

MASTER EXHIBIT SERIES

GUATEMALA

FORCED RECRUITMENT/ARMY

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Rev. 10/08/92

GUATEMALA

FORCED RECRUITMENT/ARMY

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<u>Item</u>	<u>Citation/Description</u>
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| I. | Pro Justice & Peace Committee of Guatemala, <u>Human Rights in Guatemala: January - September 1990</u> (Guatemala: Pro Justice & Peace Committee of Guatemala, October 1990), pp. 44-46. |
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The Guatemalan army is described as a repressive apparatus guilty of systematic human rights abuses. Several specific incidents are briefly discussed including four cases of forced military conscription. These cases, all taking place in 1990, occurred in five different provinces. Those forcibly inducted included indigenous men and underage combatants. One young resister was beaten. The young men were taken from buses and recreation centers by armed men, some uniformed and some in civilian clothes.

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| II. | EnfoPrensa/USA, "Political Parties Report Army Outrage," <u>EnfoPrensa - Information on Guatemala</u> (Chicago: EnfoPrensa/USA, 6 August 1990), p. 3. |
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A spokesman for the Solidarity Action Movement (MAS) reported that on July 29, 1990, in San Lucas Toliman, Solola, army members violently captured several minors from the town market, with the purpose of inducting them into the army.

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| III. | Joseph Albright, "Teens Forced to Fight World's Wars", <u>Austin American-Statesman</u> , 29 July 1990 (as reported in <u>Central America NewsPak</u> , Vol. 2, No. 12, pp. 1-2). |
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Central American armies continue their practice of forcibly recruiting fighters under the legal draft age of eighteen. In Guatemala this has been standard practice for decades. According to one source, it is common for soldiers to capture recruits on market days in Solola.

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| IV. | "Army's Forced Recruiting Criticized," <u>Central America Report</u> , Vol. 17, No. 17, 11 May 1990, pp. 134-135. |
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Over 900 young men, mostly from poor families, were forcibly recruited at the end of April 1990. Boys as young as sixteen were violently pulled from buses by military commissioners. Human Rights Ombudsman Ramiro de Leon Carpio, denouncing these operations as flagrant violations of human rights, was able to obtain the release of several minors. One method of obtaining recruits has been to advertise for laborers and to then capture those who arrive as job candidates. Army spokesman Colonel Luis Arturo Isaac admitted that the recruitment practices more heavily affected economically disadvantaged sectors.

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| V. | "Army Recruitment Comes Under Fire," <u>This Week: Central America</u> , Vol. 13, No. 18, 7 May 1990, pp. 104, 107. |
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The armed forces are made up of approximately 51,000 armed men, mostly indigenous

from the highland region. Many soldiers are press ganged into the army and recruited youths under the legal age of eighteen. One recent recruitment operation occurring in the capital provoked public outrage and denunciation.

- VI. Amnesty International, "Fear of Disappearance - Jeronimo Ruiz Morente," (London: Amnesty International, March 1990), "AMR 34/19/90".

A sixteen year old boy is abducted by armed men in Gomera, Escuintla. Now "disappeared", witnesses believe he may have been inducted into the army. Young indigenous peasant boys are frequent targets of recruitment by armed men, uniformed and in plain clothes. Abductions may be for purposes of recruitment or political interrogation. The purpose of this youth's capture is not yet clear.

- VII. Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, "Other Human Rights Violations," Human Rights Update #4, 24 January 1990.

An activist from the Council of Ethnic Communities "Runujel Junam" (CERJ) died in an attempt to flee military agents who were trying to capture him for military service, from which he was legally exempt. The incident occurred in El Quiché.

- VIII. Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, "Forced Recruitment Denounced," Human Rights Update, 8 December 1989.

A declaration signed by representatives of institutions from sixteen countries denounces a massive forced recruitment campaign being conducted by the Guatemalan army.

- IX. Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, "Other Human Rights Violations," Human Rights Update, 11 November 1989.

A new forced recruitment campaign targeting indigenous peasants, including minors, began November 4, 1989. One youth, captured by armed men from his home in Guatemala City, and subsequently disappeared, was later found to have been forcibly abducted into the Honor Guard. In another recruitment operation in Santiago Atitlán, Solola, armed men captured five youths from an Evangelical Church.

- X. "Serving the Fatherland," This Week: Central America and Panama, Vol. 12, No. 31, 14 August 1989, p. 243.

A teenaged indigenous peasant, after having been forced into military service by army recruiters, was wounded in a grenade explosion and captured by guerrillas, who kept him as a prisoner for several months before releasing him. Army spokesmen, doubting his story, consider him a deserter. He is currently under the protection of the bishop of the Catholic Church in San Marcos. Forced recruitment into the army, and treatment of army soldiers, discriminates against indigenous youths, especially from the highland region.

- XI. "Violence Common...How Much is Political?", Central America Report, Vol. 16, No. 23, 16 June 1989, pp. 180-181.

Victims of recent violence include two brothers, one of whom had deserted from the Tactical Air Force Group the previous month. They were killed in Jocotillo, Villa Canales, Guatemala along with two witnesses. One of the armed men who carried out the

killings said he had been sent "by the authorities".

- XII.a. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Guatemala, "Disappearance, 8 November 1988, "UA 296/88."
- XII.b. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Guatemala, "Further Information on UA 296/88 (8 November 1988) and follow-ups (10 November 1988 and 17 November 1988)," 7 December 1988.
- XII.c. Amnesty International, Urgent Action, Guatemala, "Further Information on UA 296/88 (8 November 1988) and follow-ups (10 November 1988, 17 November 1988, and 7 December 1988)," 30 December 1988.

Two peasant farmers from El Quiche were abducted from their hotel room in Guatemala City where they were attending a conference with the Council of Ethnic Communities 'Runujel Junam' (CERJ). Initial reports indicated that the men had been taken for their obligatory military service, but they were later released, after having been maltreated while in detention.

- XIII. "Bottom Liner," This Week: Central America and Panama, Vol. 11, No. 43, 7 November 1988, p. 350.

The process of recruitment is one in which teenaged boys are press ganged. Civil patrols help to seize young men from streets and sports stadiums. Only those from economically disadvantaged sectors are forced to serve in this way.

- XIV. Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, "The Indigenous Population Under Constant Pressure," Information Bulletin, September/October, 1988, pp. 8-9.

The army admits that it resorts to forced recruitment in violation of the Constitution. Young men lacking financial resources, especially those from indigenous communities, are primary targets. There is a shortage of voluntary enlistees because the army has a history of acting against the non-combatant civilian population. The army exerts pressure tactics such as threats, persecution and death. Denunciation of these practices have come from Antigua Guatemala, Sacatepequez as well as from the provinces of Huehuetenango, El Quiche and San Marcos. Forced unpaid labor and service in the civil patrols is also a problem weighing heavily on the rural indigenous population.

- XV. Guatemalan Human Rights Commission/USA, Report Presented to the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (Washington, D.C.: Guatemala Human Rights Commission, June 1988), pp. 6-7 & Introduction.

The army resorts to violent methods for recruitment, especially in indigenous areas. Despite assurances from army officials that recruitment is voluntary, there is a continued practice of rounding up young men and taking them by force to military barracks. The military also keeps lists of young indigenous and poor working men, pressuring and threatening them to join. Forced recruitment of young men is also facilitated by civil patrol chiefs. Examples of forced recruitment are given in Villa Canales, Guatemala, Antigua Guatemala, Sacatepequez as well as in the departments of Huehuetenango, El Quiche, Solola, Totonicapan and Chimaltenango.

- XVI. "Military Commissioners Charged with Abuse of Power," Central America Report, Vol. 15, No. 21, 3 June 1988, p. 167.

Military commissioners have been charged with abusing their power. One incident involved a young man in Escuintla shot as he tried to flee an attempt to forcibly recruit him. There are also examples of intimidation and forced recruitment into civil patrols and army in El Quiche and Huehuetenango.

- XVII. Jean-Marie Simon, Guatemala: Eternal Spring - Eternal Tyranny (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987), pp. 85, 88.

A young Guatemalan Indian from Chimaltenango gives a first hand account of his army induction. He was among a group of underage volunteers who were accepted into military service. He describes violence and abuse of new indigenous recruits, even voluntary ones. The humiliation and extreme brutality experienced in the army hardens young recruits.

- XVIII. Rebens Medina, Chief of the Library of Congress Hispanic Law Division, to the Honorable Ronald V. Dellums (D-CA), with a Report by Gisela von Muhlenbrock, Senior Legal Specialist, 7 April 1986.

Legal report states that military service is mandatory and that civil defense patrols do not have a specific statutory basis and are the product of internal warfare. Excerpts from the Guatemalan Constitution and other legal documents outline the obligations, exemptions and penalties regarding military service.

- XIX. EnfoPrensa/USA, "Human Rights- Harassment Increases," Enfoprensa- Information on Guatemala, (Washington, D.C.: EnfoPrensa/USA, 28 February 1986), p. 3.

The Committee of Campesino Unity (CUC) reports an increase in forced military recruitment. The army issued death threats along with the requirement that each village supply 35 young men to join the reserves.

- XX. Michael McClintock, The American Connection, Vol. 2, State Terror and Popular Resistance in Guatemala (London: Zed Books, 1985), pp. 161-169.

Background is given on the military structure and system. Forced recruitment is conducted by military commissioners using methods such as press ganging youths, especially those from indigenous communities - from markets, dances and buses. Exemptions from conscription can be bought with a small bribe, thus all but the rural poor are in effect exempt. The systematic torture, brutal treatment and political indoctrination faced by army recruits is described. Through this training the soldier comes to believe that he is authorized to kill "subversives" without any formalities and that those who resist orders will themselves be killed. Army training is designed to break down a soldier's sense of ethnic identity and loyalty to his civilian roots.

- XXI. Shelton H. Davis & Julie Hodson, "The Army and the Guerrillas," chap. in Witnesses to Political Violence in Guatemala - The Suppression of a Rural Development Movement (Boston: Oxfam America, 1983), pp. 1-2, 12, 29-33.

Research methods are described in an introductory section after which the report goes on

to provide detailed background history. It is suggested that the army's forced conscription of Indian youths is a main factor influencing the rural population's allegiance with the guerrillas. As the guerrilla movement has grown in strength, the army has increased the brutality of its recruiting. First hand accounts are given of the forced recruitment of indigenous youths, including of those under the legal draft age of 18. Markets, fiestas, and buses provide an easy opportunity for recruiters to round up their quota of youths. Families who can afford to pay a bribe are sometimes able to get their sons released. Guerrilla groups are described, in contrast to the army, as never terrorizing the general population and as providing indigenous communities with protection from the army.

- XXII. Amnesty International, Guatemala: A Government Program of Political Murder (London: Amnesty International, 1981), pp. 3-4, 20-24.

Torture and murder are part of a long standing program of the Guatemalan government. A former conscript soldier, of Kekchi origin, gives an account of his induction and training, and goes on to describe his second year of military service, when he served as a member of a plain clothes army unit in Guatemala City. He describes the surveillance of civilians under political suspicion and the abduction of civilians for interrogation. One such interrogation, during which the subject was tortured and killed, is described in some detail.

- XXIII. Marie Simons, "Indians Resist Military Service," Washington Post, 28 March 1980 (as reported in Information Services on Latin America [ISLA], Oakland, California, #975).

Young Indian boys are violently taken from market places or as they leave churches after mass. There are descriptions of incidents of forced recruitment occurring in Olinstepeque, Quezaltenango and San Lucas, Solola. Families are so anxious to get their sons back that they will sell their most prized possession - land - in an attempt to bribe the army into freeing their sons. The brutality of the army indoctrinates Indian men so that they cease to identify with their original communities. On finishing their military term, they are often unable to reintegrate into the civilian population and thus remain in the army, become police officers or guards. Many become alcoholics. There is also growing evidence that some former soldiers go on to join the guerrilla forces.