

February 18, 1988

Ambassador Edwin G. Gorr
U. S. Ambassador to El Salvador
U. S. Embassy
San Salvador, El Salvador

Dear Ambassador Gorr:

The Baltimore City Council, by unanimous resolution, decries the psychological distress and physical danger inflicted on the people of El Varillo by the bombing of their town and the further militarization of their countryside. El Varillo is of special interest and concern to all Baltimoreans by reason of our El Salvador Friendship-City Project. We see it as our duty and privilege to speak on behalf of the residents, to find a hearing for their own distant pleas. They would do the same for us.

We Baltimoreans are a practical people. We recognize our neighbors as a potential resource to our own culture and economy. Disruption of their wellbeing affects us and all Americans. We ask you to use your influence to restore peace, justice, and hope to these valued neighbors.

Sincerely yours,


MARY PAT CLARKE

MPC:ss

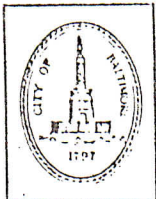
cc: Ms. Robin Lewy, Coordinator
El Salvador Friendship-City Project
1443 Gorsuch Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

This letter was personalized & sent to:

*George Schwartz
Pres. Duarte*

*Cor. Berle
Gen. Blandon*

*Riverly James
Rev. M. Singer*



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL

ROOM 400 • 100 NORTH HOLIDAY STREET • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

MAR 28 1988

Ms. Robin G. Lewy
El Salvador Friendship-City Project
1443 Gorsuch Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21218

Dear Ms. Lewy:

Senator Mikulski has asked the Department of State to respond to your letter to her of February 17, 1988, in which you discussed alleged repression by the Armed Forces of El Salvador against the people of El Barrillo.

As you may be aware, improving the human rights performance of the Salvadoran armed forces has long been a fundamental precept of U.S. policy toward that country. It is clear that over the last five years the armed forces have evolved into a demonstrably more professional and humane organization.

Regarding your concerns about alleged military repression against the citizens of El Barrillo, we are aware of no credible information indicating that the government of El Salvador or its armed forces are either repressing or violating the human rights of the citizens of El Barrillo. Given that El Barrillo is located in an area that until fairly recently was dominated by the communist guerrillas, military actions in the vicinity of the town do occur, however. The source of your information, the C.N.R, or National Repopulation Coordinator, is controlled by the communist guerrillas trying to overthrow the democratically elected government. As such, it is not a credible source of information on events in El Salvador.

It is instructive to note that while the human rights performance of the military forces of the Government of El Salvador has improved dramatically over the past few years, that of the communist guerrillas has sunk to new lows. Low-level government troops continue to commit isolated and unauthorized abuses, but it is the policy of the government and armed forces to prohibit such abuses and either discipline or prosecute offenders. The armed forces cooperate with the Catholic Church, the government Human Rights Commission, and the International Committee of the Red Cross in providing human rights training to its troops.

In contrast to the efforts of the government to improve its human rights performance, the guerrillas as a matter of explicit and public policy have adopted such measures as murdering innocent civilians, assassinating government officials, executing persons sympathetic to the government, kidnapping youths to perform combat duties, kidnapping