direct control of the Director General (Commissioner) were a series of special services: Legal Advisory, Technical Advisory, Private Secretarial, Confidential Services, Assistance Group, and Payroll.<sup>25</sup>

In addition, it established a set of departments under the title of Central Departments. The Department of Investigation and Information included the identification area,<sup>26</sup> better known as the Identification Bureau, as mentioned above. This played a central role during the existence of the PN, since it built up a huge store of personal data with finger prints from detainees, applicants for drivers licenses and, from 1971, first-time applicants for identity cards or anyone seeking a replacement.

To cover the extensive rural areas, particularly where there was no PN service, the Ambulatory Police was set up, organized in mobile groups in different regions of the country and answerable directly to the Directorate General of the PN. While its functions were those generally associated with a policing body, notable is the duty to *“Give aid, in cases of emergency, to owners and managers of estates, haciendas, agricultural land, forests and all kinds of rural properties,”* and *“give notification of any activities likely to exacerbate the mood among the rural masses or in rural communities, and, as required, to suppress by any legal means any disorders that may occur.”*<sup>27</sup>

The Corps of Detectives and other agencies for investigation and persecution are dealt with in a separate section.

With regard to the fulfillment of its functions, the law defined the PN as *“a disciplined, apolitical and obedient institution,”* subject to the *“regulations determining its duties in a hierarchical relationship.”*<sup>28</sup> To this end, a hierarchical scale was established using the ranks employed by the armed services (captains, lieutenants, and sergeants). It was not until 1985 that the force was partially reformed by means of Decree 332 and a police system of ranks was adopted, the same that largely continues to be used to this day.

For the period under analysis, the head of the institution was the Director General, answerable to the Minister of the Interior and the President of the Republic. The second in command was the Subdirector General, immediately accountable to the Director and who would substitute for him if the Director

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., Article 16.

<sup>26</sup> “Negociado de identificación” in Spanish. According to the dictionary of the Real Academia Española, a “negociado” is a section in an administrative organization that processes certain types of business.

<sup>27</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 52, sections 3 and 5, respectively.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., Article 7.

**Table I.2**

Hierarchical Organization of the National Police and the National Civil Police  
1955, 1985 and 1997

Presidential Decree No. 332 (1955) Organic Law of the National Police <sup>29</sup>	Decree Number 37-85 <sup>30</sup>	Decree Number 11-97 of the Congress of the Republic, Law of the National Civil Police <sup>31</sup>
<b>DIRECTION</b>		
Director General Subdirector General Third Chief and Inspector General	Director General Subdirector General Third Chief and Inspector General	Director General Assistant Director General Subdirectors General
<b>HIGHER OFFICERS</b>		
Chief of Police Assistant Chief of Police	General Commissioner of Police Commissioner of Police Assistant Commissioner of Police	General Commissioner of Police Commissioner of Police Assistant Commissioner of Police
<b>OFFICERS</b>		
Police Captain Police Lieutenant Second Police Lieutenant	First Police Officer Second Police Officer Third Police Officer	First Police Officer Second Police Officer Third Police Officer
<b>CLASSES</b>	<b>CLASSES</b>	<b>BASIC SCALE</b>
Police Sergeant Police Inspector Assistant Police Inspector	First Police Inspector Second Police Inspector Third Police Inspector Assistant Police Inspector	Police Inspector Assistant Police Inspector
<b>AGENTS</b>		
Police Agents	Police Agents	Police Agents

Source: Produced by AHPN based on the laws indicated.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., Article 66.

<sup>30</sup> Decree Number 37-85, Article 5 modifying Article 66 of the Organic Law of the PN. *Diario Oficial de Centro América*, 04/22/1985, p. 285.

<sup>31</sup> "Ley de la Policía Nacional Civil," Decree Number 11-97 of the Congress of the Republic, Article 17. *Diario Oficial de Centro América*, 03/04/1997, p. 2732.



General post was vacant and during temporary absences. The Inspector General acted as Third Chief, in addition to performing the functions of his own position, receiving instructions from the Subdirector or directly from the Director General. These three functionaries constituted the PN Board,<sup>32</sup> which subsequently became the Command Group, and occupied the chief positions in the chain of command.

For their part, the police departments, chiefs of district and regional stations and Corps of Detectives were accountable in administrative, organizational and disciplinary terms to the Directorate General of the PN. In legal matters, they were answerable to the judges and courts of jurisdiction. In the capital city, the Motorized, Penitentiary, Traffic, Health, and Education police also answered directly to the Directorate General, whereas in the country's Departments, if the forces were organized similarly, they reported to their respective regional headquarters.<sup>33</sup>

These agencies acted and intervened in areas where the need existed or where they were commissioned. Additionally, the PN had offices that covered specific, assigned territorial boundaries. These were called Corps in the capital, with substations in the towns around the Department of Guatemala and the regional headquarters throughout the country's other Departments. Each corps performed its functions within a given area, with its own members and through a network of appropriately distributed stations.

In other Departments, the headquarters were located at a station situated in the regional administrative center and were in charge of the substations in the surrounding towns. On occasion, a substation was located in a village, as was the case in El Fiscal, a village in Palencia.<sup>34</sup> The officer in charge of a station or substation was directly accountable to the Department's police headquarters. In the case of the Department of Guatemala, the corps in the capital city had command of the stations and substations, as no departmental headquarters existed.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> "Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional," Articles 15, 32, and 38.

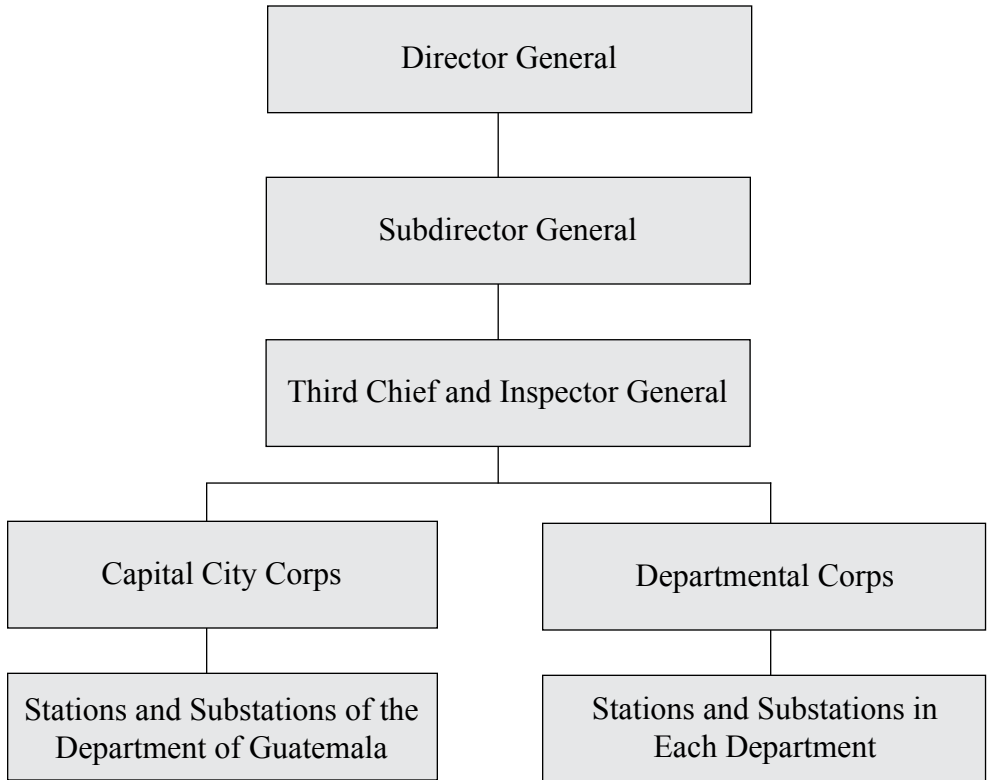
<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles 42, 45, 47, and 44, respectively.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles 22, 27, and 28.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles 50 and 41, respectively.

**Graph I.1**

## Hierarchical Line from the Directorate General to the Police Substations



Source: AHPN

The Director General of the PN stood at the top of the chain of command of the structure charged with the maintenance of public order and the safety of the inhabitants. To this end he had the power and the obligation to organize the institution according to necessity and the law, and to draw up the regulations applicable to the various agencies.

He acted as the first link between the PN and the Judicial and Executive branches. He had the obligation to “*notify the President of the Republic and the Minister of the Interior on a daily basis of anything of note occurring over the previous twenty-four hours; to do this without delay in the case of all events that in virtue of their seriousness or importance were worthy of being brought to the immediate attention of said functionaries.*”<sup>36</sup> The same applied to the President of the Judicial Body with regard to the movements of ex-convicts.

Furthermore, he was required to issue orders and oversee those suggested by the subdirector, which together regulated day-to-day work and were disseminated in a document called a “General Order,” which was drawn up daily.<sup>37</sup>

He had the power to effect movements of personnel within the lower ranks and to propose any within the higher ranks to the Minister of the Interior. In addition, he could “*summon and require to appear at his office any person that may be necessary to work on matters relating to the functions of the National Police.*”<sup>38</sup>

The Subdirector or Second Chief of the PN, apart from following the instructions of his immediate superior, had responsibility for the application of disciplinary sanctions to personnel and to give attention to any complaints that the public might make concerning members of the police. He was required to keep the Director General informed on the state of the force, distribution of the service and any new developments. On a daily basis, he prepared the General Order, including the necessary elements to be shared among the members of the PN.<sup>39</sup>

The Inspector General, or Third Chief, while forming part of the National Police Board, was clearly subordinate to the Subdirector General, as was the latter to the Director General.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, all three, in hierarchical order, exercised full authority and command over all the other law enforcement agencies and headquarters.

Specifically, the Inspector General was responsible for the task of overseeing the proper functioning of the various PN services, informing the Subdirector General of any deficiencies detected and assisting daily in the instructions given to the force.<sup>41</sup> He was also the direct superior for the central departments of the PN.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Article 33, numeral 10.

<sup>37</sup> See Section 3.12 of this same chapter.

<sup>38</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 34.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Article 35.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Articles 37 and 40.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Article 38.

<sup>42</sup> Investigation and Information, Personnel, Training, Supplies, Traffic, and Transport.

## 2.3 Government Accords

Within the sphere of the Executive, in relation to the PN, a series of Government Accords were published regarding appointments to the upper reaches of the hierarchy, reinforcements, and the consolidation or creation of a specific section within the current organizational structure. Among the most notable are the disbanding of the Judicial Police Department and its replacement by the Department of Technical Investigations in 1982,<sup>43</sup> the consolidation of the Corps of Detectives<sup>44</sup>, and the foundation of the National Police School as a body directly administered by the Directorate General (1971).<sup>45</sup>

Although the Judicial Police Section was created in 1973 in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure,<sup>46</sup> it was not until 1976 that its regulations were issued.<sup>47</sup> The Section was defined as a technical investigation agency attached to the Directorate General of the PN, but under the direction of the Ministry of Justice, whose head at that time was the Attorney General of the Nation.

## 2.4 Orders Issued by the Directorate General of the PN

The Director General of the PN had the obligation and the power to make decisions for the proper functioning of the institution. The measures and orders issued by his office were communicated by means of General Orders containing the principal mechanisms of regulation of operational, administrative and personnel changes, as well as specific regulations for the various agencies throughout the institution up until 1997, when the National Civil Police was created.<sup>48</sup>

For example, between August and September 1975, the Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Ricardo Antonio Escalante González, implemented a series of structural changes to the four corps with national reach but stationed in the capital, as well as establishing radio patrol corps and traffic police. These

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<sup>43</sup> GTPN 35 S001 11/30/1970, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 275, reproduction of Secretary of Justice Government Accord 11/03/1970, Book Number 10501 [Digital reference 665094. Internal AHPN registration 27075].

<sup>44</sup> GT PN 35 S001 21.-04/22/1982, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 048, reproduction of Law Decree No. 19-82 (dissolution of Corps of Detectives) and Law Decree No. 20-82 (creation of the Department of Technical Investigations), both from the Governing Military Junta, 04/07/1982, Book Number 10507 [Digital reference 758897. Internal AHPN registration 27749].

<sup>45</sup> GTPN 35 S001 12/27/1971, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 299, reproduction of Government Accord 12/20/1971, Book Number 10502 [Digital reference 684462. Internal AHPN registration 27055]. The creation of this school was due to the need to educate and professionalize police officers and agents, detectives, and revenue guards.

<sup>46</sup> Law Decree 52-73, "Código Procesal Penal," Chapter II, Articles 120-123.

<sup>47</sup> Ministry of the Interior, Government Accord 5-76 of 01/21/1976.

<sup>48</sup> "Ley de la Policía Nacional Civil," p. 2732.

modifications were made known in General Orders number 142 (August 27th, 28th), 159 (October 6th, 7th) and 165 (October 20th, 21st).<sup>49</sup>

In essence, they provided these corps with an organizational structure similar to that of the agencies at the top of the institutional hierarchy, assigning each its own Command Group. To this end, the rank of Third Chief was created at each agency, but without providing extra positions, meaning that those appointed to the post continued to receive the same salary they were getting in their previous jobs.<sup>50</sup>

Along with this, the concept of platoons was introduced as a means of grouping the majority of agents in order to create tactical units of the PN. Each platoon was headed by a command group made up of a commandant, a non-commissioned officer, an orderly and a driver. In addition, each platoon was divided into three squads comprising an inspector, a deputy inspector and ten agents, meaning that the platoon as a whole contained 40 members.

For this purpose, during 1975 the Director General had also ordered the creation of 890 new positions in the police force, along with the purchase of new uniforms, military equipment and vehicles.<sup>51</sup>

The following table summarizes the forces in the corps reorganized during 1975 and the stations and substations to which they were assigned. The members removed remain on the payroll of the corps indicated, but perform tasks for other agencies within the PN or even for other State agencies. They could be summoned to return to the location from where their salaries actually came.

In parentheses is the number of members per office within each corps.

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<sup>49</sup> 1. GT PN 35 S001 08/27-28/1975, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 142, Book Number 10503 [Digital reference 701485. Internal AHPN registration 30125].

2. Ibid., 10/06-07/1975, General Order No. 159 [Digital reference 701485. Internal AHPN registration 27066].

3. Ibid., 10/20-21/1975, General Order No. 165 [Digital reference 701485. Internal AHPN registration 27068].

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 10/20-21/1975, General Order No. 165. The Directorate General is responsible for the creation of the Third Chief for several corps in the capital city, whose superior officers continued to receive the same salaries and benefits as before [Digital reference 701485. Internal AHPN registration 27068].

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., General Order No. 176 "A," 11/17/1975, departure and speech of outgoing Director General. Ricardo Escalante was Director General of the PN from 09/06/1974 to 11/10/1975 [Digital reference 701485. Internal AHPN registration 27071].

Table I.3

Structure and strength of the corps of the National Police in the capital and the Department of Guatemala.  
1975

Organizational structure circulated in General Order No. 142

Corps	Command Group	Corps Offices	Personnel available	Personnel dismissed	Stations	Substations	Total personnel
<b>First Corps</b> Avenida Bolívar 40-35, zona 3.  (In 1968 it was located at 7 <sup>a</sup> . avenida 13-46, zona 1)	- Chief - Assistant Chief - Third Chief - Secretary - 2 chiefs of headquarters - 35 agents	Service Headquarters (13)  Public Order Offices (20)  Preventive Guard (16)	4 platoons	6 platoons	Guarda Viejo, zona 3 Ciudad Real, zona 12 El Gallito, zona 3 Colonia Justo Rufino Barrios, zona 12 La Terminal, zona 4 La Reformita, zona 12 Colonia Santa Fe, zona 13	Amatitlán San Miguel Petapa Villa Nueva Villa Canales	731 <sup>52</sup> (242 personnel assigned to stations and substations)
<b>Second Corps</b> 11 avenida 4-09, zona 1	- Chief - Assistant Chief - Third Chief - Secretary - 2 chiefs of headquarters - 25 agents	Service Headquarters (12)  Public Order Offices (22)  Preventive Guard (12)	4 platoons	3 platoons	Jocotales, zona 6 Barrio San Antonio, zona 6 Colonia Atlántida, zona 18 Colonia Maya, zona 18 Barrio La Ermita, zona 6	Palencia El Fiscal San José del Golfo San Pedro Ayampuc Chuarrancho	556 (199 personnel assigned to stations and substations)

Organizational structure circulated in General Order No. 159

<sup>52</sup> By comparison, in 1962, when only the First and Second Corps existed, the former had 744 members, 646 of whom were ordinary agents. 360 members were assigned to the Second Corps (309 agents) and 175 to the Traffic Corps (139 agents). See, GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police for 1962, Book Number 1503 [Digital reference 64409. Internal AHPN registration 27218].

Corps	Command Group	Corps Offices	Personnel available	Personnel dismissed	Stations	Substations	Total personnel
<b>Third Corps</b> Zona 5	- First Chief - Second Chief - Third Chief - 20 agents	Secretarial (5) Service Headquarters (7) Public Order Offices (7) Preventive Guard (12)	Three platoons	Four platoons and a squad	Villa de Guadalupe, with two platoons  El Manantial (34 Avenida "A" 13-05 Zona 5), with one platoon	San José Pinula  Santa Catarina Pinula  Fraijanes	507  (41 members assigned to the command of stations and substations)
<b>Fourth Corps</b> 2 <sup>a</sup> calle 30-82, zona 7.  From September 1980: Calzada San Juan 1-67, zona 7.	- First Chief - Second Chief - Third Chief - 20 agents	Secretarial  Service Headquarters  Public Order Offices  Preventive Guard	Two platoons	Three platoons and a squad	8 <sup>a</sup> Avenida 3-61, Colonia La Florida, zona 19 Sección "C", Lote 222, Colonia El Milagro, zona 6 de Mixco Avenida Tecun Umán 25-45, Colonia Bethania, zona 7 6 <sup>a</sup> avenida 10-71, Colonia Primer de Julio, zona 19 7 <sup>a</sup> avenida 9-39, Colonia Belén, zona 7 de Mixco 5 <sup>a</sup> calle, Lote 43, Fracción E, Colonia Monserrat I, zona 4 de Mixco 10 <sup>a</sup> avenida 25-52, Colonia San Francisco, zona 5 de Mixco 3 <sup>a</sup> avenida 2-41, Colonia El Tesoro, zona 11 Colonia Castañaz, zona 11 Colonia Castillo Lara, zona 7 Colonia Mariscal, zona 11	Mixco  San Raimundo  San Juan Sacatepéquez	480 (242 personnel assigned to stations and substations)

Corps	Command Group	Corps Offices	Personnel available	Personnel dismissed	Stations	Substations	Total personnel
<b>Traffic Corps</b>	- First Chief - Second Chief - Third Chief - 22 agents	Secretarial (5) Service Headquarters (7) Traffic Office (11) Public Order Offices (6) Preventive Guard (12)	Five platoons and a squad	Two platoons	Four traffic stations in the capital: Guarda Viejo San Pedrito Zona 7 Colonia La Florida	--	409 (51 members assigned to traffic stations)

Organizational structure circulated in General Order No. 142

Corps	Command Group	Corps Offices	Personnel available	Personnel dismissed	Stations	Substations	Total personnel
<b>Radio Patrol Corps</b>	- Chief - Assistant Chief - Third Chief - 2 chiefs of headquarters - 31 agents	Service Headquarters (23) Radio plant in San Pedro Sacatepéquez (19)	3 platoons of 100 members each: 2 officers 49 patrol commanders 49 drivers	--	--	--	486 [108 members, duties unknown]

Source: AHPN based on general orders from the PN.



Three years later, during 1978, the Director General issued several regulations that were made known through General Orders and whose purpose was to regulate the internal function of various PN agencies.<sup>53</sup> Concerning the structure of the capital's police corps, the Director General, Mario Gustavo Cardona Maldonado, ordered the addition of two prison cells at their facilities.<sup>54</sup>

Among these orders, especially notable is the issuing of the internal regulations of the Center for Joint Police Operations (COCP),<sup>55</sup> an agency already in existence since 1972 as the Department of Joint Operations. These regulations were issued following a change of Director General, when the position was assumed by Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona. It highlights the willingness to coordinate security planning with the Minister for National Defense (a specific function of the First Chief) and with the Army General Staff, or EMGE (a specific function of the Second Chief), as well as the Presidential General Staff, the EMP.

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- <sup>53</sup> 1. GT PN 35 S001 02/03-05/1978, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 016, Regulations of the Preventive Police, Book Number 10504 [Digital reference 727222. Internal AHPN registration 27056];
2. *Ibid.*, 02/20-21/1978, General Order No. 023, Internal Regulations of the Traffic Corps [Digital reference 735240. Internal AHPN registration 27062];
3. *Ibid.*, 03/13-14/1978, General Order No. 032, Internal Regulations of the Radio Patrol Corps [Digital reference 735240. Internal AHPN registration 27063];
4. *Ibid.*, 03/13-14/1978, General Order No. 032, Internal Regulations of the Motorized Corps [Digital reference 735240. Internal AHPN registration 27063];
5. *Ibid.*, 05/08-09/1978, General Order No. 056, Internal Regulations of the Secretariat General [Digital reference 735652. Internal AHPN registration 27070];
6. *Ibid.*, 06/12-13/1978, General Order No. 071, Internal Regulations of the Department of Identification [Digital reference 736310. Internal AHPN registration 26935];
7. *Ibid.*, 06/21-22/1978, General Order No. 075, Internal Regulations of the Traffic Corps [Digital reference 736310. Internal AHPN registration 27073];
8. *Ibid.*, 07/17-18/1978, General Order No. 086, Internal Regulations of the Personnel Department [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27076];
9. *Ibid.*, 07/17-18/1978, General Order No. 086, Internal Regulations of the Supplies Department [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27076];
10. *Ibid.*, 08/02-03/1978, General Order No. 093, Internal Regulations of the General Archive [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27091];
11. GT PN 35 S001 08/09-10/1978, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 096, Internal Regulations of the Public Relations Department, Book Number 10612 [Digital reference 1849940. Internal AHPN registration 32142];
12. GT PN 35 S001 09/06-07/1978, General Order No. 108, Internal Regulations of the Training Section, Book Number 10504 [Digital reference 737652. Internal AHPN registration 27095];
13. *Ibid.*, 10/02-03/1978, General Order No. 119, Internal Regulations, Legal Advice [Digital reference 737652. Internal AHPN registration 27098];
14. *Ibid.*, 10/06-07/1978, General Order No. 121, Internal Regulations of the School of the PN [Digital reference 737652. Internal AHPN registration 27099].
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 05/08-09/1978, General Order No. 056, Internal Regulations of the Police Corps of the Capital City and Departmental Headquarters [Digital reference 735652. Internal AHPN registration 27070].
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 08/23-24/1978, General Order No. 102, Internal Regulations of the Center for Joint Operations of the National Police [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27102].

Following the coup of August 8th, 1983, led by Brigadier General Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores, who installed himself as Head of State, the recently-appointed Director General of the PN, DEM Artillery Colonel, Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz, gave instructions that the police force was to adopt a new structure, based on a strictly military model, “*with the aim of unifying our organizational system.*”<sup>56</sup> The creation of the Command Group was confirmed (just as during the reorganization of 1975), along with that of the Senior Staff, the Command Support Unit and Operational Services.

**Table I.4**

Organization of National Police Corps  
1983

Composition	Agency
Command Group	Commander Deputy Commander- Third Chief
Senior Staff	Department PN-1: Personnel and Correspondence (Secretarial) Department PN-2: Intelligence and Investigations Department PN-3: Planning, operations and training Department PN-4: Supplies and Maintenance Department PN-5: Public Relations
Command Support Unit	Preventive Guard Radio Transmissions Office of Order and Traffic General Services Reaction Unit (anti-riot platoon)
Operational Services	One company with three platoons of three squads.

Source: AHPN, based on the “general guidelines on the organization of a police corps.”

<sup>56</sup> GTPN 26-01 S013 08/24/1983, unnumbered document sending “*the verbal instructions of the Director General of the Service,*” given in a meeting of commanders and including a seven-page document containing “*the general guidelines for the organization of a Police Corps,*” addressed to the Chief of the Fourth Corps, sent to the Director of the National Police School [Digital reference 68147. Internal AHPN registration 27199].

News of these changes to the organizational structure of the police force was communicated in fairly informal way, without any official notification or general order. It was carried out via a new body called the “Board of Commanders” and through the Director of the National Police School. These circumstances may have been the result of the political situation at that moment, as it came only a few days after the the Executive was forced to step down.

One of the functions of the corps commander was to make felt “*the full weight of his superior power and command by issuing his orders directly to the executive and not to the personnel responsible for carrying them out,*” with the purpose of overseeing discipline and correcting any faults on the part of his subordinates.<sup>57</sup>

The assistant commander and the third chief of a corps had obligations similar to those of the Subdirector General and the Inspector General of the PN, respectively. The former also acted as the direct assistant and principal immediate advisor to the commandant.

The Organic Law of the PN had established the position of the Central Departments, “*charged with the study and resolution of all technical aspects relating to the institution.*”<sup>58</sup> The Senior Staff of a corps, besides serving as an auxiliary of the Command Group, represented something similar for these central departments, but at a corps level. It consisted of the group of chiefs of the five departments named in the Table above on the organization the PN corps.

The PN-2 or Department of Intelligence of the Senior Staff had responsibility for “*finding, interpreting, evaluating and distributing information of a tactical, strategic, internal and external nature from personnel,*” as well as creating security and mobilization plans. At the same time he was required to process and analyze those investigations requiring “*prompt police action.*”<sup>59</sup> To this end, he had the first and second chiefs and a secretary who, among his other duties, was

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<sup>57</sup> GTPN 26-01 S013 08/24/1983, unnumbered document, seven pages with “*general guidelines for the organization of a Police Corps,*” addressed to the Chief of the Fourth Corps, submitted to the Director of the National Police School, p. 2 [Digital reference 68147. Internal AHPN registration 27202].

<sup>58</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 20.

<sup>59</sup> GTPN 26-01 S013 08/24/1983, unnumbered document, seven pages with “*general guidelines for the organization of a Police Corps,*” addressed to the Chief of the Fourth Corps, submitted to the Director of the National Police School, p. 2 [Digital reference 68147. Internal AHPN registration 27202].

responsible for the creation of files of a confidential nature and in charge of a group of investigators.

As a group, the Senior Staff's duties included the following functions:

*“Aid the Commander in all those affairs for which their services or advice may be required within the terms of their functions, or provide him with recommendations for solutions for problems that fall within their remit” and “Maintain a well-organized archive, annotated, [of] the most important activities of each section.”*<sup>60</sup>

The superiors responsible for these general guidelines emphasized the hierarchical structure and respect for the chain of command in a section titled: “Limitations of the Senior Staff”:

*“The Commander is the only person accountable to his superior for what his unit may or may not have done. He may not, therefore, transfer this responsibility for the successes or failures of his unit.*

*In view of this doctrinal principle, the Senior Staff should pay close attention to the following recommendations:*

- a. The Senior Staff cooperates with the command in order to avoid making decisions.*
- b. The Senior Staff does not make decisions, as this a function of the command that may not be delegated.*
- c. The Senior Staff is not an independent command body, it is a means by which the command guides and directs its unit.*
- d. The Senior Staff is impersonal and under no circumstances can it substitute the command; this is the essential distinction between the Senior Staff and the command.*
- e. The Senior Staff is not an executive body; it is responsible rather for the control, oversight and implementation of orders.*<sup>61</sup>

The idea of the doctrinal principle behind these recommendations is a clear indication of the order in which communication was to flow through the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

hierarchical levels. There was no possibility of independent agencies within the institution, nor the option of acting independently.

Another new element in these instructions from 1983 is the formal creation of a reaction or anti-riot unit in each of the agencies described as a Corps. Although reaction units of this type had already been existence for a number of years, e.g., the Combat Commandos,<sup>62</sup> the aim was to have a force of this type at each headquarters.

According to the instruction manual, these units were to react in cases of “*disturbances caused by people wishing to deviate from the Government’s path.*” The manual also insisted that its personnel be “*physically and psychologically trained to face any type of disturbance.*”<sup>63</sup>

## 2.5 Criminal Investigation

Throughout the eleven years that comprise the period under investigation (1975-1985), the PN had two investigative arms, pursuit and intelligence. At times between 1954 and 1997, other similar bodies overlapped or operated in parallel, replacing each other according to the political circumstances and changes in the personnel either governing the country or running the law enforcement institution.

This section devotes particular attention to the work of these sections of the PN, since the security forces and some legal instruments categorized political opposition, whether armed or otherwise, as in violation of the law and public order. The official position was that political militancy constituted an illegal act, and its pursuit came to be one of the tasks of the intelligence and criminal investigation sections.

### 2.5.1 Investigation and Intelligence Agencies

The Organic Law of the PN, issued in 1955, created the Corps of Detectives. At first, its assigned functions were those of investigation, pursuit, and apprehension of criminals. Its head was directly accountable to the Director General of the PN.<sup>64</sup> However, this group only become noteworthy during the 1970s, when it

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<sup>62</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 03/27/1978, National Police Work Report, July 1977-March 1978, Director General of PN at the time, Infantry Colonel Mario Cardona Maldonado [Digital reference 1916126. Internal AHPN registration 27472].

<sup>63</sup> GT PN 26-01 S013 08/24/1983, unnumbered document, seven pages with “*general guidelines for the organization of a Police Corps,*” addressed to the Chief of the Fourth Corps, submitted to the Director of the National Police School, p. 6 [Digital reference 68147. Internal AHPN registration 27202].

<sup>64</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 25.

was reorganized and its functions consolidated. In order to understand this fact, it is necessary to understand the prevailing political conditions following the overthrow of the second revolutionary government, led by President Juan Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán. Persecution was unleashed against anyone demonstrating agreement with the Revolution (1944-1954), against former functionaries from that period, especially those belonging to the now proscribed Communist Party, and all those who defended and publicized the concept of a democracy with greater equality and opportunities for citizens.

The State based its repressive activities on a policy of hemispheric security dictated by the United States in the context of the Cold War, when the anti-communist movement acquired military power and support. In this emerging situation, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, who came to power in 1954, organized a series of bodies both before and after enactment of the Organic Law of the PN, meaning that various agencies were simultaneously carrying out functions relating to security and public order.

- a) The Committee for National Defense against Communism and the Preventive Penal Law against Communism.

A few weeks after assuming power, the counter-revolutionary Governing Junta issued two decrees concerning the foregoing.<sup>65</sup> July 17th, 1954 saw the creation of the Committee for National Defense against Communism (CDNC) and, in order to provide it with a legal basis, the Preventive Penal Law against Communism was passed on August 12th of the same year.<sup>66</sup> The aim of both decrees was violent combat against communist sectors and opposition to the counter-revolution as a whole.

The CDNC was headed by a president and two assistants designated by the Governing Junta. These three members had the ability to name the necessary auxiliary personnel. They enjoyed wide-ranging powers; their jurisdiction for the purposes of combating and eradicating communism extended throughout the Republic. The civilian and military authorities were obligated to “*give prompt and effective assistance when required by members of the Committee and its auxiliaries;*”<sup>67</sup> in other words, said authorities were its subordinates. As well

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<sup>65</sup> Following the overthrow of Árbenz Guzmán, a Governing Junta took power, the members of which changed on several occasions until the leader of the National Liberation Army, Carlos Castillo Armas, managed to assume the presidency of the country on September 1st, 1954, a situation legitimized shortly afterward by an election held on October 10th that year with the aim of electing representatives to the National Constituent Assembly. See: Presidential Decree 064 of 09/01/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLII, No. 33, p. 257; Presidential Decree 089 of 09/21/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLII, No. 47, p. 369.

<sup>66</sup> 1. Decree of the Governing Junta (DJG) 023 of 07/19/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLI, No. 97, p. 945. Substituted by Presidential Decree 0187 of 12/24/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLIII, No. 24, p. 305, containing more far-reaching regulation of CDNC functions.

2. Decree of the Governing Junta (DJG) 059 of 08/12/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLII, No. 26

<sup>67</sup> DJG 23 of 07/19/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLI, No. 97, p. 945, Article 4.

as this, the various police forces, at the time still known as *Guards* (Guardias), received and were required to execute warrants for arrest resulting from investigations by CDNC agents.

The Preventive Penal Law against Communism strengthened the legal support for activities by CDNC personnel, as it was based on this that communism was declared illegal as a political and social expression, all activity of this type being sanctionable. This instrument also created a register of all persons considered to have links to activities or groups labeled as “*communist*” and set out the punishments to be applied.<sup>68</sup>

b) The Directorate General of National Security

The two measures described above, which were essentially political in nature, were repealed by a new decree that created the Directorate General of National Security (DGSN, Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional). This began its activities on February 28th, 1956, seven months after the enactment of the Organic Law of the PN and two days before the new Constitution. The DGSN was accountable directly to the Ministry of the Interior and had jurisdiction over the National Police.<sup>69</sup> Like the now-dissolved Committee, the DGSN was responsible for political affairs; as stated in one of the considerations in the decree in question, “*it is appropriate to adopt measures likely to ‘ensure that subversive activities by agents of international communism are adequately prevented and sanctioned.’*”<sup>70</sup> The new Constitution proscribed all Communist activity.

The significance of the investigative and intelligence bodies during the period from 1979 to 1985 was forged in this Directorate General, which took over many of the functions that had been assigned to the National Police.

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<sup>68</sup> DJG 59 of 08/12/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLII, No. 26, Article 3.

<sup>69</sup> Presidential Decree No. 553 of 02/22/1956, Article 2, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLVI, No. 72, p. 746.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, second statement.

**Table I.5**

Departments, Sections and Commissions of the DGSN  
1956

<b>Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional / Directorate General of National Security</b>	
<b>Department</b>	<b>Sections</b>
Security Department	a) Secret Service b) Defense against Communism or other totalitarian systems whose activities are punishable by law
Judicial Department	a) Permanent service with the following commissions: 1. Fraud, for investigation and pursuit of crimes provided for in heading III of the Criminal Code. 2. Crimes against the Person 3. Crimes against Property b) Laboratory and Identification
Judicial Department	--
Administrative Department	--

Source: AHPN based on  
Presidential Decree 553 of February 22, 1956.

The DGSN initially comprised four departments.

The Secret Service Section of the DGSN Department of Security was responsible for confidential investigations, particularly those relating to “*illegal activities against State Security and Public Order.*”<sup>71</sup> This body was initially staffed by members of the Security Corps, which had been created by Castillo Armas in 1954 under his exclusive command,<sup>72</sup> and was disbanded in February 1956 precisely for the purposes of creating the Section.<sup>73</sup>

In the same department, the Section for Defense against Communism took charge of implementing the provisions of the repealed Preventive Penal Law against

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., Article 7, Sections 1 and 2.

<sup>72</sup> Presidential Decree 087 of 09/21/1954, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLII, No. 47, p. 369, 09/22/1954.

<sup>73</sup> Presidential Decree 563 of 02/27/1956, Article 1, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLVI, No. 74, p. 802, 02/28/1956. The same was stipulated in the Government Accord of 03/13/1956, Article 1. In Roberto Azurdia Alfaro, comp., *Recopilación de las leyes de la República de Guatemala 1955-1956*, Volume LXXIV (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1960), pp. 892-893.



Communism. In other words, to suppress “*Communist activities*” or those of other “*totalitarian systems*.” With the passing of the aforementioned Preventive Law, this section was required to proceed with the registration of anyone who might have participated in activities classified as “Communist” and to carry out the corresponding apprehensions.<sup>74</sup> It was made up of agents from the National Committee for Defense against Communism.<sup>75</sup>

The position of the DGSN in the hierarchy and the wording of the decree for its creation allowed its personnel to dress as civilians and to request any kind of information from all official agencies.<sup>76</sup>

The Judicial Department was charged with the “*investigation, pursuit, discovery, and capture of common criminals*;” and its procedures were based on Chapter XII of the Organic Law of the PN.<sup>77</sup> The operational part was the purview of the Permanent Service Section. The Laboratory and Identification Section took care of the registration and classification of criminals, fingerprint and anthropometric records, and chemical and biological analysis, and acted as the central records office for the courts and the Ministry of Justice.<sup>78</sup> All of the above constitutes a duplication of the of the identification functions of the Department of Identification and Investigation, one of the so-called Central Offices mentioned in the Organic Law of the PN.

The Judicial Department was made up of members of the existing Judicial Police, known as the Judicial Guard during the years of revolutionary government.<sup>79</sup>

In the “*General Regulations*” set forth in the aforementioned decree, it was made clear that this Directorate had “*jurisdiction throughout the whole territory of the Republic, and in order to coordinate its functions, all other police bodies, irrespective of their nature, are obligated to provide any information that may be related to their activities*.”<sup>80</sup> A body had been created with functions similar to

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<sup>74</sup> Presidential Decree No. 553 of 02/22/1956, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLVI, No. 72, p. 746; Article 8, Sections 1, 2 and 3.

<sup>75</sup> Government Accord of 03/13/1956, Article 2, in Azurdia Alfaro, comp., *Recopilación de las leyes de la República de Guatemala 1955-1956*, pp. 892-893.

<sup>76</sup> Presidential Decree No. 553 of 02/22/1956, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLVI, No. 72, p. 746; Articles 9 and 10.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 11.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles 13-15.

<sup>79</sup> Presidential Decree No. 563 of 02/27/1956, Article 2, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLVI, No. 74, p. 802, 02/28/1956. The same was stipulated in the Government Accord of 03/13/1956, Article 3.

<sup>80</sup> Presidential Decree No. 553 of 02/22/1956, *Diario de Centro América*, T. CXLVI, No. 72, p. 746; Article 21.

those assigned to the PN, but assigned to a higher position in the hierarchy and with powers of jurisdiction and control over the latter.

This was made evident in the government accord of March 26th, 1957, which regulated the functioning of the DGSN.<sup>81</sup> The document broadened the remit of the Directorate. Besides having functions almost identical to those of the PN<sup>82</sup> the political aspect was strengthened: *“To prevent any communist activity, whether individual or in association, as well as that of any other totalitarian system.”*<sup>83</sup>

In addition, the text reconfirmed the jurisdiction of the DGSN over the whole country, while the National Police was included as a department along with the other four already mentioned in the decree of creation.<sup>84</sup> And *“the officials of the Directorate General in their capacity as the highest authorities respecting National Security, have the obligation to bear firearms...”* provided by the Ministry of Defense.<sup>85</sup>

The institutional similarities between the DGSN and the PN are reflected in the functions of the Director General and the head of the Judicial Department. Furthermore, the former was to a certain extent the subordinate of the latter, since he was required to *“collect from the heads of the various police Corps in the capital and the interior of the Republic, through the Directorate General and the National Police, or directly as circumstances require, all reports and other matters the service might require; and likewise cooperate with them (the heads).”*<sup>86</sup>

In contrast to the previous Presidential Decree 553, the Judicial Department also had six service commissions: the service inspectorate, complaints, investigations and apprehensions, surveillance, information, and permanent service. While most of these were of a technical-administrative nature, the surveillance commission had a key role in the political situation of the time. It was a forerunner for the various agencies of this type that followed in the decades to come, being: *“That [body] which has under its care the prevention of crimes or misdemeanors by means of careful observation of things and people classified as dangerous or behaving suspiciously, taking into consideration their background and means*

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<sup>81</sup> Unnumbered Government Accord, 03/26/1957, “Reglamento de la Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional y sus Dependencias,” in Roberto Azurdia Alfaro, comp., *Recopilación de las leyes de la República de Guatemala 1957-1958*, Volume LXXXVI (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1960), pp. 102-113.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., Article 5. letter g: *“To fulfill and ensure the fulfillment of all functions with respect to prevention, suppression, or simple enforcement inherent to police services.”*

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., Article 5, letter d.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Article 6.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., Article 83.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., Article 33. letter f.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., Article 40.

*of existence and public locations, establishments or places as circumstances indicate for the strict fulfillment of their functions.*"<sup>87</sup>

Although the above is broad enough in terms of the type of crime they sought to control, the store of documents in the AHPN provides evidence of systematic surveillance of a variety of public figures going back to 1957.<sup>88</sup>

The Juridical Department had the functions its name suggests and served as a support for the Directorate General of the area. However, "*in legal matters it is accountable to the Supreme Court of Justice.*"<sup>89</sup> Also, once again there is evidence of the subordination of the PN to this Directorate, since "*The Security and Judicial Departments of the National Police are required to comply with the orders or requirements issued by the Juridical Department by reason of their functions.*"<sup>90</sup>

In the AHPN, documents relating to sections within the DGSN are concentrated in texts that illustrate the flow of information between the PN and the Judicial Department. The latter carried out much of the work that the Organic Law assigned to the National Police, and there is evidence that the security and judicial departments were actually merged into one. As will be seen further on, the surveillance records for politically active individuals were channeled through the latter.

#### c) The Criminal Investigations Section, Office of Internal Investigations, and Central Complaints Section

The Corps of Detectives had been low profile, even inoperative, when it was reorganized on May 20, 1962,<sup>91</sup> under the government of General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes. It was assigned 43 detectives commanded by a chief and an inspector. Its headquarters were located on the premises of the First Corps, and through the beginning of November of that year it had carried out 1,439 detentions. During this phase of its existence, the Corps of Detectives was, for all intents and purposes, an urban police force in the capital, carrying out the functions of pursuit and prevention of minor crimes, as can be seen from the contents of the *Annual Report* of the PN for 1963.

<sup>88</sup> See: Chapter IV of this report.

<sup>89</sup> Unnumbered Government Accord, 03/26/1957, "Reglamento de la Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional y sus Dependencias," in Azurdia Alfaro, comp., *Recopilación de las leyes de la República de Guatemala, 1957-1958*, pp. 102-113; Article 46.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 79.

<sup>91</sup> GTPN 30-01 S010, *Annual Report of the National Police for 1962*, pp. 27-30, Book Number 1503 [Digital reference 64409. Internal AHPN registration 27218].

*“THE CORPS OF DETECTIVES:*

*In accordance with the provisions of Article 14, Section 8 of Presidential Decree 332 (the Organic Law of the National Police), on the premises occupied by the First Police Corps is the place of operations for the Corps of Detectives of this Institution; this Corps provides an important service to the citizenry, as its Agents are on constant, careful watch throughout the city, principally at the most frequented areas, such as markets, entrances and exits to movie theaters, etc., in order to pursue thieves and pickpockets, having apprehended and brought before the Courts of Justice numerous delinquents of this type. The performance of the Corps of Detectives during 1963 was a follows:*

*APPREHENDED FOR CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS:*

===== 983.-”<sup>92</sup>

In 1962, opposition to the regime of Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes became stiffer in multiple sectors of society. The head of the Judicial Department, Ranulfo González Ovalle, was assassinated on January 24th, 1962, contributing to the President’s declaration of a state of emergency throughout the national territory, a situation that ceased on May 19th of that same year.<sup>93</sup> So it was that the rehabilitation of the Corps of Detectives, one day after the restoration of constitutional guarantees, enabled the Judicial Department of the DGSN to focus more on political issues by merging with the Security Department. For this reason it was necessary to have an agency that would concern itself with common crimes and misdemeanors.

After the coup d’état of 1963, led by General Enrique Peralta Azurdia, and before the enactment of the Constitution of 1965, important decisions were made with regard to the security forces. On the one hand, the Ambulatory Police of the PN, a force divided into mobile platoons in order to control the rural areas of the country, now took its orders from the Ministry of National Defense under the name of the Ambulatory Military Police.<sup>94</sup> Although legally it maintained the same functions at that time, its integration into the armed forces was part of the process of the militarization of the civilian security forces.

Within the PN, after Artillery Colonel Luis Alberto González Salaverría took over as Director General, the Corps of Detectives was disbanded. In its place

<sup>92</sup> GTPN 30-01 S010, 01/11/1964, Annual Report of the National Police for 1963, p. 25, Book Number 1435 [Digital reference 185250. Internal AHPN registration 26859].

<sup>93</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police for 1962, p. 2, Book Number 1503 [Digital reference 64409. Internal AHPN registration 27218].

<sup>94</sup> Legislative Decree 332 of 02/23/1965, *Diario de Centro América*, 02/24/1965, Volume CLXXII, No. 98, p. 897.

came, in October 1965, while still under the *de facto* regime, the Criminal Investigations Section (SIC), which had the same functions originally assigned to the Corps under the immediate command of the Director General of the PN.<sup>95</sup> The pretext for this change was that the Corps of Detectives lacked technical training. On the other hand, the new body was comprised of members that had received specialist courses in investigation through scholarships from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in Washington, D.C.<sup>96</sup>

In the annual reports that the Director of the PN presented to the Minister of the Interior, although much was made of the importance and effectiveness of the Corps of Detectives, the results show nothing more than the number of apprehensions carried out.<sup>97</sup> The same was true for the Criminal Investigations Section, as the information contained in the annual report for 1965 boils down to the satisfaction of creating the Section and highlighting the 38 apprehensions managed by its agents between October and December of that year.<sup>98</sup>

The Section's 21 investigators apprehended 286 men and 43 women during 1966. Among these, 13 were for "*subversive acts*," 22 for "*aggression against agents of authority*," and one for "*Possession of military materials*,"<sup>99</sup> By a Government Accord, the Section was absorbed by the Judicial Department, which continued to concern itself with the prosecution of political crimes.<sup>100</sup> It is probable that the training its members received abroad influenced this decision. The decision itself was made on March 9th, 1967. The last entry in the Section's log, dealing with "*new events of a subversive nature*" is dated March 8th of that same year.<sup>101</sup>

On March 20th, 1967, during the government of Julio César Méndez Montenegro, it was once more decided to create an investigative body attached to the Directorate General of the PN. It was named the Office for Internal Investigations (Oficina de Investigaciones Internas) and headed by the same person who had directed the SIC, Police Captain Víctor Flores Lucas. This body also had its legal basis in Article

<sup>95</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, 01/08/1966, Annual Report of the National Police Year 1965, pp. 60-61, Book Number 1557 [Digital reference 53060. Internal AHPN registration 27209].

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> 1. GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police for 1962, Book Number 1503 [Digital reference 64409. Internal AHPN registration 27218].

2. GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police for 1963, Book Number 1435 [Digital reference 185250. Internal AHPN registration 26859].

<sup>98</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 01/08/1966, Annual Report of the National Police for 1965, Book Number 1557, pp. 60-61 [Digital reference 53060. Internal AHPN registration 27209].

<sup>99</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police for 1966, pp. 19-20 [Digital reference 1917625-1917626. Internal AHPN registration 27389].

<sup>100</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police from July 1, 1966 to March 31, 1967, p. 30 [Digital reference 1672178. Internal AHPN registration 27353].

<sup>101</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 02/02/1967, book of procedural documents of the Criminal Investigations Section of the National Police, authorized by its chief, Police Captain Víctor Flores Lucas, "*to record new developments of a subversive nature*" [Digital reference 190580. Internal AHPN registration 27157].

25 of the Organic Law of the PN,<sup>102</sup> which, concerning the aims of the Corps of Detectives, states: “...it will attend to the functions of investigation, pursuit and apprehension of criminals, the prevention of crime and other functions and obligations required by the criminal laws and their respective regulations.”<sup>103</sup> It was assigned to the facilities previously occupied by the Criminal Investigations Section and its immediate purpose was “the investigation of all facts constituting infractions of the laws of the country.”<sup>104</sup>

Some months beforehand, in July 1966, immediately after assuming power, the new President Julio César Méndez Montenegro initiated the operations of the Central Complaints Section, defined in the following manner:

*“It is a modern administrative body within the Directorate General of the National Police for the receipt of comments and complaints from the public whose functions consist in talking to complainants, attending to their problems and deciding on the action to be taken against any illegal act. It was inaugurated on July 1st, having been provided with new office equipment (typewriters, desks, file cabinets) and Radio Patrol units equipped with double-frequency radios, as the Radio Patrol Section has been placed under the centralized control of this department.”<sup>105</sup>*

The section included the following components:

Radio Control Center, this being the office that triangulated information from patrol cars and sentry points in order to “tighten surveillance” in the city. The San Pedro Sacatepéquez radio center was to be the “sub-central control for transmissions.”<sup>106</sup>

Preliminary investigation of complaints, whose agents were required to investigate punishable acts and proceed against offenders in order to bring them before the courts of justice.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police from July 1, 1966 to March 31, 1967, p. 30 [Digital reference 1672178. Internal AHPN registration 27353].

<sup>103</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 25.

<sup>104</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police from July 1, 1966 to March 31, 1967, pp. 4-5 [Digital reference 1672152-1672153. Internal AHPN registration 27353].

<sup>105</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, Annual Report of the National Police for the Year 1966, pp. 14-15 [Digital reference 1917620-1917621. Internal AHPN registration 27389].

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 15 [Digital reference 1917621. Internal AHPN registration 27389].

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

Traffic Investigation had the same functions, but specialized in traffic accidents.<sup>108</sup>

The Central Complaints Section possessed “*suitable facilities*” such as a space “*for preliminary interrogation and the processing of persons arrested by the Section’s members.*”<sup>109</sup> Meaning that, although there was already a Criminal Investigation Section, subsequently replaced by the Office for Internal Investigations, the new Government set up another investigative body alongside it. Added to this, they continued the investigative and intelligence work assigned to the Judicial Department.

This Section was provided with an archives department in order to create a “*new filing and indexing system*” for numerical classification and to contain descriptions and names of complainants and the accused, the location of events and any property stolen.<sup>110</sup>

It consisted of a total of 172 members, 107 of these agents, with the rest occupying the higher ranks.<sup>111</sup> During its existence it processed a total of 3,269 cases, among them seven for “*possession of subversive propaganda,*” five for “*subversive acts,*” and 61 for being “*suspicious,*” without further details.<sup>112</sup>

Both the Office of Internal Investigations and the Central Complaints Section were in operation during the 1960’s, the latter being the most prolific in terms of apprehensions and cases processed.

Although the Directorate General of National Security no longer appears in the documents of the period, the Judicial Department continued to exist as separately from the PN, as did the Revenue Guard, as bodies directly accountable to the Minister of the Interior.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-16 [Digital reference 1917621-1917622. Internal AHPN registration 27389].

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17 [Digital reference 1917622-1917623. Internal AHPN registration 27389].

<sup>113</sup> 1. GT PN 30-01 S010 07/31/1968, Annual Report of the National Police from July 1, 1967 to June 30, 1968; “*The A.I.D Technical Office [...] attends to everything related to scholarship students of the national police, judicial police, and revenue guard,*” p. 21 [Digital reference 8522252. Internal AHPN registration 27441].

2. COLLECTIONS-05 LB 07/10/1969, *Memoria de las labores realizadas por el Ministerio de Gobernación correspondiente al periodo del 1o. de julio de 1968 al 30 de junio de 1969* (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1969), which makes a clear distinction between reports on the National Police and those on the Judicial Police. Book Number 18196 [Digital Reference 853772. Internal AHPN registration 26811].

Gradually, the authorities began to refer with increasing frequency to the *Judicial Police, instead of the Department*,<sup>114</sup> until the name change finally became official. Beginning in 1969, the files of the *Archive* bore the name of the Judicial Police on their headings.<sup>115</sup>

The Judicial Police began to gain increasing prominence, a fact indirectly reflected in the annual work reports. Firstly, there was an emphasis on the supposed processes of modernization in investigative techniques and methods, “*moving away from the traditional [methods] so worthy of censure by law and justice*,”<sup>116</sup> as the Minister of Justice, Héctor Mansilla Pinto said in his report dated July 9th, 1968, an emphasis repeated by his successor, Manuel Francisco Sosa Ávila later that same year.<sup>117</sup>

Mansilla Pinto also cited the work report submitted by the directors of the Judicial Police, which, having first exalted its “achievements” went on to assert that:

*“... this Institution has not gone beyond its limits during periods of emergency and its activities have been in strict accordance with legal precepts, without the use of drastic measures and attending in the normal way to those cases that arise.*

*The Judicial Police has always believed that its mission is not to create problems for the Government, but rather solve existing problems through proper treatment and attention to the public, especially when extremists maintain the Guatemalan family in a state of tension.*”<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> COLLECTIONS-05 LB 07/09/1968, *Memoria de las labores realizadas por el Ministerio de Gobernación durante el período comprendido del 1o. de julio de 1967 al 30 de junio de 1968* (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1968); “*JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT States that during the period of the present Annual Report, they performed the functions of the director of the Judicial Police [...]*,” p. 34, Book Number 18195 [Digital reference 3787121. Internal AHPN registration 32355].

<sup>115</sup> A record card could contain records over many years, so that a card started in a given year could still be updated with information decades later. The change of name may have occurred in 1969. See: GT PN 50 S001 01/10/1969, a card with the heading *Judicial Department* with its first notes dating from January 10, 1969, and another with the heading *Judicial Police* whose first entry is for January 3, 1969 [Digital reference 36833. Internal AHPN registration 27670].

<sup>116</sup> COLLECTIONS-05 LB 07/09/1968, (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1968) [Digital reference 3787121. Internal AHPN registration 32355].

<sup>117</sup> COLLECTIONS-05 LB 07/10/1968, *Memoria de las labores realizadas por el Ministerio de Gobernación durante el período comprendido del 1o. de julio de 1968 al 30 de junio de 1969* [Digital reference 853772. Internal AHPN registration 26811].

<sup>118</sup> COLLECTIONS-05 LB 07/09/1968, *Memoria de las labores realizadas por el Ministerio de Gobernación durante el período comprendido del 1o. de julio de 1967 al 30 de junio de 1968*, pp. 34-35 [Digital reference 3787121. Internal AHPN registration 32355].



#### d) Corps of Detectives, 1970-1982

November 3rd, 1970 saw the reestablishment once more of the Corps of Detectives just as described in the Organic Law of the PN in 1955. At the same time as recreating the Corps, the Government Accord in question also disbanded the Department of the Judicial Police. The Accord argued that the name of the department “*does not correspond to the functions it has been performing.*” The express aim to concentrate all investigative and intelligence infrastructure in one single body under the name with which it was legally constituted in Decree 332 of 1955.<sup>119</sup>

The aforementioned Accord stated that the Corps of Detectives was to be composed of members of the Judicial Police, “*suitably reorganized.*” Furthermore, it was to transfer all its inventoried goods – office equipment, vehicles, etc. – for their continued use.<sup>120</sup> With this, the Central Complaints Section disappeared and the Office for Internal Investigations was significantly reduced, maintaining a low profile during the years that followed. In 1971, for example, the Corps of Detectives contained 424 members, while Internal Investigations had only 25.<sup>121</sup>

Abolishing the Judicial Police and setting up the Corps of Detectives meant, in the formal sense, the subordination of civil investigative work to the PN. Nevertheless, along with its personnel, Judicial also transferred its methodology and knowledge acquired while it operated separately from law enforcement under a variety of names since 1954. For this reason, several documents insist on the assignation of the Corps of Detectives to the PN,<sup>122</sup> and Article 25 of its Organic Law states that the Chief of the Corps of Detectives was accountable directly to the Director General.

The functions of the Corps had been defined as follows: “*The Corps of Detectives will attend to the functions of investigation, pursuit and apprehension of criminals, the prevention of crime and other functions and obligations required by the criminal laws and their respective regulations.*”<sup>123</sup>

<sup>119</sup> GT PN 35 S001 11/30/1970, Book of General Orders, National Police General Order No. 275, containing a reproduction of the Government Accord of 11/03/1970, Book Number 10501 [Digital reference 665094. Internal AHPN registration 27075].

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010, 01/28/1972, Annual Report of the National Police for Year 1971, pp. 9 and 11; the signatory Director General was Infantry Colonel Genaro Alvarado Robles [Digital reference 1672402. Internal AHPN registration 27512].

<sup>122</sup> 1. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/25/1971, Annual Report of the National Police for Year 1970, pp. 1-2; the signatory Director General was Infantry Colonel Genaro Alvarado Robles [Digital reference 1667246 and 1667247. Internal AHPN registration 26797].

2. GT PN 30-01 S010 04/15/1971, Annual Report of the National Police for July 1, 1970 to March 31, 1971, p. 2; the signatory Director General was Infantry Colonel Genaro Alvarado Robles [Digital reference 1667326. Internal AHPN registration 27488].

<sup>123</sup> “Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional,” Article 25.

During the first half of the 1970s, the Corps had an average of 375 members spread between detectives and administrative staff. From 1976 that number increased to 508 positions. Two years later, the number was 443 detectives (besides administrative staff) and in 1981, its last year of existence, 673 detectives.<sup>124</sup>

During the last months of this body's active life, there was frequent mention of the "new" Corps of Detectives. This came into being in August 1980 with the arrival as First Chief of the Corps of Pedro García Arredondo, who had previously been First Chief of the Special Investigations Section, or Sixth Command, and as Second Chief of the National Police of Baja Verapaz.<sup>125</sup> In the *magazine National Police* published in celebration of the first centenary of the Institution, García Arredondo was credited with having restructured the Corps.

*"...by virtue of having cleansed, through a total reorganization of the staff and the new members coming in who were selected as trustworthy, and with a strong desire to work for the good of the citizenry, and so creating a new image for the Corps... [for which reason]... the new Corps of Detectives has been superseded in all aspects, as the new organization has arrived to erase from the mind of every citizen the poor opinion that has been formed as a consequence of the poor service previously provided, through the planning of a better security service (...) achieving the performance of procedures*

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- <sup>124</sup> 1. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/28/1972, Annual Report of the National Police for Year 1971, p. 11 [Digital reference 1672402. Internal AHPN registration 27512].  
 2. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/31/1973, Annual Report of the National Police for Year 1972; signed by the Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Genaro Alvarado Robles, p. 17 [Digital reference 1670123. Internal AHPN registration 26796].  
 3. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/28/1974, Annual Report of the National Police for Year 1973; signed by the Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Genaro Alvarado Robles, p. 21 [Digital reference 1667498. Internal AHPN registration 27778].  
 4. GT PN 30-01 S010 03/13/1975, Annual Report of the National Police for the period 07/01/1974 to 03/31/1975; signed by Director General of the PN, Colonel Ricardo Antonio Escalante González, p. 11 [Digital reference 1922538. Internal AHPN registration 29425].  
 5. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/28/1976, Annual Report on Activities for the year 1975; signed by Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Mario Cardona Maldonado, p. 21 [Digital reference 1670657. Internal AHPN registration 27784].  
 6. GT PN 30-01 S010 02/07/1977, Annual Report for 1976; signed by Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Mario Cardona Maldonado, p. 24 [Digital reference 1666766. Internal AHPN registration 27796].  
 7. GT PN 30-01 S010 03/05/1979, PN work report for the period 07/01/1978 to March 1979, signed by Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona, p. 22 [Digital reference 1670316. Internal AHPN registration 27793].  
 8. GT PN 30-01 S010 02/15/1982, report on work carried out by the PN during the year 1981, signed by Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona, p. 19 [Digital reference 1666948. Internal AHPN registration 27802].
- <sup>125</sup> 1. GT PN 35 S001 08/22-24/1980, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 102, reproduction of Government Appointment Accord No. 41, according to which Pedro García Arredondo assumed charge of the Corps of Detectives on August 22, 1980, replacing Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez, Book Number 10505 [Digital registration 742068. Internal AHPN registration 27077].  
 2. GT PN 35 S001 03/31/1982-04/01/1982, Book of General Orders, General Order No. 39 which states that García Arredondo was relieved of his post on March 26, 1982 by order of the Government Junta, Book Number 10507 [Digital registration 758897. Internal AHPN registration 27084].

*in accordance with the laws of our country, since for that purpose it has employed personnel specialized in law enforcement matters.*"<sup>126</sup>

e) The Judicial Police Section, 1973-1982

With the enactment of the Code of Criminal Procedure in 1973 came the creation of the Judicial Police Section for the purposes of investigation and gathering proof on criminal acts and the pursuit of alleged offenders.<sup>127</sup> However, the Section did not begin its activities until June 1st, 1976,<sup>128</sup> months after the issue of its regulations, which define it as "*a technical body for the investigation of punishable acts and the discovery of those responsible.*"<sup>129</sup> It was attached to the Directorate of the PN, but acted under the orders of the Ministry of Justice, which also drew up the project for the Government Accord on its regulations.<sup>130</sup> Administratively, it was subject to the Organic Law of the PN, while its operational functions were guided by the Organic Law of the Ministry of Justice.<sup>131</sup>

The Judicial Police comprised three investigative departments:

1. Crimes against the life and health of persons.
2. Crimes against the State and its institutions and other illegal acts that alter the public or social order.
3. Crimes against the property of individuals or the State and its institutions.<sup>132</sup>

The Chief of the Judicial Section and the heads of department were to be licensed attorneys who, for the performance of their duties, were to have unrestricted access to the files and records of the PN. The Attorney General, at that time also the Head of the Ministry of Justice, had the power to issue orders to the PN and other civil police bodies in order to have them cooperate with the Judicial Police Section.<sup>133</sup>

The Section's investigative agents, like those of the Corps of Detectives, wore civilian clothing and carried firearms (see note 158). The Attorney General

<sup>126</sup> COLLECTIONS-05 RT 09/12/1981, "Detectives. Un dinámico cuerpo de la Policía Nacional," *Revista Policía Nacional*, No. 29, pp. 39-40 [Digital reference 3067857. Internal AHPN registration 31520].

<sup>127</sup> Decree 52-73 07/05/1973, Code of Criminal Procedure, First Book, Heading IV, Chapter II, Articles 120 and 121.

<sup>128</sup> GT PN 50 S004 06/15/1976, Circular No. 26, Of. 7o.EesJ.T50, reference 1160, the Director General of the PN announces the communication of the Chief of the Judicial Section, Ramón Antonio Táger López, regarding the commencement of the Section's activities [Internal AHPN registration 31195].

<sup>129</sup> Ministry of the Interior Government Accord 5-76, "Regulations of the Judicial Police Section," 01/21/1976, Article 1.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 20.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 3.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles 2, 4, and 18.

issued their identification documents and the Director General of the PNSigned and approved them. This shows the double nature of the Section's status, being attached both to the PN and to the Ministry of Justice, a fact that could have complicated any investigations into any of its members, as it would be difficult to deduce responsibility within a chain of command that was far from clear.

#### f) The Department of Technical Investigation, 1982-1986

The Military Junta under the presidency of Brigadier General Efraín Ríos Montt, who assumed power following the coup of March 23rd, 1982, implemented a series of changes in the legal structure of the state's organization. Firstly, it repealed the Constitution then in force, replacing it with the Fundamental Statute of Government, which also gave it legislative powers.

As regards the civil security forces, the Military Junta issued various decrees with the aim of adapting them to its requirements. The Corps of Detectives was the first body to disappear, in accordance with the Decree of April 7th, 1982, under the pretext that it had failed to fulfill its functions, "*owing to the use of empirical and inadequate procedures.*"<sup>134</sup> In fact, in the *Annual Report* by PN in 1982, the sections dealing with the closure of this body refer to its ineffectiveness and failure to meet "*the technical requirements of investigation [and that it was] marked by anomalies in its service, an unfavorable history, criminal acts, etc., etc.*"<sup>135</sup>

The same decree alludes to the remanding for trial of those members of the disbanded Corps "*against whom there is reasonable evidence that they participated [in crimes] as perpetrators or accomplices [or] concealed criminal acts.*"<sup>136</sup> This effectively caused the dismissal of 150 ex-detectives.<sup>137</sup>

That same day saw the creation of the body that replaced the Corps of Detectives, the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT), also attached to the Directorate General of the PN. Its functions were described in the following manner:

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<sup>134</sup> GT PN 35 S001 04/21-22/1982, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 048, reproduction of Law Decree No. 19-82 of 04/07/1982, Book Number 10507 [Digital reference 758897. Internal AHPN registration 27075].

<sup>135</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 02/07/1983, Annual Report of the National Police for 1982, signed by Director General of the PN, Cavalry Colonel DEM Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, p. 3 [Digital reference 1671494. Internal AHPN registration 27487].

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> GT PN 35 S001 04/21-22/1982, Book of General Orders, National Police General Order No. 048, reproduction of Law Decree No. 19-82 of 04/07/1982, Article 2, Book Number 10507 [Digital reference 758897. Internal AHPN registration 27749].

- a) To prevent and investigate crime.
- b) To pursue, apprehend and hold criminals for trial at the Courts of Justice.
- c) Any other obligations entailed in the criminal laws and their respective regulations.<sup>138</sup>

In other words, the functions of the new department were virtually the same as those assigned to the Corps of Detectives by the Organic Law of the PN.

In aforementioned decree, the intention was that the new department would contain *“the right personnel, trained in the use of scientific procedures, and whose effectiveness would guarantee the discovery of criminals, their apprehension and remand for trial at the Courts of Justice.”*

With the exception of the secret service section of the DGSN and its forerunners, no allusion was ever made to the investigative and intelligence work specifically aimed at political opponents at any of the investigative agencies created and suspended between 1956 and 1985. And this was not mentioned precisely because the authorities refused to consider suspects or detainees in political terms.

Due to the the visit by the Special Mission of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IHRIC) in September 1982, instructions were circulated to government functionaries likely to be interviewed by the members of the commission. These instructions made it clear that the term *“political criminal [...] must be rejected, because it is clearly inexact, since it refers to elements –many of them foreign– who have committed and continue to commit ordinary crimes –murder, robbery, kidnapping, etc.– whether or not they conceal these beneath political aims.”*<sup>139</sup>

Therefore, any regulation assigning functions for dealing with common criminals, must be read carefully, as it does not mean that the investigators involved are to ignore political issues.

In July 1982 – Ríos Montt had come to power as *de facto* President – the Judicial Police Section and its regulations were abolished. At that moment, no substitute was set up, instead assigning its functions to the Department of Technical Investigations

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<sup>138</sup> GT PN 35 S001 04/21-22/1982, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 048, reproduction of Law Decree No. 20-82 of 04/07/1982, Book Number 10507 [Digital reference 758897. Internal AHPN registration 27749].

<sup>139</sup> GT PN 31 DSC 09/07/1982, confidential memorandum No. 163 addressed to Victor Manuel Argueta Villalta, Chief of the Presidential General Staff, sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Eduardo Castillo Arriola; attached is the secret document *“General recommendations for the honorable functionaries of the Government of the Republic to be interviewed by the members of the Special Mission of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights –CIDH–, during their visit scheduled to take place from September 20 to 26 of this year”* [Internal AHPN registration 9897].

of the PN. The legal basis for this was that “*all laws, agreements or regulations alluding to the Judicial Section of the National Police must be understood as referring to the Department of Technical Investigations of the National Police.*”<sup>140</sup> This meant that, just as at the end of 1970, once more the aim was to concentrate all civil investigative and intelligence work in the hands of one single body under the immediate control of the Director General of the PN.

## 2.5.2 Other Agencies Involved in Investigation and Pursuit of Crime

a) Center for Joint Police Operations (Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas de la Policía - COCP)

In 1972, a new office was created called the Center for Joint Police Operations (COCP). Initially under the control of the Radio Patrol Section and with few administrative agents,<sup>141</sup> towards the end of the decade and throughout the following one, the COCP came to be one of the institution’s most important components. It evolved into a sort of central axis, receiving and processing all kinds of documents. The stream of information handled by the COCP ran from items of news common to any PN agency to confidential reports circulated within the law enforcement institution, between it and the Army or provided by individual informants. On many occasions, it also functioned as a link between the Directorate General and, for example, the Corps of Detectives in order to relay work orders.

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<sup>140</sup> Decree 57-82 of 07/13/1982. Published in *Diario Oficial*, T. CCXIX, No. 19, p. 658, 07/19/1982.

<sup>141</sup> GTPN 30-01 S010 01/31/1973, Annual Report of the National Police for Year 1972, pp. 11-12 [Digital reference 1670117 and 1670118. Internal AHPN registration 26796].

### Photograph I.1.a

Confidential information with handwritten referral to the COCP  
1981

*C.C.C.  
Detectives*

**CONFIDENCIAL**

**INFORMACION**

267

No. 2-1117-IC/81.

Se tiene conocimiento que el conocido delincuente subversivo PATROCINIO POCOM, originario de Huehuetenango, actualmente se encuentra viviendo en la casa de su hermana MAURA POCOM DE MINERA, esposa - del Doctor VICTOR MINERA, ubicada en la 45 calle 12-22 Zona 12, Colonia Villa Sol y en un apartamento que tiene dicha señora en la 15 calle final Zona 21, Colonia Justo Rufino Barrios. La Señora POCOM DE MINERA, trabaja en la Escuela de Capacitación Municipal "EJAN", ubicada en la Zona 8.

El Profesor OTTO CORADO quien actualmente es Jefe de la Policía Municipal, tiene un guardaespaldas conocido unicamente por el nombre de CARLOS, éste porta una submetralladora marca Beretta, en -- cierta ocasión le fué recogida una marca THOMPSON.

Asimismo se sabe que el Señor ROBERTO DE LEON, actualmente - desempeña el puesto de Jefe de Transportes de la Municipalidad Capitalina, desde hace tiempo se ha venido dedicando a la venta de munición de diferentes calibres y tiene en su poder tres revólveres calibre -- .44 Magnán, 3.57 Magnán y .22" Magnán respectivamente.

Guatemala, 28 de octubre de 1981.

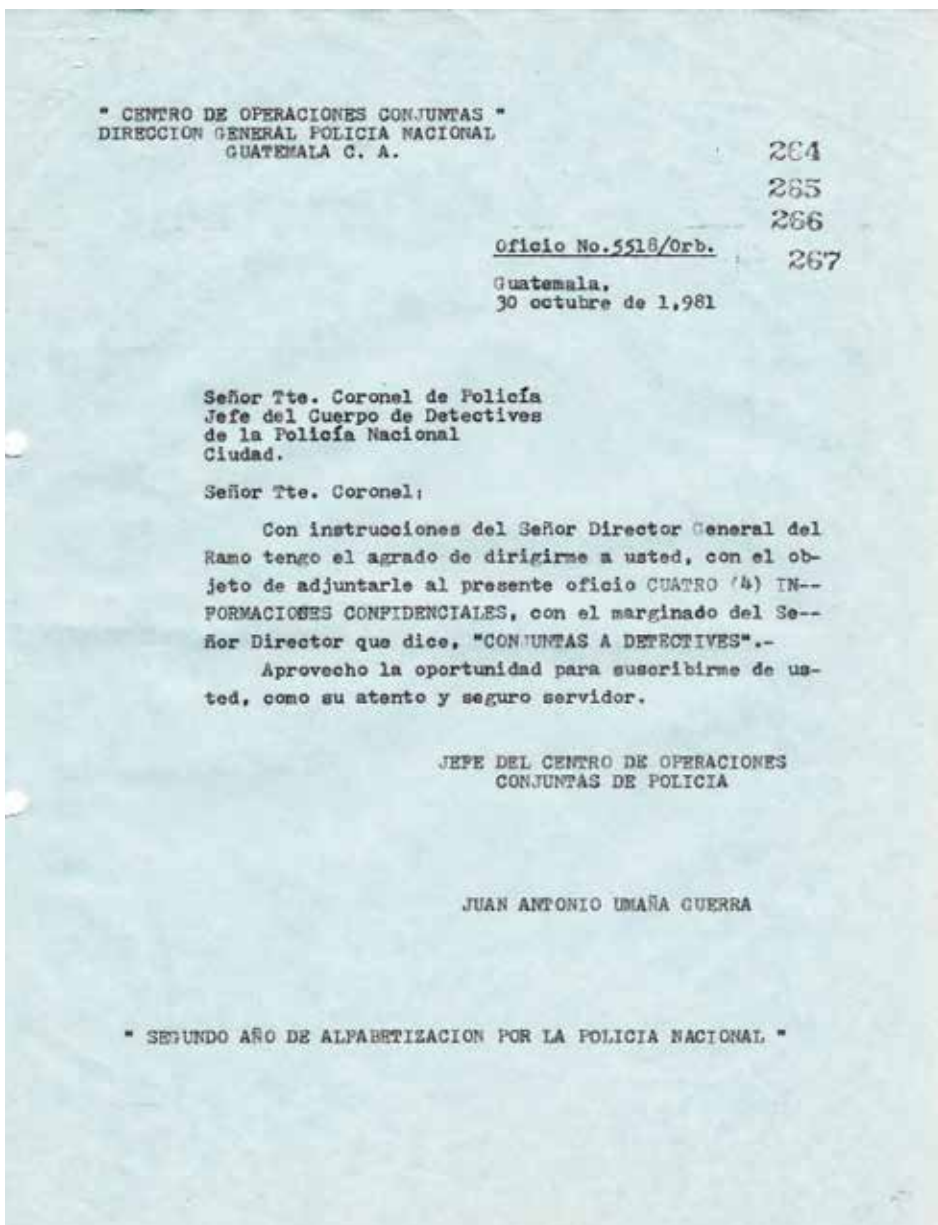
c.c. Archivo General y Servicios de Apoyo del EMP.

**CONFIDENCIAL**

Source: GT PN 51-01 S002 10/28/1981, Confidential Information No. 2-1117-IC/81  
[Digital reference 2770383. Internal AHPN registration 25907].

**Photograph I.1.b**

Function of the COCP as an axis for information flow  
1981



Source: GT PN 51-01 S002 10/30/1981, Oficio No. 5518/Orb  
[Digital reference 2770383. Internal AHPN registration 25906].



The office initially started as the National Police Center of Operations (COP) in the area occupied by the Map Room.<sup>142</sup> It took over the mapping tasks, along with the equipment in this office, with the aim of providing a permanent record of patterns of crime and police presence.<sup>143</sup> It was set up with the participation of the Officer in Charge of the Map Room and the inspectors of administration, training, organization, operations and planning at the PN, who continued to perform the same jobs, but now under the auspices of the recently-created Center of Operations.

It was not until August 1978 that the internal regulations of the Center for Joint Operations were issued, stipulating its functioning under a First Chief, Second Chief, Secretary and three office staff from the branches of intelligence, administration and planning and operations.<sup>144</sup>

These internal regulations described the COCP as “*the office in charge of the coordination and planning of security services, the organization and distribution of operational personnel and the statistical and graphic control of crime in general. Control of the various police forces and study and analysis of projects to the benefit of the institution or of national security itself.*”<sup>145</sup> In other words, it was an office with technical and analytical functions, although it would later have a number of investigators whose role is still unclear.

The COCP had the function of coordinating with the Ministry of National Defense and the Army General Staff for the implementation of security plans in relation to crime in general, of guaranteeing security at public events and protecting visiting public figures. In addition it had the functions of planning operations on highways, the deployment of detachments, and analyzed every type of study and projects for the improvement of police work.<sup>146</sup>

The Intelligence office assistant was responsible for a daily analysis of criminal activity and plotting this on the maps. Planning and Operations was responsible for drawing up security plans, instruction manuals, street maps and plans of given sectors of the Republic. Meanwhile, the Administration was in charge of the archive and the creation of files on the office’s movements. In general, the task of COCP personnel was to feed databases in order to produce statistics of various kinds.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> GT PN 51 DSC 01/26/1973, Doc. No. 4 (null) which shows that the name was soon extended to the Center for Joint Police Operations (COCP), book of various legal documents authorized by Lieutenant Colonel Gonzalo Pérez V., Chief of the Radio Patrol Section, Book Number 2514 [Digital reference 923033. Internal AHPN registration 26802].

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> GT PN 35 08/23-24/1978, Book of General Orders, General Order No. 102, “*Internal Regulations of the Center for Joint Operations*,” Book Number 10504 [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27102].

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., Article 162.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., Articles 164 and 165.

## b) The Fifth Corps (BROE/COE)

As we saw above, the corps stationed in the city of Guatemala consisted of units that were at once operational and administrative. Under these were the stations and substations of the PN throughout the different neighborhoods of the city and the towns of the Department of Guatemala. The Fifth Corps, also known as the Special Operations Command (COE) was a separate entity. It was created as an essentially elite operational agency, constituted as the Reaction and Special Operations Battalion (BROE), from a select group of police officers of all ranks. Its foundation was recorded as follows:

*“On January 4th, 1982, the National Police took another step forward with the creation of the FIFTH CORPS, organized with Superior Officers, Junior Officers and agents of all types from every corps and department where members of the service are to be found, as well as the Institution’s School.*

*This new body was forged, trained, and possessed as a team the will to do things right, with its headquarters situated at the National Police School, where every day its members, conscious of their responsibility to carry out their tasks in a responsible and ordered manner, would receive physical training and instruction in the use of weapons.*

*On moving to its current headquarters [on April 16th, 1982, to the site of today’s Precinct 14 on the corner of Anillo Periférico and Calzada San Juan], it was christened the BROE, or Reaction and Special Operations Battalion (Batallón de Reacción y Operaciones Especiales), bearing as its emblem being a dog that stands watch night and day.*

*This due to the training received and the support of its founder and first chief: General Commissioner of Police: JUAN FRANCISCO CIFUENTES CANO. The Fifth Corps took part on behalf of the National Police in operations at the departmental level, combating subversive crimes in tandem with the national army.”<sup>148</sup>*

Numerous documents analyzed show that the COE, the BROE and the Fifth Corps represented the same structure from the foundation of the COE in 1982.

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., Articles 167-169.

<sup>148</sup> COLLECTIONS-05 RT, “Nace un nuevo cuerpo,” *Revista Policía Nacional. CIV Aniversario. Órgano Informativo y Cultural*, p. 46 [Digital reference 3069367. Internal AHPN registration 31519].

First of all there is General Order No. 001 “A” of January 1st and 2nd, 1983, which reproduces Government Accord No. 539-82 of December 30th, 1982, which in its second STATEMENT declares: “*Given that January 4th, 1983 is the commemoration of the first anniversary of the foundation of the Special Operations Command, or BROE (Fifth Corps of the National Police), it is fitting to acknowledge publicly the members of this body who have distinguished themselves by their actions against crime.*”<sup>149</sup>

Other factors supporting this assertion are:<sup>150</sup>

- The command of the COE was always the same as that of the Fifth Corps.

- A vest for the use of COE agents was seen, which on its upper section bore the words *SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND* and lower down the words *FIFTH CORPS NATIONAL POLICE*.

- Other documents that mention them make no differentiation between the COE and the Fifth Corps. In official documents and communications from the COE beginning in 1982, the initials used are those of the Fifth Corps (i.e. QC). A cover sheet for records archived in the Directorate General states: “*End of the New Aspects of the Fifth Corps or Special Operations Command, 1982.*”

The background of the Fifth Corps went back to 1977, when the Combat Commandos were created using members from various bodies with a view to training all its members in combat tactics.<sup>151</sup>

Other precedents for the COE were the Special Command of the Technical Professional School for Police and the Special Unit of the PN, which had its headquarters in the first station of the Third Corps. Command of this unit was given to Police Major Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano,<sup>152</sup> who later assumed command of the COE, BROE or Fifth Corps of the PN. Using agent files stored among the files of the Second Corps, it is possible to confirm that, starting in 1982, a group

<sup>149</sup> GT PN 35 S001 01/01-02/1983, Book of General Orders, General Order No. 001 “A,” reproduction of Government Accord No. 539-82 of 12/30/1982, Book Number 10509-B [Digital reference 760858. Internal AHPN registration 25831].

In the context of the restructuring of the PN in August 1983, the document on Normal Administrative Procedure of the Special Operations Command of the National Police has the letterhead “*BROE National Police,*” and in the space for the objective it says: “*Purpose: To determine the organization and basic functions of the personnel that form part of the COE of the National Police in order to fulfill in any place and region, and in under any circumstances the mission assigned to it as an operational unit.*”

<sup>150</sup> 1. GT PN 51-02 S005 07/25/1982, oficio No. 622, Ref.Edav, new developments [Digital reference 3160978. Internal AHPN registration 30767].

2. GT PN 51-02 S005 09/25/1983, oficio No. 3682, Ref.QC.EGG. First report. COE letterhead and reference to Fifth Corps –QC– [Digital reference 3179539. Internal AHPN registration 30762].

<sup>151</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 03/27/1978, Report on the Work of the National Police, July 1977-March 1978, the Director General of the PN being Infantry Colonel Mario Cardona Maldonado [Digital reference 1916126. Internal AHPN registration 27472].

of operatives with military rank (Second Infantry Sergeant, Infantry Corporal, Parachute Corporal, Second Artillery Sergeant, Military Mechanic, Specialist Corporal, and so on) were assigned for the first time to the Special Command under Cifuentes Cano.<sup>153</sup>

The Special Operations Command, or Fifth Corps, was basically a counterinsurgency body. Its members were given the task of carrying out tracking operations,<sup>154</sup> searches for weapons, propaganda and members of the revolutionary movement.<sup>155</sup> Checkpoints were set up on the streets of the capital in order to detect suspects and bring them to trial.<sup>156</sup> At the same time, covert investigations were carried out, such as boarding urban transport to “*identify subversives*.”<sup>157</sup> Often, the Command’s agents would perform these activities in civilian dress.<sup>158</sup>

Its agents participated in a continuing process of training for operations in remote rural areas. Thus, in July 1982, 54 of these were commissioned to support ongoing operations in the region around the Pacaya volcano.<sup>159</sup>

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- <sup>152</sup> 1. GT PN 30 S001 04/23/1985, book of documents from the Directorate General of the PN, Doc. No. 290 which shows that Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano acted as Third Chief and Inspector General, Book Number 2618 [Digital reference 991710. Internal AHPN registration 27485].  
2. GT PN 30 06/07/1985, book of guidelines: police command orders, June to December 1985, which reproduces Appointment Accord No. 109 of the Head of State, through which Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano took over as Deputy Director General of the PN, Book Number 1772 [Digital reference 165599. Internal AHPN registration 29452].
- <sup>153</sup> 1. GT PN 24-06 S009 01/01/1982, thirteen cards on agents assigned to the command of Major Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano on the date indicated [for example, Internal AHPN registration 32104].  
2. Ibid. 02/01/1982, fourteen cards on agents assigned to the command of Major Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano on the date indicated [for example, Internal AHPN registration 32118].  
3. Ibid. 03/01/1982, three cards on agents assigned to the command of Major Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano on the date indicated [for example, Internal AHPN registration 32132].  
4. Ibid. 12/01/1981, also, a card showing registration in the Special Command of the Police School on said date [Internal AHPN registration 32135].
- <sup>154</sup> For example, 1. GT PN 51-02 S005 07/21/1982, of. No. 614/Ref/Rrz., search in the ravines in the northwest sector of the capital [Digital reference 3157321. Internal AHPN registration 30763].  
2. GT PN 51-02 S005 07/22/1982, of. No. 616/Ref/Rrz, search along the Naranjo River [Digital reference 3157576. Internal AHPN registration 30768].
- <sup>155</sup> For example, GT PN 51-02 S005 07/18/1982, of. 608/Ref/Rrz, at the house located at 3rd Avenue and 36th Street, Zone 12 [Digital reference 3156879. Internal AHPN registration 30764].
- <sup>156</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 02/10/1982, of. No. 0106/ETA PLAN AZPA. Security point on Calzada Aeropuerto, zone 13 [Internal AHPN registration 13011].
- <sup>157</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 12/15/1982, of. No. 1079-Ref-QC-Eirl [Digital reference 3155339. Internal AHPN registration 30765].
- <sup>158</sup> The order to the investigators of the corps covered here, but also of the Judicial Police, the Detective Corps and others, to carry out their work dressed as civilians came from decades before:  
1. Regulations for the investigations section, Article 18: “*Investigative agents [...] will always wear peasant clothes [...]*,” reproduced in *Gaceta de la Policía Nacional*, 06/09/1929, pp. 902-906.  
2. Presidential Decree 332, Article 70: “*Exempt from the obligation to wear uniform are the personnel of the corps of detectives, confidential, technical and administrative services and all those members working on classified commissions.*”  
3. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/25/1971, Annual Report of the PN for 1970, “*As the use of the uniform gives dignity to the person wearing it, as of November 1st, its use was declared obligatory for all members of the National Police, whether in Order and Security (OS) or Administrative (A), excepting the investigative service,*” pp. 1-2 [Digital reference 1667246 and 1667247. Internal AHPN registration 26797].
- <sup>159</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 07/12/1982, of. No. 588/Ref/Rrz [Digital reference 3155585. Internal AHPN registration 30766].

In August 1983, the restructuring of the police forces, mentioned above, also affected the Fifth Corps, or COE. This police agency was also organized in terms of a command group, a senior staff composed of PN-1 to PN-5, a support unit and the operational services divided into platoons and squads. In addition, the platoons belonging to this command or corps were required to participate in anti-riot activities, dispersal of protesters and to counteract any social disturbances.

### c) The Special Investigations Section or Command Six

In the Second Corps of the PN a special command was created in the 1970s, under the name Special Investigations Section or Command Six. Although it was attached to the Second Corps, it functioned separately and produced its own reports and updates.<sup>160</sup> As is the case with the Fifth Corps, up to now no documents have been discovered that contain a definition of the functions of Command Six.

Likewise, the exact date on which this Section was set up remains unknown, although there is a reference to its creation in July of 1977.<sup>161</sup> The first administrative documents found in the AHPN date from October of the same year.<sup>162</sup> The last traces of this body come from the end of April 1982,<sup>163</sup> i.e., the moment at which the country, together with certain structures within the PN were undergoing a complete reorganization by the Governing Military Junta.<sup>164</sup>

Command Six was particularly important in Guatemala city, where it carried out most of its operations. A number of documents mention that its agents generally took part in the suppression of common crime and cooperated in the processing of politically suspect individuals or by confiscating prohibited printed material.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>160</sup> GT PN 51-02 S008 01/02/1980, of. No.009/Ref.jadca, "Report on the Activities of the Section of Special Investigators of Sixth Command of the National Police. During the period between January 1 to December 31, 1979," the First Chief of Sixth Command being Lieutenant Colonel Pedro García Arredondo [Digital reference 2733331. Internal AHPN registration 27813].

<sup>161</sup> *Historia de la Policía Nacional, 1881-1981* (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1981), p. 112. "In July of 1977 [...] At the same time, other units were created, such as the Police Sixth Command..."

<sup>162</sup> GT PN 24-09-02 S001 10/25/1977, Oficio No.-001-/Ref.Mjc, daily service, for example, at that moment the Chief of Sixth Command being René Aguilar Prado and Second Chief Pedro García Arredondo, the formulation was "Command Number Six of the Second Corps" [Digital reference 2791402. Internal AHPN registration 27116].

<sup>163</sup> GT PN 24-09-02 S001 04/29/1982, daily service, for example, around this time, the letterhead no longer included the phrase "Second Corps," but rather "SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SECTION SIXTH COMMAND NATIONAL POLICE" [Digital reference 2806620. Internal AHPN registration 27112].

<sup>164</sup> This same chapter has a discussion on the disbanding of the Judicial Police and the Corps of Detectives as well as the creation of the Department of Technical Investigations -DIT.

<sup>165</sup> GT PN 51-01 S002 12/31/1981, Oficio No. 6898/Orb., for example, addressed to the Chief of Sixth Command, sent by Police Lieutenant Colonel Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra, Chief of the COCP, transferring confidential information with instructions from the Director General [Digital reference 2770915. Internal AHPN registration 27207].

Nevertheless, the series of documents located in the AHPN in the section relating to the Second Corps, make it possible to assert that the headquarters of Command Six had the following functions:

- To maintain direct communication with the Director General, the chiefs of the Second Corps, the COCP and any other of the institution's offices.

- To act as the office in charge of operations for the apprehension and location of persons and the execution of warrants for the capture of vehicles.

- To maintain the archives containing the files concerning investigations carried out by agents.

- To conduct interrogations and receive "voluntary statements."<sup>166</sup>

- To be in direct contact with the Judicial Body. Agents registered with Sixth Command were frequently summoned to give statements to the courts.

In the payroll records of people located in the AHPN, there are following entries for the chiefs of the Command:

- Special Investigations Section of Sixth Command, October 15, 1978, made out by the chief of services Otilio Cabrera Corado, a list of 127 people, the majority including personal addresses. The first mentioned is Pedro García Arredondo, followed by Juan Antonio Lima López.<sup>167</sup> During this period they occupied the positions of First Chief and Section Chief of the command, respectively. In 1979, Sixth Command had a total of 140 members, with 116 agents and the rest occupying the higher ranks.<sup>168</sup>

- For March 1980, there are records detailing a total of 153 people, all ranked and occupying official positions. The First, Second, and Third Chiefs are named as Pedro García Arredondo, Juan José Falla Aragón, and Ángel Rigoberto Cruz

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<sup>166</sup> GT PN 24-09-01 S011, this series of documents comprises interrogations and voluntary statements guided by members of Sixth Command or the Special Investigations Section of the Second Corps [e.g., Internal AHPN registration 10215].

<sup>167</sup> GT PN 24-09 S001 10/15/1978, "List of Personnel of the Special Investigations Section of Sixth Command" [Internal AHPN registration 1545].

<sup>168</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/02/1980, Of. No.009/Ref.jadca, "Report on the Activities of the Section of Special Investigators of Sixth Command of the National Police. During the period between January 1 to December 31, 1979," the First Chief of Sixth Command being Lieutenant Colonel Pedro García Arredondo [Digital reference 2733331. Internal AHPN registration 27813].

Gudiel, respectively.<sup>169</sup> Subsequently, García Arredondo moved on to head the Corps of Detectives, with René Nájera taking over as head of Command Six.<sup>170</sup>

### **3. Types of Documents Relevant to the Investigation of Human Rights**

For the purposes of the human rights investigations contained in this report, we examined and studied various types of documents found in the AHPN. Since reference will be made to these texts and documents throughout the chapters that follow, this section provides a brief introduction in order to familiarize the reader with the terms used to classify the documents and their principal characteristics. The list that follows makes no claim to completeness, as the process of recovery, identification, classification and ordering of the store of documents in the AHPN is an ongoing process.

Document types are defined according to structure, contents and the administrative activities that produced them. This means that there is a huge variety of documents, most of which are on paper. The descriptions that follow are accompanied with examples from the AHPN itself.

#### **3.1 “Oficios”**

These are documents for relaying or requesting information. They were structured in various ways depending on their purpose. Thus, there are *oficios* containing information, details of criminal procedures, requests, payroll details, and so on. All the PN offices issued and received these documents, using them with great frequency to communicate and to transport the most diverse kinds of information. They were also used for communicating with other State agencies, e.g., the Judicial Body.

*Oficios* all have reference numbers and, normally, the initials of the typist and the person responsible for it.

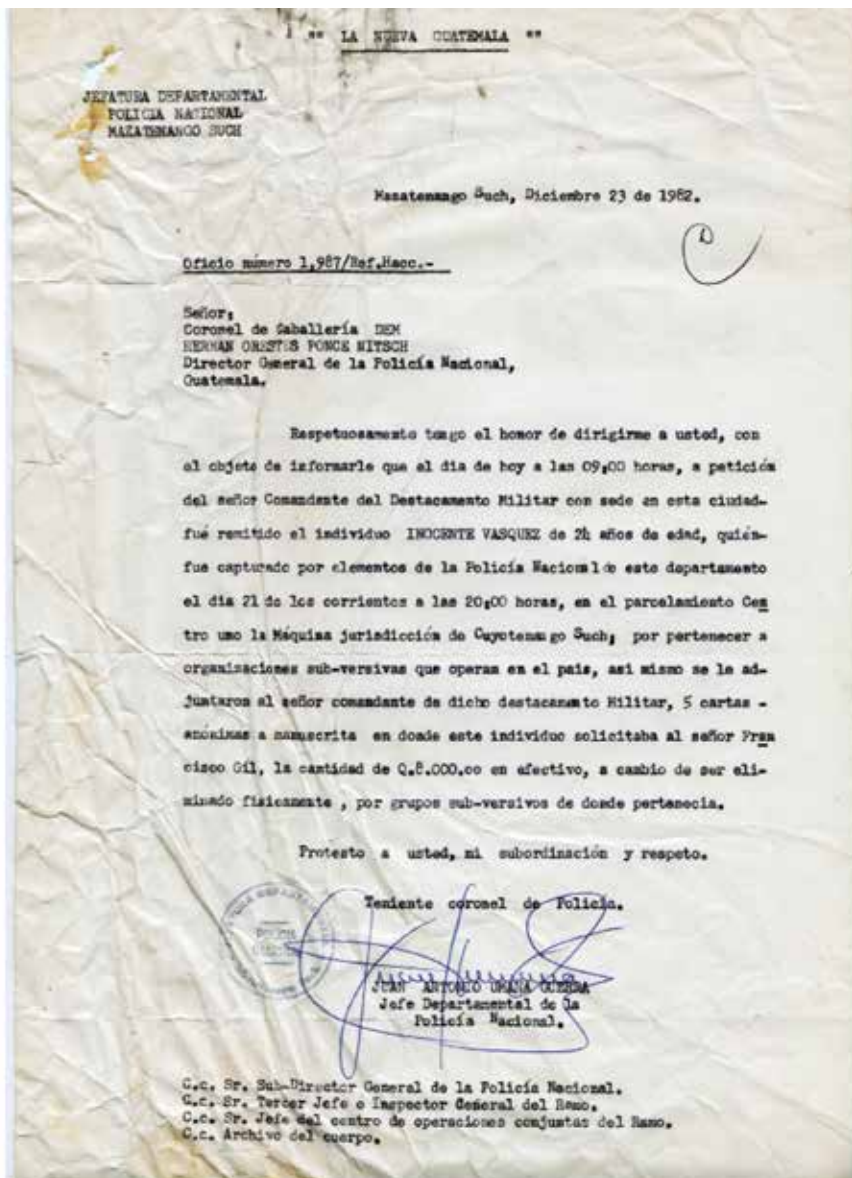
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<sup>169</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 03/1980, “*List of personnel providing services to the Special Investigations Section of Sixth Command, with headquarters in the Second Corps of the National Police...*” [Digital reference 826954. Internal AHPN registration 27183].

<sup>170</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 02/16/1980 [in the document there is a typing error, as it should say “1981,” for which there is insufficient evidence throughout the report], Oficio No. 575 Ref. Of. 1°.rfmr, addressed to the Minister of the Interior, sent by the Director General of the PN, Work Report for 1980 [Digital reference 1921875. Internal AHPN registration 25914].

## Photograph I.2

Example of an “oficio”  
1983



Source: GTPN 51-01 S002 12/23/1981, Oficio No. 1,987/Ref.Hacc.  
[Digital reference 1912437. Internal AHPN registration 25962].



In one text found among the Second Corps documents, the functions of the *oficio* are defined as follows:

*“...administrative documents can be used to request or provide information, acknowledge receipt, to communicate or receive orders from superiors, etc., etc., etc..*

*Due to their seriousness and formality, these documents are divided into six sections, as follows:*

- a) Subject*
- b) Number and Reference*
- c) Addressee*
- d) Text or body*
- e) Place and date*
- f) Signature of sender.”<sup>171</sup>*

### **3.2 “Providencias”**

In the document referred to above, “*providencias*” are defined as “*a decision by a functionary by reason of which a situation is processed, an incident is resolved or a record is made of the fulfillment of a legal order.*”<sup>172</sup> In principle, the aim or purpose of a *providencia* is the same as that of an administrative document. Nevertheless, *providencias* are predominantly procedural in nature and may grow to become files, in which case all previous communications between different agencies involved in the procedure are included as attachments. For this reason, when they are submitted the number of sheets they contain is recorded.

As the *providencia* is a specific document relating to the progress of an order or procedure, in order to be resolved by the competent body, it is generally issued at a higher level, in this case the Directorate General of the National Police. Often, the *providencia* was the instrument used by the Director to issue decisions on which agency should follow up on a given matter and how this should be done.

They would also usually contain a number and the abbreviated name of the body where they originated. In general, it may be said that *providencias* are further up the hierarchy than *oficios*, especially due to their ability to have a file attached.

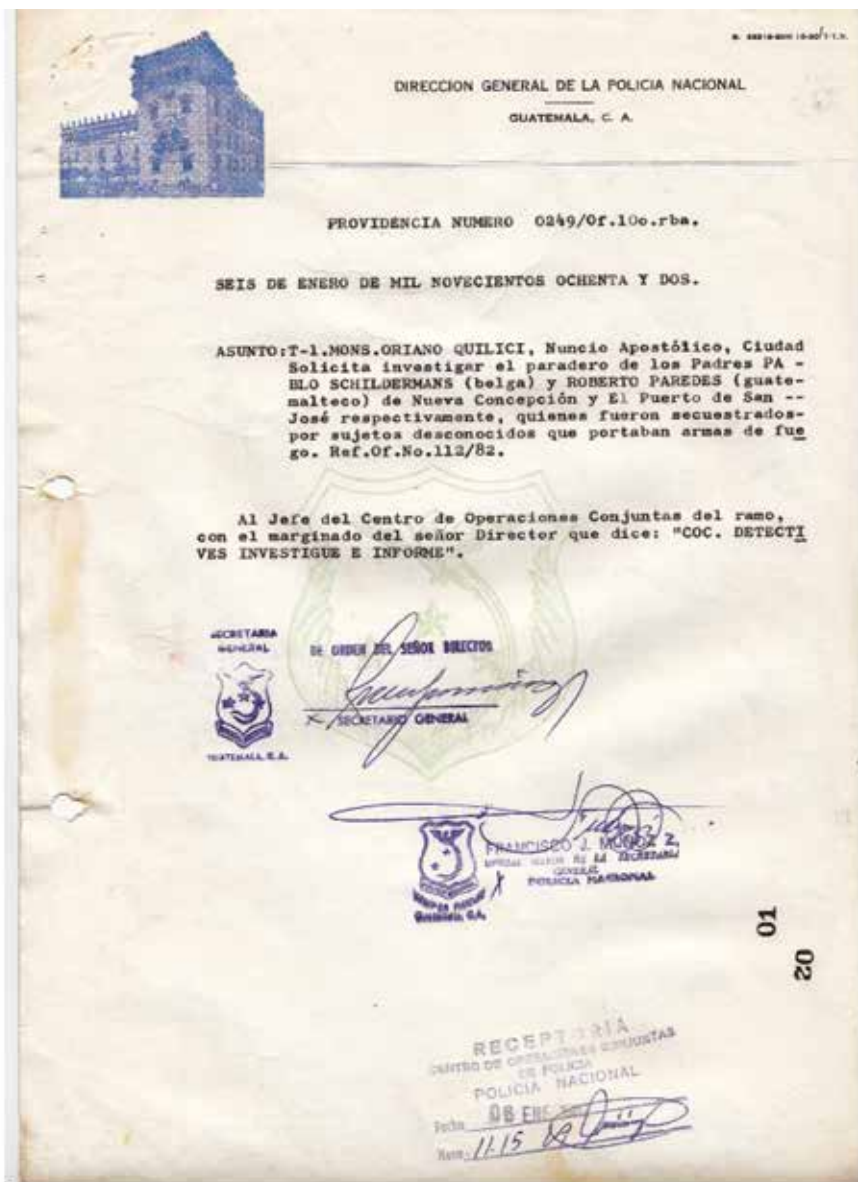
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<sup>171</sup> GTPN 24-01 S013 01/23/1980, “*Basic information on correspondence and writing.*” a document from the class on correspondence and writing taught by Police Lieutenant Colonel José Antonio Valladares Morales, Chief of the Personnel Department [Internal AHPN registration 11562].

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

### Photograph I.3

Example of “providencia”  
1983



Source: GT PN 51-01 S002 01/06/1982, Providencia No. 0249/Of.10o.rba. [Digital reference 2773476. Internal AHPN registration 25911].

### 3.3 Memorandum

This is a document of an internal nature and so both sender and recipient belong to the same institution. They are exempt from the formalities of oficios and the subject is presented succinctly. Only in special cases is it used instead of an oficio to address superiors. It refers to one specific matter.

#### Photograph I.4

Example of memorandum  
1982

**M E M O R A N D U M .**

Guatemala,  
24 de Junio de 1,982.

A.....Señor Secretario General  
de la Policía Nacional.  
Su despacho.

Respetuosamente tengo el honor de dirigi-  
rme a usted, con el objeto de hacer de su-  
conocimiento que el turno que nos correspondió  
de las 18.00 horas, de ayer a las 08.00 horas,  
de hoy transcurrió sinninguna novedad los par-  
tes del Señor Presidente y Señores Ministros,  
fuerón enviados a sus destinos a las \_\_\_\_ hrs.  
con el motorista No. 76 (r) \_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre Edy Aldana los restan-  
tes con el motorista No. \_\_\_\_\_ (r) \_\_\_\_\_  
nombre \_\_\_\_\_ los enseres -  
de la oficina quedarón en su respectivo lugar  
y en buen estado. Respetuosos.

*[Signature]*  
Jorge A.C. Leppe. Nery Pedro Pérez Ríos.

*[Signature]*  
Favio P. Masariegos. O. Manuel de J. Paredes.

Recibi. 14. Sellos. *[Signature]*

In the police document on writing and correspondence, it is characterized as “*a simplified letter containing the same information and with a similar function, with the difference that it is generally shorter and deals with a single issue (...) it does not use the formal phrasing demanded by oficios (...)*” It is comprised of: the addressee, the sender, both with their positions, the date, subject and the signature of the person responsible.

### **3.3.1 Memorandum for the information of the Head of State, the Commander in Chief of the Army, and the Minister of Defense**

These special memoranda were generally confidential or secret. In the former case, information regarding crimes (robbery, murder, homicide, kidnapping, burglary) was classified together with that concerning activities considered to be subversive or political in nature. In the latter case, they contained information directly related to the activities of PN agents or the National Army. They were issued during the periods of the *de facto* governments, i.e., between March 23, 1982 and January 14, 1986. During the government of Ríos Montt, the heading on memoranda read “*to the President,*” while afterwards they were addressed to the “*Head of State.*” These messages were also sent prior to the constitutional breach, but were then addressed to the Director General of the PN.

They were documents written by officials on the PN night shift. They contained information on the most notable new developments that might interest the recipients. The agents in charge formed part of the General Secretary’s staff, but were situated in the Directorate General of the Institution.<sup>173</sup> Their main function was to write dispatches summarizing the most important events of the previous twenty-four hours, including a list of detainees, the latest news from the capital and the Department of Guatemala, together with that from other Departments. Depending on the nature of the contents of these dispatches, they would be classified as “*confidential*” or “*special,*” or “*regular news.*”<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> The lists of the institution show that many of the people occupying the position of night duty officer continued to do so over a long period of time. Almost all communications passed through their hands and they were the first filter when sending documents to the respective offices of the daytime staff, including the Directorate General.

<sup>174</sup> GT PN 35 S001 05/08-09/1978, Book of General Orders, General Order No. 056, “*Internal Regulations of the Secretariat General,*” Book Number 10504 [Digital reference 735652. Internal AHPN registration 27070].

## Photograph I.5

Example of a confidential memorandum addressed to the Head of State  
1983

DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL, GUATEMALA, C.A.

Hoja No. -- 1 --  
Of.noct.SG.Lepe.  
Septre. 15- 1983

MEMORANDUM CONFIDENCIAL  
PARA CONOCIMIENTO DEL SEÑOR JEFE DE ESTADO  
COMANDANTE GENERAL DEL EJERCITO Y MINISTRO  
DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL.-

1.- DESCONOCIDOS ROBARON EN ABANOTUJIA:  
A las 18:05 hrs. de ayer, DOMINIO ALVARADO GARCIA de 25 años- propietario de la abarrotería denominada LA BARATA instalado en la 9na. calle 8-88 de la zona 7, informó que momentos antes, llegaron a la misma, CUATRO desconocidos y con las armas de fuego que- portaban, lo amenazaron y robaron Q.500.00 en efectivo. Se informó al Juez Iro. de Paz Penal.-

2.- EXHIBICION PERSONAL NO ESPERADA:  
A las 16: hrs. de ayer, el Licenciado HUMBERTO VELAZQUEZ AGUIRRE Registrado de la Sala 3ra. de la Corte de Apelaciones, se presentó al Segundo Cuervo, con el objeto de practicar la Exhibición- Personal de ILYANA SOLARES CASTILLO, pero no le fue posible efectuar, en virtud que no se encuentra detenida. Se retiró a las 16- 15 hrs. sin novedad.  
A las 17:30 hrs. el Juez 7mo. de Ira. Instancia Penal, se presentó al mismo Cuervo, con el objeto de Exhibir Personalmente a --- ANA MARIA LOPEZ RODRIGUEZ y LUIS LETICIA HERNANDEZ, resultándose a las 17:35 hrs. con resultado negativo, en virtud que las nombradas NO se encuentran detenidas.

3.- APARATO DE RADIO FUE RECOGIDO:  
A las 17:00 hrs. de antier, en una operación registro efectuada en el anillo periférico y 23 calle de la zona 7, fue sorprendido DIMAS FIDEL RAMANALES RAMIREZ, portando un aparato de radio sintonizado marca SONY registro PIZ Synthesizer ICER-2010 de 40 canales con su respectivo micrófono, sin tener licencia para ello, por lo que le fue recogido y enviado al Laboratorio de Radio de esta - Institución en calidad de depósito.-

4.- GOLPEADO EN OCASION DE ASALTO Y ROTO:  
A las 18:00 hrs. de ayer, fue ingresado al Hospital de accidentes del IGSS, CESAR AUGUSTO PEPEDOMO LIMA de 36 años, presentando fractura en el hueso propio y pirámides nasales, que sufrió a las- 12:35 hrs. del mismo día cuando se encontraba en el interior de la cafetería denominada LATINO instalada en la 13 Av. y 26 calle de la zona 5, al haber sido agredido a bofetadas y puntapiés por TRES desconocidos que luego le robaron Q.11,800.00 en efectivo y así - también le robaron su Pick-Up placas P-83964 TOYOTA amarillo 1983- que tenía estacionado frente a la cafetería. Se informó al Juez Iro. de Paz Penal.-

5.- DESCONOCIDOS ROBARON EN JOYERIA Y RELOJERIA:  
A las 12: hrs. de ayer, MANUEL GUILLERMO VELAZQUEZ de 38 años propietario de la Joyería y Relojería denominada DOS MIL instalada en la 3ra. Av. 12-07 zona 1, informó que momentos antes, individuos desconocidos portando armas de fuego llegaron a su negocio en grupo de TRES bajo amenazas con las mismas, le robaron 45 relojes y NO argollas matrimoniales de oro, estíma lo robado en Q.2,800.00 - Elementos del Gabinete de Identificación, tomaron los pormenores - del caso. Se informó al Juez Iro. de Paz Penal.-

6.- DESCONOCIDOS ROBARON EN ALMACEN DEPORTIVO:  
A las 17:40 hrs. de ayer, CAMILO BERTHON CALDERON SAMAYOA de- 48 años, propietario del Almacén denominado 3er CENTRO DEPORTIVO -- instalado en la 12 Av. 14-03 zona 1, informó que a las 17: hrs. del

### 3.4 Telegrams and Radiograms

These are documents produced by rapid mechanisms for the transmission of information. The former go through the Post and Telegraph Office of Guatemala and the latter by means of the PN's own radio equipment and operators, who transcribe the information transmitted.

Both are characterized by their brief, concise texts. Telegrams were widely used. There are even some addressed to the institution from people outside it. Radiograms were used particularly for rapid communication between PN agencies. On some occasions, the PN used them to communicate with the Judicial Body.

#### Photograph I.6

Example of the internal use of telegrams  
1980



Source: GT PN 30-01 S019 05/17/1980, telegram no. 231  
[Digital reference 1849231. Internal AHPN registration 25931].

## Photograph I.7

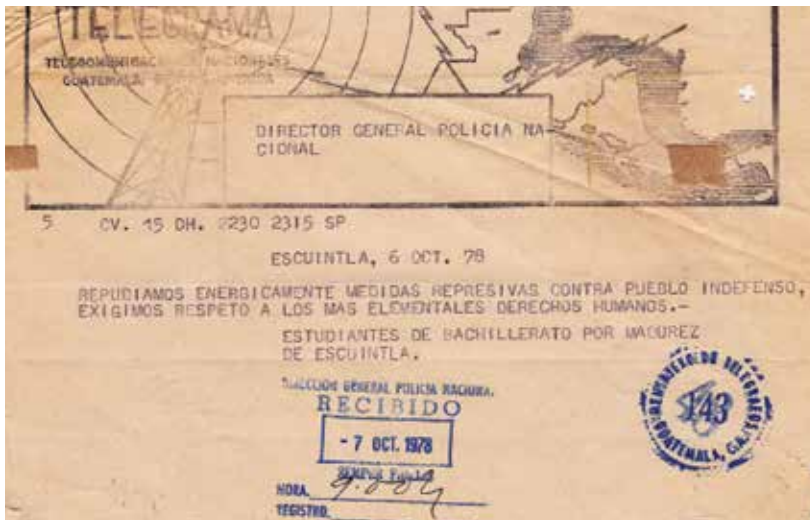
### Example of a radiogram 1982



Source: GT PN 30-01 S019 03/16/1982, Radiogram no. 536  
[Internal AHPN registration 25932].

## Photograph I.8

### Example of a telegram sent to the PN by private individuals 1978



Source: GT PN 30 S002 10/06/1978, unnumbered telegram  
[Internal AHPN registration 25933].

The police placed special importance on the use of these means of communication, since in the instruction manual mentioned above, it insisted that: *“The importance entailed in sending a telegram or radiogram dispatch to a Superior Officer relating the details of any type of event is, for you, the fulfillment of a duty and an obligation; to fail to do so would make you responsible or complicit in the act.”*<sup>175</sup>

On occasion, the contents were transmitted in code. The recipient would decipher the code and “translate” the text into Latin letters. For this purpose, a series of numeric key codes were issued regularly, which were distributed among the corps chiefs, departmental headquarters and other important agencies, such as the COCP.

### Photograph I.9.a

Example of a telegram in code  
1984



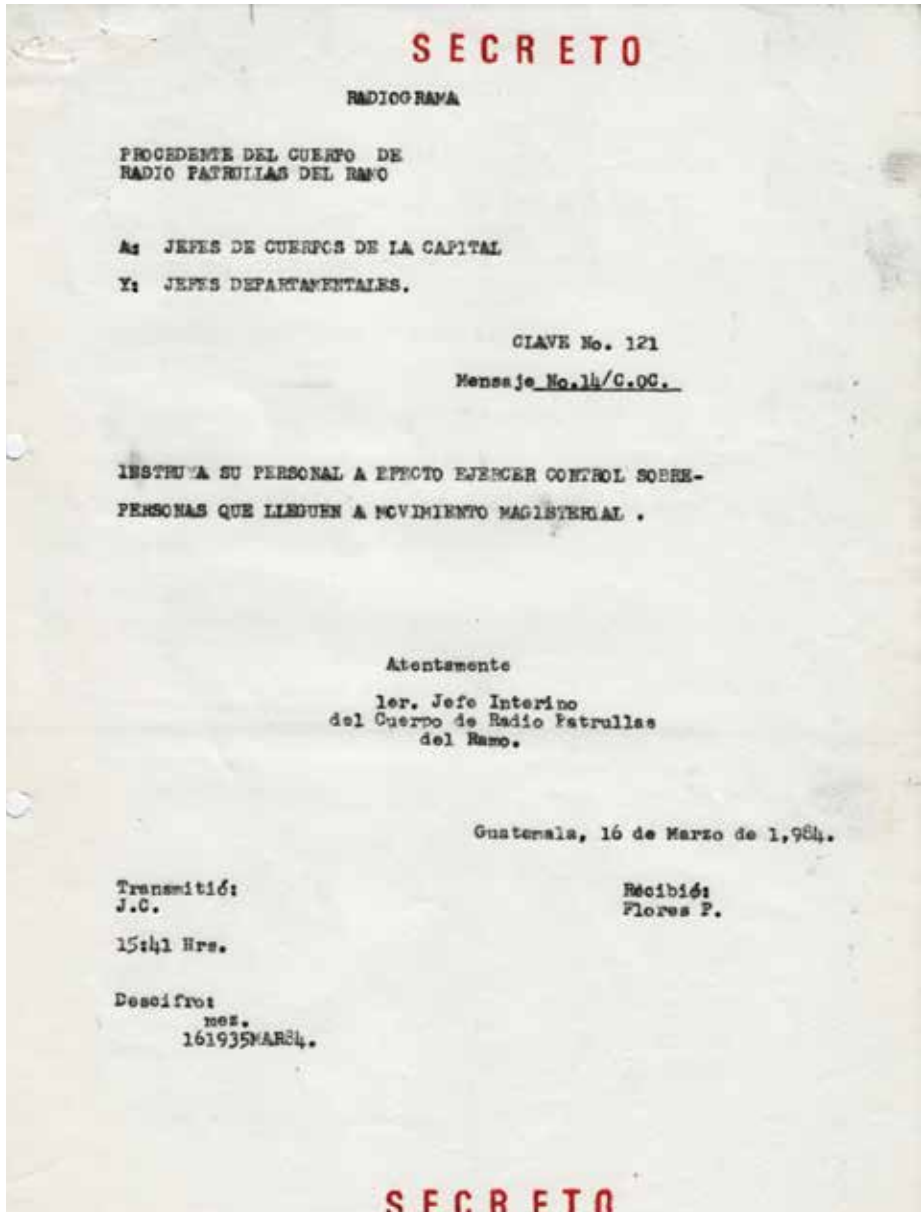
Source: GT PN 50-16 DSC 03/16/1984, telegram in code 121 no. 14/C.O.C.  
[Internal AHPN registration 25934].

<sup>175</sup> GTPN 24-01 S013 01/23/1980, “Basic information on correspondence and writing,” a document from the class on correspondence and writing taught by Police Lieutenant Colonel José Antonio Valladares Morales, Chief of the Personnel Department [Internal AHPN registration 11562].



**Photograph I.9.b**

The same telegram, deciphered version  
1984



Source: GT PN 50-16 DSC 03/16/1984, telegram no. 14/C.OC. deciphered  
[Internal AHPN registration 25935].

### **3.5 Circulars**

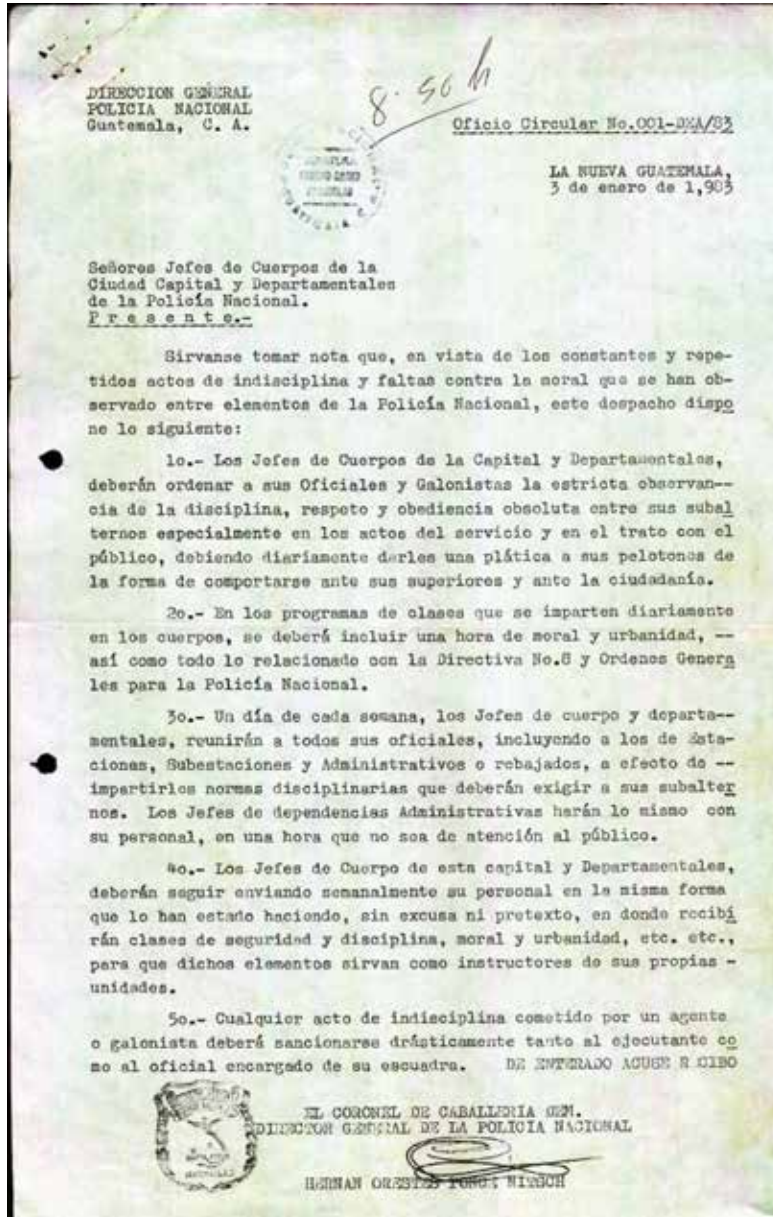
These were used to communicate orders or instructions of a similar nature. They were issued by superiors for the information of, and fulfillment by all subordinates. They were executive in nature and their contents could not be altered except when superseded by another, similar circular indicating a modification or cancellation.

The purpose of some circulars was to clarify concepts or to provide regulations for the execution of an order or plan. These were signed by the superior officer and approved by the Section Chief with responsibility for the matter.

Consequently, only general rules were established for those carrying out the order, who were allowed initiative and independence with regard to its execution.

## Photograph I.10

Example of a circular  
1983



Source: GTPN 30-01 S004 01/03/1983, oficio circular no. 001-DEA/83  
[Internal AHPN registration 25961].

### **3.6 New Developments**

These were documents drawn up at the corps, headquarters, stations, substations and other PN structures that contained summaries of noteworthy events occurring during shifts at the various agencies.

Using oficios or detailed reports, news was relayed to the superior officers of the institution. They were an administrative mechanism that functioned as a channel for information in accordance with the hierarchical organization of the police. The document was produced by an agent and then sent through the appropriate structures until arriving at the Directorate General and other State bodies. As a matter of routine, the original was sent to the Directorate General while a copy went to the COCP.

## Photograph I.11

### Example of New Developments 1984

CUERPO DE LA  
 POLICIA NACIONAL  
 GUATEMALA, C. A.

No. 13,453-Ref.Of.Cgl.

A S U N T O: Informando de las NOVEDADES  
 ocurridas en sector de este  
 Cuerpo.

Coronel de Artillería DEM  
 Jefe General de la Policía Nacional  
 d a d.

Director:

Tengo el honor de dirigirme a usted, con el objeto de informar de  
 NOVEDADES ocurridas en sector de este Cuerpo, en el turno comprendido de --  
 18:00 horas de ayer, para las 03:00 horas de hoy, detallandose en la forma  
 siguiente:

" NOVEDADES "

MUJER, EN LANZA AL VACIO DEL PUENTE BELICE, EN DONDE FALLECIO: A las 20:00  
 de ayer, el señor: Juan 7o. de Paz Penal, asociado como corresponde, se --  
 dirigió al Puente Belice zona 6, donde levantó acta de rigor de cadáver de --  
 una mujer, de aproximadamente 23 años de edad, quien por carecer de documentos --  
 de identificación, fue levantado como I.X. Fue rescatado del fondo del puente --  
 por elementos de la unidad T.R. 1 de los bomberos municipales, ya --  
 a las 18:30 horas aproximadamente, ignorando por qué motivo, se lanzó al vacío, --  
 al día siguiente se encontraba POLITRAUMATIZADO, siendo trasladado a la morgue del --  
 Hospital San Vicente, para la autopsia de ley, por la unidad de bomberos mencio-

EN DE REDES: Hasta las 20:00 horas de ayer, en el Presidio General de este --  
 Cuerpo, habían un total de 499 reos, incluyendo los que se encuentran internados --  
 en diferentes Centros Asistenciales.

ROBADO: HERRAN AUTOMOVIL EN LA ZONA URB: A las 21:10 horas de ayer, denunció --  
 el Cuerpo, la señora: GLORIA ANTONIETA GUERRA ARGUELLO, de 33 años de edad, --  
 domicilio en la 5a. Calle 42-87 Lomas del Rodeo zona 7, que a las 19:30 horas --  
 salió en su vehículo de 9a. Avenida y 2a. Calle zona 1, dejó estacionado su automóvil placas P-1118 --  
 un Oldsmobile Galant, color gris, momentos después que retornó al lugar, se dio cuenta --  
 que el vehículo ya no estaba, e ignora quien se lo haya llevado, del caso se tur- --  
 nante al Juzgado 6o. de Paz Penal.

Protesto a usted, mi subordinación y respeto.

Guatemala, 19 de diciembre de 1984.

El Teniente Coronel de Policía Nacional.  
 Comandante del Segundo Cuerpo.

Source: GT PN 24-05 S004 12/19/1984, oficio no. 13,453.Ref.Of.Cgl  
 [Digital reference 2925848. Internal AHPN registration 25964].

Before the Director General received any information on new developments, the information would go through a process of ordering and classification at the Office of the Secretary General. The officers on night duty and the Chief Clerk were responsible for this job, with the latter the one who would directly distinguish between:

- a) News that could be processed immediately;
- b) New developments deserving of the direct attention of the Director General.<sup>176</sup>

These reports were written on a daily basis. However, they were compiled into monthly and annual reports.

New developments of an ordinary nature included news of social, cultural, religious and sporting events (wrestling, saints' days, concerts), traffic accidents, and any other minor incident or misdemeanor.

The whole PN structure made use of these news reports. For the purposes of investigating human rights, those written by the Identification Bureau are of particular interest. This office was in charge of managing and feeding the database with the fingerprints of identified persons and comparing the prints taken at crime scenes and those of unidentified bodies. The Identification Bureau made a distinction between "*new developments involving identified bodies*" and "*new developments involving unidentified bodies.*" For the latter, the term "*Dispatches with XX*" was also used. It was possible to ascertain that these types of reports, among others, contained handwritten information relating to the identification of bodies that had initially been catalogued as XX.

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<sup>176</sup> GT PN 35 S001 05/08-09/1978, General Order No. 056, "*Internal Regulations of the Secretariat General,*" Articles 82 and 98, Book Number 10504 [Digital reference 735652. Internal AHPN registration 27070].

## Photograph I.12

Example of New Developments with unidentified bodies  
1983

COMANDO EN JEFE INVESTIGACION  
DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
GUATEMALA, C. A.

LA NUEVA GUATEMALA,  
9 de Septiembre de 1,983.-

ASUNTO: Jefe del Gabinete de Identificación informa a la Dirección General del Ramo, las NOVEDADES que se conocieron durante el lapso de las 18.30 horas de ayer, para las 09.00 horas de hoy 9 del presente.-

Señor Director General  
de la Policía Nacional  
Su Despacho.-

Tengo el honor de dirigirme a usted, para informarle de las NOVEDADES que se conocieron en esta Dependencia a mi cargo, durante el lapso de las 18.30 horas de ayer, para las 09.00 horas del día de hoy 9 de los corrientes, las que se detallan en la forma siguiente:

A las 19.00 horas de ayer, por aviso telefónico de la Detención de la Policía Nacional, del Municipio de Mixco, elementos de esta Dependencia, a bordo de la unidad móvil, se encontraron en la morgue del hospital San Vicente, lugar donde se cobra de una dentilla de metal, se encontraba el cadáver de una MUJER INCONOCIDA, corno de 35 años de edad, de 1.45 Mts. de estatura, dentadura incompleta sin ser posible describirla más características físicas por encontrarse en completo estado de putrefacción; no se tuvo a la vista ninguna prenda de vestir.- Inmediatamente procedió el fondo de un barranco ubicado en terreno de la aldea El Compañero, zona 9, de la población de Mixco, ignorando la causa de su fallecimiento por el estado en que se encontraba, de este caso remitió el Jefe Iro. de Paz de la localidad de dicha población, se adjunta fotografía.

A las 21.00 horas de ayer, por aviso del Ser. Cuerpo del Ramo, a bordo de la unidad móvil, elementos de esta Dependencia, hicieron acto de presencia en la 12 avenida y 16 calle de la zona 1, lugar donde frente al número 16-45, se encontraba estacionado el automóvil con placas de circulación P-129728, marca Toyota, modelo 1,972, color blanco, propiedad del señor HENRY HENRY GARCIA, con domicilio en la colonia Cerro Lirio, sector no indica número, zona 06, zona 18; estos tomados de la tarjeta de circulación la que fue encontrada en la librería; en este caso no se revelaron impresiones digitales. Asimismo, por la humedad de la lluvia en las superficies adecuadas para el fin, dicho vehículo sin presentar dichas marcas quedó en la misma dirección al cuidado de los elementos números 2039 y 1649 del Cuerpo antes mencionado.

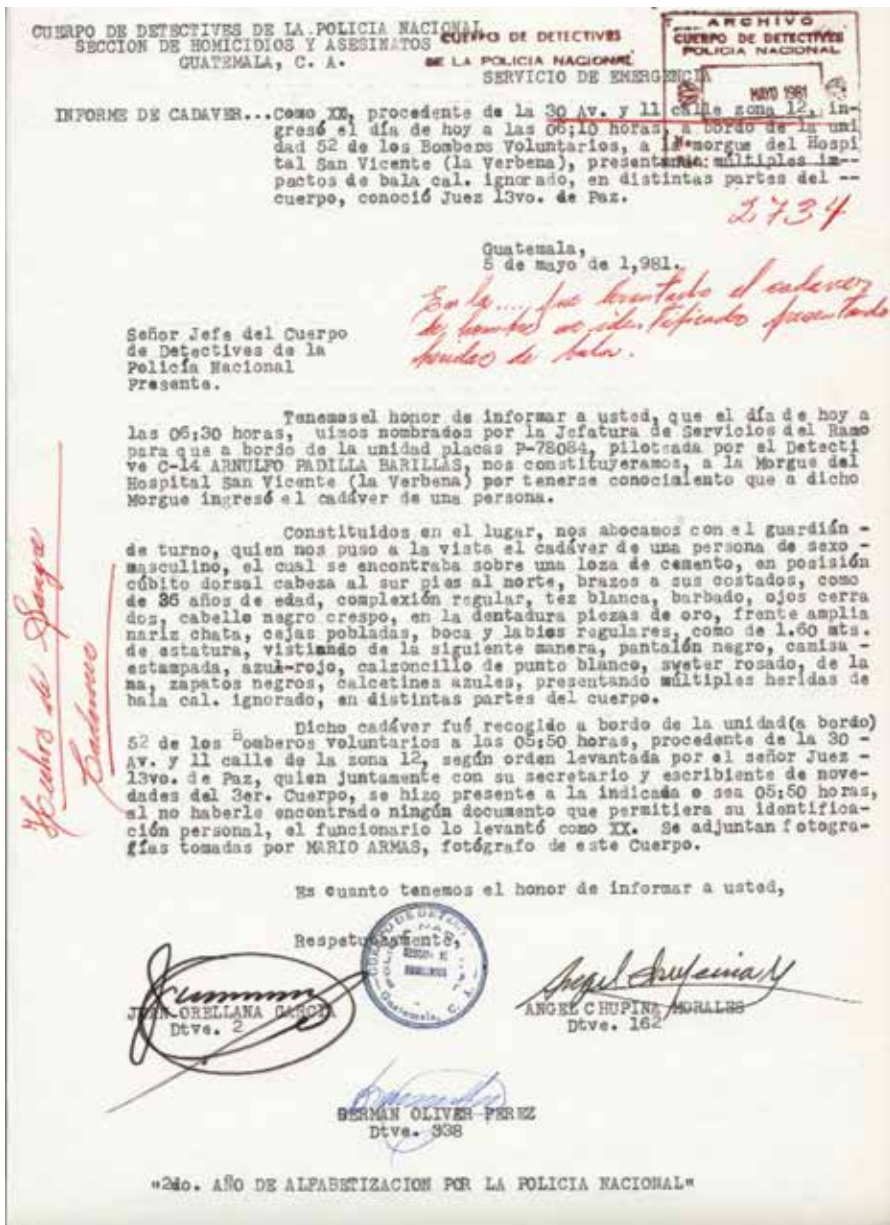
A las 09.00 horas de hoy, por aviso del Cuerpo de Guardia-patrullas, elementos de esta Dependencia, a bordo de la unidad móvil, se aproximaron en la 2a. avenida 18-30 zona 1, lugar donde se encuentra ubicado el Hotel "Belmont", propiedad de la señora VICTORIA GARCIA, con domicilio ignorado, habiendo informado el señor OSWALDO HAROLDO DE PAZ OSWALDO, encargado de dicho establecimiento y domiciliado en la 2a. calle "C" 25-32 de la zona 18, colonia El Paraíso, que a las 04.00 horas

Continúa .....

Source: GT PN 49 S002 09/09/1983, New Developments from the Information Bureau [Internal AHPN registration 25965].

Photograph I.13

Example of dispatches with XX  
1981



Source: GT PN 50 S002 05/05/1981, unnumbered report [Internal AHPN registration 25968].



**Photograph I.14.a**

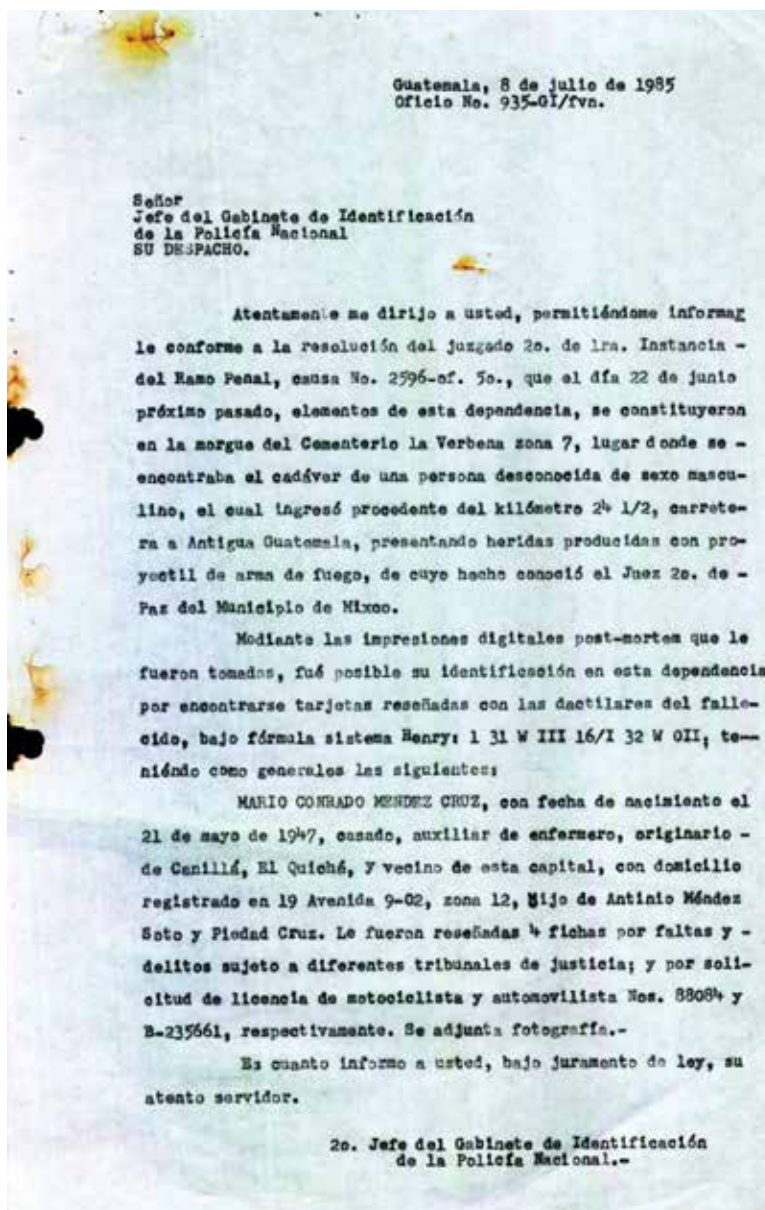
Cover sheet for XX dispatch file  
1985



Source: GT PN 49 S002 06/1985  
[Internal AHPN registration 25980].

## Photograph I.14.b

Example of post mortem identification of XX body  
1985



Source: GT PN 49 S002 07/08/1985, oficio no. 935-GI/fvn.  
[Internal AHPN registration 25982].

### Photograph I.14.c

Front of card, post-mortem XX body  
1985

Firmado por <i>Gustavo</i> 78-6-85		1er. Apellido	2do. Apellido	1er. Nombre	2do. Nombre
FECHA DE NACIMIENTO Día Mes Año Edad Alias		Hijo de <i>X X X X X X X X X X de 35 años</i>			
EUGAR DE NACIMIENTO Municipio Depto.		Domicilio			
Nacionalidad		FOTOGRAFIA de Frente Debe pegarse No engraparse			
Profesión		Cédula No. Orden		No. Registro	
Señas Particulares o Deformaciones		Sexo <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masculino <input type="checkbox"/> Femenino		Estado Civil	
Amputaciones		Taz		Talla	
OBSERVACIONES		Peso		Compleción	
<i>2do. Puz Mirca. procedente de Man. 2</i>		CABELLO a) Color		b) Forma	
<i>C. Carretera a Antigua.</i>		Ojos		Nariz	

Source: GT PN 49-02 S001 06/22/1985  
[Internal AHPN registration 25984].

### Photograph I.14.d

Back of post-mortem card with fingerprint identification  
1985

					<b>DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL GUATEMALA, C. A.</b>  Clas: _____ Ref: _____  TARIETA FORMULADA EN No. 95-4 / 100 80-60 FECHA 22/6/85 TOMA * Firma del Fichado _____ Firma del Operador <i>MVA 772</i>
IMPRESIONES SIMILITANES MANO DERECHA 					

Source: GT PN 49-02 S001 06/24/1985  
[Internal AHPN registration 25984].

The COCP, as the structure responsible for the coordination of operations, kept files with all this information. These reports on new developments enabled them to create statistical models of criminal behavior, which formed part of their functions.

For the processes of investigation into the AHPN, these reports are a source of valuable information that makes it possible to bring to light accounts of possible human rights violations, since they are a reflection of the day-to-day activities of the PN.

### 3.7 Complaints

These documents are the result of complaints by private individuals or organizations that make a declaration to the police with respect to an offense, misdemeanor, or crime, requesting that the law enforcement institution undertake to look into the matter in question. Complaints were presented either verbally or in writing, resulting in two types of record that can be found among the store of documents at the AHPN.

Verbal accusations were termed "*complaints.*" A preestablished form existed, printed on legal size sheets of blank newspaper stock, which was filled out on a typewriter by the officer on duty.<sup>177</sup> This type of document has been found in the records of the AHPN, produced by the Corps of Detectives and either as loose sheets or as part of files dating from the period 1970 to 1982.

The procedures began with a direct complaint made at a police station by a citizen. Each complaint was assigned a corresponding number and the officer immediately noted the date, the name, address and identity card number of the complainant, along with the names of his or her parents. Following this, the details of the offense, misdemeanor or crime were taken down. If the offenders were named, their identity was noted, together with details of where to locate them. A brief account of the facts was written, according to the information provided by the complainant. When finished, the complainant requested that the authorities proceed in their investigation and signed the complaint, as did the officer on duty, who also stamped the document.

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<sup>177</sup> Those responsible for attending to complaints were the tenth Officer of the Secretariat General of the PN, along with the heads of the public order offices in the corps in the capital and the departmental headquarters. At these, the shifts were twenty-four hours, starting at eight in the morning.

## Photograph I.15

Example of a complaint  
1982

SECCION DE QUEJAS Y DENUNCIAS  
CUERPO DE DETECTIVES  
POLICIA NACIONAL.-

ARCHIVO  
CUERPO DE DETECTIVES  
POLICIA NACIONAL  
MAR 1982  
No. 4036

DENUNCIA NO. 4036

En la ciudad de Guatemala, siendo las 9.10 horas,  
del día 5 de Marzo, de 1982. Se presenta a la  
Oficina de Denuncias el Sr. Sr. José Miguel López Turcios,  
de 47 años de edad, profesión u -  
oficio Carpintero, con domicilio en \_\_\_\_\_  
Via 4, 4-08 Zona 4., es hijo de Petronillo López Urpa  
y Mercedes Turcios. Se identifica con No porta do-  
documentos de identificación. Originario y vecino de San Mi-  
guel Pochuta Chimaltenango y vecino de Jocotenango, Antigua  
Guatemala, estado civil  $\bar{c}$  Unido.-

Asunto: Extravío de cédula B-2 Reg. 2133.  
Carnet de Seguridad del Banco del Café  
Boleto de Ornato, de los cuales no recuerda  
Número.-

El denunciante manifestó que el día de ayer a las 08.30 horas  
en un carro Autoletero que circulan en la vía de Guadalupe al  
parque central en X, extravió sus documentos arriba mencio-  
nados. por lo que lo hace de su conocimiento por ese mal uso  
que personas desconocidas puedan hacer de ellos.-

Enterado de lo escrito, lo ratifica y firma.

José Miguel López  
Interesado (a).

Accusations made in writing resulted in “*written complaints*.” These documents are to be found in the store of documents belonging to the Criminological Investigations Department (DIC).<sup>178</sup> The complainant, in some cases with the help of a lawyer, would set out the complaint on a sheet of official notary paper, normally addressing it to the Chief of the National Police. Conventionally, the “*written complaint*” included the general details of the complainant, a description of the facts, the date and the complainant’s signature. It was the Director General who decided on the appropriate procedure to follow with respect to the complaint.

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<sup>178</sup> DIC – Department of Criminological Investigations. This is the store of documents containing the documents filed by the various investigative bodies over the decades.

### Photograph I.16

Example of “written complaint”  
1982

**CUERPO DE DETECTIVES  
DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL**

ARCHIVO  
 CUERPO DE DETECTIVES  
 POLICIA NACIONAL  
 ABR. 1982  
 Ref: 1987

**N.º R 4071491**

SEÑOR JEFE DEL CUERPO DE DETECTIVES DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL.-

SU RESPACHO.-

Yo, FRANCISCO EDUARDO GALVEZ OLIVA, mayor de edad, Chofer, soltero originario de Los Arates Trabal, me identifico con ofídula No. Q-18-Reg.22465 y recibo notificaciones en ésta ciudad en la 9a. Av.No. 7-60 Zona 11, ante usted de manera atenta me dirijo con el objeto de:

**REGISTRO DENUNCIAR Y SOLICITAR**

**Nº 125065**


QUINQUENIO de 1978 a 1982

Por éste medio a quién corresponda sus respetables órdenes, a efecto que estoy haciendo del conocimiento de ese Cuerpo Policiaco la respectiva denuncia de mi Pasaporte a mi nombre el cual llevaba con el No. 561324 --- así como para solicitar se me sea extendido UNA CERTIFICACION para hacer mis gestiones legales ante Migración y obtener nuevamente mi documento de viaje (Pasaporte,) por lo que no dudo tomará en cuenta la Denuncia y ruego la certificación, para que persona ajena al mismo no pueda hacer mal uso de mi Pasaporte ya mencionado.-----

Por la atención prestada al mismo, aprovecho para suscribirme del Sr. Jefe su más Atto. y S. S.-----

Ciudad de Guatemala, 6 de Abril de 1982.-

(r) *Francisco Galvez Oliva*  
Francisco Galvez Oliva

MINISTERIO DE FINANZAS PUBLICAS  


CUERPO DE DETECTIVES  
 FRANCISCO GALVEZ OLIVA  
 6 ABR 1982  
 Hrs. No.

Source: GT PN 50 S002 04/06/1982, complaint, registration no. 1927 [Internal AHPN registration 25939].

For the purposes of this Report, great importance is attached to complaints relating to disappeared persons made by relatives or international bodies, as they open the possibility of reconstructing the process they went through in order to discover their whereabouts and to give depth to our analysis of the activities of the law enforcement institution.

Another type of complaint was that containing accusations against people as “*subversives*,” “*communists*” or some other title in order to label them as political opponents of the regime. These complaints, usually anonymous, were handled confidentially within the law enforcement institution.



## Photograph I.17

Example of a confidential complaint  
1983

**CONFIDENCIAL**

No.2-0341-1C/83.-

*DIT  
c/e  
Quiché*

**I N F O R M A C I O N**

Se tiene conocimiento, que las personas que a continuación se detallan son miembros activos del E.G.P. y residen en la Cabecera Departamental de El Quiché: VENTURA ALVAREZ PEREZ, ex-Locutor de Radio Quiché, la esposa de éste MARIA MEDRANO LOPEZ, VICENTE MEDRANO ROJAS, también ex-Locutor de Radio Quiché, la hermana de éste ISABEL MEDRANO ROJAS, GREGORIO y MICAELA CHAY.

Se sabe que las 4 primeras personas mencionadas, han sido vistas en esta Ciudad Capital; y que la hija de VENTURA ALVAREZ y MARIA MEDRANO, de quien se ignora el nombre, viajó a Cuba con el fin de recibir entrenamiento militar, actualmente estudia en esta Capital ignorándose en que establecimiento.

Guatemala, 8 de abril de 1,983.-

c.c. Coste. de la Zona Militar No.20, Santa Cruz de El Quiché.

**CONFIDENCIAL**

*20/1/83. fecha. no se sabe. D.*

Source: GT PN 30-01 S020 04/08/1983, confidential No. 2-0341-IC/83  
[Digital reference 859489. Internal AHPN registration 25942].

### 3.8 Record Cards

Documents for noting general details and information regarding individuals, organizations or topics. They were used for a variety of purposes: administrative processes, identification of persons, post mortem records or service histories. The cards come in varying formats and sizes, as well as from different stores of documents. For the purposes of this Report, the following were used:

#### 3.8.1 Criminal, Political, and Social Record Cards

These documents are half-letter size, printed on card and make up a series in the DIC archival collection. In the course of restoring the National Police Historical Archive, the term Master Card Record was coined to refer to these and to distinguish them from other types of record cards used by the PN.

The cards are designed as follows: at the top left was the name of the police agency, which on filling out the card took on the role of investigator (Judicial Guard, Judicial Department, Judicial Police, Corps of Detectives, Technical Investigations Department, depending on the period) and in the upper right-hand corner there was a space for recording the details of the person being registered: surname(s), given name(s) and address. Immediately below this there is a table containing four columns for noting the date, the number of the document on which the information was provided, the file referring to the agency involved and the subject.

#### Photograph I.18

Example of Criminal, Political and Social Record Card  
1970-1980

POLICIA JUDICIAL		ARCHIVO		APELLIDOS MERCOS CASTILLO.		NOMBRES Edwin Rolando		DIRECCION 15.C. "C" 1-39. Zona J.	
FECHA	NUMERO	CARTELA	ASUNTO						
6/4/70.clv.	9	Centro Reg. Telécom.	Se encuentra fichado de pertenecer a las Facciones Izquierdistas. De C-376-47						
23-12-75.cl.	4448	Jdos. Ins. R. Crim.	Detenido y consignado al Jdo. llo. de mar por: ESTAPA.-						
11.5.76. sag.	1353	D. Gral. Pol. Nac.	Se informa de sus antecedentes.						
15/12/77.luc.	20474	Denuncias.	Se queja de Robo.-						
11/5/78.Sam.	1353	D. Gral. Pol. Nac.	Se informa de sus antecedentes.						
18/8/78.Ima.	16270	Denuncias.	Df aviso de extravío de documentos.						
30/10/80.Say	2133	Jdos. Inst. R. Crim.	Detenido y consignado al do. 50 de lra. Ins por: SERVICIO DE ASISTENCIA FODONICA.-						
5/11/80.E.CH.F	2188	Jdos. Inst. R. Crim.	Captura sin Efecto.						

The cards were indexed alphabetically and completed using data from various sources, such as: complaints, police and criminal records and information resulting from various types of police activities. For example, the surveillance and monitoring services carried out by the Judicial Department and the Corps of Detectives and the information provided by other agencies of the Executive and Judicial branches.

In the process of investigating human rights in the AHPN, these documents allow us to determine, by using this system, the systematic recording and control of the activities of a given person. They provide clues about where to look for more complete documentation produced on this individual (by referring to the information in the four columns). The record cards are a valuable tool for the investigation of cases and files of possible victims of human rights violations.






### **3.8.2 Identification Bureau Record Cards**

These are a record of living or deceased persons' fingerprints. Depending on the information they contain, five types of card can be distinguished:

- i) Persons remanded for political offenses between 1954 and 1970.
- ii) Persons detained or remanded for common misdemeanors and crimes between 1924 and 1976.
- iii) Persons applying for identity cards and drivers licenses between 1971 and 1989.
- iv) Persons remanded for common crimes during the period 1926-1985. The majority of these are from the years 1970-1980.
- v) Post-mortem, which include records from 1968 to 1985. Fingerprints were taken from unidentified bodies and compared with those with the Bureau's fingerprint data bank for possible identification.

### Photograph I.19

Example of a common crime remand card  
1982

1er. Apellido	2o. Apellido	1er. Nombre	2o. Nombre	1	1	4	3	2
<i>Rivera Mendez Jorge Mario</i>				Clas. _____				
No. Folder	Sexo <i>M.</i>		Ref. _____					
Clase Delito <i>asalto y robo</i>		Domicilio <i>Sec. 4<sup>o</sup> 228 col. Milagro Z-19.</i>						
Tarjeta formulada en: <i>Sec. Consejo Nat.</i>		Fecha: <i>8/10/82</i>						
Fulgar	Índice	Medio	Anular	Menique				
								
Departamento Dactiloscópico "Henry" Gabinete de Identificación de la Policía Nacional				SISTEMA DE COMPARACION DE HUELLAS LATENTES				

Source: GT PN 49-03 S001 10/08/1982  
[Internal AHPN registration 25992].

### 3.9 Reports

Investigators or detectives were required to make written reports to their chiefs regarding the procedures carried out on the jobs they were assigned to. This fact produced a large set of documents that give an idea of the day-to-day activities of the members of the Corps of Detectives and, from 1982 on, of the Department of Technical Investigations. The reports contain detailed accounts of operational activities that include everything from surveillance and protection orders, identification of bodies, investigation of burglaries and thefts, protection of public figures, to the control of the activities of unions and political opponents, searches, tracking operations and procedures against the politically suspect.

Usually, more than one detective was commissioned on each occasion, together with a driver and a photographer, a group that can be described as an operational unit. The header on the reports indicated the section to which the detective who signed the document belonged, together with the purpose of the report: “*localization report*,” “*cadaver report*,” “*investigation report*,” “*injury report*,” etc. The purposes of this investigation led us most frequently to examine the following kinds of reports:

### **3.9.1 Corpse and Injury Reports**

These record the activities of different corps within the PN, the Fire Service and the Judicial Body who were present at a crime scene. They describe the way in which the corpse was discovered and include the respective photos. Sometimes, detectives or investigators would arrive at the scene of events in order to compile the necessary data. At other times, they would receive an order to go to the hospital where the wounded victims had been taken, or directly to the morgue if the corpse was already there when they were apprised of the situation. They would report the details of activities following the crimes, relating to the Judge who registered the corpse and the transportation of the body to the hospital or morgue. Also included were statements from witnesses and others.

**Photograph I.20**

Example of a corpse report  
1979

**DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL**  
CUERPO DE DETECTIVES POLICIA NACIONAL  
SECCION DE HOMICIDIOS Y ASESINATOS. -  
GUATEMALA, G.A.

**B-1498**

**ARCHIVO**  
CORPO DE DETECTIVES  
3635  
AGL 1979 3

**REPORTE DE CARAVAN: ENCONTRADO EN LA 20 calle y 24 Avenida de la zona 5, conocido el señor Juan Irujo, de Paz Penol, por 16, 2**

Guatemala,  
10 de agosto de 1979.

Señor:  
Jefe del Cuerpo de Detectives  
de la Policía Nacional,  
Presente.

*En la... fue levantado el cadáver de Juan Irujo, por el Sr. Jefe de la Sección de Homicidios y Asesinatos de esta Policía.*

Respetuosamente mandiréjame a usted, con el objeto de informarle que el día de hoy a los 06:30 horas, de orden de la Jefeatura de Servicios, a bordo de la unidad placas de circulación - No. P-78085, tripulada por el Detective No. 12, para que nos acompañáramos a la 24 Avenida y 20 calle de la zona 5, por tenerse conocimiento que en dicho lugar se encontraba el cadáver de una persona desconocida.

Constituidos en el lugar, pudimos comprobar que efectivamente en la vía pública, dirección ya indicada, sobre la grama - al centro de la calle yacía el cadáver de una persona de sexo masculino, en posición decúbito dorsal, cabeza hacia el sur, pies hacia el norte, brazos a su costado, de tez oscura, ojos cerrados, pelo negro lacio, nariz achatada, boca y labios regulares, bigote y barba rala, de aproximadamente 28 años de edad, de 1.65 metros de estatura, complexión regular, vestía: Saco café, camisa blanca, pañuero rojo, pantalón de lana azul, calcetín celeste, calcetines corintos, zapatos café.

El cadáver presentaba señales de Estrangulación y con tres heridas punzocortantes en la región del tórax, producidas con arma blanca.

A las 10:45 horas, hizo acto de presencia el señor Juan Irujo, de Paz Penol, acompañado de su Secretario y Escribiente de Novedades del Segundo Cuerpo de la Policía Nacional, quien practicó las primeras diligencias de rigor, no encontrándole ningún documento que le pudiera identificar ni objetos de valor, ordenando su traslado a la Morgue del Hospital General San Juan de Dios, a bordo de la Unidad No. 04, de la Policía Nacional como XX, retirándose dicho funcionario de aquel lugar a las 11:00 horas, sin ninguna novedad. Se adjuntan fotografías del occiso ya referido, tomadas por el fotógrafo Mario Armas, así mismo se dejan abiertos los investigaciones para dar con los responsables con este hecho de sangre.

En cuanto tenemos que informar al Señor Jefe, protestamos de nuestro subordinación y respeto.

*Hector de Sampedro*  
*Carbines*

*[Signature]*  
AGL. SANJUAN MELNDA  
DETECTIVE T-1

*[Signature]*  
OFIC. MELNDA ARGENTA  
DETECTIVE No. 356

**CUERPO DE DETECTIVES**  
**DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL**  
**GUATEMALA, G.A.**

...VEER.

Source: GT PN 50 S002 08/10/1979, corpse report registration 3625 [Internal AHPN registration 25986].

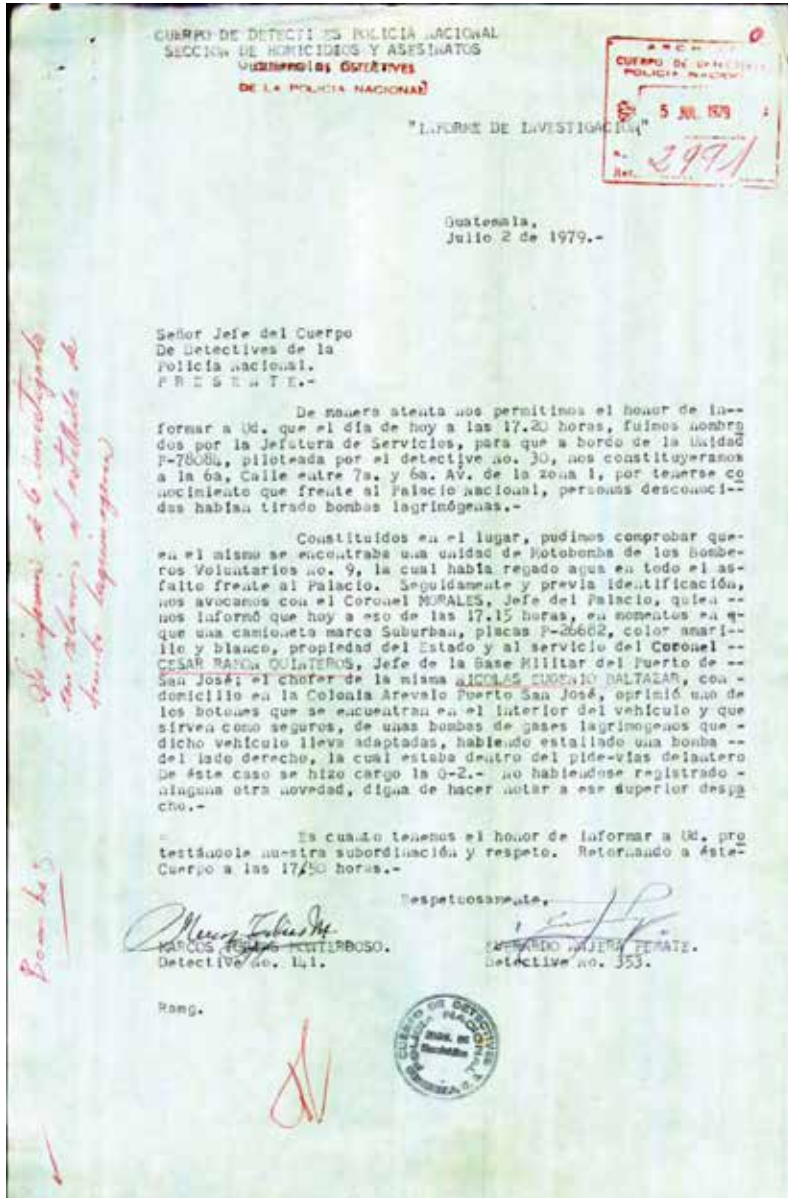
### **3.9.2 Investigation Reports**

These described follow-up activities in relation to facts that were known and recorded in the law enforcement institution. They included visits to the scene of events and interrogation of witnesses and others involved in or with links to the case, as well as the location of individuals and objects (e.g., vehicles).

Of particular interest are those reports recording the control of suspicious persons and public events. They contain information gathered by detectives assigned to carry out surveillance work on public protests and collective activities. Normally, these reports were completed with the handouts distributed at these events and photographs of the people involved. There are events for which more than one report exists, as they were submitted by different operational units.

### Photograph I.21

### Example of an investigation report 1979



Source: GT PN 50 S002 07/02/1979, investigation report, registration 2991 [Internal AHPN registration 25958].

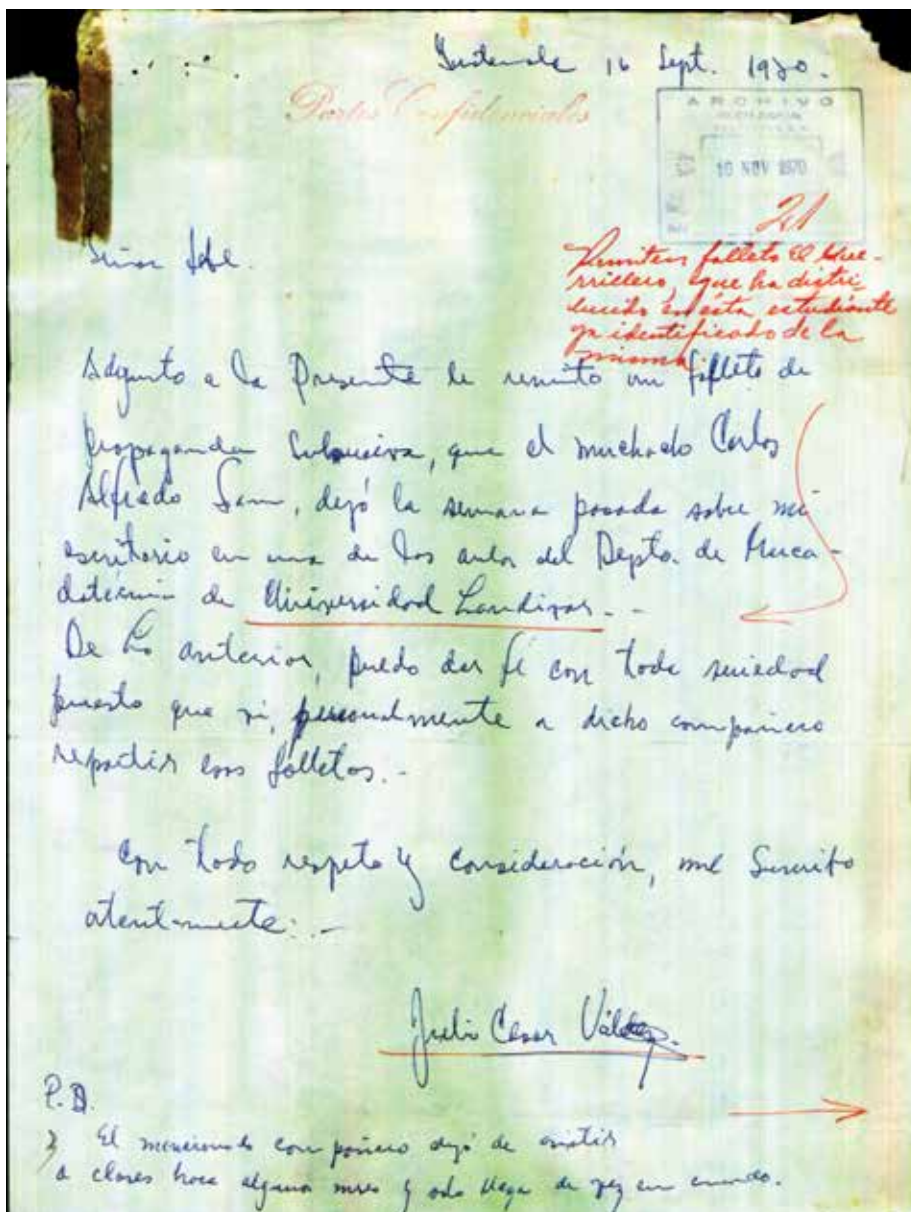


### **3.9.3 Confidential Agent Reports**

At various times, the National Police recruited a wide network of confidential agents, i.e., private individuals who aided the PN in the task of controlling citizens and intelligence. These agents were provided with an identity card and special privileges, and were sometimes paid. They periodically gave information to their contacts within the institution regarding alleged “*subversives*,” “*guerrilla strongholds*,” and specifically about members of anti-government organizations, both armed and unarmed.

## Photograph I.22

Example of a confidential report  
1970



Source: GT PN 50 S014 09/16/1970, confidential dispatch, registration 21  
[Internal AHPN registration 25960].

### **3.10 Work Records**

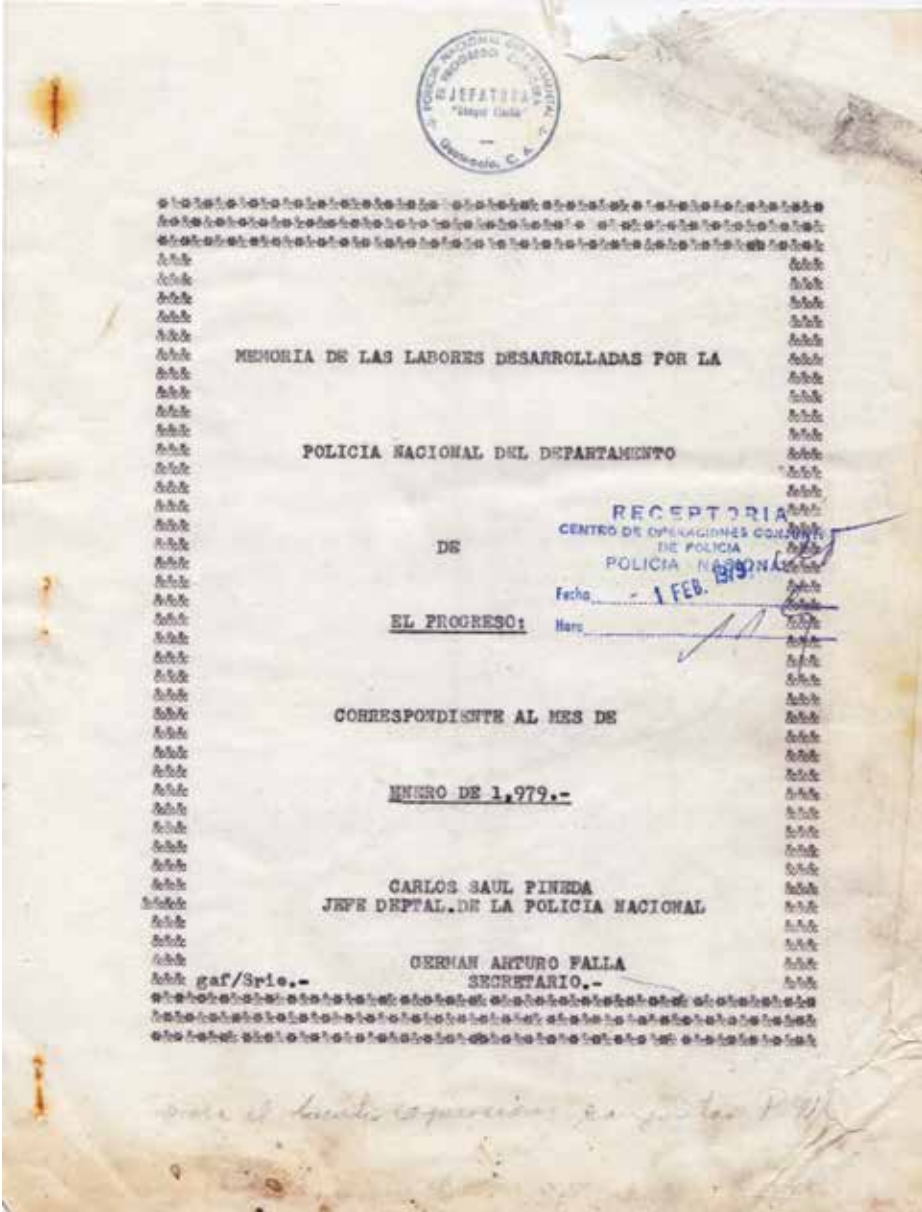
The purpose of these documents was to inform police chiefs about the principal activities carried out by the principal PN agencies with a period of time that could be bi-monthly, monthly, or yearly.

Each PN agency wrote up its annual work report. The original was sent to the Directorate General, with one copy for the COCP and another for the internal archives of the body reporting. In turn, the Director General submitted the annual report of the PN to the Minister of the Interior.

Work reports were reviews that included improvements or modifications to the informant structure, important new developments, the state of the force, staff salaries and in some cases the number of deceased agents. They provided crime statistics: records of deaths and their causes, theft and burglaries, etc. They also reported on the registration of unidentified bodies, subversive activities and, from time to time, the visit of some public functionary to the high command.

### Photograph I.23

Example of work report  
1979



Source: GT PN 51-02 S008 01/32/1979, Annual Work Report from El Progreso, January 1979 [Digital reference 2733301. Internal AHPN registration 25944].

### **3.11 Name Records**

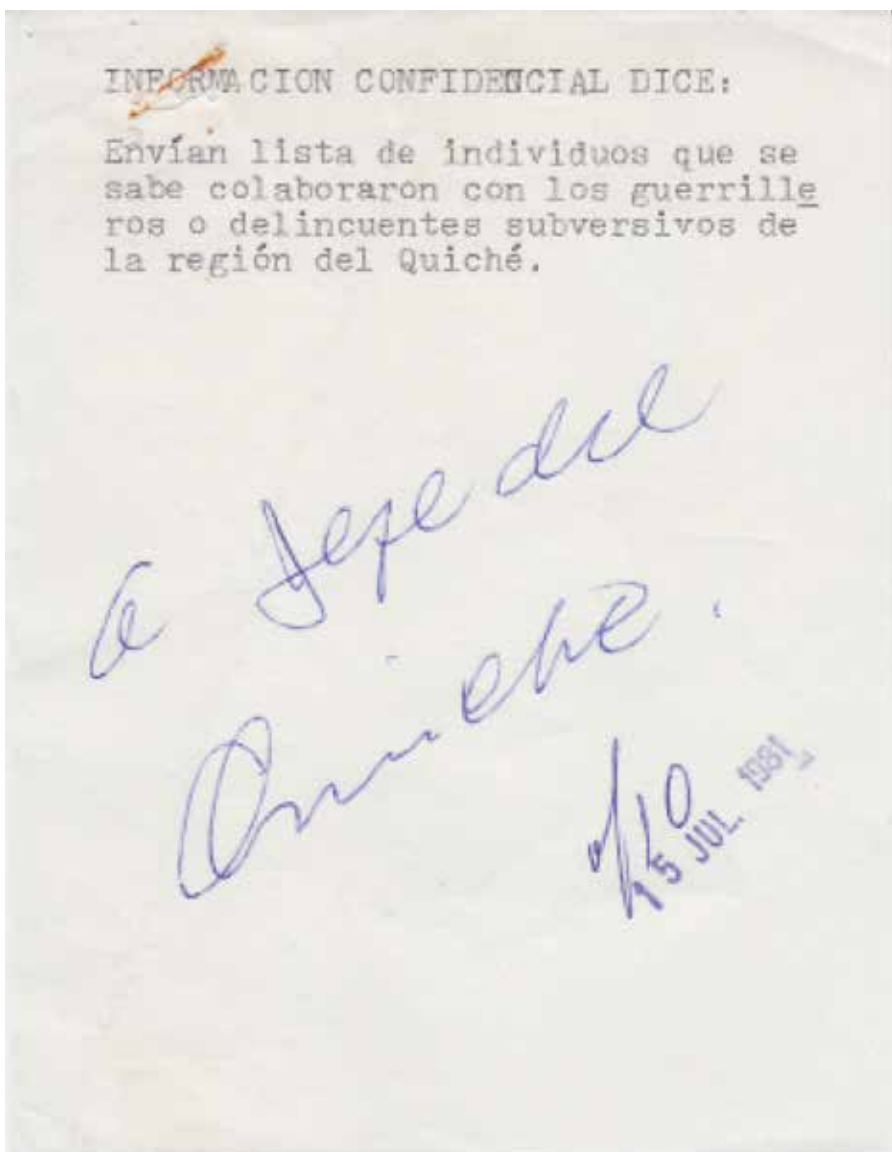
These are essentially lists of names. There are lists of people working in the PN, prisoners, deported immigrants, travelers entering the country via the La Aurora airport, and members of the political opposition.

#### **3.11.1 Person Lists**

These are lists of the names of people whom the State security forces linked to “*subversive*,” “*communist*,” or “*leftist*” activities, or those with other titles that emphasized the political nature of the work done by those listed.

**Photograph I.24.a**

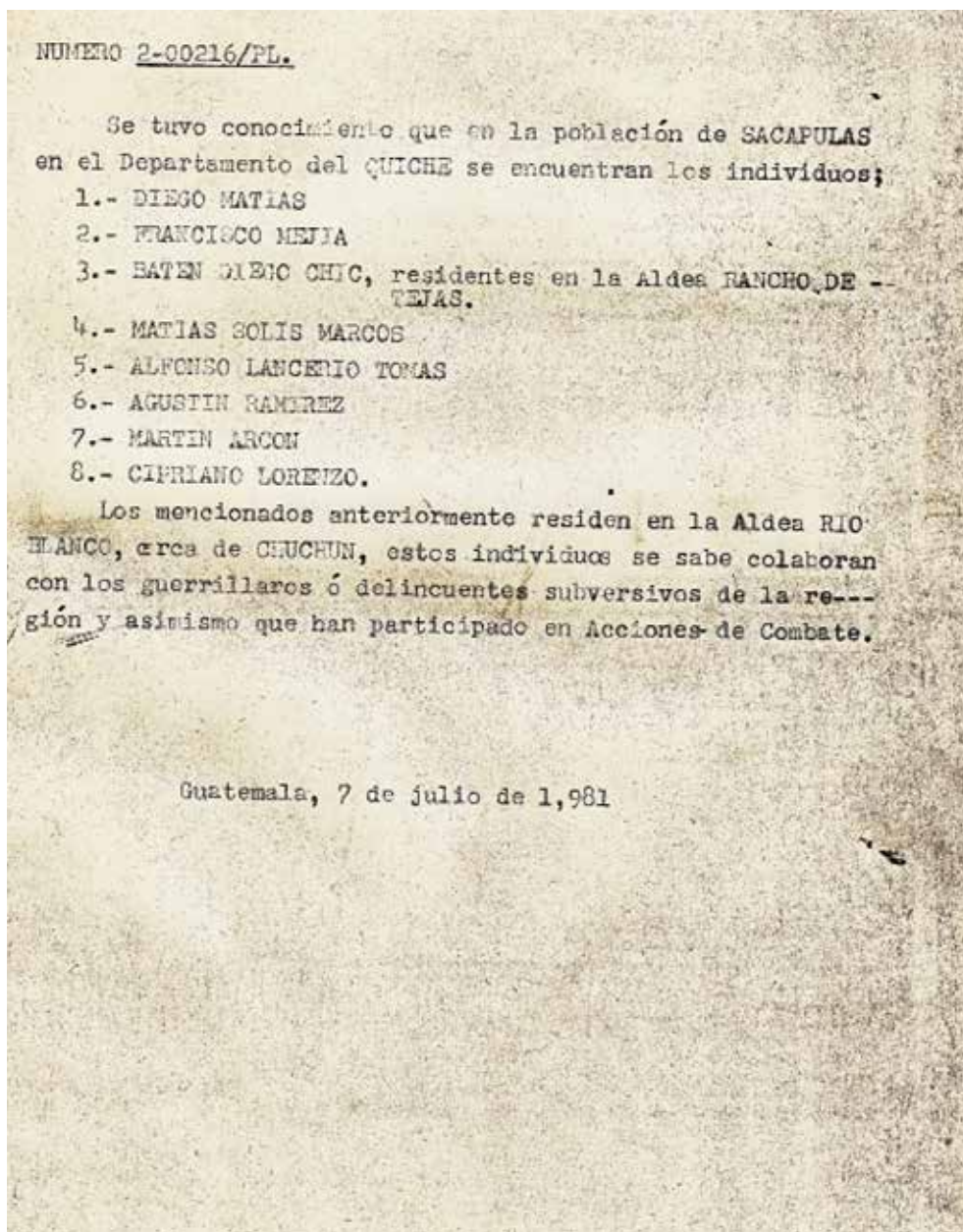
Confidential note on alleged guerrilla collaborators  
1981



Source: GT PN 30-01 S020 07/15/1981, unnumbered document  
[Internal AHPN registration 25945].

**Photograph I.24.b**

Example of list of political opponents  
1981



The lists come from a variety of sources and authors. Some bear a header linking them with the Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA, Ejército Secreto Anticomunista).<sup>179</sup> Other mention the Judicial Police or the Regional Telecommunications Center (CRT), but only in written form. A third group has no kind of identification. The majority of the lists found in the AHPN were created during the 1960s and 1970s, and some of the people listed were victims of violence over the following years.

These documents do not specify any recipient and, generally, the records of persons publicly known to be members of the revolutionary movement are interspersed with those of others linked to political groups on the extreme right.

For the investigation of human rights, these lists are especially important, as they provide details in order to reconstruct the way in which the security forces classified and processed the information they gathered.

### **3.11.2 Personnel Lists**

These are lists of the names of the people who worked for the law enforcement institution. They include information on grades and ranks, the agency where they are registered, length of service, salary received, personal address and the area they were assigned to patrol and provide other services.

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<sup>179</sup> The ESA was one of various parallel bodies operating against “*Communism*” during the internal armed conflict.



## Photograph I.25

Example of personnel list  
1981

NOMINA DE LOS TRES JEFS SUPERIORES DE LA DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL, JEFES ADMINISTRATIVOS, JEFES DE CUERPOS Y DEPARTAMENTALES, DURANTE EL PERIODO COMPRENDIDO DEL PRIMERO DE ENERO AL TREINTA Y UNO DE DICIEMBRE DE MIL NOVECIENTOS OCHENTA Y OCHO (1,980):

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01. DIRECTOR GENERAL	GERMAN CHUFINA BARRONA
02. SUB-DIRECTOR GENERAL	FRANCISCO SALAZAR ROQUEL
03. TERCER JEFE E INSP.GRAL.	REYNALDO HARGLOS PANTAGUA CORDERO
***DEPENDENCIAS ADMINISTRATIVAS***	
04. SECRETARIO GENERAL	RINDOLFO CATALAN PAZOS
05. DEPTO. DE PERSONAL	JOSÉ ANTONIO VALLADARES NOVALES
06. DEPTO. DE CONTABILIDAD	AXEL RAPIDO LOPEZ VELIZ
07. GABINETE DE IDENTIFICACION	BERGIO ROBERTO LIMA NOR-LES
08. ARCHIVO GENERAL	JOSÉ ISRAEL LOPEZ GONZALEZ
09. DEPTO. DE TRNSITO	HECTOR ALFREDO PONCE CASTELLANOS
10. DEPTO. DE ABASTECIMIENTOS	CARLOS ANTONIO ROMAN BORJA
11. OPERACIONES CONJUNTAS	JUAN ANTONIO UNABA GUERRA
12. DIRECTOR DEL HOSPITAL RAMO	CARLOS ESCOBEDO FACHECO
13. GUARDIA DE PREVENCIÓN	AUGUSTO CESAR AGUILAR GARCIA
14. GUARDIA DE PREVENCIÓN	RIGUEL ANGEL HEANRODÉZ PÉREZ
**JEFS DE CUERPOS**	
PRIMER CUERPO	
16. SEGUNDO CUERPO	GONZALO PEREZ VASQUEZ
17. TERCER CUERPO	RIGBERTO PINERA SANCHEZ
18. CUARTO CUERPO	RONEL ISABEL GONZALEZ RIVERA
19. CUERPO DE TRNSITO	JORGE ALBERTO GOMEZ
20. CUERPO DE RADIO PATRULLAS	ZACARIAS ROMAN HIGUEROS
21. CUERPO MOTORIZADO	BENIGNO DRUZ BUCARFE
22. COMANDO SEXO	JORGE MARICIO GONZALEZ MOTTA
23. CUERPO DE DETECTIVES	RENE NACERA
24. SECCION DE NARCOTICOS	PEDRO GARCIA ARREGONDO
25. DIRECTOR ESCUELA DEL RAMO	JOSE DE JESUS CASTRO
	MARIO CONCEPCION RAMIREZ RUIZ
***JEFES DEPARTAMENTALES***	
26. COBAN ALTA VERAPAZ	C-SIMIRO ORDONEZ CRUZ

### 3.11.3 Prisoner Lists

Daily, the corps submitted a list of prisoners under their charge. The Second Corps was the site of both the General Penitentiary and the Prisoners' Hospital. On the lists submitted, prisoners were grouped according to two large categories: those subject to the Criminal Courts and those subject to the Peace Courts. In the subdivisions, there are references to prisoners hospitalized in the aforementioned building or at any other medical center, even private ones.

A distinction was also made between prisoners according to where they were incarcerated, i.e., in the general sectors or in the “«Banderas» [“Flags”] Special Block,” which housed those with certain privileges. Also reported were how many intakes had occurred during 24-hour periods. The First Corps in particular was the place of detention for women undergoing immigration procedures or peace tribunals. These lists were submitted to the Director General of the PN.

For the purposes of this investigation, we mainly used the lists from the Second Corps. Due to the size and characteristics of its prison facilities, this Corps produced a greater number of reports.

### 3.12 General Orders

These are documents containing precise orders applicable to specially defined conditions of time and space. General orders commanded or guided the formal activities of the police institution. They were organized according to the date and order number during each calendar year. Finally, the files for each year were compiled and bound for archiving.

The Director General of the PN decided the content of the General Orders, while it was the Subdirector General who formulated them. These documents were then sent in mimeographed form to the subordinate areas of the PN with the understanding that strict compliance was obligatory. These orders enable us to see how the institution was run and how it functioned as well as the hierarchical methods and channels utilized for transmitting them to all components of the PN.

The orders contain the following information: services assigned, pending apprehensions of persons and vehicles, administrative aspects relating to institution staff, sanctions, hirings, and dismissals. Also present are appointments, congratulations, days off, and warnings about anomalies in the service. Transcriptions of especially important documents sent or received, information on special activities, government accords relating to the functioning of the law enforcement institution or public order and the regulations for the various agencies of the PN.

## Photograph I.26

### Example of General Order 1978

ORDEN GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL No.004.-HORA 18:00 "SEMPER FIDELIS" Palacio de la Policia Nacional.- Guatemala, Viernes 6, Sábado 7 y Domingo 8 de Enero de 1978.-----

DISPOSICIONES DE LA DIRECCION GENERAL DEL RAMO:

01.- Servicios para el Sábado 7 de Enero:

JUZGADOS DE TURNO: Tercero de Tránsito, Iro. y So. de Paz Penal.  
JEFE DE SERVICIOS: Victor Manuel Rodriguez Pérez.  
COMANDANTE DE GUARDIA: Desiderio Nobel Mazariegos.  
RADIO-TECNICOS: Céferino Vidal Cobar y Federico A. Carravito, G.  
TELEFONISTAS: Victor Manuel Davila Saenz y Alfredo A. Corado O.  
BOFEGUERO DE TALLERES GENERALES: Enrique Celso Rodas.  
ELECTRICISTA: Julio Enrique Ruiz Carous.  
CUERPO DE DETECTIVES, JEFE DE SERVICIOS: Augusto Cesar Moran Villa lobos.

02.- Servicios para el Domingo 8 de Enero:

JUZGADOS DE TURNO: Tercero de Tránsito, So. y Iro. de Paz Penal.  
JEFE DE SERVICIOS: Victor Manuel Rodriguez Pérez.  
COMANDANTE DE GUARDIA: Desiderio Nobel Mazariegos.  
RADIO-TECNICOS: Julio Elmer Quiroz Navas y Juan M. Cianeros O.  
TELEFONISTAS: Enrique Aparicio Lopez Molina y Lucio Lopez Salic.  
BOFEGUERO DE TALLERES GENERALES: Celestino Alfaro Rodriguez.  
ELECTRICISTA: Domingo Solis Elnada.  
CUERPO DE DETECTIVES, JEFE DE SERVICIOS: Innocente Saguil Salvatierra.

03.- Servicios para el Lunes 9 de Enero:

JUZGADOS DE TURNO: Primero de Tránsito y So. de Paz Penal.  
JEFE DE SERVICIOS: Benjamín Reyes de Igon.  
COMANDANTE DE GUARDIA: Carlos Alberto Castañeda Garcia.  
RADIO-TECNICOS: Santiago España Portillo y Frain Torres Bonilla.  
TELEFONISTAS: Victor Manuel Davila Saenz y Alfredo A. Corado O.  
BOFEGUERO DE TALLERES GENERALES: Enrique Celso Rodas.  
ELECTRICISTA: Julio Enrique Ruiz Carous.  
CUERPO DE DETECTIVES, JEFE DE SERVICIOS: Augusto Cesar Moran Villa lobos.

04.- RONDA EN LOS CUERPOS DE LA CAPITAL: SAC

PRIMER CUERPO: día 6.  
Turno de 18:00 a 24:00 horas.  
Sub-Jefe de Sección: JOSE ANTONIO RAMIREZ OLIVA.

día 7.  
Turno de 00:00 a 06:00 horas.  
Jefe de Sección: RICARDO LEMUS OSORIO.  
Turno de 18:00 a 24:00 horas.  
Jefe de Sección: HUMBERTO DIAZ VELASQUEZ.

día 8.  
Turno de 00:00 a 06:00 horas.  
Sub-Jefe de Sección: HIPOLITO RAMOS VALLEZ.  
Turno de 18:00 a 24:00 horas.  
Sub-Jefe de Sección: JOSE DANIEL PINEDA TUNCHEZ.

día 9.  
Turno de 00:00 a 06:00 horas.  
Jefe de Sección: PRORO ISMAEL BELLO RODRIGUEZ.

continúa.....

Another version of these documents, but with reduced jurisdiction, were Corps Orders. The chiefs of these agencies in the capital city and the heads of departmental headquarters issued these orders in order to publicize guidelines, principal services and any other matters relating to personnel and services every 24 hours.

### **3.13 Security Orders**

These came from the Army General Staff (EMGE), then called the National Defense General Staff (EMDN) and its structure was similar to that of operational plans.<sup>180</sup> They consisted in orders that involved all security forces, including the National Police, in order to provide security for some event. According to the military dictionary, the term “plan” was often used instead of “order” for preparing operations well ahead of time.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> The EMGE was established by the Constitutional Law of the Army of Guatemala, Decree Number 1782, of 09/05/1968. The EMDN, in turn was created on 03/23/1983 by Decree Number 28-83, which removed the Articles relating to the EMGE from the previously mentioned decree. Thus the EMDN substituted the EMGE.

<sup>181</sup> <http://www.mindef.mil.gt/diccionario/indez.htm>. Consulted: 07/01/2008.

## Photograph I.27

### Example of Security Order 1989

SECRETO

COPIA No. 8 DE 10 COPIAS.  
ESTADO MAYOR DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL  
PALACIO NACIONAL (6768)  
04MAY89.

EL GENERAL DE BRIGADA, JEFE DEL ESTADO MAYOR DE LA DEFENSA --  
NACIONAL, CON INSTRUCCIONES DEL SEÑOR GENERAL DE DIVISION, --  
MINISTRO DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL, EMITE LA PRESENTE ORDEN DE --  
SEGURIDAD No. DI-0016-20-03-06., QUE NORMATRA LOS ASPECTOS DE --  
SEGURIDAD DURANTE LA REALIZACION DE LA "I CONFERENCIA DE COMU --  
NICACIONES DE EJERCITOS AMERICANOS", QUE SE LLEVARA A CABO EN --  
LA CIUDAD DE GUATEMALA, EN EL HOTEL "EL DORADO", A PARTIR DEL  
051400MAY89 AL 131200MAY89.

ORDEN DE SEGURIDAD No. DI-0016-20-03-06.

REFERENCIAS: MAPA DE LA REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA,  
ESCALA 1:50,000.  
MAPA DE LA CIUDAD CAPITAL, ESCALA 1:15,000.

UNIDADES PARTICIPANTES:

DIRECCION DE INTELIGENCIA DEL EMDN.  
CUARTEL GENERAL DEL EJERCITO DE GUATEMALA.  
BRIGADA MILITAR "MARISCAL ZAVALA".  
ZONA MILITAR No. 302, CHIMALTENANGO.  
FUERZA AEREA GUATEMALTECA.  
POLICIA MILITAR AMBULANTE.  
HOSPITAL MILITAR.  
DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA GUARDIA DE HACIENDA.  
DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL.

I. SITUACION:

A. FUERZAS ENEMIGAS:

GRUPOS DE TERRORISTAS O DELINCUENTES COMUNES QUE OPE --  
RAN EN EL PAIS, TANTO EN LA CIUDAD CAPITAL COMO EN --  
EL INTERIOR DE LA REPUBLICA, ESPECIALMENTE EN EL DE --  
PARTAMENTO DE GUATHMALA Y SACATEPEQUEZ, QUE SE PROPO --  
NEN RESTRINGIR Y/O EVITAR EL DESARROLLO NORMAL DE --  
LAS ACTIVIDADES DE LA "I CONFERENCIA DE COMUNICACIO --  
NES DE EJERCITOS AMERICANOS".

B. FUERZAS AMIGAS:

1. LAS ENUMERADAS EN LA PRESENTE ORDEN DE SEGURIDAD --  
Y LAS ENTIDADES DEL SERVICIO PUBLICO.

HOJA No. 1 DE 7 HOJAS.

SECRETO

### 3.14 Operational Plans

These are documents for the advance, directed, channelled preparation of operations required on a date defined beforehand or on the sending of a selected signal with the aim of achieving an objective. They had the same structure as the security orders issued by the National Army. It was the responsibility of both the EMGE (and later the EMDN) and the PN to draw up operational plans.

According to the definition provided by the military dictionary, a plan may cover a single operation or a series of related operations which may be effected either simultaneously or successively. They are guidelines used by the higher echelons of command with the aim of enabling subordinate chiefs to prepare their plans.<sup>182</sup>

According to a “*Format*,” classified in writing as secret that was discovered among the documentation of the Directorate General of the PN, an operational plan was required to be structured in the following manner:<sup>183</sup>

- I. Situation (enemy forces, friendly forces, aggregated and segregated, suppositions).
- II. Mission (who - what - when - where - how - for what or why).
- III. Execution (concept of the operation: manoeuvres and support; schedules, distribution of personnel, routes to be followed, meeting points, coordination instructions).
- IV. Administration and logistics (uniforms, equipment, weapons, vehicles, food, medical aid, etc.).
- V. Command and transmissions (means of transmission and command posts).

Plans were required to be headed with the classifications “secret” or “confidential,” depending on the particulars of the case. They contained instructions as to which agency was to receive a copy and included any necessary attachments such as maps and street plans. They also indicated their “*distribution*,” differentiating between some recipients as “*for your information*” and some as “*for your fulfillment*.”

Below is the position of the high-ranking police or military chief who ordered the plan, with his seal and name. Also included were the seals and signatures of authentication from the Center for Joint Operations (COCP), PN-2 (Department of Intelligence) and the PN-3 (Department of Training and Operations) in the context

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> GT PN 30 S003 not dated, “*Format for an Operational Plan*,” 3 pages [Digital reference 1924003. Internal AHPN registration 27303].

of policing. In the case of military structures, the titles were G-2 (Department of Intelligence) and G-3 (Operations). According to the military dictionary, authentication with the appropriate signature and seal constituted proof that the document was genuine and official, and is a security measure aimed at protecting the communications system from false transmissions.<sup>184</sup>

Within the framework of this investigation, operational plans coming from the EMGE contribute to our understanding of the network of relationships and coordination between the different State security forces and the role assigned to the police. Furthermore, these documents are a source of data that enable us to retrieve the definition of internal enemies and the tactical priorities of the public forces according to the stage or phase the internal armed conflict was passing through.

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<sup>184</sup> <http://www.mindef.mil.gt/diccionario/indez.htm>. Consulted: 07/01/2008.



## Photograph I.28

### Example of an Operational Plan 1982

**CONFIDENCIAL**

EL CORONEL DE CABALLERIA DEN, DIRECTOR GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL. EMITE EL PRESENTE PLAN DE OPERACIONES SELECTIVAS - QUE SE REALIZARAN EN EL PERIMETRO DE LA CIUDAD CAPITAL, A PARTIR DE LA PRESENTE FECHA HASTA NUEVA ORDEN.-

PLAN DE OPERACIONES No.02/HOPN/ORB.

COPIA No. 13 DE 14  
DIRECCION GENERAL DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL, Guatemala, 19 de mayo de 1,982

I. INFORMACION:  
Se tiene conocimiento que en las vías de acceso a la Ciudad - Capital, así como en todas las zonas de la misma, se conducen a -- bordo de vehículos o a pié, personas sospechosas o vehículos robados, etc.-

II. MISION:  
La misión del presente Plan de Operaciones es la de lograr -- los siguientes puntos:

- a) Que se capture a toda persona sospechosa que se conduzca a pié o bien en vehículos.
- b) Que se registren vehículos con el fin de detectar armas, propaganda Subversiva.-
- c) Que se trate de detectar vehículos robados.-
- d) Otras no contempladas en el presente Plan.-

III. UNIDADES PARTICIPANTES:  
PRIMER CUERPO DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
SEGUNDO CUERPO DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
TERCER CUERPO DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
CUARTO CUERPO DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
CUERPO DE TRANSITO DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
CUERPO DE RADIOPATRULLAS DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
CUERPO MOTORIZADO DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
COMANDO DE OPERACIONES ESPECIALES DE LA POLICIA NACIONAL

IV. EJECUCION:

- A. Todos los Cuerpos participantes realizarán las Operaciones Selectivas, de las 08.30 a las 22.00 horas los días que les corresponden en el cuadro adjunto.
- B. Deberán reportar al Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas su sector a operar para que éste a su vez avise al Cuerpo que le corresponde para su conocimiento.
- C. Los Cuerpos participantes deberán Operar con un grupo no menor de VEINTE (20) elementos.-

V. DETALLES DE COORDINACION:

- 1) El presente Plan de Operación fué elaborado en el Centro de -- Operaciones Conjuntas de la Policía Nacional.
- 2) Los Jefes de Cuerpo deberán hacer conciencia a su personal sobre la Operación a efectuarse.-
- 3) Los Jefes de Cuerpos serán los encargados del cumplimiento del presente Plan los días que les correspondan.

Among the operational plans drawn up directly by the PN are those designed for police traffic operations, for providing security during holidays and others focusing directly on the suppression of common crime and control of the citizenry. The documents containing these plans are useful for achieving an understanding of the way in which coordination functioned within the institution, as well as the analysis it made of the situation in which the country found itself and the actions it prioritized in order to achieve its aims.

### 3.15 Security Plans

Security plans were very similar to operational plans. The difference between them was that the former was conceived as a means of safeguarding police facilities against potential attacks by “*subversive groups*.” They were structured in the same way as operational plans and written in the different agencies such as corps and headquarters. They included routine measures to avoid infiltration by elements opposed to the institution and the actions to be taken during alerts.<sup>185</sup>

## 4. Classification of Information

With the enormous amount of daily internal and external communications by the PN, the institution perceived the necessity of categorizing the information in terms of the degree to which access to it should be restricted. To this end, they decided to classify certain documents as either confidential or secret.

### 4.1 Documents Classified “*Confidential*”

The information was grouped in the following way:

- a) Sent to the PN by agents or informants and revealing activities relating to third parties. In these cases, the documents usually lacked a sender, recipient and date. The latter was sometimes handwritten on the document.
- b) Sent to the PN by other State security forces (Army, Ambulatory Military Police, Presidential General Staff), also relating to the activities of third parties, including members of the security services themselves.
- c) Produced specially by PN detectives or investigators in relation to relevant facts after carrying out tasks such as investigation, surveillance and infiltration into public activities.

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<sup>185</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 01/17/1984, for example, Security Plan No. 001, “*The Commander of the Fourth Corps of the National Police issues this security plan establishing the regulations for the security of the building in the event of an emergency*” [Digital reference 46133. Internal AHPN registration 27220].

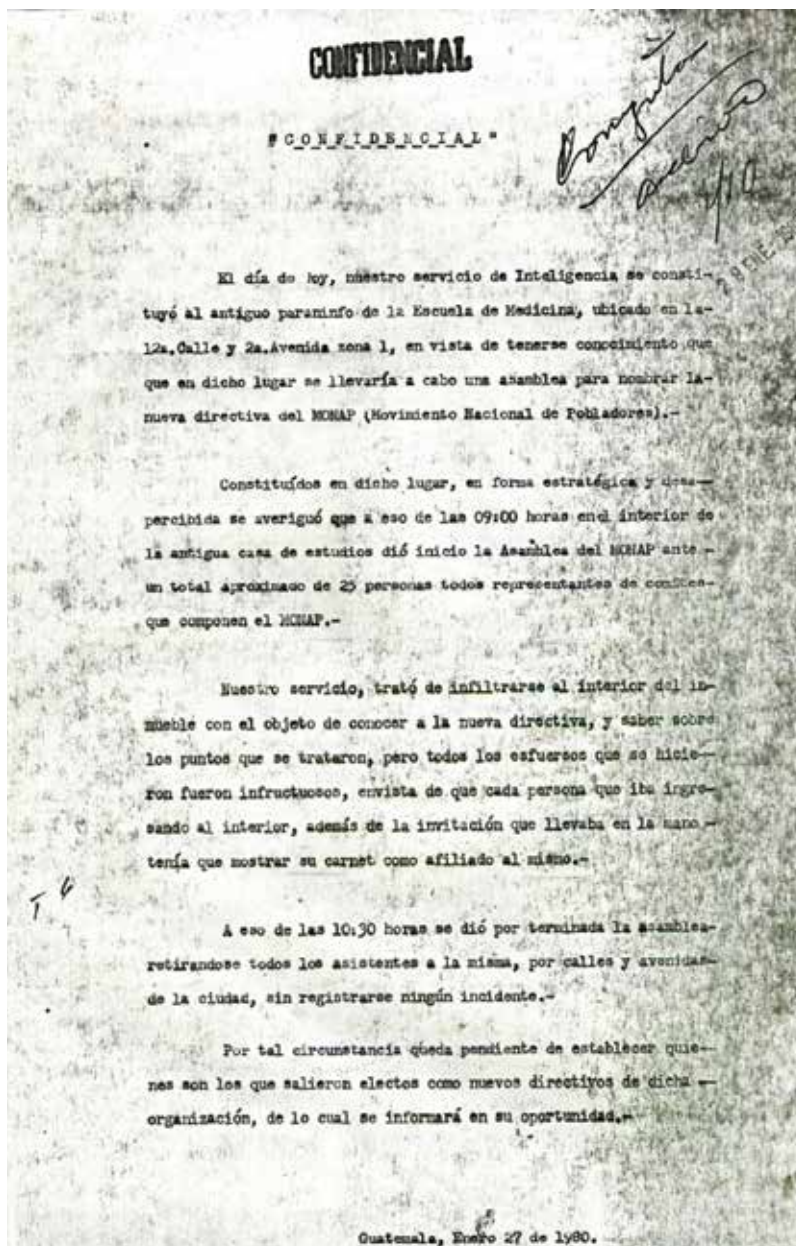
They usually bore a stamp in black ink with the word “*confidential*,”<sup>186</sup> which would also appear written or typed. A special case is that of a set of confidential documents from 1983 whose handwritten classification reads “Conf83.”

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<sup>186</sup> 1. GTPN 51-01 S002 03/12/1984, for example, information on material seized in the Colonia Maya, zona 18 [Digital reference 2776381. Internal AHPN registration 27500].  
2. GTPN 51-01 S002 03/12/1984, anonymous accusation that a priest is a collaborator with the Guatemalan Workers' Party (PGT) [Digital reference 2776383. Internal AHPN registration 27503].

## Photograph I.29

Example of a document classified as confidential  
1980



Source: GT PN 30-01 S020 01/27/1980, unnumbered document  
[Digital reference 573148. Internal AHPN registration 25922].

## 4.2 Documents Classified “*Secret*”

Information classified as secret was that relating to PN agents and members of the National Army who participated directly in operations and were involved in activities punishable by law taking place outside military headquarters or police premises.

The same classification was applied to plans and operations, security orders, alphanumeric codes and some specific instruction manuals used by the State security forces in the operational branch. They always bore a stamp in red ink that identified the information as secret.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Up to the time of writing, no documents have been found on which the stamp marking them as secret was of any color other than red.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATIONS BETWEEN THE STATE SECURITY FORCES

This chapter examines the relations and actions of the National Police (PN) with other State security forces, in particular the National Army.

Initially, it includes analysis of the technical and financial cooperation provided to the PN by the government of the United States, since the coordination between the security agencies of the Guatemalan state, particularly those of the police, was given support from the outset by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).<sup>1</sup>

Although the documents from the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) have so far provided little information about this cooperation during the period being studied (1975-1985), researchers have had access to records from previous years that reveal these kinds of relations and communications.<sup>2</sup>

Other documentary sources, such as information declassified through the National Security Archive's (NSA's) Guatemala Project, the report "*Guatemala, Memory of Silence*" from the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH), and other studies carried out, make it possible to understand the mechanisms, programs, structures, agencies and resources generated by the state in order to implement its counterinsurgency policy, especially from the 1960s on.

The AHPN records reveal that relations between the PN and the Army were established through various procedures; one of the most important was the procedure directly affecting the chain of command. During the period under investigation, the position of Director General of the police institution was occupied by five colonels from the armed forces;<sup>3</sup> another of the mechanisms that makes the relationship evident is the flow of communications between both institutions. The quantitative

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<sup>1</sup> The AID Public Safety Programs were crucial to the development of the security and intelligence forces handling internal security throughout the whole hemisphere. The Public Safety Division of the agency in Guatemala, which operated between 1957 and 1974, wrote hundreds of reports on the civilian police forces. Bearing in mind the fact that the army controlled the security apparatus, the Public Safety documents revealed themselves to be an important source respecting both the police and the Army. See: The National Security Archive's "The Guatemalan Military: What the U.S. Files Reveal," by Kate Doyle, Director of the Guatemalan Documentation Project.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the documents from the AHPN consulted in relation to the cooperation of USAID are from the period 1962 to 1970.

<sup>3</sup> Germán Chupina Barahona was promoted to the military rank of Brigadier General in December 1981, and occupied the post of Director of the PN.

investigation carried out by the AHPN reveals that, for the period 1960-1996 alone, this archive contains around 175 documents containing references to the relationship between the National Police and the Army.

In the the operational branch, coordination between the PN and the Army were analyzed using security plans and orders, particularly with regard to the role assigned to the police in these operations.

We also present agencies or structures created by the Police in order to carry out coordinated activities with other State security agencies, which were particularly active during the period selected for this report.

## 1. Antecedents to Joint Operations

The origin of the working relationships between the various State security forces has important historical antecedents found within the framework of the international battle against communism led by the United States. In Guatemala, this crystallized in 1954 with the implementation of the National Security Doctrine (DSN) “...which, more than a systematized body based on a single document, was a practical means of confronting both internally and externally any possible or real communist threat within the context of the Cold War and of the new relationship between the United States and Latin America.”<sup>4</sup>

Implementation of this doctrine in Guatemala meant the creation of a judicial structure that involved, among others, Decree 023 of the Governing Junta, which created the Committee for National Defense against Communism, and Decree 59, the Preventive Penal Law against Communism, both from 1954. 1956 saw the passing of Presidential Decree 553, which supported the creation of the Directorate General of National Security, and which substituted the Committee.

During this period the implementation of this doctrine meant placing at the Army’s disposal all the structures and resources of the Guatemalan State with the aim of “combating and defeating the guerrillas.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Report from the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH), *Guatemala: Memoria del Silencio* (Guatemala: UNOPS 1999) (hereafter, CEH Report), chapter 1, p. 117.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

This legal framework gave the security forces the power to investigate cases and arrest people, create technical records on suspected communists and to seek prosecution for actions against the State carried out by Communist individuals or groups.

The Directorate General of National Security “*will act as an office of the Ministry of the Interior; will have jurisdiction over the National Police, and for the performance of its duties comprises: I.- The Security Department; II.- The Judicial Department; III.- The Juridicial Department; and IV.- The Administrative Department.*”<sup>6</sup>

The mandate that the law established for the Directorate’s Security Department stated that: “*it carries out the functions of investigation, prevention, discovery, pursuit and vigilance against crimes of a political nature...*” through its Secret Service and Defense against Communism sections. The Section for the Defense against Communism was charged specifically with, “*The investigation, control, surveillance, reporting, and pursuit of communist activities, identifying these in accordance with the provisions of decree number 39 (Preventive Penal Law against Communism), as well as those of all totalitarian systems which by virtue of their belligerent methods or procedures represent a threat to democratic institutions and society insofar as, for all legal purposes, these are duly described in law.*”

## 1.1 USAID in Guatemala

Declassified United States Government documents affirm that the Program for State Security in Guatemala (PSP) was begun in 1956. *A Report on the National Police of the Republic of Guatemala*, compiled by Fred G. Fimbres, a consultant with USAID’s International Cooperation Administration (ICA), from April 9th of that year formed the basis for the creation of the program. Among other analyses, Fimbres pointed out that the PN was organized along the same lines as a military organization, with strongly centralized control. Nevertheless, operations were decentralized and aimed mainly at the control of activities considered to be subversive, “*meaning that law enforcement would play a secondary role.*”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Presidential Decree No. 553, date of issue: 02/22/1956; date of publication: 02/25/1956.

<sup>7</sup> Declassified USAID document, report on the National Police of the Republic of Guatemala, author Fred G. Fimbres, ICA consultant, 04/09/1956. In: National Security Archive, *Guatemala Public Safety Program*, March 2007, compilation by the NSA for the AHPN (hereafter NSA, *Guatemala Public Safety Program*).



He also mentioned that, even though the institution was operationally prepared to combat “*subversive activities and attacks*,” it was saddled with poor management, low morale among its members, and insufficient training, and was in dire need of supplies. Fimbres also pointed out that the obsessive interest by the police in the anti-communist struggle had given rise to an almost “*neurotic*” attitude. He added that this fixation had brought about the growth of a police structure organized more like an “*auxiliary army*” than a civilian police force.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the 1960s, the coordination between the various security forces became more marked as a result of the needs created by the strategy aimed at dismantling the revolutionary movement. This coordination grew from advice provided by the USAID Office of Public Safety, or OPS, which was set up by the Government of the United States as a mechanism to oversee the training of police forces at an international level.<sup>9</sup>

As part of the United States’ cooperation between November 27th and December 7th, 1965, USAID’s main advisor on public safety, the Venezuela-based American, John P. Longan,<sup>10</sup> arrived in Guatemala with the temporary mission of “*assist[ing] GOG law enforcement authorities on techniques and methods for combating terrorist, kidnapping and extortion tactics*.” After holding several meetings at a safe house with the heads of the “*the National Police, the Judicial Police and the Treasury Police*,” the American official reported that “*it became obvious that because of rivalry, non-cooperation and distrust between these three agencies, there was in fact no coordinated plan or operation*.”<sup>11</sup>

The Head of State, Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia, ordered that these “*recommendations*” issued by the American official be formulated into plans and translated into action immediately.<sup>12</sup> Longan “*worked with an elite squad to rapidly gather and coordinate intelligence, analyze information, and conduct*

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> In 1957, John P. Longan was in Guatemala as a member of the first team of advisors sent by the United States to foreign countries as part of the police force charged with training the local security forces “to destroy the effectiveness of the Communist apparatus in free world countries.” He stayed for two and a half years, and then continued on throughout Latin America. In Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre. Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> Report sent by John P. Longan, principal Public Safety Advisor-Venezuela, to Byron Engle, OPS Director, 01/04/1966. Available in the National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal. Volume II documents (online)*. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc01.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

*rapid raids on the homes and meeting places of suspected subversives.*"<sup>13</sup> As the American himself said, *"from this moment on, I was involved in setting up plans for both the covert and overt operations"*<sup>14</sup>

Among the immediate overt operations carried out was a city-wide series of *"combined, uniformed police raids in Guatemala City,"* coordinated at the highest levels of government. The forces involved were not informed as to the zones where they would be operating until they were actually on their way to the spot. As part of these operations, the permanent road blocks going out of the city were closed, and the effectiveness of the patrols was based on the element of surprise. The idea behind these operations was *"to force some of the wanted communists out of hiding and into police hands, as well as to convince the Guatemalan public that the authorities were doing something to control the situation."*<sup>15</sup>

Mr. Longan's report adds that new head advisor on public safety in Guatemala, Peter Costello, should *"establish rapport with the various police agencies that would lead U.S. advisors being able to influence GOG<sup>16</sup> police officials and give them day-to-day operational advice. Future ability of US advisors to influence police operations in Guatemala is, in my opinion, a must."* In the final meeting that Longan had with Head of State Peralta Azurdia, he mentions that, *"he was outspoken in his appreciation for the help and interest of the US Government"*.<sup>17</sup>

*The monthly Public Safety report* from March of 1966, declassified by the United States Department of State, describes various kinds of police training given by OPS for crowd control, the use of tear gas, and the use of anti-riot weapons. As part of the *"Frozen Area Plan,"* it mentions that 80 searches were carried out along with the capture of prominent opposition leaders. The report emphasizes *"searches that were productive in terms of detentions."* It also comments that the press reported the capture and execution of prisoners. The report mentions the names of Víctor Manuel Gutiérrez, Leonardo Castillo Flores and Francisco Amado.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>14</sup> Report sent by John P. Longan.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> English acronym: Government of Guatemala (GOG).

<sup>17</sup> Report sent by John P. Longan.

<sup>18</sup> Declassified document for the Department of State, Monthly Report on Public Safety – March 1966, 04/13/1966. In: NSA, *Guatemala Public Safety Program*.

A document declassified by the United States Government, dated March 1966, reads: “1. *The following Guatemalan communists and terrorists were executed secretly by Guatemalan authorities on the night of March 6th, 1966:* a) *Victor Manuel Gutiérrez Garbin, leader of PGT group, living in exile in Mexico.*” It also mentions: Francisco “Paco” Amado Granados and Carlos Barillas Sosa. Another declassified document, also dated March 1966, says: “*On March 3rd, 1966, Guatemalan troops captured the following persons near the city of Ratalhuleu, Department of Retalhuleu, Guatemala:* a. *Leonardo Castillo Flores, a top leader of the Guatemalan Communist Party.*” Others captured were: Carlos Barrios, Mauricio García and Enrique Chacón. The document adds: “*After the conclusion of the interrogation, the prisoners were secretly executed.*”<sup>19</sup> The leaders Víctor Manuel Gutiérrez and Leonardo Castillo Flores were heads of the Workers and Rural Workers Confederations, respectively, during the government of President Jacobo Arbenz.

This act was a result of the mechanism of coordinated joint operations involving the National, Judicial and Military police and the Army by means of a centralized command in the highest echelons of the Government. According to the CEH report, this “*method of capture*” was known by the name of the *Frozen Area Plan*, which consisted of closing off a physical area of several

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<sup>19</sup> 1. GT PN 50 S001 Master File Record [Digital reference 57099/57100/57101. Internal AHPN registration 25330]. *Victor Manuel Gutiérrez*, information on record from 09/26/1951 to 03/07/1966, adding “(Worker-Leader)” in the space for his name and surnames. In the “subject” column, there is information concerning: a charge of agitation of the people of Puerto Barrios; he had received a license to demonstrate; the Ministry of Defense denounces him for troubling and threatening farmers; communists leaving for Czechoslovakia; mentioned in the 2nd Workers’ Congress; the President’s office recommends copies of this message he sent to the Union Council of Guatemala on September 15th, 1958; international communist link instruction; capture ordered on 04/18/1961; December 1962 charged with: communist activities against the Government in order to overthrow it, treason against the nation and concealing his identity in communist activities; in July 1964, reported that he was a member of the PGT and that he was in Mexico; in 1966, several writs of habeas corpus issued and “*not found to be detained at this place.*”

2. GT PN 50 S001 Master File Record [Digital reference 1230693. Internal AHPN registration 27566]. *Leonardo Castillo Flores*, information recorded from 1/5/1945 to 4/18/1961, for matters such as: restriction order, investigate author of subversive documents; in 1957 complaints regarding his entry to the country; in 1959, an anonymous communication to the Ministry of the Interior requests that “*his return to this country not be permitted because he will be torn to pieces, as will other communists*” in 1960 there are reports of his activities in El Salvador with Fidel Castro, and in 1961 his capture is ordered. In March 1963, the President’s office reported his apprehension, concerning the writs of habeas corpus presented, it is said, “*It is not possible to present him,*” and in April 1963, the Directorate General of the PN reported that “*He appears on the list of people detained as a result of the latest events. Member of the PGT.*”

3. National Security Archive declassified document, Translations 1966-1995, 660300a, pages 1 and 2 (denied in their entirety), document dated March 1966.

4. National Security Archive declassified document, Translations 1966-1995, 660300b, pages 1 and 2 (denied in their entirety), document dated March 1966.

blocks by using police personnel to deny entry or exit of anyone while the raid was going on.<sup>20</sup>

American officials trained thousands of PN agents both inside Guatemala and abroad. The administrative and operational structures of the National and Judicial police and the Treasury Guard underwent thorough review and reform. The agents were directly responsible for the creation of the Regional Communications Center (CRT), or "*La Regional*," as it was known. They supplied arms, ammunition and communications equipment to the PN and encouraged the centralization of military and police intelligence with the aim of combating "*subversion and terrorism*."<sup>21</sup>

The document "*Five-Year Analysis: Public Safety Program - Guatemala 1967-1971, Inclusive*," drawn up by USAID, details a series of objectives and accomplishments in the technical and operational strengthening of the PN. It includes specific actions in the areas of mobilization, communications, training, administration and organization, maintenance and execution of the "*Rapid Police Development Project*."

Some specific actions implemented as part of this program were: the intensification of urban patrols in order to suppress and control criminal and terrorist activity, the implementation of the "*Henry*" fingerprint classification system for use by the Identification Bureau, training of investigators in rural and urban areas, and the organization and training of task forces for foot patrols and checks. In addition, the period saw the creation and training of an anti-riot platoon composed of one hundred agents in order to strengthen the police's "*counter-guerrilla*" capacity. Also under the auspices this program, 63 officers were trained who later came to occupy key positions in the PN and the Treasury Guard. Specifically, they assumed the positions of Second and Third chiefs of both these institutions, all the commands of the capital's Corps, the command of twelve departments, the Directorship of the Academy, and other high-level posts.<sup>22</sup>

A variety of documents found in the AHPN provide evidence of the relationship and technical and financial cooperation that the United States Government arranged for the PN between 1960 and 1971. Some examples from the documents are:

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<sup>20</sup> CEH Report, volume II, p. 420.

<sup>21</sup> USAID declassified document, *Five-Year Analysis: Guatemala Public Safety Program 1967-1971 including USAID*, September 1971. In: NSA, *Guatemala Public Safety Program*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

-In 1964, USAID oversaw the installation of the San Pedro Sacatepéquez radio transmitter substation, located on the Cementerio Viejo hill and christened with the name of John F. Kennedy.<sup>23</sup>

-In the PN annual work report for 1965, the section on the National Police Academy recounts that:

*“The Security Division of the United States of America, ‘AID,’ awards scholarships to members of this Institution in order to provide them with specialized training, and which have been extended to several members of the National Police; and so on January 8th, 1965 at 20.45 hours, on Pan American flight 506, the Officers thus favored with academic scholarships departed for the United States, via New Orleans on their way to the International Police Academy in Washington D.C....”<sup>24</sup>*

This same document also gives details of the names and positions of the agents with scholarships and describes another four groups of scholarship recipients during the same year.

-In 1966, the PN awarded a gold medal and honorary diploma to Chief of the USAID Office of Public Safety/Guatemala, Peter F. Costello, *“for the outstanding services he has provided to the National Police.”<sup>25</sup>*

-The *“National Police Report for 1966”* contains the following:

*“AID TECHNICAL OFFICE.*

*On October 6th of last year, in the presence of the Vice Minister of the Interior, the Director General, Sub Director General and Third Chief and Inspector General of the Institution saw the inauguration of the National Police’s AID Library and Technical Office, to be run by Mr. OSCAR ARMANDO CALDERON MIJANGOS, as its Head...”*

<sup>23</sup> GT PN 38 DSC 1964, Radio Patrol Gold Book, number 2619 [Digital reference 940864. Internal AHPN registration 29331].

<sup>24</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 *National Police Annual Work Report 1965*, sheet 22 [Digital reference 3432590. Internal AHPN registration 29334].

<sup>25</sup> GT PN 35 S001 12/16/1969, Book of General Orders, number No. 10500, general order 288 [Digital reference 675189. Internal AHPN registration 29588]. It is important to mention that the Police had in 1966 issued the Regulations on Distinctions with Government Accord 4617 of June 29, 1966, published in General Order 167 of July 20th, 1966, since in Art. 71 of Presidential Decree 332, Organic Law of the PN, it stated that it was necessary to regulate the granting of distinctions (medals for long service, special merits, exemplary conduct, sports medals, posthumous decoration, heroic valor). It contains regulations on how and where they should be used

Among its other functions, this office was to be “*a direct link between the AID Office of Public Safety and the National Police.*”<sup>26</sup>

-In 1968, the Directorate General of the PN organized a course on criminal investigation given by Richard Van Winkle for the purpose of “*training members of the service.*”<sup>27</sup>

-In documents from 1971 from the archives of the chief of the PN Identification Bureau, Sergio Roberto Lima Morales (in the post from 1970 to 1986), a number of items were discovered that expose the coordination and cooperation activities between this agency and AID. This exchange of correspondence was established with various American officials. For example, AID Public Security Advisor, Charles Guzmán, was sent a plan requested by that agency containing a job description of each of the Bureau’s employees together with the aims, objectives and organization of that office.<sup>28</sup> Another document mentions communication with Herbert O. Hardin, chief of the AID Office of Public Safety, asking him for:

“*...authorization for the training of officers CARLOS GONZALES ESPOSITO and RAYMUNDO PEREZ SALVADOR, to be given by ARLEN N. JEE, the Regional Investigations Advisor, in order to instruct these officers on the handling of arms before their arrival. The same document also contains some suggestions for improving coordination of the functions of the Bureau, most of which, following a study, were made by CHARLES C. GUZMAN, Training Advisor...*”<sup>29</sup>

This same Chief of the Identification Bureau submitted a request to the AID Public Safety Advisor, James E. Henry, for photographic equipment consisting of two 35 mm cameras in order to create a record of persons detained by

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<sup>26</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 *National Police Work Report* for 1966, folio 24 [Digital reference 1917630. Internal AHPN registration 27389].

<sup>27</sup> GT PN 43 DSC January 1968, book number 1431 [Digital reference 1161822. Internal AHPN registration 29335].

<sup>28</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 03/03/1971, oficio No. 102 –im, Archive of the Chief of the Identification Bureau, addressed to the Director General of the PN, Sergio Lima Morales with a copy attached of the Work Plan requested by Mr. Charles Guzmán, AID Public Safety Assessor. [Digital reference 3634490. Internal AHPN registration 31026]. GT PN 49-02 S013 02/03/1971, oficio No. 0043/im.-Archive of the Chief of the Identification Bureau, addressed to the Director General and containing a copy of the oficio sent to Mr. James E. Henry, AID Public Safety Advisor, which whom he had previously spoken about the importance of obtaining photographic equipment [Digital reference 3634489. Internal AHPN registration 31459].

<sup>29</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 02/03/1971, unreferenced oficio sent to Herberto O. Hardin, Chief of the AID Public Safety Division, by the Chief of the PN Identification Bureau and Courts of Justice expert Sergio Roberto Lima Morales [Digital reference 3634480. Internal AHPN registration 31067].

the First and Second Corps and in the women's prison. A telemeter with a 100 meter range was also requested "*to take photographs at protests, rallies or places for some reason under investigation.*"<sup>30</sup>

Correspondence from this same office includes a document sent to AID Public Security Advisor, Geraldo Brown, containing a request for a course on "*packaging and preservation of evidence*" for the interior of the country.<sup>31</sup>

These communications show the high degree of influence this American agency had over the authorities in the charge of the Identification Bureau through the technical and financial advice they received. In 1971, the head of this office wrote the Director General of the PN to inform him that:

*"...on Friday the 21st of this month at 17:00 hours, on Pan American flight 503 from Washington, D.C., the Criminologist, ARLEN W. GEE, AID Regional Advisor for Latin America arrived and will remain in this city for one month in order to train two persons from this Identification Bureau in the area of Ballistics and, in the absence of the undersigned, provide technical advice."*<sup>32</sup>

That same day, also addressing himself to the Director General, he reported:

*"...that tomorrow, at 14:00 hours on Aviateca flight 500, I depart for Washington, United States of America, with authorization from that Command with a scholarship from AID in order to visit police laboratories in several of that country's states.*

*Remaining in charge of the Bureau will be the secretary of the same, IDELFONSO MARIN RODRIGUEZ, with Technical Advice from Mr. Arlen W. Gee, AID Regional Advisor for Latin America."*<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 02/03/1971, unreferenced, unstamped oficio addressed to James E. Henry AID Public Safety Advisor by Sergio Roberto Lima Morales, Chief of the Intelligence Bureau and Courts of Justice expert [Digital reference 3634476. Internal AHPN registration 31061].

<sup>31</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 03/22/1971, oficio No. 134-imr/, addressed to Geraldo Brown, AID public safety advisor by PN Identification Bureau Chief and Courts of Justice expert Sergio Roberto Lima Morales [Digital reference 3634491. Internal AHPN registration 31028].

<sup>32</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 05/24/1971, oficio No. 250-imr/, addressed to the Director General PN, by Chief of Identification Bureau, Sergio Roberto Lima Morales [Digital reference 3634493. Internal AHPN registration 31031].

Other documents from the AHPN confirm the relationship and coordination between the PN and USAID through technical and specialist exchanges on issues such as fingerprint files,<sup>34</sup> ballistics,<sup>35</sup> control of civil disturbances and advanced criminology studies.<sup>36</sup>

In the National Police annual reports for 1972 and 1973, the usual letter of presentation of these to the Minister of the Interior reads, *“As has been the case for a number of years now, valuable help was received from the United States Government’s AID Office of Public Safety by its providing the Institution with material and equipment for more effective development, such as: arms, ammunition, tear gas, special fingerprinting materials, office supplies and furniture, paint and even vehicles for the use of the different National Police Corps.”*<sup>37</sup>

## **1.2 Army Joint Operations Center (Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas del Ejército, JOC/COC)**

The kind of technical and financial cooperation mentioned previously, benefiting the Guatemalan security forces and generated by the United States Government, made it possible to evaluate the Army’s intelligence work and how it was exploited. This work was classified as “unpredictable.” It also shows the deficiencies and weakness of the National, Judicial and Treasury police forces as regards their function of combating the social and revolutionary movement during the sixties.

Towards the middle of 1960, US government officials proposed a series of measures and activities aimed at guaranteeing coordination between the public security forces and the National Army. Among these stands out the creation of the

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<sup>33</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 05/24/1971, oficio No. 251-imr/, addressed to the Director General of the PN by PN Identification Bureau Chief, Sergio Roberto Lima Morales [Digital reference 3634495. Internal AHPN registration 31018].

<sup>34</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 09/10/1971, oficio No. 491-imr/, addressed to the Director General of the PN by PN Identification Bureau Chief, Sergio Roberto Lima Morales [Digital reference 3634497. Internal AHPN registration 31035]. Officers from the Bureau sent to Washington, USA, on an AID scholarship were Jorge Job Palma Garnica, Antonio Sebastián Palacios, Carlos Humberto Mendoza Masaya, Pedro Solís Aceituno and Margarito Uluán Gómez, who took a course on fingerprint files at Washington’s International Academy from September 10th to December 10th, 1971

<sup>35</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 05/25/1971, oficio No. 253-im/, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Sergio Lima Morales, Chief of the PN Identification Bureau and Courts of Justice expert [Digital reference 3634496. Internal AHPN registration 31464]

<sup>36</sup> GT PN 30 *National Police Annual Book Report, 1962*, sheet 18, book number 1503 [Digital reference 64409. Internal AHPN registration 27218].

<sup>37</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 01/31/73, Work Report, 1972, sent to the Minister of the Interior [Digital reference 1670107 and 1670108. Internal AHPN registration 29338].  
GT PN 30-01 S010 01/28/1974, Work Report, 1973, sent to the Minister of the Interior [Digital reference 1672286. Internal AHPN registration 31505].



Army's Joint Operations Center (JOC, or COC in the original Spanish) in Guatemala city, whose basic task was:

*"... to serve as the one location where all available intelligence on insurgent personalities and their activities is collected and collated. The JOC would assist the various security and intelligence services to take timely and appropriate action and would provide information designed to increase the long-range effectiveness of Guatemala's internal defense operations. The JOC will not conduct operations itself but will provide technical and material assistance to the action agency involved"*<sup>38</sup>

The headquarters of the COC was set up in the Presidential Palace, where it could have free, rapid access to military commanders and senior civilian officials. It was organizationally subordinate to the Army General Staff, as the CEH report mentions, adding: *"Its function was to serve as a linking mechanism for the coordination and control of counterinsurgency operations between the military units operating in the field and the head of the Defense General Staff;"* *"Its responsibility was to receive and process requests for coordination and support through artillery cover, air support for tactical reconnaissance missions and transportation, among others. In addition, the center housed the control station for the operational network, working 24 hours a day to link and maintain contact with all operational units."*<sup>39</sup>

Orders or requirements issued by the Army COC, particularly in times of crisis, were directed at a specific security service in order to have the action carried out. The orders were clearly and unmistakably coordinated with other services, for which the COC must necessarily have had sufficient autonomy and authority to make rapid decisions as to which of the Guatemalan security services should act.<sup>40</sup>

This same document also relates that the neither the existence of the COC nor the salaries of its staff were to be divulged and that its administrative expenses were to be paid through secret funds.

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<sup>38</sup> USAID, *Assessment of the Counterinsurgency in Guatemala, 1968/69*, secret report. Available in the National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal. Volume II documents*. Online: 03/26/2008. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc11.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> CEH Report, volume II, chapter 2, p. 69.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

The *Plan of Action for Guatemala* of August 1969 contained a proposal for the foundation of a Tactical Operations Center (TOC) to be based in the National Palace under the supervision of the Army's Operations Section (G-3). According to the Plan, it would eventually integrate itself with military intelligence (G-2) and the policing bodies, in order to form an anticommunist, anti-guerrilla unit whose mission would be to gather intelligence and respond rapidly.<sup>41</sup>

The AHPN documents show how the USAID Technical Office functioned at the PN headquarters towards the end of the 1960s. The National Police Annual Report for 1969-1970 states:

*"The AID Technical Office at the Directorate General of the National Police is the Central Mission Agency of AID in Guatemala, registered with the United States Embassy and charged with processing all questions relating to technical and material aid under the auspices of the ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS, as well as coordinating relations between AID and the country's police agencies. Its head is OSCAR GONZÁLEZ DÍAZ, who is aided in his work by a secretary, two officers and a storeroom assistant.*

*It also performs translation work for the Directorate General of the National Police, processing of files and criminal records requested by the United States Embassy, and Customs procedures for the receipt of equipment donated by AID. It also has an extensive library containing a variety of books on policing techniques, which is open to all Police Headquarters throughout the Republic where there are Police Instructors being advised by AID."*<sup>42</sup>

All these recommendations provided the foundation for the creation of the Army COC, the Regional Telecommunications Center (Centro Regional de Telecomunicaciones, CRT) and subsequently the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (Centro de Reunión de Información y Operaciones, CRIO) as well as the PN's own COC. Due to the diversity of names by which the CRIO was identified in the documents consulted and in order to avoid confusion later, in this Report we will use the term employed by the Army for this structure: Center for Information Compilation and Operations.<sup>43</sup> All these units played a fundamental role in the centralization and execution of the counterinsurgency strategy in Guatemala.

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<sup>41</sup> Declassified document from the State Department, *Action Plan for Guatemala*, 08/13/1969. In: NSA, *Guatemala Public Safety Program*.

<sup>42</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 *National Police Work Report*, 07/1/1969 to 06/30/1970, p. 16 [Digital reference 852624. Internal AHPN registration 29339].

The *Summary Report on Communications, Guatemalan Police Forces* from USAID in January 1969 advised further training from Americans in order to rectify the operational and administrative deficiencies of the PN communications systems. With this in mind, suggestions were made for financial and technical contributions that the United States Government might make. The PN had already partially implemented some of the innovations proposed for Guatemala, such as the introduction in 1967 of a Kardex system, used to maintain records and monitor the staff registered at the institution. The report repeatedly mentions the needs of the communications branch, as well as a new police unit comprised of one hundred agents to control “*civil disturbances*.”<sup>44</sup>

Consequently, American cooperation placed particular importance on technical advice in the field of coordination and communications capacity. USAID provided the equipment necessary to build a telecommunications coordination network connecting the Army, the National and Judicial Police, the Treasury Guard, the Presidential Communications Center and the Ministry of the Interior, all managed by the Army Joint Operations Center (COC).

Through an analysis of the functions carried out by the Army COC, we can infer that this office was the concrete expression of the American Government’s recommendations, aimed at guaranteeing coordination between the police forces and the Army in the field of intelligence operations. For its part, the PN Joint Operations Center (Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas de la PN, COCP), set up in 1972, fulfilled the function of ensuring coordination between the institution’s various agencies. It was also linked with the coordination of Army agencies and intelligence bodies such as the General Archive, the Presidential General Staff Support Services (Archivo General y Servicios de Apoyo, AGSA) and the Ambulatory Military Police (Policía Militar Ambulante, PMA).

According to an evaluation of the OPS carried out in December 1971, American assistance to the Guatemalan army and police forces had two goals: to improve and “*provide support to the armed and police forces in order to achieve as quickly as possible sufficient internal security capacity to face the threat posed by violent opposition*,” and second, “*to ensure that the United States maintains its*

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<sup>43</sup> The different names for CRIO identified are: in the document *Military Strategy for Continuing Army Operations*, Directive No. 3- LMRAJAE, 040800FEB86, there is mention of the: Central de Recopilación de Información y Operaciones (Center for Compilation of Information and Operations), a document from the EMDN signed by Brigadier General and EMDN Chief, Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales (this document is part of the reference documentation compiled by the AHPN in: Reference Documents/Army/Current Directives). Other authors such as Jennifer Schirmer use the name Centro de Reunión de Información y Operaciones. In the AHPN documents there are references to the Center Office for Information Gathering and Operations, in: GT PN 26 S001 Plan Dolphin [Digital reference 573226. Internal AHPN registration 29340]. GT PN 26 S001 Plan Fire [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

<sup>44</sup> USAID declassified document: *Summary report on communications, Guatemalan police forces*, OPS/USAID, January 1969. In: National Security Archive, March 2007, NSA compilation for the AHPN.

*influence over the military establishment, which occupies an important position in the Guatemalan political structure.*"<sup>45</sup>

Analysis of the documents mentioned provides evidence of the role played by the Government of the United States through USAID in the definition, implementation and control of joint operations involving the Army and the police. Both the armed and police forces were given responsibility for managing accurate information in order to facilitate the use of mechanisms for social control in counterinsurgency activities and operations.

## **2. Relations between the PN and the National Army**

### **2.1 Legal Framework**

The previous section provided an explanation of some of the mechanisms used by the State for the implementation of the National Security Doctrine (Doctrina de Seguridad Nacional, DSN) orchestrated by the Government of the United States. This involved the creation of counterinsurgency policies that provided the framework for the principal governmental actions and military strategies from 1954 on.

The report by the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) "*Guatemala, Memory of Silence*" provides a thorough account of the process of implementation and evolution of this doctrine. It relates how the process came to "*be converted into a national strategy*" based on "*national power*," composed of four elements: "*economic, social, political and military power.*" This strategy was put into operation by means of a national security plan that "*increased military power in order to realize the aim of confronting and eliminating subversion.*"<sup>46</sup> The Army appropriated these precepts and assumed control of all actions whose principal objective was the war against counterinsurgency, the "*annihilation of the enemy within.*"<sup>47</sup> The concept of the "*enemy within*" became increasingly broader, resulting in the arbitrary restriction of citizens' rights. The DSN provided the legal basis and the justification for this situation.

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<sup>45</sup> Public Safety Program Assessment USAID-Guatemala, OPS/AID, 12/00/1971 (sic). In: NSA, *Guatemala Public Safety Program*.

<sup>46</sup> CEH Report, volume I, chapter 1, pp. 119 and 120.

<sup>47</sup> In the AHPN documentation, there is a set of Security Plans and Operational Plans that use the term "enemy forces." The CEH Report refers to the *Manual for Counter-Subversive War* created in 1983 by the Center for Military Studies of the Guatemalan Army, which divides "internal enemy" into two categories of individuals, groups and organizations: those who by illegal acts were trying to break down the established order were termed "Communist revolutionaries," and those who, while not Communists, were also trying to break down the established order.

This meant that “*all Guatemalan State structures and all the resources of power must be placed at the disposal of the army in order to combat and defeat the guerrillas,*” as the report adds.<sup>48</sup>

The Constitution of 1956 passed by the National Constituent Assembly<sup>49</sup> was conceived in accordance with these precepts, as a glance at some of the articles makes clear.

For example:

-In the chapter on Political Parties, Article 23 states that, “*The organization or functioning of all those entities who propound the communist ideology or that of any other totalitarian system are prohibited.*”

-Article 54 of the section of Human Rights reads, “*Nevertheless, the organization and functioning of groups that act in accordance with or are subject to international entities that propound communist ideology or that of any other totalitarian system are prohibited.*”

-Article 123 further on in the same section declares that, “*In the event of a grave disturbance to public order or in an emergency, the public services may be militarized for the time that the disturbances last.*”

-In the part dealing with the Executive Branch in Article 180, it asserts that the National Army “*...exists to safeguard the territory, sovereignty and independence of the Nation and for the preservation of internal and external security and public order.*”<sup>50</sup>

This legal mandate allowed the Army to involve itself in the country’s internal and public security.

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<sup>48</sup> CEH Report, volume I, chapter 1, p. 121.

<sup>49</sup> Decreed by the National Constituent Assembly, February 2nd, 1956. In force from March 1st 1956.

<sup>50</sup> Decree 22 approved on 03/01/1956, *Law of Public Order* (first law on Public Order enacted), by the National Constituent Assembly, which, according to Article 1, “*is to be applied exclusively in the event of an invasion of the territory, grave disturbance of the peace, proven activities against the security of the State or public calamity.* The law does not define the concept of “*public order.*” The Dictionary of the Real Academia Española defines “orden público” (“*public order*”) as a situation and state of normal legality in which the authorities perform their proper functions and the citizens respect and obey these without protest.

The coup d'état led by Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia in March 1963 saw the installation of a regime where the function of the Army continued to be central to the security policies of the Guatemalan State. The Army General Staff (EMGE)<sup>51</sup> came to occupy a leading role in counterinsurgency strategy within the framework of the National Security Doctrine.

In contrast to the liberal period, during which a system of personal dictatorships was established, 1963 saw the beginning of the process of militarization of the State necessary for the counterinsurgency strategy. In accordance with that model from that point on, the presidency of the Republic was occupied by a general of the armed forces, with the exception of the administration of the lawyer, Julio César Méndez Montenegro from 1966-1970, under the conditions and tutelage of the Army.

In the Constitution of the Republic of 1965,<sup>52</sup> the basic functions of the Army were legally established in Article 215.<sup>53</sup>

This Constitution maintains the precepts of 1956 as outlined in the DSN, such as the prohibition of political parties and organizations propounding the Communist ideology, the militarization of public services, and the functions of the Army.

The Public Order Act of November 30th, 1965 further supported the central role of the Army in the face of what was considered a threat to the country's stability. Article 1 establishes that it "*...will be applied in cases of invasion of national territory, grave disturbance of the peace, public calamity, or activities against the security of the State.*" With this act, in the event of the declaration of a state of emergency, the State was granted the power to "*Militarize public services, including centers of learning, and to intervene in those provided by private companies.*"<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> The Army General Staff, EMGE, existed prior to the National Defense Chiefs of Staff, EMDN. Decree-Law 28-83 (03.15.83) disbanded the EMGE, creating instead the EMDN. Héctor Rosada-Granados, *Soldados en el poder. Proyecto militar en Guatemala, 1944-1990* (Utrecht: Thela Thesis, 1999). The military dictionary defines the EMGE as "a group of officers who assist their commanders in the setting up, coordination and supervision of operations. Its sections are: G1 personnel; G2 military intelligence; G3 operations and training; G4 logistics; G5 civil affairs and military government;" the same dictionary defines the EMDN as an Army technical consultative center advising the Minister of National Defense on all military matters (and refers to the EMGE). The Mirna Mack Foundation explains that the functions of both structures was strategic direction and decision-making; a directive body and head of the military intelligence system; it issued directives on intelligence and counterintelligence. They issued orders and plans that affected the entire intelligence structure.

<sup>52</sup> Decreed by the National Constituent Assembly, September 15th, 1965. In force from May 5th, 1956.

<sup>53</sup> *Constitución de la República de Guatemala*, Title VI Executive Branch, Chapter V, Army, Article 215.– "*The Army of the Guatemala is the institution designed to maintain the independence, sovereignty and honor of the Nation, the integrity of its territory, and peace in the Republic. It is sole and indivisible, fundamentally apolitical and non-deliberative; it is composed of the land, air and sea forces; its organization is hierarchical and is based on the principles of discipline and obedience.*"

Article 17 of the same act declares that *“During State of Siege, the President of the Republic will govern in his capacity as Commander in Chief of the Army by means of the Ministry of National Defense.”* Article 18 adds: *“All State authorities and entities, of any nature, are obligated to give to the military authority all aid and cooperation that may be required of them, as far as their capacities allow.”*

In reality this principle was to extend through the whole period under investigation (1975-1985), without necessarily involving any declaration of exceptional circumstances. The subordination of State institutions to the Army was a fact of the almost permanent militarization of the State.

In the constitutional laws of the Army from 1960 and 1968, it was established that *“the armed institution is dedicated to the maintenance of independence, territorial integrity, peace and internal and external security.”* The political analyst, Héctor Roberto Rosada, maintains that, from 1963, the Army *“increasingly assumed a commitment to counterinsurgency... there was a constitutional mandate to preserve the territory and the security of the State, but at the same time, fulfilling that mandate brought it cohesion as an armed force, as an institution.”*<sup>55</sup> Even the current Political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, enacted in 1985 and still in force, in Article 244 grants to the Army, among other functions, the legal mandate to maintain internal security.

The report from the CEH adds that, during the armed confrontation, the State *“delivered public safety into the hands of the Army.”*<sup>56</sup> The National Police and the Treasury Guard were institutions subordinated to the Army, which, among other things, *“allowed the latter to have control of the populace.”*<sup>57</sup>

The militarization of the PN half way through the 1960s was evidence of *“... the intervention and control of the Army over the police.”* The CEH Report tells us that most police officers were ex-military, adding that during the term of General Germán Chupina Barahona (1978-1982), there was an unwritten rule requiring recruits to have done military service in order to serve in the police.<sup>58</sup>

In accordance with its legal status, the PN was governed by the Organic Law. The Law provided for the creation of a hierarchical scale aimed at harmonizing the police force with the army and facilitating its subordination. In Chapter I a

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<sup>54</sup> Decree-Law 7 of 11/30/1965, Law on Public Order (second law on public order issued), Article 8.

<sup>55</sup> In his statement to the Third Court of Criminal Sentencing, 09/09/2002, Myrna Mack Case.

<sup>56</sup> CEH Report, Volume II, chapter 2, p. 43.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 149.

thorough analysis is provided of the establishment of the police ranks throughout the history of the institution.

The AHPN contains numerous records evidencing the legal and institutional framework of the PN.

## 2.2 Army Officers, Chiefs of the Police Institution

Once of the mechanisms that facilitated the influence of the armed forces over the PN during the period 1975 to 1985 was that the position of Director General of the institution was occupied by active members of the Army whose entire

**Table II.1**

### Directors General of the National Police 1975-1985

No.	MILITARY RANK	POLICE RANK	NAME	BEGAN	ENDED
1.	Infantry Colonel		Ricardo Antonio Escalante González	09/06/1974 09/16/1974 <sup>59</sup>	11/17/1975
2.	Infantry Colonel		Mario Gustavo Cardona Maldonado	11/17/1975 <sup>60</sup>	07/01/1978
3.	Infantry Colonel <sup>61</sup>		Germán Chupina Barahona	07/01/1978 <sup>62</sup>	03/24/1982
4.	Cavalry Colonel DEM <sup>63</sup>		Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch	03/24/1982 <sup>64</sup>	08/16/1983
5.	Artillery Colonel DEM	General Commissioner of Police <sup>65</sup>	Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz	08/16/1983 <sup>66</sup>	06/03/1985
6.		General Commissioner of Police	José Félix Álvarez Arévalo	06/03/1985 <sup>67</sup>	02/14/1986 <sup>68</sup>

<sup>59</sup> On September 6th, he took over as temporary Director General, as mentioned in: GT PN 30 S001 09/06/1974 and 09/16/1974 Book of Legal Documents, sheets 230-232, documents 260 and 261. The official swearing in was on the 16th, book number 2618 [Digital reference 990654. Internal AHPN registration 29342].

<sup>60</sup> GT PN 30 S001 11/17/1975, Book of Legal Documents, sheets 236 and 237, document No. 266, book number 2618 [Digital reference 990654. Internal AHPN registration 29343].

<sup>61</sup> Chupina Barahona was promoted to Brigadier General on 12/30/1981.

<sup>62</sup> GT PN 30 S001 07/01/1978, Book of Legal Documents, sheets 240 and 241, document No. 269, Government Appointment Accord No. 2 of 07/01/1978, sworn in on this day also, book number 2618 [Digital reference 990654. Internal AHPN registration 29344].

<sup>63</sup> Recipient of a General Staff Diploma.

<sup>64</sup> GT PN 30 S001 03/24/1982, Book of Legal Documents, sheet 247, document No. 276, taking over by decision of the Governing Military Junta, book number 2618 [Digital reference 990654. Internal AHPN registration 29345].

<sup>65</sup> Decree-Law 37-85, in Article 5 modifying Article 66 (hierarchical scale) of the Organic Law of the PN, 04/22/1985 Colonel Bol de la Cruz received the rank of Commissioner General of Police on 05/15/1985

<sup>66</sup> GT PN 30 S001 08/16/1983, Book of Legal Documents, sheet 258, document No. 285, Government Appointment Accord No. 85 of 08/16/1983, also sworn in that same day, book number 2618 [Digital reference 990654. Internal AHPN registration 26020].

<sup>67</sup> GT PN 30 S001 06/03/1985, Book of Legal Documents, sheet 271, document No. 291, Government Appointment Accord No. 109 of 05/30/1985, book number 2618 [Reference 991710. Internal AHPN registration 29346].

<sup>68</sup> GT PN 30 S001 02/14/1986, Book of Legal Documents, sheet 290, document No. 294, assumed by Air Force Colonel Rubén Suchini Paiz, book number 2618 [Digital reference 991710. Internal AHPN registration 29758].



previous career had unfolded within the military. The table below illustrates the succession of directors throughout those years.

Worthy of mention in this regard are the resumes of four military men who occupied the position of Director General of the PN.<sup>69</sup> In 1965, Infantry Colonel Ricardo Antonio Escalante González was assigned to the Intelligence Section (G2) of the Army. Ten years later he was head of the National Police.

Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona graduated from the Escuela Politécnica in 1958 and afterwards attended the School of Americas in the United States between July and September of 1960. He was Commandant of the Ambulatory Military Police (PMA) between April 3rd, 1975 and July 1st, 1978, the day on which he was named Director of the police institution. He was in this post when he was promoted to Brigadier General on December 30th, 1981.

Infantry Colonel Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch occupied the positions of Inspector, Deputy Director, and Director of the PN at different times. He was trained abroad, particularly in the Escuela de Carabineros in Chile in 1958 and then five years later at the School of the Americas. During the first years of his career he was Company Commander of the Presidential Guard of the PMA. His career at with the Police commenced in November 1966 as Inspector General, a position he occupied until November 1967. Following this, he went on to become an instructor at the School of the Americas for one year, subsequently returning to Guatemala to resume his post as Inspector of the Police. With the rank of Army Major, he acted as Deputy Director of the PN between July 1970 and January 1971. From 1972 to 1976, he was military attache at the Embassy of Guatemala in Honduras and afterwards occupied various positions in Army offices. He was Deputy Chief of the Army General Staff when, on March 24th, 1982, he was appointed Director General of the PN. He retired from the armed forces in December 1987.

Infantry Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz was responsible for the counterintelligence department of the Intelligence Section (G-2) and was assigned to the EMEG from 1974. After leaving the post of Director General of the PN in 1985, he was Commandant of the Jutiapa Military Zone and Director of the Adolfo V. Hall Institute of the Northwest.

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<sup>69</sup> National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal - Army Units and Officers, volume I, List of Military Officers*. See, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/Oficiales.RTF>.

Evidently, the PN directors of this period were military men with experience in intelligence who, as career soldiers, were governed by the hierarchy and discipline of the armed forces even as they carried out their duties within the PN. This situation made it possible to integrate effectively the tasks and functioning of the police with the requirements of the military.

Documents have been found in the AHPN that contain the “*Guidelines of the Police Command for Chiefs of Corps.*” These directives, like those from the Monthly PN Commanders Meetings,<sup>70</sup> were established during the government of General Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores (1983-1986). The documents in question are invaluable for the study and analysis of police activities owing to the ideological and content they reveal. In the monthly meeting of PN chiefs held on March 21st, 1985 in the city of Cobán, Alta Verapaz, topic number V is “*The National Police and Military Ranks.*”<sup>71</sup>

*“The use of military ranks by the National Police goes back several administrations.*

*There have been periods when its use was suspended, but a subsequent administration has always reinstated it.*

*It was authorized out of a desire to please, to gain goodwill, even though it was known that such an attitude was the cause of more than a few problems and, above all, that it was against the law.*

*The main problem that has arisen is not due to the correct use of military ranks by Police Officers, but rather that the practice has been abused, not by Officers but by people with no formal police training.”*

### **2.3 Obedience and Subordination**

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<sup>70</sup> GT PN 30 02/24/1984, Book “*Directives Issued to Chiefs of Corps of the Republic of Guatemala for 1984,*” book number 669 [Digital reference 126745. Internal AHPN registration 29362]. On page 4 of this book are the words: “*CHIMALTENANGO, FEBRUARY 24th, 1984. Dear Commanders: In this city of Chimaltenango, we inaugurate the National Meetings of the Chief of Corps of the Police with the participation of the Commanders from the Capital City and the interior of the Republic.*”

<sup>71</sup> GT PN 30 Book “*Directives from Police Command, First Semester, 1985,*” monthly meeting of PN chiefs in Cobán, Alta Verapaz, March 21, 1985, book number 1770 [Digital reference 61639. Internal AHPN registration 29365].

In accordance with the legal mandate enjoyed by the PN, its directors were governed by the Organic Law of the institution, which established its organizational dependency on the Executive Branch, with direct input from the Minister of the Interior. In legal matters it was subject to the Courts of Justice. Notwithstanding this, the documents in the AHPN examined thus far show that the principal subordination of the PN was to the National Army, a relationship not entirely exempt from controversy among military public officials. Below is a series of communications between the PN and the Army that clearly show this.

The monthly directives referred to previously, which were delivered to all the Chiefs of Corps and Departmental Headquarters by the Directorate General in 1985, clearly indicate the total obedience and subordination of the police to the Army.

At the meeting for February<sup>72</sup> of that year, orders were given that:

*“From the start, it has been made clear to the departmental Commanders that for the National Police the ultimate authority in every jurisdiction is that granted to the Commander of the Military Zone.*

*Also, there is an awareness that the Armed Institution is the standard bearer, the master of domestic tranquility and peace in the whole national territory. As the Military Commander, with a representative in each department, we should naturally collaborate with him.”*

This same document refers to other local authorities as Justices of the Peace and First Instance, who *“should be deferred to in legal matters.”* The Departmental Governor and Municipal Mayor *“are owed respect,”* and administrative and social activities are to be coordinated with them, *“but up to that point, and no further.”* The Army was granted the role of maximum local authority.

*“The Military Commander is the supervisor of the various public and private activities of each department. Within this framework, Police Commanders have been repeatedly instructed that they should work in coordination*

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<sup>72</sup> GT PN 30 02/28/1985, Book *“Directives of the Police Command, First Semester 1985,”* monthly meeting for 1985, topic 3 *“COORDINATION OF MILITARY-POLICE WORK MUST BE DONE AT A HIGH JURISDICTIONAL LEVEL,”* book number 1770 [Digital reference 61639. Internal AHPN registration 12140].

*with the Military Zone of their departments on certain tasks to be done in order to unify their plans and efforts.*

*But we have made it clear that this coordination must be carried out between Superior Officers and by lower-ranking staff.*

*(...) Normally, it is the Police Commander or his second in command who performs this coordination with the Military Commander or the Executive in each Zone, or if they so order it, this will be done with the S-2 Officer.”*

“*The Army and the Police are Sister Institutions*” was another of the themes developed in the meeting in Cobán, Alta Verapaz.<sup>73</sup> More proof, then, of how military influence constituted an axis around which the whole police institution revolved. Among the various assertions to be found in this document are the following:

*“The police is a disciplined, obedient, unquestioning institution.*

*Police discipline is the fruit of our military training. Since its creation in 1881, the National Police has been trained and organized in a military fashion. Furthermore, the Police Academy, where police officers are trained, follows military doctrine.*

*This is a good thing, as this military training that Police Officers receive makes them more aware of the importance of doing their duty; of respecting the higher ranks; above all, of adherence to the principle of loyalty.*

*(...) the vast majority of Military Officers who have temporarily commanded the Police Institution have become very fond of it.*

*In the execution of their work, Military Officers are confused with Police Officers.*

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<sup>73</sup> GT PN 30 Book “*Directives from Police Command, First Semester, 1985,*” monthly meeting of PN chiefs in Cobán, Alta Verapaz, March 21, 1985, book number 1770 [Digital reference 61639. Internal AHPN registration 29365].

*This special situation is more than enough reason to view the Institution of the Army as our elder brother, our guide, a model of behavior to be followed and imitated.*

*This relation of concepts is formulated with the aim of making it clear that there is much that unites the Army and the Police and little, if anything, that separates them.”*

Another example illustrative of the Army–PN relationship can be found in the directives of the monthly meeting for June 1985,<sup>74</sup> for which topic number 4 was titled “*ARMY AND POLICE WALK THE SAME PATH AND SHARE THE SAME DESTINATION.*” Some of the texts declare:

*(...) “The National Police has military training. Its doctrine is also military. Likewise, its organization is absolutely military.*

*We are deeply proud of our military heritage and training. So much so, that we are having difficulty getting used to the police ranks, and we like to be addressed by our military ranks.*

*As this is the bearing we are to follow, and happy as we are with the ties that unite us to the National Army, it is only natural that we continue to advance arm in arm, along the same path, towards the same destination.*

*We know that we exercise Command of the National Police because the National Army wanted it to be so.*

*This command was granted us by a Military Officer, Major General Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores, Commander in Chief of the Army.*

*In this order of things, the Army is not only our elder brother and our ally, but also our Chief. That is how we understand it and that is how it should be understood by the Chiefs of Department and the Chiefs of the Police Corps.*

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<sup>74</sup> GT PN 30 Book “*First Semester 85 Directives of the Police Command.*” monthly meeting of Police Chiefs held in the city of Guatemala on June 7th, 1985, topic 4, book number 1770 [Digital reference 61639. Internal AHPN registration 29366].

*The National Army and the National Police are united in their ideals. We share the same friends and – why not say it – we have the same enemies.*

*We share with the National Army the task of watching over the internal security of the Country and we are united in the struggle against lawlessness in all its forms.*

*So it is that, when a Military Officer or his family has a problem, we make that problem ours and help him to resolve it.”*

These “standards” were put into practice when PN officials or agents concealed illegalities (in general, normal court procedures were not followed) which involved officers, public officials connected to the military and Army collaborators or their families.

The AHPN documents have revealed a multitude of cases illustrating these practices. In two “confidential” documents sent to the Director General of the PN from the Headquarters of the Radio Patrol Corps dated May 1983, there are references to incidents on the public highway involving officers of the Army of Guatemala.

In one of these cases, the commander of Unit No. 136, inspector No. 5151, reports, “on the subject of the aggression of National Army Captain PEREZ against his domestic companion... in the Lourdes district, zone 17,”<sup>75</sup> at around 21:30 hours, stating that the aggressor, who claimed to be a National Army Captain, was under the influence of alcohol while inside an orange automobile with license plates P-246261. He immediately entered his house with his wife, paying no attention to the agents. The document continues that, half an hour later, a neighbor requested assistance from the the Commander of Radio Patrol Unit No. 273, inspector No. 223 in order to move a vehicle that was blocking the entrance to his home. At that same moment there appeared a Captain Pérez, serving in the Adolfo V. Hall Military Institute (according to the badge on his chest), in civilian dress and smelling of liquor. He moved the vehicle and withdrew from the area while verbally abusing the PN agents, saying that they were responsible for the disappearance from his vehicle of a Colt 45 caliber pistol, registration number 70G04431.

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<sup>75</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/10/1983, oficio No. 1,898 C.R.P.Bag., addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio de J. Alvarado, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 860201. Internal AHPN registration 29363].

The following day, Captain Pérez presented himself at the Radio Patrol Corps in the company of a person identified as “*confidential*” from the Presidential General Staff by the name of Isaías Orellana García, and demanding the missing weapon. The police lieutenants of this Corps, José Luis Alvarado and Ignacio Cabrera Méndez, were ordered to carry out the investigation of the case. That evening, through the “*confidential*” Orellana García, it was discovered that the weapon in question was “*in the possession of a friend of Captain Pérez, who did not give his name, and who had taken his vehicle...*”<sup>76</sup>

In relation to this, an official communication was sent to the Director General of the PN by the Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps that concludes: “*As the case involves an Officer of the Army, only this corps knows of it and as such no Court was informed, only the superior officers to whom I address this report.*”<sup>77</sup>

Another similar case recorded in a “*confidential*” document addressed to the Director General, also sent by the Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, reports that in the town of San Pedro Sacatepéquez, “*elements of the National Army discharged 4 shots against an Extra-Urban Transport with license plates C-296414 without causing any damage.*”<sup>78</sup>

The owner of the truck, Juan José Castellanos Márquez, stated that, “*As it was heading towards this city, full of passengers, it met with a National Army Jeep on its way to the aforementioned town, whose officers forced it to pull over by firing shots in the air... they then continued on their way.*” The report ends, “*No court is aware of the case.*”<sup>79</sup>

In November 1983, the Chief of Radio Patrols informed the Director General about an incident with one Porfirio Veliz Velásquez, who was carrying an Army General Staff ID card, No. 151 “G-2,” and came from Chiquimulilla, Santa Rosa. The document relates that three police agents from that Corps were called to the “Tenampa” bar in Zone 8. Here,

*“...there was an individual under the effects of alcohol firing shots in the air, and when they tried to bring him to order threatened them*

<sup>76</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/11/1983, oficio No.1,905, Ref. Of.VVQ-CR-, sent to the Director General of the PN Cavalry Colonel DEM Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, by Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Julián Hernández Jiménez, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 860201. Internal AHPN registration 29364].

<sup>77</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/10/1983, oficio No. 1,898 C.R.P.Bag., addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio de J. Alvarado, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 860201. Internal AHPN registration 29363].

<sup>78</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/06/1983, oficio No. 1,845.C.R.P.Bag., sent to the Director General of the PN Cavalry Colonel DEM Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, by the Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio de J. Alvarado Gómez, stamped *Confidential* [Digital Reference 860234. Internal AHPN registration 29369]

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

*with the same firearm, making it necessary to send further units, and thus it was that in the ensuing struggle with these officers, he himself accidentally injured the index finger of his left hand while firing a pistol he was carrying... ”<sup>80</sup>*

The report adds:

*“As a result, the ‘G-2’ section of the National Army, on discovering that it was one of their officers, arranged things via telephone with the corps he had been handed over to, along with the gun and other objects he had been relieved of, without any legal body or Court coming to know of it, solely his superiors in the Service.”*

Another case mentions a series of illegal acts committed by two “*gentlemen cadets*” of the Polytechnic School (Military Academy) on December 2nd, 1983. The report sent by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps to the Director General of the PN, with copies to the Deputy Director General, Inspector General and the Chief of Army Joint Operations, as well as to the Intelligence Section at Army Headquarters, recounts that at 20:15 hours, the cadets in question, dressed in their olive green military uniforms and carrying firearms, intercepted a Datsun car with license plates P-132154 belonging to Mr. Julio René Santizo Turcios and “*by use of threats forced him to hand over his vehicle.*”<sup>81</sup>

The officer adds that they later abandoned the vehicle outside a restaurant in Zone 9 and went on to dispossess Mr. Héctor Hernández Keesel of his car, an Alfa Romeo with license plates P-228864. When finally apprehended and identified, each of the cadets, both 17 years old, was found to have with him his beret, a backpack with harness, a Galil 5.5 6 mm rifle and, between them, five magazines containing a total of 127 cartridges of the same caliber.

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<sup>80</sup> GT PN 31 DSC 11/01/1983, oficio No. 4728/83, ref.mjm., addressed to Artillery Colonel DEM Director General of the PN, by Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio de J. Alvarado Gómez, stamped Confidential [AHPN Internal registration 9612].

<sup>81</sup> GT PN 31 DSC 12/02/1983, oficio No. 5475/83/jdrc., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio de J. Alvarado Gómez, stamped Confidential [AHPN internal registration 9605].



The officer concludes:

*“As concerns the Cadets and arms seized, they were sent to the S-2 Office at the Justo Rufino Barrios Headquarters. No legal body or court was informed.”*<sup>82</sup>

In October 1983, Carlos Elías Burgos Miralvez and Luis Alpírez Mendoza were kidnapped in the village of Trocha III de Nueva Concepción, Escuintla. With respect to this case, the Chief of the DIT, Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco, in a “*secret*” document, informed the Director of the PN, Colonel Héctor Bol de la Cruz that, by means of the investigation conducted, they managed to link Air Force Lieutenant Héctor Gómez Vivar to this event.

This “*secret*” report made by the DIT mentions that a Mrs. Michelle Padilla de Burgos reported the abduction of her husband and a Mr. Alpírez Mendoza at the PN substation in Champerico, Retalhuleu. In her complaint, Mrs. Padilla stated that both men were accosted by members of the Treasury Guard. She also asserts that witness in the Port of Champerico saw the black Toyota car, with license plates P-221596 belonging to one of the abductees, in the possession of the Treasury Guard (GH in Spanish) inside the premises of the company PESCA, SA and that the Chief of the Champerico Police Substation was involved in the kidnapping.

Treasury Guard Lieutenant Jesús Trujillo Duque reported that, at the request of Air Force Lieutenant PA Héctor Gómez Vivar, a helicopter pilot for PESCA, SA, he assigned GH agents Alberto Orellana Aldana and Félix Lima Cabrera to take the siezed vehicle and drive it to the company. In reference to Burgos Miralvez and Alpírez Mendoza, the report adds that “*Lieutenant Gómez Vivar took charge of the two individuals and their companions, informing them that an operation was in progress and that his superiors were already aware of the situation.*” Two months after the kidnapping, the same report tells that, “*Air Force Lieutenant HECTOR GOMEZ VIVAR was found at 7th Avenue, numbers 7-44, Zone 4, i.e., the city offices of PESCA SA. He was not detained owing to a prior arrangement with the Directorate of Intelligence of the National Defense General Staff, which stated that the affair had been a Counterinsurgency Operation.*”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 01/30/1984, oficio No. 0191-84 Ref. GAOB/rsl., addressed to Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol De La Cruz, Director General of the PN by Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco, Chief of the National Police Department of Technical Investigation OCN-OIPC-INTERPOL, stamped *Secret*. Attached is the report of 01/28/1984, stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 878417. Internal AHPN registration 29370].

In the Master Records Registry of the AHPN, investigators unearthed the record of Carlos Elías Burgos Miralvez, which mentions the complaint made by his wife on October 11th, 1983. The case went before the 12th Criminal Peace Court on April 10th, 1984, six months after the fact.<sup>84</sup> The report gives no indication of what happened to the kidnapped men.

Another example of the control and authority exercised by the Army over the police can be seen in the document dated August 15th, 1984 sent to the Director General by the temporary commander<sup>85</sup> of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio Alvarado Gómez. The report states that, following an automobile accident, the crews of two patrol cars attending to the scene were intercepted by a military patrol. The officer in charge ordered the policemen to proceed in favor of one of the drivers; when they told him that they had to consult their superiors, the officer “*ordered that their service weapons be removed and the police officers be taken to Army Headquarters.*” These agents and those of radio patrol No. 12183, who also reported to the scene, were duly taken to Army Headquarters. The military commander in charge apologized, saying that he “*regretted the actions of the Officer in his command, due to his lack of knowledge of traffic regulations, and immediately ordered that their weapons be returned.*”<sup>86</sup>

In May 1983, the Departmental Chief of the Huehuetenango PN, Casimiro Ordóñez Cruz, sent a report to the Third Chief and Inspector General of the Service. The report states that two officers from the Substation and four from the Treasury Guard had been “*collected*” by members of the Army in the Military Zone in order to make a “*statement.*” However, they had already been “*under arrest*” for four days as part of an investigation, despite the efforts of the Director General of the PN and the Director General of the Treasury Guard.<sup>87</sup> Other documents accompany this one: one, a “*special personal message*”<sup>88</sup> sent on May 27th by the Director General to the President of the Republic, says:

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<sup>84</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master File Record, file for Carlos Elías Burgos Miralvez, registered 10/11/1983 [Digital reference 957850. Internal AHPN registration 29371].

<sup>85</sup> Title given to those assigned a command internally.

<sup>86</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 08/15/1984, oficio No.10,220.crofrapa., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by temporary Commander of the Radio Patrol Corps, Dionicio de J. Alvarado Gómez, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 1925064. Internal AHPN registration 29372].

<sup>87</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/24/1983, oficio No.593 Ref.Of.jaah., addressed to Police Colonel Third Chief and Inspector General of the National Police by Lieutenant Colonel of Police Casimiro Ordóñez Cruz, Departmental Chief of the Huehuetenango National Police. Handwritten “*Conf 83*” [Digital reference 860724. Internal AHPN registration 29373].

<sup>88</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/27/1983, special private message, Ref.Sría.Part.veam.No.1435, addressed to the President of the Republic, Brigadier General José Efraín Ríos Mont by Cavalry Colonel Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, Director General of the PN. A special private message is defined as one “*sent from one office to another by means of a person who delivers it from hand to hand*” [Digital reference 860724. Internal AHPN registration 29374].

*“As this action was not cleared with this General and neither is there an order from a competent Judge requiring their apprehension, this attitude is characteristic, to my mind, of the crime of Kidnapping.*

*I request your intervention in order that the aforementioned police officers be returned to their posts or, if the circumstances require it, referred to the Courts of Justice.”*

The agents remained “*detained*” in the Military Zone for some twenty days. On June 10th, the Departmental Chief informed the Director General that they had “*been held by order of the local Justice of the Peace, and according to our investigations, may be involved in the death of Mr. Gundemaro Anzueto Anleu.*”

The AHPN documents show how, on multiple occasions, members of the Army exceeded the limits of their functions and exercised total control over the PN, acting illegally against a variety of people just as they did in the case cited above.

Another example showing how PN activities were subordinated to the Army is the transportation of the Jesuit priest, Eduardo Pellecer Faena, a member of the Guerilla Army of the Poor (Ejército de Guerrillero de los Pobres, EGP), following his disappearance on June 8th, 1981 and his public presentations before the media starting on September 30th of the same year. In various appearances before the press he declared his withdrawal from the guerrilla struggle and called on people to support the Government.

Four confidential documents sent from Radio Patrol Headquarters to the Director General of the PN on October, 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1981, signed by First Lieutenant Colonel of Police Benigno Cruz Buenafe and Second Chief Dionisio de Jesús Alvarado Gómez, give detailed information on the security services provided. The documents report that radio patrol No. 132, commanded by Police Lieutenant Carlos René Valle y Valle, escorted automobiles with the license plates P-83835, P-82966, P-83643, P-217220 and P-219274, of the Second Section of the National Army, used to transport the priest Pellecer Faena.

The transport operations were directed by a Major Soto of the National Army, who issued the order, en route to their destination, where the agents of the PN were to withdraw and terminate their mission. The movements were between

Army facilities and the Herrera Llerandi Hospital to the sites where a number of newspaper, radio and television interviews took place with the Emisoras Unidas network and current affairs programs such as Patrullaje Informativo and “Aquí el Mundo.”

According to AHPN documents, officers of the PN, on orders of the Director General, limited themselves to acting as security for the automobiles transporting Pellecer Faena. In their police dispatches, they make their subordination to the Army official evident.<sup>89, 90, 91, 92 and 93</sup>

The relationship established between both institutions also gave rise to disagreements and confrontations within some of the authorities. Below are some examples of these situations based on information contained in the AHPN documents.

From the period in office of Artillery Colonel, DEM Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, Director of the PN in the de facto government of General Ríos Montt, come a series of documents illustrating, on the one hand, the intention to comply with the provisions of the law and regulations of the PN and, on the other, obey the instructions and orders issued by the Army. These took precedence over any existing legal framework.

This situation is recorded in a document sent on November 11th, 1982, by the Director General of the PN to the Minister of the Interior, Engineers Colonel DEM Ricardo Méndez Ruiz requesting his intervention with the Minister of Defense. The case is explained to him of the Departmental Chief of Mazatenango, Suchitépéquez and other departmental headquarters who had received direct orders from military chiefs without going through the PN chain of command.

*“The case in question is not the first, and in different sectors of the Republic the same or similar cases have occurred where the higher-ranking authority of the National Police has been disregarded by Commanders or Officers of lower status who give direct orders to Departmental Chiefs of Police, completely forgetting that there is a*

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<sup>89</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 10/05/1981, oficio No. 5056/.Ioc. addressed to the Director General of the PN Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona by Radio Patrol Corps Chief Benigno Cruz Buenafe, stamped *Confidential* [AHPN internal registration 31566].

<sup>90</sup> GT PN 30 DSC 10/06/1981, oficio No. 5075/IJCM., addressed to the Director General of the National Police, Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona by Second Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps Dionicio de J. Alvarado Gómez, stamped *Confidential* [AHPN internal registration 31601].

<sup>91</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 10/07/1981, oficio No. 5091, Ref. Of. T. Cmg., stamped *Confidential* [AHPN internal registration 31564].

<sup>92</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 10/07/1981, oficio No. 5095, Ref. Of. T. CMG, stamped *Confidential* [AHPN internal registration 31565].

<sup>93</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 10/05/1981, oficio No. 5056/.Ioc. addressed to the Director General of the PN Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona by Radio Patrol Corps Chief Benigno Cruz Buenafe, stamped *Confidential* [AHPN internal registration 31566].

*Minister of the Interior and a Directorate General and ignoring the fact that the National Police is a separate institution from the Army and is therefore not subordinate to it.*"<sup>94</sup>

The Departmental Chief of Suchitepéquez sent the Director General of the PN a transcript of a telegram he received from the Command of the "General Manuel Lisandro Barillas" Brigade in Quetzaltenango which reads:

*"Colonel Juan Antonio Umaña, Chief of National Police. Quetzaltenango, November 10th, 1982, No. S5/008/PAAC/82.- Given you did not appear at the Hotel del Campo to attend a Seminar at the orders of superior officers, your presence is required, without any excuses whatsoever, at the Hotel Casa Contenta in order to attend the management seminar at 16:00h on November 11th, 1982 and 15:00h on November 14th, 1982. Singapore uniform. F) Lobos Zamora. Military Commander G.M.L.B."*<sup>95</sup>

The documents record a string of similar situations involving Departmental Chiefs from Huehuetenango, Chimaltenango, Baja Verapaz, and Petén. It also includes an exchange of several documents between the Director General of the PN and the Commander of the Military Brigade. The following is an example of a communication from a military chief addressed to a chief of police:

*"The current situation in the Country as a whole and particularly in those areas that are in conflict, has obliged us to work through 'DEPARTMENTAL INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION' (COORDINADORAS INSTITUCIONALES DEPARTAMENTALES, CID) offices, presided over by the Departmental Governor and supervised by the Army of Guatemala in order to prioritize the satisfaction of the needs of the populace."*<sup>96</sup>

In another document, the Military Commander reminds the Director General:

*"...it is worth considering the unique situation the country is going through as a result of subversion on the one hand and Government programs on the other... given that in the regulations and directives issued to the highest*

<sup>94</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 11/11/1982, oficio No. 5026, Ref. SG. fjms.-, sent by the Director General to the Minister of the Interior, Engineers Colonel DEM Ricardo Méndez Ruiz, with copy for the Chief of the Presidential General Staff, Infantry Colonel DEM Manuel Argueta Villalta [Digital reference 860253. Internal AHPN registration 29376].

<sup>95</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 11/11/1982, providencia No. 32183/SG.fjmz, sent to the Director General by the Departmental Chief of Mazatenango, Suchitepéquez [Digital reference 860253. Internal AHPN registration 29377].

<sup>96</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/06/1983, oficio No. S-5-355-AAAC-83, sent to the Director General by Infantry Colonel DEM Rodolfo Lobos Zamora, commander of the "General Manuel Lisandro Barillas" Military Brigade [Digital reference 860253. Internal AHPN registration 29378].

*Government officials in the Center for Military Studies by the President of the Republic, 'all Government officials and employees have an obligation to participate enthusiastically in the activities of the National Plan for Security and Development; in other words, the Rifles and Beans Plan.'*"<sup>97</sup>

Once again, the Director General of the PN communicated with the Minister of the Interior, saying:

*"I repeat what I already stated in document number 5026 of November 11th, 1982: That the undersigned is a Career Officer, that what he is honored to be and to possess he owes to the Army of Guatemala and, therefore, he would never be at odds or enter into any disagreement with the Armed Institution or any of its related parts, but rather believes firmly that the circumstances make it imperative that each Institution perform its functions without trespassing on others' territory, since one of the banes of Nations is ANARCHY, and when we encroach on the functions of others, we fall into anarchy, which is naturally damaging to the interests of our Nation.*

*Consequently, it is necessary that we convey orders through the appropriate channels and coordinate in this way in order to obtain the greatest benefits from the actions to be taken.*"<sup>98</sup>

The documentary records of the AHPN also contain evidence of the intervention of the Departmental Governor of Totonicapán, Infantry Lieutenant José Lucas Arriola, who sent the Minister of the Interior a document in order that "you may take the appropriate steps regarding Departmental Chief of Police for this department, Lt. Col. RAMIRO GARCIA PERNILLO who, on May 5th of this year, was reported to the Commander of the Military Base," in this same document is a transcription of the message he sent in May to the military commander of Quetzaltenango.

*"In compliance with your verbal orders given yesterday at the Adolfo V. Hall Institution in Retalhuleu, negative regarding collaboration with Institutional Departmental Coordination Office, failing to attend work meeting and unwilling to recognize the undersigned as immediate superior, reported to Departmental Chief of Police, Lieutenant Colonel of Police, Ramiro García Pernillo, who has stated that he was only*

<sup>97</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/24/1983, oficio No. S-5-355-AACC-83, sent to the Director General by Infantry Colonel DEM Rodolfo Lobos Zamora, commander of the "General Manuel Lisandro Barillas" Military Brigade [Digital reference 860253. Internal AHPN registration 29379].

<sup>98</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/13/1983, oficio No. 2279, Ref.SG/ciade, correspondence sent by Cavalry Colonel DEM Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, Director General of the National Police to the Minister of the Interior, Engineer Colonel DEM, Ricardo Méndez Ruiz [Digital reference 860253. Internal AHPN registration 29381].

*obeying the orders of the Director of the Service, I would appreciate your valuable intervention in order to resolve this in suitable manner. Respectfully, (signed) J.L. Arriola A. Lt. Infantry... ”<sup>99</sup>*

In another case, on July 22nd, 1980, the Commander of the Military Base at Huehuetenango reported the Departmental Chief of the PN there complaining that:

*“...he has shown little desire to collaborate with the Army, and at no time has he been concerned with maintaining relations with this very Zone, which is vitally important for the unification of efforts and to for combating subversion and criminal activity in general in this Department (...) he does not cooperate with the Army as the Treasury Guard does, which remains at all times in contact with the military units, even during operations of a different nature.”<sup>100</sup>*

On January 3rd, 1979, in a document sent by the Director General of the PN, Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona to the Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs of Corps of the capital and the departments, we read:

*“This Office regrets the occurrence of incidents among elements of the National Police, Commissioned Military, Community Mayors, Reservists, and high-ranking officers of the Army of Guatemala...*

*Recommending for one last time that there be harmony and discipline between the members of the National Police and the Army of Guatemala, abiding by the instructions already issued with this regard.”<sup>101</sup>*

On April 3rd, 1979, a document sent by the General Secretariat of the PN to Infantry Colonel DEM Manuel Antonio Callejas y Callejas, Chief of the Second Section of the EMGE, reads as follows:

*“I respectfully write to you in order to acknowledge receipt of your document No. 2-0969-1C of last March 30th, in which you were good*

<sup>99</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 07/18/1983, oficio No. 0619, ref apc.Srio/, sent to the Minister of the Interior, Colonel Ricardo Méndez Ruiz by the Governor of the department of Totonicapán, Infantry Lieutenant José Lucas Arriola A. [Digital reference 860253. Internal AHPN registration 29382].

<sup>100</sup> GT PN 30-01 S004 07/22/1980, oficio No. 0191-84, Ref. CPPG/mhr., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Infantry Colonel DEM, Commander of the “*Mariscal Gregorio Solares*” Military Zone of Huehuetenango [Digital reference 1275269. Internal AHPN registration 29383].

<sup>101</sup> GT PN 30-01 S002 01/03/1979, oficio circular No. 19 Ref.of.10°.Jssr/rfmr, sent by the Director General of the National Police, Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona, to the chiefs of corps, departmental chiefs and deputy chiefs [Digital reference 1871723. Internal AHPN registration 29384].

*enough to explain the problem an Army officer experienced with the crew of a National Police radio patrol car. I am happy to tell you that on this very day we are reiterating instructions to personnel regarding the discipline and harmony that must be maintained between members of the Army and the National Police, as issued in my circular No. 19 of January 3rd of this year... ”<sup>102</sup>*

On May 21st, 1979, Rigoberto Pineda Sánchez, Chief of the Second Corps, wrote to the Director General of the PN and, among other matters relating to administrative problems in the corps, noted:

*“These obligations are becoming more difficult as currently all the National Police are receiving military instruction from 08:00 to 10:00 daily, as the military Superiors have ordered... ”<sup>103</sup>*

Other documents found in the AHPN are two addressed to the Chief of the Second Section of the EMGE, Manuel Antonio Callejas y Callejas, by the General Secretariat of the PN. One, dated November 11th, 1980, refers to sending the Security Plan drawn up at the COCP to be executed at the National Fair.<sup>104</sup> The other reports the receipt of *“illustrated material sent to that section under your command by the Military Attache in Washington, D.C.”<sup>105</sup>*

In one file from 1983, researchers found a document containing a request from the Director General of the PN, Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol De la Cruz to the chief of the EDMN, Infantry Colonel DEM Rodolfo Lobos Zamora, that the Military Service put gas in *“six KRAVTCHIK spray cylinders”* assigned to the PN Corps in the capital for *“use from time to time during civil disturbances, should the need arise.”<sup>106</sup>* Another document sent from the PN General Secretariat to the Director of Intelligence of the EMDN, Infantry Colonel DEM Byron Disrael Lima Estrada, in that same year, is accompanied by a fingerprint report requested by that Army office.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>102</sup> GT PN 30-01 S002 04/03/1979, oficio No. 2014, Ref. OF 1º cezp, addressed to Infantry Colonel DEM Manuel Antonio Callejas and C. Chief of the EMGE Second Section by the Secretary General of the PN, no name, signature or stamp [Digital reference 1871628. Internal AHPN registration 29385].

<sup>103</sup> GT PN 30-01 S008 03/21/1979, oficio No. 1072, Ref:anv., addressed to the Director General of the PN by Rigoberto Pineda Sánchez, Chief of the Second Corps [Digital reference 833645. Internal AHPN registration 29386].

<sup>104</sup> GT PN 30-01 S002 11/19/1980, oficio No. 6679/NP., addressed to Infantry Colonel DEM Chief of the Second Section of the Army General Staff from the Secretariat General of the National Police, no name, signature or stamp [Digital reference 1857299. Internal AHPN registration 29387].

<sup>105</sup> GT PN 30-01 S002 11/18/1980, oficio No. 6673, Ref. Of. 10o. rba/cabr., addressed to Infantry Colonel and Chief of EMGE Second Section, Manuel Antonio Callejas y Callejas from the Secretariat General of the PN, no name, signature or stamp [Digital reference 1857306. Internal AHPN registration 29388].

<sup>106</sup> GT PN 30-01 S002 12/07/1983, oficio No. 5164, Ref. DG/veam., addressed to the chief of the EMDN, Infantry Colonel DEM Rodolfo Lobos Zamora by the Director General of the PN Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz [Digital reference 1857817. Internal AHPN registration 29401].



One important detail about the aforementioned control is the sending of daily reports of new developments that the police, along with other agencies, also sent to the Intelligence Office of the National Defense General Staff (Estado Mayor de la Defensa Nacional, EMDN), as the CEH report explains.<sup>108</sup>

Another type of document used was the “confidential memoranda”<sup>109</sup> used to inform the Head of State and the Minister of National Defense. They were written in the form of new-development reports by night duty officers, who initially sent them to the Director General of the PN. Also to be found are “secret memoranda” containing information on new developments involving members of the Army and the PN and other events related to the activities of the political opposition.

The AHPN has registered a significant quantity of documents containing information on coordination with Army to provide support for counterinsurgency operations and backup for military officers in forced recruitment drives.

There are files of documents sent to coordinate training and educational activities, as well as reports by the Army COC with information on the conduct of the chiefs of departmental substations. There is a record of a request for “*favours*” to avoid having charges brought against members of the military or their relatives who had been detained or captured.

The documents analyzed confirm the existence of a hierarchical power relationship between the National Police and the Army, in which the PN was obligated to be unconditionally at the service and disposal of the military, often without going through the proper command channels. Some of the most notable features of this institutional interaction that could be gleaned from the the review of the documents:

-The PN indentified the Army as the *maximum local authority*, superior to the Departmental Governor, municipal mayor and other authorities.

-Military influence was all-pervasive in the police institution. During the period studied, the Directors General of the PN were Army Officers.

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<sup>107</sup> GT PN 30-01 S002 12/07/1983, oficio No. 5165, Ref.of 4o.sirg, addressed to Infantry Colonel DEM Byron Disrael Lima Estrada, Director of EMDN Intelligence, no signature and on Directorate General letterhead. [Digital reference 1857816. Internal AHPN registration 29403].

<sup>108</sup> CEH report, chapter 2, p. 149.

<sup>109</sup> These documents are to be found mainly in the collection of the Directorate General.

-PN departmental headquarters received direct orders from the Army without the Director General having any knowledge of the fact. For failing to obey these, police officers would be detained and held in Army barracks.

-In the documents analyzed, there are clear cases of cover-ups by the PN for officers and members of the Army. The documents and confidential reports on this subject conclude that none of these cases was ever brought to the attention of the courts.

-The Army always required *support and collaboration* from the police in order to carry out counterinsurgency or other types of operations. The Director General or the police chiefs did not always take part in the planning of these activities, only meeting all requirements without objection.

-In none of the documents examined was there anything to the contrary: orders or requirements for *cooperation or support* for the Army from the PN.

## 2.4 Communication Flows

The AHPN documentation relating to communications between the PN and the Army is ample and diverse. In the period studied for this report, the purposes of this inter-institutional communication and coordination were controlled from “Guatemalan Military Intelligence,”<sup>110</sup> which was based on and structured according to the National Security Doctrine.

The report from the CEH mentions that “*Intelligence was at the core of a State policy that took advantage of the situation of armed conflict to control the populace, the society, the State and the Army itself and which was implemented through a political-military strategy based on mechanisms lying beyond the bounds of the Constitution and the Law and violated human rights.*” The report goes on to say that it was during the government of Romeo Lucas García (July 1978 to March 1982), that the system was consolidated, professionalized, and strategically strengthened. Intelligence “*attained in-depth knowledge of the guerrilla organizations; an improved share of resources of all kinds; it extended its network of informers; it used the Police for its own ends and began to exercise more effective control in the military, state and social spheres.*”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Volume II, p. 74 of the CEH Report says that this system, “*was designed with reference to the National Security Doctrine (DSN) applied to Latin America in the East-West conflict according to parameters that involved the State in a total war against Communism.*”

This system was organized by means of an effective communications network and web of informants. The CEH document gives a description of this structure, starting at the two levels that detached themselves from the Office of Intelligence (D-2) of the National Defense General Staff (EMDN). The first, formal level was comprised of members of the G-2 from the military zones, the S-2 from other military units, and by members of the National Police and the Treasury Guard. The second, informal level was made up of an extensive web of collaborators and informants where the “*confidentials*” could be found – infiltrators of public and private organizations, military officers, members of the Civil Self-Defense Patrols (PAC) and the Civil Defense Committees (popularly known as “*orejas*,” lit., “ears”).

Research in the AHPN has brought to light a variety of different types of IDs issued by the Army<sup>112</sup> (zones and military officers). Others were issued by the PN (Directorate General & Detective Corps, among others). The documents issued by the police during the leadership of General Chupina Barahona bore the following text:

*“The Director General of the National Police HEREBY DECLARES that the bearer of this document (names and personal ID) is a COLLABORATOR with his Office and as such orders that the authorities at his command and recommends that those of other jurisdictions give due consideration to the case and grant the bearer all necessary assistance when so requested.”*<sup>113</sup>

This type of ID card carried the seal of the Directorate General, the date of expiry, date of issue and the seal of the Director General. It is assumed that some of the “*collaborators*” who carried it were foreigners who had acquired Guatemalan nationality.<sup>114</sup> Others issued by the Detective Corps<sup>115</sup> in 1978 described the holder as a “*special agent*.” In 1982, the Department of Technical Investigations (Departamento de Investigaciones Técnicas, DIT)<sup>116</sup> issued them with title “*collaborators*.”

<sup>111</sup> CEH Report, Volume II, chapter 2, p. 75.

<sup>112</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 02/09/1981, ID card for the “General Aguilar Santa María” Military Zone, with jurisdiction in the departments of Jutiapa, Jalapa and Santa Rosa, the Intelligence Section confirms that the holder of this card provides services in that Military Zone as “confidential adhonorem” [Digital reference 1922273. Internal AHPN registration 29404].

<sup>113</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 April 1979, card of Bruno Philippe Hunziker Barman [Digital reference 1923326. Internal AHPN registration 29405].

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., GT PN 30-01 S020 November 1978 and April 1979, “collaborator” IDs issued to Rocco Paterno (identified by passport no. Z-1977534) and Bruno Philippe Hunziker Barman (identified by municipal ID A-1 471613) [Digital reference 1923326 and 1922586. Internal AHPN registration 29405 and 29410].

The CEH report states that the PN acted as an operational arm of Army Intelligence. *“This notable fact came to light after establishing, in many cases of human rights violations, the joint participation of members of the Judicial Police and Intelligence...”* It also presents verbatim testimony from ex-members of the G-2 describing the type of joint work that went on. For example: *“whatever the G-2 says, that’s what the National Police does”* and *“The Police were under our control.”* Respecting police work, one witness says: *“they are responsible for carrying out the Army’s orders, but it makes it dirtier.”*<sup>117</sup>

In the documents designated as *“confidential”* received by the Director General, there are documents that demonstrate the coordination activities involving the Department of Technical Investigations (DIT), the PN, and the National Defense General Staff. An example of this is the *“confidential”* report sent to the Director General by Infantry Major and DIT Chief, Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco in January 1984.

The document reads:

*“It has been discovered that in the National School, ‘RUBEN DARIO’ of Colonia Jocotales zona 6 jornada vespertina, Professors CARLOS ENRIQUE GARAVITO AND JORGE MARIO DONIS, who studied law at the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, along with Professor CARLOS DEL VALLE MERIDA, of the ‘ARENALES CATALAN’ school, next to the RUBEN DARIO, are sympathizers of various subversive groups.*

*They air negative opinions of the Army of Guatemala and the current Government, seizing any opportunity at meetings to put their communist ideas into practice.*

*They are great admirers of the law graduate COLOM ARGUETA and other leaders with communist tendencies.”*<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 11/07/1978, ID card with stamp of the Second Chief of the Detective Corps [Digital reference 1923146. Internal AHPN registration 29412].

<sup>116</sup> Another ID card was found in this person’s name in this same collection of documents, issued by the Army Intelligence Section as “confidential ad-honorem” for the “General Aguilar Santa María military zone,” in: GT PN 30-01 S020 01/05/1982, issued by the S-2 Section of Official Intelligence and authorized by the Zone Commander [Digital reference 1923148. Internal AHPN registration 29414].

GT PN 30-01 S020 08/27/82, ID issued to Mr. Juan Francisco Vielman by the National Police Department of Technical Investigation [Digital reference 1923147. Internal AHPN registration 29415].

<sup>117</sup> CEH Report, Volume II, chapter 2, p. 93.

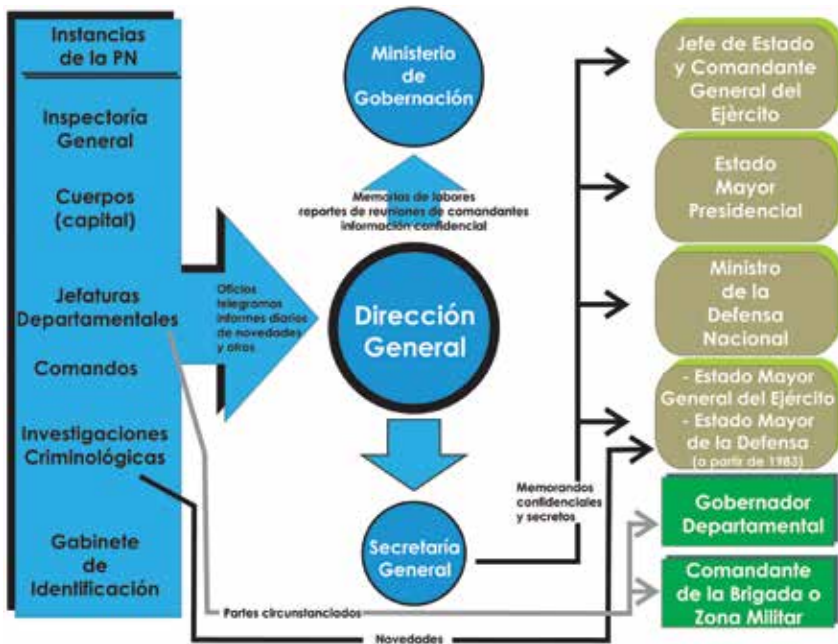
This confidential information was then sent from the Directorate General to Infantry Colonel DEM Byron Disrael Lima Estrada, Director of Intelligence of the National Defense General Staff. The document sent states: *“for your information and any purposes you may consider appropriate.”*<sup>119</sup>

### 2.4.1 Flow of Written Communication between the PN and other agencies within the Executive Branch.

Analysis of the flow of documents in the AHPN reveals that there were frequently-used channels for written communication between the PN and other agencies, particularly with the Guatemalan Army. The following outline illustrates this exchange and coordination.

**Diagram II.1**

Flow of written communication from the PN to other agencies.



Source: AHPN, self elaboration

<sup>118</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 01/18/1984, confidential information, ref. 0004-SSPM-DIT-84-rsl., attached to Oficio No. 0119-84, Ref. GAOB/rsl., sent by the chief of the DIT, Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco to the Director General, Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz [Digital reference 878387. Internal AHPN registration 29417].

<sup>119</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 01/23/1984, oficio Number 423 Ref. DG/veam., addressed to Infantry Colonel DEM and Director of EMDN Intelligence, Byron Disrael Lima Estrada from the Secretariat General of the PN, no name, signature, or stamps [Digital reference 878387. Internal AHPN registration 29418].

Agencies subject to the Directorate General of the PN produced daily, monthly and annual reports on activities carried out. They did this through “oficios,” telegrams, and daily reports on new developments (“*detailed reports*” or “*dispatches*.”) This information made it possible for the PN to establish broad social control. The documents analyzed evidence the thematic diversity they encompassed; Among others: “*report of visits of certain personages to their respective jurisdictions, development of cultural activities such as saints’ festivals, concerts, wrestling events, cinema programs, checks of departures and arrivals of individuals to and from the country, municipalities, hotels, checks of livestock, surveillance of political rallies and protests, robberies, homicide, violent deaths, common and subversive crimes.*”<sup>120</sup>

Night duty officers<sup>121</sup> at the General Secretariat were in charge of writing daily memoranda on new developments<sup>122</sup> with relevant information. Generally, these documents bore the seal “Confidential,” the date of writing, the reference of the night duty officer; depending on the presidential period, this is how they were issued. For example, confidential memoranda were addressed to the Director General under the title “*CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL.*” The information that the Director General considered relevant was sent on to the Office of the President of the Republic. Therefore, the memoranda written between 1981 and August of 1983 bore the title “*CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE INFORMATION OF PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC.*” From that date up to 1985, they were titled “*CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE HEAD OF STATE, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMY, AND MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE.*”

The series of memoranda sent to the President of the Republic is currently to be found among the documents of the Directorate General as they are copies conserved in the PN General Secretariat. These documents come from the agencies with the closest relationship with the Directorate General, and one of their main functions consisted in putting the orders issuing from there into practice.

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<sup>120</sup> Details of the AHPN’s October 2007 archival description of the documents of the Directorate General. (GT PN 30).

<sup>121</sup> Many of these memoranda contain the reference LEPE, who was one of the night duty officers at the Secretariat General during 1970. His full name was Jorge Antonio Castillo Lepe, who by 1979 was chief of the Night Duty Officers. The other chief of the night duty officers for that same year was Roberto Serrano Figueroa.

<sup>122</sup> Example of special memoranda written by night duty officers. In: GT PN 30-01 S007 10/31/1984, Of.noct.SG.Lepe, *Confidential Memorandum on new departmental developments* [Digital reference 1734251. Internal AHPN registration 29419]. GT PN 30-01 S007 01/05/1984, SG/jlrm.Oficial Nocturno. Número -1 – MC/C, *Confidential Memorandum with information for the Head of State, General Commander and Minister of National Defense. Developments in the Capital* [Digital reference 1730267. Internal AHPN registration 29420]. GT PN 30-01 S007 02/02/1979, Of. Nocturno/nppr.-, *Confidential memorandum with information for the Director* [Digital reference 1738675. Internal AHPN registration 31557].

The information included contained a selection of facts of “*the greatest importance owing to their political relevance, the activities of the PN in specific events, information on social control, searches, burglaries, criminal acts (robberies, kidnaps, public disturbances, etc.), people injured, identified and unidentified cadavers, most killed by firearms; some also report persons brought before various courts for a variety of reasons.*”<sup>123</sup> In addition, they mention activities relating to opposing political groups and coordinating operations with the Army, among other topics.

Memoranda stamped “*Secret*” and addressed to the President of the Republic generally contained information on matters relating to misdemeanors and crimes committed by agents of the police or the Army. They mention facts such as disturbances of the peace in a state of inebriation, firing shots in a public thoroughfare, people apprehended for a variety of incidents (robbery, kidnapping, extortion, threatening behavior, etc.), and people injured or killed in armed confrontations during counterinsurgency activities conducted by both institutions.

In addition, the Directorate, through the General Secretariat, centralized the correspondence from various agencies received in the form of telegrams, radiograms, “oficios”, etc. The information was selected “*according to importance, the type of context and intelligence criteria for the handling of the same.*”<sup>124</sup> It is possible to observe in much of the daily correspondence received (generally news or dispatches) text that was underlined or marked with the initials “*MC*” (meaning “Confidential Memorandum”) or “*MS*” (Secret Memorandum), which were of use in the selection of information for the writing of the memoranda.

The analysis of the documents obviously includes the flow of communication between the Director General and the Minister of the Interior. This can be seen through

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<sup>123</sup> Details of the AHPN’s 10/02/2007 archival description of the documents of the Directorate General. (GT PN 30).

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

## Photograph II.1

Confidential and secret memorandum written by night duty officers for  
 “Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and the Minister of  
 National Defense”

DIRECCION GENERAL DE  
 LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
 " GUATEMALA C. A. "

Hoja No. 1.-----  
 Of. Noc.SG-fpmo...  
 3 de Dic. de 1984.

**CONFIDENCIAL**

MEMORANDUM CONFIDENCIAL  
 PARA CONOCIMIENTO DEL SEÑOR JEFE DE ESTADO  
 COMANDANTE GENERAL DEL EJERCITO Y MINISTRO  
 DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL.

NOVEDADES DE LA CAPITAL.

- 1.- DENUNCIA DE ROBO EN REQUERITOS LEMANS.  
 Ayer a las 12.00 horas elementos del ramo se constituyeron a --  
 la 7a. av. 20-00 zona 1, lugar donde está ubicado el negocio denomi-  
 nado : Repuestos " LEMANS" lugar donde se presentó el propietario -  
 ALFREDO GARCIA quien manifestó que a las 08.00 horas se dio cuenta  
 que en horas de la noche desconocidos violentaron los vidrios de la  
 persiana y penetraron al interior donde sustrajeron mercadería con-  
 sistente en repuestos de accesorios , calculadoras, relojes, candados  
 y otros todo valorado en Q.2,660.00 del caso se informó al Juez  
 So. de Paz.-
- 2.- DESPUES DE ULTIMAR A SU ESPOSA SE HIZO UN DISPARO QUE LE OCASIONO LA MUERTE:  
 Ayer a las 00.40 horas el señor Juez So. de Paz se consti-  
 tuyó a la 16 calle y 21 avenida B° Colonia Alameda II B° zona 18,  
 vía pública con el objeto de instruir las diligencias del cadaver -  
 de la señora: NARCIA YOLANDA GARCIA DE MIRON de 28 años, quien pere-  
 ció a consecuencia de presentar cuatro heridas de bala calibre 38 -  
 que le ocasionó a eso de las 23.30 horas del día anterior su esposo  
 ANGEL MIRON REYES de 50 años, quien después de haberla ultimado con  
 el mismo revólver se hizo un disparo en la cisa derecha, siendo ---  
 trasladado al Hospital General San Juan de Dios donde falleció a --  
 las 01.40 horas el mismo Juez instruyó las diligencias, el cadaver-  
 de la mujer fue enviado al Hospital San Vicente para la autopsia de  
 ley, y el segundo fue enviado al Hospital de Accidentes del I.G.S.S.  
 para su respectiva autopsia, en el lugar de los hechos fue encontra-  
 do el revólver calibre 38 special, marca Smith Wesson No.D714658, --  
 el que quedó en poder del señor Juez.-
- 3.- PERECIO POR HERIDAS CORTANTES Y DEGOLLADO:  
 Ayer a las 09.25 horas el señor Juez So. de Paz Penal se consti-  
 tuyó a la 13 calle y 23 avenida vía Pública de la Colonia Justo-  
 Rufino Barrios zona 21, con el objeto de instruir las diligencias -  
 del cadaver de RUDY GUSTAVO FIGUEROA MUÑOZ de 32 años de edad, el  
 que presentaba heridas cortantes en diferentes partes del cuerpo y  
 degollado ocasionado por desconocidos, se le encontró la cedula A-1  
 registro No. 452,293. fue enviado al Hospital San Vicente para la -  
 autopsia de ley.-
- 4.- DESCONOCIDOS OCASIONAN DAÑOS EN BAR EL TISON:  
 Ayer a eso de las 02.15 horas cuatro desconocidos que portaban  
 armas de fuego llegaron al Bar el TISON ubicado en la 11 avenida 7-  
 50 zona 7, lugar donde intentaron penetrar pero al no abrirles la  
 puerta con las cachas de las pistolas que portaban destruyeron va-  
 rios vidrios valorados en Q.50.00 posteriormente se dieron a la fuga  
 a bordo del Jeep P-117853, pero antes de retirarse hicieron va-  
 rios disparos sin ocasionar daños, del caso se informó al Tribunal  
 la encargada de dicho negocio es la señora: MARTA AIDE NAVARRO.
- 5.- POLICIA MILITAR AMBULANTE PERECIO POR GOLPES EN ACCIDENTE:  
 Ayer a las 16.00 horas el señor Juez So. de Paz Penal se consti-  
 tuyó al Hospital de Accidentes del IGSS. con el objeto de instruir-  
 las diligencias del cadaver del señor: SANTOS CORADO ASCENCIO de 25  
 años, quien prestaba sus servicios en la Policía Militar Ambulante-  
 y con servicio en la Finca las Vegas Tiquisate Escuintla, y quien -  
 pereció a consecuencia de golpes que sufrió en un accidente de Tran-  
 sito cuando manejaba una Motocicleta, el señor Juez ordena practi-  
 carle la autopsia de ley en el mismo Centro Asistencial.

Source: GT PN 30-01 S009 12/05/1984, Of.Noc.SG-fpmo, confidential memorandum and secret memorandum for the knowledge of the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army and the Minister of National Defense [AHPN internal registration 26481].



Confidential and secret memorandum written by night duty officers for  
 “Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and the Minister of  
 National Defense”

DIRECCION GENERAL DE  
 LA POLICIA NACIONAL  
 " GUATEMALA C. A."

Hoja No. 1.-----  
 Of. Noc. 36-fpmo...  
 3 de Dic. de 1,984.

**CONFIDENCIAL**

MEMORANDUM CONFIDENCIAL  
 PARA CONOCIMIENTO DEL SEÑOR JEFE DE ESTADO  
 COMANDANTE GENERAL DEL EJERCITO Y MINISTRO  
 DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL.

NOVEDADES DEPARTAMENTALES.-

1.- VILLA CANALES, GUATEMALA:  
DOS DESCONOCIDOS PERECIERON POR HERIDAS DE BALA: Ayer a las 10.-30 horas el señor Juez de Paz se constituyó al kilómetro 18 y medio de la ruta a Boca del Monte con el objeto de instruir las diligencias de dos Cadáveres de Hombres no identificados como de 35 y 40 años respectivamente, presentaban un impacto de bala calibre ignorado en la región frontal que les ocasionaron desconocidos, fueron enviados al Hospital San Vicente para la autopsia de ley.-

2.- ANTIGUA GUATEMALA:  
DENUNCIA DE DOS DESAPARECIDOS EN EL VOLCAN SANTA MARIA DE JESUS:- Anteayer a las 23.00 horas denunció el señor: JULIO COROY MEJIA residente en el lote 23 manzana 17 Colonia Satelite Mixco, que el día --lro. del presente mes en horas de la madrugada salió de su domicilio su hijo adoptivo JULIO ELISIO TRABANINO GONZALEZ de 17 años, en compañía de 6 amigos, dirigiéndose al Volcan Santa María de Jesús ubicada en este depto, habiendo retornado únicamente 4, no así su hijo YERWIN HENE LUCAS quienes no aguardaron escalar el volcan quedándose a 3 kilometros de la cuspide, desde dicha fecha se ignora su paradero, se informo al Juez respectivo.-

3. GENOVA COSTA CUCA, QUETZALTENANGO:  
AGENTE DE LA INSTITUCION HERIDO DE BALA ACCIDENTALMENTE: Anteayer a las 19.00 horas en esta localidad en forma accidental se le disparo la Carabina al Agente ADRIAN ASCENCIO GONZALEZ, ocasionando una amputación del dedo meñique mano izquierda, por lo que fue internado en el I.G.S.S. de Coatepeque, del caso se informo al Juez de Paz Local.-

4. EL PROGRESO:  
CADAVER FUE IDENTIFICADO: Por medio de las impresiones digitales que le fueron resanadas como CANDELARIO NAJERA RAMIREZ, hijo de Justiniano Najera y Juana de Jesús Ramirez, nacido en San José Pinula el 2 de febrero de 1,954, fue identificado el cadáver de un desconocido que fue levantado en el kilómetro 38 de la ruta al Atlántico por el Juez de Paz del Municipio de San Antonio la Paz el día 29 --de Noviembre pasado, y quien pereció por heridas de bala.

5.- PUERTO BARBIOS, IZABAL:  
ESTALLA PAQUETE CONTIENIENDO EXPLOSIVOS PARA JUEGOS PIROTECNICOS- Anteayer a las 22.40 horas el señor Juez de Paz se constituyó al Edificio de Correos y Telégrafos, lugar donde momentos antes explotó el paquete No.774, que contenía explosivos para Juegos pirotécnicos, --habiéndose consumido la correspondencia que se encontraba en el interior del saco No.216, se estableció que este paquete había sido --Certificado por Concepción Solís residente en Santo Tomás de Castilla, con destinatario a Mercedes Solís, residente en Los Angeles --California. E.E.U.U. no se registraron daños personales.-

6.- ANTIGUA GUATEMALA:  
EXHIBICION NO EFECTUADA: Ayer a las 11.00 y 14.25 horas el Juez de Paz de San Lucas Sacatepequez y el Juez de Paz local se constituyeron a las detenciones respectivas con el objeto de llevar a cabo --la Exhibición Personal a favor de ALFONSO ORDOÑEZ SALOME, la cual --no se llevó a cabo en virtud que dicha persona no se encuentra detenida.-

Source: GT PN 30-01 S009 12/05/1984, Of.Noc.SG-fpmo, confidential memorandum and secret memorandum for the knowledge of the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army and the Minister of National Defense [AHPN internal registration 26481].

the annual reports sent by the head of the Police<sup>125</sup> and the official documentation he received. In February 1984, the Minister of the Interior, Gustavo Adolfo López Sandoval, made an “urgent” request to the Director General of the PN, Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz, for the operational plan for that year in order to present it to the Head of State. That same day, in document No. 0801, the police chief sent the institutional plan, stating in a section under the title “*Strategy*,” that the tactic for common criminality would continue along the same general lines, adding:

*“As for subversive criminality, the plans for strategic action are delineated by other State security forces, and the National Police comes in to contribute to the execution of these.”*<sup>126</sup>

Of the documents registered as “*confidential*,” an “oficio” of February of that same year (1984) sent to the Director General of Police by the Minister of the Interior, regarding the kidnapping of injured and long-term patients from the Roosevelt Hospital, contains the following:

*“In the course of this year – a mere two months – there have been two cases of removal of injured patients from the Roosevelt Hospital.*

*In the most recent of these, they also kidnapped a Physiotherapist, Sergio Guillermo Gómez Mendizábal; Agents of this Directorate General on duty there were unable to prevent the abduction. On the other hand, much more worrying is the fact that the kidnappers claimed to be agents of the Department of Technical Investigations.*

*In view of the fact that it is necessary to put an end to such an embarrassing situation, please issue an order that, on admission of patients injured in shootings or traffic accidents, these be placed under whatever effective and constant guard may be necessary to avoid a repetition of these cases. Further, the Personnel of Private Hospitals should be alerted so that they may maintain the same standard of vigilance for patients with bullet wounds.”*<sup>127</sup>

<sup>125</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010.

<sup>126</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 02/06/1984, reference 529 GALS/sl, oficio addressed to the Director General of the PN, Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz by the Minister of the Interior, Gustavo Adolfo López Sandoval [Digital reference 878256. Internal AHPN registration 29421].

GT PN 30-01 S020 02/06/1984, oficio No. 0801, reference Of.Noct.Rsf., oficio addressed to the Minister of the Interior by the Director General [Digital reference 860728. Internal AHPN registration 29422].

At the departmental level, the detailed dispatches were sent to the Governor and the Commander of the Brigade or Military Zone. With regard to maintaining social control, the police agency had to inform the Military Brigade of any movements of which it was aware. One example of this can be found in a copy of a document sent to the Commander of Military Zone No. 17 “General Manuel Lisandro Barrillas,” which says, verbatim:

*“...in order to inform you that it came to our knowledge through confidential sources that, yesterday evening, the administrative personnel of the CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO DE OCCIDENTE called a strike in support of their fellow administrative personnel at the UNIVERSIDAD DE SAN CARLOS DE GUATEMALA, who had requested a raise in salary.”*<sup>128</sup>

Other agencies, such as the Department of Technical Investigations (DIT), also provided reports on the latest events to the Director General of the PN, the Chief of the Second Section of the Army General Staff and to the Chief of the General Archive and Support Services (AGSA) of the Presidential General Staff (EMP). These new developments concerned themselves in particular with facts relating to petty larceny, robberies, dead bodies, people wounded, violence, stolen vehicles, protection of high-ranking officials, and Salvadorean and Nicaraguan citizens entering the country as reported by the staff of the Airport Terminal.<sup>129</sup>

The Special Operations Command (COE), or Fifth Corps, also fed “confidential” information to the Directorate General. It is possible to identify a series of documents relating to the searches carried out during 1983 in coordination with the military forces, especially with the EMP Intelligence Office. On July 26th, 1983,<sup>130</sup> Police Lieutenant Colonel Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, commander of the COE, wrote to the Director General that:

<sup>127</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 02/24/1984, confidential oficio No. 799, Ref.GALS/ydec, addressed to the Director General of the PN Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz by Minister of the Interior Gustavo Adolfo López Sandoval [Digital reference 877982. Internal AHPN registration 29423].

<sup>128</sup> GT PN 09-01 S001 10/17/1984, oficio No. 2104-84, Ref. SMS.OF.III., addressed to the Commander of Military Zone No. 17 *General Manuel Lisandro Barillas* by the departmental chief of Quetzaltenango, Armando Osorio Carias [Digital reference 607603. Internal AHPN registration 29424].

<sup>129</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/18/1983, oficio No. 223-83, Ref. GAOB/larh, addressed to the Director General of the PN Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitch by Chief of the DIT First Infantry Captain Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco, attaching “Report on Incomes and Expenditure of Important Persons at the Air Terminal” [Digital reference 854506. Internal AHPN registration 29434].

<sup>130</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 07/13/1983, oficio No. 897-Ref-QC-Eirl., sent by Lieutenant Colonel of Police Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano to the Director General of the National Police, handwritten *Conf/83* [Digital reference 854743. Internal AHPN registration 29435].

GT PN 30-01 S020 10/10/1983, oficio No. 1359/83 Ref. arcc., sent by Deputy Commander, Fifth Corps, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo to the Director General, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 996291. Internal AHPN registration 16126].

*“...yesterday at 18:00 hours, in coordination with the EMDN Intelligence Office and with the prior authorization of this Superior Command, 30 members of the this Command plus 2 officers provided perimeter security and support to elements of the aforementioned section, as they then proceeded to carry out a search of the house located on lot 532, block 19 of the Colonia Maya, zone 18.*

*...this operation was conducted because information had been obtained indicating that said house may have been serving as a guerrilla hideout; however, all this turned out not to be the case...”<sup>131</sup>*

In 1972, the PN Center for Joint Operations (COCP) was set up, with its flow of communications and coordination channeled through the radio patrol section and the FM radio of the Detective Corps. The COCP kept abreast of the operational strength of the PN, as well as the operational and administrative situation with regard to private police forces. It also delivered “confidential” information, especially that concerning the actions of insurgent groups, to the Director General and other police agencies.

#### **2.4.2 Flow of Written Communication between the Army and the PN**

The AHPN contains an important set of documents classified as “*confidential reports*,” which were sent by the Army to the PN and provided them with actionable intelligence information. With these directives, the PN carried out follow-ups, investigations or concrete operations.

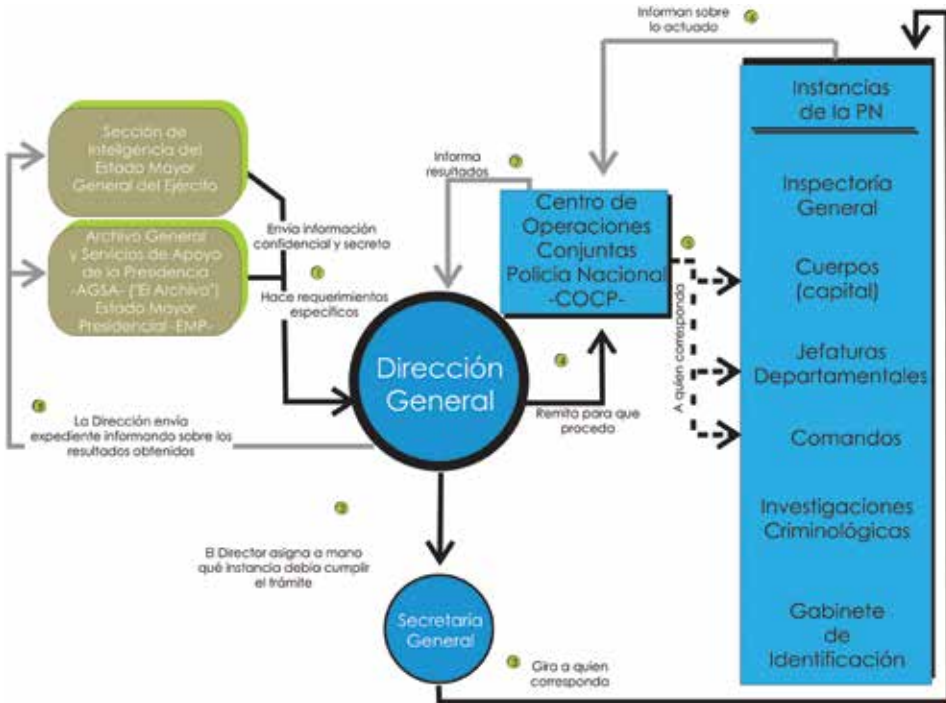
The flow of information was as follows:

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<sup>131</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 07/26/1983, oficio No. 946-Ref-QC-Eirl., sent by the Commander of the COE and Lieutenant Colonel of Police Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano to the Director General of the PN [Digital reference 854742. Internal AHPN registration 29437].

## Diagram II.2

Flow of Communication between the Army and the PN and vice versa



Source: AHPN, self elaboration

Various Army intelligence structures<sup>132</sup> would send confidential information to the Directorate General of the PN. Once this was received, the Chief Clerk of the General Secretariat would write a summary for the Director General. The Director General would indicate in written form how to proceed.

The Chief Clerk would then assign a specific officer to write up the document. In cases involving highly sensitive political information, the Tenth Officer (in some cases the Seventh Officer) would usually be assigned to write out the “providencia” (the document detailing how to proceed). Literal transcriptions of notes written in the Director General’s own hand can be read on these documents.

<sup>132</sup> Principally, the General Archive and Support Services (AGSA, an office of the Army also known as “The Regional” during the 1960s, and thereafter as “The Archive”), the Presidential General Staff, the PMA, and the Army Intelligence Section.

For example:

*“To the Chief of the Center for Joint Operations of the Service, so that he may take note of the marginal comments of the Director, who says: COC To be filed,”*<sup>133</sup> *“To the Chief of the Center for Joint Operations of the service, with the marginal comments of the Director, who says: Joint Operations to Proceede,”*<sup>134</sup> *“To the Center for Police Joint Operations, with marginal comment reading: Joint Operations, look at this for me.”*<sup>135</sup>

“Providencias” signed by the Director General or stamped by the Secretary General but with the added annotation “*BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR*”<sup>136</sup> were sent to the corresponding offices in order that they proceed in accordance with orders and that they inform the Director General of the PN directly of the results. A copy of the whole file was sent and the results of the investigations were also passed on to the intelligence structures that had provided the primary information, usually the intelligence agencies the EMGE and the EMP.

The central contents of these documents refers to intelligence and counterinsurgency activities. They are identified according to reference numbers and the date of writing. There is no letterhead and they are neither stamped nor signed. At the bottom left, they generally have the phrase “copy to:” Second Section EMGE, Directorate General of the PN, General Archive, EMP Support Services and PN Detective Corps. The CONFIDENTIAL stamp was generally placed at either the head or the foot of the document.

In some of the summaries written for the Director General by the General Secretariat of the PN, we can find text such as: “*CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FROM*

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<sup>133</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 12/08/1981, providencia No. 31184, Ref. Of. 10o. Rba/odep, addressed to the chief of the COCP from the Secretariat General of the PN, confidential documentation received [Digital reference 1924047. Internal AHPN registration 29438].

<sup>134</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 02/12/1981, providencia No. 2578, addressed to the chief of the COCP from the Secretariat General, stamped *Urgent* and the seals of the Secretariat General with signatures [Digital reference 1924291. Internal AHPN registration 29439].

<sup>135</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 02/23/1981, providencia No. 3427, addressed to the chief of the COCP, from the Secretariat General, with signatures and seals of that office [Digital reference 1924225. Internal AHPN registration 29440].

<sup>136</sup> Ópt.cit., GT PN 30-01 S020 02/12/1981, providencia No. 2578, addressed to the chief of the COCP from the Secretariat General, stamped *Urgent* and the seals of the Secretariat General with signatures [Digital reference 1924291. Internal AHPN registration 29439].

THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF;”<sup>137</sup> “CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FROM THE EMGE;”<sup>138</sup> “CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FROM THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF;”<sup>139</sup> “CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL STAFF;”<sup>140</sup> “CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC;”<sup>141</sup> or “FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL STAFF.”<sup>142</sup>

By means of these communications, lists were sent of persons accused of being “*probably subversive*.”<sup>143</sup> They also contained information regarding specific places that played host to meetings of supposedly revolutionary or union meetings (EGP,<sup>144</sup> PGT,<sup>145</sup> ORPA,<sup>146</sup> workers with the CAVISA<sup>147</sup> and others<sup>148</sup>) and noted in the margin, always, were the respective instructions to be given. For

<sup>137</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 06/05/1981, confidential information from the *Army General Staff*, No.2-0500-1C/81, no addressee [Digital reference 1924254. Internal AHPN registration 29442].

GT PN 30-01 S020 summary attached [Digital reference 1924254. Internal AHPN registration 32188].

<sup>138</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 06/19/1981, confidential information from the *EMGE*, No.2-0554-1C/81, no addressee, with copy to the National Police Detective Corps [Digital reference 1924306. Internal AHPN registration 29445].

GT PN 30-01 S020 confidential information [Digital reference 1924306. Internal AHPN registration 32190].

<sup>139</sup> GT PN 51-01 S002 01/29/1982, confidential information from the *Army General Staff*, ref. No. 2-0186-1C/82, no sender, no addressee [Digital reference 2773314. Internal AHPN registration 4887].

GT PN 51-01 S002 confidential information [Digital reference 2773708. Internal AHPN registration 32192].

GT PN 51-01 S002 01/20/1982, confidential information from the *EMGE*, ref. No.2-0091-1C-82, no sender, no addressee. These communications are stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 2773708. Internal AHPN registration 30036].

<sup>140</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 07/15/1981, confidential information from the *Presidential General Staff*, no addressee, copy to the 2nd section [Digital reference 1924334. Internal AHPN registration 29455].

GT PN 30-01 S020 confidential information [Digital reference 1924334. Internal AHPN registration 32193].

<sup>141</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 09/08/1980, confidential information from the *Archive of the President of the Republic*, no addressee [Digital reference 1924334. Internal AHPN registration 29464].

<sup>142</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 06/04/1981, confidential information from the *Presidential General Staff*, inf-66-O-E.- [Digital reference 1924347. Internal AHPN registration 29462].

GT PN 30-01 S020 confidential information [Digital reference 1924347. Internal AHPN registration 32194].

<sup>143</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/21/1980, confidential information, No.2-180-1C, no sender, no addressee, with copy to the Commander of “ZMGJRB” Headquarters, Director General and National Police Detective Corps [Digital Reference 1923969. Internal AHPN registration 29465].

GT PN 30-01 S020 05/19/1980, confidential information, No. 2-0172-1C, no sender, no addressee, copies to the Director General of the National Police and the EMP General Archive and Support Services [Digital reference 1923970. Internal AHPN registration 29466].

GT PN 30-01 S020 03/20/1981, confidential information, No. 2-0222-1C/81, no sender, no addressee, copies to the Director General of the National Police and National Police Detective Corps [Digital reference 1923958. Internal AHPN registration 29468].

GT PN 30-01 S020 03/26/1981, confidential information, No. 2-0260-1C/81, no sender, no addressee, copy to the Detective Corps [Digital reference 1923957. Internal AHPN registration 29470].

GT PN 30-01 S020 07/07/1981, confidential information, No. 2-00216/PL, no sender, no addressee [Digital reference 1923925. Internal AHPN registration 29471].

<sup>144</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/08/1981, confidential information, No. 2-0337-1C/81, copies to the Presidential General Staff General Archive and Support Services and the Detective Corps [Digital reference 1923972. Internal AHPN registration 29473].

<sup>145</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/02/1980, confidential information, No. 132/G/O.P.S., copies to the Ambulatory Military Police and the National Police [Digital reference 1923985. Internal AHPN registration 29474].<sup>146</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 06/05/1981, confidential information from the *Army General Staff*, No. 2-0499-1C/81, no addressee [Digital reference 1923987. Internal AHPN registration 29475].

<sup>146</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 06/05/1981, confidential information from the *Army General Staff*, No. 2-0499-1C/81, no addressee [Digital reference 1923987. Internal AHPN registration 29475].

<sup>147</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 05/27/1981, confidential information, No. 2-0465-1C/81, no addressee, copy to the Detective Corps [Digital reference 1923999. Internal AHPN registration 29477].

<sup>148</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 10/26/1981, confidential information from the *Army General Staff*, No. 2-1094-1C/81, copy to the “GMLB” Military Brigade, Quetzaltenango, no sender [Digital reference 1924002. Internal AHPN registration 29480].

example: “to Escuintla to proceed,” “to Detectives,” “COC, to where required,” “joint operations to Command 6, deploy, proceed, and report.”

From the archives of the Center for Joint Operations of the PN (COCP) researchers have also unearthed a series of confidential reports sent from the EMGE and the EMP. Some of these are even still in the envelopes in which they were sent bearing the heading “Army of Guatemala” or “Army General Staff.” They also carry the seal of the “President of the Republic.” *Archive of the Presidential General Staff. HEADQUARTERS.*”

On February 1st, 1982, Police Lieutenant Colonel Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra, chief of the COCP, sent one of the documents he was accustomed to send to the Chief of the Detective Corps. Word for word, it says:

*“With instructions from the Director General of the service, I am pleased to write to you enclosing (2) TWO CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS.*

1. 2-0186-1C.EMGE
2. S/N (unnumbered)EMP

*In the margin, it says: ‘COC. TO DETECTIVES,’ the first and the second ‘SEE IF CARRIED OUT.’”*<sup>149</sup>

Accompanying this are the “confidential” documents with their numbered stamp. One is numbered 0063 (NO EMP NO.), and refers to the union leaders of the National Workers’ Central (CNT), Blanca Baema Hernández and Carlos Lee Mayor, who are described as advising union organizations and in the process of preparing a meeting with representatives of the union organizations CAVISA, ACRISA, SINDICATOS BANCARIOS, TAPPAN and INCATECU. The other, from the EMGE (2-0186-1C), numbered 0064, contains information on a group of “suspected subversive individuals,” who gather at the foot of a gully in zone 3.

Documents have come to light in which the Army required other kinds of services from the PN, such as providing police and “political” records. One

<sup>149</sup> GT PN 51-01 S020 02/01/1982, oficio No.MC/515, addressed to Police Colonel and Chief of the Detective Corps by the Chief of the COCP Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra [Reference 2773314. Internal AHPN registration 4889].



example is the document sent to the Director General by Infantry Lieutenant Colonel Edgar Eugenio Méndez López, Deputy Director of Intelligence for the National Defense General Staff, which reads:

*“I have the honor to address you with the object of requesting that you give your order to the appropriate area in order to effect the prompt delivery to this Office of the Police and Political RECORDS of the persons mentioned in the list attached.”*<sup>150</sup>

The document includes an annotation by the PN which says: “Received 12/28/1983, sent same day to collect files with order URGENT” with a list attached of the names of nine people:<sup>151</sup>

*“Manuel Rámila Campos, ID A-1 Reg. 7695  
Alfredo Chávez Ramírez, ID A-1 Reg. 105033  
Feliciano Aguilar Dávila, ID A-1 Reg. 134870  
Rafael Franco Aguirre, ID A-1 Reg. 238104  
Ricardo Antonio Menéndez de León, ID A-1 Reg. 401510  
Francisco José Palacios López, ID H-8 Reg. 5259  
Tany Guy de Matteis Russo, ID A-1 Reg. 168168  
Juan Vásquez Méndez, ID A-1 Reg. 224878  
Edgar Roberto Pérez, ID A-1 Reg. 40800.”*

Their fingerprint identifications were also requested. In January 1981, Infantry Colonel and Chief of the Second Section of the EMGE, Manuel Antonio Callejas, sent a document to the Director General of the PN which said:

*“On instructions from the Brigadier General, Chief of the Army General Staff, I have the pleasure to write to you in order to send you the enclosed prints of THREE (3) cadavers delivered to the morgue of the San Marcos National Hospital on December 14th, 1980; I would be grateful if you could order this to be sent to the appropriate office in order to have them identified.”*<sup>152</sup>

<sup>150</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 12/27/1983, oficio No 2-4801-1C-yl.-, addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Infantry Lieutenant Colonel DEM, Edgar Eugenio Méndez López, Deputy Director of Intelligence, EMDN, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 1924911. Internal AHPN registration 29488].

<sup>151</sup> GT. PN 30-01 S020 undated Confidential Report [Internal AHPN registration 29489].

<sup>152</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 01/15/1981, oficio No. 2-0108-1C/kmr., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Infantry Colonel DEM and Chief of the EMGE Second Section, Manuel Antonio Callejas [Digital reference 1923911. Internal AHPN registration 29490].

Requests to register and sign “ID cards” for Army personnel were also fulfilled. On February 12th, 1981, Engineers Colonel and Chief of the First Section of the EMGE Jose Luis Ángeles Juárez, wrote:

*“...to request that you issue an order to the appropriate person in order to obtain the registration and signature of the FOUR (4) ID CARDS enclosed with this document, which belong to Personnel from the fifth group of the CIVIL AIR PATROL.”*<sup>153</sup>

Another document, sent the following day, requests that 14 IDs be registered and signed for Personnel from the fourth group of the Civil Air Patrol.

## 2.5 Functions of the PN in Security Orders and Operational Plans

An analysis of the operational plans and security orders present in the ANPN makes it possible to determine that, during the period investigated – 1975-1985 – both documents had the same distribution, as was already described in Chapter I of this report. These planning instruments were created with the aim of achieving a defined objective which formed part of the “mission.”

Within the framework of the counterinsurgency strategy, the PN constructed a basic idea of the enemy forces that would allow it to control and act against the populace, political, social and religious leaders and organizations, and guerrilla organizations operating on national territory, and particularly in the capital city. During this period, the PN security plans defined enemy forces as: “gangs of common criminals,” “subversive gangs or elements,” “gangs of subversive criminals,” “terrorist groups,” “political parties,” “politicians or their organizations,” “groups opposed to or disaffected with the Government of the Republic,” “subversive elements operating in the Republic...” among others.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>153</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 02/12/1981, oficio No. I-MMCR-0236, addressed to the Director General of the PN by Engineers Colonel José Luis Ángeles Juárez, chief of the EMGE First Section [Digital reference 1923891. Internal AHPN registration 29491].

<sup>154</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped *Secret*, sent by the division general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM and temporary chief of the Army General Staff Mejía Víctores [Reference 3262332. Internal AHPN registration 12732].

GT PN 51-01 S005 05/30/1984, Operational Plan No.001, signature and seal of the commander of the Motorized Corps, Julio Hernández Cuellar and Officer González, PN-3, stamped *Secret* [Reference 3058830. Internal AHPN registration 29492].

GT PN 51-01 S005 06/29/1984, Security Plan No. 002-84, signatures and seals of the director of EMDN intelligence, Lima Estrada and chief of the C/ICIA section of the EMDN, stamped *Secret* [Reference 3058826. Internal AHPN registration 4912].

GT PN 51-01 S005 06/27/1984, Operational Plan No. 004, stamp of the PN Directorate General and signature of Cano Pérez, PN-3, with COCP stamp and stamped *Secret* [Reference 3058825. Internal AHPN registration 4964].

GT PN 30 S003 05/04/1989, Security Order no. DI-0016-20-03-06, signature and stamp of EMDN Chief, Callejas y Callejas [Digital reference 1924039. Internal AHPN registration 29495].

In operational plan No.3 of July 1st, 1984, drawn up for the elections to the National Constituent Assembly, *enemy forces* were defined as:

*“Gangs of subversive criminals operating in national territory, political parties and groups disaffected with the Government of the Republic that propose to restrict or prevent the realization of the general election to the National Constituent Assembly...”*<sup>155</sup>

In this way, the PN portrayed political and social organizations and others seeking redress as part of the enemy within, considering them to have a share in subversion and, as such, targets of the National Security policy. Meanwhile, in its plans, friendly forces were defined as the Army, the Judicial Police, the Treasury Guard and the individual police agencies.

The PN drew up and executed different kinds of operational plans according to directives issued by the Directorate General. They were structured by the COCP and carried out by the various PN forces on commemorative dates such as PN Officer’s Day (September 12th)<sup>156</sup> and International Workers’ Day (May 1st).<sup>157</sup>

Analysis carried out at the AHPN reveals that, during this same period, the PN carried through operational plans and security orders issued by the EMGE and the EMDN Intelligence Office. The format for the operational plans sent by the EMDN usually bore the following heading:

*“INFANTRY COLONEL DEM DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE FOR THE NATIONAL DEFENSE GENERAL STAFF, IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTION NO.0017/CV. OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE GENERAL STAFF, HEREBY ISSUES SAFETY PLAN NO. 002.84,*

<sup>155</sup> GT PN 26 S001 07/01/1984, Operational Plan No 003/JAG-osh-sría. [Digital reference 572947. Internal AHPN registration 29505].

<sup>156</sup> An example is the report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps regarding the security arranged for the day of the PN parade, based on Security Plan No. 014-78 of 09/07/1978 and Instructions 001 of 08/17/1978, in: GT PN 50 S002 09/12/78, report on the National Police parade addressed to Chief of Detective Corps Francisco García, by Francisco García, Deputy Inspector No. 24 and inspector No. 1 Hugo Sandoval, Ref. 4184 [Digital reference 3243116. Internal AHPN registration 30940].

<sup>157</sup> Example of an operational plan implemented on International Workers’ Day: GT PN 26 S001 04/29/1984, Operational Plan Hurricane No. 003 [Digital reference 573340. Internal AHPN registration 29506].

*WHICH IS TO REGULATE ASPECTS OF SAFETY RESPECTING THE ARRIVAL IN OUR COUNTRY OF THE FOREIGN OBSERVERS WHO WILL WITNESS THE ELECTIONS FOR DEPUTIES TO THE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ON JULY FIRST OF THIS YEAR.*"<sup>158</sup>

The role assigned to the PN in the operational plans and security orders is one of the elements that demonstrates how the Army centralized operational coordination and issued concrete orders to the policing institution. This is made evident in documents such as the "*Excerpt, Aurora Operational Plan*" of June 1978, in which the territorial jurisdictions and operational functions of the PN in the capital city are subordinated to the Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade, identified by the name "*Alpha*," to the Honor Guard, identified as "*bravo*," to the Air Force, identified as "*Carlos*," and to the Justo Rufino Barrios Military Zone, identified as "*Delta*."<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> GT PN 51-01 S005 06/29/1984, Security Plan No. 002-84, signatures and seals of the director of EMDN intelligence, Lima Estrada and chief of the C/ICIA section of the EMDN, stamped *Secret* [Reference 3058826. Internal AHPN registration 4912].

<sup>159</sup> GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "*Aurora*," extract for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, EMGE signature and stamp of G-3 of the EMGE, Gramajo Morales and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148].

## Photograph II.2

Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "Aurora" and attached map.

~~SECRETO~~



**ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO**

REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA, C. A.

COPIA No. 02 DE 05 COPIAS  
ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO  
PALACIO NACIONAL - GUATEMALA  
22100JUB/78  
EM/com.

EXTRACTO PARA LA POLICIA NACIONAL Y LA GUARDIA DE HACIENDA

PLAN DE OPERACIONES "AURORA"

REFERENCIAS: PLANO DE LA CIUDAD CAPITAL, escala 1:12,500.  
MAPA DE LA REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA, escala 1:250,000.

**I. SITUACION.**

Objeto.

**II. MISION.**

El Ejército de Guatemala, efectuará Operaciones de Control y/o Acciones ofensivas a partir del Día "D" a la Hora "H", en los sectores de responsabilidad asignados a los Comandos Militares de la Ciudad Capital y en la Zona de Jurisdicción de las Brigadas, Comas y Batones Militares, de la República, para mantener y/o restablecer y garantizar el orden público, asegurar la institucionalidad del Gobierno.

**III. EJECUCION.**

**A. Concepto de la Operación**

(Anexo "B" Sectores de Responsabilidad de la Ciudad Capital).

**1. Maniobras**

El Ejército de Guatemala y las fuerzas de seguridad del país, ejecutarán acciones en forma coordinada, en las siguientes fases:

**a. Primera Fase: Prevención y Alarma.**

1) Las diferentes Policías del país, darán cumplimiento estricto a lo estipulado en la Ley del Orden Público, para mantener la tranquilidad y seguridad en todo el territorio o bien en las diferentes áreas afectadas.

**K. Policías del país**

**1. Policía Nacional.**

**a.** Durante la primera fase deberá cumplir estrictamente con lo estipulado en la Ley de Orden Público, para mantener la tranquilidad y seguridad en todo el territorio o bien en las diferentes áreas afectadas.

**b.** Durante la segunda y tercera fases, tomará las acciones siguientes:

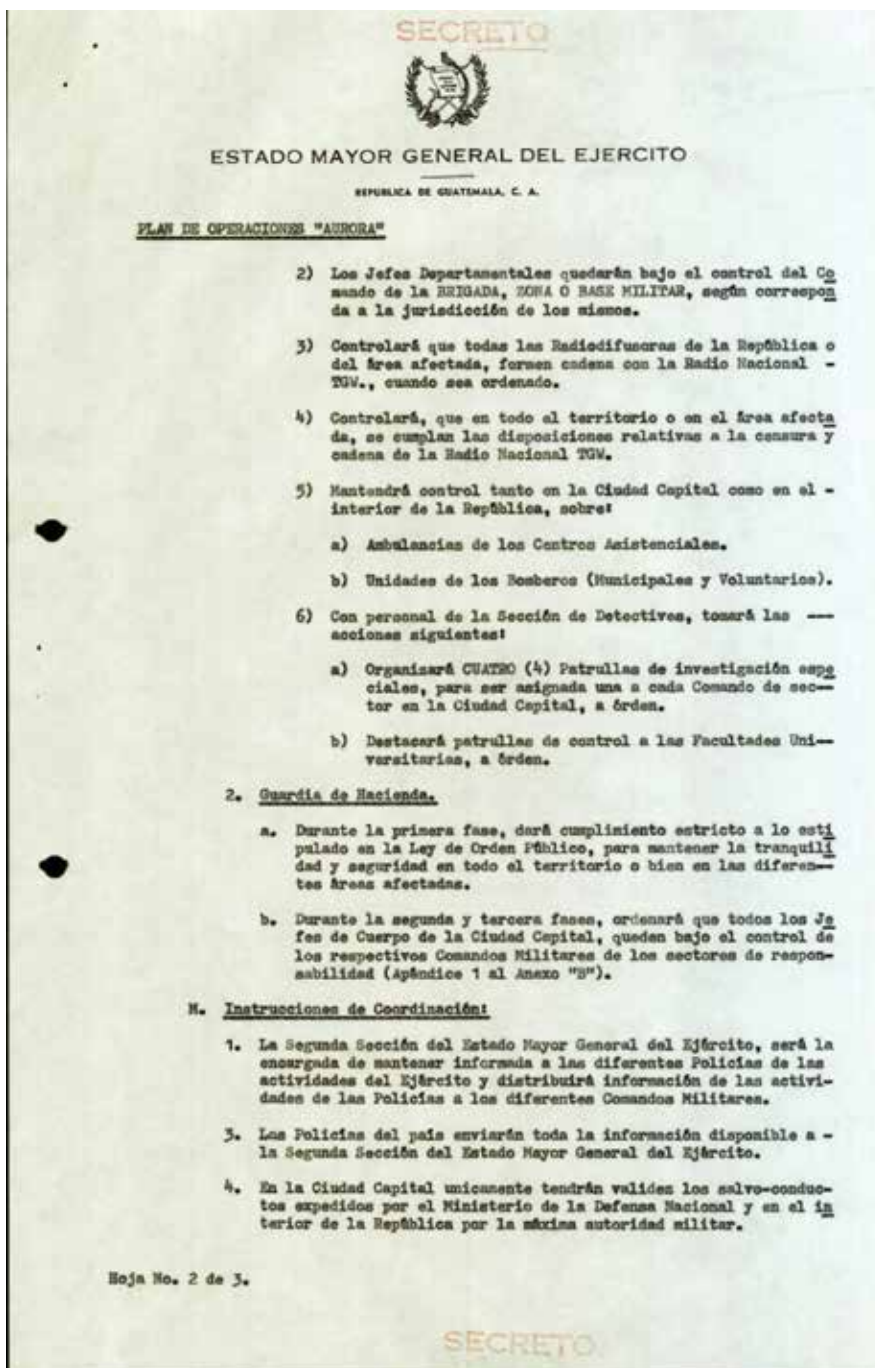
1) Ordenará que todos los Jefes de Cuerpo queden bajo la dirección del Comandante Militar de su sector de responsabilidad (apéndice 1 al Anexo "B").

Hoja No. 1 de 3.

**SECRETO**

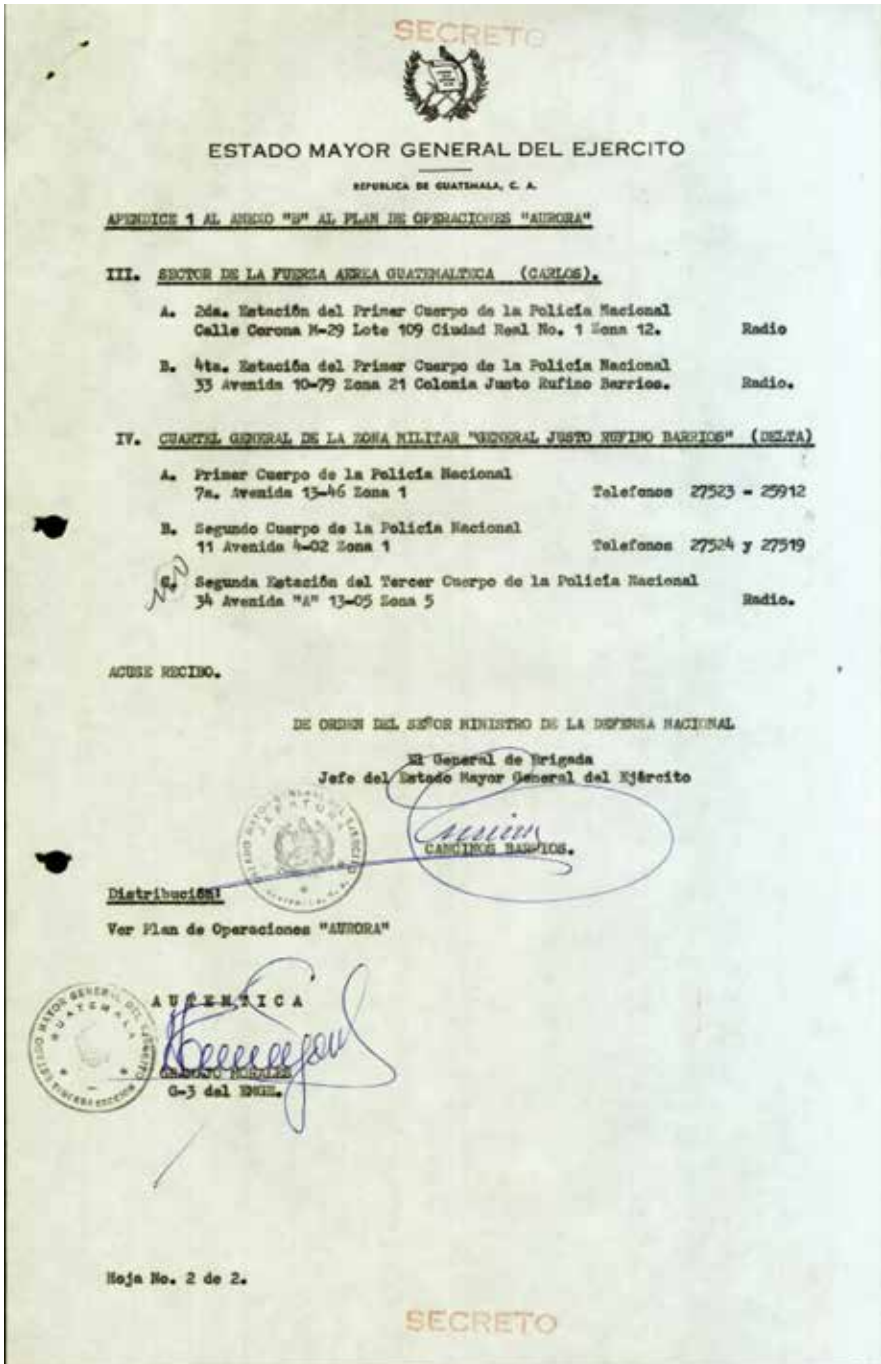
Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan "Aurora," excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].

## Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "Aurora" and attached map.



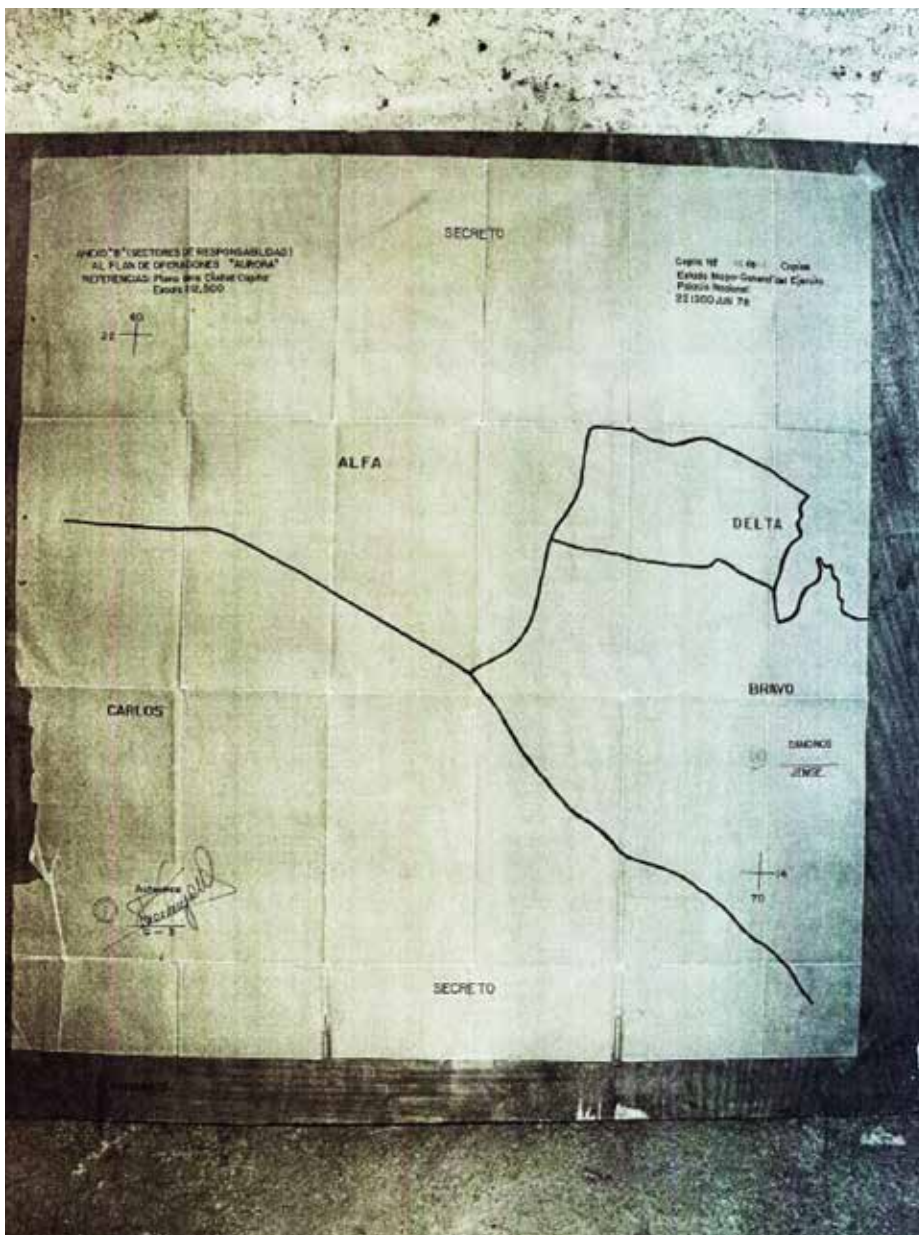
Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan "Aurora," excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped *Secrer* [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].

Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "Aurora" and attached map.



Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan "Aurora", excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped Secret [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].

Third Section excerpt Operational Plan “Aurora” and attached map.



Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan “Aurora,” excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].



Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "Aurora" and attached map.

  
**SECRETO**  
ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO  
REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA, C. A.

Guatemala, 26 de Junio de 1,978.

No. 3-"P"- 000849  
BCM.-----/ IR.

Señor Coronel de Infantería  
Director General de la Policía Nacional  
Ciudad.

Señor Coronel:

Tengo el agrado de dirigirme a usted, para hacer de su conocimiento que esta Jefatura en previsión de que en un futuro inmediato se tenga la necesidad de operar en forma conjunta con las fuerzas de seguridad del país, ha considerado conveniente enviarle la Copia No. 2 de 5 Copias del extracto del Plan de Operaciones "Aurora", de fecha 221200JUN78.

Sin otro particular, aprovecho la oportunidad para suscribirme de usted como su atento servidor.


   
Coronel de Infantería GEM.  
OSCAR HUMBERTO MEJÍA VICTORES  
Jefe Acc. del Estado Mayor General del Ejército

**SECRETO**

Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan "Aurora," excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].

Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "Aurora" and attached map.

**SECRETO**



**ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO**

REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA, C. A.

COPIA No. **02** DE **05** COPIAS  
ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO  
PALACIO NACIONAL - GUATEMALA  
221200JUN78  
SCH/ces.

**APENDICE 1** (Cuerpo y Estaciones de la Policia Nacional, en Sectores Asignados) al anexo "B" (Sectores de Responsabilidad) al Plan de Operaciones - "AURORA".

**I. SECTOR DE LA BRIGADA MILITAR "MIRISCAL JOSE VICTOR SAVAIA" (ALFA)**

A.	2da. Estación del Segundo Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 14 Calle 23-42 Zona 6 Barrio San Antonio.	Radio
B.	3ra. Estación del Segundo Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 10a. Avenida 40-03 Zona 18 Colonia Atlántida	Radio
C.	5ta. Estación del Segundo Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 18 Avenida 1-16 Zona 6 Ermita.	Teléfono 880629.
D.	4to. Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional, Calzada San Juan y 2a. Calle Zona 7.	Teléfono 43607
E.	1ra. Estación del Cuarto Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 8a. Avenida 3-71 Zona 19 La Florida.	Radio
F.	2da. Estación del Cuarto Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional Sección G. Lote 222 Colonia Milagro Zona 19.	Teléfono 43400
G.	3ra. Estación del Cuarto Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional Avenida Tecún Usum 25-45 Zona 7.	Teléfono 42974
H.	4ta. Estación del Cuarto Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 6a. Avenida 40-71 Zona 19, Col. 1ro. Julio.	Radio
I.	5ta. Estación del Cuarto Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 7a. Calle 4-60 Zona 7 Colonia Belén	Radio
J.	6ta. Estación del Cuarto Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional Fracción E Lote 43 Nonserrat I Zona 19	Radio
K.	Cuerpo de Tránsito de la Policia Nacional 15 Avenida 2-95 Zona 6	Telefonos 880664 - 880844

**II. SECTOR DE LA BRIGADA MILITAR "GUARDIA DE HONOR" (BRAVO)**

A.	3ra. Estación del Primer Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional Avenida Bolívar 40-34 Zona 3	Teléfono 26087
B.	Tercer Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 29 Calle 13-36 Zona 5	Telefonos 60203 - 67096
C.	1ra. Estación del Tercer Cuerpo de la Policia Nacional 12 Calle 19 Avenida Villa de Guadalupe.	Teléfono 680077


Noja No. 1 de 2.

**SECRETO**

Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan "Aurora," excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped Secret [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].

Third Section excerpt Operational Plan "Aurora" and attached map.

**SECRETO**



**ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO**  
REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA, C. A.

**PLAN DE OPERACIONES "AURORA"**

7. Cualquier situación no contemplada en el presente Plan o dudas que surgieren, deberán ser consultadas a la Jefatura del Estado Mayor General del Ejército, por los canales ya establecidos.

**IV. ADMINISTRACION Y LOGISTICA.**  
Omitido.

**V. MANDO Y TRANSMISIONES.**


**B. Mando**

1. El Puesto de Mando del Ejército, estará localizado en el Palacio Nacional.
2. Los Puestos de Mando de las Brigadas, Zonas y Bases Militares de la República, en sus propias sedes.
3. Cambios se notificarán en su oportunidad.

ACUSE RECIBO.

DE ORDEN DEL SEÑOR MINISTRO DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL

El General de Brigada  
Jefe del Estado Mayor General del Ejército


  
CANGIROS BARRIOS.


**ANEXOS:**

"A" Plan de Inteligencia (Omitido).  
"B" Sectores de Responsabilidad de la Ciudad Capital.

**DISTRIBUCION:**

Para su cumplimiento: Segunda Sección del Estado Mayor General del Ejército.  
Tercera Sección del Estado Mayor General del Ejército.  
Policia Nacional.  
Guardia de Hacienda.  
Archivo C.O.C.

**AUTENTICA**  
  
EMGELLO MORALES  
G-3 del EMGE.

  
Hoja No. 3 de 3.

**SECRETO**

Source: GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan "Aurora," excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped Secret [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148 and 26496].

This plan appears with the signature of the Chief of the EMGE, Brigadier General David Cancinos Barrios and that of the EMGE G3, General Héctor Gramajo Morales. Its coming into force coincided with the start of the protests against the hike in the fare of public transportation from five to ten cents. The foregoing, together with other events with a nationwide impact, reached its climax on October 20th, 1978 with the extrajudicial killing of the student leader, Oliverio Castañeda de León.

The aforementioned Plan was implemented by order of the Army High Command at various points of political activity during the period from 1978-1985. So, on August 8th, 1983, once more the Chief of the EMDN explicitly ordered the Director General of the PN to *“implement Plan Aurora, motorized patrols in your jurisdiction until further orders.”*<sup>160</sup>

The Plan’s mission was expressed in the following terms:

*“The Army of Guatemala will carry out Control Operations and/or Offensive Actions from day “D” at the hour “H” in the sectors under the responsibility of the Military Commanders of the Capital City and the Zone of Jurisdiction of the Brigades, Zones and Military Bases throughout the Republic in order to maintain and/or reestablish and guarantee public order, ensuring the institutional stability of the Government.”*<sup>161</sup>

In operational terms, the concept of the plan was based on the coordination of operations between the National Army and other Government security forces. These would act in the *“first phase,”* given the name *“prevention and alarm,”* as follows:

*“The various police forces of the country will adhere strictly to the stipulations of the Law of Public Order in order to maintain calm and security throughout the territory or in the different areas affected.”*<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> GT PN 30 S003 08/08/1983, circular 3-“M”-001033, addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Chief of the EMDN López Fuentes [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148].

<sup>161</sup> GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt of Operational Plan “Aurora,” excerpt for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, signature and stamp of EMGE G-3, Gramajo Morales and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 30027].

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

During the second and third phases, instructions were given that:

*“1. You will order all Chiefs of Corps to remain under the direction of the Military Commander of the sector for which they are responsible.*

*2. Departmental Chiefs will be under the control of the Commander of the Brigade, Zone or Military Base, according to the jurisdiction of these.*

*3. You will ensure that all radio stations within the Republic or the affected area are linked to Radio Nacional TGW (TGW National Radio) network when so ordered.*

*4. You will ensure compliance throughout the territory or in the area affected with all instructions relating to censorship and the TGW radio network.*

*5. In both the Capital City and in the interior of the Republic, you will maintain control of:*

*a. Ambulances from Medical Aid Centers.*

*b. Firefighting Units (Municipal and Volunteer).*

*6. With Detective Section personnel, you will take the following actions:*

*a. You will organize FOUR (4) special Investigation Patrols, to be assigned to each Sector Command in the Capital City, on orders.*

*b. You will deploy control patrols to the University Schools, order.”<sup>163</sup>*

In the coordination instructions, responsibility was assigned to Second Section of the EMGE (G-2) for centralizing command and for any information deriving from

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

the execution of the plan. In addition, in the event of a state of siege, the plan accepts as valid only safe conducts issued by the Ministry of National Defense in the capital city and the departments by the highest military authority.

With the implementation of the *Aurora Operational Plan*, it is possible to see how, during the period studied, the PN subordinated its functions to the requirements of the counterinsurgency strategy.

As a further illustration, among the documents of the Fourth Corps of the PN there is a set of operational plans with instructions issued by the Center for the Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO), *the most important area of operational and intelligence coordination, involving the direct participation of the President of the Republic along with the General Commander of the Army, the Minister of the Interior, the Director of the National Police, the chiefs of the Intelligence Office, the Treasury Guard and Immigration.*<sup>164</sup>

In some of these plans, there are references to “*Julio*.” It is thought that this was the code used for the handling of information sent and received by CRIO. In the plan called “*HAMACA*” (hammock)<sup>165</sup> for the control of bridges, the section of the document titled “*Recommendations*,” paragraph g) reads “*Reports on the results of the operation must be sent in a sealed envelope under the name of JULIO.-*” Another document located in the same group titled “*OPERATION TINTERO (inkwell) PATROL PLAN*,”<sup>166</sup> provides an opportunity to see one of these reports:

“*FROM CAMILO*

*TO JULIO*

*Reporting on Operations carried out today from 0830170382 to 1200170382. Inspection of Printers located in this sector, unit number 55.-*

*Having visited the Printers ‘OSCAR DE LEON PALACIOS,’ ‘FERRY,’ property of María Antonieta Suarez on 17 Av. 22-89 zone II with residence at same, established that they only print commercial stationery.”*

<sup>164</sup> Jennifer Schirmer, *Intimidaciones del proyecto político de los militares*, second edition (Guatemala: FLACSO, 2001), p. 264.

<sup>165</sup> GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Hammock*, control of bridges, capital city, no signatures, no stamps [Digital reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

<sup>166</sup> GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan for patrolling operation Inkwell*, stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573229. Internal AHPN registration 29513].

Another document contains requirements that “*Julio*” sent:

“*DON CAMILO:*

*Take note that, from today’s date and until further orders are received you must implement the Internal Defense Plan at your facilities and keep a shock force available, to be deployed on orders, and you must also choose a suitable place to be employed as a heliport.*

*JULIO*”<sup>167</sup>

Below are quotes from other examples of documents from the CRIO containing instructions and plans.

“*GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS ON COORDINATION OF DIFFERENT PLANS ISSUED BY JULIO.* -----

*I. It is necessary for S-2 senior officers and staff from the security forces to fully understand the different plans issued by the ‘CRIO’ in order to carry them out and achieve the desired objectives with the greatest possible percentage of success.*

*II. In order to achieve the desired objectives, it is also necessary for the personnel carrying them out to be aware of their mission and the specific task to be performed in each plan.*

*III. Each S-2 and those in charge of the security forces will communicate to the units executing the plan the following points, which are to be strictly adhered to:”*<sup>168</sup>

The same group of documents contains another sheet – undated and lacking any other type of visible identification – which lists the “*CRIO plans*”:

<sup>167</sup> GT PN 26 S001 03/03/1982, oficio circular No. 001, addressed to *Don Camilo* by *Julio*, stamped *Secret*. Attached is Plan for general patrols *Perú-Gato* [Digital reference 573260. Internal AHPN registration 29519]. Camilo was another codeword used in “*Plan Light*” for security and control of generator plants and electricity distribution points, referring in this case to the Fourth Corps. Other codewords used in the operational plans were: Carlos: Headquarters; Gilberto: Honor Guard; Misael: Mariscal Zavala; Artemio: FAG Tactical Security Group; Ignacio: Corps of Engineers; Arturo: PMA; Paco: First Corps; Simon: Second Corps; Dimas: School. In:

GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Light*, no sender [Digital reference 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29533]. GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Light*, signed by the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations [Digital reference 573203. Internal AHPN registration 29522].

<sup>168</sup> GT PN 26 S001 undated, *General Instructions for Coordination of the Various Plans Issued by Julio*, stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573094. Internal AHPN registration 29524].

*“CRIO PLANS:*

*DOLPHIN: Means protecting drinking water tanks.*

*BUNKER: Regroup all the area’s police.*

*MUSTANG: Put plainclothes surveillance officers on city buses.*

*BOLT DOOR: Vehicle search operations.*

*OPEN BOLT: Preventive action.*

*CLOSE BOLT: Means search all vehicles.*

*INKWELL: Means search printers in the jurisdiction to find flyers.*

*HAMMOCK: Means protect bridges.*

*FIRE: Means protect gas stations.*

*CAT PERU: Patrol the sector.*

*PETEN SOLOLA: Patrol zone 14.*

*PROGRESO SANARATE: Findings pending.*

*PANAMA NICARAGUA: Findings pending.*

*RADAR: Locate transmitters. (radio devices).*

*PYRAMIDS: Control of radio transmitter towers.*

*DON TINO: Interior defense of the building.*

*PARROT: Protect radio stations.”<sup>169</sup>*

These were actions carried out within the framework of CRIO plans dating from February 1982 on, making it possible to assume that they were implemented during the first few months of that year and analysis shows that their main objective was to pursue, control and eliminate the revolutionary movement in the city of Guatemala.

The specific operational requirements of these plans included procedures to gather and systematize information and set up “information agencies.” This referred to groups or persons commonly known to be “confidentials” or collaborators working as informers.

Also, through these plans authorization was given for the security forces to react against persons considered to be “*suspicious*” and in response to “*subversive incidents*” detected near defined objectives such as water tanks and distribution points, electricity generators and electrical distribution points, transmitter towers and antennas, bridges, gas stations and mechanical repair shops. Below are details of the mission and requirements taken from each of the plans.

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<sup>169</sup> GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Crio Plans*, stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573016. Internal AHPN registration 29525].



**Table II.2**

Operational plans issued by the CRIO or “*Julio*”  
1982<sup>170</sup>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
PLAN PYRAMID (PIRAMIDE)	Establish constant control of the transmitter antennas of radio and television stations in order to locate any subversive transmitter or transmitters that have interfered in the national radio and television broadcasting system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant control of transmission towers and search of vehicles circulating close to the transmission towers.</li> <li>• Set up information “agencies” at nearby sites to provide information on any strange movements or people.</li> <li>• Gather information concerning the name of the guard, whether there is communication with the plant, and by what means, if the guard has a radio receiver to listen to the station signal.</li> <li>• Tell the guard, if he has a radio receiver, that if he hears interference in the frequency, he should turn off the power at the plant.</li> </ul>
HAMMOCK (HAMACA)	To prevent the city’s bridges from damage or destruction by subversive elements so as to ensure that the capital’s citizens may go about their normal activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider an immediate plan to divert traffic, evacuate material to speed up traffic, or to make a rapid damage assessment in order to determine if traffic can continue or must be stopped to allow repairs.</li> <li>• Set up information “agencies” with families</li> </ul>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
		<p>living close to or under the bridges, provide them with a phone number for this purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the information agencies by issuing them with confidential IDs.</li> <li>• Send the reports on the results of the operation in a sealed envelope addressed to Julio.</li> </ul>
PLAN RADAR I	<p>To organize a thorough, systematic patrol by sectors assigned to units of the security forces in the area of zone 1.</p> <p>Search and inspect vehicles of all types where the subversives may have installed a transmitter that has been intercepting the frequencies of the radio stations located mainly in zone 1 of the capital.</p> <p>Check all suspicious vehicles with whip antennas or similar that might have a subversive transmitter installed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the characteristics of the frequency interceptions, the transmitter may be installed in a vehicle close to the transmitter antennas, or in zone 1, where the majority of radio stations are to be found.</li> <li>• According to technicians, if the transmitter is installed in a vehicle, it needs no more than a regular small antenna.</li> <li>• If the transmitter is in zone 1, instructions must be given to all the information “agencies”, collaborators, and friends to report any kind of suspicious activity or the installation of this kind of transmission device.</li> <li>• Anyone in possession of a transmitter must verify authorization.</li> <li>• When interference by subversives occurs, all vehicles in the vicinity with antennas or transmitters must be searched carefully,</li> </ul>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
		and any kind of activity, courting couple, vehicles being repaired, etc., should be viewed with suspicion.
PANZÓS SENAHÚ	Patrols of the capital city by sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checking of suspicious persons and sporadic vehicle searches. Patrol sites with facilities that may be the object to terrorist attack (bridges, power plants, fuel containers, water tanks, banks, commercial areas).</li> <li>• React to any subversive incident occurring within your patrol sector and report in order to mobilize units.</li> </ul>
PLAN LIGHT (LUZ)	Provide security and control electrical generator plants and distribution systems in order ensure the systems functions normally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization for Implementation: Headquarters, Honor Guard, Mariscal Zavala, Tactical Security Group, Engineer Corps, PMA, PN First Corps, Second Corps, Fourth Corps, and School.</li> </ul>
PLAN DOLPHIN (DELFIN)	Security for water distribution plants, treatment plants, reservoirs, pumping stations, and mechanical wells located in the capital city and surrounding areas in order to ensure they function normally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counteract any terrorist attacks on drinking water deposits.</li> <li>• Eliminate or capture individuals attempting or causing damage to such deposits, for which purpose the following measures are to be taken: Perform reconnaissance and instruct</li> </ul>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
		<p>residents to report on any suspicious activities. Sealed document: "Secret"</p>
<p>PROGRESO -SANARATE</p>	<p>Plan for patrols by sector, zone 19. Area: Fourth Corps</p>	<p>Starts and ends: 02/17/1982, 09:00 to 11:00 Montserrat I and II, Monte Verde, La Brigada, Jardines de San Juan and Belén districts. Dated: 02/16/1982</p>
<p>PETÉN- SOLOLÁ</p>	<p>Plan for patrols by sector, zone 19. Area: Fourth Corps</p>	<p>Starts and ends: 02/20/1982, 08:00 to 12:00. Las Conchas, Elgin, and La Cañada districts</p>
<p>PLAN BALD MAN (CALVO)</p>	<p>Reaction plan to counteract sabotage to gas stations in the capital city. Fourth Corps, zones 7 and 19.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior reconnaissance to enable reaction. Seek out residents in order to obtain information rapidly, provide them with a number for this purpose.</li> </ul> <p>Sealed document: "Secret"</p>
<p>PANAMA SALVADOR</p>	<p>Third plan for patrol by sector of the capital city, zone 5.  Area: Fourth Corps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish pressure in the East and Southeast sector of the capital to restrict the freedom to act of subversives in said sector.</li> <li>• Increase the presence of the security forces in the sector, provide a demonstration of coordinated force in order to neutralize the unity of the four subversive organizations.</li> </ul>
<p>OPERATION INKWELL (TINTERO)</p>	<p>Control of Printers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record the name of the proprietor and patent, names and addresses of employees and time worked there. Quantity and</li> </ul>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
		<p>type of print jobs. Check printing plates, store rooms for printed work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify that packaged material corresponds to the example.</li> <li>• Search administrative offices for subversive documents or material. On finding subversive propaganda or evidence that this was produced by the printer in question, report immediately to <i>Julio</i> and proceed to detain the staff at the print shop in order to carry out the necessary investigation.</li> </ul> <p>Document classified as “<i>Secret</i>”</p>
PERU CAT (PERU GATO)	Plan for general patrolling of zone 19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starts and ends: 02/15/1982, 17:30 to 18:30.</li> </ul>
PLAN VIELA	Search of mechanical repair shops in order to detect vehicles stolen by subversives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the owners that they have an obligation to maintain a log with the details of the vehicles being repaired.</li> <li>• Obtain the name of the proprietor, names of the employees, names of the owners of the vehicles under repair, address, phone number if the shop has one, observe the former color of the car and the color it is being painted. Note the kind of</li> </ul>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
		<p>vehicle and license plates. Remember that license plates have to be match the decals, observe whether the vehicle has bullet impacts, and make a close overall inspection, looking for “stuffing” in the lower sections, bumpers, doors, seats, etc.</p>
<p>PLAN DOOR BOLT (CERROJO)</p>	<p>Vehicle search operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When instructed to carry out a selective search, the following requirements must be met: The flow of vehicles must not be interrupted, the vehicle selected to be searched must be ordered to pull over to the side of the road and park in a place that will not interfere with the free flow of traffic in order to be searched. The vehicles searched should preferably by those transporting more than one person, camper vans, trucks, or pick-ups carrying goods or loads in general (boxes, suitcases).</li> <li>• For total searches, no one in the line of traffic may remain unsearched. In the event that the line of traffic contains officers or officials, ambulances from the fire service or charity organizations, these must be checked quickly and allowed to move on following identification of the drivers. Every effort will be made to keep the lane open for the free movement of vehicles and traffic. The search must</li> </ul>

NAME	PURPOSE	REQUIREMENTS
		<p>carried out as quickly as possible without neglecting security or details. The public must be treated courteously: <i>gentlemen, we are safeguarding the security of Guatemala.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When ordered to implement any plan, at the time specified the units must be assembled at the space specified and remain with their Corps.</li> </ul>
PLAN MUSTANG (Annex A to Plan Fire)	Make deployments on board buses on the different urban routes of plain clothes officers equipped with weapons that are discrete and effective upon firing, with the purpose of detecting and annihilating subversive elements attempting to destroy these vehicles or proclaiming armed propaganda in them.	Each unit involved must organize a minimum of 15 groups of two agents each in order to cover the routes assigned.

AHPN: AHPN, based on the information in the documents containing "CRIO Plans"

<sup>170</sup> In: GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Pyramid* [Digital reference 573182. Internal AHPN registration 29528].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Hammock*, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Digital reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Radar I* [Digital reference 573188. Internal AHPN registration 29530].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Patrol by sector, Panzos-Senahu* [Digital reference 573199. Internal AHPN registration 29531].  
 GT PN 26 S001 *Plan Light*, undated, signed by the *Center for Compilation of Information and Operations* [Digital reference 573203. Internal AHPN registration 29533].  
 GT PN 26 S001 *Plan Dolphin* [Digital reference 573226. Internal AHPN registration 29340].  
 GT PN 26 S001 02/16/1982, *Plan Progreso-Sanarate* [Digital reference 573226. Internal AHPN registration 31787].  
 GT PN 26 S001 02/20-21/1982, *Patrols Petén-Sololá* [Digital reference 573226. Internal AHPN registration 31788].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Bald Man* [Digital reference 573228. Internal AHPN registration 29541].  
 Óp.cit., GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Inkwell* [Digital reference 573229 y 573255. Internal AHPN registration 29513 and 29544].  
 GT PN 26 S001 02/15/1982, *Plan Peru-Cat* [Digital reference 573260. Internal AHPN registration 29545].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Light* [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29533].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Viela* [Digital reference 573262. Internal AHPN registration 29546].  
 GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Mustang*, annex to *Plan Fire* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

December 5th, 1982 saw the appearance of the *Fire Operational Plan*, in which the CRIO also centralized the command and whose “*suppositions*” section reads:

*The elements listed above (gangs of subversive criminals and popular mobs manipulated by subversive activists), are believed to be capable of carrying out any of the following actions:*

1. *Setting fire to or destroying mass transportation vehicles.*
2. *Strewing the streets with tacks*
3. *Setting up street barricades.*
4. *Any other violent action aimed at disrupting the normal functioning of urban transport.*<sup>171</sup>

The plan’s mission was defined in the following terms:

*“The Commands involved in this plan will carry out operations for the control and prevention of damage to collective transport in the metropolitan area, commencing on day ‘D’ at hour ‘H’ in order to preserve normal conditions of service until further orders.”*<sup>172</sup>

The paragraph on the *concept of the manoeuvre* states that the commands involved in the plan should:

*“[...] carry out their own plan for control and prevention depending on the studies and conclusions regarding the areas of conflict and based on the division of sectors provided for in the Plan Victoria 82, in two phases:*

*Phase I: PREVENTION.*

*During this phase, the Mustang plan will be implemented.*

*Simultaneously, the plan for patrols by sector will be implemented.*

*The plan for civil air patrols will be implemented.*

*The plan for fixed and vehicle surveillance will be implemented.*

*Phase II: INTERVENTION.*

*The intervention plan (Appendix B) will be implemented on order.”*<sup>173</sup>

<sup>171</sup> GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Fire*, submitted to the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*



The CEH Report mentions that:

*“...the strategy implemented during the confrontation commencing in the eighties is summed up in the mission of the Victoria 82 campaign plan, which states: The commands involved will lead operations for security, development, counterinsurgency and ideological warfare in their respective areas of responsibility, commencing on day ‘D’ at hour ‘H’ until further orders with the goal of locating, capturing or destroying subversive groups or elements in order to guarantee the peace and security of the Nation...”*<sup>174</sup>

Based on this, the assumption is that both the Fire Plan and the other plans drawn up during this period were conceived against the background of the counterinsurgency strategy. In order to implement this Plan, the participation of both ground and airborne forces was required, together with that of all the agencies of the PN.<sup>175</sup>

Instructions for coordination of the plan were issued in the following fashion:

*“-Any indications of a disturbance to the public order or attempts at sabotage must be reported immediately to CRIO by the quickest means available.*

*-Commencement of Phase II on orders.*

*-This plan shall come into operation on the day and time of the increase in the fare on the urban buses, although it may be put into action earlier on orders from the High Command if necessary.*

*-Any aspects not specified in the plan must be subject to consultation with the EMGE.”*

Study of the whole set of security plans shows that they were designed in a least two phases. One of these was a prevention and alarm phase that included reconnaissance, information gathering, surveillance and control. The other consisted in operations providing for the deployment of the various military forces and the PN at the moment when any of the anticipated *“impositions of*

<sup>174</sup> CEH Report, Volume II, chapters 1-2, p. 22 (number 779).

<sup>175</sup> JRB Headquarters, Military Brigade, Honor Guard, Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade, FAG Tactical Security Group, Army Engineers Corps, Ambulatory Military Police, Treasury Guard, BROE National Police, National Police Academy, National Police Traffic Corps, National Police Second Corps, National Police Third Corps, National Police Fourth Corps, Preventive Guard, RRMM Special Command (army reserves), Guatemalan Air Force.

*enemy forces*” became concrete according to the centralized command of the CRIO.

The kinds of plans that have come to light through examination of the AHPN documents to date were designed to be carried out in the capital city, its surrounding zones and nearby towns as part of a counterinsurgency strategy implemented throughout the national territory. The plans involved the direct participation of the military (airborne and ground forces) as well as the public security forces, including the army reserve.

Added to this, the subordination of the PN to the counterinsurgency plans and strategy was guaranteed during these operations by means of instructions listing the units, forces or commands required to participate. An example is Security Order No. 08-79, issued by Infantry Colonel DEM Temporary Chief of the EMGE, with instructions to the Major General in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense in the context of the activities celebrating May Day, 1979. Among other instructions, the order stated:

*“This Security Order is based in the sectors and jurisdictions contained in the Aurora Plan and at no time do they cease to be in effect, being capable of implementation at any moment should the circumstances so require.”*

It added:

*“The Military Commands and Services and institutions for public order will draw up their respective plans and send a copy to the EMGE, no later than 30200APR79.*

*In the event of one or various enemy impositions, the chain of information must be established immediately and in the following way:*

*-The Command, Unit or Institution receiving the information first will report to, in order:*

- a. The Head of the Army General Staff*
- b. The Second Section of the EMGE.*

- c. *The Army General Staff (C.O.C.)*
  - d. *The Presidential General Staff (AGSA)*
  - e. *COC National Police*
  - f. *The Detective Corps*
- .- *Generally, these are where information is produced.*<sup>176</sup>

For its implementation, this security order required the participation of the *General Justo Rufino Barrios Military Zone Headquarters*, the Honor Guard Military Brigade, the *Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade*, and the Guatemalan Air Force (Attack Squadron, Helicopter Squadron, Transport Squadron, Reconnaissance Squadron). In addition it included the Guatemalan Air Force Security Tactical Group, the Ambulatory Military Police, the Agricultural Veterinary and Supply Service, the Military Health Service, the Army Transmissions Service, the Presidential Guard, the National Police Guard, the Treasury Guard, and the National Police Corps of Detectives.

During this period, the PN carried out numerous activities as part of plans under the control and command of the Army and with the knowledge of the chiefs of the police institution. As a result, the PN very frequently received direct orders from the CRIO<sup>177</sup> and the Second Section of the EMGE.<sup>178</sup>

The plans indicated the specific functions of the COCP and the Detective Corps or DIT. The both appear among the final links in the information chain along which results of plans or any other incident were to be transmitted.

*“In the event of one or various enemy impositions, the chain of information must be established immediately and in the following way:*

<sup>176</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped *Secret*, sent by the division general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM and temporary chief of the Army General Staff Mejía Vicores [Reference 3262332. Internal AHPN registration 12732]. Attached is a service report on surveillance on International Workers’ Day, 05/01/1979, Ref. 1871, addressed to the chief of the Detective Corps and written by Abraham González Martínez, Deputy Inspector 23 of the National Police Detective Corps.

<sup>177</sup> GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Fire*, sent by interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and signed. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

<sup>178</sup> GT PN 51-01 S005 06/29/1984, Security Plan No. 002-84, signatures and seals of the director of EMDN intelligence, Lima Estrada and chief of the C/ICIA section of the EMDN, stamped *Secret* [Reference 3058826. Internal AHPN registration 4912] and *Plan Fire*, in: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Fire*, submitted to the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

*Command, Unit, or Institution receiving the information first will report to, in order:*

- a. *The Head of the Army General Staff*
- b. *The Second Section of the EMGE.*
- c. *The Army General Staff (C.O.C.)*
- d. *The Presidential General Staff (AGSA)*
- e. *COC National Police*
- f. *The Detective Corps.*<sup>179</sup>

The two agencies of the PN referred to were conceived as sources for the generation of information of importance to the military command. Among their functions was the production of immediate, clear reports based on the information collected in order to distribute according to the above-described hierarchy.

For example, to execute the security plan for December 1976, the Detective Corps received orders from the Director General of the PN to provide:

*"...the agents necessary to provide the required security in accordance with the coordination carried out in the 2nd Section of the E.M.G.E., wearing the badge consisting of a red pin located on the right lapel of the jacket."*<sup>180</sup>

Similarly, in the 1979 security order, the Detective Corps carried out activities of surveillance and security for the highway infrastructure in general, security for public officials and foreign delegations, patrols, and perimeter security. At the same time, it had to keep officers available in order to support Army units in accordance with the orders of the EMGE.<sup>181</sup> These practices were maintained throughout the whole period studied. Researchers are in possession of a document classified as "*Secret*" from June 1985, stamped by the EMDN Headquarters. This states:

*"FOR THE PARADE OF JUNE 30TH, 1985, SPECIAL SECURITY UNITS ARE TO USE THE FOLLOWING BADGES:*

<sup>179</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped *Secret*, sent by the division general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM and temporary chief of the Army General Staff Mejía Vítores [Reference 3262332. Internal AHPN registration 12732].

<sup>180</sup> GT PN 50 S004 12/17/1976, Security Plan No. 16-76, issued by the Director General of the National Police and created by the COCP, signed and stamped by the Director General [Internal AHPN registration 31483].

<sup>181</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped *Secret*, sent by the division general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM and temporary chief of the Army General Staff Mejía Vítores [Reference 3262332. Internal AHPN registration 12732]. Attached is a surveillance service report for 05/01/1979, Ref. 1871, addressed to the chief of the Detective Corps and written by Abraham González Martínez, Deputy Inspector 23 of the National Police Detective Corps.

01. *General Archive and Support Services to the Chiefs of Staff of The Head of State*
    - a. *Black and white button located below the jacket lapel and/or shirt collar, left side.*
  02. *EMDN Intelligence Office.*
    - a. *Black and white button located below the jacket lapel and/or shirt collar, left side.*
  03. *National Police Department of Technical Investigation.*
    - a. *Violet-colored button located below the jacket lapel and/or shirt collar, left side.*
- All Special Security Units will bear on their vehicles a Crown of fluorescent pink placed on the front and rear windshields, left side.*"<sup>182</sup>

The section on plans on administration and logistics provides for the participation of units of the PN in rapid reaction commands.

*"Units of the National Police attached to the various Commands will receive food and accommodation from the same."*

In this way, the PN turned out to be a key component for the operability of the counterinsurgency strategy centralized and led by the Army High Command. However, in terms of the internal transmission of orders, its position was not a high one. The chain of command with respect to Army agencies at the head was invariably adhered to. Within the PN, it was the COCP under the orders of the Director General that was responsible for designing operational plans and coordinating and reporting on the outcome of their implementation. In the corps and headquarters (outside the capital), the PN-3 (Office in Charge of Planning, Operations and Training) and the First Chief were in charge of drawing up a specific plan for their forces.<sup>183</sup>

### 3. Agencies and Structures for Joint Coordination

The process of modernization of the military intelligence structures becomes more evident from 1963 on, with *"a view to preparation for the prosecution of*

<sup>182</sup> GT PN 26 S001 06/29/1985, stamp of the National Defense Chiefs of Staff headquarters and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 572838. Internal AHPN registration 29554].

<sup>183</sup> GT PN 51 S002 06/30/1984 Operational Plan No. 4, stamped by headquarters and secretariat, signed by Lieutenant Colonel of Police, commander of the Second Corps, Jorge González Motta and the PN-3, Santos Aceituno López, also of the Second Corps [Digital reference 1924725-1924730]. Internal AHPN registration 32066]. GT PN 51-01 S005 06/30/1984, Operational Plan No. 002, sent by Infantry Colonel DEM and chief of the National Police Department of Technical Investigations, Edgar Eugenio Méndez López [Digital reference 3058827. Internal AHPN registration 29766].

*the internal war that would break out.*” This effectively meant the “*enthronement of the high command of the corp of army officers directly over the Government,*” according to the sociologist Manolo Vela in his study “*De peras y olmos: La Reforma de los Servicios de Inteligencia en Guatemala*” (*Of Silk Purses and Sows Ears: The Reform of the Intelligence Services in Guatemala*).<sup>184</sup> In this same document, he adds: “*From 1963 onward, United States intelligence sources contain reports of preparations for the installation of a new specialized intelligence service for the struggle against subversion.*”

The desire to guarantee the effectiveness of counterinsurgency activities and their coordination among the public security agencies and the National Army saw the creation of structures such as the Regional Telecommunications Center (CRT) and the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO). During the period studied, these agencies played an important role in guiding military and security strategy. Documents found in the AHPN demonstrate that the PN not only received explicit orders from these agencies, but also coordinated its activities with them on a constant, everyday basis.

Based on the information in the AHPN that researchers have been able to examine thus far, it can be shown that structures were created within the PN, whose fundamental purpose was to respond to the specific needs for coordination that the counterinsurgency strategy imposed. The Police Joint Operations Center (COCP) and the Special Operations Command (COE) exemplify these aims.

Nevertheless, other structures such as the Radio Patrol Corps and the Department of Technical Investigations (DIT),<sup>185</sup> which were not originally created with that purpose in mind, ended up adapting themselves to the prevailing counterinsurgency policies to the point where they came to play a significant role in the Army-National police relationship.

The requirements for control, pursuit, or capture of persons with suspected links with opposition groups such as political leaders and members of popular movements or the identification of residences possibly being used as “*guerrilla*

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<sup>184</sup> Manolo Vela Castañeda, “De peras y olmos. La reforma de los servicios de inteligencia en Guatemala,” *Análisis Estratégico*, Year I, No. 1, February 2002, pp. 67-100. (Essay presented at the XXIII International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association - LASA - Washington, D.C., Sep. 2001).

<sup>185</sup> Also known as the Judicial Police and Detective Corps, titles given to the bodies charged with carrying out criminal investigations for the PN.

*strongholds*” were numerous. Responsibility for complying with these procedures was delegated to these police structures.

### 3.1 “*The Regional*” or “*The Archive*”

In 1964, during the government of Enrique Peralta Azurdia (March 1963 to July 1966) and with the technical and financial support of the United States’ Office for Public Safety (OPS), the Regional Center for Telecommunications (CRT) was created. The creation of this intelligence office took place in the context of the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA). The CRT was identified with a variety of names assigned on each change of government, but was commonly recognized as “*The Regional*” and later also as “*The Archive*.”

Thus, in the government of Méndez Montenegro (1966-1970) it was called the National Security Service of Guatemala. In 1976 its name was changed to the Presidential Telecommunications Center (CTP), as reported by the first officer of the Officers of the Secretariat of the PN in February of that year.<sup>186</sup>

The report by the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH)<sup>187</sup> details that, under the government of General Romeo Lucas García (1978-1982), this office was given the title of Special Support and Communications Services to the President. Under the government of General Efraín Ríos Montt (March 1982 to August 1983) it was called the General Archive and Support Services to the President of the Republic (AGSA) and during the government of General Oscar Humberto Mejía Vítores (1983-1985) it was known as the Secretariat for Intelligence to the President of the Republic.

Regardless of the variety of names it was given, it always “*functioned under the auspices of the Presidential General Staff, which by 1968 had already ceased to be a special command, coming directly under the control of the President of the Republic (Constitutional Law of the Army, Decree 1782, September 5th, 1968),*” according to Vela<sup>188</sup> in his study.

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<sup>186</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/02/1976, Ref. 314, photocopy of memorandum sent to the Secretariat Officers by Officer I [Digital reference 3212603. Internal AHPN registration 29785].

<sup>187</sup> CEH Report, volume II, p. 85.

<sup>188</sup> Vela Castañeda, “De peras y olmos.”

The CEH Report mentions that the CTR facilitated communications between various police and military units. This agency was constituted within a unified system of coordination for the recording and circulation of information on persons considered to be enemies of the dominant political interests. Based on the analysis carried out by this intelligence office, plans were drawn up for police or military operations.<sup>189</sup>

The CEH explains that, through its creation, the intention was to coordinate the security systems of the countries of Central America. This joining of telecommunications was one means of supervising and restricting the circulation, financing and propaganda activities of persons suspected of being communists.

During the term of Méndez Montenegro, “*The Regional*” continued to receive support from USAID, within the framework of the police professionalization program. This consisted in facilitation of communications with police patrols in the city, on the coast and on the borders. The archival records on individuals, used for social control and flow of information, were also standardized, with an increase in communication regarding the movements and activities of members of the insurgency. All this increased the chances of receiving and providing information for military and police operations, which in other words increased the Government’s intelligence capacity.<sup>190</sup>

At a local level, “*The Regional*” used a VHF frequency to maintain contact with the National Police, the Detective Corps, the Ministry of the Interior, the Treasury Guard, the Presidential Palace, and the Army Communications Center.<sup>191</sup>

As regards the specialization in “*counterinsurgency*” attributed to this agency, according to the CEH Report, two lines of work were defined: “...*one military, headed by the Army Intelligence Section, and one political, performed by the Archive. The military line of the G-2 prioritized counterinsurgency work and the political line of the Archive preferred to work against political opponents and human rights activists.*”

The AHPN documents discovered to date that contain information on this structure cover no more than 0.5 meters in length and come mainly from the years 1970, 1971, 1974, with some from 1976. Information has come to light providing evidence of the coordination the CRT established with the Judicial Police and

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<sup>189</sup> CEH Report, volume II, Chap 2-1, p. 99.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., volume II, chap 2-1, pp. 85, 98-99.

<sup>191</sup> Schirmer, *Intimidades del proyecto político de los militares*, p. 262.



in time with the Detective Corps, specifically from 1970 on. It is clear that this agency was a source of information for decision-making at the highest levels. Organizationally, it answered directly to the President's Office and exchanged information among the highest authorities of the National Police, the Army and the Judicial Police.<sup>192</sup> A confidential document issued by the latter on April 27th, 1970, informs the CRT of the capture on April 20th of Eduardo Abran Palacios,

*“along with three other individuals, as responsible for extortion and issuing death threats to several citizens by means of letters bearing the INITIALS F.A.R, stating when submitted to interrogation that... he had had an interview with a friend... whom he knew to be a link between subversive groups currently on Mexican territory and those operating in this country, subject that on that occasion confided to him that... he had brought some weapons that he handed over to his contact in Guatemala...”*<sup>193</sup>

Usually, the CRT and the Judicial Police shared information. For example, on May 22nd, 1970, the Center requested confirmation as to whether there the Judicial Police had any record of a revolver.<sup>194</sup> The latter had a section known as the “Armory” that kept track of weapons used by members the CRT.

The PN also requested information from this office. The documentation consulted shows that the Detective Corps requested records or information on certain persons from the internal structures of the PN such as the Archive of the Directorate General and the Identification Bureau, among others. However, it also dealt with external agencies such as the Treasury Guard and the Regional Telecommunications Center (CRT).<sup>195</sup>

In its communications involving radiograms, the CRT utilized the same structure as the Central American International Security Telecommunications Network, conceived as a vehicle for information flow between the countries of the Isthmus.

<sup>192</sup> GT PN 50 S040 10/09/1970, Ref. 33, file relating to request for records from the Regional Telecommunications Center to the Judicial Police, signed by the chief of the Judicial Police Archive. Extension: on November 3rd, 1970, a Government Accord was issued establishing that the Detective Corps was to come under direct control of the Directorate General of the PN and by general order the Judicial Department was dissolved [Internal AHPN registration 30896 and 30897].

<sup>193</sup> GT PN 50 S040 04/27/1970, Ref. 11, confidential report by inspector number 3 of the Judicial Police addressed to the Chief of the Judicial Police, referred to the Second Chief for a summary to be sent in turn to the Regional Telecommunications Center [Internal AHPN registration 30898].

<sup>194</sup> GT PN 50 S040 05/20/1970, oficio No. 086 hrvh, addressed to Infantry Major and Chief of the Judicial Department by Infantry Captain Francisco Archila, chief of the CRT, with the stamp of that headquarters [Internal AHPN registration 30899].

GT PN 50 S040 05/22/1970, oficio No. 4292.vec., reference 13, addressed to the chief of the CRT, sent to Chief of Judicial Police Letona Linares [Internal AHPN registration 30920].

<sup>195</sup> GT PN 50 S040 09/06/1971, oficios No. 035, No. 103141 of 3rd. Jidg., No. 10315, references No. 6 and No. 7 [Internal AHPN registration 30901, 30903 y 30956].

The CRT worked with the section of INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization) located first at the Judicial Police and then the Detective Corps to coordinate requests for and delivery of information to other criminal investigation offices throughout Central America. The AHPN contains a series of documents<sup>196</sup> that illustrates the procedures used by INTERPOL to perform these tasks.

The Center also functioned as a link for information between the INTERPOL National Central Office in Guatemala and INTERPOL offices in other Central American countries, exchanging information on police records and individuals sought, as well as requests for investigation of persons resident in Guatemala and their activities in their countries of origin or others visited.

The CRT and the Central American International Security Telecommunications Network were not only similar in name but also in the apparently double nature of their functions, such as the exchange of information with other criminal investigation offices throughout the region. However, analysis of the AHPN did make it possible to identify some differences. The CRT also worked in coordination with national security agencies such as the Judicial Police and when the moment came, the Detective Corps. The Network dealt exclusively with country-to-country information exchanges and, in the case of Guatemala, worked in coordination with the INTERPOL section attached to the Detective Corps.

On May 13th, 1970, a radiogram bearing the CRT heading with registration number 11, sent from San Salvador, El Salvador, informed the Judicial Police of the departure that same morning, heading for Guatemala, of Carlos Arturo Reinoso Samayoa, a member of the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), who had *“participated in civil disturbances taking place in the Mexican capital, is a guerrilla (...) he is accompanied by his father, César Augusto Reinoso Portillo, who has no information.”*<sup>197</sup>

The CRT also processed the transmission on July 22nd, 1970, of a message from the Assistant Chief of Judicial Police, José María Moreira Márquez, asking detectives on duty at the Aurora International Airport to

*“...strictly control the arrival at this airport of the Swedish married couple, journalists by profession: BARBON CARABUDA*

<sup>196</sup> GT PN 50 S039 Central American Telecommunications and International Security Network GT PN 50 S040 Regional Telecommunications Center, CRT.

<sup>197</sup> GT PN 50 S040 05/13/1970, Ref. 14, radiogram sent to the Judicial Police by ANSESAL, via the Radio Section of the Regional Telecommunications Center, Office of the President of the Republic [Internal AHPN registration 30905].

*and Mrs. AUNES, and also to control any persons who might receive them, providing confidential information on all their movements.*”<sup>198</sup>

The file brings together the surveillance reports containing the names of those who went to receive them at the airport and the hotel where they stayed, as well as the itinerary of the journalists and the places they visited during their stay in Guatemala. This surveillance lasted from July 25th to 30th, when they left the country by plane.

Other documents found in the AHPN show that, in order to carry out its investigative work, the CRT also requested, via the National Police, police records on given individuals.<sup>199</sup> They prepared lists of people who allegedly belonged to “*leftist factions*,”<sup>200</sup> requested identification and location of both national and foreign individuals,<sup>201</sup> among other procedures.

An important case for assessing the capacity for social control of the CRT is that of a 17-year-old student who, in 1970, during his third year of studies was the subject of persecution. The Judicial Police intercepted correspondence addressed to him from Havana, Cuba, for which he was labeled a Communist, when actually what the young man had received was a song book.<sup>202</sup>

The file in this case collects the results of the investigation. The student underwent a lengthy interrogation by the Judicial Police. The information suggests that he was treated as a delinquent and questioned on activities he was involved in while an exchange student in El Salvador.

<sup>198</sup> GT PN 50 S040 07/26/1970, Ref. 18, Surveillance file compiled on the married couple Gitta Barbro Karabuda Giolund and Ismail Gunes Karabuda, sent to the Chief of the Registro Telecommunications Center by the Deputy Chief of Judicial Police José María Moreira Márquez [Internal AHPN registration 31234].

<sup>199</sup> GT PN 50 S040 01/13/1970 ref. 1, oficio 396, sent to the chief of the CRT, Engineer Mauricio R. Izquierdo, by Secretary of the Judicial Police, Jorge Jiménez Solís [Internal AHPN registration 30907].

GT PN 50 S040 05/11/1970, ref. 12, oficio No. 3925/mtrm., sent to the chief of the CRT, by the second chief of the Judicial Police Archives [Internal AHPN registration 30948].

GT PN 50 S040 05/20/1970, ref. 15, oficio No. 4270, sent to the chief of the CRT by the Secretary of the Judicial Police, Jorge Jiménez Solís [Internal AHPN registration 30949].

GT PN 50 S040 08/11/1970, ref. 23 sent to the Secretary of the CRT by Fernando Zambrano Díaz, chief of Judicial Police Archives [Internal AHPN registration 30950].

<sup>200</sup> GT PN 50 S040 04/06/1970, ref. No. 9, stamp of the Judicial Police Archive, in handwriting, the phrase: “*Regional Telecommunications Center*” and the text “*Recorded on file as belonging to leftist factions.*” A list of approximately 275 people appears in a document titled *List of Persons Currently on File as Belonging to Leftist Factions* [Internal AHPN registration 12587].

<sup>201</sup> GT PN 50 S040 09/03/1970, Ref. 26 oficio 8090/jbdd., addressed to the chief of the CRT by Lieutenant Colonel of Police Vicente Morales Monterroso, Chief of the Judicial Police [Internal AHPN registration 30921].

<sup>202</sup> GT PN 50 S040 11/21/1970, Ref. 42, oficio No. 12068/mtrm., oficio sent to the Regional Telecommunications Center by Lt. Colonel of Police, Vicente Morales Monterroso, chief of Judicial Police [Internal AHPN registration 30922].

The report on the interrogation to which he was subjected states that the youth listened to:

*“RADIO HAVANA INTERNATIONAL CUBA... where they announced that they were giving away song books and magazines, and as always, he tuned in at 11:00 in the morning on shortwave.”*<sup>203</sup>

At the conclusion of the information sent to the CRT by the Judicial Police, it explains that *“there is proof that the subject of the investigation has no friends in any foreign country, and is from a low-income family.”*

By means of the documents found in the AHPN relating to the CRT it is possible to identify some of the officers in charge of this agency. Among these are Engineers Major Mauricio R. Izquierdo Gudiel,<sup>204</sup> Infantry Captain Francisco Rolando Archila,<sup>205</sup> Infantry Major Elías O. Ramírez C.,<sup>206</sup> Lieutenant Colonel of Infantry DEM César Ramón Quinteros A.<sup>207</sup>

### 3.2 The Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO)

The Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) signals as one of the events demonstrating the importance of intelligence work during the 1980s, the creation of the School of Intelligence in 1980 and the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO) in 1981.<sup>208</sup>

As mentioned earlier, during the years 1975-1985, CRIO functioned as an agency simultaneously involving the participation of the President of the Republic and the Commander in Chief of the Army, the Minister of National Defense, the Minister of

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> GT PN 50 S040 01/13/1970 ref. 1, oficio 396, sent to the chief of the CRT, Engineer Mauricio R. Izquierdo, by Secretary of the Judicial Police, Jorge Jiménez Solís [Internal AHPN registration 30907].

Also in: NSA, Declassified Documents, Names of units and officers: In charge of the CRT for a few months between 1969 and 1970; when his mandate ended, he took over as Director General of the PN.

<sup>205</sup> GT PN 50 S040 02/03/1970 No. 028 hrvh., addressed to Infantry Major and Chief of the Judicial Department by Infantry Captain Francisco Rolando Archila M., chief of the CRT. His name does not appear in the NSA Declassified Documents [Internal AHPN 31559].

<sup>206</sup> GT PN 50 S040 11/13/1970, Ref. 39, oficio No. 11733, oficio sent to Infantry Major Elías O. Ramírez C., chief of the CRT by Humberto Carpio Lacanal, Secretary General of the Judicial Police. [Internal AHPN registration 30924]. According to the NSA declassified documents, he was in charge of the CRT until October 1975. In 1968, he was an Intelligence Officer (S2).

<sup>207</sup> GT PN 50 S040 04/30/1976, reference No. 6, Chief of the CRT requesting information from the Chief of the Detective Corps [Internal AHPN registration 29733].

<sup>208</sup> CEH Report, Volume II, chapter 2, p. 109. He has been identified in other studies, such as that by Jennifer Schirmer, under the same name. In the AHPN documentation, it is referred to as the “Central de Reunión de Información y Operaciones” while the Army of Guatemala refers to it as the “Central de Recopilación de Información y Operaciones.”

the Interior, the Director General of the National Police and the chiefs of Intelligence and Immigration, as well as the Treasury Guard.<sup>209</sup>

At the start of the 1980s, intelligence work was carried out by various State security agencies; with the aim of coordinating and controlling this task and “*in order to make urban counterinsurgency operations more flexible and efficient by means of better-coordinated action on the part of the security agencies,*” the CRIO was born. This unit coordinated and controlled the operations of uniformed groups doing intelligence work, such as the Ambulatory Military Police (PMA), the PN, and the Treasury Guard. These functions of the CRIO were also carried out with the PN, to the extent that police personnel were placed at its disposal.<sup>210</sup>

The section on “Functions of the PN in Security Orders and Operational Plans” in this chapter presents some examples recorded in the AHPN that explain the participation of the PN in these activities ordered by the EMGE via the CRIO. These documents, particularly those from the first half of 1982, confirm that the name “*Julio*” or “*don Julio,*” is a reference to the CRIO as a body or a high-ranking officer within it.

Other examples discovered are the “*General Instructions for Coordination of Different Plans Issued by Julio*” (lacking a letterhead, date, or signature) and another which reads *CRIO plans,*” both of which refer to the same plans: Dolphin, Bunker, Mustang, Door Bolt, Open Bolt, Close Bolt, Inkwell, Hammock, Fire, Perú-Gato, Petén-Sololá, Progreso-Sanarate, Panamá-Nicaragua, Radar, Pyramids, Don Tino, and Parrot.<sup>211</sup>

The security orders and operational plans issued by the EMGE and the EMP, specifically those from 1981 onward, established procedures for the acceleration and perfection of the deployment of all the security forces to given locations. In that year, CRIO coordinated rapid manoeuvres throughout the capital and during 1982 established itself as the point of command for counterinsurgency operations. Security plans such as Fire, along with others already mentioned, are an example of this kind of coordination.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>209</sup> Schirmer, *Intimidaciones del proyecto político de los militares*, p. 264.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Crio Plans*, stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573016. Internal AHPN registration 29525].

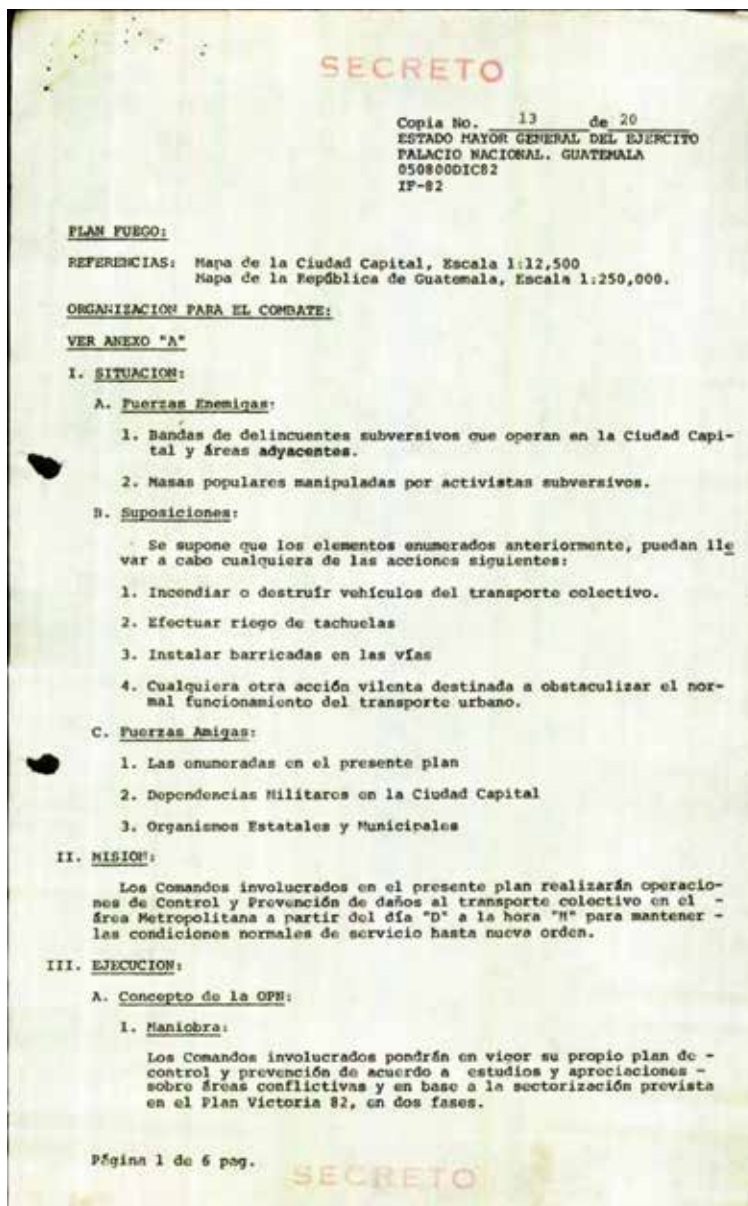
<sup>212</sup> GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Fire*, submitted to the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Light* [Digital reference 573203. Internal AHPN registration 29522].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, *Plan Hammock*, control of bridges, capital city, no signatures, no seals [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

## Photograph II.3

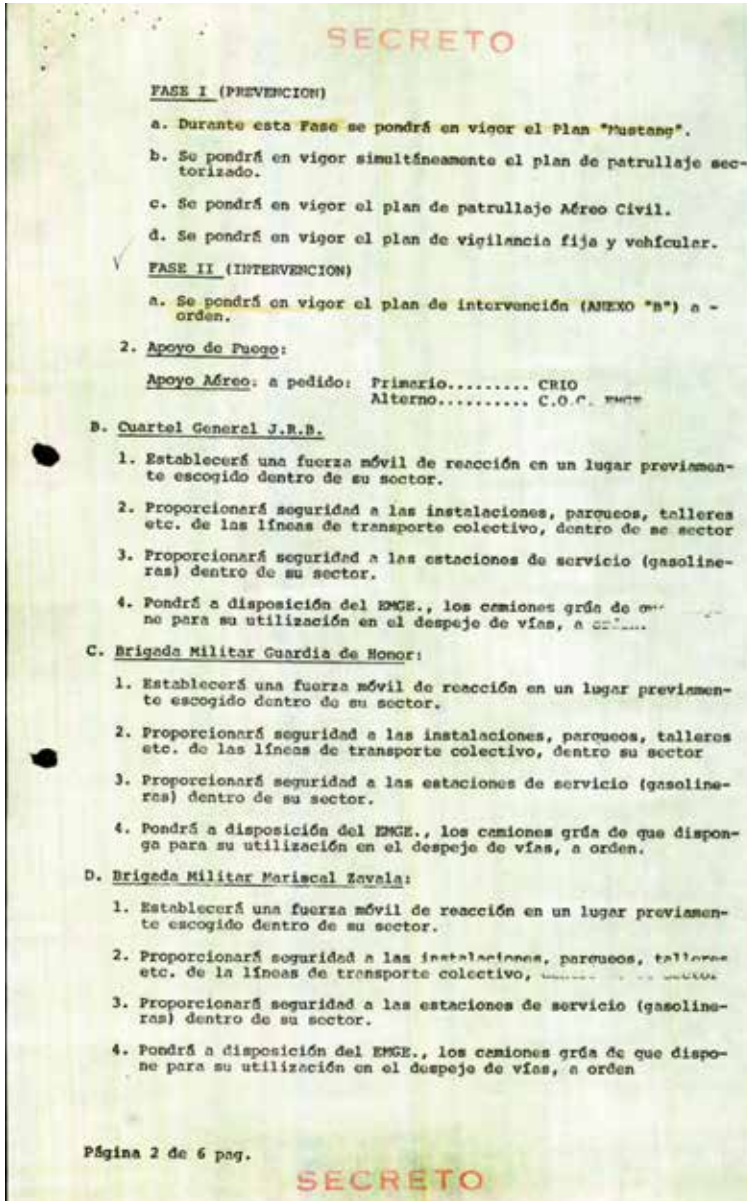
### Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock



Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

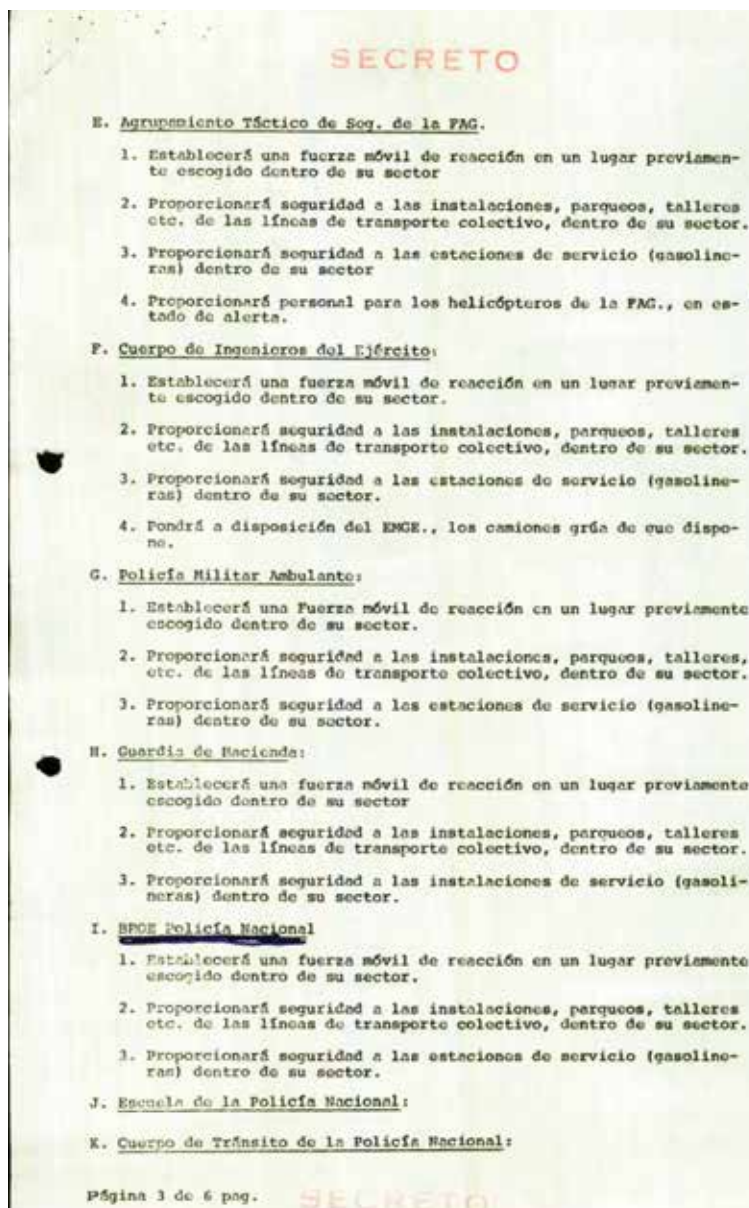
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GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock

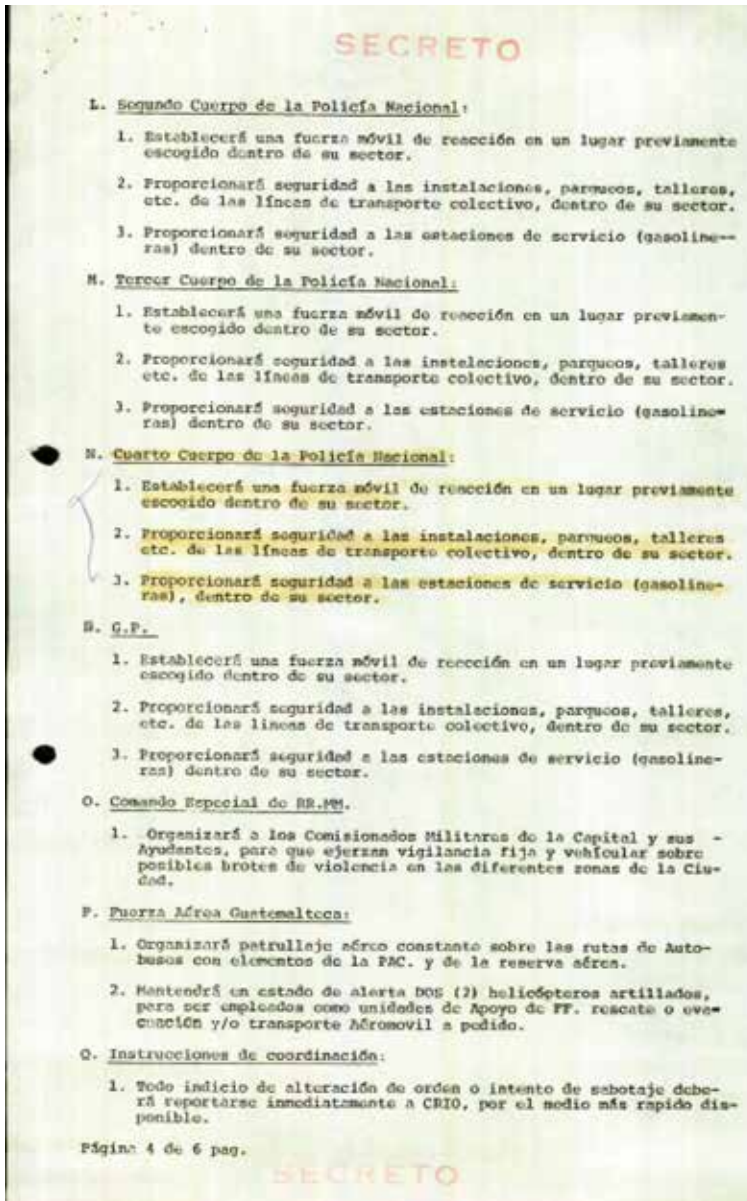


Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

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 GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].



## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock



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 GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock

**SECRETO**

2. Inicio de la Fase II a Orden.

3. El presente plan entrará en vigor el día y hora en que tenga efecto el incremento al pasaje de los autobuses urbanos, sin embargo podrá adelantarse su inicio A/O del Alto Mando, si fuera necesario.

4. Cualquier aspecto no contemplado en el presente plan deberá ser consultado al EMGE., para su solución.

**IV. ADMINISTRACION Y LOGISTICA:**

**A. ABASTOS:**  
Clases I, II, III, y V a cargo de los propios Comandos.

**B. Viáticos y pasajes:**

1. Pasajes:  
EE. de Tropa y Especialistas.....A/C MINDEF.

**C. Uniforme:**

1. UU. Militares.....Camuflaje con casco  
2. Policía Nacional..... Orgánico  
3. Personal Especializado..... Paisano.

**V. COMANDO Y TRANSMISIONES:**

**A. MANDO:**  
ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO  
PUESTO DE MANDO:  
CRIO

**B. TRANSMISIONES:**

1. Radio


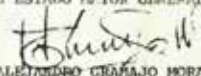
a. UU. Militares  
Interna.....Red Orgánica.  
Operativa.....Red Comando y CRIO.

b. Policia Nacional.....Orgánica y CRIO

c. UU. Aéreas.....Orgánica

2. Teléfono:  
Red de emergencia (ANEXO "D", asignación de números)

DE ORDEN DEL SEÑOR GENERAL DE BRIGADA  
MINISTRO DE LA DEFENSA NACIONAL  
EL CORONEL DE INFANTERIA DEM.  
JEFES DEL ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DEL EJERCITO

   
DIRECTOR ALEJANDRO GRAMAJO MORALES

Fórmula 5 de 6 pag. **SECRETO**

Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock

PLAN HAMACA  
CONTROL DE PUENTES  
CIUDAD CAPITAL

I. MISION:  
Fuerzas de seguridad en un esfuerzo conjunto y coordinado a partir de la fecha de emisión del presente plan, ejercerán un control constante sobre los puentes ubicados en el área urbana y suburbana de la ciudad Capital, evitando que estos sean dañados o destruidos por elementos subversivos, de manera que pueda asegurarse el desarrollo normal de las actividades de los ciudadanos capitalinos.

II. CONSIDERACION:  
Debe tomarse en consideración que a pesar del control que se pueda tener sobre los puentes asignados, podría ser que algunos de ellos, pudieran ser dañados, por lo que es conveniente considerar un plan inmediato de desvío del tránsito, evacuación de material, ripio etc; para dejar expedita la vía o bien evaluar rápido los daños para poder determinar si continúa el tráfico o se cancela por reparación.

III. UNIDAD:

A. CUARTO CUERPO, POLICIA NACIONAL.

✓ Puente Calzada San Juan, Periférico.  
Puente Calzada Roosevelt, Periférico.  
Puente Vista Hermosa, ruta San Juan Sacatepequez.

IV. FECHA - DIA - HORA:

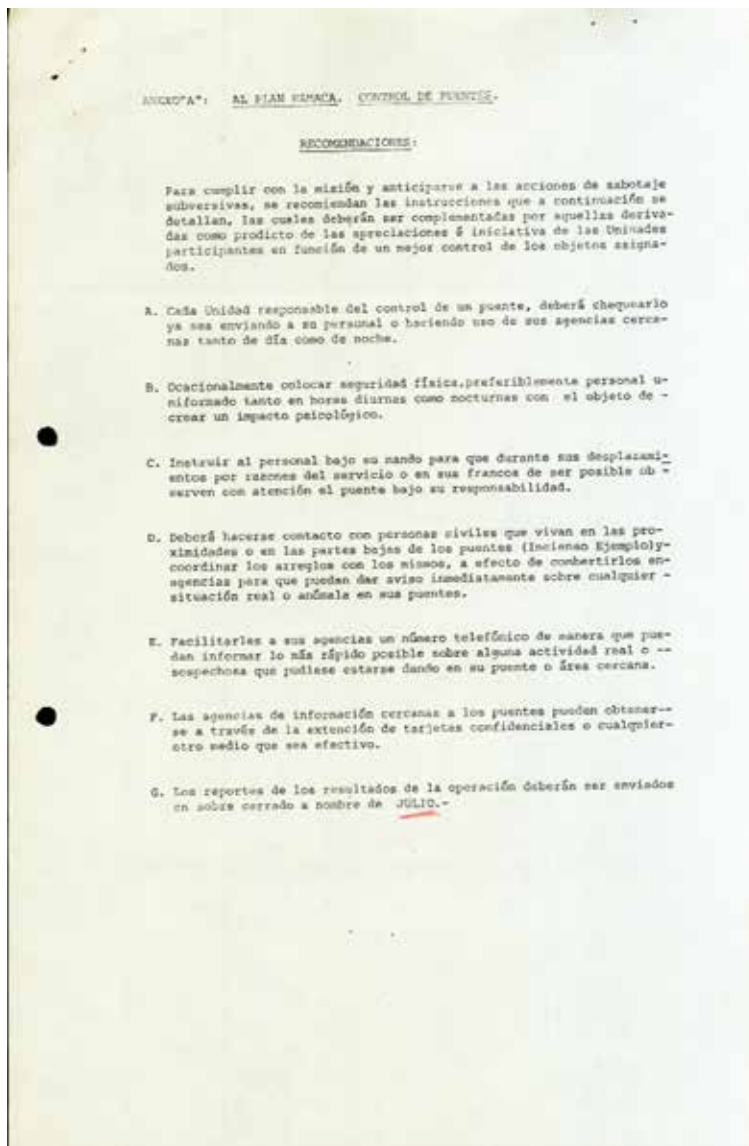
A. Control y vigilancia constante a través de sus respectivas agencias.

B. Presencia de Unidades uniformadas en los puentes en forma coordinada: A ORDEN.-

Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

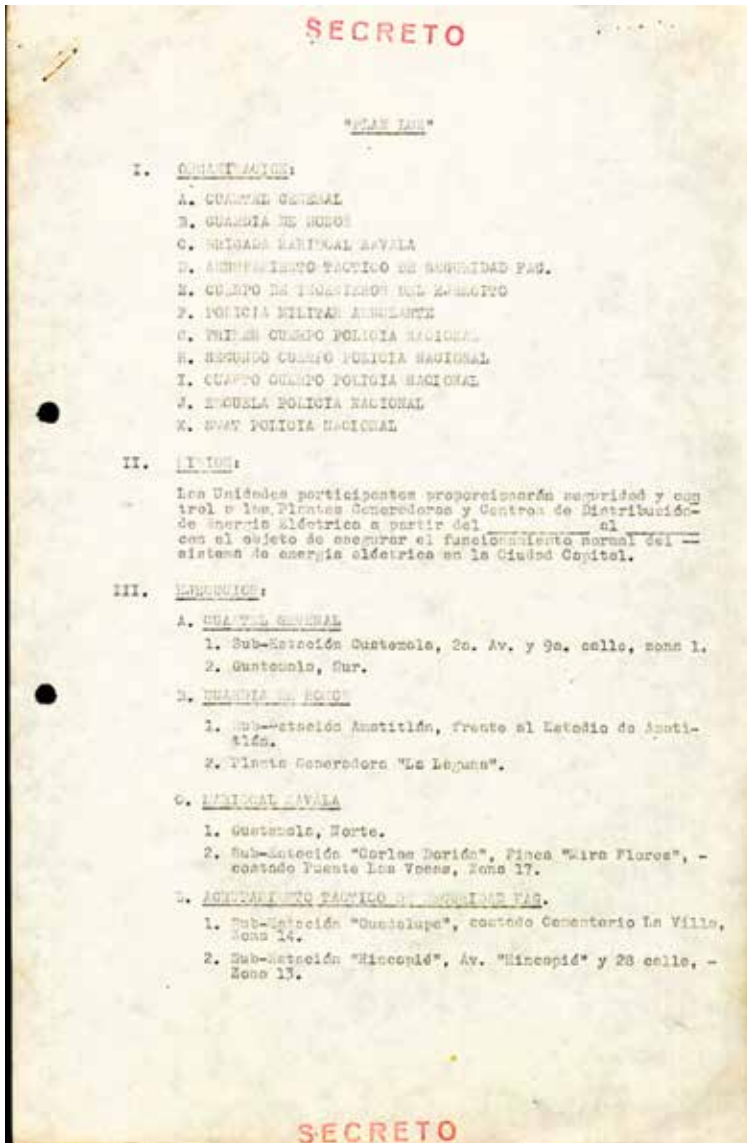
## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock



Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
 GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

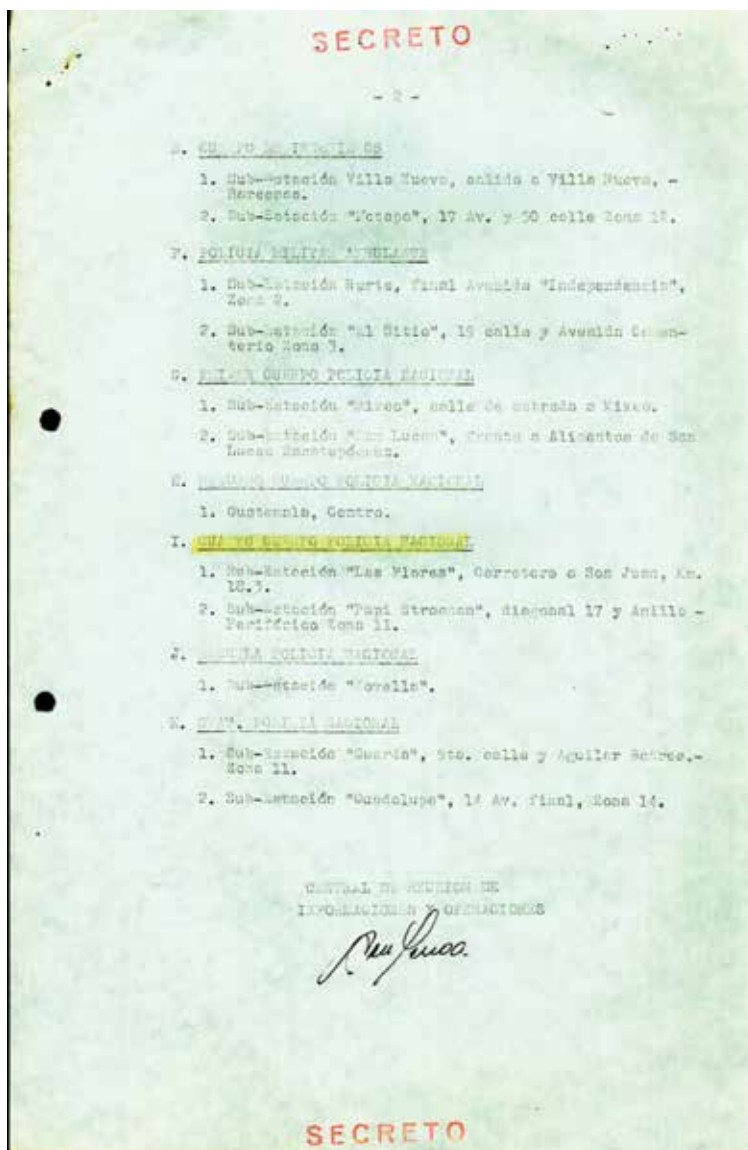
## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock



Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
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## Example of CRIO Plans: Fire, Light, and Hammock



Source: GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, Plan Fire, submitted by the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped Secret [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Light [Digital reference 573203 and 573201. Internal AHPN registration 29522].  
GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Hammock, control of bridges, capital city, no signature, no stamp [Reference 573186. Internal AHPN registration 29529].

In this way, with the participation of the Army High Command and human and technical resources trained in the planning and direct coordination of operations, CRIO became the principal user of intelligence work. It was the agency which checked and collected brought together the information on which the Guatemalan State's security and counterinsurgency policy and activities were based.

CRIO had use of its own transmission unit, which allowed it to maintain direct communication with both military units and the PN. The book discovered in the AHPN titled "*NOTES OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONS PERFORMED BY POLICE CORPS IN THIS CAPITAL CITY WITH MEMBERS IN CIVILIAN DRESS*"<sup>213</sup> by the COCP command from 1984 and 1985, shows the flow of communication that CRIO established with a diversity of agencies within the police institution, especially through the COCP and the DIT.

The book records approximately one thousand "*commissions*" performed in during the period from August 2nd, 1984 to July 7th, 1985, mostly by agents in civilian dress. While some do mention the participation of uniformed officers, these were members of the First, Second, Fourth and Fifth Corps of the DIT and Narcotics. In some cases, the names of the agents are specified, along with the license plates of the vehicles participating in the commissions.

Among the tasks assigned by CRIO to the PN are control and surveillance operations, house searches and selective and mass searches of vehicles and persons. These commissions also involved providing support for specific operations carried out by forces responding directly to CRIO and the total or partial evacuation of areas where members of the Army were operating.<sup>214</sup>

The instructions and orders issued by the CRIO were typically concise, dealing with intelligence operations carried out either by Army agencies, the PN or jointly. The specifications for said operations were communicated to the COCP and other agencies through the aforementioned "CRIO Plans."

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<sup>213</sup> GT PN 51 DSC 08/03/1984, Book "*NOTES ON SPECIAL COMMISSIONS PERFORMED BY THE POLICE CORPS OF THIS CAPITAL CITY IN PLAIN CLOTHES, COC HEADQUARTERS,*" book number 805 [Digital reference 125633. Internal AHPN registration 29782].

<sup>214</sup> GT PN 26 S001 03/16/1984, Operational Plan No. 1 Star, signatures and stamps of the Director General, Colonel Bol de la Cruz and the PN-3 Cano Pérez of the COCP [Digital reference 573146. Internal AHPN registration 29783]. Attached is a circular, in:

GT PN 26 S001 03/19/1984, oficio circular No.COC-SRIO.353, addressed to the commander of the PN Fourth Corps by Lieutenant Colonel of Police Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez, chief of the COCP. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573146. Internal AHPN registration 29984].

Below are examples of some of the records on the “*special commissions*” that appear in the COCP book:<sup>215</sup>

a) August 9th, 1984

*“DIT SPECIAL Commission.*

*10:00 Hrs. In accordance with the DIT work plan, today 65 members (of the DIT) are working in different zones of the Capital City conducting investigations aimed at capturing persons involved in crimes, especially in zones 1, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, Tierra Nueva, Sn. José Pinula, Villa Nueva and Centro Recreativo General Arana Osorio on board unit with license plates P-80124 with three officers on board. Coordinated with crío, First Corps, villa Nueva and Radio Patrols. At 24:00 Hrs.”*

b) August 11th, 1984

*“Crío Order”*

*At 15:30 hours crío informed us that the corps should take out search operations in their sector from 19:00 to 22:00 hours, reported back to them the status of the strength of the search groups of all the corps.*

c) September 11th, 1984

*“Order. 9/14/84*

*Order issued: by order of the Second Section and the Department of Information and Dissemination of the Army, ‘DIDE’ that, on the 14th and 15th of September, 1984, uniformed and plain-clothed agents will distribute flyers with the title ‘WHY I AM AGAINST COMMUNISM.’”*

<sup>215</sup> GT PN 51 08/03/1984, Book “NOTES ON SPECIAL COMMISSIONS PERFORMED BY THE POLICE CORPS OF THIS CAPITAL CITY IN PLAIN CLOTHES, COC HEADQUARTERS,” book number 805,

a) sheet 07, 08/09/1984; b) sheet 09, 08/11/1984; c) sheet 38, 09/11/1984 d) sheet 66, 10/19/1984; e) sheet 97, 11/22/1984; f) sheet 107, 12/02/1984; g) sheet 129, 01/11/1985; h) sheet 130, 01/17/1985; i) sheet 144, 02/15/1985; j) sheet 99, 11/24/1984 [Digital reference 125633. Internal AHPN registration 29782, 29784, 29786, 29788, 29790, 29792, 27993, 29794, 29796, 29797, 29798].



d) October 19th, 1984

*“Crio information*

*23:00 h. In consultation with Crio, we were told that all Military barracks will operate in the capital city tonight from 23:00 on, the corps were informed in the following manner:*

<i>First Corps</i>	<i>Major Hernández Reyes, 2nd. Chief</i>
<i>Second Corps</i>	<i>Captain Batres Castillo, 3rd. Chief</i>
<i>Third Corps</i>	<i>Lieutenant Gabriel García</i>
<i>Fourth Corps</i>	<i>Captain Espino 3rd. Chief</i>
<i>Fifth Corps</i>	<i>Captain Godoy</i>
<i>Traffic Corps</i>	<i>Captain De León</i>
<i>Preventive Guard</i>	<i>Lt. Monterroso</i>
<i>Radio Patrols</i>	<i>Lieutenant Cifuentes</i>
<i>School</i>	<i>Assistant Director</i>
<i>Narcotics</i>	<i>Lieutenant Suquín 2nd. Chief</i>
<i>Motorized</i>	<i>Lieutenant González”</i>

November 22nd, 1984

e) *“At 23:30 hours, in an automobile with Salvadorean license plates, p-188592, on Special Commission, carrying 2 agents in civilian clothing will arrive at the San Juan de Dios General Hospital and subsequently will arrive at the Bus Terminal in zone 4.- Said automobile make Subaru Color coffee.- and the agents are from the First Corps.*

*Note: Coordinated with CRIO, Preventive Guard Lieutenant Chinchilla, Radio Patrols First Lieutenant Alvarado.- Of. on Duty COC Ortega Alvarez.”*

f) November 24th, 1984

*“Crio Operation. Ordered to carry out selective operation from 16 to 19 hours - Consulted 3rd Kidar<sup>216</sup> told that 3 hours selective and rest preventive would be working with plates of vehicles stolen today, communicated to corps.”*

g) December 2nd, 1984

*“Operation Star 1600 to 1900 Hrs.*

*Crio ordered search operation at corps level from 1600 to 1900 hours in their sector; consulted Assistant Director General and ordered implementation of plan Star during this time, order issued to all corps and concluded without new developments.”*

*“Crio Operation 17:00 to 20:00 Hrs.*

*At 1500 hours, Crio ordered operation for all corps from 1700 to 2000 hours in their sector selective search, carried out without new developments and reported to Crio.*

*Note: Crio instructed that commanders reminded to pay more attention to radio. All informed.”*

h) January 11th, 1985

*“Presidential Security Operation*

*From 09:00 to 19:00 hours at the zone 4 bus terminal, reported to Director General, Assistant Director, Third Chief, DIT and R.P., Committee 1st Corps.*

*The 1st Corps removed the personnel from the location.”*

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<sup>216</sup>The word Kidar is used to refer to any of the first three chiefs of the PN, it was generally used in telegrams.

i) January 17th, 1985

*“Presidential Security Intelligence Operation*

*At 20:45 Crio ordered members of Presidential Security Intelligence to work throughout zone 5 from 02:00 to 09:00 hours.*

*Same order issued to Radio Patrols.*

*Assistant Director informed.  
Assistant R . Patrols Lt. Cifuentes  
Assistant Commander 3rd Corps*

*Only remove motorized units from area, not Agents on foot.”*

j) February 15th, 1985

*“Crio Operation At 17:20 hours 4 members went out on board white panel P-207262 to crossroads highway San Juan Sac. and col. San Francisco, informed center reporting to assitant to Ortega Guerra Kidar 3rd - Kidar, 4th Major Meza Ramoz R.P.Job.”*

*“‘DIT’ 09:00 hours 5 agents went out on board white Toyota van P-131884 (reported) 12th Avenue 6th Street zone 12, Crio informed, 2nd Corp Arévalo Corzante-Traffic Corp Gómez Soto.”*

### 3.3 The Center for Joint Police Operations (COCP)

From the AHPN documents discovered so far, it is possible to establish that this operations center was already functioning in 1972.<sup>217</sup> This agency was initially known as the Center for Police Operations (COP) and was located in the Map Room on the third floor of the National Police building. August of 1978 saw the issue of the Internal Regulations of the COCP in General Order 102.<sup>218</sup> Chapter I of this report details the creation and functions of this agency.

In the book “DIRECTIVES: ORDERS OF THE POLICE COMMAND” from the second half of 1985, at the monthly meeting of police chiefs for the month of August, the COCP is referred to as a “*center for the coordination and control of the various activities carried out by the Institution.*” It adds that, as part of this control, a record will be made of “*all facts or events occurring on the national territory; and in the case of criminal acts, these will be recorded in authorized books that will include details of the persons processed or detained...*” Further on it says: “*...it is ordered that this constant and complete information be provided to all Police Corps of the Republic, without the need for any safe conduct. Of course, obviously such information will already have been communicated to the Command also, or at the very least this will be done at the same time as it is transferred to the C.O.C.*”<sup>219</sup>

Like the COC of the Army, which formed part of the EMGE<sup>220</sup> and was physically located on its premises,<sup>221</sup> the COCP was organizationally dependent on the Director General of the PN and worked out of the Police Headquarters. The COCP had direct communication and access to the Director General. On instructions of the high command of the Police, the COCP was the body in charge of the coordination and organization of the institution’s own operations and of managing coordination with the Ministry of Defense, the EMGE and the EMP.

<sup>217</sup> GT PN 51 DSC 01/26/1973, Book of various documents, book number 2514, the chief of the Radio Patrol Section, Lieutenant Colonel Gonzalo Pérez V., authorized a book of documents from the Cuarto de Mapas containing confirmation of the creation of the COCP [Digital reference 923033. Internal AHPN registration 26802].

<sup>218</sup> GT PN 35 S001 08/24/1978, book of general orders, book number 10504, general order 102, Internal regulations of the COCP [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27102]. This order states: “*The Director General of the National Police, in accordance with the provisions of Article No. 33 Section 4 of the Organic Law of the National Police (Decree No. 332), issues the following...*” This Article of the law describes the duties of the Director General, with this section enjoining him to: “*Maintain good organization, a regime of subordination and discipline in each and every office of the National Police.*”

<sup>219</sup> GT PN 30 Book “DIRECTIVES: ORDERS FROM POLICE COMMAND, JUNE TO DECEMBER 1985,” Monthly Meeting of Police Chiefs held in the city of Guatemala, book number 1771 [Digital reference 67751. Internal AHPN registration 28832].

<sup>220</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped *Secret*, sent by the division general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM and temporary chief of the Army General Staff Mejía Victores [Reference 3262332. Internal AHPN registration 12732].

<sup>221</sup> CEH Report, volume II, p. 69.

The series of documents “*Confidential Correspondence Sent and Received*” in the COCP archives shows some of the coordination procedures utilized above all during the period under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel of Police Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra (1980-1982). The COCP received “*confidential*” information from the Directorate General which was then passed on to the relevant agency via “*oficios*,” on which it was customary to add the text “*with marginal notes by the Director.*”<sup>222</sup>

An example of this is the document sent in December 1981 by Lieutenant Colonel Umaña Guerra to the Chief of Command Six.

*“Lt. Colonel:*

*On instructions from the Director General of Police, I have the pleasure of addressing you in order to enclose this document CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION with the marginal notes of the Director saying ‘ATTACHMENTS TO COMMAND SIX’.-”*<sup>223</sup>

Documents containing confidential information sent by the Army High Command kept the features analyzed in the section on “Requirements of the PN by the Army” in this Chapter and were subsequently sent to the Director General. The confidential information enclosed with the document referred to in the previous paragraph reads:

“CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

*Information has been received that the individual known by the name of: ELMER TOLEDO PINEDA, of the village of San Mororo in the jurisdiction of the municipality of San José Pinula, department of Guatemala, disappeared from this place approximately one year ago.-*

*It is certain that it was he who planned and directed the acts committed against the Chevron gas station located in the village of Don Justo, at the entrance of said municipality, and*

<sup>222</sup> GT PN 51-01 S002 12/31/1981, oficio No. 6900/Orb., addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by the chief of the COCP Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra [Digital reference 2770917. Internal AHPN registration 29813].

GT PN 51-01 S002 12/28/1981, oficio No. 6783/Orb., addressed to the chief of Command Six of the National Police by Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra, chief of the COCP [Digital reference 2770927. Internal AHPN registration 29991].

GT PN 51-01 S002 12/28/1981, oficio No. 6785/Orb. addressed to the chief of the Detective Corps by Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra, chief of the COCP [Digital reference 2770923. Internal AHPN registration 29992].

GT PN 51-01 S002 12/31/1981, oficio No. 6901/Orb., sent to the Chief of National Police, Zacapa, by Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra, chief of the COCP [Digital reference 2773171. Internal AHPN registration 29993].

<sup>223</sup> GT PN 51-01 S002 12/31/1981, oficio No. 6898/Orb., sent to the Lieutenant Colonel of Police and Chief of Command Six of the National Police by Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra, Chief of the Center for Joint Operations [Digital reference 2770915. Internal AHPN registration 29814].

*other activities that he was planning to carry out on the same occasion.-*

*He is, therefore, a dangerous SUBVERSIVE ELEMENT, known to be working at the premises of the INCESA ESTÁNDAR factory located in Villa Nueva on the San Miguel Petapa highway.-*

*Guatemala, December 29th, 1981.*"<sup>224</sup>

Various records in the AHPN demonstrate the provision of “*confidential*” information from the Army General Staff (EMG) to the Director of the PN and the transfer of this to the COCP and other agencies.

One of the reports mentions the:

*“Top leader of the subversive organization, the EGP, in Amatitlán is JORGE... he has his people divided into two groups... they went to Nicaragua to take a course called POLITICIAN-SOLDIER, they hold their meetings in football fields Nos. 1 and 2 on the sidewalk of “RAFAEL IRIARTE” and on the shore of the AMATITLÁN lake, at a place called LAS PALMAS... The head of the COLLABORATORS SQUADRON is an individual known only as RAFAEL,... also the individual known as MONICO is the second in command of the aforementioned organization...”*<sup>225</sup>

As was usual, the reports had attached the summary prepared in the Secretariat General for General Chupina and in this case contains the following handwritten annotation: “*Attachments to detectives.*”<sup>226</sup>

Another two “*confidential*” reports also submitted by the EMGE contain references to activities by insurgent groups. One of them is in relation to the departments of Jutiapa and Santa Rosa<sup>227</sup> while the other mentions a priest who “*was preaching Communist doctrine*” in the town of Colomba, Costa Cuca,

<sup>224</sup> GT PN 51-01 S002 12/29/1981, confidential report, no addressee, no sender, handwritten note “*COC, Cdo 6*” [Digital reference 2770915. Internal AHPN registration 29815].

<sup>225</sup> *Op.cit.*, GT PN 30-01 S020 04/08/1981, confidential report No. 2-0337-1C/81. Summary attached dated 04/13/1981 [Digital reference 1923972. Internal AHPN registration 29473].

<sup>226</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 confidential report, Summary attached dated 04/13/1981 [Digital reference 1923972. Internal AHPN registration 29832].

<sup>227</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/13/1981, confidential report No.2-0340-1C/81, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 1923961. Internal AHPN registration 29834].

Quetzaltenango.<sup>228</sup> On both documents can be read handwritten notes by the Director General: “*Attachments to archive, Detectives already have it*” and “*COC Take note.*”

This coordination within the PN was done through the Radio Patrol section and the FM radio of the Detective Corps. By this means, they received daily updates and issued communications to the corps and departmental headquarters regarding sporadic action against insurgent organizations the activities of social movements. In 1984, for example, radiograms were sent as circulars for the purposes of information and to take precautionary measures in the face of any unpredictable acts in commemoration of the anniversary of the assassination of Che Guevara,<sup>229</sup> the anniversaries of the PGT,<sup>230</sup> ORPA<sup>231</sup> and the Sandinista Revolution.<sup>232</sup> Likewise, surveillance guidance was such as the following was issued: “*Instruct your personnel for the purposes of exercising control over people coming into the teachers’ movement.*”<sup>233</sup>

From the constitution of its regulations in 1978, it was estimated that the COCP would be composed of first and second chiefs, a secretary and officers in charge of intelligence, administration, planning and operations.<sup>234</sup> The following year, the name “*negociados*” (section heads) was introduced to refer to the officers in charge of the same three areas<sup>235</sup> and for the first time, there are records of people occupying the position of investigators. It had relatively few members. In 1982, there was an average of between fifteen to twenty people.<sup>236</sup> It was a stable

<sup>228</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 10/26/1981, confidential report No. 2-1094-1C/81 [Digital reference 1924002. Internal AHPN registration 29835].

GT PN 30-01 S020 10/29/1981, confidential report with handwritten note “*COC Take note*” [Digital reference 1924002. Internal AHPN registration 29836].

<sup>229</sup> GT PN 50-16 DSC 10/09/1984, circular No. 101/HCB (code 121), radiogram, addressed to departmental chiefs and capital corps by the Deputy Director General of the PN; it reads: J.A. at 21:20 hours; received: E.P., deciphered: HUGO, stamped *Secret* [Internal AHPN registration 30929].

<sup>230</sup> GT PN 50-16 DSC 09/26/1984, message 95/COC from the chief of the COCP; Hernández transmitted at 21:04 hours; deciphered by C. Solares at 23:30 hours; received Santos., annexes message No. 096/COC. del 27.09.1984 and coded document of 09/27/1984 addressed to the chiefs of corps and departments by the Deputy Director General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 30947 and 30954].

<sup>231</sup> GT PN 50-16 DSC 09/17/1984, message 78/COC, *Radiogram* addressed to the chiefs of the corps and departments by Captain of the National Police, Felícito Oliva Areas, stamped *Secret* [Internal AHPN registration 30932].

<sup>232</sup> GT PN 50-16 DSC 07/19/1984, circular radiogram No. 53/COC code 121, addressed to the chiefs of the departments and city corps by the chief of the COCP. Stamped *Secret* [Internal AHPN registration 30933].

<sup>233</sup> GT PN 50-16 DSC 03/16/1984, circular No. 14/COC Code 121, radiogram, addressed to the chiefs of corps and departments by the interim chief of the Radio Patrol Corps [Internal AHPN registration 25937].

<sup>234</sup> GT PN 35 S001 08/24/1978, book of general orders, book number 10504, general order 102, Internal regulations of the COCP [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27102].

<sup>235</sup> GT PN 51-01 S011 1979, conference on organization, functions and duties of the COCP (S-2 and S-3 of the PN), prepared by S-2 and S-3 officer of the PN, Br. Mario Girón Mata. Annexed is the COCP organization chart with the name of the S-1 Officer José Antonio Valladares Morales [Digital reference 3060243. Internal AHPN registration 29994].

<sup>236</sup> GT PN 51-02 S014 03/28/1982, table of services, officer submitting, Alfredo Jiménez Franco, officer receiving, Herlindo Cabrera Barrera. [Digital reference 2760890. Internal AHPN registration 30792].

structure, with records showing very low turnover of personnel, whose functions required training and basic education.

The lists of personnel and general orders found in the AHPN,<sup>237</sup> shows the career within the institution of three of the chiefs of the COCP during the period 1975-1985. One of these was Lieutenant Colonel of Police Jorge Alberto Gómez,<sup>238</sup> who occupied the positions of first and second chief of the Center between 1974 and 1980. He took over as Commander of the Fourth Corps following the assassination of Miguel Ángel Natareno Salazar on July 14th, 1980.

From September of that year, he moved into the post of first chief of the COCP, Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra,<sup>239</sup> who subsequently moved to the Departmental headquarters of Suchitepéquez. In place of Umaña came Lieutenant Colonel of Police Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez,<sup>240</sup> who stayed in the post from May 1st, 1982 to July 24th, 1984. Cano Pérez received his training at the Police Professional Technical School while enrolled in the Second Corps. As chief of the COCP, he worked as an instructor at the school and later became Departmental Chief for Suchitepéquez, Sacatepéquez and Retalhuleu.

During the years 1975-1985, the COCP was responsible for issuing the alphanumeric codes for radio communication, light signals and passwords and reporting any changes in these codes. It also had responsibility for delivering

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> GT PN 51 S002 09/02/1976, oficio No. 1245 Ref. shc.-, addressed to the Third Chief and Inspector General of the General Police by the second chief of the COCP Jorge Alberto Gomez [Digital reference 2773185. Internal AHPN registration 30793].

<sup>239</sup> GT PN 35 S001 August 29th, 30th, and 31st, 1980, Book of general orders, general order No. 105, section No. 121, page 17, Juan Antonio Umaña Guerra was promoted to First Chief of the COC in place of Jorge Alberto Gómez, who was promoted to First Chief of the Fourth Corps, "effective" 09/01/1980, book number 10505-B [Digital reference 1872176. Internal AHPN registration 29851].

<sup>240</sup> He was appointed chief of the COCP in May 1982, in:

GT PN 35 S002 01/03/1983, oficio No. COC-SRIO.0005., attached to the Annual Work Report for 1982, addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Chief of the COC, roll number 50 D, photograms numbers 1113, 1114, 1115 [Internal AHPN registration 28868].

His appointment was formalized in August of that year, in:

GT PN 35 S001 08/29/1982, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 103, section No. 278, book number 10508 [Digital reference 758174. Internal AHPN registration 29859].

He was promoted to Departmental Chief of Sacatepéquez:

GT PN 35 S001 07/23-24/1984, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 88, section No. 42, book number 10629-B [Digital reference 1856519. Internal AHPN registration 29999].

<sup>241</sup> GT PN 51 DSC 1972 to 1978, Book of various documents, document No. 6, book number 2514 [Digital reference 923033. Internal AHPN registration 26862].

At the start of January of 1974, the COCP was already communicating in number and letter codes for judicial and police matters and gave examples of these to the departmental police chiefs.



Document from Center for National Police Joint Operations (COCP)

"CENTRO DE OPERACIONES CONJUNTAS"  
DIRECCION GENERAL POLICIA NACIONAL  
GUATEMALA, G.A.

RADIOGRAMA FM.

Guatemala, 28 de Febrero de 1,982.

A...CORPES CUERPOS  
CIUDAD CAPITAL.

201/NP.(Clave 130). 317-31-34-69-11-25-22-27-63-44-80-74-30-35-1162-89-90  
38-48-17;-25-22-53-18-45-57-81-1105-31-17-1205-88-810-30-35-352-672-764-69-  
39-56-95-17-10-81-88-90-74-69-64-17-55-27-97-31-41-34-81-35-25-81-10-95-63-  
90-80-57-48-56-95-88-48-57-1164-352-1152-95-56-1016-960-95-25-48-34-446-649  
69-82-95-88-42-17-95-10-81-88-352-672-764-35;48-57-87-30-95-88-86-27-48-  
63-30-17-31-80-35-;446-27-45-80-17-38-90-74-48-27-31-41-34-317-424-45-35-  
419-767-48-10. Atento.

EL TENIENTE CORONEL DE POLICIA

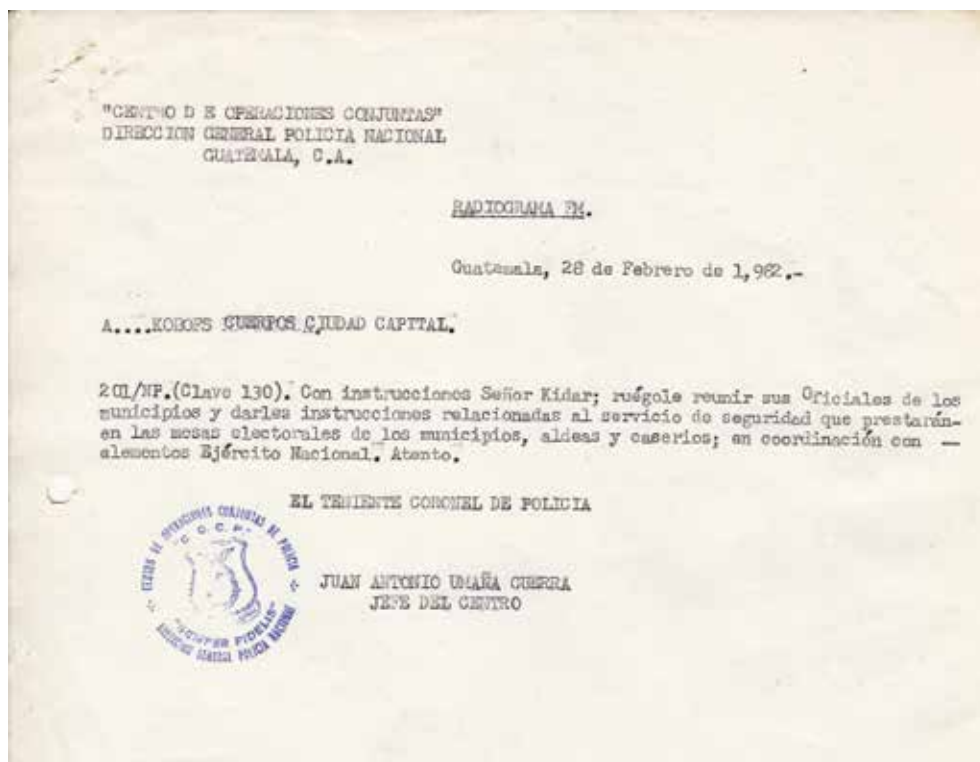


JUAN ANTONIO UMAÑA GUERRA  
JEFE DEL CENTRO



21.410 Hqs.  
*[Signature]*

**Document from Center for National Police Joint Operations  
(COCP)**



Source: GT PN 51-01 S002 02/28/1982, FM radiogram in code and deciphered.

these to the chiefs of the corps and departmental headquarters of the PN.<sup>241</sup> This type of restricted-circulation information was technically known in the military and police forces as Transmission Operating Instructions (IOT).

The COCP was the entity in charge of maintaining up-to-date information on the state of the PN's strength and the operational and administrative situation regarding private police forces.<sup>242</sup> It had knowledge of all the operations carried out by the various commands, corps and headquarters of the PN. In special cases, it also possessed information on members of the Army, PMA, Guatemalan Air Force (FAG), Honor Guard, EMGE, and CRIO.<sup>243</sup>

Through analysis of one of the functions assigned to the COCP, it is possible to state that private police also played an active part in the counterinsurgency strategy.

As part of its functions of coordination with the Army, the COCP organized conferences on intelligence. These were given by the Second Section of Intelligence of the EMGE to the chiefs of the corps in the capital and the departments, DIT, the Narcotics Section, directors and deputy chiefs from the Police school.<sup>244</sup>

This police agency also designed PN operational plans in accordance with the security guidelines laid down by the Army. As an example, here is a quote from the document sent on May 18th, 1982 by the chief of the COCP, Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez to the Director General together with Operational Plan No. 02/HOPN/ORB, "*which is to be carried out by different corps of the National Police of this capital city, commencing today and until further orders are given.*" The "*mission*" for this plan was:

*"a) To capture all suspicious persons whether on foot or in vehicles.*

*b) To search vehicles in order to detect weapons or subversive propaganda.-*

<sup>242</sup> The "*collaboration and coordination*" of private police with the PN was backed by the "Law on Private Police," Legislative Decree 73-70 of October 15th, 1970; for example in 1971, authorization was given by a Government Accord for the "Valiente Private Investigations Police," owned by Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez.

<sup>243</sup> GT PN 51 DSC 08/03/1984, Book "*NOTES ON SPECIAL COMMISSIONS PERFORMED BY THE POLICE CORPS OF THIS CAPITAL CITY IN PLAIN CLOTHES, COC HEADQUARTERS,*" book number 805 [Digital reference 125633. Internal AHPN registration 29782].

<sup>244</sup> GT PN 51-02 S002 06/18/1982, oficio No. 1913/MACP/sm COC addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the chief of the COCP, Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez [Digital reference 2776678. Internal AHPN registration 30002]. Concretely, these conferences took place on June 17th and 18th, 1982, and were given by Major Felipe Alonso Ochoa and Lieutenant Marco Vinicio González Vega of the Section of the Army General Staff.

c) *To attempt to detect stolen vehicles.-*

d) *Any other activity not included in the present Plan-*"<sup>245</sup>

Security Plan No. 02-84 issued in response to the elections to the National Constituent Assembly in July of 1984, by the then Director of Intelligence of the EMDN Infantry Colonel Byron Disrael Lima Estrada,<sup>246</sup> was later rewritten as an operational plan for the PN, with the signature of the Director General, Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz and authenticated by the COCP.

The COCP also coordinated its operations with the various police corps, with CRIO<sup>247</sup> and with the Special Operations Command (Comando de Operaciones Especiales, COE).<sup>248</sup> This Command responded to information requests originating in the COCP, in particular those concerning "disappeared" or hospitalized persons.<sup>249</sup> The following is a response to one of these requests: "*In response, I can report to you that a meticulous search of this command's arrest book was carried out, from which it was determined that the persons in question are not recorded as having been arrested.*"

Following the coup d'état of March 23rd, 1982, the records studied give evidence of visits by the chief of the COCP to the COE.<sup>250</sup>

### 3.4 Police Commands

In the Annual "*Work Report*" by the Directorate General of the National Police covering July 1977 to March 1978, it states:

<sup>245</sup> GT PN 31 DSC 05/18/1982, oficio No. 1830/DP, addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez, chief of the COCP, stamped *Confidential*. Attached is Operational Plan No. 02/HOPN/ORB of 05/19/1982, signed by the director general, Cavalry Colonel Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch [Internal AHPN registration 9962].

GT PN 51 DSC undated, oficio No 01,393/Ref.QC-HGPA, addressed to Police Major and Second Chief of the COCP by Police Major Edgar Leonel Lorenzo, Deputy Commander of the COCP [Digital reference 613524. Internal AHPN registration 28148].

<sup>246</sup> GT PN 51-01 S005 06/29/1984, Security Plan No. 002-84, signatures and seals of the director of EMDN intelligence, Lima Estrada and chief of the C/ICIA section of the EMDN, stamped *Secret* [Reference 3058826. Internal AHPN registration 4912].

<sup>247</sup> GT PN 51 DSC 08/03/1984, Book "*NOTES ON SPECIAL COMMISSIONS PERFORMED BY THE POLICE CORPS OF THIS CAPITAL CITY IN PLAIN CLOTHES, COC HEADQUARTERS,*" book number 805, sheets 66 and 99 [Digital reference 125633. Internal AHPN registration 29790].

<sup>248</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 03/28/1982, oficio No 191/Ref/Eirl. Special developments. Addressed to Director General DEM by Police Major Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of Special Operations [Digital reference 3121955. Internal AHPN registration 30910].

<sup>249</sup> GT PN 51 DSC undated, oficio No 01,393/Ref.QC-HGPA, addressed to Police Major and Second Chief of the COCP by Police Major Edgar Leonel Lorenzo, Deputy Commander of the COCP [Internal AHPN registration 28148].

<sup>250</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 11/11/1982, oficio No 956-Ref-QC-Eirl, new developments report, address to the Director General of the PN by the Deputy Commander of the COCP Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3143576. Internal AHPN registration 12276].

*“December 29th, 1977 saw the creation of the Combat Commands, duly trained in combat tactics and sliding, ascending and descending over rugged terrain. These Commands are made up of personnel from the various Corps, where they do their ordinary active service. Their goal is that all personnel will be trained over time in order to achieve optimal conditions for the enhancement of services.”<sup>251</sup>*

The Directorate General, Corps commanders, departmental commanders and commanders of other PN agencies were informed of the security and counterinsurgency strategy designed by the Army High Command. They also had knowledge of the role assigned by the operational plans to each of the agencies within the larger police institution.

Coordination between the Army and the PN for the implementation of this strategy was made effective through structures such as “The Archive,” the CRIO, the COCP, and the Coordination of Joint Operations of the EMGE, among others. All these facilitated direct communication between the various agencies of the PN and the armed forces.

The participation of the PN combat commands alongside other structures of the police institution was important for the execution of operational plans arising from the security strategy. Their intervention stood out due to the features of the physical preparation for combat and technical training of the personnel, as well as their rapid reaction capacity.

On some occasions, the reports from the commandos to the army structures were more detailed than those sent to their own PN Directorate General. Communications between the Army and the PN were of an operational nature, and a phone call from the Army was enough to put the combat commands into operational status.

*“... via a phone call requesting physical support made by an officer of the 2nd Section of the E.M.G.E, they deployed on 13th Av. and 16th St. Z. 2, Melgar Díaz district, where, upon entering a low-income residence, the members of intelligence were repulsed by firearms, and upon counterattacking, managed to capture 2 individuals, 3 women, collecting 9*

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<sup>251</sup> GT PN 30-01 S010 Work Report for the period: July 1977 to March 1978 and 1974-78 summary, Directorate General of the National Police, page 8 [Digital reference 1916126. Internal AHPN registration 29925].

*children (...) This is respectfully brought to the attention of the Engineers Colonel DEM, Minister of the Interior, for his information and whatsoever he might consider pertinent to order.”<sup>252</sup>*

The commands were extremely flexible, rapid-action structures, constituted according to operational requirements. They were made up of and maintained by members selected from the corps, departmental headquarters and the Police Professional Technical School for the purposes of carrying out a given operation. They were disbanded once the mission was completed. Thus, officers that had participated in one operation would not necessarily be the same as those taking part in another, although the name of the command would remain the same.<sup>253</sup> The section that follows here contains information about the PN commands that researchers have been able to glean from the documents studied.

### **3.4.1 Special Operations Command (COE)**

In Chapter I of this report, there is a section titled “The Fifth Corps” (BROE/COE),” which details the creation and history of this agency.

As we have already seen, its principal function was counterinsurgency. This section presents examples that reveal that this command participated directly in combat, enjoyed operational and security support from the PN and the National Army, and carried out population surveillance and control.

The documents analyzed show that the commander of the COE personally participated in armed operations against various opposition organizations and individuals. In addition, he coordinated operations directly with the structures of the Army and the Presidential General Staff, as evidenced by the updates sent to the institution’s Directorate General.

April 20th, 1984,

*“At 15:55 hours, 40 men withdrew, 2 officers under the command of the Unit Commander, plus several members of the EMGE on board truck 0-12144, Jeep 244, automobile P-132708, pick-*

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<sup>252</sup> GT PN 30-01 S012 11/23/1982, providencia No 33167.SG-Of.10.jram, report from the Commander of the COE [Digital reference 1769164. Internal AHPN registration 29901].

<sup>253</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/15/1983, Of. No. 034-Ref-QC-Rrz., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Commander of the Special Operations Command, COE, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano. 96 men from various corps enrolled in the command [Digital reference 3162783. Internal AHPN registration 30829].

*up P-204936, heading for kilometer 19 of the Pan-American Highway, where a vehicle search and personal identification operation took place, afterwards carrying out reconnaissance on the outskirts of Volcán de Agua, where it was learned there had been problems.*"<sup>254</sup>

December 11th, 1982,

*"At 13:45 hours, withdrawal of the Deputy Commander with four men on board Jeep 244, in order to perform a Work commission for the Second Section of the Army General Staff."*<sup>255</sup>

December 22nd, 1982,

*"12:50 hours, withdrawal of 40 men commanded by officers on board truck 0-12144 in order to conduct a search operation in the Monte Real II district, supervised by Unit Commander and two members of the Presidential General Staff, returning at 21:30.*

*15:18 hours, 40 agents withdrew, commanded by one officer, relief.*

*21:05 hours, 40 agents withdrew, commanded by one officer... in order to provide relief.*

*23:00, Unit Commander withdrew... to supervise checkpoints in the Monte Real II district, zone 7.*

*01:15 hours, 40 men withdrew, commanded by one officer... in order to provide relief for personnel in Monte Real II district, zone 7, returning at 02:30."*<sup>256</sup>

<sup>254</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 04/20/1983, Of. No. 530-Ref-QC-Eirl. new developments report addressed to the Director General of the PN, written by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3170673. Internal AHPN registration 30796].

<sup>255</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 12/11/1982, Of. No. 1062-Ref-QC-Eirl. new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3151412. Internal AHPN registration 30798].

<sup>256</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 11/22/1982, Of. No. 988-Ref-QC-Rrz. new developments report addressed to the Interim Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Digital reference 3145918. Internal AHPN registration 30911].

June 18th, 1983,

*“COMMANDER WITHDRAWS: 08:50 hours, Commander withdrew with 3 men on board automobile P-101634 to perform a commission at the Justo Rufino Barrios Headquarters, returning at 13:00.”*<sup>257</sup>

*“OFFICER WITHDRAWS: 11:20 hours, Police Lieutenant Julián de Jesús Alfaro withdrew with 4 men on board Jeep 244, in order to perform a commission for the Presidential Guard.”*<sup>258</sup>

The COE barracks was located at numbers 19-89, 20th Street, Zone 10, Villa de Guadalupe. On April 16th, 1982, it was transferred to 31st Avenue between 4th and 5th Streets in Zone 7, Centroamérica district, known as the Anillo Periférico (beltway) barracks. The building in Zone 10 was handed over to the Detective Corps.<sup>259</sup>

The COE headquarters was equipped for the new counterinsurgency functions it had been assigned. Thus, on January 16th, 1983, eight Anr/601 radios were installed to be used for Army transmissions. On January 23rd of that same year, they installed a closed circuit television system provided by the EMP<sup>260</sup> with the aim of enabling effective telecommunications between the State security agencies.

COE members received constant training from the Directorate General’s Professional Technical School, in particular from members of the Army,<sup>261</sup> including officers assigned to private security companies:

<sup>257</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 06/18/1983, Of. No. 791, Ref-QC-arcc., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Digital reference 3173321. Internal AHPN registration 30801].

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 04/16/1982, Of. No. 255/Ref/Eirl, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano. This report explains the various procedures that both the COE Commander and the Chief of the Detective Corps initiated, together with other officials of the institution and the Army in order to transfer these agencies to the new building assigned them [Digital reference 3125842. Internal AHPN registration 30802].

GT PN 51-02 S005 04/16/1982, Of. No. 254-Ref-Edav. Report on the transfer of the Unit from the building in zone 10 to the Barracks in zone 7 [Digital reference 3125829. Internal AHPN registration 30803].

<sup>260</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/23/1983, Of. No 083-Ref-QC-Larr, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE. *“At 09:30 hours, National Army Colonel Harry Ponce Ramirez and Rodolfo Geyer arrived at this Command to inspect the closed circuit television supplied by the Presidential General Staff, leaving at 10:20 hours”* [Digital reference 3166184. Internal AHPN registration 30804].

<sup>261</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 10/28/1982, Of. No 906-Ref-Eirl.qc., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3138638. Internal AHPN registration 30806].

GT PN 51-02 S005 11/23/1982, Of. No 990-Ref-QC-Eirl., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3146275. Internal AHPN registration 30807].



*“...at 10:00 hours, the Army Reserve Second Lieutenant serving in Alarmas de Guatemala arrived together with 2 men on board Jeep P-199390 in order to give a short course in ascending and descending rock faces to members of this Command.”*<sup>262</sup>

*“...arrival at the barracks of Colonel Jaime Piedra Santa and Colonel Bonilla of the Directorate General’s Department of Training in automobile plates P-128114.”*<sup>263</sup>

*“COLONEL SILVA AND OFFICER CÓRDOVA MIRANDA... 08:45 hours, coming from the Directorate General’s Dept. of Training, arrived here in order to provide classes on Civil Disturbances to the personnel.”*<sup>264</sup>

The most notable members of the COE, including the commander and his staff, had, in addition to military training and service, prior operational experience. This practice had been acquired in the performance of their duties at the Special Command of the Police Professional School and in the PN Special Unit. The operations in which the COE was called upon to take part were diverse and included raids.

One example of this type of operation is that conducted on July 26th, 1983. For this operation, the commander of the COE, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, informed the Director General of the PN that, in coordination with the EMDN Intelligence Office and *“with prior authorization from this Authority, 30 members of this Command plus 2 officers provided perimeter security and support to members of said section, as they proceeded to carry out a search at the residence located on Lot 532, block 19 of Maya district, zone 18... this operation was carried out based on information that had been received indicating that a guerrilla stronghold might be operating in said place; however, all results were negative.”*<sup>265</sup>

The COE maintained direct relations with the Army, from which it received orders, coordinated actions and provided daily reports on new developments relating to the command itself. However, like the other police commands, its commander was organizationally subordinate to the Director General of the PN.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 06/29/1983, oficio No 828-Ref-QC-MARL., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3176231. Internal AHPN registration 30809].

<sup>265</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 07/26/1983, oficio No. 946-Ref-QC-Eirl., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Digital reference 854742. Internal AHPN registration 29437].

The Commander made reports to the Director General via the daily new developments reports, and when it was necessary to expand upon them, he would draft “oficios” and “providencias,” written sometimes as a matter of routine and other times in response to a specific request. Copies were also sent to the Sub-Directorate General, the Inspectorate General (Third Chief), the COCP, Identification Bureau, and “Don Julio” (CRIO).

On more than one occasion, information regarding captures made during operations was concealed in the written communications. This fact is made evident by one of the investigation files systematized for Chapter IV of this report, “*Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez and Héctor Manuel De León Escobar; file No. 28.*”

The COE responded to specific needs for information on the part of the COCP, particularly regarding missing persons, and performed commissions and operations on the direct orders of the latter. On December 2nd, 1982, the COE deputy commander, Police Major Edgar Leonel Lorenzo, informed the second chief of the COCP of the detention of the lawyer “*DANIA (Tania) ARACELY ARDON MAYORGA*” and the professor “*JAIME ARMAS CEALLOS OVALLE*” (Jaime Armando Fiallos Ovalle). “*In response, I can report to you that a meticulous search of this command’s arrest book was carried out, from which it was determined that the persons in question are not recorded as having been arrested.*”<sup>266</sup>

Other documents give evidence of the operational relationship with other Army structures:<sup>267</sup>

- a) On December 15th, 1982, the commander and two officers in automobile P-78483 on commission by the Presidential General Staff.
- b) On December 31st, 1982, the commander with two members of security detail in automobile P-78483 in order to hold a work meeting in the Second Section of the EMP.

The command’s participation in military operations was particularly notable in the areas of “*tracking,*” “*searches,*” “*patrols,*” “*raids,*” and “*commissions*” as part of the counterinsurgency strategy of the time. Some examples follow:

<sup>266</sup> GT PN 51-02 S002 12/02/1982, Of. No 1897/Ref-QC-HGPA., addressed to the Second Chief of the COCP by the Deputy Commander of the COE Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3059920. Internal AHPN registration 30912].

<sup>267</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 12/15/1982, Of. No 1079-Ref-QC-Eirl., new developments report addressed to the Director General of PN by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3155339. Internal AHPN registration 30765].

GT PN 51-02 S005 12/31/1982, Of. No 1151-Ref-QC-Eirl., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3161361. Internal AHPN registration 30811].

In March 1983, the commanders of the COE and the DIT, on orders from the Director General of Police, worked in coordination with the Commander of the Honor Guard Military Brigade to set up a mixed column in order to carry out a “*tracking operation*” in the village of Santa Elena Barillas, in search of “*subversive elements,*” and a reconnaissance operation in the villages of Los Positos and Dolores, where a platoon of the Presidential Guard was also to be found.<sup>268</sup>

December 27th, 1982:

*“At 17:55 hours, an officer withdrew with 20 men on board truck 0-12197 and Jeep 244 in order to conduct a Search Operation in zone 13, achieving the capture of two female individuals and sized cassettes with recordings of war songs, which remained in the possession of the E.M.G.E Intelligence section, returning 20:00 hours.”*<sup>269</sup>

September 28th, 1982

*“at 20:30 hours, from the Police Communications Center, the undersigned received information that in the Nueva Monserrat district, Zone 7, unknown individuals were attacking personnel from this Command with firearms, in response to which, on board Units 358, 244 and the van with plates P-78437, we proceeded to the aforementioned location with 10 men, having first confirmed that personnel from the Institution’s School who had been conducting a foot patrol operation in that sector were being attacked with firearms from the terraces of the houses on Black 3, block E, immediately carrying out a support operation, evacuating the gentlemen cadets in question and commencing a counterattack with the following results: A) Elimination of one of the subversive individuals...; B) Capture of a woman...; C) Location of a residence where, according to the prisoner, she worked as a domestic employee, and where after consultation a search was conducted that turned up subversive material consisting of study documents and texts, said residence was*

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<sup>268</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 03/14/1983, Of. No 329-Ref-QC- Larr., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Digital reference 3165969. Internal AHPN registration 30812].

<sup>269</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 12/27/1982, Of. No. 1130-Ref-QC-Eirl., new development report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3157987. Internal AHPN registration 30813].

*supposedly inhabited by one CARLOS HUMBERTO SALAZAR LIMA, his wife and children, and apparently a man, one more woman, and the female prisoner. .*

*The Presidential General Staff Intelligence Office has been informed of the case and, while awaiting a decision on appropriate action, this command has been assigned to security... ”<sup>270</sup>*

The COE handed over any weapons seized during raids to the Army,<sup>271</sup> while also receiving orders from the Directorate General of the PN in order to avoid affecting certain people in the context of actions such as residential searches. In the following case, for example, they were instructed not to search the houses of officials from the United States Embassy.

*“On instructions from the Director General of Police in order to implement the Order from the Ministry of National Defense, DO NOT SEARCH the residences of the following persons:*

*Lt. Colonel David “W” Patton, United States Group Commander, 23 av. 7-09 zone 15, Vista Hermosa I.*

*Lt. Colonel Benjamín H. Castro, United States Air Force Representative, 23 av. 7-34 zone 15, Vista Hermosa I.*

*Colonel George E. Maynes, Defense Attaché to the US Embassy. 2<sup>a</sup> av. 7-85 zone 14.*

*W0-1 Robert Prescott Operations Coordinator Defense Attaché’s Office at the American Embassy, 20th av. 3-21 zone 15, ... ”. <sup>272</sup>*

Most of the activities carried out by the COE formed part of counterinsurgency plans designed and coordinated by the National Army and the CRIO. Consequently, they participated directly in the following plans: Azpa, Pyramid, Operation

<sup>270</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 09/28/1982, Of. No.829-Ref-QC-Cqy, addressed to Calvary Colonel and Director General of the PN by Police Colonel Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3169920. Internal AHPN registration 30815].

<sup>271</sup> GT PN 30-01 S004 06/02/1983 Oficio No 1914/Ref., QC.ETA, report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Digital reference 1700851 a 1700853. Internal AHPN registration 29879].

<sup>272</sup> GT PN 51-02 S002 07/12/1982, Of. N° MCP/1958, Ref.Of.08420 M.D.N., addressed to Lieutenant Colonel of Police and Chief of the Narcotics Department by the chief of the COCP Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez, stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 3051862. Internal AHPN registration 30914].

Inkwell, Operation Light, Dolphins, and Operation Cat. The results of these plans can be read in the reports, for example, “*Executing PLAN AZPA, ISSUED BY JULIO,...*”<sup>273</sup>

The COE also took part in activities that violated established legal procedures for the capture of individuals. Without remanding them for trial or presenting them before a competent judge, it handed them over to the Army General Staff.<sup>274</sup> On July 9th, 1982, the Commander and Deputy Commander, leading two officers and 49 men, conducted a “*search operation*” in the house of Víctor Manuel González Rosales located on 1st Street 43-14 zone 7, where, they report, they seized weapons, ammunition and “*on instructions from above*” received from the Police Second Corps, they did not institute remand procedures, but instead handed Mr. González Rosales over to Air Force Captain Mario Augusto Rivas García of the Army General Staff.<sup>275</sup>

Another mode of operational coordination with the Army was the participation of members of the COE in the Task Force<sup>276</sup> of the Southwestern Theater of Operations (Teatro de Operaciones de Suroccidente, TOSO), using the Retalhuleu air base as a center of operations, which were directed and coordinated by the the Army General Staff Intelligence Office (D-2).<sup>277</sup>

From January 15th, 1983, the personnel of the First Company of the COE formed part of the task force detachment of the TOSO. It operated along the Pacific

<sup>273</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 02/10/1982, Oficio No. 0106/ETA, addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Internal AHPN registration 13011].

<sup>274</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 07/09/1982, Of. No 581/Ref. Edav., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3155279. Internal AHPN registration 30817].

GT PN 51-02 S005 07/08/1982, Of. No. 465/ETA, addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3152788. Internal AHPN registration 30818].

GT PN 51-02 S005 07/21/1982, Of. No 614/Ref/Rrz., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3157321. Internal AHPN registration 30763].

GT PN 51-02 S005 05/06/1982, Of. No 349/Ref. Edav., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Edgar Leonel Lorenzo, Deputy Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3125390. Internal AHPN registration 28799].

GT PN 51-02 S005 08/02/1982, Of No 637/Ref/Rrz., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE. Detainees handed over to Infantry Lieutenant Cruz Magdalena Reyes García of the Ambulatory Military Police (PMA) [Digital reference 3156950. Internal AHPN registration 28802].

<sup>275</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 07/09/1982, Of. No 581/Ref. Edav., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3155279. Internal AHPN registration 30817].

<sup>276</sup> The Military Dictionary defines the Joint Task Force as a “*force composed of members assigned or added to the land, air or naval forces, or two of these military forces brought together and designated as such by the Minister of Defense or the Commander of a unified Command or a specific Command. The task forces consisted of a military core composed of forces from different areas (infantry, artillery, armored, navy, air force). This enabled the Army to combine troops for certain kinds of operations, responding rapidly to new situations in a conventional armed confrontation. It had sufficient flexibility to be assembled at short notice and carry out military operations for the time necessary, and its units could be relieved if operations were prolonged. Once the mission was concluded, it was demobilized and its members returned to their units of origin.*” CEH Report, volume II, pp. 48.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, volume II, p. 503.

coast, covering part of the departments of Retalhuleu, Suchitepéquez, the south of Sololá and part of the Pacaya volcano. Between November 20th, 1982 and January 15th, 1983, over 300 men joined the command.

During these months, the COE commander Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano and the Deputy Commander coordinated directly with various agencies of the armed forces and maintained direct, constant communication with the Director General of the PN, Colonel Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch.

On January 16th, 1983, a report on new developments<sup>278</sup> stated that the Commander of this Unit returned to the Presidential Palace with eight Anr/601 radios from the Army transmissions service. The Deputy Commander, for his part, visited the Air Force Tactical Grouping. Eighteen men and two officers from the command returned to the Army Intelligence Service in zone 13 to pick up 1,500 cold combat rations. Another sixteen men and three officers returned to the Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade with 750 .30 caliber rifle cartridges. Later, another 17 men and three officers withdrew, heading for the War Materiel service.

At close to midnight of that same day, the report says:

*“FIRST COMPANY BROE TO OPERATION: At 23:30 hours the First Company of this command with (140 men) departed for the Southern Theater of Operations to conduct Policing operations in support of the Military units in the area under the command of the Deputy Commander of this Command.”*

Four days later, on January 20th, the commander of the COE, leading three officers and twelve men, went out on a commission to the town of Santa Bárbara in the department of Suchitepéquez.<sup>279</sup> He returned on January 28th from the Sololá operational area accompanied by Manuel de Jesús Pérez López, police lieutenant from the substation at Patulul, in the department of Suchitepéquez. At the same time, two of the Command's agents, Manuel de Jesús Morales Martínez and Silverio Rosales Castañeda were evacuated from the area.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/16/1983, Of. No 036-Ref-QC-Arcc, new development report to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3162851. Internal AHPN registration 30821].

<sup>279</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/20/1983, Of. No 51-Ref-QC-Eirl, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3165918. Internal AHPN registration 30822].

<sup>280</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/28/1983, Of. No 88-Ref-QC-Eirl, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3166738. Internal AHPN registration 30823].

On April 6th of that same year, 140 men and eight officers under the command of Captain Manuel V. Martínez were withdrawn to be sent to the Southwestern Theater of Operations in order to relieve Command personnel attached to the army detachments in Mazatenango and Retalhuleu.<sup>281</sup> On April 21st, the body of agent José María Pérez Vásquez arrived from Retalhuleu, accompanied by four men under the command of Lieutenant López Vásquez of the TOSO.<sup>282</sup>

On May 6th, 133 men and officers under the command of the Commander and Third Chief of the Unit returned from the TOSO along with 40 security agents. According to the new developments report, "*these were detached in the Southern Area as a task force.*"<sup>283</sup>

### 3.4.2 Command Six

It was noted previously that during the 1970s, in the Second Corps of the PN, a special command was created under the name Special Investigations Section or Command Six.

The AHPN research team in charge of the archives of the Second Corps has determined that, in organizational terms, Command Six, or the Special Investigations Section, was an annex or substructure of this Corps like the Prisoners' Hospital/PN Hospital and the so-called General Prison. The Second Corps took its orders directly from the Directorate General of the PN, receiving its instructions and reporting back to it on the execution of the orders received.

This police corps maintained a close relationship with the Judiciary through the reports sent to and received from the various courts throughout the country. Relations were also constant with the Directorate General of Prisons by means of the lists of prisoners it handled.

Like the other structures already analyzed, it occupied a subordinate position with respect to the National Army, through the Presidential General Staff and the Ambulatory Military Police. Together with the latter, it planned and executed a variety of operations in coordination with the COCP.

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<sup>281</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 04/06/1983, Of. No 422-Ref-QC-Eirl., new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Deputy Commander of the COE, Edgar Leonel Lorenzo [Digital reference 3167244. Internal AHPN registration 30824].

<sup>282</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 04/21/1983, Of. No. 557-Ref-QC-Larr, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by the Commander of the COE Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Digital reference 3170783. Internal AHPN registration 30825].

<sup>283</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 05/06/1983, Of. No 606-Ref-QC-Eirl, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Edgar Leonel Lorenzo, Deputy Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3170118. Internal AHPN registration 30827].

With the counterinsurgency strategy in place, the role of this corps was to implement the corresponding plans and operations for the area in question.<sup>284</sup> In this context, in order for the Second Corps to fulfill this role, it made use of specialized structures such as Command Six and the Prisoners' Hospital.

Command Six had various vehicles assigned for its use. In January of 1981, the first chief of special investigations of this Command, Lieutenant Colonel of Police Ricardo Benedicto Santos Arriaga, sent a document to the National Police's Chief of Transport. In order to process the payment of a vehicle road tax, he attached a list of motor vehicles in the agency's fleet.

**Table II.3**

*Vehicles in service with Command Six, January 1981*<sup>285</sup>

NO.	TYPE	MAKE	PLATES	COLOR	CHASSIS	ENGINE
01	Jeep	Toyota	O-12170	White	FJ40-119834	F-60032
02	Jeep	Toyota	P-78479	Green	FJ40-112321	F-60032
03	Jeep	Toyota	O-12200	Red	FJ40-112321	F-366662
04	Chevy Nova		P-78460	Yellow	770916	TO77330
05	Maverick		P-78474	Black	J4W94F	154574
06	Maverick		P-78468	Sapodilla	F4W92F15456OF	IDEN
07	Panel		P-78457	White	26084	218924L
08	Maverick		P-78464	Green	F4W92F154576F	D30E8425A
09	Jeep	Toyota	O-12133	Red	FJ40-119940	F380751 <sup>286</sup>

Source: AHPN, based on the information in the oficios: No. 039/REF.OCC, 01/15/1981 of the First Chief of Special Investigations for Command Six and No.1,340 REF.OCC. 02.12.1981, same sender.

Note that the oficio addressed to the PN Chief of Transport mentions two vehicles with the same engine number (white Toyota Jeep and green Toyota Jeep) and one of them (green Toyota Jeep) also had the same chassis number as another (red Toyota Jeep).

<sup>284</sup> The Second Corps was in charge of maintaining security and social control in zones 1, 2, 6, and 18 of the capital city and the municipalities of Chinautla, Palencia, San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc.

<sup>285</sup> GT PN 24-09-01 S001 0/15/1981, oficio No. 039/REF.OCC., addressed to the Chief of Transport of the National Police, Lieutenant Colonel of Police Ricardo Benedicto Santos Arreaga, First Chief of Special Investigations, Command Six [Internal AHPN registration 30892].

<sup>286</sup> GT PN 24-09-01 S001 0/15/1981, oficio No. 039/REF.OCC., addressed to the Chief of Transport of the National Police, Lieutenant Colonel of Police Ricardo Benedicto Santos Arreaga, First Chief of Special Investigations, Command Six [Internal AHPN registration 30892].



In another document from September 1981, containing the list of vehicles attached to the Command Six section, there is a table drawn up by the command's Chief of Services, Otilio Cabrera Corado, which shows thirteen vehicles with the following details: type of vehicle, color, unit number, "*PLATES ASSIGNED*," "*PLATES IN USE*," plus observations. Two of the vehicles in question were registered as follows:<sup>287</sup>

**Table II.4**

*Partial list of vehicles in the Command Six section*

<i>ORDER No.</i>	<i>TYPE OF VEHICLE</i>	<i>COLOR</i>	<i>No. DEM No.</i>	<i>PLATES ASSIGNED</i>	<i>PLATES IN USE</i>	<i>TO SERVICE OBSERVATIONS</i>
<i>07</i>	<i>Toyota Jeep</i>	<i>Red</i>	<i>06</i>	<i>P-78484</i>	<i>0-12200</i>	<i>2 plates Stored File</i>
<i>08</i>	<i>Chevy Nova</i>	<i>Blue</i>	<i>---</i>	<i>P-78473</i>	<i>P-78474</i>	

Source: Excerpt from "*List of Vehicles of Command 6 Section*," 09/04/1981

Command Six received complaints of various types and kept a numerical record of these over the whole year.<sup>288</sup> It had jurisdiction over the city of Guatemala, its boroughs, and some other departments of the Republic.

<sup>287</sup> GT PN 24-09-01 S002 09/04/1981, "*LIST OF VEHICLES IN USE IN THE COMMAND SIX SECTION*," compiled by the Chief of Command Six Services, Otilio Cabrera Corado [Internal AHPN registration 5891].

<sup>288</sup> For example, in: GT PN 24-09-01 S005 10/24/1980, complaints received, No. 495/rlr. [Internal AHPN registration 11518].

## CHAPTER III

### THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICT, 1975-1985

In chapter I of this report we outlined the fact that, by mandate of its Organic Law, Presidential Decree 332 of 1955, the National Police (PN) was the institution charged with maintaining public order and protecting the lives and security of the people and its possessions. Its role was also to prevent, pursue and suppress lawbreakers, and cooperate in investigations relating to the crimes described in Guatemalan legal ordinances.<sup>1</sup> In the fulfillment of its functions, the PN answered directly to the Ministry of the Interior, and in legal matters it was subordinated to the Republic's courts of justice.<sup>2</sup>

In the course of the analysis of the documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN), researchers have been able to identify the mechanisms employed by the police institution in order to carry out its functions. These activities, however, went beyond ensuring public order, focusing rather on the social and political control of the populace. There is documentary evidence showing the prompt, systematic collection of information on individual people from both official sources and through informants among the general population. There are also detentions and captures of "suspicious persons" in "cleansing operations," as well as searches of individuals, residences and vehicles.

During the period studied (1975-1985), members of the PN infiltrated, for intelligence purposes, social groups that organized or attended events concerning protests, unions, politics, or social events in general. On occasion, the PN's activities went beyond its legal mandate to "*protect the lives and security of the the people,*" becoming acts that should be carefully studied, as there are indications that many of these could be considered human rights violations.

This Chapter contains an examination of the dynamics of the PN in its role as a security force during the period colored by the internal armed conflict and counterinsurgency policies. Its tasks included the systematic registration and compilation of files on the country's population, surveillance of residences, and

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<sup>1</sup> See Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional, Article 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Article 3.

persecution of the political opposition, together with the role it assumed as a source of information in the context of its work alongside other State security forces.

This should be examined within the framework of the stages through which the internal armed conflict passed during the years 1975–1985. During the first stage, the political opposition was reorganizing itself, particularly after the earthquake of 1976. This event fostered a spirit of solidarity and struggle, but also a resurgence of State repression; one of the results of this was that armed groups received greater popular support and became stronger, spreading over virtually the entire country.

The second stage, covering the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the following decade, is characterized by the merciless persecution of political opponents and people committed to the social struggle with the goal of dismantling the popular movement. The armed confrontation between the Army and the rebel organizations in the north and west of the country also intensified during this stage. The conflict entered its most violent phase during the regimes of Lucas García (July 1978 to March 1982), Ríos Montt (March 1982 to August 1983) and Mejía Vítores (August 1983 to January 1986), the latter two being constituted as *de facto* (i.e., unelected) governments. It was during this period that the conflict claimed greater numbers of victims through forced disappearances, executions without trial, genocide, torture, and sexual violence. The counterinsurgency policy implemented during this stage led to an unprecedented weakening and breakdown of the capital's civil groups. In rural areas, the social fabric of the communities where the insurgency had been strongest was destroyed by the recovery of control by the military.

With this as our backdrop, the documents in the AHPN allow us to gather information that will contribute to our knowledge of the role played by the PN in the repression and counterinsurgency activities that took place during the conflict.

## **1. Population Registration and Files**

The PN had a variety of agencies that gathered, recorded and organized information. Notable among these were the Identification Bureau, the Detective

Corps, the Department of Technical Investigations (DIT) that preceded it, and the Police Center for Joint Operations (COCP).

The compilation of personal data had begun with the Identification Bureau in 1927. Initially, its task was to build a database containing the fingerprints of detainees. Later it began to open files on people applying for drivers licenses, and unidentified bodies. Starting in 1971, all those applying for their first national ID card or its replacement were included.<sup>3</sup> The AHPN contains files of this last type through 1985, at the latest.<sup>4</sup>

The various criminal investigation offices that followed during the next five decades maintained an archive of personal files containing notes on the activities, references and any other additional data on individuals considered to be of interest to the PN. This record was justified by and formed part of the functions of the institution in cases of detentions, requests for police records, court orders or similar procedures.

Nevertheless, the legality of these records is debatable, especially in view of its role in the surveillance of people's social and political activities. The Organic Law of the PN specifies nothing of this kind as part of the functions of the Detective Corps. Rather, it would seem to be a legacy of the Preventive Penal Law against Communism, Article 3 of which explicitly proposes the necessary registration of persons considered to have links with activities and groups labeled as "*Communist*."<sup>5</sup> This task was subsequently assigned to the Service Section for Defense against Communism by Decree No. 553, which provided the basis for the creation of the Directorate General of National Security. Since then, the legality of this function has been watered down through successive transfers, first to the Judicial Department, and then to the Detective Corps when it was set up using personnel from the defunct Judicial Police.

Alongside the Identification Bureau, each successive office for investigation and intelligence also had its own records section. These produced a set of fingerprint files with basic information on the person identified and the reasons for opening said file.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> GT PN 49-02 S012 11/05/1971, "Press release" [Digital reference 3632086. Internal AHPN registration 29665].

<sup>4</sup> GT PN 49-03 S001 06/06/1980, fingerprint file opened due to extension of municipal ID [Digital reference 3466421. Internal AHPN registration 29496].

<sup>5</sup> Governing Junta Decree No. 59 of 08/12/1954.

<sup>6</sup> 1. GT PN 50-13 S001 10/19/1969, file from the Identification Section of the Judicial Police recording fingerprints and dactyloscopic data [Digital reference 2573860. Internal AHPN registration 29711]  
2. GT PN 50-13-01 S001 02/12/1972, file from the Detective Corps (with Judicial Police letterhead) for recording latent fingerprints using the five-fingers system [Digital reference 2723287. Internal AHPN registration 29779].

One agency that brought together all types of information was the COCP, since it was sent a copy of most PN internal communications and, furthermore, of the entire flow of correspondence between the Police and the Ministry of the Interior, the Presidential General Staff and the Army. Consequently, this police agency possessed a store of data that served it not only in its statistical functions, but also in the preparation and review of operational plans. In addition, the office workers in the intelligence branch were “*responsible for the day-to-day analysis of criminal activity.*”<sup>7</sup>

## 1.1 The Master File Record

Based on the documentation discovered in the AHPN so far, it is known that the files were the principal instrument used by the police institution for recording individuals, their activities and their movements. The same files were used to record legal, administrative and political information. They first came into use in 1935 with President Jorge Ubico’s Security Police. The most recent dates form 1986, the year in which the DIT was disbanded. It is estimated that, over the course of these fifty-one years, close to one million people were registered in the files that are now available in the documentation corresponding to the PN’s criminal investigation structures.<sup>8</sup>

During the initial phase of the process of organizing the archives, researchers decided to call this mountain of documents the *Master File Record* (Registro Maestro de Fichas, RMF), which is organized in alphabetical order, starting with the first surname (primer apellido) and first name of the individuals registered there. The information they contain came from different sources, such as police reports, complaints, remands, detentions, interrogations, investigations, surveillance and prior records of those subject to police persecution. It was also taken from files and paperwork produced by the Executive and the Judiciary.

Although the files’ principal function was the control and monitoring of individuals, they were also used to record information on institutions, organizations and issues, depending on the political phase through which the country was passing. For example, there are notes on events involving bloodshed, bodies, “*agitators,*” “*subversives,*” the University campus, bombs, weapons, etc.

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<sup>7</sup> GT PN 35 S001 08/23-24/1980, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 102, “*Internal Regulations of the Center for Joint Operations,*” Article 167, Book Number 10504 [Digital reference 737074. Internal AHPN registration 27102].

<sup>8</sup> GT PN Collection 50 (Department of Criminological Investigation –DIC-) S001. The calculations, as of June 30th, 2010, were based on the physical volume of the files, which form a line stretching 222 meters. The files are kept in 515 boxes, with approximately 2156 dossiers, each of which contains collections of some 460 files or cards. The total number of files is over 900,000.

### Photograph III.1

File on "GUERRILLA REBELS"  
1981

CUERPO DE DETECTIVES POLICIA NACIONAL		FACCIOSOS GUERRILLEROS	
ARCHIVO		APELLIDOS	NOMBRES
		DIRECCION	
FECHA	NUMERO	CARPETA	ASUNTO
26-1-81.mam	547	Cuerpo Detectives	Informe de presuntos guerrilleros , quienes pintaron paredes y casas y lanzaron propaganda subversiva.
9-7-81.mam	4246	Cuerpo Detectives	Informe de 10 facciosos muertos en el tiroteo que se produjo en la zona 15 en la residencia ubicada en la 16av. 10-09, zona 15 Vista Hermosa III, y en la cual también se encontró Armas de Fuego.
10-7-81.mam	4254	Cuerpo Detectives	Informe de que fueron muertos once facciosos de sexo masculino y femenino, localizados en el interior del

Source: GT PN 50 S001 01/26/1981 – 07/10/1981 [Digital reference 713239. Internal AHPN registration 26385]

### Photograph III.2

File on "DEMONSTRATIONS"  
1978

CUERPO DE DETECTIVES POLICIA NACIONAL		No. 10	
ARCHIVO		APELLIDOS	MANIFESTACIONES
		NOMBRES	
		DIRECCION	
FECHA	NUMERO	CARPETA	ASUNTO
7/3/78.hu.	912	Cuerpo Detectives	Se informa de manifestación en la Municipalidad de Guatemala apoyando a José María Ruiz Furlan.
20/2/78.hu.	458	D. Gral. Pol. Nac.	Informe de vigilancia que se realizó en la colonia Sta. Isabel Villa Nueva.
11/3/78.ca.	962	Cuerpo Detectives	Informe confidencial relacionado a manifestación que realizó el partido MLN y la cual se dirigió al parque Central.
13/4/78.jev.	1442	Cuerpo Detectives	Informe confidencial de manifestación que realizó José María Ruiz Furlan.

Source: GT PN 50 S001 03/07/1978 – 04/13/1978 [Digital reference 753230. Internal AHPN registration 26386]

In the personal files, in addition to a person's full name, their address was also recorded. Written below this, in a table designed for the purpose, were the "date" of registration, the reference "number" for tracking documentation relating to the record, the origin or source of the information, recorded in the "folder" column, and in "subject" a summary of the action documented was provided. By way of example, below is a reproduction of the file card used to register the details of the political leader Alberto Fuentes Mohr.

### Photograph III.3

File recording information on Alberto Fuentes Mohr  
1973

CUERPO DE DETECTIVES POLICIA NACIONAL ARCHIVO		APELLIDOS: FUENTES MOHR.- NOMBRES: Alberto DIRECCION: D.F. Q.B.P.D.	
FECHA	NUMERO	CARPETA	ASUNTO
12/7/73.cr.	5776.	Cuerpo Detectives.	Informan de su ingreso al Pais, procedente de Tegucigalpa, Honduras.-
26-7-73.cr.	5832.	Cuerpo Detectives.	Ingreso procedente de Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
3/8/73.cr.	5881.	Cuerpo Detectives.	Informan de su salida con destino al Pais de Tegucigalpa, Honduras.-
11-8-73 jgf.	5915	Cuerpo Detectives	Informan de su ingreso al pais.
13-8-73 jgf.	5919	Cuerpo Detectives	Informan que salió con destino a Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
19-11-73 jgf	1897	D.Gral.Pol. Nac.	Se toma nota de circular relacionada a que goza de inmunidad al ser proclamado candidato a la Vice-presidencia de la Republ. por el partido Democracia Cristiana.

Source: GT PN 50 S001 07/12/1973 – 11/19/1973 [Digital reference 250375. Internal AHPN registration 26387]

The system for organizing the files made for easy searching according to the names of those already registered in any of the circumstances for which it was designed. The following transcription of a communication between DIT headquarters and the Directorate General of the PN illustrates how they were used and how new files were opened.

*“A. Persons entering the country as Deportees are received at the Air Terminal by members of the Office of the Department of Technical Investigations, INTERPOL Section, who proceed to check their documentation, after which they are transferred to the Immigration Office, strictly for purposes of immigration. Afterwards, they are sent to the headquarters of the Department of Technical Investigations.*

*B. Once at the Departmental headquarters, the local and international Archives are consulted in order to establish the existence of any outstanding complaint or apprehension order against the individual or any notifications from INTERPOL. In the case of a positive result, the individual is held for investigation or trial before the appropriate Court, within the period of time established by law.*

*C. Otherwise, the deportees are released and a file is opened on them where it is recorded that they have entered the country as deportees.*

*D. Persons originally from Departments considered to be areas of conflict, such as Huehuetenango, Quiché, Totonicapán, etc., are investigated in relation to their travels and reasons for emigrating.*

*E. For Honduran and Salvadorean deportees, owing to their non-resident status in Guatemala, control is limited to a record of their general information, date of entry and destination.”<sup>9</sup>*

Sections C and D are particularly revealing. The first reflects the arbitrary control the PN exercised over people who, in this case, had committed no crime or misdemeanor of the type described in the country’s laws, since they were deported

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<sup>9</sup> GT PN 50-08 DSC 11/11/1983, Providencia No. 032-SISI-amp, sent from the DIT headquarters to the Director General of the National Police [Internal AHPN registration 31199].



from a different country. The other section shows the ever-present suspicion derived from the simple fact of hailing from a given region of Guatemala that led to people being registered and then kept under watch for political reasons.

The procedures for recording and retrieving information involved the use of particular techniques for identification, labeling and description of the documents in order to facilitate and speed up retrieval.

For the PN this system of files for criminal, political and social control can be summed up as follows:

- a) Over the course of time, to describe, classify, study and analyze individuals, their movements (including migration), personal relationships, participation in political and social life, infractions committed, etc.
- b) To analyze and compare social activities, descriptions of groups, characteristics of collective acts, etc.

However, now that this set of files forms part of a historical archive, this double purpose also has a positive impact on the recovery of historical memory. Through it, many processes can be reconstructed, and it is possible to understand how the security forces conjectured regarding the suspicious, dangerous, and subversive nature of individuals.

As an illustration of this mechanism, below is a file made out in the name of Aníbal Leonel Caballeros Ramírez.

Each card contains a record of the event in question and the date. In order to find more details regarding the “*Subject*” the searcher can look among the documents that correspond to the “*Number*” written in the second column. On the Caballeros

### Photograph III.4

File recording information on Aníbal Leonel Caballeros Ramírez  
1977-1978

CUERPO DE DETECTIVOS POLICIA NACIONAL		ARCHIVO	
		APELLIDOS	CABALLEROS RAMIREZ.
		NOMBRES	Anibal Leonel.
		DIRECCION	
FECHA	NUMERO	CARRETA	ASUNTO
30-7-77.Ra.	2308	D.Gral.Pol.Nac.	Fue levantado su cadaver presentando señales de violencia. Se realizó fotocopia de la D.Gral. del ramo.
8/6/78 jev	2333	Cuerpo Detectives	Informe confidencial de manifestación por el aniversario de la muerte de éste estudiante.-

Source: GT PN 50 S001 [Digital reference 815254. Internal AHPN registration 26389]

Ramírez file card, at least one copy of the document with the reference 2308 is deposited in the procedures archive of the DIC collection. The report on the findings can be found here, including the description (“*signs of strangulation and blood on the face,*”) as well as the identification and registration of the body. The report filled out by the detectives of the homicide section on their visit to the morgue, in which they state that the cause of death was 4th degree contusions of the thorax and abdomen, can also be found here. There are also details of the deceased mother, the scene of the events, and of the Instituto Normal Rafael Aqueche, the school where Caballeros was studying his fourth year of teacher training.<sup>10</sup>

In this case, the file is accompanied by two reports containing information on surveillance and observation of the same number of protest demonstrations. They both took place on August 1st, 1977. The first was held in the afternoon in protest against the execution of Caballeros. The second took place that evening and demanded that the authorities produce Robin García, a classmate of Caballeros

<sup>10</sup> 1. GT PN 50 S040 07/30/1977, ref. 2308, cadaver report address to the Chief of the Detective Corps by detectives nos. 149, José María Flores Muñoz and 337, Francisco del Cid Aguilar [Internal AHPN registration 4501].  
2. GT PN 50 S004 08/02/1977, No. 23177/oficio 9o.hgm., addressed to the Director General of the PN, Infantry Colonel Mario G. Cardona Maldonado by the Chief of the Detective Corps, Infantry Colonel Carlos Ignacio González Palacios [Internal AHPN registration 34735].

and the last person to be seen with him. Also included was a flyer titled “*Manifiesto in the Face of Repression*” bearing the name of the Steering Committee of the Technical Vocational Institute’s Student Association.<sup>11</sup>

Another record referenced in the file cited contains a document with the reference number 2333. It is a confidential report from the intelligence service of the Detective Corps about a demonstration held on June 8th, 1978. It was initially organized to commemorate the first anniversary of the violent death of Mario López Larrave, but became more intense due to the massacre of farmers that took place in Panzós, Alta Verapaz. Indeed, the speeches and the posters also contained protests against the deaths of the students Robin García and Leonel Caballeros.<sup>12</sup> Enclosed are fifteen flyers and pamphlets from an equal number of union and student organizations, one flyer with slogans, and eleven photographs taken during the protest by agents of the intelligence service.<sup>13</sup>

Surveillance of certain people in militant political opposition circles, or who were considered to be “*subversives*,” reached such a pitch that it continued even after their deaths. This explains the notes made on the files, even on dates after the death of the subjects investigated, as well as the emphasis placed on detectives’ reports on protest demonstrations against numerous acts of violence.

In this way, the archives of the successive criminal investigation entities were integrated into the filing system that facilitated the review of records. Currently, they help to clarify the investigative activities of the AHPN.

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<sup>11</sup> GT PN 50 S004 AEU flyer [Internal AHPN registration 34736].

<sup>12</sup> GT PN 50 S002 06/08/1978, ref. 2333, confidential report from the Detective Corps Intelligence Service, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 3234003. Internal AHPN registration 29574].

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

### Photograph III.5

Photo taken by members of the Detective Corps  
September 8th 1978



Source: GT PN 50 S002 [Digital reference 3234003. Internal AHPN registration 29574]

## 1.2 Personal Identification Archive

The archive of the Fingerprint Department of the Identification Bureau of the PN was set up in 1925. Its main function was to enable the identification of people through their fingerprints by means of various systems of fingerprinting. In the period studied, there were sections for the Henry Dactyloscopic Ten-Print Alphabetical Classification, Oloris Vucetich, one-finger, and five-finger systems.<sup>14</sup>

At different times, Bureau agents were granted scholarships by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to travel to the the US in order to train in the use of the different methods employed.<sup>15</sup> In May and June of 1971, support was provided by Arlen W. Gee, USAID's regional advisor for Latin America, who arrived to give training in ballistics and provide general technical assistance.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> GT PN 35 S001 06/12-13/1978, book of General Orders, General Order of the National Police No. 071, "*Internal Regulations of the Department of Identification*," Article 115, Book number 10504 [Digital reference 736310. Internal AHPN registration 26935].

<sup>15</sup> 1. GT PN 49-02 S013 05/24/1971, oficio No. 251-imr; Chief of the Identification Bureau, Sergio Roberto Lima Morales, traveled to the United States to observe police laboratories in various states; addressed to the Director General of the institution, from the Bureau Chief [Digital reference 3634495. Internal AHPN registration 31034].

2. GT PN 49-02 S013 09/10/1971, Oficio No. 491-imr, five Bureau officers were awarded USAID scholarships for a three-month course in Washington on fingerprint files; addressed to the Director General of the institution by the Chief of the Identification Bureau [Digital reference 3634497. Internal AHPN registration 31035].

<sup>16</sup> GT PN 49-02 S013 05/24/1971, oficio No. 250-imr, addressed to the Director General of the institution by the Chief of the Identification Bureau [Digital Reference 3634493. Internal AHPN registration 31031].

This identification service began with the registration of people who had broken the law and were detained in any of the country's prisons. The reason for this protocol was to establish a database of fingerprints or the purposes of identifying and tracking down criminals. To this end, it had cards or files on which to record the criminal act that the individual had committed or repeated. This system made it possible to keep a record of tens of thousands of citizens, finally reaching a figure of somewhere around a million people, according to the AHPN records.

Between 1975 and 1985, the PN, in its capacity as the body responsible for traffic-related matters, and through the Identification Bureau, also recorded on these file cards the fingerprints of anyone applying for a driver's license or renewing one. Generally, this was the way in which the first file was opened on individuals who were afterwards persecuted for political activism. Thus, when the security forces came to view them as an objective, they already had a record on file at this PN structure.<sup>17</sup>

Another of the Bureau's functions was to register the bodies of persons whose bodies appeared on public roads and remained unidentified, in order to establish their identities.

It was in 1971 that the fingerprint record was extended to include even those reaching eighteen years of age and came to their municipal offices in order to obtain ID cards (the "cédula de vecindad," a personal identification card used throughout the country), along with those seeking a replacement card, or those registering their residence in the locality.

On November 3rd of that year, the Directorate General of the PN sent a circular to the Departmental Chiefs informing them of this last measure.

*"With a view to increasing the volume of our archives and to maintain control over the greatest possible number of the inhabitants of the national territory, this Office has decided that fingerprints are to be taken at the Departmental Administrative Centers of all persons of legal age and thus eligible for their Municipal ID, the replacement of same, or who are registering in that place.*

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<sup>17</sup> 1. GT PN 49-02 S010 05/25/1973, table showing numbers of people on file according to cause, sent by the secretary of the Henry fingerprint department, German Pérez Santos [Digital reference 3634399. Internal AHPN registration 32068].  
2. GT PN 49-02 S004 05/18/1977, for example, a file opened as a result of motorcycle license application #62533 by Vicente Hernández Camey, a community leader who was subsequently killed. His case is analyzed in depth in Chapter IV of this report [Digital reference 3641610. Internal AHPN registration 31045].

*To this end, the cooperation of that municipality must be sought in order that, before issuing said document, applicants are required to visit their local offices so that the official in charge may complete the card referred to, exempting from this requirement all persons presenting a driver's license for any type of motor vehicle, since these are already registered in the archives.”<sup>18</sup>*

On November 5th, 1971, a press bulletin from the police institution informed the populace in the following terms:

*“The National Police has as one of its functions the identification of individuals in cases where documentation is lacking, availing itself for this purpose of the only infallible method, which is fingerprinting, with the aim of providing a social service, and not seeking any criminal connections or those of any other kind, but rather that of performing its duties in the event of a catastrophe or unfortunate occurrence that may disfigure a human being and therefore make the task of identification difficult; for this reason, following the example of other countries which are considerably advanced in this field and the concern of this Institution with respect to the aforementioned cases, it has been decided that, through the agency of the Identification Bureau and with the cooperation of the Municipality of the City of Guatemala, all persons of legal age obtaining Municipal IDs or replacing the same must have a fingerprint file that will serve as an aid to the aforementioned document and whose purpose is, as indicated, to provide a*  
*CIVIL SERVICE OF PROFOUND SOCIAL CONTENT.*

*As such, we request the cooperation of all the citizenry in the hope that this may be extended to the Departments of the Republic.”<sup>19</sup>*

As the documents cited show, this intention was to extend the identification to people living in the capital, the departmental administrative centers and the municipalities, which required coordination by the local authorities. Note that

<sup>18</sup> GT PN 49-02 S012 11/03/1971, unnumbered oficio; addressed to departmental chiefs by the director general of the PN, Infantry Colonel Genaro Alvarado Robles [Digital reference 3632085. Internal AHPN registration 32069].

<sup>19</sup> GT PN 49-02 S012 11/05/1971, “Press release” [Digital reference 3632086. Internal AHPN registration 29665].

the argument in favor of the measure is different in each communication. The letter addressed to the departmental chiefs of the PN is an order and talks in terms of control of the inhabitants. The press release aimed at the public, on the other hand, presents the measure as a social service.

The technical resources for the task of identifying individuals, as well as the forensic and photographic laboratories, formed part of the tools available to the Identification Bureau for the fulfillment of its functions. They also lent a scientific foundation to the police institution as a support for the legal steps taken by the Judiciary.

The documents of the Identification Bureau contained in the AHPN were in terrible condition when they were discovered. The fingerprint files were completely uncared for, heaped in a disordered pile under a layer of dirt and garbage. Other documents were in folders, many of them labeled “*trash*.” It is possible that all this may have been dumped at any moment had it not been for the discovery made by the PDH. It is estimated that the National Police Historical Archive contains over 225 thousand file cards, some 130 thousand of which are records of people requesting municipal IDs, replacements or registration at departments throughout Guatemala.

## **2. Population Surveillance and Control**

### **2.1 Public and Everyday Life**

One of the main sources for understanding how the PN handled information on the day-to-day life of the populace are the documents known as “ordinary new developments.” These were written at all the lower-level offices and transmitted to the higher echelons. These reports contained information on the most diverse kinds of events, such as accidents, social, cultural, economic, religious, and sporting events (wrestling, saints’ festivals, concerts, etc.). Through them, it is possible to gain knowledge of aspects of the social and cultural life of a neighborhood, community or jurisdiction.

One example of these “new developments” is the instructions issued by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps in 1977, ordering one of his units to go and remove a group that used to play ball on 11th Street and 28th Avenue, zone 7,

Kaminal Juyú I. Area residents had complained because the ball players were breaking house windows and dirtying the clothes of passers-by, especially on Saturdays and Sundays.<sup>20</sup>

The AHPN also contains cases that illustrate the control that State security forces held over the movements of members of the population classified as “*suspicious*” or “*dangerous*.” Even if individuals had done nothing more than simply walk on a public thoroughfare, it was possible to receive such labels. Due to one such classification, on June 28th, 1981, members of the National Palace Security Guard apprehended Francisco Sar Barrios, who was afterwards handed over to the Investigations Section of the Detective Corps. The report on his capture states:

*“On arrival at said place, we were received by Major Guillermo Portillo Gomez, Chief of Security at the National Palace, who explained to us that as at around 17:20 hours a suspicious individual was present in the area around the Central park, for which reason they proceeded to provisionally detain him, and upon identifying him, found that he answers to the name of FRANCISCO SAR BARRIOS, 31 years old, address Km.9 Ruta al Atlantico Aserradero los Pinos, who was then brought to this Corps for investigation, being placed under the charge of the Investigations Section of this Corps.”*<sup>21</sup>

On another occasion, in the department of San Marcos, Emilio Gonzales Muñoz was apprehended “*for being found in suspicious circumstances with no identification document, for which reason he was taken from that place to the capital city to be investigated accordingly.*” In fact, he spent several days under arrest at the Mariscal Z barracks in the Quetzaltenango military zone before being sent to the First Corps of the PN in the capital.<sup>22</sup>

In these and other similar cases, the PN acted arbitrarily in the persecution of allegedly “*suspicious*,” “*subversive*,” or “*dangerous*” individuals. They were taken into custody without evidence of any criminal activity. The function of this

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<sup>20</sup> GT PN 38 DSC 11/29/1977, New Developments from the Headquarters of the Radio Patrol Corps Services, Book number 2518 [Digital reference 923634. Internal AHPN registration 28483].

<sup>21</sup> GT PN 50 S002 06/28/1981, Ref. 4,002, Driving Report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Ricardo Antonio Sánchez, Detective no. 201; Francisco Javier de Laparra, Detective no. 37; Orlando Guerra Salazar, Detective no. 307 [Digital reference 3700668. Internal AHPN registration 31200].

<sup>22</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/27/1973, Ref. 2834. Addressed to the Chief of Detective Corps by detective No. 98 Manuel Escobar y Escobar [Digital reference 3163577. Internal AHPN registration 31201].



modus operandi was keeping tabs on the populace based solely on the surveillance of individuals' movements in public and people's personal descriptions.

A message sent on October 20th, 1984 by the Departmental Chief of Quetzaltenango to one of his subordinates reads:

*“Superior Order, stay alert, as the subversives are trying to surprise members of the National Police who are on duty in the Municipalities, in the city streets and on the move with mobile units, you are therefore recommended not to permit the presence of any suspicious person traveling either on foot or by vehicle, and request any assistance needed from Radio Patrols, always alert, much care and precaution, any developments immediately inform this office.”*<sup>23</sup>

A report addressed to the Chief of the PN on August 13th, 1985 states:

*“In order to bring to your attention the service of surveillance, patrols and supervision in the sector under your charge, I attach a photocopy of the new developments for the 72 hours between the 9th and the 11th of this month; monitoring and surveillance must be tightened, with training given to personnel in said services; instructing them to always remain alert and never get distracted, explaining to them all security regulations.*

*Also, make them aware that they are to identify and make a record of any suspicious persons, especially those carrying a typical shoulder bag, backpack, briefcase, etc. in the vicinity of houses or commercial establishments and private residences, since these persons may be criminals who mug passers-by.”*<sup>24</sup>

The PN also had the Radio Patrol Corps, which as an agency was not subject to any territorial jurisdictional limits when it came to inspecting different activities

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<sup>23</sup> GT PN 09-01 S001 10/20/1984, addressed to the Deputy Chief of the National Police by Police Lieutenant Colonel Armando Osorio Carías, departmental chief of the PN for Quetzaltenango [Digital reference 607581. Internal AHPN registration 32115].

<sup>24</sup> GT PN 32 S002 08/13/1985, oficio No. 174.IG-Rbdt, Addressed to the “Chief” of the PN, no sender [Digital reference 2620426. Internal AHPN registration 28484].

involving gatherings of people. This includes probing the ideas expressed at religious events, as the following example describes:

*“At 19:15 hours yesterday, a mass took place at the Metropolitan Church attended by approximately 600 people from all social classes. Said mass was celebrated by his Grace the Metropolitan Archbishop PROSPERO PENADOS DEL BARRIO, who pronounced the following words: ‘Beseech God in your prayers for the disappeared throughout the National territories persecuted by the Death Squadron, and add that blessed be those who are persecuted by the law,’ ending at 20:20 hours without anything further of note.”<sup>25</sup>*

Which is to say that the PN kept itself informed of any kind of event that might take place, and commissioned agents to infiltrate and report on what was happening or being said at each and every one of them.

## **2.2 “Cleansing Operations”**

Among the documents so far analyzed from the AHPN, researchers have discovered operational plans that allude to “*cleansing operations*” or whose conclusions include this term. These actions were characterized by the high number of personnel involved in their execution, using the dragnet technique for the purpose. That is, the coverage or search was organized in such a way that an area was closed off as if enclosed in a net. Police officers moved in on the area from various points in order to converge in the center.

The aim of these operations was always set out in a similar way: the capture of criminals and drug addicts, the suspicious, the intoxicated, the undocumented and the subversive. The goal was to exercise control in the less well-off areas of the capital city, such as the marginal zones and the zone 4 Terminal (the wholesale market) and in the surrounding municipalities. The targets were defined beforehand in the operational plans ordered by the chiefs of the police institution. The COCP would generally be in charge of drawing up these proposals.

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<sup>25</sup> GT PN 51-01 S004 08/04/1984, new developments, addressed to the Commander of the COCP by Wilfredo E. Ortega A., COCP duty officer, reporting on “the most important new developments to occur.” [Digital reference 2750596. Internal AHPN registration 28477].

Usually, there was no mention of the term “*cleansing operation*” in the plan, but there are examples where they are referred to as such, for example in Operational Plan No. 001 of September 22nd, 1984, which says:

“I. SITUATION:

*The traffic corps, in the course of fulfilling Orders issued from Command, on 221900SEP84 carried out in the sector designated a Cleansing Operation with the aim of implementing greater control and thus being better able to combat and eradicate common crime.*”<sup>26</sup>

In a book recording new developments at the service headquarters of the Radio Patrol Corps dating from 1977, there are repeated references to these activities. For example, on December 28th of that year, the following development is recorded:

*“Operation: At 20:00 hours, on board Bus O6949 of this corps, officer Ramiro Osorio Carias set out in his unit 207 with 12 men for a traffic operation on the beltway exit into La Bethania and cleansing in Zone 3.*”<sup>27</sup>

A month prior to this, at the end of November, the same book states:

*“Today at 20:00 hours, under the command of Officer José Luis Osorio Díaz, 20 members of this Corps went out on bus O6949 for a Cleansing operation at the following addresses: 7th Ave to 2nd Ave, 15th St. to 18th St., Zone 12: from 20:00 to 21:30 hours, and 21:30 to 23:00 hours, on Calzada Aguilar Batres at 5th Ave from 15th St. 19th St., Zone 11.*”<sup>28</sup>

It tended to be the case that, although the official plan did not include the term in question, the report submitted following its execution was titled “*Report on Cleansing Operation.*”<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> GT PN 51-01 S005 09/22/1981, Operational Plan No. 001, copy No. 2 of 4 copies, stamp of the Headquarters of the Traffic Corps of the National Police [Digital reference 3058822. Internal AHPN registration 28478].

<sup>27</sup> GT PN 38 DSC 12/28/1977, New Developments from the Headquarters of the Radio Patrol Corps Services, Book number 2518 [Digital reference 923634. Internal AHPN registration 28486].

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 11/24/1977.

<sup>29</sup> GT PN 50 S002 06/27/1981, Ref. 3938. Report on Cleansing Operation carried out at the administrative center of Villa Nueva, addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Abraham Chacón Bolaños, Sub-Inspector 28, 2nd Chief, Homicide Section [Digital reference 3700294. Internal AHPN registration 31202].

In the above-mentioned cases, only one agency was responsible for carrying out the plan. Nevertheless, on many occasions multiple agencies were summoned to take part in these operations. Operational Plan No. 01/HOPN/Orb., named “LOBOS” to be conducted at the zone 4 Bus Terminal on May 11th, 1982, involved the following units:

“III. UNITS PARTICIPATING:

*First Corps of the National Police*  
*Second Corps of the National Police*  
*Third Corps of the National Police*  
*Fourth Corps of the National Police*  
*National Police Traffic Corps*  
*National Police Radio Patrol Corps*  
*National Police Motorized Corps*  
*National Police Department of Technical Investigation*  
*National Police Special Operations Command.*”<sup>30</sup>

The structure and wording of these plans remained constant between 1975 and 1985. Among the documents of the Second Corps, researchers found a series of plans for the year 1981. All were produced by the COCP and involved significant deployments of force. They were designed to establish a police presence in the different neighborhoods and districts of the city.

There is evidence of, among other things, the following:<sup>31</sup>

1. Operational Plan No. 016/GCHB/ORBC, named “Uranus,” of 03/31/1981, to be carried out in the Nueva Aurora, Reyna Barrios and Santa Fe districts, zone 13.
2. Operational Plan No. 017/GCHB/Ebpp, named “Jupiter,” of 04/03/1981, to be carried out at the zone 4 Bus Terminal.
3. Operational Plan No. 019/GCHB/orb., named “Nail,” of 06/15/1981, to be carried out in La Limonada, zone 5.

<sup>30</sup> GT PN 51-01 S005 05/11/1982, Oficio No. 1817/NP, addressed to the director general of the PN, Cavalry Colonel DEM Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, by Police Lieutenant Colonel Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez, chief of the COCP. Attached is Plan “*Wolves*,” copy 05/16 [Digital reference 3058809. Internal AHPN registration 28488].

<sup>31</sup> 1. GT PN 24-01 S005 03/31/1981, Operational Plan No. 016/GCHB/ORBC “Uranus” [Internal AHPN registration 30931].  
 2. Ibid. 04/03/1981, Operational Plan No. 017/GCHB/Ebpp “Jupiter” [Internal AHPN registration 30930].  
 3. Ibid. 06/15/1981, Operational Plan No. 019/GCHB/orb. “Nail” [Internal AHPN registration 30928].  
 4. Ibid. 06/19/1981, Operational Plan No. 020/GCHB/orb “Fish” [Internal AHPN registration 30927].  
 5. Ibid. 10/17/1981, Operational Plan No. 025/GCHB/COC/orb “Gold” [Internal AHPN registration 30919].

4. Operational Plan No. 020/GCHB/orb, named “Fish,” of 06/19/1981, to be carried out in the municipality of Amatlán.
5. Operational Plan No. 025/GCHB/COC/orb, named “Gold,” of 10/17/1981, to be carried out in the Carolingia, El Milagro and La Esperanza districts, zone 19.

Copies of the plan in question were sent to participating units, and included a map of the area where the operation was to take place, along with specific markings indicating for each corps the area it was to search.

The Operational Plan titled “*Action*” was implemented in the municipality of Villa Nueva on June 26th, 1981. The mission, in which all the capital corps, including Command Six and the Detective Corps took part, was as follows:

*“The mission of the present Operation is to eradicate existing common crime and disrupt the various gangs operating in the area.*

1. *Apprehend thieves, muggers and drug addicts.*
2. *Apprehend all suspicious persons where traveling on foot or by vehicle.*
3. *Search and identify all vehicles and individuals on board in order to detect weapons and Subversive propaganda.*
4. *Search individuals found in Bars and Saloons and take any undocumented persons into custody.*
5. *Report all vehicles unlawfully parked on the streets or otherwise in violation of the law.*
6. *Any other goals not included in the following Plan.”*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> GT PN 50 S002 06/25/1981, Operational Plan No. 021/GCHB/orb. Copy 9/15. Signed by Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona, Director General of the PN [Digital reference 3700294. Internal AHPN registration 31203].

The operation involved a search of the municipality from east to west and from north to south, assigning each police corps responsibility for carrying this out in a given area. In the plan's section on "administration and logistics," the PN corps were directed to use combat (SWAT-style) uniforms, while Command Six and the Detective Corps would dress in accordance with their functions, i.e. in civilian clothes.<sup>33</sup> For many decades before this, PN investigators had received repeated orders to perform their duties without the official uniform.<sup>34</sup>

Command of the implementation of the plan was in the hands of the Directorate General of the PN and transmissions were made via the Radio Patrols' FM units, over the phone or by "*the most suitable means.*"<sup>35</sup>

During the operation, a married couple who owned a bar was taken in for employing underage waitresses. The report on the results of this plan calls attention to the following detention:

*"Also detained and taken to this [Detectives] Corps for investigation were the individuals FREDY OTONIEL POGIO HUERTAS, HUGO RENATO GONZALEZ RAMIREZ, AND MANUEL ANTONIO COLINDRES CASTRO, who were held in the Investigations Section by agents of the same, who will report on their activities at the proper time."*<sup>36</sup>

This is a case of depriving someone of their freedom without any ostensible accusation; a "preventive" detention of the persons involved in order to investigate them afterwards. Guatemalan legislation provides for apprehensions when authorized by court order or of persons in the act of committing a crime *in flagrante*. In the aforementioned case, neither of these requirements was met, making this an illegal detention. There were thousands of cases of Guatemalan men and women illegally detained in just the same way. The PN, however, was

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> The order to the investigators to carry out their work in plain clothes dated back several decades.

1. Regulations for the investigations section, Article 18: "*Investigative agents ... will always carry out their activities in peasant clothes [...]*," reproduced in *Gaceta de la Policía Nacional*, 06/09/1929, pp. 902-906.

2. Ley Orgánica de la Policía Nacional, Article 70. "*Exempt from the obligation to wear uniform are the personnel of the corps of detectives, confidential, technical and administrative services and all those members working on classified commissions.*"

3. GT PN 30-01 S010 01/25/1971, Annual Report of the PN for 1970, "*As the use of the uniform gives dignity to the person wearing it, as of November 1st, its use was declared obligatory for all members of the National Police, whether in Order and Security (OS) or Administration (A), excepting the investigative service,*" pp. 1-2 [Digital reference 1667246 and 1667247. Internal AHPN registration 26797.

<sup>35</sup> GT PN 50 S002 06/05/1981, Operational Plan No. 021/GCHB/orb. Copy 9/15. Signed by Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona, Director General of the PN [Digital reference 3700294. Internal AHPN registration 31203].

<sup>36</sup> GT PN 50 S002 06/27/1981, Ref. 3938. Report on Cleansing Operation carried out at the administrative center of Villa Nueva, addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Abraham Chacón Bolaños, Sub-Inspector 28, 2nd Chief, Homicide Section [Digital reference 3700294. Internal AHPN registration 31202].

secure in its position of impunity within the framework of the counterinsurgency and the National Security Doctrine, which licensed this kind of behavior.

Other AHPN records show the results of the “*cleansing operations*” carried out by the Second Corps between August and November 1982.

**Table III.1**

Results of four “*cleansing operations*” performed  
by the Second Corps  
September and October 1982<sup>37</sup>

Date	Schedule	Coverage	Results
13.09.82	15:00 to 17:00	Sectors assigned to the corps	14 people detained for intoxication and lack of documents
27.09.82	10:15 to 12:00	Mercados Colón, Central and corps sector	25 people detained for intoxication and lack of documents
07.10.1982	15:00 to 17:00	Main streets and avenues of zones 1 and 6	12 people detained for intoxication and disturbing the peace
21.10.82	13:35 to 16:25	Mercados Colón, Central, Parroquia zone 6, San Martín	25 people detained for intoxication and disturbing the peace

Source: AHPN with data from GT PN 51-02 S005 and GT PN 51-02 S021

<sup>37</sup> 1. GT PN 51-02 S021 09/13/1982, oficio No. 3195 SC-lacl, report on cleansing operation, addressed to the Director General de la PN by Alberto de Jesús Alvarado Gutiérrez, Deputy Commander of the Second Corps [Internal AHPN registration 29576].

2. GT PN 51-02 S021 09/27/1982, oficio No. 3360 SC-lacl, report on cleansing operation, addressed to the Director General de la PN by Alberto de Jesús Alvarado Gutiérrez, Deputy Commander of the Second Corps [Internal AHPN registration 5390].

3. Ibid. 10/07/1982, oficio 3478 SC-lacl, report on cleansing operation, addressed to the Director General de la PN by Alberto de Jesús Alvarado Gutiérrez, Deputy Commander of the Second Corps [Internal AHPN registration 31193].

4. Ibid. 10/21/1982, oficio No. 3623 SC-lacl, report on cleansing operation, addressed to the Director General de la PN by Alberto de Jesús Alvarado Gutiérrez, Deputy Commander of the Second Corps [Internal AHPN registration 5384].

What stands out in these operations is the detention of people who represented no danger whatsoever from a political point of view and who were economically disadvantaged (prostitutes, the undocumented, alcoholics, etc.). In addition, there was no legal basis for detaining someone for not carrying an identity card, meaning that taking someone in as undocumented was illegal<sup>38</sup> unless constitutional guarantees had been restricted due to a state of emergency.

In December of 1977, the PN conducted a “*General Cleansing Operation*” in zone 4, about which we can read, word for word:

*“Command appointed the first chief of this Corps as Chief of the Cleansing Operation carried out in zone 4 by Personnel of the corps of the National Police in this capital, and for this purpose, in the basement of this Building were organized a total of:*

*1 Chief  
2 Second Chiefs  
1 Third Chief  
9 Officers  
17 Inspectors  
111 Agents  
30 Plain-Clothes Agents from Command 6  
21 Drivers  
Total 192.  
Vehicles  
5 Buses  
2 Prisoner Transports  
1 Bronco  
7 civilian vehicles, Command 6  
6 Radio Patrols  
Total vehicles 21.*

*With a total of 75 individuals detained, 2 for possession of firearms, 2 for sharp weapons, and the rest for lack of ID, the operation concluding at 07:00 hours without further developments.”<sup>39</sup>*

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<sup>38</sup> Legislative Decree 1735, Law on Municipal ID, 05/30/1931; Legislative Decree 17-73, Penal Code, 07/05/1973. Neither of these legal precepts contains a reference to any obligation to carry the municipal ID at all times.

<sup>39</sup> GT PN 38 DSC 12/13/1977, New Developments from the Headquarters of the Radio Patrol Corps Services, Book number 2518 [Digital reference 923634. Internal AHPN registration 28483].



Similarly, on April 20th, 1983, the Director General ordered the Chief of the Fourth Corps to conduct a “*cleansing operation*” in coordination with the Special Operations Command (COE). This operation was to be carried out between eight and ten in the evening in the Belén, Brigada, Paraíso Uno, San Ignacio, Nimajay, San Carlos, and Los Pinos districts of zone 7 in the municipality of Mixco.<sup>40</sup> Three months later, on July 21st, the COCP, on instructions from the Director General, ordered a “*cleansing operation*” from nine hundred to thirteen hundred hours in the districts of El Milagro and La Esperanza, zone 19.<sup>41</sup>

The majority of the documents in the AHPN show that the PN was the principal actor in the cleansing operations. Nonetheless, the National Army did also take part in some operations. On September 19th, 1982, the Commander of the First Corps reported to the Director General in the following terms:

*“...today at 20:00 hours, members of the Honor Guard of the National Army under the command of Major Pimentel effected a cleansing operation at the zone 4 Bus Terminal, detaining several people of both sexes in the following conditions:*

<i>For intoxication and causing a public nuisance-----</i>	<i>16 individuals</i>
<i>Undocumented and intoxicated-----</i>	<i>20 individuals</i>
<i>Clandestine prostitution-----</i>	<i>39 women</i>
<i>Undocumented and working</i>	<i>8 Salvadorean</i>
<i>as prostitutes-----</i>	<i>women</i>
<i>Total-----</i>	<i>83</i>

*...Adding that the detainees were handed over by members of the National Army to Officer in charge of this corps... ”<sup>42</sup>*

From what has so far been said of the “*cleansing operations,*” we can deduce that they were not focused on pursuing or sanctioning infractions, misdemeanors, crimes, or any illegal acts in particular. With this operational modus operandi, the PN sought to control and neutralize the populace, since, through their very presence on the streets, they could discourage or deter any manifestation of opposition. A similar function was performed by the mass detention of alleged criminals apprehended during these operations. One of the main purposes of these

<sup>40</sup> GT PN 26-01 S002 04/20/1982, Providencia No. 0187/CC. JAG. oficio Sria. WE, the commander of the Fourth Corps sent said providencia to the COE [Digital reference 53622. Internal AHPN registration 28490].

<sup>41</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 07/21/1983, oficio No. COC/0811-laov., addressed to the Chief of the Fourth Corps by Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez, chief of the COC [Digital reference 40472. Internal AHPN registration 28536].

<sup>42</sup> GT PN 35 S002 09/19/1982, oficio No. 1697.PC.dmr., addressed to the Director General of the PN by the commander of the First Corps, Police Lieutenant Colonel Gonzalo Pérez Vásquez [Microfilm: Roll of 32 photograms 383-384. Internal AHPN registration 29674].

operations was to achieve effective, extensive and enduring control over the sites of their interventions, something requiring the deployment of vast numbers of personnel in those areas.

### 2.2.1 “*Cleansing Operations*” Resulting in Forced Disappearances

As mentioned above, the AHPN contains evidence of scores of “*cleansing operations*” that resulted in the detention of people who had supposedly disturbed the public order (drunks, sex workers, the undocumented, etc.). According to the instructions issued, detentions were for the purposes of registering or arresting all suspicious persons without actually providing a clear definition of what it was that made them “*suspicious*.” Among these are also included the detentions of people with alleged links to opposition political activities and those labeled as “*subversive*.”

For example, on February 10th, 1984, the Director General of the PN, through an order passed down by the Chief of the COCP, ordered that the Commander of the Fourth Corps, together with the other corps, was take part in a “*cleansing operation*.” In order to carry out this operation, he had to provide thirty men under the command of the officers considered most suitable. The operation was to take place in the area running from “*the Beltway, Calzada Roosevelt, at 13th St., Zone 11, as far as Petapa Ave, Zone 12. The order concludes with the instructions that “any individuals detained in the area of zone 11 are to be handed over to that (the Fourth) Corps, and those taken in zone 12 are to go to the First Corps.*”<sup>43</sup>

The following day – February 11th – an order was given to carry out an operation matching the given traits between 10:00 and 13:00 hours in the same sector. Later that day, the deputy commander of the “*Eagles*” platoon informed the Chief of the Order Office of the Fourth Corps of the detentions carried out:

*“...with the object of informing you regarding the CLEANSING”  
operation from 13th St. to Petapa Ave, zone 12 and Calzada  
Roosevelt as far as the same Avenue and zone between 10:00*

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<sup>43</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 02/10/1984, oficio COC-165-WA, addressed to the Commander of the Fourth Corps by Police Lieutenant Colonel Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez, Chief of the COC [Digital reference 123234. Internal AHPN registration 8179].

*hours and 13:00 hours, the results were as follows: three persons captured for possession of firearms, being the following:*

*OTONIEL BILLAGRAN GONZALES, GREGORIO AGUILAR GONZALES, AND JOSE LUIS BILLAGRAN DIAZ, these gentlemen, the first mentioned was carrying a leather briefcase containing a 9 millimeter handgun plus another of 3.80 millimeters, he was in the company of the others in the Bar known as LAS PALMERAS, located on 3rd Avenue 2-13, zone 11 (...) and JOSE LUIS CASTILLO YOL, from whom was seized a quantity of marijuana in the same sector of zone 11 and JUAN BARRERA VASQUEZ for aggressive behavior (...) in total the number of detainees is five, concluding at 13:00 hours.”<sup>44</sup>*

Below is a quote from an undated memorandum in which the Third Chief of the Fourth Corps reports to the Commander as follows:

*“Today at 12:00 hours, Inspector Mario Figueroa Sandoval, agents Amadeo Enrique Gómez and Sergio Estuardo Ruiz Ríos, who were proceeding with the CLEANSING OPERATION IN ZONE 11, ordered by Police command in the ‘LAS PALMERAS’ bar on 3rd Avenue 2-13 zone 11, captured the individuals:*

*1-JOSE LUIS VILLAGRAN DIAZ, 27 years of age (...) a machine operator (...) a brown plastic bag was seized from him, this containing TWO PISTOLS, one a 3.80 caliber, ‘Astra’ brand (...) and the other a 3.80 caliber ‘Llama’...*

*2-ELADIO CULAJAY CASTAÑEDA, 25 years of age, married (...) weaver...*

*3-GREGORIO AGUILAR LOPEZ, 37 years of age, single (...) Machine operator...*

*The three detainees are workers at the universal textiles factory ‘MISHANCO’ located at 4th Avenue 39-52 zone 8.”<sup>45</sup>*

There is sufficient evidence to confirm that the quotes above all refer to the same incident. There people were detained at the “Las Palmeras” bar, located

<sup>44</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 undated, unnumbered oficio addressed to the Chief of the Order Office of the Fourth Corps by Luis Alfonso Juárez García, Deputy Commander of the Eagles Platoon [Digital reference 123134. Internal AHPN registration 29592].

<sup>45</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 Undated memorandum addressed to the Commander of the Fourth Corps by the Third Chief of the Fourth Corps, p. 7 [Digital reference 91627. Internal AHPN registration 28537].

at the same address, for illegal possession of firearms in a bag or backpack. Although only one of the men detained was caught in possession of both guns, both the descriptions of these and the person carrying them differ. Also, two of the three names are identical. They do not coincide with respect to the number of detainees and the name of one of them, but the place and the address of the events are identical. A different source to the AHPN, *the Military Diary*,<sup>46</sup> reveals that the three individuals captured in the “*cleansing operation*” of February 11th, 1984 were “*picked up*” by members of the Army at the headquarters of the PN Fourth Corps on February 13th the same year.<sup>47</sup> According to the same source, Eladio Culajay Castañeda and Gregorio Aguilar López were freed on February 18th, while José Luis Villagrán Díaz was executed without trial on March 6th, 1984, and the whereabouts of his body remain unknown to this day.<sup>48</sup>

This case illustrates how the PN operated. Under certain circumstances, the people captured were handed over to other State security forces, violating all established legal procedures. Had the PN and the Army fulfilled the legal functions attributed to them, they would have held the detainees for trial at the courts of justice where, eventually, they would have received a punishment for “*illegal possession of weapons*” which, according to the regulations of the times, amounted to no more than a fine of between fifty and three hundred quetzals and the seizure of the weapons.<sup>49</sup>

## 2.3 House Searches

During the period studied, the PN conducted numerous searches of houses and homes, referred to in police vocabulary as “*raid operations*.” Legally, these practices were classified as “*Authorized entry*.” They were only to proceed with an order from a competent judge at a time established by the legal ordinances,<sup>50</sup> unless the President of the Republic had declared a state of emergency.

The documents found in the AHPN that contain the term “*raid*” as an operational resource of the PN make it possible to establish how these activities were carried

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<sup>46</sup> *The Military Diary*, also known as the *Death Squad Dossier*, is a document consisting of a detailed list of 184 people detained between August 1983 and March 1985. According to the details in each entry, many of the victims were dead only a few days after being illegally detained. As in the present case, it is enormously useful for cross-checking information from different sources and come across facts with value as evidence regarding the forced disappearances. See, <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf>, consulted 06/30/2010.

<sup>47</sup> *Military Diary*, José Luis Villagrán Díaz, identified as Z.64-1, sheet 18; Eladio Culajay Castañeda, as O-64-2 and Gregorio Aguilar López as O-64-3, both on sheet 19 of the list.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Congressional Decree Number 17-73, Penal Code, 07/05/1973, Article 406

<sup>50</sup> Congressional Decree Number 52-73, Code of Criminal Procedure 07/05/1973, Second Book, Title I, Chapter XVII, on house searches.

out, who took part in them and what made them different from other police operations. The documents show that, in the majority of cases, these operations were conducted without meeting the established legal requirements.

In order to carry them out, there was coordination between the various State security agencies. They were conducted with the aim of seizing a variety of items such as backpacks, books, utensils, and firearms that, in the opinion of the security agents, constituted evidence of links with the insurgency. These searches also involved the capture of “suspicious” individuals. Below are various examples of these operations from reports made by different corps of the PN.

On July 14th, 1983, commencing at nine o’clock, Lieutenant Axel René Flores Osorio and Second Lieutenant Martín Fuentes Cordón, at the head of 30 agents from the Blue Eagles Command of the Fourth Corps, on orders from their superiors, proceeded to “*search*” houses on both sides of 8th Avenue “D,” between 23rd and 25th Streets of the Primero de Julio district in zone 19. 23 houses were searched in total, with the discovery reported of two olive-green backpacks, picked up by members of the PN in the house marked number 24-43.<sup>51</sup>

In the records of the Fourth Corps available in the AHPN, researchers found repeated mentions of the active participation of this police agency in joint operations with the Army, mostly in searches of homes located in the area for which it was responsible.

Thus, on July 3rd, 1981, members of the EMGE, with support from the Fourth Corps of the PN, searched the house located on 48th Avenue 4-60 zone 7, municipality of Mixco, where they seized all the objects and assets found there, including vehicles which, after being repaired, went on to form part of the PN motor pool.<sup>52</sup>

On occasion, the Fourth Corps headquarters would serve as a detention center for people captured during residential searches. On March 31st, 1982, after a shoot-out between several people and a unit of the Fourth Corps and the discovery of a metal cylinder containing firearms, on 39th Avenue and 3rd St., zone 7 in the El Rodeo district, Captain Andrés López of the Second Section of the EMGE took

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<sup>51</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 07/14/1983, dispatch on searches conducted in the Primero de Julio district addressed to the Chief Clerk of the Fourth Corps by Police Lieutenant Accel René Flores Osorio and Santos Martín Fuentes Cordón, in charge of the operation [Digital reference 40087. Internal AHPN registration 28479].

<sup>52</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 02/09/1984, oficio No. 274-JAG-osh-sria., addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Commander of the Fourth Corps, Police Lieutenant Colonel Jorge Alberto Gómez [Digital reference 1646932. Internal AHPN registration 29594].

possession of the weapons and detained the building's two security guards, who were held for investigation at the Fourth Corps headquarters.<sup>53</sup>

Similarly, the COE requested that the Fourth Corps conduct surveillance of residences previously "raided" by the PN in coordination with the Army and the Presidential General Staff. On July 30th, 1983, for example, it requested surveillance of a residence located on 2nd St. lot 374, zone 11 in the El Tesoro district which had been the object of a search in a joint operation with members of EMP intelligence and the COE itself, as it was considered to belong to "subversive criminals from the PGT."<sup>54</sup>

To conduct searches of houses, the various structures of the PN generally acted in a coordinated fashion. Further on, the document reads:

*"...in accordance with instructions from superiors, today from 11:00 to 12:30 hours 'A RAID' was carried out in zone 14 under the command of Officers of this Corps Manuel Cotto Rodriguez, Trinidad Méndez Fajardo and Emiliano Avila Davila with 32 agents and with the involvement of the following corps: First, Second, Third, fourth and fifth corps, Radio Patrol Corps, Motorized Corps; said Raid was supervised by Officer Quiñónez of 5th Corps.*

*Object of said search was to detect weapons and ammunition, Subversive propaganda or kidnap victims; the members of this corps were assigned to operate in the area of 1st and 2nd Avenue and 9th Street, zone 14.*

*At 1st Avenue 7-71 in zone 14, Inspector No. 4885, Luis Armando Fajardo, and agents 723 Luis Alberto Aguirre, 6228 Cristobal Hernandez Mendez, and 6259 Marco Tulio Pérez Valenzuela found a double Army helmet of which Officer Quiñónez of the fifth corps took possession. Chief of Operation."*<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/31/1982, Ref. 1917, report on the location of a mail drop, addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by detectives Carlos H. Reyes, Det. 323; Augusto Herrera G., Det. 339; and Orlando Guerra Salazar, Det. 120 [Digital reference 3721656. Internal AHPN registration 566].

<sup>54</sup> GT PN 26-01 S003 07/30/1983, oficio 964-QC-arcc., request to the Fourth Corps to mount guard on a searched residence, addressed to the Commander of the Fourth Corps. Sent by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of COE [Digital reference 40624. Internal AHPN registration 28480].

<sup>55</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 10/29/1982, oficio No. 1985.PC.dmr, dispatch on searches conducted addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Commander of the First Corps, Gonzalo Pérez Vásquez [Internal AHPN registration 11953].

Another example of this type is the following:

*“According to coordination plans drawn up yesterday by the Army General Staff, raid operations were to be carried out in the Santa Elisa district, zone 12, jointly with all the police corps, with this command responsible for conducting a search of the area from Petapa Avenue to 24th Avenue and from 25th to 31st Streets, but as the sector was very extensive, the coordinator decided that the Motorized Corps should also operate in the area, and the sector comprising Petapa Avenue to 22nd Avenue was assigned to them. At 10:40 hours, this office received through the Communications Center information that the Motorized Corps Unit, during an attempt to search apartment No. 5 at Petapa Avenue 25-25 in zone 12, Santa Elisa district, a young woman opened then immediately closed the door, saying that she would let them in presently, after 10 minutes a gunshot was heard inside and consequently the presence of the undersigned was requested...”<sup>56</sup>*

According to the report on the incident, the young woman, named as Miriam Eugenia Méndez Calderón, committed suicide, presumably to avoid capture.

Likewise, the term “*raid*” was used on October 29th, 1982, when a private hospital was searched with the alleged consent of its director, as reported by the Chief of the Robberies Section. The “Medical Center Hospital” search operation lasted from 11:00 to 12:00 and involved 25 members of the DIT. The report was accompanied by a list of those hospitalized.<sup>57</sup>

These “*raid operations*” resulted in the seizure of weapons and other items, as can be read in the various reports submitted by the PN-2 Officer of the COE to the Chief of the Command.

*“I respectfully address myself to you with object of informing you regarding the weapons and objects seized during the searches carried out by the personnel of this command on the 27th of this month in zone 2 of the capital.*

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<sup>56</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 10/30/1982, oficio No. 918-Ref-QC-Eirl., report on a suicide during an attempted search, addressed to Cavalry Colonel DEM Director of the PN by Police Lieutenant Colonel Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the Fifth Corps [Internal AHPN registration 11962].

<sup>57</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 10/29/1982, “*Report of the commission carried out on October 29th, 1982, which consisted in the search of the Hospital Centro Médico,*” addressed to Captain Gustavo Adolfo Oliva, chief of the DIT by the chief of the Robberies and Larceny Section, Roberto Eduardo Melgar Delgado, who was in command of the operation [Internal AHPN registration 11958].

*From Mrs.: Regina de Rodríguez, residing at 11th Avenue 15-06 zone 2 was seized: one backpack, olive green color.*

*From Mr.: Eddy Orlando Mejía Trujillo, residing at 16th Street 11-37 zone 2, were seized two cartridges, one of 50 mm caliber and another of 30 mm caliber... ”<sup>58</sup>*

Using the information analyzed so far, it is possible to draw the following conclusions regarding the practice of “raid operations”:

- a) The higher command of the police institution issued the orders for the majority of operations involving house searches. In the documents relating to these, no court search order has been found.
- b) In a significant number of cases, the operations were coordinated between the PN and other State security forces, principally the EMP and the Army General Staff.
- c) The results of the operations basically consisted in the detention of individuals and the seizure of arms and items associated with military and/or “subversive” activities.
- d) These operations affected all people with homes in the sector. There were house-to-house searches of entire streets and avenues, either in order to check the buildings adjoining the previously identified principal target, or because there was uncertainty due to incomplete intelligence. In addition to the objective itself, it served to create fear among the people.

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<sup>58</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 10/27/1982, report on material seized during searches addressed to the Third Chief of the Fifth Corps by PN Officer -2 of the COE, Julián de Jesús Alfaro [Internal AHPN registration 11968].



## 2.4 Personal and Vehicle Search Operations

Personal and vehicle search operations formed part of the operational plans of the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO) analyzed previously.

There follows a summary of the search operations conducted by the Second Corps in the capital city during five months in 1982.

**Table III.2**

Summary of Operations Conducted by the Second Corps  
May to October 1982

Operation	Date	Time	Areas Covered	No. of Officers
1. Operational plan to capture all suspicious persons	05.27.1982	08:30 to 22:00	From 15th Street zone 1 to the North zones 1, 6, and 18	22
2. Operation search suspicious vehicles and pedestrians	08.03.1982	08:00 to 22:00	Avenues and streets, promenades and boulevards zones 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 11	
3. Operation search suspicious vehicles and pedestrians	08.15.1982	08:00 to 22:00	Zones 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12	20
4. Operation search vehicles and pedestrians	08.24.1982	08:00 to 22:00	Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12	20

<b>Operation</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Areas Covered</b>	<b>No. of Officers</b>
5. Operation search suspicious vehicles and pedestrians	08.27.1982	10:00 to 22:00	Streets and avenues of zones 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12	20
6. Operation search suspicious vehicles and pedestrians	09.02.1982	08:00 to 22:00	Zones 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12	20
7. Operation search suspicious vehicles and pedestrians	09.08.1982	08:00 to 22:00	Zones 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 18	20
8. Search of vehicles and pedestrians	09.17.1982	10.00 to 22:00	Zones 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 18	20
9. Patrol, vehicle search, surveillance of public and private buildings, banks, commercial areas and electrical plants situated in the Corps' sector	09.19.1982	00:00 to 12:00	Second Corps Sector	11

<b>Operation</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Areas Covered</b>	<b>No. of Officers</b>
10. Operation Vehicle Search	10.11.1982	09:00 to 12:00	Zone 6, Route to the Atlantic and San Rafael zone 18	20
11. Operation to search vehicles and pedestrians	10.18.1982	09:00 to 06:00	Zone 1, 2, 6, and 18	20

Source: GT PN 51 S007 1982, New Developments and Correspondence Received by the Corps.

The operations involving personal and vehicle searches were characterized by the specific definition of objectives. They form part of the operational plans analyzed in Chapter II of this report.

Other examples of control operations coordinated between various agencies of the PN were those carried out by the Radio Patrol Corps on June 18th and 22nd of 1982. In this case, the principal objective was to control access to the capital city via the Pacific and Atlantic highways, as well as those leading to the northwestern highlands, and the areas adjoining or surrounding these, as the following table demonstrates.

**Table III.3**

Operations Conducted by the Radio Patrol Corps (CRP)  
June 18th to 22nd, 1983

Type of Operation	Date	Time	No. Officers	Coverage	Observations
Support for the Traffic Corps	6.18.1982	19:00 to 22:45		Puente Belice and 15th Avenue and 17th Street zone 6	Control of entry and exit from the city to the Atlantic
Support for the Fourth Corps		13:30 to 19:30		El Tejar, Chimaltenango and the entrance to San Lucas	Control of entry and exit to the West
Support for the Fourth Corps		09:30 to 12:00	13	Checkpoint No. 1 at San Juan Sacatepéquez and entrance to Belén,	
Support for the Fourth Corps		18:00 to 24:00	33	km 30 west of San Lucas Sacatepéquez	
Support for the Traffic Corps		13:30 to 18:15	17	Periférico and 2nd Avenue zone 2. Cementos Novella zone 6 and Puente Belice	Control of entry and exit to the Atlantic
Vehicle search		19:00 to 23:20	21	Periférico and 13th Street, zone 11, Roosevelt and entrance to Belén, Calzada San Juan and 33rd Avenue zone 7	

Type of Operation	Date	Time	No. Officers	Coverage	Observations
Vehicle search	6.18.1982	13:00 to 19:00	21	Avenida Cementerio and 24th Street zone 3, 6th Avenue between 6th and 7th Streets zone 7, 9th Avenue between 6th and 7th Streets zone 7, 12th Avenue and 6th Street zone 11, 16th Avenue and 9th Street zone 11, Periférico and 13th Street zone 11.	Interconnecting circuit between zones 7 and 11 is still covered by the Fifth Corps
Vehicle search		9:00 to 14:00	20	5th Avenue and 1st Street zone 4, Avenida Santa Cecilia and 27th Street zone 8, 1st Avenue and 24th Street zone 1, Avenida del Cementerio zone 3	Control of alternative routes to Avenida Bolívar. In order to maintain control, cover possible shortcuts off the main routes.
Vehicle search	6.22.1982	19:00 to 20:00	20	7th Avenue and 19 street zone 12	Corridor connecting the south entrance with the western exit
Vehicle search		20:00 to 21:00	20	Calzada Aguilar Batres	

Type of Operation	Date	Time	No. Officers	Coverage	Observations
Support for the Traffic Corps	6.22.1982	8:00 to 9:00	21	Avenida Elena and 14th Street	
Support for the Traffic Corps			21	Km. 7.5 zone 18	Entry corridor to the Atlantic
Support for the Traffic Corps		11:00 to 12:00	21	15th Avenue and 17th Street zone 6	
Vehicle search		21:00 to 22:00		Roosevelt and 16th Avenue zone 11	
Vehicle search		14:00 to 15:00	23	Avenida Las Américas between 15th and 16th Streets zone 14	Aurora Airport Beltway
Vehicle search		15:00 to 16:00	23	Avenida Hincapié and 24th Street zone 13	
Vehicle search		16:00 to 17:00	23	5th Street between 3rd and 4th Avenues zone 13	
Vehicle search		17:00 to 19:00	23	El Mirador district, 18th Street zone 11	
Vehicle search		7:00 to 8:00	17	26th Street between 17th and 18th Avenues zone 5, then key zones in the capital.	

Source: GT PN 38 June 1982, New developments from the Radio Patrol Corps.

In May 1982, the Director General of the PN issued operational plan number 02/HOPN/ORB. It was based on the assumption that “*on the access routes to the capital as well as all its zones, traveling either on foot or in vehicles, there are suspicious persons or stolen vehicles.*” On this basis, the police decided to proceed with the detention of “*suspicious*” persons either on foot or in vehicles, and to search automobiles in order to detect weapons, subversive propaganda, and stolen cars.<sup>59</sup>

These types of plans essentially sought to limit the freedom of movement of opponents of the regime. At the same time, it allowed for extensive surveillance of the general population, which was also subject to these searches.

The Radio Patrol Corps received its orders from the PN high command. It implemented operations in specific areas of the capital lasting from one to three hours at the sites assigned. Each patrol car carried a driver, a commander, an officer and a backup who provided immediate assistance to any other PN corps requesting it via the radio. The Services Headquarters was responsible for assigning units for this purpose. The dispatches from the radio patrol commanders illustrate this pattern.

*“Information Dispatch, Radio Patrol No. 118. (...) I report that today (...) the plant operator ordered us to come to the 4th corps of the national police (...) in order to assist in the operation carried out on the Interamericana highway at the place called Tejar...”*<sup>60</sup>

In a single day, the checkpoints could cover various zones of the city perimeter. These operations did not form a daily part of the normal functions of the police institution. On the contrary, they were part of specific plans in which the COCP would define the day, time, place, objectives and mechanisms of the operation. The element of surprise and coordination between the police corps formed part of the plans.

From analyzing the operational plans of the CRIO, we know that a plan titled “Viela” had as its objective a search of mechanical repair shops in order to “*detect vehicles stolen by subversives.*”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> GT PN 26 S001 05/19/1982, Operational Plan No. 02/HOPN/ORB, issued by the Director General of the PN [Digital reference 573148. Internal AHPN registration 25953].

<sup>60</sup> GT PN 38 DSC 18.06.82, part of Radio Patrol operation No. 118 [Internal AHPN registration 15956].

<sup>61</sup> GT PN 26 S001 undated, Plan Viela [Digital reference 573262. Internal AHPN registration 28482].

### **3. Surveillance, Control, Persecution, and Elimination of the Political Opposition**

Using as cover the control and surveillance performed for the purposes of preventing and combating crime, the PN developed plans and operations aimed at controlling and persecuting political opposition. In the years 1975-1985, these operations affected broad sectors of the popular protest movement. Their scope ranged from students, professionals, union members, rural workers' organizations, religious groups, political parties with social and democratic agendas, relatives of the victims of repression, right up to the armed opposition and the rebel or guerrilla movement.

In the AHPN documents it is possible, for example, to find an abundance of information on people such as the student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León or the political leader Manuel Colom Argueta, who were publicly recognized as opponents of the regime. The documents show that the PN took part first in control and surveillance of these men and later took part in their executions. In both cases, the Detective Corps was in charge of carrying out the intelligence work that provided knowledge of the political activities and daily routines of these and other leaders and activists. There are intelligence reports, photographs and files from this police corps that demonstrate this, as well as the flow of information to the Director General of the police.<sup>62</sup>

The AHPN research team has gathered information on the events based on the dates of the executions of both leaders. This reveals the role of the Detective Corps, not only in procedures relating to the discovery of bodies, but also in the investigations conducted by detectives at the funeral vigils and burials of the victims. In the documentary records, there are also references to the monitoring of meetings, protests and other activities involving the organizations to which both leaders belonged: The Association of University Students (Asociación de Estudiantes Universitarios, AEU) and the United Revolutionary Front (Frente Unido de la Revolución, FUR), respectively.

This activity contrasts with the absolute absence of any investigation aimed at explaining the events and finding those responsible for the murders. In relation to the execution without trial of Oliverio Castañeda de León, there is a communication from an unnamed source dated November 7th, 1978. It reports to the PN that someone by the name of Juan José González had informed the

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<sup>62</sup> See Chapter IV of this report.



Rector of the USAC of the name of the man who murdered the student leader. According to this informant, the perpetrator was allegedly *El Chino Lima*.<sup>63</sup> This was the nickname of Police Colonel Juan Antonio Lima López, who, around the time of the execution of Castañeda de León, appears on a list of personnel in the Command Six Special Investigations Section as second in command after Pedro García Arredondo.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to this, there is a loose sheet with no heading containing notes on Juan José González's activities between 1973 and 1978. A caveat to this, however, is that the PN archives contain records on several people of this name. All this constitutes evidence that the police proceeded to search their files for the name of the person who made a report to the Rector, and not that of the alleged perpetrator he named, who was an active member of the police.

The activities of the PN in relation to members of the rebel movement involved the gathering and accumulation of information on individuals and organizations. However, this was done in a dispersed, fragmented manner, probably because intelligence work relating to the insurgency was fundamentally centralized by the Army.

### **3.1 Operations against “*Guerrilla Strongholds*”**

Along with surveillance operations and activities, the PN participated directly in attacks on “guerrilla strongholds” or guerrilla safe houses. At the site of the events, in addition to seizing any items they turned up, the police proceeded to detain the residents, including children, adolescents, and women. On many occasions, the occupants of these houses, whether rebels or otherwise, died as a result of the armed actions of the State security forces.

The AHPN contains documents that make it possible to analyze the role played by the PN in these operations. Below are the records for July and August of 1981.

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<sup>63</sup> GT PN 30 S002 11/07/1978, anonymous report concerning information from Juan José González [Digital reference 1923252 y 1923253. Internal AHPN registration 11873].

<sup>64</sup> GT PN 24-09 S001 10/15/1978, Command Six personnel list [Internal AHPN registration 1545].

**Table III.4**

Operations against Guerrilla Safe Houses  
July-August 1981

No	Date	Address	Proprietor	Situation and number of bodies found
1	07.09.1981	16th Ave., nos. 10-09, zone 15, Vista Hermosa III	Physician and Dentist José Francisco Meneses	Three women and seven men, one identified as Roberto Batz Chocoj of 20 years of age.
2	07.10.1981	30th Street, nos. 1-69, zone 12, El Carmen	Retired Colonel Pedro Rodríguez Valenzuela	Eight men and three women, two of them in peasant clothing. None identified.
3	07.24.1981	14th Street "B", nos. 12-38, zone 10, Oakland	Engineer Claudio Olivares	No deaths or captures
4	07.25.1981	2nd Street, nos. 19-76, Zone 14	Blanca de Palomo	Five men and three women. None identified.
5	07.29.1981	18th Ave., nos. 7-86, zone 11, Miraflores		No one was present, the building was unoccupied.
6	08.05.1981	23rd Ave., nos. 32-24, zone 12, Santa Elisa		No one found.
7	08.12.1981	Km. 40 route to Chimaltenango		Three men and two women. None identified.
8	08.13.1981	4th Ave., nos. 10-03, zone 14		No one was present, the building was unoccupied.

No	Date	Address	Proprietor	Situation and number of bodies found
9	08.13.1981	9th Ave., nos. 9-10, zone 11		Two men. One identified as Juan Carlos Escobar Molina.
10	08.13.1981	4th Ave., nos. 4-98, zone 12, Guajitos	Román Hernández	Eight people captured, including three minors. The lists of detainees from the Radio Patrol Corps and the Detective Corps do not coincide completely on the names and ages.

Source: GT PN 35 S002; GT PN 24-05 S004; unclassified records; GT PN 30 and GT PN 38.

The documents quoted in the following section provide examples of the actions performed by the PN in this kind of operation.

On August 13th, 1981, the Commander of the Radio Patrol Corps reported to the Director General of the National Police regarding an operation in the area of Santa María Cauqué.

*“I respectfully claim the honor of addressing myself to you with the object of informing you promptly of the new developments occurring in the operations conducted by members of the National Army and the Detective Corps, backed up by units of this Corps. 20:00 hours, via FM radio, on the highway leading to the Capital of Chimaltenango, a guerrilla stronghold was destroyed, with the deaths at the site of five rebels, three male and two female; the manager of ‘GINSA,’ CLIFFORD BEVINS, was found held hostage in the same location, and died in the same place; a quantity of*

*weapons and ammunition was seized; the Operation commenced at 15:00 hours and concluded at 20:15 hours; shortly thereafter, the Justice of the Peace for Sumpango Sacatepéquez arrived.”<sup>65</sup>*

That same day, detectives 323 and 81 reported the following to the Chief of the Detective Corps:

*“We respectfully claim the honor of addressing ourselves to you to report that today at 9:30 hours, by the Police Services headquarters, on board unit P-78215 driven by detective No. 135, Justo Rufino Gómez, that we proceeded to 9th Street 9-10, zone 11 in order to confirm the fact that two bodies had been found.*

*Assembled in said place, we met with members of the government security forces who were taking possession of weapons of various calibers, among them Beretta machine guns, billy clubs, grenades, 12-gauge shotguns, M-16s, Fall and G-3 rifles, along with medical equipment; according to accounts received at the scene from bystanders, the location had been the scene of a confrontation between security forces and subversive elements.”<sup>66</sup>*

The documents cited above show that the PN was subordinated to the armed forces. In other situations, the police institution learned of these operations after the Army had already carried them out. This is what happened on July 9th, 1981. Two detectives reported to the Chief of the Detective Corps regarding the events taking place at a house in Vista Hermosa III, Zone 15.

*“Today at 17:00, upon your orders as transmitted by the Chief of this Section we proceeded with units bearing the plates P-78316 driven by detective No. 389 and P-78222 driven by detective 33 to 16th Avenue 10-09 zone 15, Vista Hermosa III, as reports had been received saying that at this place there were a number of rebels firing on members of the National Army. Upon arrival, we*

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<sup>65</sup> GT PN 30 S002 08/13/1981, Memorandum No. 0483/jcs., confidential, dismantling of two “guerrilla strongholds,” addressed to the Director General of the PN by Benigno Cruz Buenafé, chief of Radio Patrol Corps [Digital reference 1924625. Internal AHPN registration 14085].

<sup>66</sup> GT PN 35 S002 08/13/1981, cadaver report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps, by detectives Carlos H. Reyes, David Alvarado Larios and César Augusto Ruiz [Microfilm: Roll 8 Block No. 1851-1900, Photo #42. Internal AHPN registration 29332].

*could see that there had indeed been shots fired by subversive individuals at members of the National Army, but all was now under control and the bodies of several guerrillas shot during the gunfight were visible...*<sup>67</sup>

Another example is the report submitted by the Second Chief of the First Corps to the Director General of the PN on July 29th, 1981.

*"...I am pleased to inform you that today at 22:00 hours we received a written dispatch from National Police Lieutenants ELLIAS BARAHONA AND JORGE MARIO PACHECO CASTILLO reporting that today at 17:55 hours on 18th Ave. 7-86, zone 11, Miraflores district, members of the National Army carried out a RAID on said Residence, the proprietor of which is unknown. It was known that there were subversive elements at this address, but it was confirmed that no one was there; in one of the bedrooms, the following objects were found: Two claymore bombs, 29 grenades of Russian manufacture, a quantity of 556 cartridges, subversive propaganda for the secret organization ORPA, a roll of wire, two pickaxes, two spades, one dynamite detonator. These objects remained in the possession of the Army."*<sup>68</sup>

According to numerous documents in the AHPN, attacks against alleged guerrilla safe houses continued during 1982 and 1983. Thus, on November 28th, 1983, after an attack on a building identified by the PN as a safe house for the Guatemalan Workers' Party (Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo, PGT) located in zone 12, the Commander of the Fifth Corps reported that the "raid" had been carried out in coordination with EMP Intelligence. The report says that no detentions were registered and that the items taken were removed by members of the EMP.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> GT PN 35 S002 07/09/1981 "REPORT ON 10 REBELS KILLED IN SHOOTOUT (...)" addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by detectives Nery Carrillo and Manuel C. [illegible] [Microfilm Roll No. 7, Photo #1419-1420. Internal AHPN registration 2108].

<sup>68</sup> GT PN 35 S002 07/29/1981, oficio No. 2,435/Lemus, members of the National Army conducted a search, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by 2nd Chief of the First Corps [Microfilm Roll No. 7, Photo #1232. Internal AHPN registration 29244].

<sup>69</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 11/28/1983, oficio No. 1585/83. Ref. oficio Eirl., report on support provided for the EMP, addressed to the Director General of the PN by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, Commander of the Fifth Corps [Internal AHPN registration 11773].

Writing of the same event, investigators from the DIT gave a different account. They reported that the EMDN Intelligence Office had been involved and that a wounded 19-year-old man using the pseudonym “Omar” had been “*taken to the National Police Hospital by members of the Fifth Corps.*”<sup>70</sup> A similar description appears in the *Military Diary*, which records that, during the operation, the victim had been “*cornered and, being wounded, surrendered, and was taken to the hospital of the 2nd Corps of the PN, where he died as a consequence of his wounds.*”<sup>71</sup>

### **3.2 Monitoring of Leaders, Organizations, and Activities of the Protest Movement**

Among the records in the AHPN are two types of document that make manifest how the protest movement of the years 1975-1985 was the object of monitoring and persecution, together with the guidelines that the PN followed for this purpose.

- a) Instructions on PN education and training and security plans.
- b) Confidential information and investigative reports recording the activities of the popular movement.

#### **3.2.1 Confidential Information and Investigative Reports**

Using the AHPN documents, it has been possible to reconstruct how the PN acted to control the social movement during the period from 1975 to 1985. Below is a summary of the principal activities of the PN in this area.

On July 14th, 1976, the Chief of the Homicide and Murder Section, José Regino Rivera Argüello, sent a document to the Chief of the Detective Corps informing him as follows:

*“Confidential information was received at these offices which states that today at 18:00 hours at the headquarters of the Municipal workers’ union located on 21st Street and Bolívar*

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<sup>70</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, unnumbered document, detailed report on the same operation addressed to the Chief of the Department of Technical Investigation of the PN by Luis Humberto Román Zelada, investigator No. 363 [Internal AHPN registration 11777].

<sup>71</sup> *Military Diary*, sheet 8 Z-28.

*Avenue, Zone No. 1, Extreme Left groups belonging to the student block will perpetrate Sabotage and Attacks on the people attending the gathering in order to afterwards smear the Government for all the damage and harm suffered by the demonstrators at the protest mounted by the Organized Student Block.*

*In virtue of this and in compliance with the orders for today at 17:30 hours, members of this Corps established strict surveillance and observation at the Municipal workers' union headquarters, (...) for the purpose of controlling any sabotage or damage committed by demonstrators in the aforementioned protest, (...) having observed only around 50 or 60 people, among whom it was possible to identify the individual: JOSE LUIS PAZ Leader of the C.N.T. (...) each person leaving was carrying a package, possibly containing pamphlets or flyers that may have been distributed to individuals during the Session, for which reason it was impossible to obtain an example of one... ”<sup>72</sup>*

EMGE Security Order number 16-76 concerning the demonstration to be held on Wednesday, October 20th of that year argues that the gathering in question was an “*initiation of subversive activities with the aim of attacking the Police Corps, members of the Army, Public Service Facilities and recovering Weapons, as well as for propaganda purposes.*”<sup>73</sup>

In compliance with this Security Order, the Directorate General of the PN issued Security Plan No. 013/76, dated October 19th, 1976. This specifically orders the Detective Corps that, beginning at six in the morning:

*“...you will name the personnel necessary in order to have them mingle in pairs among the demonstrators and collect information regarding events disturbing the public order and, if obtained, communicate this as promptly as possible to the Radio Patrol Corps or the units named for their information, and to remain until the rally at the bandshell has concluded.”<sup>74</sup>*

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<sup>72</sup> GT PN 50 S004 07/14/1976, Ref. 1383, surveillance and observation report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by the Chief of the Homicides and Murder Section, José Regino Rivera Argüello [Internal AHPN registration 283].

<sup>73</sup> GT PN 50 S004 10/21/1976, Ref. 2447. Oficio No. 30957/oficio 2º jidg., addressed to Mario Gustavo Cardona Maldonado, Director General of the PN, by the Third Chief of the Detective Corps, Miguel A. García Herrarte [Internal AHPN registration 392].

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

These practices came to be a regular pattern of activity during social mobilizations. In a confidential report dated February 15th, 1978, the Detective Corps reports a small demonstration involving the workers of “*Aceros y Esmaltes (Steels and Enamels) in zone 12,*” attaching photos of placards and the people participating.<sup>75</sup> On May 1st – International Workers’ Day – of that year, another confidential report from the same Corps contains information on the organizations, slogans and flyers circulating during the march, attaching photos of the participants. This document reads:

*“...at 9:10 hours, said procession set off with members of the UNION UNITY COUNCIL (CNUS) at its head; these in turn each followed by the following private and state entities: F.A.S.G.U.A. (Autonomous Federation of Unions of Guatemala), C.U.C. (Rural Unity Committee), and the unions of the following private companies, S.T.I.C.A.V.S.A. glass factory, the union of bakers and confectioners, Ingenio Madre Tierra, Incatecu, Texaco, Phillips, Central American Tobacco, Organized Front for the Unions of Amatitlán (Frente Organizado Sindicatos de Amatitlán, F.O.S.A.), Aceros y Esmaltes S.A. SI.GINSA, STM from the Municipality. Following this group of Affiliates of the CNUS came the EMERGENCY COMMITTEE OF STATE WORKERS, supported by the following state entities, the GUATEL union, INAFOR, PUBLIC WORKS, FEGUA, DIGESA, ROADS, PUBLIC HEALTH, POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS, STATISTICS, TEACHERS. Following this movement and associated to the C.N.T. (National Workers’ Central), the march continued as follows: Rural Workers Federations, University of San Carlos Employees’ Union, and lesser unions from factories and companies in the capital and finally bringing up the rear of the procession was the IGSS union with three May Day-themed carnival floats accompanied by the Guatemalan Union of Artists and Similar.”<sup>76</sup>*

<sup>75</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/15/1978, Reference 707, confidential and surveillance report by detectives from the Detective Corps [Digital reference 3230869. Internal AHPN registration 374].

<sup>76</sup> GT PN 50 S002 05/01/1978, Reference 1727, confidential investigation and surveillance report on demonstration on International Workers’ Day, Detective Corps [Digital reference 3231332. Internal AHPN registration 29619].



The document states that the march ended at 11:20 hours in the Central Park, with the participation of approximately three thousand people, and that it had been organized and directed by the Secondary Level Students' Coordinating Committee (CEEM) and the Association of University Students (AEU).<sup>77</sup>

A third confidential report by the Detective Corps dates from the period in which Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez occupied the position of First Chief of said agency (July 1978 to January 1980). This records the march of August 4th, 1978 held to commemorate the first anniversary of the murder of the student leaders Robín García and Aníbal Caballeros. On that day, university students, accompanied by other sectors of the social movement, carried out an activity in the Plaza Italia with the aim of exercising their right to protest publicly over the “*thousands of Guatemalans who were victims of repression.*”

It is precisely here, in this report from the Detective Corps, that the name of the student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León appears for the first time, highlighting his role as one of the main agitators of the march.

*“...it was made up of a group of approximately 1,500 people, consisting of workers, farmers, students of secondary and post-secondary education, and among the union agitators, Luis Felipe Irías was observed, [and the] current secretary of the AEU Oliverio Castañeda, together with leaders of the CNT, CETE, AGRICASA, CENUS, the Guatemalan Students' Revolutionary Front (FERG), MONAP, the Organized Student Block (BEO).”<sup>78</sup>*

This report was accompanied by a bulletin from the El Salvador Secondary School Students' Revolutionary Brigade (Brigadas Revolucionarias de Estudiantes de Secundaria, BRES) expressing solidarity with Guatemala, a communication from the BEO, the public announcement of the emergence of the Robín García Student Revolutionary Front (FERG) in the secondary education sector, a communication from the Association of Law Students, the slogans for the march and eleven photos of it.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> GT PN 50 S002 08/04/1978, Ref. 3496, confidential investigation and surveillance report on demonstration, Detective Corps [Digital reference 3237429. Internal AHPN registration 518].

### Photograph III.6

Photo taken by members of the Detective Corps of the PN  
August 4th, 1978



Source: GT PN 50 S002 08/04/1978. Confidential. Ref. 3496 [Digital reference 3237429. Internal AHPN registration 26791]

Also included in the confidential report is the emergency press release from the AEU, stating:

*“In the face of the threats made by spokesmen of the Government of the Republic with the aim of repressing the PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION that will begin at 5 o’clock this afternoon and called by various popular organizations, the Association of Students –AEU- DECLARES: ...*

*No citizen, sector or popular organization is legally obligated to request permission from any Government authority in order to exercise freely the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Therefore, the peaceful demonstration that will take place today does not need any authorization, except if the country were in an abnormal situation of SUSPENSION OF GUARANTEES, a situation which has at no time been declared by the Executive or ratified by the Congress of the Republic as the law demands.”<sup>79</sup>*

<sup>79</sup> 08/04/1978 Ref. 3496 Press release. URGENT from AEU. Detective Corps [Internal AHPN registration 34797].

Days previously, the Minister of the Interior, Donaldo Álvarez Ruiz, had declared that, in the absence of government permission, any demonstrations would be repressed.<sup>80</sup> The report from the Detective Corps cited above goes on to say that the demonstration was repressed at 17:20 hours by means of tear gas grenades.<sup>81</sup>

Other sources state that, faced with the government action, the students took refuge in the University Auditorium. 200 people received treatment from the Red Cross and 31 more were hospitalized, with most of the injured between 14 and 17 years of age.<sup>82</sup>

At the end of September 1978, despite the widespread and growing popular mobilization, the Municipal Council of the City of Guatemala approved an increase of 100% in urban transport fares. On Friday, November 30th, the day the new fares went into effect, young people from low-income neighborhoods such as La Carolingia, El Gallito, La Parroquia, and others in zone 6 renewed their protests. The following weekend, during a general assembly of the National Committee for Union Unity (CNUS), the popular movement called a general strike in opposition to the increase. State employees brought their work to a halt and occupied their workplaces while secondary schools and the surrounding buildings were taken over by students, leading on some occasions to confrontations with the PN.<sup>83</sup>

In the middle of these mobilizations, on October 2nd, a Deputy Inspector from the INTERPOL Section of the Detective Corps informed his Chief of events at the Vocational Technical Institute in zone 13 stemming from the protests:

*“...on arriving at Liberación Boulevard, across from the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security (Traumatology), we were surprised by a hail of stones thrown by a large group of individuals involved in blocking the circulation of traffic and carrying placards with slogans calling for the public to join the movement. The undersigned and the detectives under my command tried to attract the attention of the rioters, but their response was to attack us with stones and any other objects to hand, meaning it was necessary to fire teargas grenades, causing them to disperse and withdraw, leaving behind them a banner of regular dimensions declaring ‘The Technical Institute: Present in the Popular Struggle’ (...) After this,*

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<sup>80</sup> Kobrak, Paul, *En pie de lucha. Organización y represión en la Universidad de San Carlos, Guatemala, 1944-1996*. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1999.

<sup>81</sup> GT PN 50 S002 08/04/1978, Ref. 3496, confidential investigation and surveillance report on demonstration, Detective Corps [Digital reference 3237429. Internal AHPN registration 518].

<sup>82</sup> Kobrak, *En pie de lucha*, p. 58.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

*we directed our attention to the Technical Institution, but at that moment the Model Platoon arrived, for which reason I reported to this Corps, receiving instructions to regroup.*"<sup>84</sup>

On October 3rd, the Chief of the Second Corps reported to the Director of Police in relation to the events occurring in zone 1, in similar circumstances to those that took place on Liberación Boulevard.

*"Since the early hours of today, a group of hundreds, mostly youths, gathered in a blatant challenge to the authorities, proceeded to place obstacles, mainly on 8th and 9th Avenues, zone 1, in order to block the passage of vehicles, as well as strewing tacks everywhere; youths carrying all kinds of objects imaginable that might serve as a weapon, whom we tried to persuade to reconsider their attitude, the officers on duty at the scene receiving in response a barrage of stones, bricks, etc.; during the hours of approximately 11:00 to 19:00, the riot developed in the area between 8th and 10th Streets and 6th and 11th Avenues, zone 1, during which time they devoted themselves to vandalism, destroying the lights, windows and signs of numerous stores in the area, for which reason, in order to prevent this, and under attack – even by firearms, as there were moments at which shots could be heard, which fortunately failed to find a target, doubtless thanks to their lack of expertise – our officers set off tear gas grenades and proceeded to apprehend those responsible in an energetic but non-violent manner, confirming that these individuals, after hurling objects, rapidly fell back, in order to regroup and launch their treacherous attacks from another direction with the aim of inflicting the greatest possible damage."*<sup>85</sup>

This same report gives detailed information on the businesses destroyed and the number of and reasons for the detention of 244 people. 166 men, one woman and 74 minors were accused of "public disorder," three men accused of "public disorder" [and] distributing subversive propaganda."

<sup>84</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/02/1978, report on reaction to barricades. Addressed to the Chief of Detective Corps by Deputy Inspector No. 21 Rafael Pedroza Montenegro of the Interpol Section [Digital reference 1923371. Internal AHPN registration 28513].

<sup>85</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/03/1978, oficio No. 2866 EEGF., report on reaction to rioting, addressed to the Director General of the PN by Rigoberto Pineda Sánchez, Chief of the Second Corps [Digital reference 1923385. Internal AHPN registration 28527].

**Table III.5**

Report from the PN concerning detentions, deaths and injuries following the October Days of 1978

<b>Date</b>	<b>Detainees</b>	<b>Dead</b>	<b>Injured</b>
October 2nd	168	2	42
October 3rd	417	5	15
October 4th	118	3	10
October 5th (includes data from Quetzaltenango)	79	3	7
October 6th	28	4	24
October 7th	39	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>99</b>

Source: GT PN 30 S002 10/08/1978.

New developments from October 2nd to 7th included in a PN report put a number on the persons detained, shot dead, shot and wounded, private vehicles damaged, and PN officers and vehicles affected.

October 6th, 1978 saw the execution without trial of Arnulfo Cifuentes, the high-profile leader of the Union of Postal and Telegraphic Workers. He was shot and killed in the process of arriving home to his house at the end of 17th Avenue and 20th Street of the 4-4 Project in zone 6. This event was the prelude to repeated and systematic strikes at other leaders of the popular movement.

As a result of the popular protests, on Friday, October 7th, the Municipal Council of Guatemala restored the previous public transportation fare of five cents. However, in a confidential report by the PN, it was confirmed that, up to

October 12th, 200 workers from the Judiciary were still on strike, and continued to occupy the Tribunal Tower, claiming that

*“...they were not prepared to drop the strike until the people who had disappeared reappeared, and those who were being held released, and as a result, the entire judicial machinery would remain in suspension.”<sup>86</sup>*

During the same period, the Detective Corps continued to detain State workers who participated in the protests for violation of Article 119 of the Political Constitution of the Republic, which prohibited strikes by State employees.<sup>87</sup>

In the midst of this social upheaval, on October 20th, 1978 came the murder of the Secretary General of the AEU, Oliverio Castañeda de León. In the documents of the AHPN there is clear evidence that, starting with the march of August 4th of that year, the Detective Corps had identified and targeted this student leader.<sup>88</sup>

Furthermore, there is a declassified document from the US Government’s Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) offering the following analysis of the protests of October 1978.

*“The Lucas government, early in its term, served notice that it would not tolerate demonstrations lacking prior authorization. This set the stage for clashes with labor and other leftist organizations (...) An October 1978 incident exposed the urban problem. Beginning as a protest over announcements of a 5-cent increase in bus fare (...), the event was soon followed by widespread strikes and labor unrest. The protest, fueled at times by leftist students and political and union groups, degenerated into rioting. Lucas finally reacted to heavy criticism from various sectors, which backed his campaign, by ordering the police to move with firmness against strikers and protestors to bring the 9 days of violence*

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<sup>86</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/12/1978, confidential report on surveillance of workers in the Judiciary, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1923554. Internal AHPN registration 28549].

<sup>87</sup> GT PN 50 S007 10/09/1978, Ref. 2157. No. 27583/oficio 5to. cmm., list of people held and reasons, addressed to the 5th Justice of the Criminal Peace Alfonso García Ortiz by the Second Chief of the Detective Corps [Digital reference 3474745. Internal AHPN registration 28562].

<sup>88</sup> See Chapter IV of this report.

*under control. Had the disorders continued, they would have posed a serious threat to the Lucas government's continuance in power. The military stood back and allowed Lucas to deal with the problem using the National Police. The rioting was curbed, but bus fare has remained at five cents.*"<sup>89</sup>

Further on in the same document, it says:

*"Government actions in dealing with that issue [the October 1978 crisis] resulted in the dismantling of most public sector labor groups. Attention now seems to focus on private sector labor groups, with violence directed at union leaders."*<sup>90</sup>

Indeed, during the first years of the decade between 1975 and 1985, the Guatemalan popular movement reached a historic high. The period from 1976 to 1978 was a period of growth in popular organization in different sectors: rural unions, secondary and tertiary level students, State workers, settlers of marginalized areas, teachers, journalists, religious organizations, etc.

The earthquake of February 4th, 1976 sent tremors through the social fabric of Guatemala. It energized social forces, producing acts of solidarity that raised the levels of organization with the aim of overcoming the difficulties caused by the natural disaster. This factor, together with the socioeconomic and political conditions, created a context that favored the growth and development of popular organization. As such, this period witnessed some of the greatest growth in the Guatemalan popular movements, comparable only with that of the democratic period from 1944 to 1954.

The popular struggle was developing in a variety of areas, such as wage increases, demands for land by rural workers, improved working conditions, educational and health demands, struggles against the price of urban transport and in favor of respecting popular organization.

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<sup>89</sup> Unclassified document, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), *Military Intelligence Summary (MIS) Volume VIII, Latin America (U)*. November 1979. DOB-2680-108A-79. Available in the National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal. Volume II documents* (online). [www.gwu.edu/~NSARCHIVE/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc16.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~NSARCHIVE/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc16.pdf)

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

Initially, State repression in itself provided further reasons to resist; among others, the demands for an end to government violence and repression, the clamor for the disappeared, the protests against the assassination of political leaders. At the same time, these events gave rise to the emergence of new groupings such as the Robin García Student Front, which was created in response to the murder of the student honored by the organization's name.

In the heart of the Guatemalan state, and particularly the high command of the Army and other security forces, popular organization and the protest movement were considered to be under the influence of the armed insurgency. In the view of the counterinsurgent State, popular action was part of “*subversion*” and was therefore seen as an enemy and a target of National Security policy. Members and leaders of the popular movement were considered to be no less subversive than those of the armed rebellion.

Due to the State's repressive logic, social mobilization was interpreted as a facade of the insurgency. It fostered the rebelliousness of the populace against the Government, and as a result, the main force of the strategy was directed at its neutralization, dismantlement and destruction. The overall concept was that both popular organization and rebel organizations were participating in “*subversion.*”

In a report from April 1985, a PN analyst wrote the following to the Director General:

*“Just as we have with subversion, we have to learn to live with the Mutual Aid Group, treating it as it is: One more subversive Association (...) Maintaining a hard line against the Mutual Aid Group in this and other; subsequent governments will prove beyond doubt that the Armed Institution considers it to be a subversive target, to be controlled and neutralized and, if necessary, destroyed.”<sup>91</sup>*

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<sup>91</sup> GT PN 30 DSC 04.1985, unnumbered document on police activities for the week 04/01/1985 to 04/07/1985, section “*THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AS SPIRITUAL ADVISOR TO CONFLICTIVE GROUPS,*” no addressee or sender [Internal AHPN registration 30845].



The same document offers an analysis of the position of the Catholic Church.

*“THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AS SPIRITUAL ADVISOR TO CONFLICTIVE GROUPS.*

*It is a fact that the political attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Security Forces has changed in recent years. The change in Guatemala has been notable, and it would seem that the leftist wing of the Church is currently in the ascendancy.*

*This new policy of the Catholic Church is not a result of the caprice of the ecclesiastical hierarchy or a matter of merely personal views on the part of Monsignor Próspero Penados del Barrio.*

*This policy has been planned; it is wide-reaching and long-term. The planning encompasses all of Central America, and it is evident that there are directives and plans of action of a general nature. Naturally, there are certain differences between plans for Nicaragua and the rest of the nation of Central America.*

*The Church is in open opposition to the duly constituted Governments of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. All governments enjoying the full support of the armed forces.*

*It should be said that the Church has different plans for ‘its peace’ than those of the armies of said Central American republics.*

*...the Church has thus adopted a new policy, leaving behind the comfortable attitude of the past, when it lived a life of privilege granted to the ecclesiastical hierarchy by successive presidents. It has now united itself with opposition groups which, according to its doctrines, are dispossessed and persecuted.*

*Naturally, this new policy is more popular, since those who are governed and lacking in material goods are the most numerous. Those who govern and who have possessions are a minority.*

*The Church goes where its interests lead. This is, of course, to the majority, despite its being a majority without reasoning or direction.*

*We expect, then, a rapprochement between the Church and the unions, students, ethnic groups, etc.; in short, anything to do with groups of human beings.*

*This comment is based on an examination of the behavior of Monsignor Penados del Barrio in relation to the Mutual Aid Group, its politics and its activities.*

*The Church is no stranger to this group. On the contrary, its birth was given shelter and direction by the Church.*

*The Catholic Church made the cause its own and promoted it.*

*To this end, it is enough to remember the so-called Peace marches carried out in our country; the first between Tiquisate and Esquipulas and the second from San Lucas to the capital, which were organized by members of the Church and had as their coordinating centers the Catholic churches themselves.*

*The brotherhood of Franciscan priests based in the city of Antigua Guatemala has been at the center of all this anti-Government activity, but the directions have been issued from the ecclesiastical hierarchy's own Cathedral...''<sup>92</sup>*

It is clear that the State and its security forces considered the Catholic Church to be part of the “subversive” movement, although this document does not describe it in these terms. It does, however, label the Mutual Aid Group as such, claiming that it was created in the “shelter” of the Church and its highest authorities.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

Another example that makes it possible to document the monitoring of various organizations and institutions is a memorandum from May 1980 addressed to the Minister of the Interior, Donaldo Álvarez Ruiz. This contains a report on the Congregation of the Sacred Family of the Belgian College.

*“...it works subtly and skillfully to infiltrate the various communities of the Municipality of San José del Golfo in this department in order to “PERFORM WORKS”, that is, SPREAD POLITICAL DOCTRINE OF A COMMUNIST NATURE as they have done in other places in the Republic - Huehuetenango and Quiché-. It is highly advisable to control these activities.”<sup>93</sup>*

This document contains a handwritten annotation which reads: *“To D. Nat. Pol. Investigate, proceed and report.”*

In confidential information from January 8th, 1982, religious sectors were once more signaled as a danger to the regime.

*“Information has been received stating that, in the Catholic church of ‘Jesus the Worker’ located in the El Milagro district, zone 7, meetings of a subversive nature have been taking place, with the Priest JOSÉ PEREZ as the indoctrinator; currently living in Chimaltenango, he arrives at said church disguised with a hat and beard. In the early hours, armed youths have been seen entering and leaving the church and also in the community clinic at the Bus Terminal of the aforementioned district, which is run by an individual known as VITALINO who is assumed to be in charge of propaganda. It is known that the Priest HECTOR CORADO also visits said church; so far he has not been spotted and is presumed to have left the country; it is also known that many of the inhabitants of said district have been attending the meetings and have made economic and material contributions to the Priest JOSÉ PEREZ, they are nervous of late, as they are receiving anonymous threats if they are thinking of leaving the organization, imploring them not to inform the authorities.”<sup>94</sup>*

<sup>93</sup> GT PN 30-01 S001 05/06/1980, memorandum, with handwritten note: *“to the Director of the National Police. Investigate and report,”* addressed to the Minister of the Interior, sender unknown [Digital reference 1275293. Internal AHPN registration 31350].

<sup>94</sup> GT PN 30 S002 08/01/1982 No. 2-0030-IC/82, confidential information, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1924217. Internal AHPN registration 29660].

This surveillance was also carried out on people denouncing the regime abroad and who had a long political career in the country. For example, on January 5th, 1984, the Vice Minister for Foreign Relations, Carlos A. Moreira López, sent a request to the Minister of the Interior, Gustavo Adolfo López Sandoval, asking for an investigation into Rigoberta Menchú, as two articles had been published in the press in relation to the book *I, Rigoberta Menchú. An Indian Woman in Guatemala*, in which she attempted to discredit the government. Below are the terms in which the Vice Minister couched his request:

*“I would be very grateful if you would take the necessary steps in order to provide this Ministry with all possible information regarding the background of Rigoberta Menchú, date and place of birth, testimony of people who may have met her, links to subversive groups, etc.”*<sup>95</sup>

Additionally, an unnumbered document dated May 6th, 1971 reports on the journey made by the lawyer Alfonso Bauer Paiz to Santiago de Chile as a political exile.<sup>96</sup>

*“I respectfully inform you that today, on Pan American airlines flight 515, at 16:30 hours, destination Santiago de Chile in the Republic of Chile, stopping over in Panama, the Guatemalan lawyer ALFONSO BAUER PAIZ departed as a political exile to said nation; born on April 18th, 1918, his address in this city was 8th Street 9-41 Apt. 101, zone 1 and was traveling on Guatemalan passport No. 187043.”*<sup>97</sup>

Accompanying the report was another document with information on the activities of the lawyer Bauer Paiz. It describes him as a “*recalcitrant communist*”. It mentions his activities during the 1950s and 1960s in alleged subversive plots. It describes his participation in communist circles in Guatemala and Mexico

<sup>95</sup> GT PN 50 S040 02/03/1970 No. 00334, request for information on Rigoberta Menchú, addressed to the Minister of the Interior, Gustavo Adolfo López Sandoval by the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carlos A. Moreira López [Digital reference 878083. Internal AHPN registration 31115].

<sup>96</sup> Alfonso Bauer Paiz was a congressional representative, Minister of Economy and Labor, and holder of a variety of other key posts during the revolutionary decade (1944-1954) and a professor at the Universidad de San Carlos in the Schools of Law and Economic Sciences; he went into exile twice, suffered an attempt on his life in connection with his activities in the Exmibal (Izabal Mine Exploration and Exploitation) case, and represented the Alianza Nueva Nación (New Nation Alliance) in Congress during the period 2000-2003. His departure for Chile was the start of his second period in exile after having minimally recovered from the assassination attempt.

<sup>97</sup> GT PN 50 S002 05/06/1971, Ref. 3687, report on the departure into exile of Alfonso Bauer Paiz, addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Detective No. 59 Rubén González Estrada, Airport Police Service [Digital reference 3102663. Internal AHPN registration 28566].

in astounding detail, as well as the positions he occupied in the revolutionary governments and in various political parties.<sup>98</sup>

As already described above, a similar level of surveillance was maintained over a large number of people in the political opposition, notable academics and leaders of the union, student and settler movements, etc.

Another mechanism for monitoring social organizations was the confidential information received by the police from other State security forces and the network of informants. This network was composed of individuals receiving special privileges or payment from the PN in exchange for providing information.

Confidential inquiries that reached the Directorate General of the PN were subjected to analysis and generally resulted in an order for immediate investigation and surveillance and that the force be placed on alert, ready for action. The Secretariat General played a lead role. Apart from serving as a means of communication between the Director General and the other State agencies through the Ministry of the Interior (the office at the summit of the institution's hierarchy), private entities and persons, it was also defined as:

*“...an office for execution and coordination. For all matters sent to the Director General for his opinion or decision, whether of an official or private nature, the Secretariat General must collect all information in order that the Director may have a sound basis from which to judge; to this end, it works in coordination with both the other offices within the institution and those outside it.”<sup>99</sup>*

The control and monitoring of the union sector is exemplified by a problem that arose between a company and its workers' union. The union denounced the violation of a recently signed collective agreement between the employer and the employees in an article published in the 01/14/1982 issue of *Prensa Libre*. The security forces immediately concluded that it was part of a destabilization plan conceived and backed by rebels.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> GT PN 50-04 DSC 02/19/1977, higher course for chiefs and officers in the National Police service on the functioning, organization and powers of the Secretariat General, given by the Secretary General Gabriel A. Motta S. [Internal AHPN registration 31211].

This is reflected in a confidential report dated January 28th, 1982.

*“Information has been received that the Workers’ Union at the ‘Collins’ factory based in Amatlán is taking advice from communist agitators working secretly and infiltrated among the workers at said factory, having planned to create an area of labor disturbances there in order to cause problems for the Government with the help of subversive criminals.”<sup>100</sup>*

According to a handwritten note in the margin, the matter was referred to the PN Joint Operations Command for it to undertake the task of drawing the necessary conclusions and alerting the appropriate agencies.

A further technique was the infiltration of plain clothes detectives to take part in specific activities by the popular organizations. Take, for example, the following: On January 27th, 1980, an unnumbered confidential information document reported that members of the Detective Corps Intelligence Service had assembled in the old bandshell at the Medical School located on 12th Street and Second Avenue, zone 1, in order to infiltrate the election of leaders of the National Settlers’ Movement (MONAP). They were unable to do so, since it was necessary to present an invitation, as well as be a member of MONAP.

*“Due to these circumstances, it remains to be established exactly who was elected as the new leaders of said organization, which will be reported at the earliest opportunity.”<sup>101</sup>*

Through the agents and detectives of its investigative and intelligence bodies, the PN infiltrated the structures of the organizations of the popular movement in order to obtain information on its activities with the aim of controlling and repressing its members and leaders.

Plain clothes detectives also infiltrated marches and social mobilizations with the intention of identifying activists and take photographs that would form part of subsequent reports to their superiors on the details that came to light during these activities.

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<sup>100</sup> 1. GT PN 30 S002 undated, denunciation by the Workers’ Union at Herramientas Collins, S.A., published in *Prensa Libre* [Digital reference 1924227. Internal AHPN registration 30963].

2. *Ibid.*, 10/14/1982, unnumbered confidential information on the activities of the Workers’ Union at the Collins tool factory, referring to the denunciation appearing in *Prensa Libre* [Digital reference 1924240. Internal AHPN registration 30936].

3. *Ibid.*, 01/28/1982, confidential information No. 2-0165-IC/82, on the activities of the Workers’ Union at the Collins tool factory, referring to the denunciation appearing in *Prensa Libre* [Digital reference 1924185. Internal AHPN registration 30962].

<sup>101</sup> GT PN 30 S002 01/27/1980, unnumbered confidential information from the “*Intelligence Service*” concerning an assembly by MONAP (National Settlers Movement) [Digital reference 1924070. Internal AHPN registration 31007].

### 3.3 Surveillance and Monitoring of Rebel Leaders and Organizations

Among the AHPN documents, instructions have been found for the control and persecution of the armed insurgency as one of the operational priorities of the PN and other State security forces. There are also numerous documents – some classified as confidential – that demonstrate the activities of the police with the aim of observing and controlling the movements of alleged members of rebel groups. Analysis of a variety of documents produced by the PN shows the frequent use of the terms “*subversive*” or “*rebel*” when undertaking repressive or deterrent actions against certain people, whether or not they were members of the insurgency.

The following is a description of some of the main findings in relation to this topic.

#### 3.3.1 Operational Manuals and Instruction Books

In 1977, Aviateca submitted a request for an airport security manual. The Detective Corps made an application to the United States Embassy and received a compilation of leaflets, pamphlets and instruction booklets on security measures, and courses on weapons training and other areas totaling 120 pages translated into Spanish. The Director General of the PN was pleased with this and asked for it to be reproduced in its entirety for distribution among the corps, headquarters and other police agencies.<sup>102</sup>

One of the leaflets was based on a text written in 1974 by Mr. Brian Michael Jenkins, an American advisor on security and terrorism, which was titled “*Soldiers Versus Gunmen: The Challenge of Urban Guerrilla Warfare*.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> GT PN 30 DSC 02/02/1977, Providencia No. 2056, order from the Director General of the PN to reproduce the manuals obtained from the US embassy, addressed to the Chief of the Center for Joint Operations by the Director General [Internal AHPN registration 30970].

<sup>103</sup> GT PN 30 DSC undated, “*Urban Guerrillas*” manual [Internal AHPN registration 30970].

It reads:

- “1. Urban guerrillas have demonstrated that protracted urban warfare is possible in cities...”*
- 2. Generally, we can see that urban guerrillas have not fared well...*
- 3. In almost all cases, it was the armies, and not the police forces, that took the field against the urban guerrillas. This reflects the recognition at a certain point by the government that urban guerrillas constituted a full-fledged threat to national security...*
- 5. Technology has played a very minor role in campaigns against urban guerrillas...*
- 6. In almost all cases, government forces have resorted to extra-legal methods to deal with urban guerrillas. These include the following:*
  - a) Mild methods such as preventive detention or the suspension of various civil rights.*
  - b) Harsher methods such as the following: (1) The destruction of property in reprisal for assistance given to guerrillas. (2) The covert sponsorship of counter-attacking terrorist groups. (3) The systematic use of torture during interrogations.*
- 7. Not only have governments used extra-legal methods, but for the most part they got away with it...*
- 8. Terrorism by guerrillas has provoked counter-terrorism by vigilante groups. The ‘death squads’ in Brazil are one example.*



- (a) *Right-wing terrorists in Guatemala such as 'La Mano' - The Hand - and the Ulster Volunteer Force in Northern Ireland are other examples.*
  - (b) *A few of these groups have been covertly sponsored or tolerated by government forces.*
9. *Besides direct military action, extra-legal measures and counter-terror, there are other reasons for the guerrillas' lack of success. An economic interpretation is necessary...*
- (b) *Prosperity seems to be a hostile environment for urban guerrillas...*
10. *No governments have been overthrown by urban guerrillas, but the survival of one at least has been taken over by the army that was ordered to crush the guerrilla movement.*<sup>104</sup>

The same document analyzes the development of “*urban guerrilla warfare*” through five stages: Violent propaganda, organizational growth, guerrilla offensive, mass mobilization and urban rising.

In response to these statements and inspired by other instruction manuals from the 1960s,<sup>105</sup> the police gave particular importance to the management of information. To this end, the capture of members of and leaders of the insurgency was an option that was understood and utilized as a mechanism for obtaining firsthand information. This also made it possible to capture other members and gain knowledge of the infrastructure and relationships between various rebel organizations.

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> See Chapter II of this volume.

Among the AHPN relating to this is an instruction booklet titled “*Interrogation.*” The instructions state:

*“The enemy will only talk if the interrogator is properly prepared to carry out the interrogation. The information provided will be useful for future operations and for correcting mistakes in those operations. A record must be made by any available means of everything the prisoner says.”*<sup>106</sup>

Prior to conducting the “*interrogation*” the same set of instructions recommends taking the following into account:

1. *What information is urgently required or may be obtained from the Prisoner.*

2. *Personal observation of the prisoner. What is the physical condition of the person under interrogation. External appearance (clothes, expressions, etc.). Behavior (nervous, etc.). Any particular characteristics that can be noted. The attitude of the other prisoners towards the prisoner (if not in isolation).*

3. *Information provided by those who effected the capture. Where s/he was captured. When. Who made the capture. Circumstances of the capture. What s/he was doing. Whether any kind of warning signal was given. Whether s/he resisted or what attitude was adopted. Whether s/he was accompanied; by whom. What happened to the others. What weapons s/he had. What documents s/he was carrying. What other items or subversive material s/he was carrying. Where these items are now.*

4. *Treatment of prisoners. How hs/e was treated by his captors. Whether s/he tried to flee or commit suicide. If s/he conversed with his captors, what did he say? If s/he was interrogated previously, is the report of the interrogation available?*

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<sup>106</sup> GT PN 51-01 S011 undated, “*Interrogation*” [Digital reference 3060259. Internal AHPN registration 28592].

5. *Instructions for techniques to be employed during interrogations. Go over the following points carefully. The circumstances of the capture and any other information provided by the persons effecting the capture. Details of the prisoner's background and any previous interrogations of people in the same organization or area of action. The prisoner's own observations. Various interrogation methods. Gain a general idea of the following:*

a.- *What is his apparent attitude: frightened, calm, willing to cooperate, etc.?*

b.- *What can be done to increase or prolong his fear.*

c.- *What can be done to eliminate or alleviate his fear.*

d.- *What documents or personal effects that the individual was carrying when captured that might be used to aid the interrogation.*

e.- *What information is urgently required.*

6. *The enemy has published and distributed to the seditious individuals manuals explaining how to answer during interrogation. All interrogators must read the manuals recovered in order to be aware of the techniques the enemy uses and to detect whether the prisoner has answered in accordance with the guidelines in said manuals.*<sup>107</sup>

Thus, the gathering of information regarding the insurgency's operational methods, its movements and routines, infrastructure and relationships between different structures was aimed at striking blows in order to destroy its influence and ability to act. Just as with the popular movement, the strategy involved the practice of transgression of the legal limits, leading to human rights violations.

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

### 3.3.2 Information Revealing the Monitoring of Rebel Organizations

Among the AHPN records from the Directorate General of the PN, researchers found and analyzed confidential documents that they believe formed part of the Director General's personal files. Practically all the information they contain – including that provided by the EMGE – is accompanied by written orders, probably from the Director General, for different areas of the PN such as Command Six, COCP, the Detective Corps and the Departmental Headquarters. There follows a description of the contents of some of those documents classified as confidential.

On January 3rd, 1980, the PN was informed of the entry into the country, via the Republic of Honduras, of arms and ammunition from Cuba destined for the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP). The handwritten annotation reads “*Joint,*” meaning the COCP.<sup>108</sup>

On December 19th, 1979, two captains from the Army Chiefs of Staff arriving on board a Copa flight number 318 out of Panama reported that the Nicaraguans Abel Antonio Hernández Castillo and Juan Carrión Calero, passengers on the same flight, “*were talking about ways of handling Guerrilla cells in our Country in accordance with Sandinista ideology so as to carry out the indoctrination of the entire rural population and win over the indigenous leaders throughout the country.*” The information indicated, furthermore, that awaiting them at airport was a woman driving a dark gray Volvo automobile, license plates P-72196. Lastly, it adds that the owner of the car was Mrs. Norma Libertad Rodas Sáenz de Siliézar. The handwritten note in the margin says: “*Command 6. Of. 10,*” a PN office.<sup>109</sup>

Confidential information No.2-0377-1C/80 from the EMGE, dated August 8th, 1980, mentions that they have information that four individuals of Nicaraguan nationality, pilots for the “*Palmieri*” transport company, are traveling to Central America and are in possession of a black and red “*unionist*” card. It adds that these individuals serve as a link for the introduction of communist propaganda into the countries of the region. A copy of this document was sent to the EMP General Archive and Support Services. An note in the margin says “*To Detectives, proceed.*”<sup>110</sup>

<sup>108</sup> GT PN 30 S002 01/03/1980, unnumbered document, confidential information concerning the entry of weapons for the EGP [Digital reference 1924086. Internal AHPN registration 28589].

<sup>109</sup> GT PN 30 S002 12/19/1979 (receipt stamp), unnumbered document, information on the entry into Guatemala of two Nicaraguan activists, provided by Army General Staff Captains Darío Gularte and César Muralles, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1924107. Internal AHPN registration 28588].

<sup>110</sup> GT PN 30 S002 08/08/1980, No.2-0377-1C/80, confidential information about Nicaraguans assumed to be bringing in Communist propaganda, no addressee or sender; copy to the General Archive and Support Services of the EMP [Digital reference 1924283. Internal AHPN registration 28587].

In the Master File Record, as part of the collection of documents from the Criminological Investigation Department, information was accumulated and classified under the following headings: “*Guerrillas*,” “*Terrorists*,” “*FAR*,” “*EGP*,” “*ORPA*,” “*PGT*,” “*Terrorist Bombs*,” “*Flyers*,” and “*Subversive Banners*.” The information contained in said files refers to activities carried out by or known to the PN.<sup>111</sup>

From 1982, the DIT produced tables of information on the “*subversive activities*” classified by department. As part of this information, a document was found that presents a synopsis of what the police considered to be the situation regarding “*subversion*” in May 1982.

*“Urban Subversion has apparently decreased in the last few days in comparison with previous months, Confidential Information indicates only that they are preparing to set up new strongholds, as they are in rural areas, as well; these cases are under investigation.*

*They are also involved in setting up organizational blocks to infiltrate the Unions, as was reported previously.*

*With regard to kidnapping, it only remains to establish whether they had a hand in the abductions of the Abularach brothers, Alvaro Contreras Velez and Guillermo Toralla Loarca.*

*Other actions carried out, which are now common knowledge, fall into the category of common crime.”<sup>112</sup>*

Throughout the period studied, the Detective Corps and other criminal investigation structures received confidential information relating to alleged

<sup>111</sup> 1. GT PN 50 S001 07/10/1981 (first entry on file), file “*TERRORIST BOMBS*” [Digital reference 802067. Internal AHPN registration 28563].

2. GT PN 50 S001 11/27/1981 (first entry on file), file “*GUERRILLA ARMY OF THE POOR ‘E.G.P.’*” [Digital reference 753946. Internal AHPN registration 28564].

3. GT PN 50 S001 01/28/1964 (first entry on file), file ‘*REBEL ARMED FORCES’ (F.A.R.)*’ [Digital reference 802174. Internal AHPN registration 28567].

4. GT PN 50 S001 07/22/1980 (first entry on file), file *GUERRILLAS* [Digital reference 724536. Internal AHPN registration 28569].

5. GT PN 50 S001 01/10/1981 (first entry on file), file “*SUBVERSIVE BANNER*” [Digital reference 802118. Internal AHPN registration 28570].

<sup>112</sup> GT PN 50 S004 05/24/1982, Record 736, systematized report on subversive activities during the months of March, April and May 1982, addressed to Cavalry Colonel DEM, Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, Director General of the PN by Police Colonel Oswaldo Yat Xolon of the Department of Technical Investigation [Internal AHPN registration 31212].

members of the insurgency. One example is the information to be found in the EMP General Archive and Support Services. It was possible to ascertain its origin by the “received” stamp of the Detective Corps together with the signature of the Eighth Officer. This recipient also recorded and signed a receipt slip for said document. The reference to the 1978 document is found on a slip of paper attached to it on which is written the following: “*BROUGHT FROM: THE PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL STAFF GENERAL ARCHIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES (without knowledge, simply returned the sealed envelope and signed proof of receipt).*”<sup>113</sup>

The information refers to “*the teacher, Godofredo Bravo, Director of the Public School in the urban center of Guacas, village of Cuyuta in the Municipality of Masagua, department of Escuintla; he is a member of the E.G.P., verbally indoctrinates the older students, distributes subversive propaganda in the neighborhood, carries a .45 caliber pistol...*”<sup>114</sup>

Six years later, on May 15th, 1984, according to the *Military Diary*, Godofredo Bravo was captured along with Mrs. Nérida Isabel Ramírez Miranda at the El Compromiso farm, Kilometer 160, in the jurisdiction of Mazatenango, Suchitepéquez. In the words of the same document, this place was used for meetings of “*all the regional representatives*” and a machine gun, a rifle, a pistol, and a revolver were found there. It adds that Bravo was captured as they were “*tipped off by BRAULIO, after a good interview.*” A written note on the document adds: “*INFORMATION RECEIVED THAT THE COMMITTEE OF MAZATE HANDED THEM OVER TO THE TEACHING UNION IN A PUBLIC ACT WITH AUTHORIZATION FROM HIGH COMMAND.*”<sup>115</sup>

Another source utilized by the PN in relation to alleged rebels was that of voluntary or anonymous informants. The police followed up on this information and even passed it on to higher levels such as CRIO. Below are some examples of this type of communication.

An unnumbered confidential document dated August 12th, 1980 reads:

*“Via information from a source as yet unconfirmed, we have knowledge to the effect that: At the LA CORONA ranch in the jurisdiction of Chicacao Suchitepéquez, there is a rebel stronghold, as it has been observed that every 4 to 5 days,*

<sup>113</sup> GT PN 50 S002 08/15/1978, Confidential, Inf-037-O-C, registration 3645, report on the activities of Godofredo Bravo, received by the Detective Corps, sent by the General Archive and Support Services of the Presidential General Staff [Digital reference 3234686. Internal AHPN registration 25264].

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> *Military Diary*, Z 136 and Z 136-1.

*two black Chevrolet pickup trucks can be seen arriving at the ranch late at night together with an International van driven by unknown individuals, especially women wearing wigs.*"<sup>116</sup>

The source adds that *"in the ranch house there is a rebel cache containing weapons and ammunition which is being used by the guerrillas operating on the south coast."* Further, the owner of the ranch is Mr. ROLANDO CALDERON. A handwritten comment in the margin reads: *"to Mazate to see whether to coordinate with Army."*<sup>117</sup>

Another communication of this type was sent in 1982 by a military officer from Amatitlán to the Director General of the PN. This concerns a Maryknoll priest in collaboration with members of ORPA, recommending as a result *"mass searches of the chalets, especially the houses of the lakeside lifeguards."*<sup>118</sup> Another example is the confidential document detailing the existence of ORPA arms caches in Santo Domingo Suchitepéquez.<sup>119</sup> In both of these cases, the original records provide detailed information which includes the names of the informants.

In the margin of the documents containing the information cited above are handwritten notes ordering them to be sent to *Don Julio*. As explained earlier, this was actually a codename used to refer to the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO).<sup>120</sup>

In the AHPN, researchers have also unearthed documents used internally by the rebel organizations, such as accounts of activities, resolutions of congresses, and private correspondence. This material, seized during various operations, constituted information that provided the government security forces with knowledge of the opposition groups, their thinking, contradictions, proposals, and modus operandi.

The PN not only collected information relating to the activities of these organizations, it also constantly exchanged information with the internal structures of the institution and other intelligence units of the State security forces.

<sup>116</sup> GT PN 30 S002 08/12/1980, unnumbered document, confidential information about a possible *"rebel stronghold"* in Suchitepéquez, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1924429. Internal AHPN registration 28552].

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> GT PN 51-02 S002 02/24/1982, Oficio No. GCHB/MC/COC/0529, confidential information provided by the military commissioner for Amatitlán, Mario Antonio Ramírez, with attached photocopy of the confidential information, addressed to *"Don Julio,"* no sender [Digital reference 2773450. Internal AHPN registration 31412].

<sup>119</sup> GT PN 51-01 S002 02/16/1982, providencia No. 3308/oficio10o.rba., handwritten accusation about a possible ORPA arms cache, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Walter Marroquín [Digital reference 2773417. Internal AHPN registration 31429].

<sup>120</sup> See Chapter II.

#### 4. The National Police as a Source of Intelligence Information

In the previous sections, it has been shown how the PN collected information of various types, on both the activities and the individuals and structured groups involved. In the case of the popular movement and rebel organizations, it was also PN practice to exchange information with other State security forces, principally the EMGE and the EMP Support Services unit.

PN forces were deployed to the urban areas of different parts of the Republic. The Army was concentrated in strategic positions as necessitated by the internal armed conflict. The deployment of the PN throughout the territory was paired with a powerful information network. This involved voluntary and confidential collaborators who provided the counterinsurgency apparatus with information that fed intelligence work.

In addition, the PN collected information through its own operational structure. For example, in June 1973, upon orders from above, the Detective Corps was instructed to investigate an anonymous accusation that claimed

*“...that on weekends, groups of youths led by Jesuit priests go out to raise the awareness of the Quiché natives, asking them questions such as: light-skinned people are not the same as you, who is better and why?”<sup>121</sup>*

The response to the above order reports that the detectives assembled in Santa Cruz del Quiché, trying to make contact with an indigenous leader of the MLN-PID coalition, as this is the group that is supposedly being most affected, since the “Communist youths catechize the natives.”<sup>122</sup>

The report adds that they failed to make the aforementioned contact. Nevertheless, they talked to someone who refused to give his or her name, but who gave them detailed information on each of the individuals who were, this person claimed, catechizing in different municipalities around Quiché. The informant mentioned positions, names and surnames, and some addresses for the alleged “*Communists*,” most of whom were primary and secondary school teachers. Among these, the name that stands out is that of Emeterio Toj Medrano, identified as one of the catechizers and a worker of the Quiché radio station. The

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<sup>121</sup> GT PN 50 S004 06/04/1973, providencia No. 6546; Ref. 843, concerning Jesuits raising awareness among the inhabitants of Quiché, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Luis Enrique Ocaña Corzo, Second Interim Chief of the Detective Corps. [Internal AHPN registration 3404].

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.



document says that “*the Jesuit priests are members of the group of awareness-raisers.*”<sup>123</sup>

Eight years later, on July 4th, 1981, the indigenous leader Emeterio Toj was captured in Quetzaltenango. During the first two days, he was held at the PN First Corps in that city, where he was subjected to his first “*interrogation*”. Following this, he was moved to Huehuetenango, and was subsequently kept constantly on the move between different military barracks in the capital and El Quiché until November 21st of that same year, when he managed to escape from the Justo Rufino Barrios barracks.<sup>124</sup>

Another case illustrating the collaboration of the PN in intelligence work is the confidential report by the Detective Corps dated July 15th, 1978. This reports that unknown men captured Narciso de Jesús Alvizúrez after he had spoken at a demonstration in favor of investigating the murder of Father Hermógenes López, who had been executed on June 30th of that year.

The report says that Mr. Alvizúrez had been at EMP Service Headquarters since Monday, July 10th. On July 15th, he was picked up and “*accompanied*” by members of the Detective Corps in order to travel to the municipality of San José Pinula in order to take part in a supposed meeting with his captors, which did not, however, take place.<sup>125</sup>

The relationship between the PN and the other State security forces worked at a departmental and a municipal level. Prisoners were deposited at police facilities while the Army decided what to do with them. Also, people captured by the PN were transferred to Army offices, as in the case of the three Salvadorean citizens detained by the COE and handed over to the Ambulatory Military Police (PMA).<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> CEH Report, volume VI, pp. 199-206.

<sup>125</sup> GT PN 50 S002 07/15/1978 Ref. 3083, confidential report concerning the processing of a person kidnapped in San José Pinula, no addressee, sent by members of the Detective Corps [Digital reference 3239555. Internal AHPN registration 28548].

<sup>126</sup> 1. GT PN 51-02 S005 05/06/1982. Oficio No 349/Ref. Edav., New developments from the COE, among others, “*DELIVERY OF SALVADOREAN CITIZENS,*” addressed to the Director General of the PN by Edgar Leonel Lorenzo, Deputy Commander of the COE [Digital reference 3125390. Internal AHPN registration 28799].

2. GT PN 51-02 S005 08/02/1982, Of. No 637/Ref/Rrz. [Digital reference 3156950. Internal AHPN registration 28802].

The intelligence agencies of the PN, the Army and the EMP penetrated various State offices with the purpose of taking over control of the state apparatus and, from there, the population in general.

In July of 1983, Air Force Colonel Carlos Eliseo Gálvez Miranda, chief of the Office of Special Services of the Ministry of Public Finances (which reality functioned as an intelligence unit),<sup>127</sup> informed the Director General of the PN of the violation of correspondence in the postal service.

*“I am pleased to write to you for the purposes of transcribing some information obtained from the Institution under your charge regarding the violation of correspondence that is taking place in the Postal Service.*

*According to this information, those who are violating the correspondence are from Presidential Intelligence and following the President’s orders, but they are doing it very poorly, as they know neither how to open nor close the letters.*

*I pass this information on to you in order to bring it to your attention, as a collaboration with the Office in my charge, in order to avoid leaking information that might subsequently cause problems.”<sup>128</sup>*

The data collected corresponding to the period studied shows how intelligence activities in Guatemala have been conducted with absolutely no legal controls, following arbitrary criteria and without accountability for any of the activities to any higher office.

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<sup>127</sup> CEH Report, volume II, p. 101. According to the CEH, this office worked out of the 18th floor of the Minister’s office, performing, among other things, the following functions: customs control, which represented an important source of income for the office itself and other Army counterinsurgency tasks; preparing the budgets of a number of public bodies considered to have strategic value for the Army; administrative recruitment of personnel for state bodies and confidential Army expenses in the area of security.

<sup>128</sup> GT PN 30 01 S004 07/26/1983, oficio No. 201/83.-SEM., notice on the task of intercepting mail, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Carlos Eliseo Gálvez Miranda, Chief of the Office of Special Services of the Ministry of Finance [Digital reference 996864. Internal AHPN registration 31014].

## 4.1 Secret and Confidential Documents

The AHPN has thrown up an abundance of documents that were classified as secret and confidential. Some come from confidential agents and collaborators, invariably addressing themselves to the Directorate General of the PN. Others were sent by various PN structures to Director General, who then passed them on to other structures for coordination with the Army. Handling them was the responsibility of the Tenth Officer of the Secretariat General of the PN. There is also evidence of a less frequent flow of correspondence from Army structures to the PN which, although classified secret or confidential, were for the purposes of instruction and operational coordination.

In addition, there is proof of daily submissions of information from by the Director General of the PN to the Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Army, and the Minister of National Defense. These were sent in the form of “*Special Memoranda*” that might also be classified as confidential or secret. Both were written up by the Chief Clerk of the Secretariat General of the institution.

The contents of the “*special confidential memorandum*” comprised a series of informative notes on events such as the robbery of vehicles, reports of disappearances, the appearance of unidentified bodies, sabotage of infrastructure, detentions, woundings or homicides, robberies, and other events that together create a panoramic vista of the circumstances at the time.

The Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Army was also sent information on the participation of members of the Government security corps, including military personnel, in events as diverse as public disturbances, murders, and other criminal activities. This information was recorded in a “*special secret memorandum*” that would invariable appear after the special confidential memorandum.

Up to now, researchers have found one complete set of documents of this type in the AHPN containing the daily record of correspondence for the year 1985. They are messages stamped by the PN and attached to “oficios” in order to record the date the documents were sent and their movements, with the recipient identified in institutional terms and bearing the signature of the Tenth Officer, who would have been the one who sent it.

At the start of 1983, most confidential information was sent with a copy to the Directorate General of the PN, PMA, military zones, and the EMP General Archive and Support Services. During this period, the information was handled by the Tenth Officer of the Secretariat General, Ricardo Benigno Aguilar, who would in turn pass it on to the office of the Director General. The Chief of Police, depending on considerations involved in the tasks to be carried out, would send orders to various offices of the institution to have them investigated, for information purposes, or to be filed.

By recording and analyzing the stamps, it has been possible to establish the origin of some confidential documents. The stamps on the sets of documents identified up to now are those of the DIT, the Second Corps, the Ministry of the Interior, the Departmental Headquarters of Mazatenango and Suchitepéquez, the Radio Control Corp, the Ministry of National Defense, the EMP, and the PMA.

The documents from the Detective Corps also contain numerous reports classified as confidential. The word “confidential” is usually stamped or typewritten in black ink.

The “*Intelligence Service*” of the Detective Corps was made up of members from various sections of the corps up to at least February 1976, when the Third Chief reported that

*“On instructions from Corps Headquarters, the Chief of the Service and the Chief of the Section for Investigations are informed that all personnel working for the Intelligence Service will now provide their services under the jurisdiction of Detective No. 63 RAUL LORENZANA GONZALEZ, who will take over as Chief in charge of this area until further notice, and that his office will be located in the room previously used for classes.”*<sup>129</sup>

A report submitted in February 1977, by the Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps to the Chief of the Second Section of the EMGE and the Chief of the EMP General Archive and Support Service,<sup>130</sup> provides details relating to the investigation “*with reference to a confidential document from the Instituto*

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<sup>129</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/20/1976, Ref. 320 “B,” Memorandum concerning the organization of the intelligence service, addressed to the Chief of Service and the Investigation Section of the Detective Corps by Miguel A. García Herrarte, Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps [Digital reference 3212681. Internal AHPN registration 28546].

<sup>130</sup> GT PN 50 S023 02/24/1977, oficios 05491/oficio 9o.mgg Ref. 09 and 05492, investigation report on the activism of a student in the INRA, addressed to the Chief of the Second Section of the EMGE and the Chief of the EMP General Archive and Support Services, by the Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps, Miguel A. García Herrarte [Internal AHPN registration 25985].

*Rafael Aqueche*” that had been ordered with the aim of obtaining information about the person and activities of the student, Erwin René Manzo. It reads:

*“In February of 1975, for reasons as yet unknown, he enrolled in this Institute from ‘COMMERCE’... only a few months after enrolling, he commenced to stir up the feelings of the other students, something which reached an extreme following the earthquake of 1976...”*<sup>131</sup>

According to the detective’s report,

*“...in the way in which this individual conducts himself and the vocabulary he uses, he identifies himself with marked communist tendencies (...) The problems caused by this individual provoked the students of the 6th Grade to release a statement to the press and radio on February 16th, 1977 in which it can be read that the aforementioned individual sought to bring the students out on strike, and on that same text they DECLARED HIM PERSONA NON GRATA due to his exploiting or using the Institute as a POLITICAL INSTRUMENT (...) it is definitely the case that this is AN AFFILIATED MEMBER OF THE PARTY (FUR).”*<sup>132</sup>

The report concludes by noting that this student

*“...is serving as President of the Board of the Rafael Aqueche Students’ Association, and on the third floor there is a small room where they meet to discuss decisions. I enclose two photographs of this individual...”*<sup>133</sup>

Another type of confidential report was submitted by detectives deployed in order to implement security plans. These were assigned to surveillance and observation of demonstrations, marches, rallies and university activities, such as the student celebration of the Dolores Strike of 1976.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> GT PN 50 S004 04/07/1976, document No. 8714/oficio 9o. afn., Ref. 526, submission of a report on surveillance of a student event, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by the Second Chief of the Detective Corps, Alfonso García Ortiz [Internal AHPN registration 242].

Researchers found a file relating to the demonstration by miners in Ixtahuacán. The images demonstrate that the agents took photos from the farm fields lining the highway, hiding among the bushes.<sup>135</sup>

On another occasion, during a protest by workers at the Pantaleón plant in November 1977 against mass layoffs, the images that accompany the report seem to show that the protesters did not object to being photographed, which may indicate that the photos are the result of infiltration by some security agent and that these formed the basis of the confidential report.<sup>136</sup>

The AHPN contains clues as to the way in which the DIT proceeded in the construction of their confidential reports. In order to do this, there was a previously designed structure consisting of the following sections: a) the subject, b) the background, c) the information and d) the conclusions. They were written up by the Chief of the Section for Intelligence and Internal Security (SISI).

The DIT received confidential information from other state structures, especially other intelligence agencies. It was also sent documents from anonymous sources or signed by private citizens containing, for example, information about alleged *“drunken thieves and murderers...”* This can be seen in a report signed by Eduviges Escotto and Estanislao Buchin sent to the President of the Governing Military Junta, General José Efraín Ríos Montt. In this document, the informants name 20 people, requesting that *“these corrupt laborers be punished with the full rigor of the law.”*<sup>137</sup>

It should be added that another type of document, which was also identified as confidential, contained information on permanent surveillance and infiltrations into social and rebel organizations. In the case of the documents quoted below, it can be seen that they had information on a variety of people and their circumstances, even when these were outside Guatemala.

<sup>135</sup> GT PN 50 S004 11/21/1977, document No. 36169/oficio 6o.0ln., Ref. 3678 “A,” various surveillance and observation reports dealing with a march by miners from Ixtahuacán, addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps, Miguel A. García Herrarte [Internal AHPN registration 954].

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 05/25/1982, document No. 3554 REF. VSO/megr., submission of a list of accusations by private individuals, addressed to the Director General of the PN by General Horacio Egberto Maldonado Schaad, Minister of the Interior [Internal AHPN registration 31223].

*“We have information regarding the arrival today in Mexico City, from Guatemala, of Mario Solórzano M., Leader of the Guatemalan Social Democratic Party, in order to attend the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties (CPPAM) and who, when interviewed, stated that ‘a relentless wave of repression continues in Guatemala, and the Government and the security forces are to blame for it.’ (...) Chetumal October 12th, 1981.”<sup>138</sup>*

*Information has been received that in Lima, Peru, the Latin American Secretary of the International Movement of Catholic Students (MIEC – MAN), denounced the ‘unjustified detention’ in Guatemala of MARIO AZMITIA, Director in Charge of the Archdiocese Ecclesiastical Bulletin and his children MARIO AND DORA CLEMENCIA; the Secretary revealed that Dora Clemencia is pregnant. (...) Chetumal, October 13th, 1981.”<sup>139</sup>*

## 4.2 Confidential Agent Networks

Among the AHPN documents are anonymous telegrams, letters and communications sent by military officers, police patrols, collaborators and self-styled patriotic Guatemalans containing information on alleged subversive activities. Researchers have also found IDs issued by the PN to civilians who provided information to the police institution.

One COC document titled *“POLICE INTELLIGENCE”* emphasizes the importance of obtaining information provided by private citizens. It states that the possible sources for gathering relevant information are many, mentioning among these objects, individuals, and groups. It adds that *“Valuable data can be obtained from the press and radio services (...) and, especially, from informants.”*<sup>140</sup>

<sup>138</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/12/1981, information No. 78-81, confidential report on the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1923978. Internal AHPN registration 28545].

<sup>139</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/13/1981, information No. 79-81, confidential report concerning complaints of human rights violations in Guatemala made in Peru, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1923979. Internal AHPN registration 28544].

<sup>140</sup> GT PN 51-01 S011 01/16/1980, unnumbered document, essay on police intelligence authored by the COC [Digital reference 3060247. Internal AHPN registration 27826].

The document goes on to say that, in the context of the counterinsurgency, for the identification of rebel individuals and groups, the support of the civilian population is essential, and so *“it is necessary to establish among the populace, whenever feasible, a wide network of informants as soon as possible.”*<sup>141</sup>

In order to gain an idea of how wide this net of confidential informers was spread, we can cite the request sent on July 7th, 1976 by Gustavo Asturias, then secretary of the Central Office for National Typography, to the Chief of the Detective Corps requesting payment for 500 IDs for “confidentials” that had been printed there.<sup>142</sup>

The network of confidentials was widely distributed over a diversity of places, providing coverage for counterinsurgency information tasks. For example, it is known that a group of informants operated inside the Pavón Prison Farm, providing information to the prison warden and the First Chief of the Detective Corps in relation to rebel activities and access to weapons. The confidentials performed these types of activities both inside and outside the prison.

This is the case with prisoner Roberto Larios Martínez, who, in September 1979, provided information about *“subversive activities.”* According to this, there were *“some points to be cleared up which have caused us great difficulty, as (...) they have to be carefully teased out from the very cores of the cells under investigation up to now (...).”* This same document shows that Larios Martínez was linked to two informants, one inside the prison and another on the outside. For the latter, he requested *“provision of an ID for the person collaborating with me from outside this Farm when it is necessary for this person to be protected by a document of this nature.”*<sup>143</sup>

Another case is that of the Pavón prisoner Edwin Oliva Roque, who informed the warden of the Prison Farm, Santiago Girón Perrone, concerning Salvador Menéndez, who he claimed possessed a firearm at a property belonging to him, adding that he was originally from El Salvador.<sup>144</sup>

The so-called confidentials were protected by identification documents granted by the Directorate General or the Sub-Directorate General.<sup>145</sup> They could also be

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> GT PN 51 S002 07/07/1976, oficio No. 406/76, Ref. 1280, reminder for payment for previously delivered material, addressed to the Chief of the PN Detective Corps, by Gustavo Asturias, secretary in charge of the office, Tipografía Nacional [Digital reference 3208640. Internal AHPN registration 28542].

<sup>143</sup> GT PN 50 S002 09/03/1979, Ref. 4126, accusation of potential “subversive” activities addressed to the Director of the Pavón Prison Farm, Major Santiago Girón Perrone, with copy to the Detective Corps by Roberto Larios Martínez [Digital reference 3262554. Internal AHPN registration 28541].

<sup>144</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/08/1980, complaints about activities inside the detention center addressed to the Director of the Pavón Prison Farm, Major Santiago Girón Perrone by Edwin Oliva Roque [Internal AHPN registration 31231].



issued by the first, second and third chiefs of the Detective Corps. These IDs granted a certain privileged status and access to areas that would otherwise be inaccessible.

In the documentation of the criminal investigation structures, there is a set of special file cards for registration of individuals acting as confidential agents of the Detective Corps between 1972 and 1976. These were used to record the following information: names and surnames, home address, municipal identity number, who had recommended them, and their personal record, including the expiry date of the ID. Below is one of these file cards showing a confidential agent recommended by Police Colonel Juan Antonio Lima López, Section Chief of Command Six in 1978.

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<sup>145</sup> GT PN 31 DSC 01/14/971-10/29/1975, book on "*Collaborators and Confidentials, Office of the Deputy Director General of the National Police,*" Book number 640 [Digital reference 3748659. Internal AHPN registration 32074].

### Photograph III.7

Confidential agent registration file  
1976

APELLIDOS DIÁZ CLAVERIA  
 NOMBRES CARLOS HIMBERTO  
 DIRECCION Escuintla Av. Centro America.-  
Depto. de Guatemala, antiguo Dr. Lima.-  
 CEDULA DE VECINDAD No. E-554337.-  
 RECOMENDADO POR Juan Antonio Lima López.-

**ANTECEDENTES** 8/11/76 Se le extendió credencial de Agente confidencial  
firmada por el Sr. Sr. Jefe de la Institución.-----  
El 23/6/78. le fué recoigida credencial extendida por el señor Sr. Jefe del  
8/11/78. por elementos de la Guardia de Hacienda por haber sido consignado  
al Juzgado de Paz de Escuintla. dicha credencial fué enviada por el Capitan  
RÁMON GIRÓN BARRIOS.-

COORDINADORA  
 C. 15419-71/076  
 TIP. NACIONAL-GUATEMALA

Source: GT PN 50 DSC [Internal AHPN registration 26487]

Immediately following this is the ID for the same person:

**Photograph III.8**

Front cover of a confidential agent ID  
1976



Source: GT PN 50 DSC [Internal AHPN registration 26488]

### Photograph III.9

Inside of a confidential agent ID  
1976



Source: GT PN 50 DSC [Internal AHPN registration 26488]

One of the confidential agents' ID cards discovered in the AHPN, states the obligations they were under in 1977:

Obligations of the PMA confidential agent:

1. *Submit to the PMA information on anything implying a transgression of the law.*
2. *Stay in constant communication with the PMA Intelligence Section, by any means.*
3. *Collaborate closely with PMA detachments in your jurisdiction when circumstances require.*

4. *Report to the PMA command by the fastest possible means when requested, or should the Government decree of a State of Siege, Emergency, or Public Calamity.*
5. *In the event of any misuse of this ID card, the Command may attribute responsibility according to the merits of the case.*
6. *The Command reserves the right to take back ID cards immediately and without notice. Guatemala, 1977.*<sup>146</sup>

Researchers have not been able to find information to pinpoint the moment or exact date when the Detective Corps began to use these IDs. Nevertheless, according to the information available so far, ID cards were issued between 1974 and 1982. Those carrying them were people recommended by public officials and individuals close to or trusted by police chiefs and officers.

However, the AHPN records also contain instruction material used for training agents in the recruitment of informants. These declare recruitment to be one of the most difficult and delicate of tasks. They warn against the different types of characters agents might encounter, and the possible consequences of any mistake. Apparently, a clearly targeted profile had been defined for the recruitment of informants.<sup>147</sup>

The manual on “*Recruitment of Informants*” produced by the Second Section of the EMGE and found among the documents of the AHPN says that, once informants have been identified, they must go through a phase known as “*cultivation and development*,” which was to last a certain length of time before achieving the required level of trust. This provided an opportunity to accept or reject informants. Following this, there was a “*test*” which might last weeks or sometimes even months. This began with simple missions that gradually increased in difficulty. The test involved situations already known to the secret service that could be used to assess the candidate’s loyalty.

The same manual says that the means of payment of informants depended on whether it was for a “*penetration informant*” or an “*ordinary informant*.”

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<sup>146</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 10/28/1978, identification of an individual who provided services to the PMA as a confidential, issued by the S-2 of the PMA [Digital reference 1922706. Internal AHPN registration 29662].

<sup>147</sup> GT PN 51-01 S011 s/f, document from the Second Section of the EMGE, Intelligence School, recruitment and payment of informants [Digital reference 3060260. Internal AHPN registration 28540].

Over time, the type of ID issued to confidentials by the PN went through a number of changes. During one period the holder was identified as a “*special agent*.” By 1979, there are ID cards that say “*agent collaborator*,” and IDs for “special inspector” have also been found, though it has not been possible to clarify the nature of the functions assigned to the holder.

All these cards were issued for a limited time, although not necessarily for a limited area. The expiry date of the ID varied and depended on the decision of the chief who authorized it. The most frequently repeated periods are three and six months.

According to the recruitment manual, the amount paid to informants depended on the credibility and reliability of the information. Also considered were basic factors such as “*promptness, risk, and effort*.” The quantity of the data provided was less important.

In confidential information document No. 2-1312-81 of December 10th, 1981, sent by the EMGE, it is established that in the PN:

*“...there are various positions for Confidential Agents with a monthly salary of Q400.00 and that those persons proposed must accept that this is the amount they earn, but they only receive Q200.00, since the remaining Q200.00 goes to a chief high in the Institution who has not been identified.”*<sup>148</sup>

Payment could be made in either local or foreign currency. Payment could be received “*through indirect aid*” such as, for example, “*a larger house or a promotion at work*.” In the case of informants of “*few means*,” payment could be made “*in the form of merchandise*.” The giving of “presents” to informants who might be offended if they were offered payment in cash was also permitted.<sup>149</sup>

At present in the AHPN, as part of the information system, there is an auxiliary database containing records of people who acted as confidential agents (Auxiliary Base number 78).

<sup>148</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 12/10/1981, confidential information, No. 2-1312-81 concerning payment of confidential agents no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1923781. Internal AHPN registration 28539].

<sup>149</sup> GT PN 51-01 S011 s/f, document from the Second Section of the EMGE, Intelligence School, recruitment and payment of informants [Digital reference 3060260. Internal AHPN registration 28540].

### 4.3 The Lists: Systematized Information

Among the files in the AHPN are lists of people accused of belonging to “*the subversion*” and “*clandestine factions*.” Virtually all these were produced by other State security forces and afterwards sent to the PN. Most of them date from the end of 1960 and the beginning of 1970. Although they do not fall into the period under investigation, their importance requires us to deal briefly with their existence, since the period 1975-1985 saw the murder or disappearance of people who appeared on these lists.

The lists from the end of 1960 were made by Military Officers, paramilitary groups, the Judicial Police and Regional Telecommunications Center (CRT), better known as “*The Regional*.”

Among the AHPN documents, a file was found dated April 6th, 1970 with the handwritten title: “*Regional Telecommunications Center: Recorded on file as belonging to leftist factions*.”<sup>150</sup>

Forming part of this file are:

- “*List of persons recorded on file as belonging to leftist factions*” (198 names appear together with their respective addresses).
- “*List of people known as communists throughout the country who have been members of the Guatemalan Workers’ Party, P.G.T.*” (25 names appear together with their respective addresses).
- List containing the names of six people establishing their most important movements within the city of Guatemala.
- One loose sheet bears the title “*extreme right*” and lists fourteen names, below which is “*extreme left*” and the names of 32 people, among them members of the PGT and officials from the revolutionary governments of 1944-1954.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> GT PN 50 S040 04/06/1970, ref. 09, “*List of People on file as belonging to leftist factions*,” it includes a short list of people headed “*EXTREME RIGHT*,” filed by the then-Judicial Police in the Regional Telecommunications Center folder [Internal AHPN registration 17578].

<sup>151</sup> GT PN 50 S040 04/06/1970, ref. 09., “*List of people known as communists throughout the country who have been members of the Guatemalan Workers’ Party - P.G.T.*” [Internal AHPN registration 12588].

Researchers have also found other lists, such as the document from the Judicial Police titled “*Names of Guerrillas Active in Río Hondo.*” This was made during the 1960s and includes 196 names of people accused of being “*guerrilla,*” “*link,*” or “*Communist*” from the villages and neighborhoods of Río Hondo, Gualán, Zacapa, and Chiquimula, with an abundance of detail regarding the activities of each person.<sup>152</sup>

During the period 1975-1985, the lists continued to be used, but less so. This was probably due to the fact that intelligence work was centralized by the high command of the armed forces. From these years, lists have been found in a file containing confidential documents from the Directorate General of the PN produced in response to the protests against the urban transport fare hike of October 1978.

Based on an analysis of these documents, we can infer that the information compiled, mainly by the Detective Corps, was used to create lists of people and identify their respective links with organizations participating in the mobilizations.

The aforementioned file contains a sheet of letterhead from the Directorate General of the PN, without a date or any other means of identification, on which are written the names of 45 people it associates with organizations in the popular, student, and union movements.<sup>153</sup>

Subsequently, some of the names on this list came to form part of the 36 “*sentenced to death*” in bulletin number 3 of the Secret Anticommunist Army (ESA) dated October 18th, 1978, two days before the murder of the student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León. The only name that appears underlined in red ink in that bulletin is precisely that of the student, Castañeda de León.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> GT PN 30-01 S016 undated list of “Names of guerrillas active in Río Hondo,” by the Judicial Police, the title Judicial Police only appeared as a letterhead between 1968 and 1970, no specific addressee or sender [Internal AHPN registration 15038].

<sup>153</sup> GT PN 30 S002 Presumably 09/1978, list of presumed members of the opposition, no addressee or sender [Digital reference 1923416. Internal AHPN registration 11902].

<sup>154</sup> GT PN 30-01 S004 10/18/1978, Bulletin No. 3 of the Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA) [Digital reference 806896. Internal AHPN registration 28538].



The lists apparently constituted a mechanism for organizing the information of those individuals identified as presumed members of social, political, and insurgent organizations and labor groups, their families, as well as individuals linked to far-right groups. The identification of members of insurgent organizations and those who associated with the extreme right was a political interpretation that framed the conflict as one between extremist political forces.

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# CHAPTER IV

## INVESTIGATION FILES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents six investigation files comprising information found in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN). They expose human rights violations committed in specific events that may have involved, either directly or indirectly, the institution of the police.

In the archival and research procedures carried out, researchers have located and identified different records which, when cross referenced, produce information of great relevance and interest for this archival investigation. The result of the integration of these documents, in conjunction with other external studies and investigations, has been the creation of a set of electronic files. The original documents remain physically in the place where they belong in archival terms, keeping to the original principles respecting their order and source.

In order to carry out this process, an “*information search strategy*” has been developed based on technical and scientific criteria for social and archival research which is explained in more detail further on.

There is a structure designed to systematize information submitted by researchers and archivists working with the documents in order to build files and cases for investigation. On the basis of these processes and the experience acquired, the following definitions were conceived:

- **1.1 Investigation File:**<sup>1</sup> a collection of digital images of various documents dealing with the same matter or person. They are always of an individual nature. The documents may come from different collections of documents.

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<sup>1</sup> Analysis unit created by the AHPN.

- **1.2 Investigation Case:**<sup>2</sup> a collection of electronic research files containing shared information. Each case can be “organized according to events, people, institutions, etc. It is a more global means of grouping, always thematic and collective. Investigation cases can consist of records that come from a number of collections.

Currently, there are 109 cases and 829 files of this type on record,<sup>3</sup> which have been grouped using the aforementioned processes and according to requests received from the Information Access Unit. The investigation cases and files are constantly added to, reviewed and updated. There is an ongoing process of incorporation of new relevant documents arriving from the archives.

The method of systematizing the information obtained from the AHPN records provides an opportunity to confirm, back up, complement and enrich knowledge of events already gained from other non-State testimony or documents alongside official documents from the PN in its capacity as a State security institution.

## 2. Search Strategy

In order to reconstruct the events recounted in this Chapter, an *information search strategy* was applied,<sup>4</sup> which was conceived and documented in the AHPN. In order to implement this strategy, various criteria and procedures have been established:

- In the definition and conceptualization of the investigation cases and files, initially it was necessary to determine the existence of evidence or the presumption that a human rights violation had taken place. It was alodetermined that these events exemplify PN mechanisms or patterns of behavior. The process starts with the identification of substantial information that makes it possible to contextualize the case within a specific period and in a particular place.

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<sup>2</sup> Analysis unit created by the AHPN.

<sup>3</sup> Detail provided by the AHPN data bank on 07/06/2010.

<sup>4</sup> The information search strategy was conceived in terms of archival research processes; it has been documented in the protocol for the systematization of files and cases, a product of accumulated experience and guidance received from the archival expert Dr. Trudy Peterson.

Other guiding factors during this initial process have been, on the one hand, the existence of relevant information in outside sources and, on the other, the ability of archival research to elucidate the truth and motives behind criminal proceedings.

- The search strategy is based on the establishment of chronological blocks corresponding to **before, during, and after the fact**. This enables the location of information in the archives, sub-archives and series of documents along with the identification of the police agencies which, according to their function, territorial coverage or operational status may have been involved in the case.

To facilitate this process, the AHPN team has developed descriptive instruments that guide the researcher towards the precise location of documents of interest, such as classification tables, archival descriptions, inventories and catalogs.

This strategy must be renewed each time usefulness of consulting the series reaches its limit.

- When applying the search strategy, it is necessary to determine other specific criteria such as:
  - The overall political context in which the events took place.
  - Names and personal details, dates on which the events occurred, family background and history, chronology of the events.
  - Circumstances leading up to the event.
  - People and organizations involved.
  - Security structures mentioned, related, involved.
  - Chain of command.
  - Information on related events.
  - Type of crime imputed to the victims.
  - Type of vehicles and license plates.
  - Lawyers in the cases, aggression and attacks against them.
  - Legal authorities in charge of the cases, aggression and attacks against them.
  - Information on the cases from various reports and documents from international organizations.
  - Interviews with relatives

- The type of event: forced disappearance,<sup>5</sup> unlawful execution, illegal detention, torture, firing squad, rape, intimidation, etc.
  - Starting points for the kinds of documents consulted

The AHPN team has identified different types of documents produced by various PN agencies. Some of these facilitate an initial approach to archival research due to the information they contain. Below is a list of these document types, classified by chronological blocks, with the proviso that these are not the only method and there are many other options for consultation.

These document types are only a guideline. When consulting or working with one of them, it is possible to come across links to one or more additional documents.

<b>Before the fact</b>	<b>During the fact</b>	<b>After the Fact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Files from the master file record of the Department of Criminal Investigation and files from the Identification Bureau.</li> <li>-Lists containing information from a variety of sources, victims of different kinds of violations.</li> <li>-Documents relating to control of the populace.</li> <li>-Memorandum for the information of the Head of State,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Confidential and secret documents.</li> <li>-Agent service books, transfers, awards to personnel.</li> <li>-Investigation reports, surveillance.</li> <li>-News dispatches</li> <li>-Reports on special commissions.</li> <li>-Operational, security, traffic and other types of plans.</li> <li>-Police books, documents containing reports of dispatch of fuel to vehicle that may coincide with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Files containing information on “political” crimes, control of drivers’ licenses, municipal ID files, postmortem files from the Identification Bureau.</li> <li>-Documents on writs of habeas corpus and their results, negative or positive.</li> <li>-Interrogations, “voluntary declarations”.</li> <li>-Complaints</li> <li>-Release orders</li> <li>-Apprehension orders</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> Legal parameters to take into account regarding forced disappearances. 1. Order, authorization, support from the authorities, 2. Denial of any kind of freedom, 3. Political motives, 4. Refusal to reveal whereabouts, 5. Participation or non-participation of the security forces, 6. Refusal to acknowledge destination or detention. 7. Acquiescence. 8. Despite no political motive being involved. 9. Agents of the State. 10. Period in Office 11. Arbitrarily, abuse, excessive use of force. 12. Gang members also commit crimes of forced disappearance.

<b>Before the fact</b>	<b>During the fact</b>	<b>After the Fact</b>
Commander in Chief of the Army, and Minister for National Defense -List created by the death squads, among others. -Work Reports.	registration numbers identified in the case. -Lists of codes in force at the time of the events. -General orders from the corps and the Directorate General -Reports on images. -Detainee books.	-Requests from diverse national or international bodies in relation to the case. Personnel Lists

The investigation files presented in this Chapter are some of those which, by being identified and related with other documents, have made it possible to demonstrate possible human rights violations during specific events. These are cases which may have involved the National Police during the years 1975 to 1985.

It should be noted that these files are characterized by a series of elements that were used to identify them in the process of constructing this Report. Among these are:

- The systems of control and monitoring that the security forces used with the political leaders of the opposition to the regime.
- The impunity and arbitrariness that prevailed among the authorities responsible for investigating crimes, clarifying events and applying justice.
- The high degree of subordination of the PN to the requirements and orders issuing from the Army and the concealment activities of both institutions.

- The excesses committed by the security forces during the implementation of counterinsurgency policies and activities.
- Omission and acquiescence by the authorities in relation to crimes and human rights violations, etc.

The aim of this Chapter is to offer researchers and the general public a guide to searching, identification, analysis, and the construction of a specific file based on archival research carried out in the AHPN. The ability to do so translates into a significant contribution to cases proceeding through the legal system, in the reconstruction and clarification of the truth, and in strengthening of historical memory.

### 3. ILLUSTRATIVE CASES

#### 3.1 MARÍA ÁNGELA AYALA SARAVIA JUNE 13th, 1983

##### 1. Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

The AHPN file in this case contains 37 documents. The most relevant types of documents are:

- File card from the Detective Corps on María Ángela Ayala opened in August 1970 in the records of what was then called the Judicial Police. In addition, records made by the Detective Corps in 1977. Between July and August 1983, the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT) recorded, in five of these files, writs of habeas corpus entered in favor of the victim. It includes two files on Edgardo Daniel Rangel Bauer, one of those allegedly involved in the events.
- Confidential memoranda sent by the Director General of the PN to the President of the Republic, generally including new developments in the capital. These report six writs of habeas corpus in favor of the victim at different police headquarters during the month of July 1983.
- A confidential “oficio” in which the Second Chief of the Police Joint Operations Center (COCP) informed the Director General of the document that the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) left in the Archbishop’s Palace proposing an exchange of the sister of General Efraín Ríos Montt for fifteen political prisoners from that organization.



- Telegrams and documents issuing successive writs of habeas corpus in favor of María Ángela Ayala Saravia.
- A memorial sent by the mother of the victim Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala, to the Minister of the Interior in 1986. In it, she enters a complaint about the disappearance of her daughter and the subsequent extortion activities carried out by men who identified themselves as members of the Judicial Police. She attaches documentation in support of her complaint (a letter from María Ángela to her mother, a copy of the ID of one of those allegedly involved, and checks filled out by the victim during her detention).
- “Providencias” recording PN internal procedures with regard to the aforementioned complaint.

## 2. Background

At the start of the 1980s Guatemala went through a period of great political and social unrest. On March 23rd, 1982, following a coup d'état and the appointment of a governing triumvirate headed by General Efraín Ríos Montt, alongside General Horacio Maldonado Schaad and Colonel Francisco Gordillo, a group of Army officers took over State. One of their main acts after the assuming control of the Government was the derogation of the Political Constitution in order to replace it with the Fundamental Statute of Government.<sup>1</sup>

On June 9th of that same year, General Ríos Montt dissolved the triumvirate and proclaimed himself President of the Republic. A series reforms to the existing judicial framework were introduced and new laws passed. The counterinsurgency strategy continued to be implemented in both rural and urban zones with the same or greater intensity as before.

On February 24th, 1983, a final extension was declared to the state of siege that had been decreed by the government of General Efraín Ríos Montt on June 1st, 1982 and which came to an end on March 23rd, 1983. Following the first anniversary of the coup, the Government implemented a series of legal measures that included the suspension of the state of siege, the declaration on June 29th,

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<sup>1</sup> Decree 24-82, Fundamental Statute of Government

<sup>2</sup> Law Decree 71-83 06/29/1983, Declaration of a State of Alarm over the entire national territory.

<sup>3</sup> Law Decree 27-83 06/29/1983, New amnesty for political crimes and connected common crimes.

1983 of a state of alarm throughout the whole country,<sup>2</sup> and the regulation of a “*new amnesty for political and related common crimes.*”<sup>3</sup>

This period also saw the establishment of the Courts of Special Jurisdiction;<sup>4</sup> according to the CEH Report, “*For political reasons, some detainees were secretly tried by these, but the majority were ‘disappeared.’*”<sup>5</sup> It adds that by August 1983, there was already a list of 37 missing persons, all members of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala.<sup>6</sup> On August 8 of that year, General Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores, Minister of Defense in the government of Ríos Montt, carried out a new military coup and took over as Head of State.

This was the political context in which María Ángela Ayala Saravia lived as a primary school teacher and social worker with a degree from the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. She worked for the Association for Family Well Being - APROFAM - and gave classes at the USAC School of Social Work. She was active in the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR).<sup>7</sup>

According to three files from the archive of Detective Corps in 1977 and 1980, María Ángela Ayala Saravia had made a report to the National Police regarding the loss of her personal documents and also a mugging she had suffered.<sup>8</sup> On June 13th, 1983, she was captured in the area where she worked, and to this day her whereabouts are unknown.

### 3. Description of the Events

Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala and mother of María Ángela, describes the capture of her daughter in a document sent in 1986 to the Minister of the Interior, which was found in the AHPN. In it she states:

<sup>4</sup> Law Decree 46-82, Law of Courts of Special Jurisdiction. In CEH Report, volume VI, p. 207, quote number 653: The Courts of Special Jurisdiction were instituted by the government of Ríos Montt on July 1st, 1982. The faces of the judges were hidden and their identities unknown; they could be either civilian or military and were appointed by the Head of State. They were responsible for judging crimes of a political or related nature.

<sup>5</sup> CEH Report volume VI, p. 207.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

<sup>8</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, records for 08/13/1970.olv., No. 380 of the Directorate General folder: *it states that she was interviewed at her new residence* [Internal AHPN registration 4776]. GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, records for 01/28/1977.mel., No. 1289 from the Complaints file: *It gives notification of some mislaid documents* [Internal AHPN registration 4102].

GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, records for 08/25/1977.mel., No. 13456 from the Complaints file: *It gives notification of some mislaid documents* [Digital reference 383076. Internal AHPN registration 4794].

*“On June 13th, 1983, at midday, my daughter was abducted with extreme force and inhuman treatment by heavily armed men in plain clothes...”*<sup>9</sup>

The CEH report cited previously adds that she was pushed into a 4x4 vehicle at the intersection of 9th Street and 3rd Avenue, zone 1.<sup>10</sup>

Some days after the capture, procedures were begun to discover her whereabouts. A series of motions for habeas corpus were presented and granted in favor of the victim without any positive result or indication of her whereabouts.

According to the AHPN file, these motions for habeas corpus were brought between July 4th and August 13th of 1983. They are recorded in five files from the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT). According to the documents, information regarding these procedures was submitted to, among others, the Seventh Criminal Court of First Instance, the Secretary General of the PN, and the Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice<sup>11</sup> as follows:

*“... is hereby informed that said person has been neither detained nor bound over by members of this Department”*<sup>12</sup>, or *“It is hereby reported that ...has been neither detained nor captured by members of said Department,”*<sup>13</sup> or *“...on reviewing the corresponding files, no record of any kind appears, meaning she is not sought by members of this Office.”*<sup>14</sup>

The AHPN contains other records that also contain information on the habeas corpus motions brought on behalf of María Ángela Ayala Saravia. Among these are three confidential memoranda from the Directorate General of the PN addressed to the President of the Republic which contain daily reports on the most important new developments. One of these says that the Third Judge of the Court of First Instance requested information on María Ángela from the Narcotics Section and the First and Second Corps. In another document, the Judges of the Courts of First Instance of Sololá and Antigua Guatemala presented writs of

<sup>9</sup> GT PN 30-01 S004 02/27/1986, memorandum No. G 8204021 and Registration No. 552518, sent to the Minister of the Interior by Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala [Internal AHPN registration 4786].

<sup>10</sup> CEH Report, volume VI, p. 210.

<sup>11</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, with records from between 07/04/1983 and 08/13/1983 [Digital reference 383073, 383071, 383072, 383166, 383074. Internal AHPN registration 4774, 4778, 4775, 4779, 2939].

<sup>12</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, records for 07/12/1983.ra., No. 106 and 07/13/1983.ra. No. 104, both records are in the *Habeas Corpus* file [Digital reference 383071. Internal AHPN registration 4778].

<sup>13</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, records for 07/04/1983.eos., No. 99, Writs of Habeas Corpus [Digital reference 383073. Internal AHPN registration 4774].

<sup>14</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, María Ángela Ayala Saravia, records for 08/13/1983.rmo., No. 128, *Writs of Habeas Corpus* [Digital reference 383074. Internal AHPN registration 2939].

habeas corpus at the departmental headquarters there.<sup>15</sup> Using these procedures it is possible to identify a series of documents responding negatively to these writs, such as one issued by the DIT.<sup>16</sup>

Other AHPN documents dated between July 13th and 20th, 1983, record further legal attempts at effecting the reappearance of María Ángela Ayala Saravia. One example is a document sent by the PN<sup>17</sup> to the lawyer José Arturo Moreira García, secretary of the Tenth Tribunal of the Court of Appeals, stating that the victim had not been captured by members of the police.<sup>18</sup> Two documents were sent by the Director General of the PN, one to the Seventh Tribunal of the Court of Appeals and another to the Fourth Tribunal,<sup>19</sup> in response to requests from those tribunals for hearings in relation to writs of habeas corpus on behalf of the victim. The response to both these was:

*“With regard to this matter, I regret to inform you that it is not possible for me to comply with said order as the person in question is not being detained at any of the Corps of the institution in my charge and furthermore is not being sought for any reason whatsoever.”*<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> GT PN 30-01 S007 07/05/1983 SG/of.noc.ppr.-, Confidential memorandum for the information of the President of the Republic, new developments in the capital, p. 1 [Internal AHPN registration 4781].

GT PN 30-01 S007 07/06/1983 SG/of.noc.ppr.-, *Confidential memorandum for the information of the President of the Republic, new developments in the departments*, p. 2 [Internal AHPN registration 31451].

GT PN 30-01 S007 07/13/1983 SG/of.noc.ppr.-, Confidential memorandum for the information of the President of the Republic, new developments in the capital, p. 1 [Internal AHPN registration 4782].

<sup>16</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 07/20/1983, providencia with writ of habeas corpus drawn up by the Chief of the archive of the Department of Technical Investigation of the PN, for Services Headquarters [Internal AHPN registration 4784].

<sup>17</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 07/13/1983, oficio No. 3358 Ref.of.5º.jfg., addressed to José Arturo Moreira García, Attorney-at-Law, secretary of the tenth Court of Appeals. It is not known which section of the PN issued this oficio [Internal AHPN registration 14189].

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 07/20/1983, oficio No. 3484, of.Noct.SG/Trp., addressed to the Secretary of the Fourth Court of the Court of Appeals of the Supreme Court of Justice, the reference indicates that it was sent from the Secretariat General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 14190].

<sup>20</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 07/20/1983, oficio No. 3487, Ref.of.Noct.Rsf.-, addressed to María Graciela Cortes de Arrivillaga, Attorney-at-Law, secretary of the Third Court of the Court of Appeals by Artillery Colonel Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, Director General of the National Police [Internal AHPN registration 14191].

On July 4th, 1983, the Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice, Mario Fuentes Destarac, sent a telegram to all the Chiefs of the PN stating:

*“... (I) ON THE BASIS OF THE REQUEST PRESENTED TODAY NOTIFY THE 3RD JUDGE OF THE CRIMINAL COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE OF THIS DEPARTMENT IN ORDER THAT HE APPEAR AT THE DETENTION CENTERS OF THE CAPITAL CITY IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH WHETHER MARIA ANGELA AYALA SARAVIA IS BEING DETAINED IN ONE OF THESE PLACES; AS THE CASE MAY BE, FOR WHAT ACT, THE AUTHORITY EFFECTING THE DETENTION, WHETHER SHE HAS BEEN CHARGED, INDICATING THE COURT AND ESPECIALLY HER PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CONDITION, HEARING HER IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER HER CASE IS INCLUDED IN THOSE PROVIDED FOR IN SECTION 16 OF ARTICLE 23 OF THE FUNDAMENTAL STATUTE OF GOVERNMENT; II) NOTIFY LIKEWISE THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, IN ORDER THAT HE REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THIS CHAMBER IF THIS PERSON WAS DETAINED BY OFFICERS UNDER HIS COMMAND AND IF REMANDED, BEFORE WHICH COURT, FOR WHAT CRIME AND THE DATE; III) A REPORT IS TO BE REQUESTED FROM THE MANAGER OF THE BANCO INDUSTRIAL FOR THE PURPOSE OF INDICATING WHETHER MRS. MARIA ANGELA SARAVIA HAS A SAFETY DEPOSIT AT SAID PLACE, WHETHER THIS WAS OPENED WITH THE CONSENT OF THE ACCOUNT HOLDER AND THE NAME OF THE NOTARY WHO AUTHORIZED HER SIGNATURE AND IV) CIRCULATE THIS TELEGRAM TO ALL NATIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENTAL CHIEFS IN ORDER THAT THEY INDICATE WHETHER ANY OFFICER UNDER THEIR COMMAND DETAINED THE PERSON IN QUESTION, ARTICLE CITED AND 29, PARAGRAPHS 16 AND 17, FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE LAW ON THE JUDICIARY... ”*<sup>21</sup>

Two months after the event, on August 30th, 1983, Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala, sent an urgent telegram to the Minister of the Interior stating as follows:

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<sup>21</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 07/04/1983, telegram 23 No. 65 JAV 707 DH 18 1930, addressed to the Chiefs of the National Police by Mario Fuentes Destarac, Attorney-at-Law, Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice [Internal AHPN registration 31552].

*"MY DAUGHTER THE SOCIAL WORKER MARIA ÁNGELA AYALA SARAVIA, DISAPPEARED ON JUNE THIRTEENTH OF THIS YEAR WHILE ON HER WAY HOME FROM WORK AT THE INSTITUTION KNOWN AS 'APROFAM,' SINCE THAT DATE WE HAVE NO IDEA OF HER WHEREABOUTS, WHICH IS WHY I AM REQUESTING THAT BY ALL APPROPRIATE MEANS YOU INVESTIGATE HER WHEREABOUTS. AT THE TIME I REPORTED THIS TO NATIONAL POLICE."*<sup>22</sup>

The follow-up to this latter communication can be found recorded in two documents. On September 1st, 1983, Vice Minister Haroldo Cabrera Enríquez sent an "oficio" to the Director General of the PN, attaching the telegram above and remarking: *"in order to add it to the records sent with oficio number 3106 of last August 19, number 2, and proceed with the investigation of the case."* In the other document, the Secretary General of the PN sent the Chief of the DIT information on this telegram and also instructing him to *"add it to the record sent as part of "providencia" number 230... (final two digits unreadable) of last August 22nd, proceed with investigation and report promptly to this Office."*<sup>23</sup>

So far, the AHPN has not yielded any other kind of documentation containing information on the actions carried out by the PN in following up on the case, much less any results the investigation may have had.

Even three years after the event, María Ángela's mother continued to denounce the disappearance of her daughter and demand that the authorities carry out the investigation necessary to establish her daughter's whereabouts. Thus in February 1986, she once more sent a request to the Minister of the Interior for this purpose.

#### **4. Analysis of the Case**

The section above, in addition to providing details of the victim's capture, demonstrates above all the procedures initiated by María Ángela Ayala Saravia's mother. Mrs. Saravia, the widow of Ayala, called for the authorities to undertake the inquiries necessary to determine the circumstances of her daughter's capture and its consequences.

<sup>22</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 08/30/1983, telegram 2HP 64/Q.3.84 10H00 1120 URGENT, addressed to the Minister of the Interior by Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala [Internal AHPN registration 4802].

<sup>23</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 09/01/1983, oficio No. 03312 REF.VSO/aetq., addressed to the Director General of the PN Artillery Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz by the Vice Minister for the Interior, Haroldo Cabrera Enríquez, Attorney-at-Law [Internal AHPN registration 4801].

GT PN 50 DSC 09/05/1983, providencia No. 24251/of.10°.SG.rba, sent to the chief of the Department of Investigation by the Secretary General of the PN and the Chief Clerk of the Secretariat General, stamped # 34602, handwritten *Section 6* and *Providencias 1983* [Internal AHPN registration 4800].

The documents reveal that the investigative activities of the institution were scarce ineffective, despite the fact that the family provided the police with important details. The vacuous inquiries carried out by the PN are documented in a file in the Department of Criminal Investigation (DIC) and, without exception, they limited themselves to responding in writing to the writs of habeas corpus for the victim issued by the various courts.<sup>24</sup> The response was negative in all cases.

On February 27th of that year, María Ángela's mother sent a request to the Minister of the Interior.<sup>25</sup> In this, in addition to providing the date, time and place of her daughter's capture, she includes valuable information regarding the supposed members of the *Judicial Police*<sup>26</sup> who, six days after her daughter's disappearance, came to her house to extort money from her.

*"...arriving at my house on Sunday the 19th day of the same month, someone called Joaquin Lima, who brought me a letter from my daughter and 3 checks..."*

This handwritten letter forms part of the DIT case file; it was supposedly written by María Ángela to her mother four days after her capture. Among other things, it says:

*"You know what the bosses are like, and since I had to do a last minute job, it's been pretty difficult for me to call you on the phone... what I beg of you more than anything is that you do not stop taking your medicine... If anyone calls for me, tell them I'm fine, that I'm on a special job for APROFRAM."*<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Seventh Court of First Criminal Instance, Third Judge of First Criminal Instance, Judge of First Criminal Instance of Sololá, Judge of the First Criminal Instance of Antigua, Fourth Court of the Court of Appeals.

<sup>25</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 02/27/1986, request No. G 8204021 and Registration No. 552518, sent to the Minister of the Interior by Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala [Internal AHPN registration 4786].

<sup>26</sup> By 1983, the investigative structure of the National Police was formally known as the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT) and not the Judicial Police, as Mrs. Francisca Saravia indicated in the request. However, during those years, the image of the Judicial Police was strongly fixed for the Guatemalan populace, leading the citizens to identify any member of the investigative structure of the PN as a "judicial," even though that name for the structure had been changed. In the "Criminal Investigation" section of Chapter I of this report, this topic is dealt with more fully.

<sup>27</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 06/17/1983, handwritten letter, supposedly from María Ángela Ayala to her mother [Internal AHPN registration 4787].

In the letter, she also tells Mrs. Saravia that one of the checks was to pay the rent and the other two were for expenses.

The request sent by María Ángela's mother to the Minister of the Interior provided clues that might have given direction to the PN's investigative work. In addition to the name Joaquín Lima, there are the names of Edgardo Rangel Bauer and the lawyer Isidro Valdez Herrera, supposedly agents of the Institution.<sup>28</sup>

The searches carried out in the AHPN to date have turned up no documents linking these three men with the PN. The only thing to come to light is the Detective Corps file on Edgardo Daniel Rangel Bauer, which records a complaint he made on June 30th, 1980, stating that, while walking between 18th Street and 15th Avenue, zone 1, he was attacked by two individuals who snatched a 14-carat gold chain worth two hundred quetzals and one 18-carat gold cross with 16 diamonds worth three thousand five hundred quetzals. Rangel Bauer's signature appears on the complaint and is similar to that used to endorse one of the checks withdrawing money from the account of María Ángela Ayala Saravia, possibly confirming the involvement of same person in both cases.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, Mrs. Saravia claimed that the safety deposit box her daughter was renting at the Banco Industrial had been opened and emptied of all its contents.

*“...Some days later (Wednesday the 22nd) the same man (Joaquin Lima) turned up at the Banco Industrial ‘Financial Center’ in zone 4 with a document from the lawyer, Isidro Valdez Herrera which by means of document number fifty four authorized the opening of my daughter’s safety deposit, which was rented from said bank, taking everything it contained. Other individuals claiming to be members of the Judicial Police cashed checks at the Banco Industrial in the name of Edgardo Rangel Bauer, evidenced here by a photocopy of the same...”<sup>30</sup>*

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<sup>28</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 02/27/1986, request No. G 8204021 and Registration No. 552518, sent to the Minister of the Interior by Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala [Internal AHPN registration 4786].

<sup>29</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, Rangel Bauer, Edgardo Daniel, complaint registered as No. 10058, complaints file, complaining of *ASSAULT AND ROBBERY* [Internal AHPN registration 4795].

GT PN 50 S020 06/30/1980, complaint No. 10058 of the Complaints and Crime Report Section of the PN Detective Corps [Internal AHPN registration 2731].

<sup>30</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 02/27/1986, request No. G 8204021 and Registration No. 552518, sent to the Minister of the Interior by Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala [Internal AHPN registration 4786].



What is especially serious about these events is that, following the capture and disappearance of the victim, individuals identifying themselves as members of the *Judicial Police* extorted money from the family of María Ángela Ayala Saravia and illegally took possession of some of her belongings. These communications with her mother are evidence of the contact that these people had with the victim following her capture. The mother's request mentions that, "*The day my daughter disappeared, she was carrying a purse containing all her papers, her keys, and check book.*"<sup>31</sup>

The document also states:

*"...On August 4th, 1983, two men arrived at my door and told me they were from the Judicial [Police], then waved a check in my face for Q100.00 signed by my daughter, which was not paid to me by the bank, whereas the bank did pay them [the men] a check in the amount of one thousand five hundred quetzals, and others in the amount of one hundred and seventy-five quetzals (Q175.00)."*<sup>32</sup>

Together with the request, Mrs. Saravia sent a copy of her daughter's letter and four checks issued by Banco Industrial S.A. for account No. 03-019080-1, made out in 1983. Two of these checks were endorsed by Edgardo Rangel Bauer, municipal ID A-1 438788, telephone 33613 and another illegible signature with municipal ID A-1 94665, telephone 67619. One dated June sixteenth and another July twenty-second for one hundred and seventy-five (Q175.00) and one hundred quetzals (Q100.00) respectively. Also attached was a copy of another check dated June twenty-third in the name of Ángela Ayala for the amount of one thousand five hundred quetzals (Q1,500.00) and one other on which the only legible detail is the amount of one hundred quetzals (Q100.00). Lastly, there was also a copy of a municipal ID with the name Joaquín Humberto Ramírez Lima, number A-1 473.821, address 2nd Avenue 3-27, zone 2.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 06/17/1983, handwritten letter, supposedly from María Ángela Ayala to her mother [Internal AHPN registration 4787].

GT PN 30-01 S006 06/23/1983, copy of check No. 1276938 for Q1500.00 from Banco Industrial, S.A. [Internal AHPN registration 31365].

GT PN 30-01 S006 06/17/1983, copy of check No. 1276931 for Q175.00 from Banco Industrial, S.A. [Internal AHPN registration 31363].

GT PN 30-01 S006 07/22/1983, copy of check No. 1276942 for Q100.00 from Banco Industrial, S.A. [Internal AHPN registration 31373].

GT PN 30-01 S006 date illegible, copy of check [Internal AHPN registration 31371].

GT PN 30-01 S006 05/13/1980, municipal ID in the name of Joaquín Humberto Ramírez Lima, number A-1 473,821 [Internal AHPN registration 31376].

In the AHPN documents dated 1986 relating to this case, there is a series of “oficios” and “providencias” with a copy of the request, the checks and the letter María Ángela sent to her mother, which were at that time sent to various offices of the police institution in accordance with the established administrative and hierarchical procedures. These procedures carried out by the PN were clearly meant only to comply with bureaucratic requirements.

The administrative procedures applied by the PN to the request in question after its delivery to the Ministry of the Interior were as follows:

-On March 10th, 1986, the First Vice Minister of the Interior sent a document to the Director General of the PN enclosing a copy of the request asking that an investigation be ordered and stating that “...it should be recorded which tribunal is aware (of the facts).”<sup>34</sup>

-A week later, the Deputy Director of the PN sent the documents to the Chief of the Fourth Corps to have them investigated and a report produced. It goes on “... if the competent courts of justice are aware of this fact, or if otherwise bring it to their attention.” It also gives instructions that the plaintiff be told that the PN would continue its investigations according to the instructions of the courts.<sup>35</sup>

-Between May 5th and 6th, the authorities of the Fourth Corps carry out the following procedures:

- The Second Chief of the Corps, in accordance with instructions, writes to the Seventh Justice of Criminal Peace to inform him that two of his agents presented themselves at the home of Mrs. Saravia, the widow of Ayala, in order to obtain information on the events, “for which reason she requested that it be made known to the courts.” To this end, the lady “was told to appear at your Office.”<sup>36</sup>
- The Third Chief of the same Corps sends a document to Mrs. Saravia, the widow of Ayala, to inform her that the communication sent to the Seventh Criminal Peace Court and tell her that the PN, “in compliance with the orders of the same continues to investigate.”<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 03/10/1983, oficio No. 1093 Ref.JJRP/smmg, sent to the Director General of the PN Rubén Suchini Paz Attorney-at-Law by Benjamin Rivas Baratto Attorney-at-Law, first Vice Minister of the Interior [Internal AHPN registration 4785].

<sup>35</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 03/18/1982, providencia No. 05471 Ref-S-G-of.2do.rfmr, to the Chief of the Fourth Corps, sent and signed by the Deputy Director of the PN, Infantry Colonel Ricardo Alberto Pinto Recinos, and the Secretary General Francisco José Muñoz Zavaleta, stamped *Urgent* [Internal AHPN registration 4806].

<sup>36</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 05/05/1986, oficio No. 5,631/jrado, sent by the Second Chief of the Fourth Corps, Ronaldo Salguero Godoy to the Seventh Justice of the Criminal Peace [Internal AHPN registration 4803].

<sup>37</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 05/06/1983, oficio No. 1042-GCC-mjrc., sent to Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala by the Third Chief of the Fourth Corps, Gamaliel Castillo Calderón [Internal AHPN registration 4804].

- In the end it was the chief of the Fourth Corps, Manuel Vicente Martínez Jiménez,<sup>38</sup> who informed the Director General of the National Police of the investigative process. Proceedings were limited to three specific actions: presentation of the complaint before the corresponding court as, according to that police office, Mrs. Saravia “*hadn’t entered the complaint regarding the disappearance of her daughter MARÍA ÁNGELA AYALA SARAIVIA.*” It was established that the ID of Mr. Joaquín Humberto Ramírez Luna was false, and that this name appeared in the Police archives on the register of drivers’ licenses as class “B,” No. 480036 with an address in Mazatenango. As for the third, in the report is says, “*...enclosed are 5 photocopies of the three checks that Mrs. SARAIVIA mentions in her complaint, which were provided by Banco Industrial S.A., ...further details shall be provided only upon presentation of a court order.*”<sup>39</sup>

Two months after the request from the First Vice Minister of the Interior, the Deputy Director of the National Police sent a response detailing the steps taken by the Fourth Corps and mentions, among other things:

*“...the 7th Criminal Peace Court was informed... of the disappearance of MARÍA ÁNGELA AYALA SARAIVIA, in response to the plaintiff in question..., it had not yet been done.”*

*It concludes “...the National Police in accordance with the orders of the aforementioned court, which is aware of the case, will continue to investigate...”*<sup>40</sup>

The information contained in both the request sent by Mrs. Saravia and the final report from the Chief of the Fourth Corps make it clear that the PN had at that time clues it might have followed up on in order to discover the whereabouts of the victim. One of the main pieces of evidence from the request are the names of the man who turned up at the Banco Industrial to remove the contents of

<sup>38</sup> This officer, prior to his appointment as Chief of the Fourth Corps, was Third Chief of the Special Operations Command, COE, or Fifth Corps.

<sup>39</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 05/06/1986, providencia No. 363-MVMJ-mjrc.Srio, addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Fourth Corps, Manuel Vicente Martínez Jiménez, and also signed by the secretary of the Corps, Manuel de J. Reyes C. [Internal AHPN registration 4805].

<sup>40</sup> GT PN 30-01 S006 05/19/1986, oficio No. 02462 Ref.S-G-of. 2do.rfmr., addressed to Benjamín Rivas Baratto, Attorney-at-Law, first Vice Minister of the Interior, by the Deputy Director General of the PN, Ricardo Alberto Pinto Recinos [Internal AHPN registration 31380].

the safety deposit box (Joaquín Humberto Ramírez Lima), the lawyer who authorized the opening of the box (Isidro Valdez Herrera), and the man who on two occasions cashed checks from María Ángela Ayala Saravia's account (Edgardo Daniel Rangel Bauer).

The fact that they neither proceeded nor attempted to obtain a court order to force the bank to provide further information constitutes a dereliction of the PN's investigative duties. This process took place in 1983, despite the fact that on July 4th of that year, the Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice ordered all Police Chiefs to “...*REQUEST A REPORT FROM THE MANAGER OF THE BANCO INDUSTRIAL IN ORDER FOR HIM TO INDICATE WHETHER ANGELA AYALA SARAVIA HAS AT SAID BANK A SAFETY DEPOSIT BOX, WHETHER THIS WAS OPENED WITH THE HOLDER'S AUTHORIZATION AND THE NAME OF THE NOTARY WHO AUTHORIZED HER SIGNATURE.*”<sup>41</sup>

Both the report by the Chief of the Fourth Corps and the document sent by the Deputy Director of the PN to the First Vice Minister of the Interior stated that no court had been informed of the victim's disappearance. This contradicts all the documented procedures that took place in 1983, which show that several courts were already aware of the capture and disappearance of María Ángela Ayala Saravia, in addition to the complaint that the victim's mother made to the PN.<sup>42</sup>

In the AHPN, a document was found dated July 9th, 1983 and written by the Second Chief of the PN Center for Joint Operations (COCP), Eligio Alberto Méndez Ross, in relation to the victim. It is addressed to the Director General of the police, Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch, informing him about an interrogation involving the agent Eleázar Ramos Álvarez, who was a member of the Archbishop's Palace Guard.

During the interrogation, the agent mentioned that he had found a legal-size envelope, open and unaddressed, under the main door to the Archbishop's Palace. The envelope contained five typewritten sheets and one written by hand, plus a white gold ring. The text said that the sister of President Efraín Ríos Montt, kidnapped by the FAR on June 29th, 1983, was alive and “*they were asking for*

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<sup>41</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 07/04/1983, telegram 23 No. 65 JAV 707 DH 18 1930, addressed to the Chiefs of the National Police by Mario Fuentes Destarac, Attorney-at-Law, Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice [Internal AHPN registration 31552].

<sup>42</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 08/30/1983, telegram 2HP 64/Q.3.84 10H00 1120 URGENT, addressed to the Minister of the Interior by Mrs. Francisca Saravia, the widow of Ayala [Internal AHPN registration 4802].

*the release of political prisoners and gave details of the names of approximately fifteen people... and that they were giving a period of eight days in which to send them to Mexico in exchange for the lady's freedom.*"<sup>43</sup>

It is possible to link this document to the case thanks to research carried out by the Commission for Historical Clarification, which mentions this event in its report and adds the names of the prisoners whose exchange was requested, one of whom was María Ángela Ayala Saravia.

The CEH Report states:

*"On different dates, several national and international newspapers published a statement paid for by the FAR proposing an exchange: Ana Lucrecia Orellana Stormont, América Yolanda Urizar Martínez and María Ángela Ayala Saravia, the three FAR militants, in exchange for Marta Elena Ríos Montt, sister of Efraín Ríos Montt, and Celeste Aída Mejía Víctores, sister of the then Head of State, Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores..."*<sup>44</sup>

The CEH Report adds that the General Command of the FAR "*reported that negotiations with the Government had been fruitless*" and that on October 26th, 1983, they released both women. The proposal the FAR made shows that, as part of the State's counterinsurgency policies, María Ángela Ayala Saravia and the others involved in the requested exchange had been captured by the security forces.

This case illustrates the terrible experiences suffered by thousands of Guatemalan families at the height of the internal armed conflict. Many of the cases involving captured/disappeared persons documented in other studies demonstrate similar patterns of conduct during captures, along with harassment and extortion of families and the total impunity with which the authorities acted in the investigation and resolution of the cases.

Not all families dared to file complaints for fear of reprisals, but those who did, such as Francisca Saravia, ran into a wall of overwhelming impunity, despite the information and details which, in this case, she provided to contribute to the investigation.

<sup>43</sup> GT PN 30.01 S006 07/09/1983, oficio COC/778/EAMR/wa, addressed to the Director General of the PN Cavalry Colonel Hernán Orestes Ponce Nitsch by Police Major Eligio Alberto Méndez Ross, Second Chief of the COC, with copy to the Deputy Director General and the Third Chief or Inspector General, stamped *Confidential* [Digital reference 1271562. Internal AHPN registration 32072].

<sup>44</sup> CEH Report, volume VI, p. 213.

## **5. Name and position of the commanders of State security forces and other public officials apprised of the events:**

General Efraín Ríos Montt  
*President of the Republic of Guatemala.*

Cavalry Colonel DEM Orestes Ponce Nitsch  
*Director General of the National Police.*

Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz  
*Director General of the National Police*

Rubén Suchini Paiz, Attorney at Law  
*Director General of the National Police.*

Ricardo Alberto Pinto Recinos  
*Deputy Director General of the National Police.*

Professor Reynaldo Haroldo Paniagua Cordero  
*Inspector General of the National Police.*

Francisco José Muñoz Zavaliza  
*Secretary General of the National Police.*

Ricardo Hernández Girón  
*Chief Clerk of the Secretariat General of the PN.*

Eligio Alberto Méndez Ross  
*Second Chief of the PN Center for Joint Operations.*

Rigoberto Morales  
*Deputy Commander, PN First Corps*

Manuel Vicente Martínez Jiménez  
*Chief, National Police Fourth Corps.*

Ronaldo Salguero Godoy  
*Second Chief, National Police Fourth Corps.*

Gamaliel Castillo Calderón

*Third Chief, National Police Fourth Corps.*

Infantry Major Gustavo A. Oliva Blanco

*First Chief, Department of Technical Investigation*

Police Lieutenant Colonel José Félix Arévalo

*Interim Second Chief, Department of Technical Investigation*

Police Major Br. Emilio Orellana Cerdón

*Third Chief and Interim Inspector General, Department of Technical Investigation*

José Dionisio Ortiz

*Chief of Investigations Section, Department of Technical Investigation*

## **Judiciary**

Second Tribunal of the Criminal Court of First Instance

Third Tribunal of the Criminal Court of First Instance

Seventh Tribunal of the Criminal Court of First Instance

Judge of the Court of First Instance, Sololá

Judge of the Court of First Instance, Antigua Guatemala

Tenth Tribunal of the Court of Appeal

Third Tribunal of the Court of Appeal

Fourth Tribunal of the Court of Appeal

Mario Fuentes Destarac, Attorney at Law

*Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice.*

**Ministerio de Gobernación / Ministry of the Interior**

Haroldo Cabrera Enríquez, Attorney at Law  
*Vice Minister of the Interior (1983)*

Lic. Benjamín Rivas Baratto, Attorney at Law  
*Vice Minister of the Interior (1986)*





## 3.2 AUGUSTO VÁSQUEZ HERNÁNDEZ

### APRIL 9TH, 1984

#### 1. Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

This investigation file currently contains ten documents from the National Police Historical Archive. One of these was written prior to the events<sup>1</sup> and is a work report by the Departmental Headquarters of Izabal for the month of January 1984, which includes a list of personnel.

Making up the documents relevant to the case that were produced after the events are:

- a) Work report from the Izabal Departmental Headquarters for the month of July 1984 which also includes a list of personnel.<sup>2</sup>
- b) A radiogram sent by the Departmental Chief of Izabal to the Director General of the PN.<sup>3</sup> At the foot of the page, the letter “*m*” is handwritten. Thanks to the labor of description and archival research carried out on various ANPN documents, it has been possible to establish that this kind of annotation, as well as the letters (also handwritten) “*ms*” or “*mc*,” indicate that the information arrived via either secret or confidential memorandums from the Directorate General of the PN to the Head of State, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister for National Defense. Generally, these types of annotations were made by night duty officers when they were classifying relevant information to be passed on to the Director General and from the latter to the Government authorities.
- c) Various documents containing confidential information.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 01/31/1984, work report from the department of Izabal for the month of January 1984, including an updated list of the personnel at the Izabal departmental headquarters [Internal AHPN registration 11621].

<sup>2</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 07/02/1984, work report from the department of Izabal for the month of July 1984, including an updated list of the personnel at the Izabal departmental headquarters [Internal AHPN registration 11621].

<sup>3</sup> GT PN 30-01 S019 04/10/1984, Radiogram no. 839, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by the Departmental Chief for Puerto Barrios [Internal AHPN registration 11630].

d) Work report from the Izabal Departmental Headquarters for April 1984.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Background

At the start of the de facto government of Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores (1983-1986), by order of the Directorate General of the National Police, the corps and headquarters adopted a new form of organization which was to involve personnel available at each police headquarters.

The document “*General guidelines for the organization of a police corps*,”<sup>6</sup> established that each Departmental Headquarters should contain a command group comprising a commander, deputy commander and a third chief. In addition, it should have a staff organized preferably with a PN-1 (in charge of personnel and correspondence), PN-2 (in charge of intelligence and investigations), PN-3 (in charge of planning, operations and training), PN-4 (in charge of supplies and maintenance), PN-5 (in charge of public relations), and there should also be a support unit (transmissions, safety, order office), platoons and squadrons.

This same period saw the approval of Government Decree 37-85, which introduced police ranks in place of the military ones used throughout the institution. The new hierarchy took the following form: Commissioners of Police (General and Deputy), Police Officers (First, Second and Third), Police Inspectors (First, Second and Third), Deputy Police Inspector and Police Agent. It was decreed that the rank of Police Officer was of a permanent nature as it was accredited by the Executive Branch through the Ministry of the Interior.

However, in practice, the National Police continued to enjoy a subordinate relationship with the Army which was repeated at all levels. The commissioners

<sup>4</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/24/1984, providencia 1103/Ref-SDG-Avle., addressed to Artillery Colonel DEM, Director General of the PN, by Cavalry Colonel DEM Oscar Humberto Santiago Cárdenas, Deputy Director General of the PN, signed and stamped by the secretary of the Subdirector General, Rosalío González López [Internal AHPN registration 11616].

GT PN 30-01 S020 04/17/1984, providencia No. 1726.IG-Jaa., addressed to Cavalry Colonel DEM, Deputy Director General of the PN, by Professor R. Haroldo Paniagua C., Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN, and signed and stamped by the secretary of the Inspectorate General, Clara Luz Montenegro [Internal AHPN registration 11618].

GT PN 30-01 S020 04/12/1984, oficio No. 543-84 Ref/gaf., addressed to Police Colonel, Third Chief and Inspector General, by Police Lieutenant Colonel, Departmental Chief of Puerto Barrios, Izabal, Zoe Cruz Villatoro Monzón [Internal AHPN registration 11619].

GT PN 30-01 S020 04/10/1984, confidential information dated in Los Amates, Izabal, no addressee, no sender [Internal AHPN registration 11620].

GT PN 23 DSC 08/17/1984, confidential information, PN First Corps, a complaint that the Fifth Corps was aware of, issuing oficio No. 5596 to the 7th Court of Criminal Peace [Internal AHPN registration 11633].

<sup>5</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 05/02/1984, work report and new developments report for April 1984 from the Departmental Headquarters of Puerto Barrios, Izabal, attached is oficio No. 0631, REFE OF EAGP., addressed to the Director General of the National Police, by Luis Alfredo López Caceros, Second Departmental Chief of the PN for Izabal [Internal AHPN registration 11614].

<sup>6</sup> GT PN 26-01 S013 08/24/1983, report sent to the Chief of the Fourth Corps of Police by the Director of the PN Academy, Police Lieutenant Colonel Professor Mario Ramírez Ruiz, who attaches the document, *General Guidelines for the Organization of a Police Corps* [Digital reference 68147. Internal AHPN registration 12118].

used to maintain a permanent relationship with the military zones and the stations and substations with military detachments. In Chapter II of this Report, there is an analysis of the documents in the AHPN that show the nature of the relations and exchanges between the PN and the Army. One example is the directives for the monthly commanders' meeting for February 1985 delivered to the commanders by the Directorate General.

A selection of these orders stated: “...for the National Police, the highest authority in each jurisdiction is held by the Military Zone Commander.”; “Also we are aware that the Institution of the Army is the standard bearer, the overseer of tranquility and peace over the whole national territory.”; “...Police Commanders have been repeatedly instructed to work in coordination with the Military Zone in their department on certain tasks they undertake...”; “Normally, it is the Police Commander or his second in command who coordinates with the Military Commander or Executive in each Zone, or if they so order, with the S-2 Officer.”<sup>7</sup>

The most significant fact gleaned from analysis of this AHPN document was that this relationship between the State security forces had repercussions for the social and political life of the country.

### 3. Description of the Events

On the night of April 9th, 1984, at approximately 22:00 hours, the commander of the military detachment at Los Amates, Izabal, requested support from the PN.<sup>8</sup> Agent Rolando Oliva Solís<sup>9</sup> was assigned to support the Army patrol carrying out an order to verify the presence of “a group of unknown individuals armed with revolvers.”<sup>10</sup> in the village of Quiriguá. A Civil Self-Defense Patrol had alerted the military about the situation.

According to the reports, on arriving at the scene, members of the State security forces “were attacked” by Augusto Vásquez Hernández, who was carrying a

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<sup>7</sup> GT PN 30 DSC 02/28/1985, Book “*First Semester 85 Directives from Police Command*,” book number 1770, monthly meeting for February 1985, topic 3 “COORDINATION OF MILITARY-POLICE WORK MUST BY DONE AT A HIGH JURISDICTIONAL LEVEL” [Internal AHPN registration 12140].

<sup>8</sup> The AHPN researchers were unable to unearth any document containing a request from the Army officer, this description of events was put together from the contents of the “confidential” documents cited in the case.

<sup>9</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 01/31/1984, work report from the department of Izabal for the month of January 1984, including an updated list of the personnel at the departmental headquarters, Izabal [Internal AHPN registration 11621].

<sup>10</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/10/1984, confidential information dated in Los Amates, Izabal, no addressee, no sender [Internal AHPN registration 11620].

machete. The reaction of the police officer and members of the military patrol was to use their firearms, resulting in his death.

Radiogram No. 839 from the Izabal Departmental Headquarters states:<sup>11</sup>

*“...Deputy Chief Los Amates reports today 0400 hours, health center that locality, after respective procedures, jurisdictional vupón (Justice of the Peace)<sup>12</sup> ordered removal to Nat. Hosp. morgue of the body of AUGUSTO VÁSQUEZ only surname, 39 years, dead as result of two bullet wounds, caliber unknown caused by unknown persons in the village of Quiriguá same jurisdiction, investigation underway to find culprits.”*

This document, like others contained in the file, show that the Izabal Departmental Headquarters reported the death of Augusto Vásquez Hernández to the Directorate General of the PN as caused by persons unknown. A copy of the radiogram was also sent to the Deputy Director, Third Chief, and PN Joint Operations.

On April 10th, 1984, a confidential report states that the men who shot Augusto Vásquez were PN agent Rolando and members of a troop of the Army of Guatemala whom it does not identify:

*“...the Commander of said Detachment requested support from an officer from this Substation and the undersigned assigned the agent Rolando Oliva Solis to join the officer and several members of the troop assembled at the place indicated and in an alleyway there, an individual armed with a machete (curved) attacked them, concentrating his blows particularly on the agent, for which reason they opened fire, hitting him twice, on which he fell to the ground and the same officer ordered him to be taken to the Health Center...”<sup>13</sup>*

Oficio No. 543-84 Ref/gaf. submitted by the Izabal Departmental Chief to the Third Chief or Inspector General of the PN, states:

<sup>11</sup> GT PN 30-01 S019 04/10/1984, radiogram No. 839, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by the Departmental Chief for Puerto Barrios [Internal AHPN registration 11630].

<sup>12</sup> Using the documents found in the AHPN that contain telegraphic codes, it has been shown that *kidar* is the telegraphic code used to refer to the Director General of the PN, and *vupón* was used to signify the Justice of the Peace.

<sup>13</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/10/1984, confidential information dated in Los Amates, Izabal, no addressee, no sender [Internal AHPN registration 11620].

*“...present was a group of unknown individuals armed with firearms, on arriving at the place where they were, one of the individuals, armed with a curved machete, attacked them, directing himself particularly at the aforementioned Agent Oliva Solis raining blows right and left, this officer moved back and fell to the ground, at which point the individual attempted to seize this opportunity to kill him, however, at the last moment, the agent drew his revolver and shot twice, hitting him in the body; members of the troop also opened fire, though they missed the target, perhaps for fear of hitting said agent...”<sup>14</sup>*

This same document confirms the procedure implemented, adding:

*“The Officer accompanying Agent Oliva Solis realized perfectly that this was a case of self-defense and consequently ordered the other members of the troop accompanying them to say nothing to anyone and that they were going to say that unknown individuals had killed the assailant Vásquez Hernández and this is the way it was reported to the Justice of the Peace of the jurisdiction, i.e., that unknown individuals had killed him as I reported to my superiors in radiogram No. 0839...”*

Subsequently, and in accordance with the National Police hierarchy, the information was passed on to the Deputy Director General and the Director General of the PN.<sup>15</sup>

Oficio No. 1103/Ref.SDG-Avle sent by the Deputy Director General to the Director General details the events and the procedure finally implemented. However, the report sent to the Jurisdictional Justice of the Peace states that *“unknown individuals had attacked the assailant Vásquez Hernández,”* thus concealing agent Rolando Oliva Solís’ role.

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<sup>14</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/12/1984, oficio No. 543-84 Ref/gaf., addressed to Police Colonel, Third Chief and Inspector General, by Police Lieutenant Colonel, Departmental Chief of Puerto Barrios, Izabal, Zoe Cruz Villatoro Monzón [Internal AHPN registration 11619].

<sup>15</sup> GT PN 30-01 S020 04/17/1984, providencia No. 1726.IG-Jaa., addressed to Cavalry Colonel DEM, Deputy Director General of the PN, by Professor R. Haroldo Paniagua C., Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN, and signed and stamped by the secretary of the Inspectorate General, Clara Luz Montenegro [Internal AHPN registration 11618]. GT PN 30-01 S020 04/24/1984, providencia 1103/Ref-SDG-Avle., addressed to Artillery Colonel DEM, Director General of the PN, by Cavalry Colonel DEM Oscar Humberto Santiago Cárdenas, Deputy Director General of the PN, signed and stamped by the secretary of the Subdirector General, Rosalío González López [Internal AHPN registration 11616].

This document carries a note stapled to the margin on which is written the phrase “*Legal, protect him.*” This note communicates the order to protect the agent Rolando Oliva Solís from the possible legal repercussions of the death of Mr. Augusto Vásquez Hernández. Based on the documents available, it is not possible to establish whether this order came from the Director General after he was informed of the contents of the oficio.

The same note stapled to the margin also contains the handwritten text, “*defense not necessary,*” which is also impossible to source. It is probably an indication that the events never came to be investigated.

The Departmental Headquarters maintained the false version of events, which is illustrated by the work report for April sent to the Director General of the Police. This states that, on April 10th, “*at 04:00 hours in the Health Center in Amates Izabál, the Local Justice of the Peace signed the death certificate of (SANTOS) AUGUSTO VASQUEZ, 39 years of age, who died as a result of bullet wounds to various parts of the body inflicted by persons unknown...*”<sup>16</sup>

Less than two months after the execution of Augusto Vásquez Hernández, agent Rolando Oliva Solís was transferred to the First Corps of the capital. This can be confirmed via the list of personnel registered at the Izabal department who had served with other corps throughout the country.<sup>17</sup>

What is more, a document dated August 17th, 1984 mentions agent Rolando Oliva Solís. In an attempt to recover a stolen vehicle, the police officer made sure that, in addition to being armed, the crew were members of the National Army by asking to see their IDs, then allowed them to carry on. All this occurred in the presence of the helpless owner of the vehicle, who, as he attempted to get his vehicle back, received death threats from the soldiers, mentioning that agent Oliva Solís chose to withdraw from the scene.<sup>18</sup> This situation, like so many more, shows the degree of subordination and obedience of the PN to the Army, as well as the cover-ups and impunity that prevailed in the ranks of the State security forces.

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<sup>16</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 05/02/1984, work report and new developments report for April 1984 from the Departmental Headquarters of Puerto Barrios, Izabal, attached is oficio No. 0631, REFE OF EAGP., addressed to the Director General of the National Police by Luis Alfredo López Caceros, Second Departmental Chief of the PN for Izabal [Internal AHPN registration 11614].

<sup>17</sup> GT PN 30-01 S011 07/02/1984, work report from the department of Izabal for the month of July 1984, including an updated list of the personnel at the Izabal departmental headquarters [Internal AHPN registration 11622].

<sup>18</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 08/17/1984, confidential information, PN First Corps, a complaint that the Fifth Corps was aware of, issuing oficio No. 5596 to the 7th Court of Criminal Peace [Internal AHPN registration 11633].

## 4. Analysis of the Case

The case makes it clear that the procedures followed by the PN when its members became involved in legally questionable cases. The Inspectorate General of the PN gave its backing to the version given in the radiogram attributing the death of Vásquez Hernández to “persons unknown” thereby concealing the participation of agent Rolando Oliva Solís. This case and others like it analyzed in the documents of the AHPN show that the PN denied information to the courts by not identifying those responsible for certain crimes with the aim of guaranteeing these individuals’ impunity.

The culture of impunity within the police institution grew even stronger, as the agent responsible for this execution, Rolando Oliva Solís, instead of being investigated, sanctioned and brought before the jurisdictional courts, was protected and rewarded by being transferred to a police corps in the capital.

The absence of any criminal investigation and the application of the appropriate criminal procedures is a violation of civil rights and constitutional guarantees of the victim and his family.<sup>19</sup> The State didn’t protect or guarantee “*in a preferential and unconditional manner the life and physical well being, dignity and personal safety*”<sup>20</sup> of this citizen.

## 5. Principal Actors

All that is known of the victim, Augusto Vásquez Hernández, is that at the time of the events he was 39 years old and came from the neighborhood of Filo Toltec, Los Amates, Izabal. The AHPN documents indicate that he was killed without trial by agent Rolando Oliva Solís on one of the streets of the village of Quiriguá, when the PN was carrying out an operation in coordination with members of the Army stationed at the Los Amates military garrison.

Within the PN, the following people were aware of the fact:<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Also established in the Fundamental Statute of Government, in force in 1984, Chapter V “*Individual Guarantees.*”

<sup>20</sup> Id., Article 23, Chapter V “*Individual Guarantees.*”

<sup>21</sup> Data base chain of command of the AHPN.



Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz  
*Director General of the PN*

Artillery Colonel DEM Oscar Humberto Santiago Cárdenas  
*Deputy Director General of the PN*

Professor R. Haroldo Paniagua Cordero  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN*

Lieutenant Colonel of Police Mónico Antonio Cano Pérez  
*Second Chief of the PN Center for Joint Operations (COCP)*

Lieutenant Colonel of Police Zoe Cruz Villatoro Monzón  
*Commander, Departmental Headquarters of Puerto Barrios, Izabal*

Police Major Luis Alfredo López Caceros  
*Second Chief of the Departmental Headquarters of Puerto Barrios, Izabal, officer in charge of the office.*

Inspector Manuel René García Guzmán  
*Substation Chief, Los Amates, Izabal*

Currently, the name of the Commander of the Los Amantes Military Detachment is unknown, along with that of the other members of the Army who took part in this event. Consequently, so is the relevant chain of command within the Army.

Also aware of the fact was the Jurisdictional Justice of the Peace for the department of Izabal.

### 3.3 OLIVERIO CASTAÑEDA DE LEÓN<sup>1</sup> OCTOBER 20TH, 1978

Photograph IV.5



#### 1. Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

The AHPN documents discovered and analyzed that currently make up the file on the student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León so far total 71 records,<sup>2</sup> including:

- a) Confidential reports.
- b) Victim's card file, which formed part of the collection of the Detective Corps Master Record File.
- c) Daily developments reports.
- d) Oficios.
- e) Investigation Reports.
- f) Lists of people belonging to social organizations, and
- g) Operational and security plans.

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<sup>1</sup> The photo shown below is from [www.prensalibre.com/pl/2004/marzo](http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2004/marzo).

<sup>2</sup> From the records of the AHPN data bank for February 2009.

The majority of these documents contain information that the PN recorded in relation to events that the institution considered to be of most significance during 1978. Specifically, the events connected with the popular protests, led by union and student organizations against the increase in the urban transport fare, the rise in the price of basic goods and social repression. In this context, Oliverio Castañeda de León was Secretary General of the Association of University Students (AEU) of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala and therefore the university leader for these mobilizations.

## 2. Background

Oliverio Castañeda de León was the Secretary General of the Association of University Students (AEU) of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC), elected on May 22nd, 1978. He was an outstanding student at the School of Economics. In addition to his leadership in the student sphere, he was recognized in the area of union politics and was a member of the State Workers' Emergency Committee (CETE) as well as the National Committee for Union Unity (CNUS) in his capacity as Secretary General of the AEU. He was the son of Doctor Gustavo Castañeda Palacios and Mrs. Jesús de León de Castañeda. He was 23 years old when he was murdered.

As already described in Chapter I of this Report, in November of 1970, the Detective Corps was brought back<sup>3</sup> and the Department of the Judicial Police was disbanded. The goal of this was to concentrate the whole investigation and intelligence infrastructure in one single office by renewing the direct chain of command between the Chief of this Corps and the Director General of the PN.

In the PN work reports, it is reported that, in 1978, 443 positions were opened for detectives in this Corps (not including administrative personnel), rising in 1981 to 673.<sup>4</sup>

The confidential reports produced by members of this police agency located in the AHPN<sup>5</sup> show the procedures and activities it carried out, especially during the political events developing throughout 1978. These intelligence documents were written by detectives for Chief Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez, who submitted them, in turn, to Director General Germán Chupina Barahona. Today these reports form part of the supporting documentation for this case.

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<sup>3</sup> As stipulated by the Organic Law of the National Police, 1955, Decree 332.

<sup>4</sup> In: GT PN 30-01 S010 Reports sent to the Ministry of the Interior.

<sup>5</sup> These reports can be found in: GT PN 50 S002 Detective Corps.

They provide information relating to: identification of the leaders of social and popular organizations, production of photographs, compilation of lists of people, gathering of pamphlets, communications and slogans. There are even some that mention this Corps' participation, together with the Model Platoon,<sup>6</sup> in breaking up social protest demonstrations.

By way of example, below are quotes from two of these reports: one, dated February 15, 1978, reporting on the demonstration held by workers from the Aceros y Esmaltes company located in zone 12 of the capital. It includes photographs of placards and the people taking part.<sup>7</sup> With respect to the *Parade in Commemoration of International Workers Day, 1st of May,*” there are details of the organizations participating, slogans and the leaflets handed out during the march. It states:

*“...at around 9:10 hours, said procession set off with members of the UNION UNITY COUNCIL (C.N.U.S) at its head, these in turn each followed by the following private and state entities: F.A.S.G.U.A. (Autonomous Federation of Unions of Guatemala), C.U.C. (Rural Unity Committee), and the unions of the following private companies, S.T.I.C.A.V.S.A. Glass Factory, the Bakers and Confectioners unions, Ingenio Madre Tierra, Incatecu, Texaco, Phillips, Central American Tobacco, F.O.S.A. Organized Front for the Unions of Amatitlán, Aceros y Esmaltes S.A. SI.GINSA, STM from the Municipality. Following this group of CNUS affiliates, the march continued with the STATE WORKERS' EMERGENCY COMMITTEE, together with the following state entities: GUATEL, INAFOR, PUBLIC WORKS, FEGUA, DIGESA, ROADS, PUBLIC HEALTH, POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS, STATISTICS, TEACHERS. Following this movement and associated to the C.N.T. (National Workers' Central), the*

<sup>6</sup> From 1965, there is information on the creation of the Model Unit by internal order of the Director General of the National Police, with its first unit, the parachute platoon, trained in Mariscal Zavala and concluding its training on January 21st, 1965. It seems that the Model Unit subsequently became the Model Platoon, which received military instruction. In:

GT PN 30 DSC Book 1557, National Police work report, 1965, p. 62 [Digital reference 53060. Internal AHPN registration 27209].

GT PN 30 S001 Book 2618, minutes of the Directorate General for 1960-2000, document number 176 of 11/26/1965, mentioning the officer in charge of military instruction of the Model Platoon [Digital reference 988108. Internal AHPN registration 31282].

GT PN 30-01 S010 PN work report for July 1977-March 1978, sheet 008, mentioning that on December 29th, 1977 the Combat Commandos were created, “these commandos will be made up of personnel from the various Corps in which they carry out their ordinary active service” [Digital reference 1916126. Internal AHPN registration 31302].

<sup>7</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/15/1978, confidential report, reference from Detective Corps file No. 707, stamped Confidential. Handwritten in red ink can be read: “Demonstrations Confidential Report in relation to a parade carried out by workers from:” and underlined, again in red, in the text is “STEELS AND ENAMELS OF ZONE 12.” On the lower left appears another text handwritten in pencil that says: “COMMANDER F.C. SUPPORT FILE G-2 D.C.P.N.” there is also a signature in red [Internal AHPN registration 374].

*march continued as follows: Rural Workers Federations, University of San Carlos Employees' Union, and lesser unions from factories and companies in the capital, and finally, bringing up the rear of the procession was the IGSS union with three May Day themed carnival floats accompanied by the Guatemalan Union of Artists and Similar.”<sup>8</sup>*

This same report states that the march concluded at 11:20 hours in the Central Park, with the participation of approximately three thousand people. The final section reads:

*“It was possible to observe during the course of the demonstration that it was organized and overseen by members of the C.E.E.M. (Secondary Education Coordinating Committee) and the A.E.U., who carried megaphones inciting the masses to keep shouting their protests against the Government and its agencies, but without detecting any altercation involving the public and passers-by...”<sup>9</sup>*

Castañeda de León assumed the role of Secretary General of the AEU on May 22nd, 1978. Two months later, the Detective Corps recorded the student's details in their files for the first time.

As a result of a march held on August 4th of that year called by university students to protest the murder of the union leader Mario Rolando Mugía Córdova,<sup>10</sup> and in rejection of repression, a confidential report shows that the Detective Corps identified and targeted the student leader for monitoring and surveillance. The most significant section reads:

*“...said demonstration commenced at 17:00 hours and was made up of a group of approximately 1,500 people, consisting of workers, farmers, students in secondary and post-secondary education, and among the union agitators it was possible to observe LUIS FELIPE IRIAS, current secretary of the A.E.U., OLIVERIO CASTAÑEDA, together with leaders of the*

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<sup>8</sup> GT PN 50 S002 05/01/1978, confidential report, reference from Detective Corps file No. 1727, stamped Confidential, handwritten in red is the reason for the demonstration and the same signature that appears on other confidential reports [Internal AHPN registration 197].

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Union leader, responsible for union organization in the department of Huehuetenango. In November 1977, he was one of the union activists who organized the march by the Ixtahuacán miners, the decade's most important human mobilization. On July 20th, 1978, he was the victim of an attack in the CNT headquarters in Huehuetenango, surviving initially, but dying three days later.

*C.N.T., C.E.T.E., AGRICASA, CENUS, the Guatemalan Students' Revolutionary Front (F.E.R.G.), MONAP, the Organized Student Block (B.E.O.).*"<sup>11</sup>

It adds:

*"at 17:20 hours, the National Police model platoon began to disperse the demonstrators, using for this purpose teargas grenades, and with backup provided by our service."*<sup>12</sup>

The report also includes the texts of banners, placards and posters carried by the demonstrators. Attached are flyers and slogans circulating during the march and eleven photographs of people taking part.

Based on this report, reference number 3496, the Detective Corps proceeded to fill out a card file on Oliverio Castañeda de León, identifying him as one of the *"agitators of the marches."*<sup>13</sup>

### Photograph IV.6

Political and social control file for Oliverio Castañeda de León

FECHA		NUMERO	CARPETA	ASUNTO
4.8.78. sam.		3496	Cuerpo Detectives.	En informe confidencial de manifestación llevada a cabo el día 4.8.78. como repudio al asesinato del dirigente sindical Mario Rolando Muris Córdoba, mencionan que esta era uno de los agitadores sindicales. Dicha manifestación fue disuelta con bombas lacrimógenas.-

GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, CASTAÑEDA, Oliverio, No. 3496 from the files of the Detective Corps, the subject summarizes the corresponding confidential report [Internal AHPN registration 26393].

<sup>11</sup> GT PN 50 S002 08/04/1978, confidential report with Detective Corps file reference N. 3496, stamped *Confidential*. Handwritten in red pencil is a summary of the reason behind the demonstration, and the same signature that appears on other confidential reports [Internal AHPN registration 518].

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, CASTAÑEDA, Oliverio, No. 3496 from the files of the Detective Corps, the subject summarizes the corresponding confidential report [Internal AHPN registration 26393].

The police maintained surveillance and monitoring of the university student leader Castañeda de León during subsequent demonstrations. Another confidential report dated September 20th, 1978 states:

*“Our intelligence service assembled today in the Plazuela Italia as information had been received that several union and student bodies would be meeting there in order to publicly demonstrate the combative solidarity of the Guatemalan working classes with the people of Nicaragua as well as their repudiation of the United States, concerning the problems with urban transport.”*<sup>14</sup>

It says that three thousand people took part and that during the rally, members of the following organizations spoke: The Union Unity Committee (CNUS), the Association of University Students (AEU), the Secondary Education Coordinating Committee (CEEM), the Settlers Movement (MONAP), the National Workers’ Central (CNT), the municipal workers’ Committee in support of the Nicaraguan people. It continues:

*“It was also possible to determine that the strongest union was CAVISA, which demonstrated its support for the people of Nicaragua. There were also leaflets going around that requested people’s cooperation by contributing food for the people of Nicaragua, mentioning collection points at the Guatemala High School on 10th Ave. 33-77, zone 5, tel. 61680, Santa Teresita School, 22 Street, Marizcal district, zone 11, tel. 480967, the Guatemalan Belgian School, 9th Street 10-38, zone 1, tel. 23615, La Asunción school, Real de la Villa de Guadalupe Street, zone 10, tel. 61347, and CONFREGUA. 4th Street, 5-52, zone 1, tel. 86448. Flyers were handed out stating that, at the Don Bosco Sanctuary at 18:00 hrs., a mass would be held in solidarity with the people of Nicaragua; collaboration in the campaign by sending donations to the Red Cross; participation in the act of solidarity at the IGSS Auditorium on Friday the 22nd at 19:00 hrs.”*<sup>15</sup>

Attached were flyers from Central American Glass Industry Limited (CAVISA) and the Association of Engineering Students of the USCA, slogans and calls for

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<sup>14</sup> GT PN 50 S002 09/20/1978, confidential report with Detective Corps file reference No. 4338, stamped *Confidential*, handwritten in red pencil is the event investigated [Internal AHPN registration 3078].

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

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future acts of solidarity with Nicaragua. It also contains thirteen photographs of people taking part in the march, taken around the Plaza Italia.

Of these photos, it draws attention to one showing the banner of the Association of University Students (AEU) being carried by the student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León. By means of photographic analysis it has been possible to conclude that two segments were selected then blown up. One of these shows an image of Castañeda de León on which -over his left leg- a cross was drawn.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.



**Photograph IV.7**

These three photos, along with others, were found in the confidential report written by the Detective Corps in relation to a mobilization carried out on September 20th, 1978 in solidarity with Nicaragua. Photographs 1 and 3 are enlargements, showing two details from photograph 2. The student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León appears in photograph 3, wearing white pants, upon which a cross can be seen, drawn on his left leg. At the same time, two of his companions appear to be

looking at the Detective Corps photographer. In:

GT PN 50 S002 09/20/1978, confidential report with Detective Corps file reference No. 4338, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 29952, 29971, 29972].

### Photograph IV.8



Photographic composition illustrating the level of control and surveillance exercised over students leaders. Two segments were selected from the central photo and blown up. In: GT PN 50 S002 09/20/1978, confidential report with Detective Corps file reference No. 4338, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 29952, 29971, 29972].

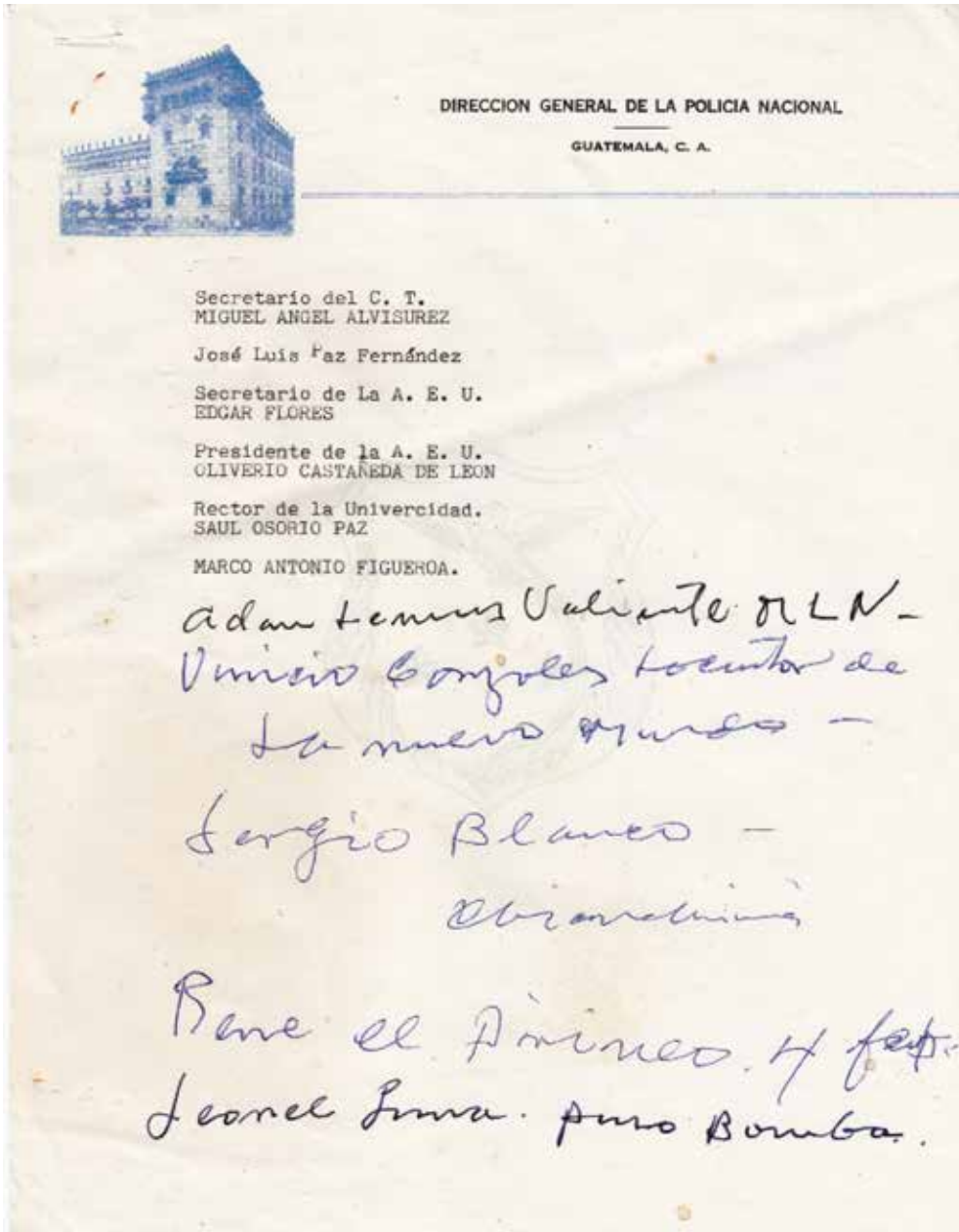
After the documentary analysis performed in the AHPN, it is possible to infer that, using the information gathered by the Detective Corps, the PN compiled a list of people linked with one or other of the organizations in the popular movement who took part in the marches.

Among the documents from the Directorate General, several lists were found containing the names of approximately forty people, most of whom were union leaders. Alongside the name was the position they occupied and the institution they represented.<sup>17</sup> Stuck onto the sheets is the crest of the PN, apparently cut from the letterhead of paper from the Directorate General of the PN. No date is supplied.

There is a list written on a sheet with the original letterhead, and it is precisely this one that contains the name of the student leader Castañeda de León as “*President of the A.E.U.*” Also on this list is the name of the Rector of the USAC, Saúl Osorio Paz, among others.

<sup>17</sup> GT PN 30 S002. In the list of names was placed the acronym of the institution each person represented, and attached to the list of names are other sheets with an explanation of each set of initials [Digital reference 1923413, 1923416, 1923422. Internal AHPN registration 11890, 11885, 11902, 11903, 11904, 11905, 11906, 12089].

### Photograph IV.9



List of university students and union members found in the archive of the PN Directorate General, on which the name of Oliverio Castañeda de León is included. In GT PN 30 S002 [Internal AHPN registration 26345].

The name Oliverio Castañeda de León also appears on a list of “*sentenced to death*” by the Secret Anticommunist Army (ESA) in its bulletin No. 3 of October 18, 1978, two days before his execution. The name of the student leader stands out, as it appears underlined<sup>18</sup> in this bulletin, which can be found in the AHPN.

A declassified document from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA),<sup>19</sup> states that the presidential term of general Lucas García (1978 to 1982) saw the

*“...revival of an antiriminal ‘death squad.’ Some of the recent murders and mysterious disappearances have been attributed to such a group, possibly acting behind the facade of a ‘Secret Anti-Communist Army.’ Violent acts against political and labor personalities have increased since the October 1978 crisis. Government actions in dealing with that issued resulted in the dismantling of most public sector labor groups. Attention now seems to focus on private sector labor groups, with violence directed at union leaders.”*<sup>20</sup>

Paul Kobrak, author of the book *En pie de lucha*, describing the principal events of this era, says: “*Despite the mass mobilization occurring in the city, at the end of September 1978, the municipal council approved a rise in the bus fare from five to ten cents to...*” further on, he adds, “*The AEU and the University Governing Board immediately attacked the plan as an attack on the city’s poor.*”<sup>21</sup>

The 100% increase in the transport fare provoked diverse social groups to come out into the streets in protest, mobilizations that were repressed by the State security forces.

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<sup>18</sup> GT PN 30-01 S004 10/18/1978. Bulletin No. 3, Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA) [Digital reference 806896. Internal AHPN registration 28538].

<sup>19</sup> *Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)*: United States agency. The responsibility of DIA defense attachés overseas to gather and analyze information on foreign armies made this agency the most fruitful source for information on the Guatemalan army. The DIA produces “*military intelligence summaries*,” biographical profiles of key officials, general orders (tracking changes in command), and in-depth intelligence analysis of security topics.

<sup>20</sup> Declassified document, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), *Military Intelligence Summary (MIS) Volume VIII, Latin America (U)*. November 1979. DOB-2680-108A-79. Available in the National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal*. Volume II documents (online). [www.gwu.edu/~NSARCHIVE/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc16.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~NSARCHIVE/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc16.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Kobrak, *En pie de lucha*, p. 58.

In his study, Kobrak declares: *“Still, the protesters achieved their goal. ...on October 7, the municipal council agreed to restore the five-cent fare. Through mass mobilization, protesters had defeated the Lucas government, though at a great human cost...”*<sup>22</sup>

Following this municipal decision, street protests were fewer, though social and political tensions did not lessen. Under the surface laid multiple demands by the rural and urban populations.

These institutions defined the social organizations as “enemy forces,”<sup>23</sup> throwing themselves into controlling and acting against them.

In the AHPN archives, it is possible to find information on a multiplicity of events relating to the social protests of 1978. Below are quotes from various records that mention the mobilizations occurring between August 4th and the first days of November. The information is contained in confidential reports, new development reports and oficios. They come from various PN agencies: The Directorate General, Detective Corps, PN Center for Joint Operations and the Inspectorate General. The information reported concerns public demonstrations and protests, strikes, individuals detained and charged, reports of woundings and deaths, among other events.

The journal of the USAC Center for Urban and Regional Studies comments: *“During the days of October, i.e., during the first week of October 1978, a general strike was declared against the rise in the urban transport fare, and the Government responded with repression and murder.”*<sup>24</sup>

A confidential report dated October 2nd, 1978, written by Deputy Inspector number 21 of the Detective Corps, states that he was commissioned along with eight other detectives to *“dissolve a group of individuals who were working to block the circulation of vehicles, especially buses from the urban service, by*

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 58, 59..

<sup>23</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped Secret, sent by the divisional general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM, Army General Staff temporary chief, Mejía Victores [Internal AHPN registration 12732].

<sup>24</sup> Edgar Ruano Najjarro, “Para comprender a Oliverio Castañeda de León,” in Rebeca Alonzo Martínez, comp.. *¡Oliverio Vive! “Mientras haya pueblo habrá revolución”* (Guatemala: Ediciones CEUR, 2008), p. 38

*placement of barricades...*” Another written by the Deputy Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps refers to the damage caused to the infrastructure of public and private buildings in the center of the capital during the social protests.<sup>25</sup> A report on the latest developments in relation to the protests carried out on October 2nd and 7th in the cities of Guatemala and Quetzaltenango says that, during those six days, 844 were detained, 22 more died from gunshot wounds, and around one hundred people were wounded.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. Description of the Events

On October 20th, 1978, the march to commemorate the 34th anniversary of the October Revolution set off as usual from El Trébol (“The Clover,” a highway interchange on the south side of the city) towards the Central Park. According to complaints brought by students who took part, *“During the course of the demonstration, it was possible to observe several vehicles without license plates driving along the same route without being stopped by members of the National Police, despite the fact that the people riding in them were blatantly waving guns.”*<sup>27</sup>

Another summary of the events of that day states: *“The Central and Centenario parks awoke on the morning of October 20th to find themselves occupied by plain clothes police officers. Police vehicles surrounded both parks, all containing heavily armed men in civilian dress...”*<sup>28</sup>

The Report from the Commission for Historical Clarification, in its illustrative case No. 45, recounts:

*Towards one in the afternoon, Oliverio Castañeda and a group of students left the Centenario park and crossed Eighth Street... the shooting started immediately after they crossed Sixth Avenue.*

<sup>25</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/02/1978, report by the Detective Corps, Interpol Section, written by Deputy Inspector No. 21, Rafael Pedroza Montenegro and sent to the Chief of the Detective Corps [Digital reference 1923371. Internal AHPN registration 29266].

<sup>26</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/02/1978, oficio No. 8688/jla.-, written by the Deputy Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Jorge Cardona Dionicio, sent to the Director General of the PN. Stamped “received” by the PN Center for Joint Operations, dated 10/05/1978, handwritten “Joint” [Digital reference 1923371. Internal AHPN registration 11907].

<sup>27</sup> GT PN 30 S002 10/02/1978, “NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE DISTURBANCES OF OCTOBER SECOND, 1978” [Digital reference 1923371. Internal AHPN registration 29280].

<sup>28</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/20/1978, Ref. 5038, communication from the Revolutionary Student Front Robin García [Internal AHPN registration 12046].

Ruano Najarro, “Para comprender a Oliverio,” p. 39.

*A man jumped out of the back door of a long, turquoise sedan, license plates P-109716<sup>29</sup> and opened fire on Oliverio with a machine gun.”<sup>30</sup>*

The Detective Corps, in its “Casualty and Gunshot Injury Report. Emergency Services,” describes the scene of the crime as follows:

*“...today at 13:30 hours, we were commissioned at the orders of the Inspector in Chief of the Corps Services to board the unit with license plates: P-53940, driven by detective No. 215, and assemble at the ‘Rubio’ passage, situated on 6th Avenue and 8th Street, zone 1, as information had been received that in that place a shooting had taken place, and as a consequence of this, there were people who had suffered bullet wounds, and one had died.–*

*...we were able to confirm that, at the entrance to the Rubio passage, on 6th Street, zone 1, lying on the sidewalk was the body of a person of male sex, lying on his side with his head pointing south, feet north, arms by his sides, feet extended; clothes: a yellow Ban-Lon t-shirt, blue canvas pants, brown shoes, blue socks, with: THREE IMPACTS FROM BULLETS, CALIBER UNKNOWN, ONE through the right ear, with an exit wound in the parietal lobe on the same side, ONE in the spinal region, with an exit wound in the region of the sternum and the OTHER in the left thigh, with an exit wound on the outside of the same.”*

*“According to the accounts of bystanders, today’s deceased had, shortly beforehand, stood up to speak at the rally that took place in the Bandshell in the Central Park to celebrate October 20th, – but that at approximately 13:15 hours, he was walking along that avenue (6th Ave., zone 1) when suddenly, from a pea-green sport hatchback, license plates P-109716, three individuals opened fire against the now deceased person, then made a quick*

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<sup>29</sup> Further on, there is another reference to this number in two reports made by agents of the Detective Corps.

<sup>30</sup> CEH Report, volume VII, Annex 1, Illustrative Case No. 45, p. 119.

*escape, heading north along 6th Avenue; the witnesses declined to provide their names to the undersigned.*<sup>31</sup>

The report later says that the body had been identified by the victim's father, Gustavo Castañeda Palacios, who said that at the time of the event the victim, named Oliverio Castañeda de León, was Secretary General of the AEU.

At the scene of the events, the Detective Corps registered the discovery of the body with the 4th Judge of the Criminal Peace and the officer from the Second Corps who wrote the new developments report. The judge ordered that this be duly recorded and the body removed to the morgue of the "San Juan de Dios" General Hospital. The detectives filed a request at the same Hospital and at Center number 1 of the Guatemalan Institution of Social Security (IGSS) in order to determine the names and conditions of five people who had been hurt during the attack, among them a girl of seven years of age. It gives general details of the people injured, who told the detectives that, "*they were moving on foot..., taking a walk in the company of their two young children... they heard reports and at the same time realized that they had been hurt..., not knowing what had happened.*

*"Following up on the investigation concerning the license plates of the cars driven by those responsible for the shooting, P-109716, we consulted the National Police Traffic Department, who informed us that these were registered to a blue Pontiac automobile, property of LEONEL CASTILLO RUBIO,<sup>32</sup> address "S" Street 7-8, "October 6" district, zone 7. The corps file was*

<sup>31</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/20/1978, cadaver and gunshot-injury report No. 1061, Detective Corps file reference No. 4996, written by Carlos H. Reyes Ramírez, detective No. 323, Ramiro García Osorio, detective No. 88 and Samuel Carillo Castillo, detective No. 39. Handwritten in red ink is "*Bloodshed / Bodies. Report of his death due to bullet wounds,*" with the same signature appearing as on other confidential reports [Internal AHPN registration 1806].

<sup>32</sup> The statement made by the Detective Corps regarding "*confirming that this gentleman had not filed any complaint relating either to the loss of plates or vehicle*" is contradicted by another oficio from the very same Corps, No. 30243, with Detective Corps file reference No. 2397 of 11/10/1978, which states that Mr. Castillo Rubio, "*who on December 7, 1974 filed with this Corps Complaint No. 9743 reporting the robber of his license plate, which he reported to this Corps in order to avoid improper use of same.*"

In: GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, oficio No. 30242/of.2º jidg., addressed to the Seventh Justice of the Criminal Peace by Miguel A. García Herrarte, Third Chief, Inspector General of the Detective Corps, with Detective Corps file reference No. 2397 [Internal AHPN registration 2500].



*consulted, confirming that this gentleman had not filed any complaint relating to the loss of either plates or vehicle.*<sup>33</sup>

At the conclusion of the report, it refers to the existence of photographs taken at the scene of the crime which have not been found in the AHPN. All that appears is the “*voluntary statement*” of Sergeant Carlos Humberto Ortiz Palma of the Voluntary Firefighters’ Corps, who confirms the description and the license plates of the assailants’ vehicle. Also attached are details of the place and time of the funeral vigil and burial of the student leader.

This report was written and signed by detectives Carlos Reyes Ramírez (number 323), Ramiro García Osorio (number 88), and Samuel Carrillo Castillo (number 39).

The version obtained by the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) with respect to this case coincides with some of the details given in the report by the Detective Corps to the PN. The CEH says that:

*“He (Oliverio) was running southwards along 6th Avenue in an attempt to escape, but he was caught by a bullet that brought him to ground at the entrance to the Rubio passage. Another five people passing through this place, among them two children, were also hit. At that moment, a white Toyota jeep with official plates O-8038 stopped in the middle of the street and a man in plain clothes stepped from it and shot him in the head, delivering the coup de grace. He then returned to the vehicle, which sped off. Also involved in the operation was a Bronco with license plates P-11716.”*<sup>34</sup>

Despite the fact that the PN was already in possession of the details of one of the vehicles that took part in the attack on the student leader, in the work report sent by the Second Corps to the Director General in March of 1979, in reference to the certificate authorized by the judge on duty on the day of the events it says:

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<sup>33</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/20//1978, cadaver and gunshot-injury report, Detective Corps file reference No. 4996, written by Carlos H. Reyes Ramírez, detective No. 323, Ramiro García Osorio, detective No. 88 and Samuel Carillo Castillo, detective No. 39 [Internal AHPN registration 1806].

<sup>34</sup> CEH Report, Annex I, p. 121.

*“...who died as the victim of several shots from firearms fired by unknown individuals who were driving in a car that could not be identified...”<sup>35</sup>*

An operation with these characteristics, only 200 meters from the Presidential Palace and the Government Palace, required the significant and highly visible deployment of forces that included men, weapons, vehicles, and communication devices, and the creation of conditions under which to operate with speed and impunity.

#### **4. After the Fact**

The AHPN documents show the control and surveillance maintained by the PN of the activities of the AEU and the student movement as a whole. Witnesses to these activities are the public messages issued, one by the “Robin García” Student Front –FERG– and another by the Organized Student Block –BEO– as well as the confidential reports by the PN containing information on subsequent meetings, mobilizations, and pronouncements.

For example, on October 23rd, a confidential report by the Detective Corps reported in detail the content and the discussions that took place in the AEU Assembly held that day at 18:10 hours in the Plaza Rogelia Cruz at the USAC. Five hundred people from student and union organizations were present at this event to hear the presentation of the following proposals, all unanimously approved, according to the detectives’ report:

*“1. From this day forward, their association would be called THE OLIVERIO CASTAÑEDA DE LEON STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION.*

*2. To use both of the late University secretary’s surnames (paternal and maternal) whenever referring to him, in order to distinguish him from the ex-right-wing leader Oliverio Castañeda Paiz.–*

*3. Declare as directly responsible for his death the following public officials and persons: Constitutional President of the*

<sup>35</sup> GT PN 51-02 S008 work report from the Second Corps, July 1st, 1978 to March 1979, sent by the First Chief of the Second Corps to the Director General under oficio No. 0093.Jss. Receipt stamp of the Center for Joint Operations, COCP, 02/16/1979 [Digital reference 2737862. Internal AHPN registration 31289].

*Republic, General Fernando Romeo Lucas García, Minister of Defense Otto Spligler Noriega, Minister of the Interior Donald Álvarez Ruiz, Director General of the National Police, Colonel German Chupina Barahona, Mario Sandoval Alarcón and the country's Security forces.–*

*4. Initiate procedures to have the University and schools from which the aforementioned persons graduated declare them personae non gratae and cease to recognize their validity as associates, particularly the Vice President of the Republic, Dr. Francisco Villagrán Kramer; who they also declare responsible.–*

*5. Attempt by all means possible to expel from the University the wife of the Vice President of the Republic, who currently works as a professor there.–*

*6. To make it known to the general public that, on the day of the events in which the Secretary General of the University lost his life, at the same time, a yellow pick-up with official plates No.) -8038. was seen driving on 6th Ave. and 8th Street.–*

*7. Pay for advertisements on the radio, television and newspapers directly accusing the aforementioned persons of this death.–*

*8. Communications and bulletins will be sent to all departmental student associations to request they repudiate this act by holding a minute of silence and an hour-long strike daily.–*

*9. Request the same measures from the workers' groups and unions throughout the country in order to paralyze industry and trade in protest.–*

*10. Call on the general public to attend a demonstration to pass through the streets and avenues of the city center, ending at*

*precisely the place where Oliverio Castañeda de León died, placing there a plaque in his memory, this movement to take place next Thursday, the 27th of this month.—*<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, a confidential report dated October 22nd described the rally conducted by the Escuintleco United Revolutionary Front (FURE) at the park in Escuintleco, where the principal leader, Manuel Colom Argueta, rejected the repression and denounced the murder of the student leader.<sup>37</sup>

The confidential report from the Detective Corps dated October 26th states that the “*intelligence service assembled in Plazuela Italia, opposite the capital municipal buildings, due to information received that a demonstration was to be held*” to protest the death of the Secretary General of the AEU.

*It adds: “We ascertained that there were indeed approximately 800 people gathered, with the march setting off at around 17:20 hours for the Plazita Quemada, to then head along 5th Avenue as far as 8th Street, where they headed east, going around the Central Park, and following this took 6th Avenue, zone 1, and on 8th Street at the Rubio passage, they conducted a rally, and during course of the march, some 8,000 more joined, most of them students, shouting at the top of their voices and directly accusing THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, THE VICE PRESIDENT, THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR AND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, who they claimed had planned and ordered the execution of the leader and in general insulting the Government...”*

*During the rally, various student leaders stood to speak, along with members of the S.T.U.S.C., with the latter claiming that the description of the vehicles used by the perpetrators were similar to those used by Command 6 of the National Police and other*

<sup>36</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/23/1978, confidential report, reference from Detective Corps file No. 5038, handwritten in red is “*Confidential report on the Assembly of the Association of University Students and union leaders in protest,*” with the same signature appearing as on other confidential reports and stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 31099].

<sup>37</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/22/1978, confidential report, reference from Detective Corps file No. 5036, handwritten in red is “*Rallies Report regarding a rally held in the Escuintla park in protest at the murder of Br. Oliverio Castañeda, and other affairs,*” with the same signature appearing as on other reports of this type and stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 3077].

*union leaders concentrating on the death and condemning the declarations of the MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR AND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL POLICE... ”<sup>38</sup>*

With the same purpose of surveillance and control of the effects the killing of the student leader might have on the public consciousness, a confidential report made by the Departmental Chief of Baja Verapaz recounts that on October 28th, to mark the graduation of the XII Cohort of Rural Primary Education Teachers at the Teacher Training College No. 4, Salamá, the speakers included the new graduates Larry Hipólito Escobar and Edgar Amado Rodríguez Leal. The document reads:

*“...who, without any respect for the place in which they were, and before an audience of some 400, made speeches of some half an hour in length which they devoted to denigrating the Government, claiming that the authorities were kidnapping and murdering students, citing the killing of OLIVERIO CASTAÑEDA DE LEON and those of two students from the IMBO Institute in San Marcos, who had been found dead on the 27th of last month in that Department. They also said, trying to appear very wise and powerful, that they too were going to do some kidnapping, but that their target was ignorance, and that they were going to do some killing, but the victim would be illiteracy, and so with the attitude of these wicked students, what was taking place (ceased to be) an academic event but was rather a political Rally.*

*These persons insulting the graduation ceremony, totally lacking in respect for the event, turned up in their shirt sleeves while all other wore suits and ties, saying that they had no need to be decently dressed around Government personages, so insulting the Higher authorities. Hipolito Escobar was the leader of the students at the aforementioned College when recently the students there called a strike and went on a march to the central park in the capital city to protest against the Government and*

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<sup>38</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/26/1978, confidential report, reference from Detective Corps file No. 5118. Like other reports of this type, it has the subject handwritten in red ink, the signature is similar, and the *Confidential* stamp [Internal AHPN registration 195].

*to urge it to construct a college costing one and a half million quetzals...the same individuals show quite a vocation and advancement in oratory... That is all that I am able to inform you of in this confidential manner, for the purposes you see fit.”*<sup>39</sup>

#### **4.1 “Ordering the investigation of the case until the capture of those responsible for the crime.”**<sup>40</sup>

There are very few documents relating to any kind of investigation by conducted by the Detective Corps or other police agencies in order to identify those guilty of the crime. The records show above all the surveillance, monitoring and observation of the activities of the student and popular movements that were being carried out and which increased following the murder of the student leader.

The AHPN has only turned up documents with evidence of two:

A document found in the archive of the Directorate General containing information sent on November 7th, 1978, reports that someone named Juan José González informed the Rector of the USAC that the perpetrator of the extra-legal execution of Oliverio Castañeda de León was *El Chino Lima*.<sup>41</sup> This was the nickname given to Police Colonel Juan Antonio Lima López, who appears on

<sup>39</sup> GT PN 30 S002 11/01/1978, oficio No. 0996/vj-s-, confidential report written by the Departmental Chief for Baja Verapaz, sent to the Director General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 12182].

Other AHPN documents that make up the file for this case recount student activities at departmental level (Baja Verapaz, Quetzaltenango, Escuintla) before, during and after the criminal events involving the student leader, such as: GT PN 32 S007 09/09/1978, memorandum No. 0271/Jgbp. addressed to the Director General of the PN, sent by the Third Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Jorge Cardona Dionicio [Internal AHPN registration 12156].

GT PN 32 S007 09/13/1978, memorandum No. 0277/Jgbp. addressed to the Director General of the PN, sent by the Third Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Jorge Cardona Dionicio [Internal AHPN registration 12155].

GT PN 32 S007 09/14/1978, memorandum No. 0279/LAGS, addressed to the Director General by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Benigno Cruz Buenafé [Internal AHPN registration 12154].

GT PN 32 S007 16.09.1978, memorandum No. 281/JDRC, addressed to the Director General, by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Benigno Cruz Buenafé [Internal AHPN registration 12153].

GT PN 30 S002 10/06/1978, telegram No. 5 CV.15DH.2230 2315 SP, addressed to the Director General by high school students for maturity from Escuintla [Internal AHPN registration 12090].

<sup>40</sup> Order issued by the Fourth Justice of the Criminal Peace to the PN, to withdraw from the scene of the crime, in:

GT PN 50 S002 10/20/1978, cadaver and gunshot-injury report No. 1061, Detective Corps file reference No. 4996, written by Carlos H. Reyes Ramírez, detective No. 323, Ramiro García Osorio, detective No. 88 and Samuel Carrillo Castillo, detective No. 39. Handwritten in red ink is “*Bloodshed / Bodies*” Report of his death due to bullet wounds,” with the same signature appearing as on other confidential reports [Internal AHPN registration 1806].

<sup>41</sup> GT PN 30 S002 11/07/1978, report and criminal record, no addressee or sender [Internal AHPN registration 11873 and 11874].

the personnel lists from October 15th, 1978 as part of the Command Six Special Investigations Section, as second in command after Pedro García Arredondo.<sup>42</sup>

Together with this information, bearing the same date, is a loose sheet with neither letterhead, recipient or sender. It contains notes on the record of Juan José González between 1973 and 1978, with the proviso that “*Several persons of this name appear*”<sup>43</sup> in the PN archives.<sup>44</sup> It is evident that the PN investigated the person who had informed the Rector rather than the alleged culprit, who was an active member of the police.

The other document deals with the identification of the license plates of one of the vehicles in which the killers of Castañeda de León rode. On November 10th, 1978, detectives Nos. 9, 11, and 79 from the INTERPOL section informed the Chief of the Detective Corps, Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez, that the unit they were driving had been attacked while driving on the Calzada José Milla y Vidaurre. It says that the attack had been carried out by four men from a dark blue Pontiac automobile with private plates P-109716 who had managed to escape after being repelled with firearms, leaving the vehicle abandoned.

The same report states that the license plates P-109716 did not belong to the dark blue Pontiac. They had been stolen on December 7th, 1974 from Mr. Arturo Leonel Castillo Rubio, who had reported the robbery at the time. The dark blue Pontiac, meanwhile, was the property of Aída Consuelo Chávez de Morales<sup>45</sup> and had been stolen from her son, Donald Estuardo Morales Chávez, at the intersection of 7th Avenue and Simeón Cañas Avenue by eight unidentified individuals carrying firearms and claiming to be members of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP).

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<sup>42</sup> GT PN 24-09 S001 10/15/1978 “LIST OF PERSONNEL OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SECTION OF COMMAND SIX, WITH ADDRESSES,” drawn up by the chief of services, Otilio Cabrera Corado. Juan Antonio Lima López remained in his post as Second Chief of Command Six until his murder on January 15th, 1980 [Internal AHPN registration 12139].

<sup>43</sup> GT PN 30 S002 11/07/1978, report and criminal record, no addressee or sender [Internal AHPN registration 11873 and 11874].

<sup>44</sup> Refer to the Master file record of the Detective Corps, in: GT PN 50 S001

<sup>45</sup> In the report from the Detective Corps of 11/10/1978, Ref. 2397, there is a voluntary statement taken from Mrs. Aída Chávez Castillo de Morales in relation to the theft of her vehicle. Also informed of this were the Detective Corps, Radio Patrols, the Directorate General, and Command 6. GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, interrogation, “*VOLUNTARY STATEMENT TAKEN FROM MRS. AIDA CHAVEZ CATILLO DE MORALES*,” reference No. 2397 in the Detective Corps archives [Internal AHPN registration 12139].

GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, complaint No. 21796, reference No. 2397 in the Detective Corps archives [Internal AHPN registration 12695].

The three detectives concluded:

*“Carrying our investigations further, we were also able to establish that the plates 109716 are the same as those of the vehicle used by the perpetrators of the murder of the Universidad de San Carlos Student OLIVERIO CASTAÑEDA DE LEON, who was killed in one of the passages in the Portal del Comercio on October 20th.”*<sup>46</sup>

For their part, detectives 221, 313, and 356, also from the INTERPOL Section, state in their report of November 10th that, upon searching the stolen vehicle, they found, on the rear seat and floor, 16 spent 45 caliber shells and twenty live rounds of the same caliber, three 9 mm shells, a wallet with one quetzal, and two yellow wires with a fuse of the type used for detonating explosives. They also report that they found two 45 caliber bullets in two tires which were flat, a set of plates with the number P-108832 and a jar containing “*metaphen*.” They conclude by saying that the Identification Bureau had reported to the scene to take fingerprints.<sup>47</sup>

This same Third Chief or Inspector General of the Detective Corps, Manuel A. García Herrarte, sent a document to the Seventh Judge of the Criminal Peace in order to place at his disposal the dark blue Pontiac with license plates P-109716, including the decal, chassis, and engine numbers. It describes the events and states that the car in question was hit by twenty bullets.<sup>48</sup> The Chief of the PN Traffic Corps was also informed.<sup>49</sup>

The use by PN agencies of plates and vehicles reported stolen was a matter or course during the internal armed conflict. For example, in July 1979, the Homicide Section of the Detective Corps sent an abandoned vehicle to the Mariscal Zavala pound to be duly turned over to the Fifth Judge of Criminal Peace. This automobile was delivered to the judge with neither plates nor decal.

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<sup>46</sup> GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps written by detectives from the Interpol Section: Mercedes Morales Ramos, detective No. 9, Miguel Angel Ayala Medina, detective No. 11, and Alvarado Estrada Orellana, detective No. 79, with Detective Corps file reference, No. 2397 [Internal AHPN registration 12137].

<sup>47</sup> GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, “*Shooting Report*,” addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps and written by detectives Oscar Humberto R. Castro No. 221, Héctor Leonel Telles Guzmán, No. 313 and Ovidio Meléndez Argueta, No. 356, with Detective Corps file reference, No. 2397 [Internal AHPN registration 2500].

<sup>48</sup> GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, oficio No. 30242/of.2º.jidg., addressed to the Seventh Justice of the Criminal Peace by Miguel A. García Herrarte, Third Chief, Inspector General of the Detective Corps, with Detective Corps file reference No. 2397 [Internal AHPN registration 2500].

<sup>49</sup> GT PN 50 S007 11/10/1978, oficio No. 30243/of.2º.jidg., addressed to the Chief of the PN Traffic Corps, by Miguel A. García Herrarte, Third Chief, Inspector General of the Detective Corps, with Detective Corps file reference No. 2397 [Internal AHPN registration 12123].



However, two days previously, the same report mentions a “*Vehicle under investigation*” of the same description found with license plates No. P-171944.<sup>50</sup>

The plates assigned to the vehicles – including motorcycles – for the use of the Detective Corps and its personnel were apparently exempt from the applicable tax. It also mentions the use of plates for the institution’s *special services*. Up to now the functions of these special services remains unknown.<sup>51</sup>

Further evidence of the way in which the PN used vehicle license plates can be found in a list of vehicles for the Command Six Section from 1981. Three vehicles appear registered to the Command, together with the make and color of each. Alongside the description are two columns, one titled “*plates assigned*” and another titled “*plates in use*.”<sup>52</sup>

Within the PN, among other commanders aware of the facts were:

Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona,  
*Director General of the PN*  
July 1st, 1978 - March 23rd, 1982

Colonel Francisco Salazar Roquel  
*Deputy Director General of the PN*  
November 18th, 1975 - March 24th, 1982

Commissioner General César Augusto Trujillo Chacón,  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN*  
December 20th, 1974 to June 3rd, 1985

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<sup>50</sup> GT PN 50 S002 07/26/1979, new developments report for the chief of services, inspector 3, Victoriano Mayen Morales, Detective Corps file reference No. 3425 [Digital reference 3256168. Internal AHPN registration 31558].

<sup>51</sup> GT PN 50 08/07/1979, Record of license plates issued to the Detective Corps of the National Police for the period 1979 to 1983, signed by the Third Chief and inspector general, Miguel A. García Herrarte, Detective Corps file reference No. 3557 [Digital reference 3259034. Internal AHPN registration 32337].

<sup>52</sup> GT PN 24-09-01 S002 09/04/1981, list of vehicles of the Command Six section, written by the chief of services, Otilio Cabrera Corado [Internal AHPN registration 5891].

**The Detective Corps**

Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez,

*First Chief*

July 5th, 1978 - January 11th, 1980

Alfonso García Ortíz

*Second Chief*

May 13th, 1976 - July 10th, 1978

Manuel A. García Herrarte

*Third Chief and Inspector General*

January 5th, 1975 to January 28th, 1980

**Second Corps**

Lieutenant Colonel Rigoberto Pineda Sánchez

*First Chief*

September 7th, 1978 to March 30th, 1982

Carlos Silvestre Balderas Cabrera

*Second Chief*

October 9th, 1978 - June 7th, 1979

Gilberto Estrada Castillo

*Third Chief*

September-November 1978

**5. Analysis of the Case**

The AHPN documents relating to the social mobilizations before and after the October Days of 1978, the time at which the extra-legal execution of the student Castañeda de León took place, make it evident that the PN directed its efforts to finding, compiling and systematizing information on the organizations and their leaders participating in the popular mobilizations.

The AHPN records relating to the case show that, as part of its control activities, the Detective Corps sought to obtain photographs of the leaders most visibly involved in the mobilizations. They described in detail the slogans chanted or

written on banners, collected the leaflets distributed, and paid particular attention to the organizations mobilizing the greatest number of people, as well as what was said during these activities and the messages they transmitted. Thus, the confidential reports that make direct mention of the student leader identify him as one of the “*principal agitators*” in the mobilizations of August to October 1978.

The AHPN documents show that the National Police played a lead role in the control and surveillance of the student leader before his death. As mentioned previously, his name appears on one list of activists from social organizations compiled by Detective Corps and another by the Secret Anti-Communist Army only days before his murder.

The extra-legal execution of the Secretary General of the AEU, Oliverio Castañeda de León, marked the beginning of a systematic wave of persecution of the most prominent leaders of the AEU. The aim was to eliminate the increasing organization and mobilization of university students, denying them the opportunity to participate politically in the university and national arenas.

*“Of the sixteen members of the AEU Secretariat directed by Oliverio, eight were killed, among them Antonio Ciani,<sup>53</sup> a young law student who held the post of Organization Secretary and was therefore considered to be Oliverio’s successor.”<sup>54</sup>*

The attacks and aggression against the AEU and the USAC intensified during later periods. In May 1984, five members of the Executive Committee were kidnapped, and to this day no one knows their whereabouts. In September of that same year, Army troops forced their way into and occupied the university campus, claiming that it was a center of subversion and drug trafficking. Following the publication by the “*El Estudiante*” newspaper of the names of the principal members of the AEU between August and September 1989, ten of its leading figures were arbitrarily detained and later executed or disappeared.

In October 1978, when the victim’s death was recorded, the conclusion must be that the Operational Plan Aurora was now in progress, as the military High Command had ordered its implementation, in particular during political circumstances of intense social mobilization that represented a danger to

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<sup>53</sup> On November 6th, 1978, Antonio Ciani was captured and disappeared.

<sup>54</sup> Ruano Najarro, “Para comprender a Oliverio Castañeda de León,” p. 43.

*“Institutionality.” This plan’s mission was to “maintain and/or reestablish and guarantee public order, ensuring the institutionality of the Government.”*

After the phase of prevention and alarm, the Plan ordered the corps chiefs to place themselves under the command of the Military Commander of the sector under their charge. In the coordination instructions, command was granted to the Army General Staff (EMGE), specifically its Second Section.<sup>55</sup>

In the document *“Excerpt, Operational Plan Aurora”* of June 1978, the territorial jurisdiction and functions of the PN in the capital city were operationally subordinated to the Brigada Mariscal Zavala military barracks, codenamed *“alpha,”* the Honor Guard *“bravo,”* the Air Force *“carlos”* and the Justo Rufino Barrios Military Zone *“delta.”*<sup>56</sup>

The Aurora plan appears with the signature of the Chief of the EMGE, Brigadier General David Cancinos Barrios, and that of the G3<sup>57</sup> of the EMGE, General Héctor Gramajo Morales. The military high command also ordered that the same plan be implemented in various politically sensitive moments during the period 1978-1985.

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<sup>55</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, reference 1,871, stamped *Secret*, sent by the divisional general in charge of the office of the Ministry of National Defense, Infantry Colonel DEM, Army General Staff temporary chief, Mejía Victores [Internal AHPN registration 12732].

<sup>56</sup> GT PN 30 S003 06/22/1978, Third Section excerpt Operational Plan “Aurora,” extract for the National Police and Treasury Guard on EMGE letterhead, EMGE signature and stamp of G-3 of the EMGE, Gramajo Morales and stamped Secret [Digital reference 1923963. Internal AHPN registration 12148].

<sup>57</sup> Section of the EMGE responsible for the functions of operations and training.



## 3.4 JUAN SOTOJ OLIVARES

### NOVEMBER 20th, 1984

#### 1. Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

In order to support and write this file, 9 of the AHPN documents were consulted and analyzed, and the information gathered about the events was clear and conclusive. These records make evident the failure of the PN to fulfill its legally assigned functions, as well as the treatment meted out by this institution, which in some cases resulted in human rights violations. They also show the complicity and subordination of the PN to the Guatemalan Army.

The documents studied are:

- a) "Oficios" sent by the Chief of the Amatitlán PN Substation to the Justice of the Peace for that municipality and the commander of the First Corps.<sup>1</sup>
- b) Summary of Police Activities.<sup>2</sup>
- c) Memorandum addressed to the Chief of the First Corps.<sup>3</sup>
- d) Agenda.<sup>4</sup>
- e) Identification Files.<sup>5</sup>
- f) Investigation Reports.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/21/1983, oficio No. 1965/Oap, addressed to the Justice of the Criminal Peace by Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the National Police Substation in Amatitlán [Internal AHPN registration 11776].

GT PN 23 DSC 11/21/1984, oficio No. 1968/oap, addressed to the Commander of the First Corps by Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the National Police Substation in Amatitlán [Internal AHPN registration 11788].

<sup>2</sup> GT PN 51-01 S003 events recorded between December 3rd and 9th, 1984, summary of police activities, no sender or addressee [Internal AHPN registration 4657].

<sup>3</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/23/1984, memorandum addressed to the Second Chief of the First Corps of the PN, by Police Lieutenant Víctor Manuel Lima Vega, Chief of Services of the National Police First Corps [Internal AHPN registration 4956].

<sup>4</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/27/1984, General and Corps Order, Order of the Day No. 170, no direct recipient, signed by Aldana Marroquín, Chief of the National Police First Corps [Internal AHPN registration 4988].

<sup>5</sup> GT PN 50 S001 file from the PN Detective Corps on Juan Sotoj Olivares [Internal AHPN registration 11800].

GT PN 50 S001 file from the PN Detective Corps on Efraín Sotoj Olivares [Internal AHPN registration 11801].

<sup>6</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/05/1976, investigation report submitted by Inspector No. 12, Factor Salazar Raxal, to the Chief of the Detective Corps, Ref. 454 [Internal AHPN registration 11802].

## 2. Background

The institutional superiority granted to the Army during the military governments, and also during some civilian governments, caused many members, especially during the internal armed conflict, to go beyond the limits of their authority. The abuse of power by members of the military and police tolerance of these was a fatal formula for the general public, leading to grave violations of people's fundamental rights. This case, like so many others, is evidence of this.

In addition, during this period, impunity and violation of national and international legal frameworks was constant, fostered principally by the military and police security forces.

In force during this period was the Fundamental Statute of Government (Decree-Law 24-82) enacted by General Efraín Ríos Montt, who by that time was no longer President of the Republic following the coup d'état led by General Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores. This statute remained in force until the enactment of the new Political Constitution of the Republic on January 14th, 1986. Chapter V, Section 16 of the aforementioned Decree-Law, Individual Guarantees, states:

*No detainee or prisoner may be denied the satisfaction of his natural functions. Neither may he be subjected to physical or mental torture, cruel treatment, degrading punishments or acts, discomforts or coercion, nor obligated to perform work that may damage his health or is incompatible with his physical condition or dignity as a human being.*

*Public officials or employees who issue orders conflicting with the provisions of this point and subordinates who carry out such orders will be removed from their positions, authorization for their occupation of any public position or job will be permanently withdrawn, and they will suffer the applicable legal sanctions.*

*Chiefs of prisons and detention units will be held personally responsible for any acts of torture, cruel treatment, or degrading*

*punishment inflicted on prisoners or detainees in the establishment under their charge...*

*The action resulting from any crime committed in these circumstances is imprescriptable.*

### 3. Description of the Events

Mr. Juan Sotoj Olivares<sup>7</sup> was detained by agents of the PN on November 20th, 1984, together with his brother Efraín Sotoj Olivares in the municipality of Amatitlán, accused of the robbery of some pigs from some land located in Bárcenas in the municipality of Villa Nueva.<sup>8</sup>

In a document sent on November 21st by the Chief of the Amatitlán PN Substation, Carlos René Valle Valle to the Commander of the PN First Corps, he explains the details of the case. He states that in his first statements, Efraín Sotoj Olivares claimed that the pigs were the property of Miguel Ángel Valiente Téllez<sup>9</sup> and that he looked after them at a farm that was also owned by Valiente Téllez located in Bárcenas, Villa Nueva. He adds that in his statement, Sotoj Olivares added that four days previously, four unknown men had arrived at the farm, attacking him with *“slaps and kicks, and then verbally threatened him, saying that they would be back, for which reason he chose to move the pigs...”* to some empty land in the village of Trojes in Villa Nueva.

<sup>7</sup> GT PN 50 S001 file from the PN Detective Corps on Juan Sotoj Olivares [Internal AHPN registration 11800].

GT PN 50 S001 file from the PN Detective Corps on Efraín Sotoj Olivares [Internal AHPN registration 11801].

In Juan Sotoj Olivares' Detective Corps ID file, it is recorded that, on 11/26/1974, *“Received report of a robbery committed at this person's workplace.”* In Efraín Sotoj Olivares' Detective Corps ID file, it is recorded that, on 1/23/1980, he was detained and turned over to the Palín Justice of the Peace for multiple assaults and armed robberies.

<sup>8</sup> The municipalities of Amatitlán and Villa Nueva are part of the department of Guatemala.

<sup>9</sup> Legislative Decree 73-70 of 10/15/1970 (in force to this day), which regulates the functioning of the private police companies, establishes the National Police's levels of authority over and involvement in these companies, for example: their subordination to PN regulation (article 1); PN authorization of the entity that controls the company, further authorizing the Ministry of the Interior, and even the President of the Republic, to decide whether or not to move forward with its inscription; the PN School verifies members' training; *the companies' directors must strictly respect the orders, requirements and other directions regarding their operations dictated by the Directorate General of the National Police* (article 2); the companies must present monthly reports to the PN detailing increases and decreases in membership, their stock of weapons, and salaries (articles 12 and 13); they operate under the control of the PN (article 8); in the application of the Law on Public Order, *the private police forces must cooperate directly with the Directorate General of the National Police, and all their members are obliged to provide any assistance that may be required of them* (article 14). Therefore, the activities of these took place with the full knowledge of the Ministry of the Interior and, by extension, of the National Police. For example, in 1971, a Government Accord authorized the creation of “Policía Privada de Investigaciones Valiente” (Valiente Private Investigative Police), property of Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez – brother of Miguel Ángel Valiente Téllez –, who would later serve as First Chief of the PN Detectives Corp from July 1978 to January 1980. Miguel Ángel Valiente Téllez was also known by the name Miguel Antonio Valiente Téllez, who held the post of deputy director of the “Los Vigilantes” Private Police and owned a plantation located 30 kilometers from the capital city. A confidential report from 1976 ties this private police force to acts of kidnapping and extortion.

See: GT PN 50 S002 03/05/1976, investigation report submitted by Inspector No. 12, Factor Salazar Raxal, to the Chief of the Detective Corps, Ref. 454 [Internal AHPN registration 11802].



The document also says that Mr. Hugo Alberto Valiente presented himself at the Substation as legal representative of Miguel Ángel Valiente Téllez and contradicted the statement by Sotoj Olivares. He also accused the Sotoj Olivares brothers of cattle rustling at the El Porvenir ranch in Masagua, Escuintla together with six other individuals whose names he provided.<sup>10</sup> The document finishes with the following text:

*“At 08:00 hours, Second Lieutenant ELMER LEONER (HERNANDEZ) MENDEZ ACEVEDO presented himself at that same Substation, accompanied by several soldiers, just as agents SOSA GOMES, ALARCON LEIVA AND CASTAÑEDA MONROY were taking down the details of SOTOJ OLIVARES, in which moment the aforementioned officer and men commenced to attack them with their bare hands and feet, the results of which you are already aware.”<sup>11</sup>*

In the “*Summary of Police Activity*” for the week from November 19th to 25th, 1984, the section titled “*SITUATIONS TO BE AVOIDED*” says that the Chief of the Amatitlán Substation and its agents were detained because

*“A complaint has been filed against them for taking part in the concealment of the murder of the prisoner Juan Sotoj Olivares, who died on Wednesday, November 21st, as a result of a beating administered in the cells of the Amatitlán Police...”*

It adds:

<sup>10</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/21/1984, oficio No. 1965/Oap, addressed to the Justice of the Criminal Peace by Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the National Police Substation in Amatitlán [Internal AHPN registration 11776].

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> GT PN 51-01 S003 events recorded between November 19th and 25th, 1984, summary of police activities, no sender or addressee [Internal AHPN registration 4656].

<sup>13</sup> The agents involved who are mentioned in the documents are: Alexis Neftalí Sosa Gómez (agent No. 807), Carlos Humberto Alarcón Leiva (agent No. 872), Edgar Antonio Castañeda Monroy (No. 1002), Edwin Armando Garcia Miranda (No. 6227), and Héctor René Orellana Ortiz (No. 1141).

*“At this time, four police officers are guarding the prison. These are Officer Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the Amatitlán Police Substation, plus three agents under his command.”<sup>13</sup>*

Treatment of the case at the institutional level: *“Participation or cover-up”*:

*“...where he was detained and charged with the crime of theft together with his brother Efraín Sotoj Olivares. Both are at the disposal of the Judge of Amatitlán.*

*The person accused as perpetrator of this crime is Infantry Second Lieutenant Elmer Otoniel Méndez Acevedo, enrolled in the Honor Guard and serving in the Amatitlán Military Detachment.*

*The reality of the situation is that, on Tuesday, November 20th, this Officer, accompanied by three soldiers, arrived at the National Police Substation and, in the presence of the personnel there, proceeded to beat the detainee, Juan Sotoj Olivares. As a result of these blows and others sustained previously, the prisoner died at the local Hospital.*

*The matter became known, and it was in this way that his immediate family heard of his death. This was to be expected, as his brother was also being held in the same place, accused of the same crime, when the events occurred.*

*It also came to the notice of the Amatitlán judiciary, the staff of the hospital in which he died, as well as the press, as the family of the deceased made sure of this.*

*In order to neutralize the situation, the authorities intervened just as the scandal was about to break.*

*The result of this was the arrest of the Police Officer and Agents of the Amatitlán Substation. The fact is that something had to be done in the face of a possible accusation by the family claiming*

*that an Army Officer and soldiers under his command had beaten a prisoner to death in the presence of a Police Officer and agents who had taken him into custody.*

*Reporters covering police sources agreed not to publish this story, despite that fact that one of the deceased's sisters had already gone to the papers to denounce his death.*

*The legal aspect of the case is also being attended to, and for the moment the deceased's family is somewhat satisfied at seeing the measures taken against the personnel of the Amatlán Police Substation. The personnel appear as the guilty parties.*

*The intention is to prevent what actually happened from being made public, as this would affect not only the Officer involved, but also the Government and the Army. Due to these circumstances, the police officers will remain in custody and their case processed for as long as necessary. In any case, they are being given legal support and they are still enrolled, seeing as they are not responsible for these events.*

*From the first, this matter has been known to the Intelligence Office and the Second Command of the Honor Guard, which sent the S-2 Officer to deal with case right from the start.”<sup>14</sup>*

Although these events are treated as a situation that “*must be avoided*,” the report does not explain what precisely it is they want to prevent. Perhaps:

Interference by members of the Army in PN jurisdiction?

Extra-legal executions?

Complicity on the part of members of the police?

Disclosure of the case?

The impunity of Second Lieutenant of Infantry Elmer Otoniel Méndez Acevedo?

<sup>14</sup> GT PN 51-01 S003 events recorded between November 19th and 25th, 1984, summary of police activities, no sender or addressee [Internal AHPN registration 4656].

There are contradictions in the documents sent to the Amatlán Justice of the Peace and the Chief of the First Corps, sent by the Chief of the Amatlán Substation on the same day. For example, the Justice of the Peace was told that the Sotoj Olivares brothers were “*taken to the Order Office of this Police Substation from Callejón Castillo, Cantón Hospital of this town yesterday morning at 01:00 hours by members of the Military detachment stationed here...*”<sup>15</sup> In the document sent to the Chief of the First Corps, it states that it was agent No. 1141, Héctor René Orellana Ortíz, who reported the robbery by phone. Due to this, four other agents were assigned and these carried out the detentions. This document mentions the presence of Army Second Lieutenant of Infantry, Elmer Otoniel Méndez Acevedo and the other elements from 8 o’clock onwards.<sup>16</sup>

Among the discrepancies between the documents, the following stands out in the material sent to the Justice of the Peace:

*“The now charged Juan Sotoj Olivares was sent to the National Hospital in the same locality where he was in custody, as he claimed he was sick, and according to the medical diagnosis was suffering from ‘APPENDICITIS;’ consequently, he was kept in the observation ward of said Hospital.”*<sup>17</sup>

The Chief of the First Corps of the National Police was informed of the real reason why Mr. Juan Sotoj Olivares was taken to the local hospital, where he died.

Apart from the complicity between the Army and the PN, that of other institutions is worthy of note: the hospital where the victim died and the those working in the communications media who agreed not to make the event public.

#### **4. Analysis of the Case**

The National Police allowed Juan Sotoj Olivares to be attacked by Second Lieutenant of Infantry Elmer Otoniel Méndez Acevedo and three soldiers from the Honor Guard until they killed him, while the victim was in their custody and judicial protection.

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<sup>15</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/21/1984, oficio No. 1965/Oap, addressed to the Justice of the Criminal Peace, by Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the National Police Substation in Amatlán [Internal AHPN registration 11776].

<sup>16</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/21/1984, oficio No. 1968/oap, addressed to the Commander of the First Corps, by Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the National Police Substation in Amatlán [Internal AHPN registration 11788].

<sup>17</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/21/1984, oficio No. 1965/Oap, addressed to the Justice of the Criminal Peace, by Carlos René Valle Valle, Chief of the National Police Substation in Amatlán [Internal AHPN registration 11776].

As mentioned previously, the police officer and agents were arrested, as “*something had to be done in the face of a possible accusation*” by the family, and the intention was “*to prevent what actually happened from being made public, as this would affect not only the Officer involved, but also the Government and the Army.*”<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the incident was not made public, but instead was closed by the court to which it was presented, and the “*Summary of Police Activity*” for the week from December 3rd to 9th, 1984 reads:

*“CHIEF OF AMATITLAN POLICE SUBSTATION AND THREE AGENTS FREED.*

*The Police officer Carlos René Valle Valle, National Police Substation Chief, and another three agents were held and brought to trial as a consequence of the death of the prisoner Juan Sotoj Olivares in this town’s jail.*

*This affair is related to the incident provoked by Second Lieutenant of Infantry Elmer Otoniel Méndez Acevedo, who was internally charged with having struck the deceased prisoner.*

*On Friday, December 7th, the Court ordered the release of these police officers, who remain enrolled and, given the circumstances, were aided in their legal defense.*

*With the Court’s decision in this matter, it is hoped that the matter may now be considered closed.”*<sup>19</sup>

The case was resolved extremely quickly. Barely 17 days after the capture and execution of Juan Sotoj Olivares, the case was brought to court, proceedings were initiated, the PN police officers were charged, their innocence determined, they were exonerated, and the case closed. The real guilty parties went unpunished.

In this case, an individual charged with having committed as common a crime as robbery ended up dead at the hands of the Guatemalan government security forces. The Judiciary acted in a particularly rapid and effective manner, but for the benefit of those actually responsible, not in favor of justice.

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<sup>18</sup> GT PN 51-01 S003 11/19-25/1984, summary of police activities, no sender or addressee [Internal AHPN registration 4656].

<sup>19</sup> GT PN 51-01 S003 12/03-09/1984, Summary of police activities, no sender or addressee [Internal AHPN registration 4657].

The facts of this case constitute a grave violation of the right to life of Mr. Juan Sotoj Olivares and the denial of his relatives' right to justice.

Members of the National Police aware of the fact:

Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz  
*Director General of the PN.*

Artillery Colonel DEM Oscar Humberto Santiago Cárdenas  
*Deputy Director General of the PN.*

Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN.*

Lieutenant Colonel of Police  
Gustavo Enrique Aldana Marroquín<sup>20</sup>  
*First Corps Duty Chief.*

Carlos René Valle Valle<sup>21</sup>  
*Amatitlán PN Substation Chief.*

The Army chain of command during the events and their consequences:

Brigadier General Oscar Humberto Mejía Vítores  
*Head of State and Minister of National Defense.*

Colonel Rodolfo Lobos Zamora  
*Chief of the National Defense Chiefs of Staff*  
Colonel César Augusto Cáceres Rojas  
*Deputy Chief of the National Defense Chiefs of Staff*

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<sup>20</sup> GT PN 23 DSC 11/23/1984, memorandum addressed to the Second Chief of the First Corps of the PN by Police Lieutenant Víctor Manuel Lima Vega, Chief of Services of the National Police First Corps [Internal AHPN registration 4956].

GT PN 23 DSC 11/27/1984, order of the day No. 170/- no direct recipient, signed by Aldana Marroquín, Chief of the National Police First Corps [Internal AHPN registration 4988].

These documents, in addition to confirming the name of the Chief of the First Corps, illustrate the changes made in the Amatitlán Substation three and seven days after the events.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, the Chief of the Amatitlán Substation was replaced on November 23rd, 1984, by Lieutenant Mario Cesar Gómez, and on November 27th of that same year, a further change was made, with the appointment of officer Rolando Santos Morales.

Infantry Colonel DEM Byron Disrael Lima Estrada  
*Director of the Intelligence Office (D2)*

Honor Guard Second Command <sup>22</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel José Domingo García Samayoa  
*Director of Operations, National Defense General Staff*

Pablo Nuila Hub  
*Chief of the Presidential General Staff.*

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<sup>22</sup> In the lists of officers reviewed in the declassified documents of the NSA, the name of the officer who was second in command at the date of the events does not appear, but rather the names of those who occupied the position before and after 11/20/1984: Jaime Hernández Méndez (09/01/1981 to 11/23/1982) and Guillermo Arturo Vargas Barrera (taking over 09/05/1985). Officer Jaime Hernández Méndez was commander of the Honor Guard Brigade from 03/24/1982 to 01/13/1986 and was promoted to the rank of Colonel on 02/17/1984 while occupying the post. In: National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal - Army Units and Officers, volume I, List of Military Officers*. See, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/Oficiales.RTF>.

## 3.5 JORGE ALBERTO CHÁVEZ VÁSQUEZ AND HÉCTOR MANUEL DE LEÓN ESCOBAR

NOVEMBER 28th, 1983



Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez<sup>1</sup>



Héctor Manuel De León Escobar<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

This investigation file was constructed using information concerning the victims from the Military Diary and the documents of the AHPN. With regard to the latter, fourteen documents relating directly to the events in question were located and analyzed. Among those found were:

- Confidential memoranda addressed to the Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Army.
- A memorandum addressed to the Chief of the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT).
- Reports written by the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT) and other PN agencies.
- Documents informing the Director General of the activities of various corps of the Police in these events.
- Reports from the Telephones Office of the Directorate General.

Also quoted are a further eight documents from the AHPN that back up elements relating to the social and political context of the period.

<sup>1</sup> Photograph taken from the Military Diary, at: <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf> p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



## 2. Background

### 2.1 The Military Diary

The book “*La verdad detrás del Diario Militar; desapariciones forzadas en Guatemala 1982-1985*” (The Truth Behind the Military Diary, Forced Disappearances in Guatemala, 1982-1985), published in September 2006 by a group of social organizations,<sup>3</sup> explains that the document known as the Military Diary was first presented to the public in Washington, D.C., on May 29th, 1999 by the National Security Archive (NSA).<sup>4</sup> Based on the studies and analysis performed on this document by the specialist Kate Doyle<sup>5</sup> it has been established that it was created by Guatemalan Presidential Intelligence through its office known as *The Archive*.<sup>6</sup>

The Military Diary is a sort of record of operations in which the authors made regular notes over the course of 19 months on the detentions and executions that apparently formed part of a counterinsurgency campaign aimed at destroying guerrilla organizations.

Each person registered is identified with a letter and correlative number relating to the date of the capture. For example, the oldest date that appears is August 29th, 1983, that of the capture of Teresa Graciela Samayoa Morales, registration No. 1. This is the first in a chain of captures that continues up to registration No. 175, for which there is no date of capture, only that of the detainee’s “*handover to S-2 Xela*” - March 19th, 1985.<sup>7</sup>

The letter that appears in the records stands for the guerrilla organization to which each victim allegedly belonged. In the case studied here, the people captured appear registered as Z.27 (Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez, known as

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<sup>3</sup> Tzuk Kim-Pop Movement, National Human Rights Movement, the Famdegua Association, and the International Center for Human Rights Research, CIIDH.

<sup>4</sup> *La verdad detrás del Diario Militar. Desapariciones forzadas en Guatemala, 1982-1985* (Guatemala: Movimiento Tzuk Kim-Pop, Movimiento Nacional por los Derechos Humanos, Asociación Famdegua, Centro Internacional para Investigaciones en Derechos Humanos, 2006), p.18.

<sup>5</sup> Expert on archives and human rights. Head of the Guatemala project of the National Security Archive, NSA.

<sup>6</sup> In 1964, with the technical and financial support of the US Office of Public Safety (OPS), the Regional Telecommunications Center (CRT) was created within the context of the Conference of Central American Armies (CONDECA). From its creation, this intelligence office was identified by various names assigned with each change of government, but it was commonly known as “*The Regional*” and later also as “*The Archive*.”

<sup>7</sup> *La verdad detrás del Diario Militar*, pp. 19, 25, and 78.

*Manolo*) and Z.28 (Héctor Manuel de León Escobar, pseudonym *Omar*), the letter “Z” is linked to militants from the Guatemalan Workers’ Party, PGT.<sup>8</sup>

The book “*La verdad detrás del Diario Militar, desapariciones forzadas en Guatemala 1982-1985*” also presents the results of the analysis of the diary’s contents, saying:

“...it contains a register of one hundred and eighty three (183) people kidnapped, identified as belonging to guerrilla organizations. For each person, a record is made of their name(s), surname(s), aliases (or false names); the great majority have a photograph, and the date and time of their detention (capture) are also recorded very precisely, together with a brief description of the actions and circumstances of the kidnapping and their ultimate destiny. These records make it possible to establish exactly how long the kidnap victims remained in the hands of their captors.”<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2 About the Archive of the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations, CRIO

A number of studies have made a detailed analysis of the existence and functioning of military intelligence units as essential components in the implementation of counterinsurgency policies and strategies during the period of the armed conflict.<sup>10</sup> The documents of the AHPN have brought to light information on jointly coordinated intelligence agencies formed by the various State security forces, providing evidence of the nature of the relationships, activities and communication established between the PN and the Army.

In 1964, with the assistance of the United States’ Office of Public Safety, the Regional Telecommunications Center (CRT) was created in Guatemala as the forerunner of what came to be known as *The Regional* and eventually as *The Archive*. During the government of General Efraín Ríos Montt, it was given the official title of the General Archive and Support Services of the Office of the President of the Republic (AGSA). During the term of General Humberto

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 19, 20, and 21. Letters used in the records have been matched as follows: “W” the Organization of People in Arms, ORPA; “X” the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, EGP; “Y” the Rebel Armed Forces, FAR and “Z” the Guatemalan Workers’ Party, PGT.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.18.

<sup>10</sup> See CEH Report; *Guatemala Nunca Más. Informe de la Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado* (Guatemala: ODHAG, 1998); Carmen Rosa De León-Escribano, *Evolución de las estructuras de inteligencia en Guatemala* (Washington: REDES, 2001).

Mejía Vítores, it was renamed the Secretariat of Intelligence of the Office of the President of the Republic.

The report by the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) report mentions that the CRT facilitated communications between various police and military units. This agency was constituted within a unified system of coordination and unification of the records on persons considered to be enemies of the dominant political interests. Based on the analysis done by the CRT, police or military operational plans were created.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the documents found in the AHPN show that, as part of its investigative work, the CRT sent requests to the Judicial Police for the police and political records of certain citizens,<sup>12</sup> lists of people supposedly belonging to “*leftist factions*,”<sup>13</sup> identification and location of people from Guatemala or overseas,<sup>14</sup> among other procedures.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO) was set up. The purpose of this office was to coordinate and control the intelligence work being carried out by a variety of State security agencies and “*to make urban counterinsurgency operations more flexible and efficient by means of greater coordination of the activities of the security agencies.*”<sup>15</sup>

It functioned as an organization involving the participation of the President of the Republic as well as the Commander in Chief of the Army, the Minister of National Defense, the Minister of the Interior, the Director General of the National Police, the Chiefs of the Army Intelligence Office (D2), the Treasury Guard and Immigration.<sup>16</sup> Its function was essentially that of operational coordination of

<sup>11</sup> CEH Report, volume II, pp. 105-111.

<sup>12</sup> GT PN 50 S040 01/13/1970, ref. 1, oficio No. 396/of.7o., addressed to the chief of the Regional Telecommunications Center, CRT, Engineers Major Mauricio R. Izquierdo by the Secretary of the Judicial Police, Jorge Jiménez Solís [Internal AHPN registration 30907].

GT PN 50 S040 05/11/1970, ref. 12, oficio No.3925/mtrm., sent to the chief of the CRT, by the second chief of the Judicial Police [Internal AHPN registration 30948].

GT PN 50 S040 05/20/1970, ref. 15, oficio No. 4270, sent to the chief of the CRT by the Secretary of the Judicial Police, Jorge Jiménez Solís [Internal AHPN registration 30949].

GT PN 50 S040 08/11/1970, ref. 23 sent to the Secretary of the CRT by Fernando Zambrano Díaz, chief of Judicial Police Archives [Internal AHPN registration 30950].

<sup>13</sup> GT PN 50 S040 04/06/1970, ref. No. 9, stamp of the Judicial Police Archive, in handwriting, the phrase: “*Regional Telecommunications Center*” and the text “*Recorded on file as belonging to leftist factions.*” A list of approximately 275 people appears in a document titled List of Persons Currently on File as Belonging to Leftist Factions [Internal AHPN registration 12587].

<sup>14</sup> GT PN 50 S040 09/03/1970, Ref. 26 oficio 8090/jbdd., addressed to the chief of the CRT by Lieutenant Colonel of Police Vicente Morales Monterroso, Chief of the Judicial Police [Internal AHPN registration 30921].

GT PN 50 S040 11/21/1970, Ref. 42, oficio No. 12068/mtrm., oficio sent to the Regional Telecommunications Center by Lt. Colonel of Police, Vicente Morales Monterroso, chief of Judicial Police [Internal AHPN registration 30922].

<sup>15</sup> Schirmer, Jennifer, *Intimididades del proyecto político de los militares*, second edition, Guatemala, FLACSO, 2001, p. 264

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

the uniformed groups doing intelligence work such as the Ambulatory Military Police (PMA), the PN, and the Treasury Guard. The unit even contained personnel from the police institution.<sup>17</sup>

Study of the whole set of security plans in the AHPN shows that they were designed in two phases. One of these was a prevention and alarm phase that included reconnaissance, information gathering, surveillance and control. The other was operational, providing for the deployment of the various military forces and those of the PN in accordance with the decisions of the command centralized through CRIO.

Generally, these plans were created to be carried out in the capital city, the surrounding areas and nearby towns. The majority of the military forces (air and land) participated directly in them, together with the other public security forces, as part of the counterinsurgency policy that was implemented throughout the national territory.

Added to this, the subordination of the PN to the counterinsurgency plans and strategy was guaranteed during these operations by means of instructions. Army commanders required that the units, forces or commands participating, on the basis of these instructions, create their own plans and submit a copy to the EMGE on the corresponding date.<sup>18</sup> Thus, any action carried out by the PN was subject to plans that under the control and command of the Army. As a result, the PN received direct orders from the CRIO<sup>19</sup> and the Second Section of the EMGE.<sup>20</sup>

Other studies confirm the existence of an intelligence *system* characterized by the generation of constant, comprehensive information by a structure that was essentially military and “*that encompassed other State structures, where it has been able to construct intelligence units and networks.*” They also show that for “*the sake of convenience of internal and external security, the military intelligence system coordinated, supported, and was assisted by the information*

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, Security Order No. 08-79, issued by temporary chief of the EMGE. Attached is a surveillance service report for 05/01/1979, Ref. 1871, addressed to the chief of the Detective Corps and written by Abraham González Martínez, Deputy Inspector 23 of the National Police Detective Corps. [Internal AHPN registration 12732].

<sup>19</sup> GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Fire*, submitted to the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

<sup>20</sup> GT PN 51-01 S005 06/29/1984, Security Plan No. 002-84, signatures and seals of the director of EMDN intelligence, Lima Estrada and chief of the C/ICIA section of the EMDN, stamped *Secret* [Internal AHPN registration 4912].  
GT PN 26 S001 12/05/1982, *Plan Fire*, submitted to the interim chief of the EMGE, Infantry Colonel DEM Héctor Alejandro Gramajo Morales, stamped and sealed. Stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 573171. Internal AHPN registration 26484].

*and intelligence produced by the structures of the Presidential General Staff and the National Police.*"<sup>21</sup>

The Report "*Guatemala, Never Again,*" by *The Inter-diocesan Project for the Recuperation of the Historical Memory* of the Archbishopric's Office for Human Rights, explains some of the military intelligence strategies which were implemented and which have a close relationship to this case. The report states:

*"One of the objectives of torture is to achieve the conversion of the person tortured into a collaborator. Exposed to extreme suffering, people may supply names and information, genuine or otherwise, in an attempt to lessen that suffering."*<sup>22</sup>

It adds,

*"Another factor encouraging betrayal is the use by military intelligence of internal problems, power struggles or personal dissatisfaction... victims are captured in order to exacerbate their depressive or aggressive state of mind until achieving their absorption into the apparatus of their former enemy. Once the persuasion stage is complete, the new recruits are quickly involved in operations to kill or capture their former associates so as to leave no way back."*<sup>23</sup>

The report cites an actual case:

*"Carlos Quinteros, director of the PGT, detained by intelligence in 1983, collaborated so effectively with his former enemies that he was involved in the capture of nearly 70 of his former comrades."*<sup>24</sup>

The Military Diary records the capture of Carlos Humberto Quinteros García, known as *Commandante Miguel*, registration number "*Z.10,*"<sup>25</sup> on October 9th, 1983. Quinteros was a member of the Military Commission of the Guatemalan Workers' Party (COMIL-PGT) and it records that he "*Turned in*

<sup>21</sup> De León-Escribano, *Evolución de las estructuras de inteligencia en Guatemala*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>22</sup> *Guatemala Nunca Más*, p. 202.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> This is the first record appearing in the Military Diary in relation to the Guatemalan Workers' Party, PGT, at: <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf>, p. 72.

3 houses... On 10OCT83, agents entered the house located on 9th Avenue 'A' 1-34, Zone 1, where the PGT archive was supposedly kept."<sup>26</sup> The Diary does not mention whether he was executed or released.

Quinteros García was captured along with Juan Matías Palacios, *Joaquín*, "Z.11" and Héctor Rolando Valdéz Guzmán, Guillermo or *Tatu*, "Z.12"; the latter two were executed. Following this case, the Military Diary records the capture of dozens of members of the PGT, among them Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez and Héctor Manuel De León Escobar.

The Military Diary refers to Quinteros García by his pseudonym in its description of the capture of Jorge Alfonso Velásquez Soto, "Z.26," stating that he "said that because of the capture of (p) Miguel, everyone had taken the necessary security measures, but that today..." In the case of Héctor Manuel De León Escobar, it mentions that, in the process of capturing him "he was surrounded and in the shooting he injured (p) Miguel and Canahuí."<sup>27</sup> The assumption is that, in both cases where "(p) Miguel" is mentioned, the reference is to Carlos Humberto Quinteros García.

### 2.3 Who Were Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez and Héctor Manuel De León Escobar?

The only documented details we have concerning these two men are those that appear in the AHPN and the Military Diary.

According to the Military Diary, Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez was a member of the central region of the Guatemalan Workers' Party, PGT.<sup>28</sup> He was in charge of the party's information and intelligence apparatus. He was 31 years old when he was killed.<sup>29</sup> He used the pseudonym Manolo and probably the false identity Ricardo Antonio Gómez Álvarez.

Héctor Manuel De León Escobar, 19 years of age,<sup>30</sup> was chief of the military squad of the Guatemalan Workers' Party, PGT-PC. He used the false identity Daniel Augusto Salguero Guzmán and the pseudonym *Omar*.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> GT PN 30-01 S009 11/28/1983, new developments report from the telephones office of the Directorate General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 15349].

GT PN 50 DSC memorandum sent to the First Chief of the DIT by the Second Chief of the DIT, Br. Elmee Avil'y Barrios Argueta reporting on events occurring between November 26 and 28, 1983 [Internal AHPN registration 11770].

<sup>30</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, confidential report addressed to the chief of the DIT by investigator No. 363 Luis Humberto Román Zelada [Internal AHPN registration 11777].

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

### 3. Description of the Events

The event we examine here took place in the city of Guatemala on November 28th, 1983. The description presents first the details recorded in the Military Diary, then those provided by the AHPN documents in order to make a comparison of both sources. The information obtained from the AHPN is divided into two parts, the first relating to the events in zone 1 on the morning of November 28th and the second concerning information on an operation carried out in zone 12 that same afternoon.

The Military Diary states that on November 28th, 1983, the capture took place of Jorge Alfonso Gregorio Velásquez Soto, known as “Roberto” (also identified by the code “Z.26”),

*“...a member of the PGT.PC.11/28/1983: Detained on 8th Avenue and 12th Street, zone 1.*

*He said that due to the capture of (p) Miguel, all of them had taken their respective security measures, but that on that day at 12:00 hours, he made contact with (p) MANOLO, MANUEL AND OMAR at the Pollo Campero restaurant on 9th Avenue, zone 1, as a result of which an operation was mounted; the operation was detected, and an exchange using firearms ensued, resulting in the death of (p) MANOLO on 10th Street and 8th Avenue, zone 1.*

*01/21/84: (+) left”.*<sup>32</sup> Immediately after this, the same source reports that that same day the following event took place:

*“JORGE ALBERTO CHAVEZ VASQUEZ*

*(p) MANOLO*

*Member of the PGT Central Region.*

*In charge of the Information and Intelligence Apparatus.*

*11/28/83: Died on 10th Street and 8th Avenue, zone 1, when he detected the group and sounded the alert he was gunned down. He was the husband of (p) ELBA, sister of (p) MANUEL.*

*1970, traveled to Moscow and Cuba.”*<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf>, page 67.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

*“HECTOR MANUEL DE LEON ESCOBAR*

*(p) OMAR*

*Chief of the PGT Military Squad. PC.*

*False name: DANIEL AUGUSTO SALGUERO GUZMAN.*

*11/28/83: He was found in the company of (p) Manolo, at the time of the shooting he fled and his whereabouts are unknown. At 17:00 hours, his house was located at 12th Street and 5th Avenue, zone 12, where surveillance was established. He was taken by surprise in the company of his sister and on seeing the police he fled, heading towards 5th Avenue and 13th Street, zone 11, where he ran into a mechanical repair shop, injuring the owner; he was surrounded, and in the ensuing gunfight injured (p) Miguel and C; he was cornered and being injured surrendered, he was taken to the hospital of the 2nd Corps of the PN, where he died as a consequence of his wounds.”<sup>34</sup>*

### 3.1 Eighth Avenue, zone 1

In the AHPN, the events occurring on the morning of November 28th, 1983 are recorded in three documents. A memorandum written by the Second Chief of the Department of Technical Investigation of the PN sent to the First Chief of that department,<sup>35</sup> a report from the Telephones Office of the Directorate General of the PN,<sup>36</sup> and a “*Confidential Memorandum for the information of the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and the Minister of Defense, New Developments in the Capital.*”<sup>37</sup>

The *memorandum* written by the Second Chief of the DIT states that “*UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS driving a white paneled vehicle who had possibly attempted to KIDNAP SOMEONE who defended him or herself, taking part in A SHOOT-OUT, resulting in the deaths of two people and injuries to others...*”<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> GT PN 50 DSC memorandum sent to the First Chief of the DIT by the Second Chief of the DIT, Br. Elmee Avil’y Barrios Argueta reporting on events occurring between November 26 and 28, 1983 [Internal AHPN registration 11770].

<sup>36</sup> GT PN 30-01 S009 11/28/1983, new developments report from the telephones office of the Directorate General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 15349].

<sup>37</sup> GT PN 30 S004 11/29/1983, oficio Noct. SG/Trp., confidential memorandum informing the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and Minister for National Defense of new developments in the capital, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 11772].

<sup>38</sup> GT PN 50 DSC memorandum sent to the First Chief of the DIT by the Second Chief of the DIT, Br. Elmee Avil’y Barrios Argueta reporting on events occurring between November 26 and 28, 1983 [Internal AHPN registration 11770].



The memorandum sent to the Head of State reports that as a consequence of the events, eleven people were injured (including a minor) and two more died. The document states:

*“HOSPITALIZATION OF VICTIMS SHOT BY UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS”*  
*Yesterday at 12:20 hours, the following people were brought from 8th Avenue and 10th Street, zone 1 for treatment at the Hospital General San Juan de Dios, MANFREDO ANIBAL LOPES Y LOPEZ..., ANASTACIO MIGUEL BARRERA BARRENO SAJ..., CIRIACO HERNADEZ ORTIZ..., TIMOTEO AJCIBINAC SICIMIT..., ELMER ALBERTO CADENA LIMA..., CARLOS ENRIQUE BATRES RAMAZZINI..., JOSE IXCHOC..., IRMA YOLANDA MARINEZ DUARTE..., ANA DELY CHAVEZ SOLORZANO..., JOAQUIN ALBERTO HERNANDEZ..., JUAN CARLOS VELASQUEZ... ”<sup>39</sup>*

The same report notes that the victims had been injured by firearms and that:

*“...all were caused by individuals unknown at the scene of the events; they were hospitalized; the relevant courts have been informed of the case. Abandoned at the scene was the vehicle, license plates P-123415, make Toyota, color green, model year 1970, with a number of bullet marks on it; it was stolen at gunpoint by unidentified individuals from Mr. SERGIO IDTALO REMOLA FERNANDEZ.”<sup>40</sup>*

In relation to the two people killed, the report says:

*“DIED DUE TO BULLET WOUNDS*  
*Yesterday at 13:10 hours, His Honor the 3rd Criminal Justice of the Peace, duly associated, appeared at 8th Avenue and 12th Street, zone 1, to initiate proceedings relating to the body of: ARTURO RAFAEL HERNÁNDEZ, 47 years of age, further details unknown; he died at 12:00 as a result of three bullet wounds, caliber unknown, to the head, caused moments before by unidentified individuals who after this fled; immediately he was ordered to be taken to the IGSS General Hospital accident unit for an autopsy.-”*

<sup>39</sup> GT PN 30 S004 11/29/1983, oficio Noct. SG/Trp., confidential memorandum informing the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and Minister for National Defense of new developments in the capital, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 11772].

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

*SHOT TO DEATH*

*Yesterday at 13:25 hours, His Honor the 3rd Criminal Justice of the Peace presented himself duly associated at 8th Ave. and 10th Street, zone 1, in order to issue the certificate for the body of: RICARDO ANTONIO GOMEZ ALVAREZ, 31 years old, further details unknown; he died at 12:30 due to three bullet wounds, make and caliber unknown, in the chest region, caused by unidentified individuals who after this fled; immediately the order was given to take the deceased to the San Vicente Hospital for autopsy.”<sup>41</sup>*

The report from the Telephones Office of the Directorate General of the PN also records the details of eleven people wounded and two dead.

### 3.2 Zone 12

The Military Diary says that Mr. De León Escobar survived the exchange of fire that took place in zone 1, managing to escape. However, the pursuit was taken up once more later that day at a residence in zone 12.

Eight documents from the AHPN contain the PN's version of what happened on the evening of November 28th, 1983.

One of the reports is the “oficio” of the same date written by Police Colonel and Commander of the Fifth Corps, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, who informed the Director General of the PN, Colonel Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz as follows:

*“...today at 17:30 hours, the undersigned, commanding a reaction platoon, provided backup for members of EMP Intelligence, as information had been received that at the aforementioned time they had come under attack by alleged subversive criminals.*

*Subsequently, following investigation, a raid was carried out at the residence located at 5th Avenue 12-56, zone 12, where it was found that the domicile in question had functioned as a safe house for one of the Clandestine Factions operating in this country...*

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

*In this operation, no one was detained, and regarding what was found there, everything was removed by members of EMP Intelligence, with this Corps being assigned to provide security services at said residence.*"<sup>42</sup>

The same information is recorded in a report on new developments sent to the Deputy Director General of the PN.<sup>43</sup>

That day (11/28/1983), Inspector number 363, Luis Humberto Román Zelada, informed the Chief of the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT) that, upon assembling at the aforementioned location, Lieutenant Barahona González of the PN Fifth Corps had informed him of the following:

*"That at said place a Guerrilla Stronghold of the Clandestine Organizations the PGT and EGP had been discovered, and that members of the Army Second Section had acted, and that they had supported the action with a platoon..."*

*The same Lieutenant González Barahona reported that members of the BROE had transferred to the National Police Hospital an injured individual known as "OMAR," an EGP militant, whose real name is Daniel Augusto Salguero Guzmán, 19 years of age..."<sup>44</sup>*

A second report by the DIT describes the incident in similar terms:

*"A... it was possible to establish that the shooting had involved Subversive Criminals organized in the Guatemalan Workers' Party (P.G.T.) in the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (E.G.P.) and members of the National Defense Chiefs of Staff Intelligence Office, supported by members of the National Police Fifth Corps.*

*B... the Security Forces described discovered a subversive stronghold for the Organizations the P.G.T. and the E.G.P., which sparked the shooting between the Subversive Criminals and the Authorities, resulting in injury to an individual named Daniel Augusto Salguero Guzmán (ps) "OMAR," 19 years of age, who*

<sup>42</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 11/28/1983, oficio No. 1585/83. Ref. Of. Eiri., sent to the Director General PN by commander of the Fifth Corps, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Internal AHPN registration 11773].

<sup>43</sup> GT PN 31 DSC 11/29/1983, report on new developments written by officer in charge of hearings/Crma., of the Office of the Deputy Director General of the National Police addressed to the Deputy Director General [Internal AHPN registration 11780].

<sup>44</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, confidential report addressed to the chief of the DIT by investigator No. 363 Luis Humberto Román Zelada [Internal AHPN registration 11777].

*was taken to the National Police Hospital by members of the Fifth Corps.*"<sup>45</sup>

The person the Detective Corps identified as Daniel Augusto Salguero Guzmán, with the pseudonym "*Omar*," is recorded in the Military Diary under the legal name of Héctor Manuel De León Escobar.

An annual report titled "*Shooting Injuries, 1983*," written by the Department of Technical Investigation (DIT) on November 29 of that year, contains the names of eleven people wounded on 8th Avenue and 10th Street who were admitted to the San Juan de Dios Hospital. This report also records the name of Daniel Augusto Salguero Guzmán, wounded on 5th Avenue 12-56, Zone 1 (the name, avenue and street coincide with the other documents, but not the zone); it states that he was admitted to the National Police hospital, and in the Observations column notes:

*"He was admitted with bullet wounds, caliber unknown, one in the left leg without an exit wound and the other in the region of the frontal lobe with an exit wound in the occipital region."*<sup>46</sup>

Some of the documents contain inconsistencies. No link is made between this joint operation and the events that took place that same morning in zone 1. There are various reports concerning the items seized at the house in zone 12, several versions from the office that received them, and also as to whether in this joint operation by the security forces anyone was injured or captured.

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<sup>45</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report by the DIT, no addressee, no sender, subject, "*Guerrilla stronghold discovered on 5th Ave. 12-56 zone 12, by security forces on 281740NOV8*" [Internal AHPN registration 11779].

<sup>46</sup> GT PN 50 DSC list of gunshot injuries, 1983 [Internal AHPN registration 11172].

The aforementioned final report by the DIT<sup>47</sup> states that the weapons and items found at the place were taken by members of the PN Fifth Corps under the command of Police Lieutenant Colonel Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano.

Investigator number 392, Julio César Jongezoon Ovalle, also reported to the Chief of the DIT regarding this operation. However, his report makes no mention of the capture of any injured insurgents, although it does confirm that the weapons were collected by the Commander of the Fifth Corps and mentions that the operation concluded at 23:00 hours.<sup>48</sup>

The reports written give partial details of the items seized at the house in zone 12. Thus, some contain information on the type of weapons found, and PGT uniforms and documentation.<sup>49</sup> One, dated November 30th, only mentions the weapons seized.<sup>50</sup> A document sent to the Chief of the General Archive and Support Services of the Head of State and the Minister for National Defense by the Chief of the DIT, enclosed along with the documents seized<sup>51</sup> “several sheets of bond paper, ONE (1) containing what are possibly Japanese characters, ONE (1) medical prescription in the name of EVELIA GIRON RUANO, and ONE (1) driver decal for an automobile...”

Another report from the DIT (without a sender or addressee), lists in addition to the weapons, papers and other items seized, eight numbers of vehicle license plates with the names of their respective owners according to the PN plates Archive<sup>52</sup> A further report by the DIT reports the sets of plates found<sup>53</sup> and yet another, again from the DIT, records weapons, uniforms, and papers.<sup>54</sup>

## 6. Analysis of the Case

Based on the information obtained from the Military Diary and the AHPN documents, it is possible to make a comparison of some of the details relating

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report produced by the DIT by investigator No. 392 Julio César Jongezoon Ovalle addressed to the Chief of the DIT, subject “*Extended report on guerrilla stronghold*” [Internal AHPN registration 11778].

<sup>49</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 11/28/1983, oficio No. 1585/83, Ref. Of. Eiri., sent to the Director General PN by commander of the Fifth Corps, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Internal AHPN registration 11773].

<sup>50</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 11/30/1983, report without sender, addressee or stamps [Internal AHPN registration 11775].

<sup>51</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 11/29/1983, oficio No. 1617-83, Ref. GAOB/sdep., sent to the Chief of the General Archive and Support Services of the Head of State and Minister for National Defense by Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco, chief of the DIT [Internal AHPN registration 11774].

<sup>52</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report by the DIT, no addressee, no sender, subject “*Guerrilla stronghold discovered on 5th Ave. 12-56 zone 12, by security forces on 281740NOV83*” [Internal AHPN registration 11779].

<sup>53</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, confidential report addressed to the chief of the DIT by investigator No. 363 Luis Humberto Román Zelada [Internal AHPN registration 11777].

<sup>54</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report produced by the DIT by investigator No. 392 Julio César Jongezoon Ovalle addressed to the Chief of the DIT, subject “*Extended report on guerrilla stronghold*” [Internal AHPN registration 11778].

to the events involving Chávez Vásquez and De León Escobar. This permits the identification of evident contradictions in the reports by the PN, which in turn gives rise to a series of unanswered questions with respect to what really happened throughout the day of November 28th, 1983.

Upon revisiting the events mentioned in the various documents already noted, it is possible to determine that:

Jorge Alfonso G. Velásquez Soto (*Roberto*), was captured on November 28th on 8th Avenue and 12th Street, zone 1,<sup>55</sup> moments before meeting with Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez (*Manolo*) and Héctor Manuel De León Escobar (*Omar*). According to the PN reports, a couple of blocks from the site where Velásquez was detained, a shoot-out took place due to “UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS” driving a white paneled vehicle who may have been trying to KIDNAP SOMEONE who defended him or herself, taking part in A SHOOT-OUT resulting in the deaths of two people and injuries to others... ”<sup>56</sup>

The PN reports contain certain inconsistencies as to the exact location of the events. They record that these took place on 8th Avenue, between 10th and 13th Streets, zone 1. The report by the Telephones Office of the Directorate General of the PN mentions the death of Arturo Rafael Hernández twice, but first it states that he was attacked on 8th Avenue and 13th Street and that he died from wounds to the chest and abdomen; then it says that he died from head wounds on 8th Avenue and 12th Street.<sup>57</sup>

The record concerning Velásquez Soto (*Roberto*) in the Military Diary mentions that he “made contact with (p) MANOLO, MANUEL AND OMAR at the Pollo Campero on 9th Avenue, Zone 1...”<sup>58</sup> From neither the Military Diary nor the PN records is it possible to establish who Arturo Rafael Hernández was and whether he was also a member of the PGT, whether he was the other person to be contacted and used the pseudonym *Manuel* or whether he had simply been an innocent bystander.

The other person killed was Ricardo Antonio Gómez Álvarez, who in terms of his age, the circumstances of his death and the place where he was shot down according to PN reports, coincides with the record in the Military Diary of the case of Z.27, which corresponds to the real name of Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf>, p. 67.

<sup>56</sup> GT PN 50 DSC memorandum sent to the First Chief of the DIT by the Second Chief of the DIT, Br. Elmee Avil'y Barrios Argueta reporting on events occurring between November 26 and 28, 1983 [Internal AHPN registration 11770].

<sup>57</sup> GT PN 30-01 S009 11/28/1983, new developments report from the telephones office of the Directorate General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 15349].

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf>, p. 67.

(*Manolo*). The police report mentions that the body of Gómez Álvarez was taken by order of the Judge to the morgue of the San Vicente hospital to be autopsied. While the events in question were taking place, Héctor Manuel De León Escobar (*Omar*) managed to escape from the scene.

Despite the fact that the PN reports make no link between the shootout that occurred at midday in the center of the capital city with the discovery of a “*guerrilla stronghold*” in zone 12 that same evening, from the details unearthed it can be inferred that Héctor Manuel De León Escobar (*Omar*), following his escape from the shootout in zone 1, headed for a house located on 5th Avenue 12-56, zone 12. The report by the commander of the Fifth Corps,<sup>59</sup> Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, addressed to the Director General of the PN, states that, “*commanding a reaction platoon, they provided backup for members of EMP Intelligence*”<sup>60</sup> at the address indicated.

There is evidence that the capture of De León Escobar took place as he attempted to flee down 5th Avenue and 13th Street, zone 12. As he fled, he attempted to hide in an auto repair shop where the security forces had cornered and wounded him. During this, it seems that the owner of the shop, Jorge Cano, was also injured. However, this version of events was publicly contradicted by PN spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel of Police Mario Ramírez Ruiz.<sup>61</sup>

In a “*Confidential memorandum for the information of the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and Minister of Defense,*” it was reported that on November 28th, 1983,

*“...at 17:40 hours, proceeding from 14th Street 5-29, zone II, Mr. JORGE CANO LÓPEZ, 25 years old, entered Roosevelt Hospital; he had sustained a wound from a bullet of unknown manufacture and caliber in the scapular region, left side, caused by unknown individuals in front of his residence who then fled,*

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<sup>59</sup> Numerous documents analyzed show that the Special Operations Command, COE, the Reaction and Special Operations Battalion, BROE and the Fifth Corps represented the same structure from the foundation of the COE in 1982. For further details, see chapters I and II of this report.

<sup>60</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 11/28/1983, oficio No. 1585/83. Ref. Of. Eiri., sent to the Director General PN by commander of the Fifth Corps, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Internal AHPN registration 11773].

<sup>61</sup> *Prensa Libre*, 11/29/1983, p. 37.

<sup>62</sup> GT PN 30 S004 11/29/1983, oficio Noct. SG/Trp., confidential memorandum informing the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and Minister for National Defense of new developments in the capital, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 11772].

*resulting in his hospitalization; the case was reported to the 6th Criminal Peace Court.*"<sup>62</sup>

The same information was issued in the reports from the Telephones Office of the Police Directorate General.<sup>63</sup>

Some of the contradictions identified through close study of the PN reports have to do with the version reported by the commander of the Fifth Corps Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano in comparison with that of the other police agencies.

In his report, Commander Cifuentes Cano states that in this operation "*no one was detained,*" which contradicts the accounts in the other seven police reports of the event. These all say that, following a shoot-out,

*"...an injury was sustained by an individual named Daniel Augusto Salguero Guzmán (ps) "OMAR," 19 years of age, who was taken to the National Police Hospital by members of the Fifth Corps.*"<sup>64</sup>

During and after the events, the Official Spokesman of the PN, Lieutenant Colonel of Police Mario Ramírez Ruiz,<sup>65</sup> in public statements to the press regarding the attack in zone 1, insisted on the version involving a group of unknown criminals attempting to carry out a kidnapping.<sup>66</sup> In answer to the media's questions about the operation in zone 12, he denied the existence of anyone who had been wounded, captured and taken to the Police Hospital by members of the PN Fifth Corps.<sup>67</sup>

Another unclear detail in the PN reports has to do with the seizure of the weapons, papers and other items found in the house in zone 12. Commander Cifuentes Cano reports that,

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<sup>63</sup> GT PN 30-02 S001 11/28/1983, new developments report from the telephones office [Internal AHPN registration 25324].

<sup>64</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report by the DIT, no addressee, no sender, subject "*Guerrilla stronghold discovered on 5th Ave. 12-56 zone 12, by security forces on 281740NOV83*" [Internal AHPN registration 11779].

<sup>65</sup> In 1981 he occupied the position of Director of the PN School.

<sup>66</sup> *Prensa Libre*, November 29, 1983, p. 8.

<sup>67</sup> *Diario Impacto*, November 29, 1983, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> GT PN 51-02 S021 11/28/1983, oficio No. 1585/83. Ref. Of. Eiri., sent to the Director General PN by commander of the Fifth Corps, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano [Internal AHPN registration 11773].



*“ regarding what was found there, everything was removed by members of EMP Intelligence, with this Corps being assigned to provide security services at said residence. ”*<sup>68</sup>

Three DIT reports produced between November 28th and 30th state that, *“the weapons seized... remained in the possession of the Chief of the National Police Fifth Corps, JUAN FRANCISCO CIFUENTES CANO.”*<sup>69</sup> *“The weapons found, together with the other items, were taken by members of the National Police Fifth Corps under the command of Lieutenant Colonel of Police, JUAN FRANCISCO CIFUENTES CANO.”*<sup>70</sup> *“Items and weapons collected by members of the 5th Corps...”*<sup>71</sup>

The Military Diary states that De León Escobar was taken by surprise in the company of his sister, but none of the PN reports mentions the presence of any woman at the house, much less what might have happened to her. It says only that *“ROSA ROSALES, WHO LIVES NEXT DOOR TO SAID RESIDENCE, KNOWS THE OWNER AS LETICIA AND DOES NOT KNOW HER ADDRESS.”*<sup>72</sup>

Another detail pointing to the presence of a woman during these events is that Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco, Chief of the DIT, sent some of the documents found during the search to the General Archive and Support Services (AGSA)<sup>73</sup> of the Head of State and the Ministry of National Defense. What he submitted consisted of several sheets of bond paper, a text in *“Japanese characters,”* a medical prescription in the name of Evelia Girón Ruano, and a driver decal.<sup>74</sup>

Evelia Girón Ruano appears in the Military Diary under the codename Z.35 *“(p) GERUNDIA AND ROSA. Member PGT. PC. 01/03/84: Captured. 01/28/84: Free for contacts.”* It is not known whether Evelia Girón Ruano was actually the sister of De León Escobar and whether she managed to escape during the raid.

In this case, analysis of the reports and the actions of the commander and officers of the Fifth Corps show the way in which information was concealed. It

<sup>69</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 11/30/1983, report without sender, addressee or stamps [Internal AHPN registration 11775].

<sup>70</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report by the DIT, no addressee, no sender, subject *“Guerrilla stronghold discovered on 5th Ave. 12-56 zone 12, by security forces on 281740NOV83.”* [Internal AHPN registration 11779].

<sup>71</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, report produced by the DIT by investigator No. 392 Julio César Jongezoon Ovalle addressed to the Chief of the DIT, subject *“Extended report on guerrilla stronghold”* [Internal AHPN registration 11778].

<sup>72</sup> GT PN 50 DSC 11/28/1983, confidential report addressed to the chief of the DIT by investigator No. 363 Luis Humberto Román Zelada [Internal AHPN registration 11777].

<sup>73</sup> Also known as *“The Regional”* or *“The Archive.”*

<sup>74</sup> GT PN 99 DSC 11/29/1983, oficio No. 1617-83, Ref. GAOB/sdep., sent to the Chief of the General Archive and Support Services of the Head of State and Minister for National Defense by Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco, chief of the DIT [Internal AHPN registration 11774].

was explicitly stated in the report to the Director General of the National Police that during the operation no one had been either captured or injured and that the weapons had been taken away by EMP Intelligence. According to the DIT reports, what occurred was the very opposite of that reported by the Fifth Corps.

The Military Diary says that, during the operation in zone 12, Escobar De León “*was surrounded and in the shooting wounded (p) Miguel and Canahúí...*” In the PN documents, as previously noted, the only people reported as having been injured were Escobar De León and Jorge Cano, owner of the repair shop, and no one else.

In this case there is evidence that the victim, Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez, was executed in zone 1 in the middle of an intelligence operation and taken to the morgue at the San Vicente Hospital under a false name. It is currently unknown whether the family was given access to any information about what happened and if they were able to recover the body.

Furthermore, there are clear indications that the Fifth Corps of the National Police, in coordination with the EMDN Intelligence Office and members of EMP Intelligence, continued with the operation, removing the wounded Héctor Manuel De León Escobar to the National Police Hospital beside the Police Second Corps building, where presumably he died as a result of his injuries. To date there is no official knowledge of his death, nor, if he did indeed die, of the whereabouts of his body.

It is notable that the documents of the Second Corps for November 28th, 1983 contain no reference to what occurred, particularly in zone 1, as this forms part of the geographical coverage of this corps. The developments reported at 03:00 hours on the 28th and the 29th mention only the admission to Center 1 of the Social Security hospital of Mr. Luis Alfredo López Argueta, wounded at 15:00 hours on 8th Avenue and 9th Street, zone 1, by two unidentified individuals.<sup>75</sup> The address coincides with the area where the shooting occurred, although the reported time does not. Another event, recorded at 17:45, is the presentation of a writ of habeas corpus for one Luis Hernández Orantes.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 11/29/1983, oficio No. 11,787/SC.of. WEGF, oficio sent to the Director General of the National Police by the commander of the Second Corps, Rubén Pineda y Pineda [Digital reference 3307723. Internal AHPN registration 30934].

<sup>76</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 11/28/1983, oficio No. 11,763, Ref.of.JVAC, sent to the Director General of the National Police by the commander of the Second Corps, Rubén Pineda y Pineda [Digital reference 3307724. Internal AHPN registration 30944].

Other documents studied in relation to this police corps and to the day of the events in question were the lists recording the movement of prisoner-patients admitted to the hospital during the previous 24 hours,<sup>77</sup> as well the list of prisoners<sup>78</sup> entering the jail also located at this police corps. However, no record was found to establish whether De León Escobar had entered this place.

In this case, Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez would seem to have been denied the right to life and Héctor Manuel De León Escobar, in addition to being denied the right to life, also had his right to personal well being and safety denied, though his being injured when he was taken captive, and without any knowledge of what transpired between the moment of his capture and presumed death.

## 5. Principal Actors

At the time of the events and according to the information in the Military Diary, Jorge Alberto Chávez Vásquez and Héctor Manuel De León Escobar were members of the Guatemalan Workers' Party, PGT.<sup>79</sup>

Based on the elements studied in the Background section of this report, especially the part referring to the existence of an intelligence system run by military structures known as *the Archive* and the Center for Compilation of Information and Operations (CRIO), among others, it is possible to affirm that in order to implement multiple counterinsurgency strategies, communications and coordination systems were set up between the Army and the National Police, as this case clearly illustrates.

The existence of military counterinsurgency plans such as the Plan de Campaña Victoria 82 and Plan Firmeza 83, along with the CRIO Plans, Plan Fire, and others confirm that the main military instruments for defeating those considered enemies were “*SCORCHED EARTH, DISPLACEMENT, PUNISHMENT, CONTROL AND ANNIHILATION OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, COVERT MILITARY, INTELLIGENCE, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS.*”<sup>80</sup>

The documents found in the AHPN show that a platoon from the Fifth Corps, commanded by Police Colonel Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, acted in

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<sup>77</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 11/28/1983, report on the movements of prisoner patients admitted in the last 24 hours sent to the Chief of the Second Corps Order Office by inspector No. 6697, René García Corado [Digital reference 3307940. Internal AHPN registration 30945].

<sup>78</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 11/28-29/2010, table of affiliations [Digital reference 3308384. Internal AHPN registration 30946].

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-colorpdf>, p. 67.

<sup>80</sup> CEH Report, volume II, p. 21.

coordination with military intelligence structures. According to the PN reports, in this case in particular, the operation was coordinated with members of the EMP, whose chief was Infantry Colonel Juan José Marroquín Siliézar,<sup>81</sup> as well as with the EMDN Intelligence Office, whose chief at the time was Infantry Colonel DEM Byron Disrael Lima Estrada.<sup>82</sup> The full participation of these military structures in the operation on the evening of November 28th, 1983, together with the characteristics of the operation that took place in zone 1, are amply documented by the information discovered in the AHPN. The details mentioned previously lead to the conclusion that it was these same structures (EMDN and EMP) who were responsible for the events taking place that same day.

Thus it was that, under orders from, or with the acquiescence of the Commander of the Fifth Corps, Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, the already injured Héctor Manuel De León Escobar was taken to the PN Hospital beside the Second Corps. According to the Military Diary, the victim died at the hospital as a consequence of his injuries. Nevertheless, to this day his families have received no information as to what occurred following his capture in zone 12.

There is evidence that the Fifth Corps of the PN possessed the means and the technology necessary to maintain direct communication and coordination with the Army and the EMP during special operations. January 16th, 1983 saw the

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<sup>81</sup> Juan José Marroquín Siliézar: began his military career in 1959 when he enrolled at the Escuela Politécnica. In December 1961 he graduated as a cadet and in 1965 was awarded the rank of Second Lieutenant. Between 1968 and 1971, he studied at the *United States Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia*. In 1972 he studied at the *US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*. In 1975, we achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and in 1976 he was promoted to Colonel. In 1978 he held the position of operations officer (S3) for the Military Zone of Petén. Between 1979 and 1983, he performed *unknown* functions at the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of the Economy and the Presidential General Staff. Between August 1982 and January 1983, he was Second Commander of the Cobán Military Base and from October 6th, 1983 to March 15th, 1985 he was Chief of the Presidential General Staff. During that time, the US Embassy in Guatemala claimed that the Archives under his command were responsible for the deaths of three AID officials. In 1987 he was Commander of Military Zone 13-16 and was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. In 1990 he was Deputy Chief and Chief of the National Defense General Staff, retiring the same year. (Source: Declassified documents from the NSA).

<sup>82</sup> Byron Disrael Lima Estrada, an "ultra-conservative" man, according to the United States Defense Intelligence Agency. He is currently in prison along with his son, Captain Byron Lima Oliva, for their part in the murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi on April 26th, 1998 – two days after the public presentation of the report by the REMHI project. He began his military career in 1958 at the Military School of Venezuela. In 1965, he attended the Basic Infantry Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, and in 1968 he took the Military Police Course at the School of the Americas, Fort Gulick, Panama. In 1970, he took the counter-intelligence course given by a *Mobile Training Group* from the US in Guatemala City, he then began to take on intelligence duties, working as S-2 for the Puerto Barrios Military Zone. Subsequently, in 1973, he was promoted to Major and became an agent of the Regional Telecommunications Center (*the Archive*), where he remained until 1981, when he was promoted to Colonel and sent to the Huehuetenango Military Zone as Second Commander. He was in command of the National Defense General Staff Intelligence Office from August 9th, 1983 to February 1985. The Military Diary covers the period between August 29th, 1983 and March 19th, 1985. (For more extensive biographical details, see Defense Intelligence Agency, *Biographic Sketch Colonel Byron Disrael Lima, Guatemala, June 1985*, and *Electronic Briefing Book: Colonel Byron Disrael Lima Estrada*, NSA, electronic edition.)

installation at Fifth Corps headquarters of eight Anr/601 radios from the Army's transmission service<sup>83</sup> together with the connection of an EMP closed circuit television system<sup>84</sup> in order to coordinate the operations of the Southwestern Task Force (Fuerza de Tarea de Sur Occidente, TOSO).

At the time of the events, the chain of command within the PN was organized as follows:

Artillery Colonel DEM Héctor Rafael Bol de la Cruz

*Director General of the PN*

August 16th, 1983 to June 3rd, 1985

Artillery Colonel DEM Oscar Humberto Santiago Cárdenas

*Deputy Director of the PN*

August 16th, 1983

Reynaldo Haroldo Paniagua

*Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN*

Mario Ramírez Ruiz

*Official Spokesman for the National Police / Public Relations Office*

### **Fifth Corps**

Lieutenant Colonel of Police Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano

*Commander*

Police Major Edgar Leonel Lorenzo

*Deputy Commander*

Manuel Vicente Martínez Jiménez

*Third Chief and Inspector General*

**Departamento de Investigaciones Técnicas / Department of Technical Investigation**

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<sup>83</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/16/1983, new developments report, oficio No 036-Ref-QC-Arc., addressed to Cavalry Colonel DEM and Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, commander, Special Operations Command, COE [Digital reference 3162851. Internal AHPN registration 30821].

<sup>84</sup> GT PN 51-02 S005 01/23/1983, new developments report, Of No 083-Ref-QC-Larr. addressed to Cavalry Colonel DEM and Director General of the National Police by Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, commander, Special Operations Command, COE [Digital reference 3166184. Internal AHPN registration 30804].

Infantry Major Gustavo Adolfo Oliva Blanco  
*First Chief*

Br. Elmee Avily Barrios Argueta  
*Second Chief*

Melecio Tirado Gómez  
*Third Chief and Inspector General*

## **Second Corps**

Rubén Pineda y Pineda  
*First Chief*  
April 1st, 1982 through February 1984

Raúl Adolfo Palma Santos  
*Second Chief*  
February 1st, 1983 through February 1984

Bernardo Boteo Castillo  
*Third Chief and Inspector General (took over in 1983)*  
August 3rd, 1983 through December 1984

Doctor Carlos Escobedo Pacheco  
*Director of the National Police Hospital*  
March 1976 to December 1985

During the same period, the chain of command in the Army was as follows:

Brigadier General Oscar Humberto Mejía Vítores  
*Head of State*  
August 8th, 1983 to June 30th, 1985

Brigadier General Oscar Humberto Mejía Vítores  
*Ministry of National Defense*  
September 1st, 1982 to at least August 15th, 1985 (*ended after, "DD"*)<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Based on the declassified documents of the National Security Archive (NSA), a list was made of Guatemalan Army officers and the military record of each one, with the note that each of the dates mentioned are approximate. For this reason, a series of acronyms was developed that should be considered as probable values, for example "ended after [DD]" means that the period probably "ended after (después de)" the date given.

Colonel Rodolfo Lobos Zamora

*Chief of the National Defense Chiefs of Staff*

October 21st, 1983 to at least September 5th, 1985 (*ended after, "DD"*)

Colonel César Augusto Cáceres Rojas

*Deputy Chief of the National Defense Chiefs of Staff*

November 1st, 1983 to January 13th, 1986

Infantry Colonel DEM Byron Disrael Lima Estrada

*Director of the Intelligence Office (D2)*

August 9th, 1983 to February 1985

Lieutenant Colonel José Domingo García Samayoa

*Director of Operations, EMDN*

October 1983 to at least June 1985 (*ended after, [DD]*)

Infantry Colonel Juan José Marroquín Siliézar

*Chief of the Presidential General Staff*

Before October 6th, 1983 (*started before [AD]*)<sup>86</sup> through March 15th, 1984

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<sup>86</sup> In this case, "*started before [AD]*" means "started before (antes de)" the date indicated.

## 3.6 ANASTACIO SOTZ COY AND VICENTE HERNÁNDEZ CAMEY AUGUST 1980



Photograph IV.10  
Vicente Hernández Camey<sup>1</sup>



Photograph IV.11  
Anastasio Sotz Coy<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

Among the documents in the AHPN, researchers discovered and analyzed a variety of documents directly relating to the involvement of the PN in two incidents. The records range in time from the moment in which the two bodies of “*unidentified persons*” were discovered through the process of identification of the victims by the PN Identification Bureau.

- a) Daily new developments report sent by the Identification Bureau to the Director General of the PN on August 9, 1980.<sup>3</sup>
- b) Post-mortem records on the victims.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Photograph taken from: GT PN 49-02 S004 05/18/1977, Application for motorcycle driver’s license No. 62533 by Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31045].

<sup>2</sup> Photograph taken from: GT PN 49-02 S004 01/10/1977, Application for Class “B” motorcycle driver’s license No. 204720 de Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 26364].

<sup>3</sup> GT PN 49-02 S006 08/09/1980, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Identification Bureau [Digital reference 3600151. Internal AHPN registration 31042].

<sup>4</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31057].

GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31056].

GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31069].

GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31073].

GT PN 49-02 S004 05/11/1972, Identification Bureau file on application for municipal ID from Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31075].



- c) Victims' applications for municipal IDs and motorcycle driver's licenses.<sup>5</sup>
- d) Documents sent by the Chief of the Identification Bureau to the Justice of the Peace for the department of El Progreso on August 14th, and to the Criminal Justice of the Peace of Villa Nueva on August 12th, 1980. The same document was sent on the same date to the Director General of the PN.<sup>6</sup>
- e) Telegram from the ninth tribunal of the Court of Appeal of Antigua Guatemala, Sacatepéquez containing information on the writ of habeas corpus presented on behalf of Vicente Hernández Camey on August 17th, 1980.<sup>7</sup>
- f) Memorandum from the Directorate General sent to the chiefs of the First and Second Corps and the Detective Corps on August 19th of the same year.<sup>8</sup>

The illegal detention of Vicente Hernández Camey and Anastacio Sotz Coy was known to the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH).<sup>9</sup> The case of Hernández was also taken up by the Catholic Church's project for Recovery of the Historical Memory (REMHI).<sup>10</sup> In the case of Sotz Coy, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH) was also aware and took action.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 01/10/1977, Application for Class "B" motorcycle driver's license No. 204720 de Anastacio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31078].

GT PN 49-02 S004 04/07/1976, Application for motorcycle driver's license No. 53237 by Anastacio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31076].

GT PN 49-02 S004 05/18/1977, Application for motorcycle driver's license No. 62533 by Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31045].

<sup>6</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 08/12/1980, oficio No. 560/fvn., addressed to the Criminal Justice of the Peace, Villa Nueva, Guatemala by the Chief of the Identification Bureau and court expert [Internal AHPN registration 31064].

GT PN 49-02 S004 08/12/1980, oficio No. 561/fvn., addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Identification Bureau [Internal AHPN registration 31062].

GT PN 49-02 S004 08/14/1980, oficio No. 573/fvn., addressed to the Departmental Justice of the Peace of El Progreso by the Chief of the Identification Bureau and court expert [Internal AHPN registration 31072].

GT PN 49-02 S004 08/19/1980, memorandum No. 351, ref. of. noct.cezp., addressed to the Chief of the First Corps, Second Corps and Detective Corps by Professor Randolph Catalán Pazos, Secretary General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 11298].

<sup>7</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 08/18/1980, urgent telegram No. 207-80.S.76-80, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Malvina Beatriz Armas E. Secretary Tribunal 9, Court of Appeals [Internal AHPN registration 11297].

<sup>8</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 08/19/1980, memorandum No. 351, ref. of. noct.cezp., addressed to the Chief of the First Corps, Second Corps and Detective Corps by Professor Randolph Catalán Pazos, Secretary General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 11298].

<sup>9</sup> CEH Report, volume VIII, cases presented, Annex II, pp. 211 and 213.

<sup>10</sup> *Guatemala Nunca Más*, volume IV, *Victims of the Conflict*, p. 361

<sup>11</sup> "Informe sobre la situación de los derechos humanos en la República de Guatemala," CIDH, OEA. OEA/Ser.L/V/II.53. Doc. 21 rev. 2. 10/13/1981; Case 7581 "Nehemias Cúmez, head of Comalapa Popular Housing and several employees of the reconstruction committee," resolution in the 53rd period of sessions of the General Assembly, 06/25/1981.

## 2. Background

Chapter II of this Report explained the main strategies and activities which, in the context of the armed conflict, the State security forces jointly carried out. Many of these activities were framed in the plans and security orders issued by the Army and sent in those terms to the PN and other security agencies. These documents defined the concept of “*enemy forces*” or “*internal enemy*.”<sup>12</sup>

From the security plans found in the AHPN, it is possible to know which groups were considered to be enemy forces: “*gangs of common criminals,*” “*subversive gangs or elements,*” “*gangs of subversive criminals,*” “*terrorist groups,*” “*political parties,*” “*politicians or their organizations,*” “*groups opposed to or disaffected with the Government of the Republic,*” “*subversive elements operating in the Republic...*” among others.<sup>13</sup> The breadth of this definition served to justify the almost indiscriminate attack against wide sectors of the populace, political, social, religious and union leaders and organizations.

The CEH Report mentions that, during the government of Romeo Lucas García (July 1978 to March 1982), the system for intelligence and counterinsurgency was consolidated, professionalized and strategically strengthened: “*it achieved in-depth knowledge of the guerrilla organizations; a greater share of resources of all types; widened its network of informers; used the Police for its own purposes and began to exert more effective control in the military, State and social spheres.*”

Both the CEH and REMHI reports refer to the mechanisms for social and psychological control implemented during this period. They mention illegal detentions and unlawful executions, among others, as part of the patterns of activity that caused terror among many rural communities. “*In the Army’s plans, constant surveillance of the people was fundamental for the accomplishment of the goals they set themselves. In the communities, physical control was delegated by the Army to the civilian patrols, which set up sentry posts and checkpoints and placed themselves at strategic spots such as pedestrian or vehicle bridges in*

<sup>12</sup> The Military Dictionary of the Army of Guatemala defines the internal enemy as “composed of all those individuals, groups or organizations that through the use of illegal actions attempt to destroy the established democratic order.” In: Military Dictionary: <http://www.mindef.mil.gt/diccionario/diccionario>

<sup>13</sup> GT PN 50 S002 04/26/1979, reference 1,871, Security Order No. 08-79 [Internal AHPN registration 12732].  
 GT PN 51-01 S005 05/30/1984, Operational Plan No.001, signature and seal of the commander of the Motorized Corps, Julio Hernández Cuellar and Officer González, PN-3, stamped *Secret* [Internal AHPN registration 29492].  
 GT PN 51-01 S005 06/29/1984, Security Plan No. 002-84, signatures and seals of the director of EMDN intelligence, Lima Estrada and chief of the C/ICIA section of the EMDN, stamped *Secret* [Internal AHPN registration 4912].  
 GT PN 51-01 S005 06/27/1984, Operational Plan 004, stamped by the Directorate General of the PN and signed by Cano Pérez, PN-3, with COCP stamp and stamped *Secret* [Digital reference 3058825. Internal AHPN registration 4964].  
 GT PN 30 S003 05/04/1989, Security Order no. DI-0016-20-03-06, signature and stamp of EMDN Chief, Callejas y Callejas [Digital reference 1924039. Internal AHPN registration 29495].

*order to check the IDs and permits of people moving from one place to another. Psychological control was directed by members of the Armed Forces.*"<sup>14</sup>

The 1981 report by the CIDH on the situation for human rights in Guatemala states that in 1980, many people connected to the Comalapa Reconstruction Committee were kidnapped and executed. In its resolution No. 36/81, Case 7581 the Commission resolves: "*Based on Article 39 of the Regulations, to assume as true the events reported in the communication of November 6th, 1980 in relation to the arbitrary detentions of the following persons in the village of Comalapa: Nehemías Cúmez and his nephew Adolfo Cúmez, Anastasio Sotz, René Gómez Ovalle, Antonio Muz, Ernesto Apén y Maximiliano Otzoy; the arbitrary detentions and subsequent torture and murder of Juan Muz y Roque Salazar; the arbitrary detention and subsequent murder of Julio Tuyuc and the murder of the attorney Miguel Curruchiche.*"<sup>15</sup>

## **2.1 Who were Anastasio Sotz Coy and Vicente Hernández Camey?**

By comparing the details on these two men contained in the files and documents from the Identification Bureau found in the AHPN with those from the reports by the REMHI, CIDH, and CEH, it is possible to establish that:

Anastasio Sotz Coy, from the village of Comalapa, Chimaltenango, was born on April 15th, 1954 to Cirilo Sotz Bal and Antonia Paula Coy Chicól. He worked in agriculture and was secretary of the organization "*Vivienda Popular*" (Popular Housing). At the time of his detention, he was provisional president of this organization, standing in for Nehemías Cúmez,<sup>16</sup> also detained and disappeared.

Vicente Hernández Camey, 32 years of age and married to Juana Curuchiche Salomón, was from the village of Santa Anita las Canoas in the municipality of San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango; his date of birth was April 5th, 1948. His parents were Anastasio Hernández and Tomasa Camey. He worked as a social promoter for a private organization called "*Vecinos Mundiales*" (World Neighbors) which promoted projects for community development on the central plateau. Both were members of the Kaqchiquel indigenous people.

In book VIII, "Cases Presented," Annex II of the CEH Report, under number 785 for the year 1980, it reads: "*on July 26... members of the Guatemalan Army*

<sup>14</sup> CEH Report, volume II, pp. 75, 76, and 192.

<sup>15</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, CIDH, OEA. Resolution No. 36/81, case 7581, Guatemala, June 25, 1981

<sup>16</sup> Both the CIDH and the CEH Report mention Nehemías Cumes, leader in Comapala, who disappeared in March 1980, who at the time of his capture occupied the position of President of the local reconstruction and organization committee, "*Vivienda Popular*" (Popular Housing).

*who had set up a checkpoint captured Hipólito Cumes and Anastasio Sotz... they were participating in a local cultural and educational organization...*<sup>17</sup>

Case number 493 of that same report tells of the capture of Vicente Hernández Camey together with Roberto Xihuac by members of the Army at a roadblock as they were on their way by motorcycle to the municipality's main town of Chimaltenango. *"Following this, the soldiers struck them, seized the motorcycle, and took them away."*<sup>18</sup>

## 2.2 The PN Identification Bureau

Another collection of documents located in the AHPN comes from the PN Identification Bureau. The documents found as "garbage," in a terrible state of abandonment and deterioration and which now form part of the AHPN, make it possible to know the procedures used for the identification of the bodies of unidentified persons, among others.

In February of 1969, the Henry Fingerprint System was installed under the charge of Sergio Roberto Lima Morales, Chief of the Identification Bureau. In the words of the institution itself, using this system, it was possible to make *"infallible"* identifications by means of dactyloscopic impressions (fingerprints). This system made it possible to establish the identities of *"xx bodies"* abandoned on the public highway without any documentation. Fingerprints were taken, and these post-mortem files were analyzed and compared with those recorded previously as part of some administrative procedure or due to a court order as a result of an infraction of the laws of the time.

This office also produced documents titled *"new developments involving the deaths of known persons"* and *"new developments involving the deaths of unidentified persons."* In some cases, these were also known as *"Dispatches with XX."* It was possible to ascertain that these types of reports, among others, contained handwritten information relating to the identification of bodies that had initially been catalogued as XX.

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<sup>17</sup> CEH Report, volume VIII, p. 213.

<sup>18</sup> CEH Report, volume VIII, p. 211. This report gives 1979 as the year of his detention, contradicting the details recorded in the REHMI report and the documentation in the AHPN which show the date to have been August 7, 1980.

### 3. Description of the Events

Details of the date and the circumstances surrounding the detentions of Anastacio Sotz Coy and Vicente Hernández Camey are contained in the three reports cited above. The AHPN documents contain no information in this regard, but they do reveal that both were executed after their capture.

The report on new developments sent on August 9th, 1980 by the Chief of the Identification Bureau to the Director General details the events recorded from 16:30 on August 8th to 08:00 on the following day. It describes the discovery of the bodies of ten “unidentified men”: one was found on the road near Bárcenas, Villa Nueva, four in Amatitlán, and five at kilometer 65 on the Atlántico highway. In the margin of this document there is information identifying two people.

Concerning Hernández Camey, the report states:

*“At 17:30 this afternoon, following an alert from Radio Patrols, traveling in the mobile unit, officer René Campos Barahona and photographer Rafael Girón Alvarado presented themselves at the Morgue of the ‘San Juan de Dios’ General Hospital, where, lying on a metal stretcher, was the body of an UNIDENTIFIED MAN, approximately 35 years old, dark skinned, straight black hair, brown eyes, large ears that stick out, complete set of teeth with gold filling in the middle of upper incisors, straight nose, 1.70 m tall, regular build; no clothing visible; various injuries caused by projectiles from firearms of unknown caliber to different parts of the body, causes of the incident unknown; came in from the road near Bárcenas and Villa Nueva; the Criminal Justice of the Peace was informed, a post-mortem file was made, photograph attached.”<sup>19</sup>*

In the left-hand margin of this document are the handwritten words “Vicente Hernández Camey” and to the right of this, the note: “#560 12/8/80” and the letter “B” inside a circle.

Further on, the report states:

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<sup>19</sup> GT PN 49-02 S006 08/09/1980, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Identification Bureau [Digital reference 3600151. Internal AHPN registration 31042].

*“Yesterday at 23:50 hours, following an alert from Radio Patrols, traveling in the mobile unit, officer Abel René López Castro and photographer Rafaél Girón Alvarado presented themselves at the Morgue of the San Juan de Dios General Hospital, where they found the following bodies.-”*

There follows a description of five bodies of “*unidentified men*,” numbered and assigned a letter of the alphabet for the purposes of identification. In the left margin of the description of body number four is the following handwritten phrase: “*Anastasio Sotz Coy #573 14/8/80*,” while in the right-hand margin is written the letter “a” enclosed in a circle. With regard to this body, it says:

*“No. 4. ‘D,’ on table No. 3 was the body of an UNIDENTIFIED MAN of approximately 25 years of age, dark skinned, straight black hair, eyebrows, eyes black, nose straight, clean shaven, large mouth, thick lips, teeth complete, regular build, 1.62 m tall, wearing white polyester t-shirt, maroon nylon pants, brown cotton socks only.”*

The report adds:

*“There were signs of strangulation and facial injuries from a bladed weapon; they were found at kilometer 65 of the Atlántico highway; the Criminal Justice of the Peace of El Progreso, the municipal administrative center, was informed of these cases. The Justice of the Peace informed of the case sent them in the aforementioned alphabetical order.”<sup>20</sup>*

For the purposes of the present case, below are details of the process of identification of Sotz Coy and Hernández Camey carried out by the team from the Identification Bureau. They proceeded to take the post-mortem fingerprints

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

**Photograph IV.12**  
 Post mortem file on Anastasio Sotz Coy

FICHADO POR: 8/8/80		1er. Apellido	2do. Apellido	1er. Nombre	2do. Nombre				
FECHA DE NACIMIENTO: Día Mes Año Edad Año		Hijo de							
25		y de							
LUGAR DE NACIMIENTO Aldea		Domicilio							
Municipio		Sexo		Estado Civil					
Depto.		Cédula No. Orden		No. Registro					
Nacionalidad		FOTOGRAFIA De Frente							
Profesión									
						Tez	Talla	Peso	Complejión
						CABELLO a) Color	b) Forma		
Notas Particulares		Ojos		Nariz					
Amputaciones o Deformaciones		el cadaver inhumado procedente del kilometro 65 ruta al							
OBSERVACIONES: atlántico pres estaba sujeta de estrangulamiento y variada con									
arma blanca en la cara concilio el dr. Juan de "su" anal del progreso Anastasio									
of. Ldo. Castro.									

Front of post mortem file on Anastasio Sotz Coy, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31073].

**Photograph IV.13**  
 Post mortem file on Vicente Hernández Camey.

					1 FORMULA DACTILOSCOPICA 11 AGO. 1980	
MANO IZQUIERDA					GABINETE CENTRAL No. _____ GABINETE DE No. _____ AUTOGRAFIA DEL FICHADO No. _____	
9 0 ITII 7 M P I I I B 11/8/80 MAND. DERECHA						

Back of post mortem file on Vicente Hernández Camey, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31056].

of the victims after their arrival at the morgue of the San Juan de Dios General Hospital on August 8th, 1980. The files concerning these two cases unearthed in the AHPN are included here:<sup>21</sup>

In the files of both victims, the Identification Bureau stated the following information on Anastacio Sotz Coy:

*“the cadaver was brought in from kilometer 65 of the Atlántico highway with signs of strangulation and wounds with a blade to the face, informing the Justice of the Peace of El Progreso Guastatoya, of. Lopez Castro.”*<sup>22</sup>

On Vicente Hernández Camey:

*“found on the barcnas villa nueva road informed villa nueva justice of the peace.”*<sup>23</sup>

The above is evidence that, following the capture and unlawful execution of both victims, their bodies were abandoned at places some distance from where they were detained –which in this case were their home villages– probably with the intention of preventing their identification by neighbors and relatives.

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<sup>21</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31057].

GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31056].

GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Anastacio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31069].

GT PN 49-02 S004 Identification Bureau post mortem files on Anastacio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31073].

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.



**Photograph IV.14**  
Application for a motorcycle driver's license  
by Vicente Hernández Camey

GABINETE DE IDENTIFICACION			
GUATEMALA, C. A.			
Nombre del Padre <i>Vicente Hernández</i>		Tez. <i>morena</i>	Talla <i>1.61</i>
Nombre de la Madre <i>Emilia Gómez</i>		Peso. <i>139</i>	Compleción <i>mg.</i>
Motivo para ser fichado <i>Para lic. Clase moto # 62533</i>		CABELLO a) Color <i>negro</i>	
Tribunal		b) Forma <i>lacio</i>	
Resolución del Caso		Ojos <i>3</i>	Naris <i>var.</i>
Lugar de Nacimiento <i>San Pedro Jil.</i>	TOGRAFIA    De Perfil	Profesión u Oficio <i>aguardador</i>	
Municipio <i>Chimuluc</i>		Domicilio <i>San Pedro las Cañas</i>	
Departamento <i>Retalhuleu</i>		Sexo <i>mas.</i>	
Sexo <i>mas.</i>		Estado Civil <i>casado</i>	
NACIONALIDAD <i>Guat</i>	CEDULA Orden <i>2-3</i>		Señas Particulares <i>ning.</i>
Registro <i>18011</i>	Amputaciones o Deformidades		
OBSERVACIONES:			

Front of application for a motorcycle driver's license by Vicente Hernández Camey, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 05/18/1977, Application for a motorcycle driver's license No. 62533 [Internal AHPN registration 31045].

**Photograph IV.15**  
 Application for a motorcycle driver's license  
 by Vicente Hernández Camey

FICHADO POR: <b>LICENCIA</b>		1er. Apellido	2o. Apellido	1er. Nombre	2do. Nombre
Firma del Fichado <i>Vicente Hernández Camey</i>		Tarjeta Formada En: <i>Hernández Camey Vicente</i>			Sub-Clase
FECHA DENACIMIENTO Día Mes Año		Ciudad			Departamento
5	4	18	<i>DEPTO. MACULISCOPICO "HENRY"</i> <i>Ciudad, Guatemala, C. A.</i>		
Firma del Oficial Operador		Número	Folder	Clos.	
EDAD 29		Fecha: --- Toma		9 0 1 T III ?	
		18 MAYO 1977		M I T I I	
		Tarjeta No.			
1. Pulgar Derecho	2o. Índice Derecho	3. Medio Derecho	4. Anular Derecho	5. Menique Derecho	
6. Pulgar Izquierdo	7. Índice Izquierdo	8. Medio Izquierdo	9. Anular Izquierdo	10. Menique Izquierdo	
Mano Izquierda Cuatro Dedos Simultáneos		Pulgares Izquierda Derecha		Mano Derecha Cuatro Dedos Simultáneos	

Back of application for a motorcycle driver's license by Vicente Hernández Camey, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 05/18/1977, Application for a motorcycle driver's license No. 62533 [Internal AHPN registration 31045].

Following this, the post-mortem fingerprints of the victims were compared with other Identification Bureau records. It was found that a file on Vicente Hernández Camey had been opened on May 18th, 1977 when he applied for a motorcycle driver's license.<sup>24</sup>

**Photograph IV.16**  
Application for municipal ID by Anastasio Sotz Coy

GABINETE DE IDENTIFICACION	
GUATEMALA, C. A.	
<p style="text-align: center;">FOTOGRAFIAS</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">21</p> <p>DE FRENTE</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">DE PERFIL</p>	<p>           LUGAR DE NACIMIENTO: <u>San Juan Comalapa</u>            MUNICIPIO: <u>Comalapa</u>            DEPARTAMENTO: <u>Chimaltenango</u>            EL DIA: <u>16</u> DE <u>Abril</u> DE <u>1964</u>            SEXO: <u>Masculino</u> ESTADO CIVIL: <u>Soltero</u>            NACIONALIDAD: <u>Guatemalteco</u>            CEDULA No. ORDEN: _____ REGISTRO: _____            EDAD: <u>13 años</u> TEE: <u>Normal</u> TALLA: <u>1.69</u>            PESO: <u>1.25</u> COMPLEXION: <u>Regular</u>            CABELLO: <u>AJ</u> COLOR: <u>Negro</u> SI FORMA: <u>Lacio</u>            OJOS: _____ RASIS: <u>Pa</u>            PROFESION U OFICIO: <u>Agricultor</u>            DOMICILIO: <u>San Juan Comalapa</u>  <u>Comalapa</u> </p>
SEÑALES PARTICULARES: <u>Un lunar de b lto en el pabellón de la oreja izquierda</u>	
AMPUTACIONES Y DEFORMIDADES: _____	
NOMBRE DEL PADRE: <u>Ciriaco Sotz Bol</u>	
NOMBRE DE LA MADRE: <u>Antonia Paula Coy Chiedl</u>	
MOTIVO PARA SER FICRADO: <u>Obtencion de la de vealdad.</u>	
TRIBUNAL: _____	
RESOLUCION DEL CASO: _____	
OBSERVACIONES: _____	

Front of application for municipal ID by Anastasio Sotz Coy, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 05/11/1972, Identification Bureau file on application for municipal ID from Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31075].

<sup>24</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 05/18/1977, application for motorcycle driver's license No. 62533 by Vicente Hernández Camey [Internal AHPN registration 31045].

**Photograph IV.17**  
 Application for municipal ID by Anastasio Sotz Coy


Exclusivo Oficina		APELLIDOS		NOMBRES	
FICHADO POR: <b>CELULA</b>		SOTZ COY		ANASTASIO	
FIRMA DEL FICHADO <i>Anastasio Sotz Coy</i>		DEPARTAMENTO: Chimaltenango			
FIRMA DEL OPERADOR <i>[Signature]</i>		NUMERO:		FECHA TOMA DE HUELLAS: 13 de Mayo de 1972	
REF.		CLAS. <i>032 W I I I 17</i> <i>I 28 W O I I</i>			
Pulgar Derecho 1	Indice Derecho 2	Medio Derecho 3	Anular Derecho 4	Auricular Derecho 5	
Pulgar Izquierdo 6	Indice Izquierdo 7	Medio Izquierdo 8	Anular Izquierdo 9	Auricular Izquierdo 10	
Mano Izquierda Cuatro dedos simultaneos			PULGARES Izquierdo   Derecho		Mano Derecha cuatro dedos simultaneos

Back of application for municipal ID by Anastasio Sotz Coy, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 05/11/1972, Identification Bureau file on application for municipal ID from Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31075].

**Photograph IV.18**

Application for a motorcycle driver's license by Anastacio Sotz Coy

**GABINETE DE IDENTIFICACION**  
GUATEMALA, C. A.


Nombre del Padre <i>Anastacio Sotz Bal</i>		Sexo <i>mas</i>	Talla <i>1.63 M</i>
Nombre de la Madre <i>María Paula Sotz Bal</i>		Edad <i>1362</i>	Complejión <i>Oj</i>
Motivo para ser fichado <i>Por licencia 53237</i>		CABELLO a) Color <i>negro</i>	
Tribunal		b) Forma <i>lacio</i>	
Resolución del Caso		Ojos <i>3</i>	Marca <i>av</i>
Lugar de Nacimiento	 GRAFIA  De Perfil	Profesión u Oficio <i>Fabricador</i>	
Municipio <i>San Miguel</i>		Domicilio <i>San Miguel</i>	
Departamento <i>San Miguel</i>		Señales Particulares	
Sexo <i>M</i>			
Estado Civil <i>soltero</i>			
NACIONALIDAD <i>Guat</i>			
Orden <i>A 63</i>			
CEDULA Registro <i>15175</i>			
Amputaciones o Deformidades			
OBSERVACIONES:			

Front of application for a motorcycle driver's license by Anastacio Sotz Coy, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 04/07/1976, Application for motorcycle driver's license No. 53237 by Anastacio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31076].

**Photograph IV.19**  
 Application for a motorcycle driver's license  
 by Anastacio Sotz Coy

**GABINETE DE IDENTIFICACION**  
 GUATEMALA C. A.

*68 11-1-77*

Nombre del Padre <i>Cirilo Sotz Bal</i>		Tes. <i>mor</i>	Tallo <i>1.63</i>
Nombre de la Madre <i>Antonia Paula Coy Elucal</i>		Peso <i>130</i>	Compleción <i>reg</i>
Motivos para ser fichado <i>lic. clase 'B' 204720</i>		CABELLO ni Color <i>negro</i> ni Forma <i>lacio</i>	
Tribunal Resolución del Caso		Ojos <i>3</i>	Marza <i>recta</i>
Lugar de Nacimiento <i>Comalapa</i>	FOTOGRAFIA 	Profesión u Oficio <i>agricultor</i>	
Municipio <i>N</i>		De Perfil	
Dpto. <i>Chimaltenango</i>		Domicilio <i>Canton Escuro</i>	
Sexo <i>mas</i>		Comalapa Chim.	
Estado Civil <i>sol.</i>		Señal Particular	
NACIONALIDAD			
Orden <i>C-3</i>			
Registro <i>15175</i>			
Amputaciones o Defamidades			
OBSERVACIONES:			

Front of application for a motorcycle driver's license by Anastacio Sotz Coy, in: GT PN 49-02 S004 01/10/1977, Application for Class "B" motorcycle driver's license No. 204720 de Anastacio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31078].

Anastacio Sotz Coy had his file opened on May 11th, 1972 when he applied for his municipal ID for Comalapa, Chimaltenango, and there are two other records made relating to his application for a driver's license, one from April 17th, 1976 and the other from January 10th, 1977.<sup>25</sup>

The final step in the procedure used to identify the bodies on unknown persons is shown in a the communication sent on August 12th, 1980. This is a report from the Chief of the Identification Bureau on the identity of Vicente Hernández Camey privately addressed to the Director General of the PN, Colonel German Chupina Barahona, and the Criminal Justice of the Peace of Villa Nueva.

*“Using fingerprints taken post mortem, the office under my charge was able to identify the body, thanks to the existence of cards containing the prints of the deceased using the formula according to the Henry system, 9 0 1 T-II 7/M 17 T-II; the personal details being as follows:*

*VICENTE HERNANDEZ CAMEY, date of birth April 5th, 1948, married, farmer, from San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango, with domicile in same place, son of Anastacio Hernández and Tomasa Camey. He was put on file on May 18th, 1977, for APPLICATION FOR MOTORCYCLIST LICENSE No. 62533. Photograph attached.*”<sup>26</sup>

Similarly, on August 14th, the Chief of the Identification Bureau informed the Criminal Justice of the Peace for the department of El Progreso and the Director General of the PN of the identity of Anastacio Sotz, who was identified using the Henry dactyloscopic formula, “0 32 W III 17/I 28 W OII.”<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 05/11/1972, Identification Bureau file on application for municipal ID from Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31075].

GT PN 49-02 S004 01/10/1977, Application for Class “B” motorcycle driver's license No. 204720 de Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31078].

GT PN 49-02 S004 04/07/1976, application for motorcycle driver's license No. 53237 by Anastasio Sotz Coy [Internal AHPN registration 31076].

<sup>26</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 08/12/1980, oficio No. 560/fvn., addressed to the Criminal Justice of the Peace, Villa Nueva, Guatemala by the Chief of the Identification Bureau and court expert [Internal AHPN registration 31064].

GT PN 49-02 S004 08/12/1980, oficio No. 561/fvn., addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Identification Bureau [Internal AHPN registration 31062].

<sup>27</sup> GT PN 49-02 S004 08/14/1980, oficio No. 573/fvn., addressed to the Departmental Justice of the Peace of El Progreso by the Chief of the Identification Bureau and court expert [Internal AHPN registration 31072].

GT PN 49-02 S004 08/14/1980, oficio No. 574/fvn., addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Identification Bureau and court expert [Internal AHPN registration 31071].

Even though the PN was in possession of all the information concerning the identity and whereabouts of its victims, their places of origin and the details of their residences, it provided no information whatsoever to the relatives who continued to seek them or the human rights organizations that requested it.

The wife of Vicente Hernández Camey, Juana Curuchiche Salomón, obtained a writ of habeas corpus in Chimaltenango on August 17th, 1980. The following day, an urgent telegram was sent to Tribunal 9 of the Antigua Guatemala Court of Appeals by the Director General of the PN.<sup>28</sup> That same day, the Secretary General of the PN circulated a memorandum to the chiefs of the First and Second Corps and the Detective Corps following up on the *habeas corpus*, though without any of the relatives receiving any information whatsoever about the victim.

As mentioned previously, the CIDH was aware of the capture and disappearance of Anastacio Sotz on November 6th, 1980. Twice it initiated proceedings to require the Government of Guatemala to provide information relating to the case. No answer, however, was forthcoming. The Commission understood the facts of the case to be true, and proceeded to recommend that the Government investigate and sanction those responsible.<sup>30</sup>

On January 22nd, 1988, María Santos Sotz Coy, sister of Anastacio, filed a complaint with the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH) regarding the disappearance of her brother.<sup>31</sup> In the process of the investigation carried out by the PDH, it requested information from on the victim from various State institutions, among them the National Police. The answer from the police institution was negative. Now, the AHPN documents demonstrate that Anastacio Sotz Coy was identified by the PN Identification Bureau on the same day his body appeared alongside four others.

In 1998, while still unaware of the information now brought to light by the AHPN, the relatives denounced the forced disappearance of the victims to the Commission for Historical Clarification.

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<sup>28</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 08/18/1980, urgent telegram No. 207-80.S.76-80, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by Malvina Beatriz Armas E. Secretary Tribunal 9, Court of Appeals [Internal AHPN registration 11297].

<sup>29</sup> GT PN 24-05 S004 08/19/1980, memorandum No. 351, ref. of. noct.cezp., addressed to the Chief of the First Corps, Second Corps and Detective Corps by Professor Randolph Catalán Pazos, Secretary General of the PN [Internal AHPN registration 11298].

<sup>30</sup> “Informe sobre la situación de los derechos humanos en la República de Guatemala,” Resolution No. 36/81, caso 7581, Guatemala, June 25, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> File No. 98-88-PDH- Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, Guatemala



## 4. Principal Actors

The victims were both indigenous Guatemalans who had stood out for their local leadership. Vicente Hernández Camey was a promoter for the organization “*Vecincos Mundiales*” in San Martín Jilotepeque, and Anastacio Sotz was President of the organization “*Vivienda Popular*,”<sup>32</sup> part of the Comalapa Reconstruction Committee.

The information compiled indicates that those responsible for the illegal detention of the victims were members of the Guatemalan Army manning the road blocks where the two of them were captured.

According to the information and details collected, it can be inferred that Mr. Hernández Camey was executed on the day of or the day after his capture. Regarding Mr. Sotz Coy, he was held captive for around two weeks, during which time, according to what can be gleaned from the reports from the Identification Bureau of the PN<sup>33</sup> he was presumably the victim of cruel and inhuman treatment.

The activities of the PN took place after the illegal detention and death of the victims. Specifically, through the intervention of the Identification Bureau for the purpose of identifying the bodies of the unknown persons. The PN had in its possession information requested by the victims’ families and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, but it never revealed it, contributing to the fact that these men are still on the list of the disappeared three decades later. All this has caused terrible suffering to their relatives, who have also been denied the right to justice and the truth.

Also informed of the identification of the victims were the Criminal Justice of the Peace of Villa Nueva, Guatemala and the departmental Justice of the Peace for El Progreso.

At the time of the events, the chain of command at the PN was as follows:

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<sup>32</sup> Substituting Nehemías Cúmez, captured and disappeared in March 1980.

<sup>33</sup> The PN report states that the body of Hernández Camey *had several wounds caused by projectiles from firearms of unknown caliber to different parts of the body...* and the body of Sotz Coy “*showed signs of strangulation and facial injuries from a bladed weapon...*”

Donaldo Álvarez Ruiz  
*Minister of the Interior*

Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona  
*Director General of the PN*

Colonel Francisco Salazar Roquel  
*Deputy Director General of the PN*

Professor Reynaldo Haroldo Paniagua Cordero  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the PN*

Sergio Roberto Lima Morales  
*Chief of the Identification Bureau*

The chain of command in the Army was the following:

General Romeo Lucas García  
*Commander in Chief of the Army and President of the Republic*

General Ángel Anibal Guevara Rodríguez  
*Minister for National Defense*

General Luis René Mendoza Palomo  
*Head of the Army General Staff*

Infantry Colonel DEM, Manuel Antonio Callejas y Callejas  
*Director of the Intelligence Section (G-2)*

General Héctor Ismael Montalván Batres  
*Chief of the Presidential General Staff*

## 5. Analysis of the Case

The research carried out at the AHPN shows that the victims were detained at a roadblock by the State security forces.<sup>34</sup> They were then tortured and unlawfully executed. Their bodies were abandoned far from their homes and the place of their capture, as the Identification Bureau reports demonstrate.

The Director General of the PN, Colonel German Chupina Barahona, and other commanders of the institution were informed of the identity of the victims four days after the bodies were discovered by information sent by the Chief of the Identification Bureau. Notification was also sent to the Departmental Judge of El Progreso and the Criminal Justice of the Peace of Villa Nueva, Guatemala.

Despite the requests for information by relatives of the victims and regional human rights organizations, the PN and the legal authorities notified revealed no information whatsoever.

By illegally detaining the victims at an Army road block, security personnel violated their rights to free movement and to personal well being and safety. Their right to life was violated when they were secretly and arbitrarily executed. The resolution by the CIDH adds, furthermore, that Articles 7 (Right to Personal Liberty), 8 (The Right to A Fair Trial) and 25 (Right to Judicial Protection) of the American Convention on Human Rights were also violated.

The victims' relatives and society as a whole were denied the rights to justice and the truth regarding the events.

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<sup>34</sup> The CEH Report and the resolution by the CIDH affirm that the victims were detained by members of the Army of Guatemala.

### **3.7 MANUEL COLOM ARGUETA<sup>1</sup>** **MARCH 22, 1979**



Photograph IV.1 - Colom A. – Source: GT PN 50 S002 02/01/1978, confidential report, Ref. 461 [InternalAHPN registration 12862].

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<sup>1</sup> The photo shows a flyer for the United Revolutionary Front –FUR- filed by the PN, in: GT PN 50 S002 02/01/1978, confidential report, Ref. 461 [Internal AHPN registration 12862].

## 1 Documents in the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN) Supporting the Archival Analysis

To date, the file on Manuel Colom Argueta contains a total of 117 documents<sup>2</sup> located in the AHPN.

This file comprises a variety of document types such as: file cards at the Department of Criminological Investigation (DIC), confidential reports, investigation reports, “oficios,” new developments reports, “providencias,” and so on.

The DIC files form part of the Master File Record<sup>3</sup> and were filled out by the criminal investigation structures of the National Police. These offices underwent a series of name changes over time, which is reflected in the authorship of the files.<sup>4</sup>

The documents containing confidential information are notable in that the contents are concerned with intelligence or political activities. On occasion, these documents can be extremely thorough and detailed. Many of them were produced by confidential agents of the Detective Corps.

Usually, these kinds of documents do not contain any type of identification (no stamps, letterheads or signatures). Some have been found preceded by oficios containing the recipient’s details, as well as the distribution list of those receiving copies. The authors of these kinds of reports rarely identified themselves, and occasionally there are notes in the margin with orders to “investigate,” “proceed,” or “launch operation.” Some of the documents bear the “received” stamp of the Detective Corps and a reference number,<sup>5</sup> while others, in addition to the date and a “Confidential” stamp, were identified by the stamp of the Detective Corps on the upper section of the sheet.<sup>6</sup> Generally, documents obtained during the political activities and meetings that had been observed (flyers, announcements, programs

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<sup>2</sup> AHPN Data Bank registration 05/29/09.

<sup>3</sup> GT PN 50 S001

<sup>4</sup> The Judicial department functioned from 1956 under the control of the Directorate General of National Security of that time. In 1970, this department disappeared and was reestablished as the Detective Corps. Government Accord of 11/03/1970, reproduced in:

GT PN 35 S001 11/30/1970, book of General and Corps Orders, general order of the National Police No. 275, book number 10501 [Digital reference 665094. Internal AHPN registration 27075].

Chapter I of this report contains a section titled “Criminal Investigation” which explains the way in which these agencies evolved, specifically throughout the period 1954-1985.

<sup>5</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/02/1977, confidential report by the Detective Corps, reference No. 562, no addressee, informing R-2 and R-8 [Internal AHPN registration 11464].

<sup>6</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/01/1978, confidential report by the Detective Corps, reference No. 461, no addressee, no sender [Internal AHPN registration 12859].

of activities, etc.) were attached to the report, together with photographs taken at the scene.

Some of the confidential documents contain codes or numbers that probably referred to the identity of the author. One of these reports mentions a meeting of members of the United Revolutionary Front (*FUR*) with students from the Medical School. It reads: “*From confidential information provided to this office by Confidential Agent X-4...*”<sup>7</sup> and at the foot of the same document is the phrase, “*Inf: LM-S.*” Another confidential document is identified solely at the foot of the page by the code No. 222.<sup>8</sup>

On other confidential reports, visible at the foot of the page is the code *K-1*,<sup>9</sup> “*Inf: R-2 y R-8*”<sup>10</sup> and *X-10*.<sup>11</sup> This last item stands out in particular: it includes information on the recipient, in this case the Chief of the Detective Corps, beginning with the phrase, “*The undersigned persons have the honor to report:*”<sup>12</sup> suggesting that *X-10* represents more than one person. These reports illustrate the monitoring and surveillance that the Detective Corps carried out on the political activities of Colom Argueta.

## 2. Background

The political leader Manuel Colom Argueta was born in the city of Guatemala on April 8th, 1932. He attended secondary school at the Instituto Nacional Central para Varones (National Central School for Boys), where he was president of the Students’ Association. He graduated with a High School Diploma in Arts and Sciences and was considered one of the best students in his class.<sup>13</sup>

He went on to study at the School of Juridical and Social Sciences at the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC), where he played a prominent role as a student and leader of the Students’ Association “*El Derecho*” and as Secretary of the Organization of University Students (AEU).

<sup>7</sup> GT PN 50 S002 10/08/1975, confidential report by the Detective Corps, reference No. 2221, no addressee, informing LM-S [Internal AHPN registration 13163].

<sup>8</sup> GT PN 30 S004 09/24/1973, confidential report, no reference number, no addressee, No. 222, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 16739].

<sup>9</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/15/1978, confidential report from the Detective Corps, reference 662 “A,” no addressee, informing K-1, with stamp of the Tribunal Auxiliary Section of the Detective Corps [Internal AHPN registration 12166].

<sup>10</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/03/1977, confidential report from the Detective Corps, reference No. 562, no addressee, informing R-2 and R-8 [Internal AHPN registration 11464].

<sup>11</sup> GT PN 50 S004 10/18/1975, confidential report from the Detective Corps addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps, Br. Luis Enrique Ocaña, informing X-10, Ref. 2062 [Internal AHPN registration 13219].

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Rosa Sánchez del Valle, comp., *Por el delito de pensar* (Guatemala: Fundación Friedrich Ebert, Editorial Magna Terra, 1999), p. 31.

He set off on his path through the turbulent social and political scene at an early age. He was one of the 33 citizens who signed a public declaration opposing the elections which sought to reaffirm the presidency of Carlos Castillo Armas. Together with other young people and professionals, he publicly declared his opposition to the new regime. In June 1956, he took part in a demonstration to commemorate the events of June 25th, 1944 which was dispersed by the public security forces using gunfire, resulting in the deaths of at least five students.<sup>14</sup> During the period 1967 to 1969, he was a member of the University Superior Council as representative of the Bar Association.

Manuel Colom Argueta was a standard-bearer for the opposition and leader of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR). In the elections of 1970, as candidate for the Civic Committee known as Democratic Revolutionary Unity (URD), he won the race for mayor of the capital for the period 1970-1974.

The documents so far discovered in the AHPN show that the PN was involved in a political persecution of Manuel Colom Argueta that lasted 22 years. This began with the activities initiated in 1957 and carried on until his assassination. The documents demonstrate that the PN played a significant part in his constant monitoring, surveillance and control. In 1957, the Judicial Department<sup>15</sup> opened a file consisting of 12 sheets in order to contain information on Colom Argueta, with 63 annotations added between September 8th, 1957 and September 28th, 1979.<sup>16</sup>

From 1957 comes a report on a raid carried out at the Revolutionary Party headquarters, "*finding Communist Propaganda*" and an envelope with his name and address. In the years that followed, the details noted are always related to something in the social and political spheres. On November 15th, 1960, we read, "*Filed record of his political activities.*" In 1961, it says, "*He appears on the list of Communists and his address.*"<sup>17</sup>

It also states that he was expelled from the country in 1962, in relation to which it notes, "*The Bar Association and a number of congressmen are to hold a session in order to agree on a strike in protest at his expulsion from the country.*"<sup>18</sup> The

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> The Judicial department functioned from 1956 under the control of the Directorate General of National Security of that time. In 1970, this department disappeared and was reestablished as the Detective Corps. Government Accord of 11/03/1970, reproduced in:

GT PN 35 S001 11/30/1970, Book of General and Corps Orders, book number 10501, National Police general order No. 275 [Digital reference 665094. Internal AHPN registration 27075].

<sup>16</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record [Internal AHPN registration 12164]. This record built up over the course of 22 years also includes documentation on investigations conducted after his murder.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

## Photograph IV.2

### Political and social control files on Manuel Colom Argueta



Files recording notes on the control exerted over Manuel Colom Argueta by the Judicial Department and the Detective Corps.  
En GT PN 50 S001, master file record [Internal AHPN registration 26391].

file contains confidential dispatches accusing him of being a “terrorist” claiming that he was involved in the organization of assassinations of public officials.<sup>19</sup> In February 1962, it records his detention, being held at the discretion of the Director General of the PN.

The DIC card files also mention Colom Argueta’s activities during the “*Days of March and April*,”<sup>20</sup> classified under the title “*student disturbances*.” The annotation dated April 17th, 1962 states that the President had been informed that Colom Argueta “*agreed*” that on Monday the 22nd they were going to “*close the*

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Student and popular days of protest against the government of Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes in 1962.



*markets, cut off the water and halt the urban transit system.*"<sup>21</sup> On April 30th of that same year, the order went out for his apprehension for public disturbance.

Some of the details recorded illustrate the coordination of activities between the PN and the Army in order to monitor and control the political leader. In November 1962, it includes information on Colom obtained from the "*REBELLION War Audit.*" In August 1964, collaboration is requested from the Military Zones in order to watch his movements.<sup>22</sup>

Also recorded are the dates of his departure from the country to Italy, El Salvador, Mexico, and Costa Rica.

In October 1978, it states that Colom Argueta spoke at a rally organized in Escuintla in protest against the murder of the student leader Oliverio Castañeda de León. One of the last annotations on this file refers to March 22nd, 1979, the day of "*his death as a consequence of multiple bullet wounds.*" Finally, on September 28th of that same year, the file states that the Attorney General of the Nation requested information relating to his violent death.

Other AHPN documents, especially confidential reports, contain detailed information on the activities at which Colom Argueta was present. For example, in September 1973, while serving as mayor of the city of Guatemala, his actions were systematically observed.

*"Case No. 2 CONFIDENTIAL. Our informant states the following: That, the Engineering Student in the 6th Semester, surname PONS, is the liaison between several cells, and that he has knowledge of many of the FAR organization's private affairs, since he is the liaison. That in their most recent conversations, there has been repeated mention of the fact that they are close to taking action, and that the area from Escuintla to Quetzaltenango is where they will make their presence felt most, having said that they will start by setting fire to cane plantations, other kinds of ranches, and gas stations in that region. With regard to the High Official mentioned previously, it says that it discounts the possibility of his being a civilian, since from the conversations they have had he deduces that it is someone of high military rank. That the systematic movement*

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<sup>21</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record [Internal AHPN registration 12164].

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

*they have been developing since the matter involving the teachers, among them the rises in the prices of bread, milk, meat, staple grains, and gasoline, which they are hoping to exploit, are due to the fact that the City Mayor is handling things with a good group of thinking professionals from the left and outside instructions, and that the goal they pursue is to lead the people of Guatemala into chaos and naturally throw the country into anarchy through these methods, ensuring that the military equipment that has entered and will continue to come in will be used to achieve their aims.*"<sup>23</sup>

On March 29th, 1976, the Chief of the Detective Corps received a report from members of the Homicides and Murder Section regarding someone with a bullet wound who turns out to be Manuel Colom Argueta. The event was recorded that day at approximately 16:25 hours on 14th Avenue and 8th Street, zone 12 of the capital city. According to the report, the victim was hit by a bullet.<sup>24</sup>

On March 30th of that same year, the aforementioned detectives added to the information. It confirms the information detailed above and adds that Colom Argueta was admitted to Center One of the IGSS Hospital, and then transferred to the Zone 10 Medical Center. After this, they interviewed the victim, who told them that, after leaving the University campus, where he worked as a researcher at the Center for Urban and Regional Studies (CEUR), he was heading for his home in zone 15, Vista Hermosa II. At the intersection of 14th Avenue and 8th Street in Zone 12, a city bus passed in front of him, forcing him to halt there. This opportunity was taken by several individuals traveling in two automobiles and a motorcycle to open fire on his vehicle. The escorts accompanying him repelled the attack, and after being pursued by their assailants, who continued firing at them, managed to take refuge in the Municipal Fire Station, the outcome being a bullet wound to the right arm. During the shooting, a member of his personal security personnel was also injured.<sup>25</sup> It then adds:

*"He says that since the death of Mr. ANDRADE,<sup>26</sup> he has been watched at his home and any places he has visited by persons unknown to him, using for the purpose different vehicles and motorcycles and*

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<sup>23</sup> GT PN 30 S004 09/24/1973, confidential report, no reference number, no addressee, No. 222, stamped *Confidential* [Internal AHPN registration 16739].

<sup>24</sup> GT PN 50 S004 03/29/1976, Ref. 446, gunshot wound report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Deputy Inspector 20 Jorge Ovidio Chacón B. and Detective 23 Pedro Armando Sosa V. [Internal AHPN registration 12181].

<sup>25</sup> GT PN 50 S004 03/30/1976, Ref. 446, investigation report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Deputy Inspector No. 20 Jorge Ovidio Chacón B. and Detective No. 23, Pedro Armando Sosa V. of the Homicide section [Internal AHPN registration 12169].

<sup>26</sup> The person in question is Attorney at Law Rolando Andrade Peña, official of the capital municipal offices, who was murdered in February 1976, two weeks after the earthquake of February 4. His proposal to allow poor families to reconstruct their homes on private land cost him his life.

*that repeatedly, when he has been leaving his house, he has been able to observe that on a softball pitch on the way out of the district, men unknown to him were posted behind trees holding WALKIE-TALKIE radio transmitters, and that a week previous, as he was walking from the University campus towards his home, he realized that these individuals had now been watching his house for several days, being relieved close to the Honor Guard, recognizing three of them who he only knows by their last names: LOBOS, PIMENTEL, AND RUIZ, who he knows work for the REGIONAL CENTER and that he is also in possession of the numbers of various license plates of vehicles that have been watching him, which he will supply the undersigned at the opportune moment for the relevant legal purposes.”<sup>27</sup>*

After the attack on March 26th, 1976, Manuel Colom Argueta informed the National Police that he was being watched and followed, and provided some license plate numbers for the vehicles and motorcycles involved, among which were the motorcycle plates 29186.<sup>28</sup> Following an interrogation of the alleged owner of this motorcycle, Porfirio Díaz Lemus, it was reported that he was enrolled in the PN, serving as a musician in the Band Corps, where he had been working since 1961. He claimed that on the day of the attack, he had been giving classes at various educational institutions, and consequently, the motorcycle had been used “only” by him.<sup>29</sup> The license plate, along with many others, was physically located in the AHPN.<sup>30</sup> Another report produced by the Detective Corps on April 22nd, 1976 and addressed to the Director General details a series of events “involving criminality in all its aspects.” It goes on to say:

*“...through a report dated the second of this month (April 1978) which reports that Attorney at Law COLON ARGUETA, mentioned vehicles with license plates P-37669, P-34-091, P-52983, rental cars A 160263, P-377714, P-22073, P-66517 and motorcycles 29186, 36034 and 36036, vehicles which have been keeping at watch on him for some considerable time...”<sup>31</sup>*

<sup>27</sup> GT PN 50 S004 03/30/1976, Ref. 446, investigation report addressed to the Chief of the Detective Corps by Deputy Inspector No. 20 Jorge Ovidio Chacón B. and Detective No. 23, Pedro Armando Sosa V. of the Homicide section [Internal AHPN registration 12169].

<sup>28</sup> GT PN AHPN collections, license plates, of vehicles, collections -04 CPL, license plate no. m-29186 [Internal AHPN registration 26153].

<sup>29</sup> GT PN 50 S004 04/06/1976, oficio No. 8581/of 7°. jda, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by the Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps, Miguel A. García Herrarte [Internal AHPN registration 12170].

<sup>30</sup> Reference is made to the object that coincides with the number and not only the latter.

<sup>31</sup> GT PN 50 S004 04/21/1976, oficio No. 9871, Ref. of. 5°. y Ref. 602, sent to the Director General by the Detective Corps, no signature [Internal AHPN registration 2489].

In turn, the Third Chief of the Detective Corps informed the Director General of the PN of the investigation carried out with regard to the attack on Colom Argueta. This report states that their inquiries came up negative for evidence at the scene of the events, for which reason the intention was to continue with investigations concerning this case.<sup>32</sup>

Another document with evidence that Manuel Colom and those with connections to him were being followed is a confidential report ordering discreet surveillance of William Long, indicating the address and the number of the room he was staying in. The order comes from the Director General of the PN, Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona, who was to be kept informed daily by the Third Chief and Inspector General.

*“At 17:15 hours, a call came from the Third Chief of this Corps, who ordered that very discreet, motorized surveillance service be established on the individual WILLIAM LONG who is currently staying at the Pan American Hotel, located on 6th Ave. and 9th Street, Zone 1. He is staying in room No. 367 of said hotel.*

*This service is by order of the Director General of the P.N., who must be informed of its progress on a daily basis through the Third Chief of this Corps.*

*He also indicated that the detectives in charge of this service must keep the case secret and inform themselves of all relevant details of the same, gaining a thorough knowledge, as this individual has come to hold conferences (with) MANUEL COLON (sic) ARGUETA.”<sup>33</sup>*

The following day it was reported that surveillance and observation had been in effect since 18:00 hours and that Mr. Long had arrived from Managua, Nicaragua. The report states that during his stay, *“it was not possible to confirm the truth of these interviews”* with Manuel Colom Argueta. It adds that William Long, *“is 37 years of age, from Colorado, United States, Journalist by profession, with US passport number Z-2205477, Tourist card No. 27506.”<sup>34</sup>*

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<sup>32</sup> GT PN 50 S004 03/30/1976, report with Ref.of.5º. and Ref. 446, addressed to the Director General of the PN by Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps, Miguel A. García Herrarte [Internal AHPN registration 2364].

<sup>33</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/15/1978, confidential report from the Detective Corps, reference 662 “A,” no addressee, informing K-1, with stamp of the Tribunal Auxiliary Section of the Detective Corps [Internal AHPN registration 12166].

<sup>34</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/16/1978, confidential report from the Detective Corps, Ref. 662”A,” no addressee, written by hand at the top left is: *“Inf. S. Direct.Gral. PN”* and top center, *“confidential report on observation and surveillance of this person”* [Internal AHPN registration 12165].

In the AHPN collection, researchers came across a memorandum that Manuel Colom sent to the President's private secretary, Doctor Ramiro Carrillo, requesting his intervention to obtain security for fellow party members who were being persecuted:

*"As I was already able to tell you over the phone, and am now doing by this method so as to be more private and direct, I would like to propose security arrangements for a number of colleagues who are being subjected to persecution.*

*My colleagues Baudilio Morales, Secretary General of Suchitepequez; Dr. Genar Méndez, Secretary of San José Pinula; Osvaldo Enriquez of the affiliate in the Capital and former candidate for city councillor, Byron Barrera were subjected to persecution and attempted kidnapping. Believing that a misunderstanding of the problem of transportation would bring about more sensible security controls and policies, it was arranged for these colleagues to take training courses at the CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT. However, the situation has not changed, and now persecution has become more widespread in Departments such as Suchitepéquez, where there has been an attempt to abduct TOMAS OBREGON ROBLES, Secretary General of the San Antonio Suchitepéquez branch, and Baudilio and Alvaro Obregon Gonzalez have suffered the disappearance of relatives, all of which can be traced to the intrigues of military officers and the activities of the current chief of the Departmental Police, the former chief of Command Six.*

*Dr. Gener Méndez worked with Father Hermogenes López, who received a visit from you. Instead of pursuing and apprehending the murderers of the priest Hermogenes López, now they are harassing another member of the community of San José Pinula, Doctor Méndez, our colleague. When relatives or friends attempt to inquire into the reasons for the persecution of colleagues, the police officers responsible claim that there are lists drawn up.*"<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> GT PN 30-01 S004 11/24/78, memorandum written by Manuel Colom Argueta addressed to the Private Secretary of the Office of the President of the Republic, Doctor José Ramiro Castillo Bobadilla [Internal AHPN registration 12194].

A confidential report from the PN Detective Corps dated February 1st, 1978, contains a wealth of details on a rally carried out at the Plazuela Italia and a later demonstration by members and sympathizers of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR). They were protesting the denial of the entry of their political party on the Electoral Register. The report states that taking part in the event were Américo Cifuentes Rivas, Factor Méndez, Miguel Ángel Andrino, Manuel Colom and other FUR leaders.<sup>36</sup>

### Photograph IV.3

Flyer by the United Revolutionary Front, FUR



Flyer found in a confidential report produced by the Detective Corps following the first public demonstration by the FUR, held on February 1, 1978. In: GT PN 50 S002 02/01/1978, confidential report, Ref. 461 [Internal AHPN registration 12862].

Another of these reports says that the Detective Corps intelligence services were present at the Escuintla park, as there was to be a rally held there by the Escuintla United Revolutionary Front (FURE). The report quotes a speech by one of the organization's leaders:

<sup>36</sup> GT PN 50 S002 02/01/1978, confidential report from the Detective Corps, reference No. 461, no addressee, no sender, written in hand at the top right is "G-2 YArc." [Internal AHPN registration 12859].

*“With regard to the repression by the Government of Guatemala in the sense that, before taking power, the President of the Republic promised to provide “BREAD THE SIZE OF YOUR HUNGER” but what he is giving is “REPRESSION AND MURDER”, and as an example we have the murder of the Secretary General of the AEU and the active FUR member. Br. OLIVERIO CASTAÑEDA DE LEON...”<sup>37</sup>*

It adds information about a speech by Edgar Peña, an active member of the FURE:

*“Lastly, the Mayor of the capital spoke of the complicity of the President of the Republic in the rise in the urban bus fare and that in order to bring it back down, a number of Guatemalan lives would have to be sacrificed; words of MARCO TULIO COLLADO PRADO, Mayoral Candidate for Escuintla.*

*He referred to the anti-democratic system of the extreme right, declaring that for years right-wing governments had been murdering rural and urban workers and students and that we are currently celebrating 34 years of struggle against the repressive government. He added that he had been very peaceful during his struggle, because the right provokes and then shows its claws and that, as it holds out bread with one hand, it uses the other to repress us; referring to ‘MEDIocre’ and ‘SERVILE’ governments of the Guatemalan right, while inciting the people of Guatemala to join a violent struggle...*

*He also spoke of the Mayor of the capital, Colonel Abundio Maldonado, who, in complicity with the President of the Republic of Guatemala, is a traitor to the nation, as he has dismissed a number of workers and has demonstrated his incompetence by his inability to solve the transportation problem. He pointed out that when he was Mayor he had no problems with strikes, because from the start what he did was raise the municipal workers’ pay; and that projects were carried out, but not as he had intended as he had been forced to share ideas with ‘ARANA THE JACKAL.’*

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<sup>37</sup> GT PN 50 S003 10/22/78, confidential report, Ref. 5036, no addressee, no sender [Internal AHPN registration 3077].

### Photograph IV.4

#### FUR rally in Escuintla



Photo taken by agents of the Detective Corps to monitor a rally held at the Escuintla branch of the United Revolutionary Front (FURE) in October 1978. In: GT PN 50 S003 10/22/1978 Ref. 5036 [Internal AHPN registration 26792].

*Lastly, he declared his intention to stand for election on December 12th of this year in Escuintla in order to prevent victory from being snatched and to avoid fraud; words of the attorney MANUEL COLOM ARGUETA.*<sup>38</sup>

Attached to the document is a flyer from the FURE and five photographs of the people who spoke during the rally.

The control and surveillance implemented against Manuel Colom Argueta were extended to his family, friends and fellow party members. The AHPN contains records of monitoring done on his brothers Marco Antonio and Francisco Guillermo Colom Argueta.<sup>39</sup>

### 3. Description of the Events

On March 22, 1979, seven days after achieving the electoral authorities' acceptance of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR), Manuel Colom Argueta was executed between 10:30 and 11:00 on 3rd Avenue and 5th Street, zone 9. The murder was committed during a large-scale operation involving the participation

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, Marco Antonio Colom Argueta [Internal AHPN registration 12185].

GT PN 50 S001 Master file record, Francisco Guillermo Colom Argueta [Internal AHPN registration 16415 and 16409].



of at least three automobiles and 2 motorcycles. The information included in the AHPN documents that mention the incident comes from a variety of the Institution's structures. The Radio Patrol Corps reported:

*"...today at 10:30 hours, information was received via telephone that on 5th Street and 6th Ave., Zone 9, unidentified individuals had machine-gunned two automobiles, for which reason an order was issued to units 205 and 136, commanded by agents No. 379: MARIO GUZMAN LOPEZ 272: and ROLANDO EFRAIN RUBIO IZAGUIRRE, respectively, who established that in fact at the house marked No. 5-06 on 5th Street the automobile with plates P-43937 was to be found, inside of which were two 12-bore shotguns, No. 23052 and 278081, both with 4 cartridges and a 9 mm pistol. No. 302828, with a magazine containing 17 rounds; the passengers had already been taken by the R.2 unit of the Municipal Fire Service to the IGSS medical center, establishing that the men in question were: HILARIO HERNANDEZ QUIÑONEZ and HECTOR BARRILLAS ZELADA who died after being admitted to said center, three blocks to the west, i.e., at 3rd Ave. On 5th Street the automobile P-94891 was found with damage from machine gun fire, inside, officers found someone dead, at 11:30 hours, His Honor the 11th Justice of the Peace arrived with his Secretary and the clerk of the 1st Corps, who ordered the immediate removal of the body to the morgue at IGSS Center One, where the agents in question were unable to enter by order of His Honor the aforementioned Judge, it being established that the person who died inside the 2nd vehicle was Attorney at Law MANUEL COLON ARGUETA, and that the person previously mentioned was his bodyguard, information obtained from the clerk of the 1st Corps, agent No. 4278. JULIO RENE TAHUITE, who met His Honor the Judge inside the IGSS morgue, for which reason it was impossible to obtain further details, the vehicles were driven to the 1st Corps, handed over with the aforementioned weapons to the order Office, also admitted to the San Juan General Hospital was Mrs. CANDIDA ROSA GONZALEZ FAJARDO, 42 years of age, suffering from a wound from a bullet of unknown caliber to the right side of her body, without an*

*exit wound, occasioned at the same address, possibly by the same individuals, on board the R.5 Unit of the Municipal Fire Service, the 1st Corps Order Office was informed of the events and they passed on the report to this superior Office.”<sup>40</sup>*

The Identification Bureau wrote the incident report on the victim. Attached to it were photographs of Colom Argueta and his escorts. The report states:

*“At 10:55 hours today, following an alert by Radio Patrols, on board a mobile unit Officer Abel René López Castro and photographer Marco Tulio Méndez Hernández reported to 3rd Avenue and 5th Street zone 9 where they found the automobile with license plates P-94891, make Toyota, color red, model 1978; inside said vehicle, lying on his right side lay the body of Attorney at Law MANUEL ALBERTO COLOM ARGUETA, date of birth April 8th, 1932, married, Lawyer and Notary, born and residing in the capital, son of Antonio Colom Aguirre and Filiberta Argueta; sustained multiple injuries inflicted by projectiles from fire arms of unknown caliber to different parts of the body, occasioned by unidentified persons; the vehicle referred to had multiple holes in it caused by projectiles from firearms and was taken to the 1st Police Corps. Afterwards, the same officers appeared at the Center’s Emergency Room, one from the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security, where the following bodies had been taken:*

*1st.- On a metal stretcher lay the body of Mr. HILARIO HERNANDEZ QUIÑONEZ, date of birth October 21st, 1945, married, laborer, from Conguaco, Jutiapa, address 8th Avenue 4-31, zone 19 La Florida, son of Anacleto Hernández and Luparia Quiñonez.-*

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<sup>40</sup> GT PN 30-01 S008 03/22/1979, oficio No. 1812/fpa, addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Benigno Cruz Buenafe, copies to the Deputy Director, Third Chief and Joint Operations [Internal AHPN registration 13044]. Written in hand is “#5 SM.” Thanks to the labor of description and archival research carried out on various ANPN documents, it has been possible to establish that this kind of annotation indicates that the information arrived via either secret or confidential memorandums from the Directorate General of the PN to the Head of State, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister for National Defense. A copy of the same document has the letters “C.O.C.” written on it, presumably as another of the addressees, in:

GT PN 51-02 S005 03/22/1979, oficio No. 1812/fpa, addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Benigno Cruz Buenafe, copies to the Deputy Director, Third Chief and Joint Operations [Internal AHPN registration 12383].

*2nd.- Lying on a metal stretcher was the body of Mr. HECTOR BARILLAS ZELADA, date of birth December 9th, 1938, married, driver, from Villa Canales in this Department, son of Marcelino Barillas and Anita Zelada; the already deceased persons were bodyguards of Attorney at Law Manuel Colóm Argueta, who had been driving an automobile with license plates P-43937, color blue, model 1971, property of Anna Borghini de Colóm, which also had multiple perforations due to projectiles from firearms, the incident occurring on 5th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, zone 9, at 10:30 hours, the aforementioned bodies had various wounds caused by firearms of unknown caliber caused by unidentified persons; the 11th Criminal Justice of the Peace, who had been informed of the case, ordered paraffin casts to be made from the deceased's hands, which were made at the aforementioned medical center, in order to determine whether they had used firearms before their deaths. A post-mortem file was made out for them, photographs attached.-*

*The identity of Attorney at Law Manuel Alberto Colóm was confirmed as he was on file under the Oloris Vucetich system: S3333-D-2222; dated July 13th, 1951, APPLICATION FOR AN AUTOMOBILE DRIVER'S LICENSE.*

*The identity of Mr. HILARIO HERNANDEZ QUIÑONEZ was confirmed as he was on file under the Henry system: 6 9 U OIO 13-2 tU III; made out on August 24th, 1970, for BURGLARY AND ARMED THREATS, 1st Criminal Peace Court; May 20th, 1972, for DRUNKENNESS, AFFRAY, FIREARMS POSSESSION, 6th Criminal Peace Court; August 7th, 1978, APPLICATION FOR TYPE "B" LICENSE No. 242201.-*

*The identity of Mr. HECTOR BARILLAS ZELADA was confirmed as he was on file under the Henry system: 20 L 2 U OII 13-M 2 U IOM; made out on December 26th, 1961, INJURIES, subject to Court of Instance, Cuilapa, Santa. Rosa, February 28th, 1969, for ATTACK ON AUTHORITY, 2nd Court of Instance; February 11th, 1969, for DAMAGE, ATTACK ON AGENTS OF AUTHORITY, 1st*

*Peace Court; November 11th, 1970, for HOMICIDE, 3rd Court of Instance; December 13th, 1974, for INJURIES IN TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, 3rd Court of Instance.- The vehicles described above were taken to the pound of the Police First Corps.<sup>41</sup>*

*A radiogram from the PN Telephones Office states:*

*“16.30 Hrs. Dispatch received from First Corps that at 11:30 hours, His Honor the 11th Criminal Judge of the Peace arrived at 5th Street and 4th Avenue, zone 9 in order to sign the Death Certificate for the body of Mr. MANUEL ALBERTO COLOM ARGUETA, 46 years old, married, graduate in Law, born in and resident of the Capital, address 10th Avenue 12-60 zone 14, son of Antonio Colom Aguirre and Filiberta Argueta, who died at 11:00 hours as a consequence of several injuries from a firearm to various parts of the body, principally the head region, 12 and 16 caliber rifle and 45 mm, the deceased was found inside an automobile that he owned, plates P-94891, which were caused by unidentified individuals, His Honor the Judge recorded this and gave orders for the body to be taken to the morgue at IGSS Center One to be duly autopsied.”<sup>42</sup>*

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<sup>41</sup> GT PN 32 S007 03/22/1979, new developments report addressed to the Director General of the PN by the Chief of the PN Identification Bureau [Internal AHPN registration 12198].

<sup>42</sup> GT PN 30-01 S008 03/22/1979, new developments from the National Police telephones office [Internal AHPN registration 12167].

For its part, the Detective Corps wrote a long, detailed “*Cadaver Report*,”<sup>43</sup> as well as a report on the person injured in the incident<sup>44</sup> and another confidential report with photographs.<sup>45</sup> These provide details of the transfer of the victim’s body to the funeral home, the mass celebrated the following day, and the procession that took in the Plaza Italia, University Bandshell, the headquarters of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR) and the Central Park before arriving at the General Cemetery.

A memorandum from the Radio Patrol Corps, a report from the PN Telephones Office and an officio from the First Corps also recorded the events.<sup>46</sup>

The document from the Detective Corps Monitors Office quotes the radio news program “*Radio Prensa*,” reporting:

“*SPECIALIST OFFICERS INVESTIGATE MURDER OF COLOM ARGUETA*

*Information has been received from the Ministry of the Interior that specialist officers have been duly instructed to proceed with a thorough investigation of the criminal act perpetrated against Attorney at Law Manuel Colom Argueta. The Ministry says that strict orders were immediately issued to keep a close watch on the country’s borders so that the wrongdoers can be brought to justice in order to duly determine their responsibility.”*<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/22/1979, cadaver report, Ref. 1354, addressed to the Chief of Detective Corps by detective No. 85 Felipe Delfino Márquez M., detective No. 349 Oswaldo Cotto Morán and detective No. 360 Manuel Augusto Mancilla García [Internal AHPN registration 3075].

<sup>44</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/22/1979, gunshot wound report on Mrs. Candida González Fajardo, Ref. 1354, addressed to the Chief of Detective Corps by detective No. 221 Humberto R. Castro, detective 313 Héctor Leonel Telles G. and detective No. 356 Ovidio Menéndez Argueta [Internal AHPN registration 12188].

<sup>45</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/22/1979, confidential report from the Detective Corps, Ref. 1354, no addressee, no signature [Internal AHPN registration 12189].

<sup>46</sup> GT PN 30-01 S008 03/22/1979, new developments from the National Police telephones office [Internal AHPN registration 12167].

GT PN 30-01 S008 03/22/1979, officio No. 4928/jdfm., new developments report from the First Corps Order Office to the Director General of the PN by the Second Chief of the First Corps, Catalino Esteban Valiente Alonzo [Internal AHPN registration 12196].

GT PN 30-01 S004 03/23/1979, memorandum No. 101 mmrl. of the PN Radio Patrol Corps by the Chief of the Radio Patrol Corps, Benigno Cruz Buenafe [Internal AHPN registration 12867].

<sup>47</sup> GT PN 30-01 S024 03/23/1979, report from the monitors office [Internal AHPN registration 12197].

This same report describes the funeral of Colom Argueta.

*“No fewer than two hundred thousand people are estimated to have made up the funeral cortege for Attorney at Law Manuel Colom Argueta... it comprised people from all social strata, representatives of political, workers,’ laborers,’ and rural organizations.”*<sup>48</sup>

Other reports give a diametrically opposed account of the funeral:

*“When the funeral set off, there were in total some 150 people, during the procession, people joined along the way, among them laborers, rural workers, unionists, students, members of the media, sympathizers or members of the F.U.R. wearing red carnations as a sign of protest, the Union of the Municipality, the Union of Street Vendors and others walk along shouting ‘MEME OUR FRIEND, THE PEOPLE ARE WITH YOU’...”*<sup>49</sup>

Attached to this report were the announcements and flyers from the social organizations taking part in the funeral.

The AHPN also contains a file on the murders of Alberto Fuentes Möhr and Manuel Colom Argueta. It comprises ten documents concerning a request made by the Vice President of the Republic, Francisco Villagrán Kramer, to the Attorney General of the Nation, Lionel López Rivera.<sup>50</sup> The Vice President explains his concern over the fact that the Human Rights Commissions of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) had asked for *“information regarding the procedures and investigations relating to the murder of the former Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Treasury of Guatemala, Doctor Alberto Fuentes Mohr,”* as well as that of Manuel Colom Argueta and other union and business leaders who had been killed. The petition requests:

*“ballistic and projectile analysis and the possible coincidence of weapons in these cases. Likewise, the investigation carried*

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/23/1979, confidential report, no addressee, no sender, stamped *“Archive”* [Internal AHPN registration 12191].

<sup>50</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/05/1979, document addressed to the Attorney General of the Nation, Lionel López Rivera by Vice President of the Republic, Francisco Villagrán Kramer, file ref. No. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 1809, 12180, 12856, 12172, 12173, 12176, 12177, 12178, 12179].

*out on the subsequent murder of people it insists witnessed or participated in political assassinations.”<sup>51</sup>*

The document in question was known to Attorney General of the Nation (PGN). He in turn wrote to the Director General of the PN,<sup>52</sup> saying *“I would be extremely grateful if you would order the various national Police Forces responsible for the investigations in question to submit their reports on the results of these...”* The Director General sent this to the Legal Advisor of the National Police.<sup>53</sup>

For its part, the Legal Department of the PGN requested information on the inquiries conducted by the National Police<sup>54</sup> The Director General requested reports from the Chief of the Detective Corps:

*“Homicides urgent*

*Consultation*

*The chief of the Homicides Section, supervised by the Legal Advisor, submit the report requested 09/18/1979.”<sup>56</sup>*

In the stream of bureaucratic exchanges of correspondence, the Inspectorate General of the PN Detective Corps responded that it was continuing to investigate the case and that it would provide information at the earliest opportunity.<sup>57</sup>

According to the police dispatches, Héctor Barillas Zelada and Hilario Hernández Quiñónez, the political leader’s security personnel, were caught in the assassins’ gunfire on 5th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues zone 9. The

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/11/1979, oficio No. 562 from the Attorney General’s Office Control No. 5036 Office of the Attorney General of the Nation to the Director General of the National Police, file ref. No. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 12176].

<sup>53</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/14/1979, providencia number 22260, ref. oficio 10ºrba., from the Directorate General to the police Legal Advisor, file ref. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 12178].

<sup>54</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/17/1979, dictamen 8857, reg.10,001, asunto T-67, addressed to the Director General of the PN, by the lawyer advising, signature illegible, from file ref. No. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 12179].

<sup>55</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/17/1979, providencia No. 22390, subject T-68, signed by Secretary General Catalán and the chief clerk of the Secretariat General Francisco J. Muñoz Z, stamped “received,” Detective Corps No. 32971, file ref. No. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 12180].

GT PN 50 S004 26.09.1979, urgent memorandum addressed to the chief of the Detective Corps by the Secretariat General “*by order of the Director,*” from file Ref. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 12173].

<sup>56</sup> GT PN 50 S004 no date, handwritten document included in file ref. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 12172].

<sup>57</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/28/1979, providencia No. 24218, oficio 9º. ramm, subject T-68.Reg.2997, addressed to the Director General of the PN by Miguel García Herrarte, Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps, from file ref. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 1809].

brown, four-door 220 series Mercedes Benz with license plates P-43937 crashed into house number 5-06.

Two blocks from there, on 3rd Avenue and 5th Street zone 9, they caught up with the red 1979 Toyota with license plates P-94891 in which Manuel Colom Argueta was traveling. All the vehicle's windows were shot out with the exception of the rear windshield, making it possible to affirm that he was the victim of a pattern of crossfire by the assailants in what was an operation of significant proportions.

The CEH Report states:

*“With the bodyguards eliminated, a red car and two motorcycles set off in pursuit of Colom Argueta, who was trying to get away from the scene of the shooting, intercepting him at 3rd Avenue and 5th Street zone 9, where they machine-gunned the car. Information from eye witnesses and the victim’s family suggest that the occupants of the red car fired several bursts at the right side of the automobile while on the left Colom was attacked by the riders of one of the motorcycles, from which a well-built young man carrying a machine gun dismounted in order to finish the victim off.”<sup>58</sup>*

In the AHPN correspondence was found addressed to the Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez, Chief of the Detective Corps in which a witness who identified himself as “The Unknown One” stated that:

*“...as the car driven by the professional gentleman who was assassinated was being chased, I was able to see that of the three vehicles pursuing him one was a white paneled car, license plates 295376, out of which got a man holding a gun and when Mr. Colom Argueta’s car had already been machine-gunned, this person came from the left firing again at the body of the aforementioned gentleman.”<sup>59</sup>*

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<sup>58</sup> CEH Report, Annex I, p. 140.

<sup>59</sup> GT PN 50 S002 03/28/1979, Ref. 1354, document addressed to the chief of the Detective Corps, Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez by “The Unknown One” [Internal AHPN registration 12190].



## 4. Principal Actors

Manuel Colom Argueta was a leading figure in the political opposition and leader of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR), who formed part of the Democratic Front against Repression (FDCR) as well as the Democratic Socialist Party (PSD) and other popular organizations. Manuel Colom Argueta and Alberto Fuentes Möhr<sup>60</sup> were the opposition leaders that could have represented an alternative to “officialism” in the electoral process that was to take place in 1982.

In the elections of 1970, the Democratic Revolutionary Unity party (URD), standing as a Civic Committee, nominated Manuel Colom Argueta as candidate for mayor of the capital for 1970-1974. In these elections, General Carlos Arana Osorio won the Presidency of the Republic. As mayor of the capital, Colom Argueta brought stable and comprehensive management of the municipal government in terms of planned urbanization. This period saw the design, planning and construction of the city beltway, giant waste water collectors, the underground sewer system and the Metropolitan Development Regulatory Plan. He worked to organize the National Association of Municipalities of Guatemala (ANAM), of which he was President.

In 1970, the arrival of General Carlos Manuel Arana Osorio as President of the Republic, initiated a long period of governments headed by a sequence of Generals. In 1974, General Kjell Eugenio Laugerud García came to power as a result of an electoral process rife with questions of suspected fraud “*enabling the continuation in power of the National Liberation Movement and the Institutional Democratic Party (MLN-PID)*.”<sup>61</sup>

It became normal practice for the Head of the Defense Chiefs of Staff or the Minister for National Defense of the previous government to take over as President of the Republic in the succeeding administration.

On the day of the unlawful execution of Manuel Colom Argueta, the chain of command at the Ministry of the Interior and the PN was as follows:<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Former Foreign Minister, Doctor in Economic Sciences and leader of the Democratic Socialist Party. Assassinated on January 25, 1979.

<sup>61</sup> Kobrak, *En pie de lucha*, p. 45.

<sup>62</sup> Database for the chain of command from the AHPN and Adolfin Contreras Cruz and Fernando Sinay Álvarez, *Historia de la Policía Nacional de Guatemala 1881-1997* (BA Thesis in History, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, USAC, September 2004).

Donaldo Álvarez Ruiz  
*Minister of the Interior*

Infantry Colonel Germán Chupina Barahona  
*Director General of the National Police*  
July 1st, 1978 to February 23rd, 1982

Colonel Francisco Salazar Roquel  
*Deputy Director General of the National Police*  
November 18th, 1975 to March 24th, 1982

Manuel A. García Herrarte  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the National Police*  
January 5th, 1975 to January 28th, 1980

Police Colonel Reynaldo Haroldo Paniagua Cordero  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the National Police*  
June 1st, 1980 to June 21st, 1984

General Commissioner of Police César Augusto Trujillo Chacón  
*Third Chief and Inspector General of the National Police Detective Corps*  
December 20th, 1974 to June 3rd, 1985

Manuel de Jesús Valiente Téllez  
*First Chief of the National Police Detective Corps*  
July 5th, 1978 to January 11th, 1980

Gonzalo Pérez Vásquez  
*First Chief of the National Police First Corps*

Catalino Esteban Valiente Alonzo  
*Second Chief of the National Police First Corps*

Cipriano Guerra Castillo  
*Third Chief of the National Police First Corps*

Manuel Serrano Cano  
*Secretary of the National Police First Corps*

Augusto Campos Villalobos  
*First Chief of the National Police Third Corps*

Emilio Tomás Méndez San José  
*Second Chief of the National Police Third Corps*

Ízale Bonilla Morales  
*Third Chief of the National Police Third Corps*

Benigno Cruz Buenafé  
*First Chief of the National Police Radio Patrol Corps*

Jorge Cardona Dionisio  
*Second Chief of the National Police Radio Patrol Corps*

Manuel María Rodríguez López  
*Third Chief of the National Police Radio Patrol Corps*

Francisco Doradea Lima  
*Secretary of the National Police Radio Patrol Corps*

Jorge M. González Motta  
*First Chief of the National Police Motorized Corps*

Julio C. Fernández Cuéllar  
*Second Chief of the National Police Motorized Corps*

Oscar S. Rodas Ramírez  
*Third Chief of the National Police Motorized Corps*

## 5. Analysis of the Case

The current division and breakdown of the social fabric is perhaps the most palpable result of the repression of the popular movement during the armed conflict. A fundamental aspect of the case of the execution of Manuel Colom Argueta is precisely his role as a political leader with roots in broad sectors of the population.

Colom Argueta seemed to be capable of achieving electoral success by offering a different option on the political spectrum of that era. After several attempts, in 1979 he finally registered the Democratic Socialist Party (PSD) and the United Revolutionary Front (FUR) to participate in the elections, but that same year saw the assassinations of its most prominent leaders.

Regarding this, a declassified document from the United States government's Defense Intelligence Agency<sup>63</sup> (DIA) dated November 1979 analyzes the situation in the following terms:

*"In the area of political rights, the first new political parties in 10 years have been certified during the first year of Lucas' administration. A total of 14 new parties had filed applications, and as of September 1979, four had been certified, including 1 leftist party, the FUR (United Revolutionary Front). The leader of this party and former mayor of Guatemala city, Manuel Colom Argueta, was murdered in March 1979, several days after his party had attained certification. This and the murder of Social Democratic leader and former Foreign Minister, Alberto Fuentes Mohr, 2 months earlier, is a setback to the movement to open the political doors for wider choices and more open elections. Army Chief of Staff, Major General David Cancinos Barrios, who was scheduled to be elevated to the position of Minister of Defense on 1 July 1979, and considered by many as President Lucas's choice as successor to the Presidency, was assassinated on 10 June 1979."*<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA): United States agency. The responsibility of DIA defense attaches overseas to gather and analyze information on foreign armies makes this agency the most fruitful source for information on the Guatemalan army. The DIA produces "military intelligence summaries," biographical profiles of key officials, general orders (tracking changes in command) and in-depth intelligence analysis of security topics.

<sup>64</sup> Unclassified document, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), *Military Intelligence Summary (MIS) Volume VIII, Latin America (U)*, November 1979. DOB-2680-108<sup>a</sup>-79. Available in the National Security Archive Electronic documents, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal*. Volume II documents (online). [www.gwu.edu/~NSARCHIVE/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc16.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~NSARCHIVE/NSAEBB/NSAEBB32/docs/doc16.pdf)

Other documents declassified by the National Security Archive (NSA) contain information relating to the murder of Colom Argueta. One of these is a memorandum concerning a meeting held on May 7th, 1979, between the Guatemalan Foreign Minister, Rafael Eduardo Castillo Valdez and an official from the US State Department.<sup>65</sup> In essence, the document explains that during they meeting they discussed the new policies on bilateral cooperation that the United States Government imposed on Central America and, in the case of Guatemala specifically, as a result of the increase in political violence. It also mentions the recent assassinations of prominent center-left political leaders (Colom Argueta and Fuentes Mohr) and potential candidates for the presidency in 1982.

Right there it states that, based on intelligence reports, the murder of Colom Argueta favored the presidential ambitions of the Chief of the Army General Staff (EMGE),<sup>66</sup> General David Cancinos Barrios, since the political leader had been seen as a serious competitor. The memorandum also reports that the government of Lucas García was responsible for the increase in political violence as it failed to stop the political assassinations and criminal activities of the death squads.

Another informative memorandum, dated September 22nd, 1979, contains details of the situation for human rights in Guatemala and states that the Guatemalan government was involved in serious and systematic human rights violations.<sup>67</sup> This document also mentions that, according to intelligence reports, the murders of the two political leaders (Fuentes Mohr and Colom Argueta) were carried out on the orders of the Chief of the EMGE. It also signals the political party, the National Liberation Movement (MLN) as responsible for the acts of political violence and the formation of extreme-right terrorist groups.

This report demonstrates the permanent control the police institution maintained over Manuel Colom Argueta, his fellow party members, friends and family. The AHPN contains numerous documents that prove the continuous surveillance to which the leader was subjected in the course of his political, working, teaching, professional and personal activities. The set of confidential reports written mainly by the Detective Corps demonstrate the selection made of political leaders, opponents of the regime currently in power.

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<sup>65</sup> Peter Tarnoff, Executive Secretary to the State Department, Washington, D.C., memorandum for Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, The White House; May 7, 1979; The National Security Archive (Washington, D.C.)

<sup>66</sup> The chief of the EMGE, during this period was General David Cancinos Barrios, who occupied the post from 02/01/1977 to 06/10/1979, the day he was assassinated. In: National Security Archive, *The Guatemalan Military: What the US Files Reveal*, Volume I, Army Units and Officers.

<sup>67</sup> Viron Vaky and Patricia Derian, informative memorandum for the Assistant Secretary of the State Department; September 22, 1979; The National Security Archive (Washington, D.C.)

In the documents studied, the absence of any results in the PN investigations is evident. In relation to the attack in 1976 in which Colom Argueta was injured and about which he himself provided substantial information, the authorities acted to conceal the events. Three years later, he was executed together with two members of his personal security team. Once again, none of the documents relating to the investigation of his murder show no evidence of any progress. An example of this is the bureaucratic procedure that followed the request for an investigation sent out by the Vice President of the Republic that terminated with a document from the Detective Corps which concludes by stating “*at the earliest opportunity we will provide further information in this regard.*”<sup>68</sup>

In this case, we can identify the following human rights violations: violation of the right to political participation of Manuel Colom Argueta and the members and sympathizers of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR). Violation of the right to safety and well-being of Manuel Colom Argueta, his family, and the members and sympathizers of his political party. Violation of the right to life of Manuel Colom Argueta. Violation of the right to due process and an effective investigation of the criminal act by the PN and the judicial authorities which, to this day, have neither explained what occurred nor punished any of those responsible.

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<sup>68</sup> GT PN 50 S004 09/28/1979, providencia No. 24218, oficio 9º ramm, subject T-68.Reg.2997, addressed to the Director General of the PN by Miguel Garcia Herrarte, Third Chief and Inspector General of the Detective Corps, from file ref. 1651 [Internal AHPN registration 1809].



## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This report presented by the National Police Historical Archive (AHPN), a product of archival research, constitutes the first in-depth look at evidence of human rights violations. It is offered to the public with the aim of shedding light on fundamental aspects of the structure and functioning of the National Police, its practices and typical behaviors, and their evolution, particularly between 1975 and 1985, the period which was given priority for this first phase of investigation. The report also details the National Police's relationship with other security forces and its activities in the context of the internal armed conflict. The latter had a terrible effect on the populace in general and on vast numbers of individuals.

The AHPN is of incalculable importance for the opportunities it provides for research on human rights and historical clarification. It facilitates the detailed reconstruction of the institutional history of the most important State bodies during more than one hundred and fifteen years and makes it possible to analyze and unveil the conduct of the institution during the internal armed conflict.

Although this Report does not dwell on the history of the PN, the documentation itself calls for the inclusion of some notes in order to round off the topics presented. Founded in 1881, it performed the function of overseeing public order, but another pair of security forces played a secondary role during the first decades of its existence, as successive regimes organized corps specializing in the criminal and political persecution and repression. Even during the revolutionary governments, the police, at that time known as the Civil Guard, worked in tandem with the Judicial Guard.

It is impossible to understand the PN and the role it played without taking account of the political and historical circumstances surrounding its acquisition of the structure and functions that would last until its disbandment as a consequence of the Peace Accords. The PN of the second half of the twentieth century emerged during a period of widespread political agitation and repression of the sectors that had gained strength during the revolutionary governments. Several decrees issued between 1954 and 1956 are a reflection of the growing anti-communist current, bringing about the creation of various agencies of repression that were gradually integrated into, and their functions taken over by the police institution.



It was then that it evolved into the National Police as it was known throughout the 1970s, 80s, and 90s.

The Organic Law, Presidential Decree 332, assigned to the PN certain functions of a very general nature that can theoretically be summed up as the protection of the citizens, their interests and property, the prevention and suppression of criminal activity and the maintenance of public order. This mandate gave it ample room to maneuver, allowing, in its role as a subordinate of the National Army to evolve and lay the foundations for the features characteristic of a public security force designed for political repression.

The internal organization of the PN is characterized by its vertical nature, made manifest in a rigid chain of command. The Director General was formally answerable to the Minister of the Interior, although he had an obligation and power to submit reports directly and immediately to the President or Head of State as the case might be, when the situation or the information justified this.

The majority of the successive superior chiefs of the PN occupied the ranks of Colonel or General achieved in military service, including General Staff diplomas. Military nomenclature was also used for the internal ranks of the police as some of its members managed to ascend the hierarchical ladder (Lieutenant Colonel of Police, Police Lieutenant, Police Sergeant). It was not until 1985 that a structure of ranks was introduced that reflected a body of a civilian nature (commissioner, inspector, officer).

As head of the institution, the Director General possessed certain powers to issue internal regulations and implement administrative and structural changes without going against the Organic Law. Regarding decisions involving greater reach and responsibility, he was subordinated to the Executive, specifically the Minister of the Interior. As the Director's immediate superior, the Minister would decide the appointments of Deputy Directors, chiefs, and deputy chiefs, the dissolution and creation of operational structures, and other basic guidelines that affected the functioning of the institution. It should be noted that these were not very frequent events, as the PN essentially remained remarkably constant over the decades.

The PN possessed structures that covered predetermined territorial areas, assigned to the corps in the capital and the departmental headquarters. It also had mobile units, such as the Motorized and Radio Patrol Corps, and investigative and operational agencies, such as the Special Operations Command and Command Six, that could be immediately ordered into operation in any sector. The central agency for investigation and intelligence was the so-called Detective Corps and, later, the Department of Technical Investigation.

The various PN agencies together produced a considerable stream of written communication. This was also the case with external bodies, especially to and from the office of the Minister of the Interior, the Presidential General Staff and the Army General Staff/National Defense General Staff. In principle, this exchange is illustrative of activity that is essentially administrative and hierarchically directed. However, the result of this is an enormous collection of documents made up of the most diverse records: telegrams, radiograms, operational reports, accounts of surveillance operations and dead bodies and including secret and confidential memorandums and operational reports. Added to this are the previously mentioned “oficios,” “providencias,” memoranda, and more.

The documents in the AHPN attest to the close working relationship between the various State security forces. These coordinated activities were especially common in the context of the international struggle against communism led by the United States. In Guatemala, this persecution intensified in 1954 after the overthrow of the elected president Jacobo Árbenz and alignment with the dictates of the US respecting hemispheric security policies as laid out in the National Security Doctrine (DSN).

The AHPN collection thus makes it possible to understand the coordination and relationships between the PN and the highest authorities in the National Army, principally during the period studied for this report. The communications between the Directorate General of the PN and the Head of State, Commander in Chief of the Army, and Minister of Defense provide evidence of the direct relationship it maintained with the military structures.

Thousands of documents reveal the PN to be a key component for the operability of the counterinsurgency strategy centralized and led by the Army High Command. This is shown by reports on support provided for operations, both legal and illegal,

carried out by the armed forces. There are also multiple confidential information documents on the popular protest movement and opposition organizations in order for the PN to undertake their control, surveillance and repression.

In joint counterinsurgency operations, the PN played a clearly complementary role in relation to the military agencies involved. Its subordination is made clear in a multitude of documents dealing with conceptual issues for the security forces, and which confirm the unequal nature of the relationship. This imbalance led to some disagreements and frictions, both minor and major, between both institutions. In 1985, the PN introduced some changes in such a way as to imply a modicum of independence from the Army, such as the change in nomenclature of the ranks to suit its civilian nature.

Within the framework of the counterinsurgency strategy, the PN constructed a notion of *enemy forces*. This allowed it to broaden its own field of action for the control and repression of the populace, political, social and religious leaders and organizations and guerrilla organizations operating on national territory, but particularly in the capital city and departmental administrative centers.

During this period, many citizens were considered *enemies of the State* or *suspected of belonging to subversive groups*, and as a result were subjected to constant control. In general, the usual order was to stop and search all suspicious individuals whether on foot or in vehicles. There was a tendency to label virtually everyone as *suspicious*.

The State security forces committed systematic violations of due process. For example, they detained people as *undocumented persons* despite the fact that the law had not established, for Guatemalan nationals, any obligation to carry identification documents (in the case of undocumented foreigners, the legal precepts followed different principles).

For the purposes of surveillance and intelligence work, the police institution set up successive investigative bodies. They implemented a system of personal files that initially served as a record of common criminals. Later, it was also used to record and retrieve any information for the control and monitoring of the social and political activities of both individuals and groups. Thus, the system became an administrative instrument of power based on an intelligence structure that

grew progressively more professional as resistance to the military governments became stronger and more intense.

The Detective Corps was set up in 1970 using the personnel and methods of the disbanded Judicial Police. This was a parallel agency to the police, based on wholly anti-communist decrees following the overthrow of President Jacobo Árbenz and created for the control and severe repression of political opponents.

The documents analyzed prove that the PN's criminal investigation branches, without excusing the other corps, carried out selective and prolonged surveillance of opposition leaders. The personal files for criminal, social and political control, along with the confidential reports, demonstrate this pattern of involvement in counterinsurgency policies.

Based on the information in the APHN that it has so far been possible to examine, it is possible to show that, within the PN, structures were created whose main aim was to respond to the specific needs for coordination imposed by the counterinsurgency strategy. So it was that the Police Center for Joint Operations (COCP) came into being as a link and a parallel corps to its namesake in the Army. Afterwards came other agencies such as the Special Operations Command (COE) or Fifth Corps and Command Six (attached to the Second Corps) with essentially operational functions, both within and beyond the bounds of what was legal.

During the period 1975-1985, the PN availed itself of various means of making its presence and control over the population felt. First and foremost was its intelligence work devoted to the compilation of essential information. Based on this, they planned and carried out diverse types of operations such as raids, searches, checkpoints and attacks on houses believed to be or identified as *guerrilla strongholds*. In certain cases, especially during their raids on safe houses, the PN played a secondary role. The lead player would usually be an army unit. These activities were not sanctioned by court orders, even during periods where no state of emergency existed.

An important aspect of the daily life of the police institution was the network of agents and confidential collaborators that various chiefs built as a means of having eyes and ears in numerous places, institutions, and organizations. They would usually be provided with an ID card that would confirm them as such, and

sometimes they were paid for their services through confidential payments, or enjoyed other kinds of privileges.

This confidential network, shared partially with the Army, was highly effective. There are multiple confidential documents in the AHPN, some with the sender identified as the Army General Staff or Presidential General Staff. The writers of these reports informed against individuals, organizations, houses and activities. After the information was received, the police would implement investigative or repressive measures through their specialist agencies.

At the PN no files were held on individuals. The mountain of information on any single person was kept at the various agencies, as each received and archived its own communications. Now, linking up documents on a the same person or event allows the construction and creation of digital files. That is to say, a folder with reproductions of the documents and their archival references. The files presented in this report reveal the activities of members of the PN that spilled over into violations of the human rights of Guatemalan citizens during the years 1975-1985.

Another recurring detail in the policing practices of that era was the absence of criminological investigation in cases of violent death or disappearance of political opponents. Also absent was the application of due legal process, violating the civil rights and constitutional guarantees of the victims and their relatives. At certain moments the upper levels of the PN hierarchy impeded the functioning of its internal investigative bodies and the corresponding legal action, fostering a culture of impunity at the police institution.

On numerous occasions, the PN failed to fulfill the functions that were its legal obligation and acted as an accomplice, allowing someone in its custody and under its protection to be attacked, executed or abducted by other State security forces. One of the files included in this Report recounts what happened to one person who was detained and charged with a common crime. Despite the constitutional guarantees legally underpinning due process, he ended up being executed without trial by agents of the Guatemalan State security forces.

The police had its own detention centers, particularly that of the Second Corps, which was also the site of the prisoners' hospital. The custom was to drive

detainees to the various police corps and to the headquarters of the Detective Corps/Department of Technical Investigation, where they would undergo investigation and interrogation procedures, both legal and illegal.

During the period studied, in the course of policing operations numerous citizens' activities were treated as criminal, resulting in violations of constitutional guarantees such as the right to freedom of movement, organization and expression, along with social and political participation.

There is evidence of other human rights violations such as apprehensions without bringing the detainee before the competent judge or doing so with undue delay. Other investigations underway in the AHPN will be able to resolve many questions that keep arising on examination of the documents stored there.

As this report was in its final writing phase, the legal value of the AHPN documents was made clear by their use as conclusive evidence in several court proceedings. It is for this reason that access to this trove of documents has finally given hope of obtaining prison sentences from the courts of justice for those who planned and committed human rights violations. This results from the fact that families and national and international humanitarian organizations link numerous crimes against humanity with the commanders and agents of the National Police.

It bears repeating that the National Police Historical Archive works with an absolute conviction of the inherent rights of the population in general, and those of the victims and their families in particular, to know and understand the information that the documents reveal regarding the activities of the PN during the internal armed conflict. It is the beginning of an institutional effort to contribute to the clarification of multiple human rights violations, the reconstruction of the historical memory and the clarification of the truth, alongside the quest for and achievement of justice.



## ACRONYMS USED

AEU	Asociación de Estudiantes Universitarios / Association of University Students
AGSA	Archivo General y Servicios de Apoyo / General Archive and Support Services
AHPN	Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional / National Police Historical Archive
AI	Amnistía Internacional / Amnesty International
AID	Agencia Internacional para el Desarrollo / International Development Agency
ANAM	Asociación Nacional de Municipalidades de Guatemala / National Association of Municipalities of Guatemala
APROFAM	Asociación Pro-bienestar de la Familia / Association for the Well-Being of the Family
BEO	Bloque Estudiantil Organizado / Organized Student Block
BRES	Brigadas Revolucionarias de Estudiantes de Secundaria de El Salvador/Revolutionary Brigade of High-School Students of El Salvador
BROE	Batallón de Reacción y Operaciones Especiales /Reaction and Special Operations Battalion
CAVISA	Industria Centroamericana de Vidrios Sociedad Anónima / Central American Glass Industry Limited
CEEM	Coordinadora de Estudiantes de Educación Media/ Secondary Level Students' Coordinating Committee
CEH	Comisión para el esclarecimiento histórico/Commission for Historical Clarification
CETE	Comité de Emergencia de los Trabajadores del Estado / State Workers' Emergency Committee
CEUR	Centro de Estudios Urbanos y Regionales / Center for Urban and Regional Studies
CIDH	Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos / Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
CNT	Central Nacional de Trabajadores/National Workers' Central
CNUS	Comité Nacional de Unidad Sindical / National Committee for Union Unity



COC	Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas del Ejército / Center for Joint Army Operations
COCP	Centro de Operaciones Conjuntas de la Policía / Center for Joint Police Operations
COE	Comando de Operaciones Especiales / Special Operations Command
COMIL-PGT	Comisión Militar del Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo / Military Commission of the Guatemalan Workers' Party
CONDECA	Consejo de Defensa Centroamericana / Central American Defense Council
COP	Centro de Operaciones de la Policía / Center for Police Operations
CRIO	Central de Recopilación de Información y Operaciones / Center for Compilation of Information and Operations
CRT	Centro Regional de Telecomunicaciones / Regional Telecommunications Center
CSJ	Corte Suprema de Justicia / Supreme Court of Justice
CTP	Centro de Telecomunicaciones de la Presidencia / Presidential Communications Center
D-2	Dirección de inteligencia / Intelligence Office
DEM	Diplomado en Estado Mayor / Chiefs of Staff Diploma
DGSN	Dirección General de Seguridad Nacional / Directorate General of National Security
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DIC	Departamento de Investigaciones Criminológicas / Department of Criminological Investigation
DIT	Departamento de Investigaciones Técnicas / Department of Technical Investigation
DSN	Doctrina de Seguridad Nacional / National Security Doctrine
EGP	Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres / Guerrilla Army of the Poor
EMDN	Estado Mayor de la Defensa Nacional / National Defense Chiefs of Staff
EMGE	Estado Mayor General del Ejército / Army General Staff
EMP	Estado Mayor Presidencial / Presidential General Staff

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ESA	Ejército Secreto Anticomunista / Anti-Communist Secret Army
FAG	Fuerza Aérea Guatemalteca / Guatemalan Air Force
FAR	Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes / Rebel Armed Forces
FDCR	Frente Democrático Contra la Represión / Democratic Front against Repression
FERG	Frente Estudiantil Robin García / Robin García Student Front
FUR	Frente Unido de la Revolución / United Revolutionary Front
FURE	Frente Unido Revolucionario Escuintleco / Escuintla United Revolutionary Front
G-2	Sección de inteligencia del Ejército / Army Intelligence Section
G-3	Sección de operaciones y entrenamiento del Ejército / Army Operations and Training Section
GH	Guardia de Hacienda / Treasury Guard
ICA	International Cooperation Administration
IGSS	Instituto Guatemalteco de Seguridad Social / Guatemalan Institute of Social Security
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IOT	Instrucciones Operativas de Transmisiones / Transmissions Operational Instructions
MC	Memorando confidencial / Confidential memorandum
MICUDE	Ministerio de Cultura y Deportes / Ministry of Culture and Sport
MINDEF	Ministerio de Defensa / Ministry of Defense
MINGOB	Ministerio de Gobernación / Ministry of the Interior
MLN	Movimiento de Liberación Nacional / National Liberation Movement
MONAP	Movimiento Nacional de Pobladores / National Settler Movement
MP	Ministerio Público / Ministry of Justice
MS	Memorando secreto / Secret Memorandum
NSA	National Security Archive

ODHAG	Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala / Human Rights Office of the Archbishopric of Guatemala
OEA	Organización de Estados Americanos / Organization of American States
OPS	USAID Office of Public Safety
ORPA	Organización del Pueblo en Armas / Revolutionary Organization of Armed People
PA	Piloto Aviador / Air Force Pilot
PAC	Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil / Civil Self-Defense Patrol
PDH	Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos / Human Rights Ombudsman
PGN	Procurador General de la Nación / Attorney General of the Nation
PGT	Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo / Guatemalan Workers' Party
PID	Partido Institucional Democrático / Institutional Democratic Party
PMA	Policía Militar Ambulante / Ambulatory Military Police
PN	Policía Nacional / National Police
PNC	Policía Nacional Civil / National Civil Police
PRAHPN	Proyecto de Recuperación del Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional / Project for the Recuperation of the National Police Historical Archive
PSD	Partido Socialista Democrático / Democratic Socialist Party
PSP	Programa de Seguridad Pública / Public Security Program
REMHI	Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica / Recuperation of the Historical Memory
RMF	Registro Maestro de Fichas / Master File Record
S-2	Sección de Inteligencia Militar / Military Intelligence Section
SEREVIDH	Servicio de Referencias sobre Violaciones / Reference Service on Human Rights Violations
SIC	Sección de Investigaciones Criminales / Criminal Investigations Section

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TOSO	Teatro de Operaciones de Suroccidente / Southwestern Theater of Operations
UAI	Unidad de Acceso a la Información / Information Access Unit
URD	Unidad Revolucionaria Democrática / Democratic Revolutionary Unity
USAC	Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala
USAID	United States Agency for International Development



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