

on the Soviet Union to release a Soviet refusenik, Anatoly Shcharansky, and allow him to emigrate to Israel. Just last month, on Shcharansky's 36th birthday, over 80 Members signed a proclamation reinforcing the message of the resolution; the proclamation was sent to Shcharansky and the leaders of the Soviet Union. Anatoly Shcharansky was arrested and imprisoned for daring to practice his faith and encourage others to do the same. He has been in prison for almost 7 years, and his mother says he is too ill to survive the brutality of that environment for the remainder of his sentence.

Anatoly Shcharansky has come to represent more than 350,000 Jews in the Soviet Union who are waiting for a chance to emigrate. Some continue patiently with their lives while they wait for their application to be ruled upon. Some, particularly those like Shcharansky who speak out for the rights of Jews in the Soviet Union, have been arrested and jailed under harsh conditions for extended periods of time. Fewer and fewer Soviet Jews receive permission to leave. In 1983, only 1,314 were allowed to leave, an appalling drop from 51,320 in 1979.

For those who must remain, religious persecution has become a fact of life. Jews are subjected to slander in the press, repression in the classroom, and harassment by their fellow countrymen. Their religious materials are confiscated. Soviet Jews with the courage to speak out on behalf of their people are silenced.

Recently, the Soviet Government has become more overtly antagonistic, supporting the creation of the Anti-Zionist Committee, a group whose virulent anti-Semitic activities included condoning publication of "The Class Essence of Zionism," a book suggesting—among other things—that Jews helped the Nazis in the Holocaust. The committee also alleged that the reason Jewish emigration had dropped so dramatically was that all those wishing to leave have left.

We must protect the treatment and censure of Jews in the Soviet Union. With the new leadership in the Soviet Union, we have a chance again to bring this issue to the forefront of all our dealings with the Soviets. In the coming months, we will have numerous opportunities to raise the issue of Soviet Jews. There will be a special order on March 15 to give Members an opportunity to speak out against Soviet repression of its Jewish population, and many activities in connection with solidarity Sunday for Soviet Jews on May 6. I urge all my colleagues to join in this important effort. ●

REARMING THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY

HON. MICHAEL D. BARNES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 1984

● Mr. BARNES. Mr. Speaker, the Reagan administration's recent decision to resume the sale to Guatemala of spare parts destined to restore some of that country's combat helicopters is ill conceived and ill timed. This action clearly contradicts a history of congressional opposition to a resumption of military ties with a country that has consistently been among the worst violators of human rights in the Western Hemisphere. It also goes against the recommendations of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America.

David B. Lawrenz, a staff researcher at the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, has prepared an analysis of U.S. support of the Guatemalan Military Government during the Reagan Presidency and the effects that this aid has had upon the people of that country. I would encourage each of my colleagues to read this report.

REARMING THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY: "REAGAN REFUGEES" FOR MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES?

(COHA Memorandum by David B. Lawrenz, Staff Researcher)

Although the Reagan administration's decision to consummate a direct-cash sale to Guatemala of \$2 million worth of helicopter parts goes against the findings of the president's Bipartisan Commission on Central America as well as strong Congressional sentiments, this move comes as little surprise given this administration's past efforts to beef up the Guatemalan armed forces. The methods used by the Reagan administration to send police and military equipment, spare helicopter and airplane parts and, reportedly, Green Beret advisers to Guatemala demonstrate the White House's determination to strengthen that country's military and counter-insurgency capacity, as well as to improve U.S. relations with the Guatemalan military leadership, in order to integrate the country into Washington's Central American security strategy. These means have ranged from covert activities (in the case of a Green Beret whose presence in Guatemala in October 1982 was revealed by a free-lance journalist) and apparent violations of a 1976 restriction on military assistance to gross human rights violators such as Guatemala, to reclassification of military-related vehicles that permitted evasion of the 1976 Congressional ban.

The recently announced sale of helicopter parts is the Reagan administration's first official transfer of military equipment to Guatemala, and will permit that country's armed forces to reactivate six helicopters from their aging fleet of Bell UH-1H "Huey" and Bell UH-1D craft. The State Department has stated that, as a direct cash sale, the transfer of these parts will not violate the 1976 Harkin Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Moreover, Congress has no control over this type of transaction. In January 1983, when the Reagan administration first declared its intention of selling Guatemala \$6.3 million worth of airplane and helicopter spare parts and communications devices, the transfer of

these items did not come under Congressional review because they were not designated as military equipment.

Perhaps the cruelest irony involved in the announcement of the \$2 million helicopter parts sale is the fact that the Reagan administration had blocked the transaction two months earlier, in late October 1983, following a spate of political violence that included the murder of two Guatemalans working under a U.S. Agency for International Development (AID)-financed program, and the death-squad-style slayings of a professor from the Univ. of San Carlos and a Franciscan priest. At that time, the White House temporarily froze the sale and announced that Ambassador Frederick Chapin, then in Washington, would not return to Guatemala for at least one month. While the State Department emphasized that this delay did not signify that U.S. approval for the \$2 million sale would be reviewed, press reports did indicate that senior officials at State were advocating voiding the whole transaction.

The Reagan administration's placing the parts sale on hold was ostensibly designed to pressure the Guatemalan government to improve its human rights performance. Sadly, the delay of the sale does not seem to have effected any change in the violently repressive activities of government security forces or the officially condoned right-wing death squads. Based on Enfoyprensa Press Agency's figures, drawn from Guatemalan police, press, court and relief organization sources, COHA has found that between Dec. 1, 1983 and Jan. 12, 1984, politically motivated murders totalled at least 133 and disappearances, 100. Of those persons kidnapped or "disappeared," during this period, 15 were under ten years old.

While the Reagan administration's approval of the helicopter parts sale does not represent a major military transfer compared to U.S. arms assistance to its other Central American allies, it does signify blatant rejection of the sentiments expressed by Congress and even the surprisingly harsh language utilized by the Kissinger Commission on Guatemala. The White House defiance of a document that otherwise legitimates the basic thrust of current U.S. regional policy may signal the initiation of further Reagan administration attempts to arm the Guatemalan military regime in the near future.

The Reagan reversal of President Carter's efforts to isolate Guatemala for its extremely poor record of human rights violations by cutting off all military assistance and commercial sales began in June 1981. At that time, the U.S. completed a \$3.2 million sale of trucks, jeeps and spare parts with Guatemala, after the Commerce Department, on order from the administration, reclassified these items from the "Crime Control and Detention" category to "Regional Stability and Controls," thus sidestepping the 1976 Congressional ban. The 100 jeeps involved in this deal reportedly came equipped with 24-volt electrical systems, which would allow the installation of military communications equipment. A similar evasion of the 1976 restrictions on U.S. Government military aid to Guatemala occurred when the State Department licensed the commercial sale to that country of \$750,000 worth of police arms and equipment in 1982.

The history of the sale of U.S. helicopters to Guatemala during the Reagan years commenced in 1980, when the Commerce Department, again under White House authorization, licensed the Bell Helicopter Company of Fort Worth, Texas to sell civilian choppers to the Guatemalan military government, then headed by Gen. Romeo Lucas

Garcia. Between December 1980 and December 1982, Bell sold Guatemala \$25 million worth of civilian helicopters: six Bell 412s, three Bell 212s, eight Bell 206-B's and six Bell 206-L's. A report by Mark Thompson that appeared in the *Forth Worth Star Telegraph* in December 1982 revealed that between January and April 1982, Bell had trained, at the company's Fort Worth facilities, at least 20 members of the Guatemalan air force to fly the 412s. Thompson also quoted Bell employees who indicated that "dozens" of Guatemalans received flight training in Fort Worth in 1981 and 1982.

The Bell 412s, civilian models of Bell's UH-1H "Huey" chopper—Guatemala bought nine Hueys between 1971 and 1977—were immediately converted for military use by installing machine guns from obsolete Hueys, once they reached the country. The Guatemalan army has also reportedly pressed the 412s into combat service by placing gun-wielding soldiers in the doors of the helicopters. The Guatemalan government also purchased sophisticated radio transmission equipment for the Bell helicopters during this period from the Southwest Vert-All, Inc. firm of Dallas. According to Thompson, a Vert-All employee traveled to Guatemala in 1982 to install the gear in air force planes.

The Commerce Department's authorization of these sales constituted a direct violation of the 1976 arms restrictions in spirit, if not in letter. The sales also violated a two-year-old standing "gentlemen's agreement" between the administration and members of Congress committing the administration to notify Congress of any intention to allow transfer of military goods to Guatemala.

Further evidence of clandestine U.S. support of the Guatemalan army was revealed in an Oct. 1982 report that appeared in the *New York Times*. It stated that a helicopter downed by Guatemalan guerrillas contained documents indicating that a Miami-based avionics firm, Conex, had contracted to repair a transponder from a Guatemalan air force plane and that a 200-pound package of unspecified contents was being held at Homestead Air Force Base in Florida for delivery to the Guatemalan air force.

Several studies have documented the Guatemalan security forces' routine use of U.S.-supplied helicopters in their attacks on Indian villages, in raids along the Mexican border and in conjunction with the National Police in the recently instituted search and control program, dubbed Operation octopus, in Guatemala City. Furthermore, there is a direct correlation between the intensity and frequency of the army's "scorched earth" assaults upon rural Indian towns and the volume of refugees fleeing to southern Mexico and, in growing numbers, to the U.S. In his November 1983 report to the General Assembly, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Guatemala, Viscount Culville, wrote that "Some refugees in (the) Puerto Rico (refugee camp) did not arrive until May 1983, having been living on the fringes of the co-operatives. . . harassed at the time by the army, particularly by helicopters." The O.A.S.'s Inter-American Commission on Human Rights also recently singled out the army's use of helicopters against civilians: "The refugees invariably tell the Commission that they left their homes because they were afraid of the mass attacks launched by government officials. Many of them witnessed massacres and destruction of their homes, churches, community buildings, animals, crops and other private property through air and artillery attacks." One example of the Guatemalan military's indiscriminate helicopter assaults against non-combatants comes from a Committee for Peasant Unity report that

on September 16 and 18 of 1983, the army repeatedly attacked and bombed refugee camps in several Guatemalan villages, causing the deaths of 77 men, 17 women and 26 children.

An issue of vital importance that the Reagan administration should consider is: "How will the reactivation of six Huey helicopters affect the refugee situation in Mexico, Guatemala and the U.S.?" While the use of these restored choppers will, in some instances, improve the armed forces capabilities to pursue and fight leftist insurgents effectively, the military government's common practice of whole-scale bombing and destruction of rural villages can now be expected to take place with greater frequency.

In its report to President Reagan, the Kissinger Commission lavished praise upon the Guatemalan government's civic action program, calling it a "positive aspect of the counter-insurgency" campaign. Another aspect of Guatemala's "counter-insurgency effort" which the Kissinger Commission lauded was the Civil Defense Forces, which in the words of the report, "provide security for villagers, go on patrol regularly and have taken heavy casualties in contacts with insurgents." What the Commission members failed to relate in their rosy depiction of the civil patrols is that the Guatemalan government has forced close to 700,000 men to abandon their work to "perform uncompensated counterinsurgency services for the army," according to one study. The country's military uses the civil patrols as unarmed vanguard forces to seek out and report on guerrilla presence. In a recently released American Friends Service Committee report, Nancy Peckenham states that "at times, because of local animosities or rivalries, people (who formerly supported the insurgents) may be denounced to the authorities in order to have them removed from the village. Exploiting these social tensions, the army prompts civil patrols to take revenge against their fellow villagers who were most supportive of the guerrillas."

The civic action and civil patrol programs form the two prongs of the Guatemalan government's brutal "beans and bullets" anti-insurgency effort in the countryside. Although the Kissinger Commission failed to see through the thin veneer of positive actions carried out under these campaigns, the reality is that these government programs lie at the base of the country's refugee crisis. Indian peasants, whose entire villages are destroyed by the armed forces to eliminate suspected bases of support for the guerrillas, often either flee directly to Mexico or gradually arrive there after spending months eking out a miserable existence in the Guatemalan countryside, where they are vulnerable to attacks from the army and/or civil patrols. In some cases, these displaced Indians live for a period in the "strategic hamlets" established by the government and jointly controlled by the army and the civil patrols, before making the dangerous journey to the Mexican refugee camps.

The problems which Guatemalan refugees in the southern Mexico state of Chiapas face due to the extremely poor standards of health, sanitation and nutrition in the camps there are compounded by the Guatemalan government's attitude toward their plight and status as refugees. Officials of the Mejia regime have claimed on several occasions that some of the refugees in Chiapas are actual members of, or lend assistance to the Guatemalan guerrillas. *Enfrensa* reported that on January 12, 1984 the Guatemalan Minister of the Interior, Gustavo Adolfo Lopez Sandoval, described the Guatemalan refugees as "insurgents . . .

(who) frequently raid Guatemalan border towns to cause trouble." This government claim, however, is refuted by statements such as one by Msgr. Prospero Penados del Barrio, Archbishop of Guatemala and President of the Guatemalan Bishops Conference, that most of the estimated 100,000 refugees in Mexico are women, children and elderly persons. Patrocinio Gonzalez Garrido, a senator from Chiapas, recently said that "It is a serious thing (for the Guatemalan government) to accuse 35,000 (refugees), the majority of whom are women, children and elderly, of being guerrillas."

The Mexican government has issued repeated assurances that the country's borders will remain open to the Guatemalan refugees and that no measures will be taken to deport these people against their will. But the Guatemalan army, in its seemingly endless and senseless efforts to track down insurgents among the refugees, has heightened latent fears within Mexico that refugee camps could become a source of serious social chaos. The Chiapas-based Committee for Aid to Guatemalan Refugees (CARGUA) has reported that 8,000 Guatemalan soldiers maintain a tight watch along the Mexican border, harassing and intimidating Indians, who often travel in groups of 15-20 persons, attempting to flee their country. It should also be noted that up until a number of months ago, Guatemalan patrols made repeated incursions into refugee camps located in Chiapas and either murdered on the spot or dragged off some of the residents across the border.

One of the most ominous reported instances of Guatemalan army incursions into the Mexican refugee camps occurred last January, when soldiers invaded several camps in a sweep through the southern Mexico region between La Trinitaria, Santiago and La Sombra. In two separate cross-border attacks, over 160 Guatemalan soldiers entered camps and killed 5 refugees. Despite a vigorous protest of these incursions by the High Commissioner of the U.N. High Commission on Refugees, CARGUA states that the Guatemalan army has yet to quit this practice. In October 1983, the Guatemalan armed forces carried out large-scale operations along the Mexican border that forced 500 Indians to flee to the Ixcán refugee camp.

Since 1978, Guatemalan refugees have also come to the U.S. in large numbers. In a May 1983 American Friends Service Committee report, Angela Berryman listed Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) figures showing that U.S. authorities apprehended 4,402 Guatemalan nationals in Fiscal Year (FY) 1979, 3,785 in FY 1980, 4,182 in FY 1981 and 3,994 in FY 1982. Based on INS estimates that for every undocumented entrant it apprehends in the U.S., four or five actually arrive in this country, Berryman puts the total number of Guatemalans who have entered the U.S. in the past four years at between 50,000 and 60,000. In fact, a highly reliable INS source told COHA that the actual figure may be as high as 75,000, with five to seven thousand residents in the Washington metropolitan area alone.●