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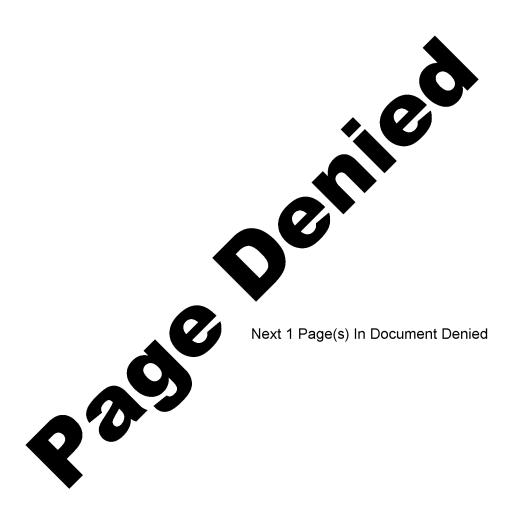
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In Salvadoran Bishop's Death

Ex-Intelligence Chief Levels Allegations

By Don Oberdorfer Washington Post Staff Writer

The assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero five years ago was carried out by former Nicaraguan national guardsmen directed by Col. Ricardo Lau, who later became chief of intelligence for the CIA-backed rebels fighting against the Sandinista government, a former Salvadoran security official charged vestardor.

cial charged yesterday.
Col. Roberto Santivanez, who was head of El Salvador's central intelligence agency in 1978-79, said at a Washington news conference that Lau had been paid \$120,000 in connection with Romero's assassination by wealthy Salvadoran exiles on March 27, 1980, three days after the killing.

The killing of Romero, who was

among the most popular and important figures in El Salvador at the time, was a key event in polarizing the political situation in that country. Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte has said the government is investigating the widely discussed crime, but no results of the investigation have been announced.

Santivanez gave interviews to several news organizations and about two dozen members of Congress a year ago recounting his inside knowledge of death squad activity in El Salvador, but at the time insisted that his name not be used for fear of reprisals.

His revelations caused an immediate stir even without use of his name.

There was a further stir when it



COL, ROBERTO SANTIVANEZ
... appears at news conference

was learned that Santivanez had been promised \$50,000 as living expenses by critics of U.S. policy in Central America.

Bruce Cameron, a former congressional aide who helped arrange Santivanez's original testimony, said he actually received \$32,500.

See LATIN, A28, Col. 1

■ U.S. planning its largest military exercise in Honduras. Page A28

Detail Offered On Bishop's Assassination

LATIN, From A1

Santivanez said yesterday that "money was not my motivation" but that funds were essential to support his life and travel.

The news conference yesterday, sponsored by an independent film-maker who is releasing a documentary on Santivanez, came as the administration is preparing a large-scale effort to persuade Congress to reverse its cutoff of secret funding for the anti-Sandinista insurgents.

Beyond his charge against Lau—which was not mentioned in his remarks last year—Santivanez's news conference was notable for its description of the links between various Central American rightist officials and groups in connection with the Salvadoran death squads.

According to Santivanez, the decision to kill the archbishop was made by Miami-based Salvadoran capitalists "who gave the money" and was passed along inside El Salvador by Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former major in the security service who has since become a prominent figure in Salvadoran politics.

The killing was planned in Guatemala, according to Santivanez, and carried out by "two ex-Somoza [Nicaragua] national guardsmen working with a Salvadoran National Guard team."

Santivanez did not name Lau, who had been an intelligence officer and field commander for former Nicaraguan president Anastasio Somoza, as one of the archbishop's

Santivanez said that, on the basis of a captured "diary" of death squad activity and "several other sources," Lau played "a key role" in training

the death squads and was paid for Romero's assassination.

Lau was later chief of intelligence for the "September 15 Legion," one of the earliest paramilitary organizations fighting against the leftist Sandinista government that took over Nicaragua after Somoza's fall.

over Nicaragua after Somoza's fall.

After the formation in August 1981 of the Democratic Front of Nicaragua (FDN), the umbrella group for the anti-Sandinista fight, Lau was its first chief of intelligence.

Secret Central Intelligence Agency support for the FDN and other elements of the "secret war" against the Sandinistas was authorized by President Reagan in November 1981.

Lau was forced out of the FDN intelligence post about September 1982, reportedly on CIA instructions, but has been described as taking an unofficial role in FDN counterintelligence as late as last year.

Bosco Matamoros, Washington representative of the FDN, said Lau at present has "no connection in any capacity" with the anti-Sandinista organization.

Matamoros said "we have no knowledge" that Lau had a role in the assassination of Romero, an act which Matamoros described as "condemnable."

Santivanez was removed from his post as chief of the Salvadoran national intelligence agency, ANSE-SAL, as a result of the October 1979 coup that brought a reformist group of military officers to power. In the following months, including the period of Romero's assassination, Santivanez was residing in Guatemala, where he said the assassination was planned.

Guatemala had been a haven for right-wing exiles following the fall of Somoza in July 1979 and the reformist coup in El Salvador in October that year. Santivanez said he had spoken at the time with hired assassins who made frequent flights from Guatemala into El Salvador to kill people selected for assassination.

Officers of the Old National Guard Remain a Factor in the Rebel Forces

5

Leaders Are Their Own Worst Enemies ian director of the Nicaragua Demo-

p.ruggle, President Reagan asserted that Congress must obcide whether the United States would keep "trying to O'lp people who had a Communist tyramy imposed on one by force, deception and fraud."

O'lginally trained by American Marines, the Namonal Guard defended the ruling Somoza family for more on the property of t Office

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras—Less than a year after of the said, which little hope of success, some of them result, more than 12,00 guerrillas are involved in the said, more than 12,00 guerrillas are involved in the said, mellion reportedly provided to insurgents by the Central Intelligence Agency, While their foot soldiers of mainly peasants angered by Sandinista policies, allows a little top commanders are former National Guard officers. Their influence and unclear political aims have procome issues in the Congressional debate on continuing Ad. Last week, vigorously supporting the guerrillas' pruggle, President Reagan asserted that Congressional

from the C.I.A. A rival guerrilla leader, Edén Pastora guardsmen have proved capable. Others, however, have been accused of crimes including murder and stealing ad brutality. Now, as rebel leaders, some former he says, the National

Guardsmen could not win popular support at home.

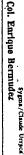
Their supreme military commander, Col. Enrique sermudez, was the Somoza Government's last military attache in Washington where, a former associate says, he comented ties to the C.I.A. At his base on the Hondu-Colonel Bermudez replies, make up only I percent of the rebel army and have been unfairly stigmatized. "I don't think you can judge all by the sins of the few," he said. Guard officers' experience in defending the Somozas casts doubt on their commitments now. These officers, nel Bermudez depicts as part of the struggle between Moscow and Washington, Critics argue that the National pear to receive little political instruction and say their only goal is to destroy the Sandinistas in a war that Colocreate a pluralistic democracy. But rebel fighters aprun-Nicaraguan border, new recruits drill awkwardly in ill-fitting boots. Colonel Bermudez sald in an interview that he was fighting the "Sandinocommunist system," to

Their numbers may be small, but their influence appears to be great. Under Colonel Bermudez, the heads of large landowners who backed the Somozas. civilian officials, Enrique and Aristides Sanchez, were tional Guard enlisted men. And two influential rebel veterans. Many company commanders are former Naforces and most of the largest combat units are Guard intelligence, training, operations, special

mer Guard officers departed under a cloud. Honduran ment in the disappearance or killing of at least 18 Hondumilitary officials say they suspect Col. Ricardo Lau, until recently the head of rebel counterintelligence, of involve Edgar Chamorro Coronel, who was dismissed as a civilruns and 80 Salvadoran leftists since 1981. After a rebel command shakeup in 1983, several for-

> he had heard many charges against Mr. Lau, once a close aldes, but had manders threatened to kill Colonel cratic Force five months ago for pubmembers of Congress and other Santiváñez was dismissed as Salva-0scar for arranging" the assassination in had "received ments indicating that Colonel a former director of intelligence in El Salvador, said he had seen docuseen no evidence to support them. Last week, Col. Roberto Santiváñez, Central America. Mr. Bermudez sald ment on reports of its operations in ment. The C.I.A. has declined to com-Lau could not be reached for com-Lau at a meeting in December 1983. The C.I.A. station chief was called in licly criticizing the rebels, other com-1980 of E1 f El Sulvador's Archbishop, Arnulfo Romero. Colonel payment of \$120,000 said. Mr.

mando Lopez, head of logistics. C.I.A. agents seeking the The rebel chief of staff, Emilio Echaverry, retired last year. He was accused of stealing large amounts of C.I.A. money, according to Mr. Chamorro and Capt. Ar-Americans raised about \$35,000 for his expenses. tests, Mr. Chamorro sald. A former National Guard sermissing money forced abveral rebels to take ite detector



Mr. Bermudez said they had "mis-treated civilians," Another rebel official said they had been accused of along with two other Guard alumni. "Sulcide," was mander, using the nom geant who became a top combat comrobbery, rape and murder. executed in e 1983

that?" Other rebel officials reply that ". National Guard officers have the . military, Mr. Chamorro added. "We used the Argentines, the C.I.A. and the Guard," he said. "How do you "" Worried about the guardsmen's reputation, the C.I.A. appointed a same right to fight as any other Nicaexperience is needed. However, a raguan exile and that their military create a democratic army out of new seven-member National Direcdez and his aides continued to run the senior rebel official. Colonel Bermucording to Mr. Chamorro and another journalists and torate in late 1982, primarily to meet Congressmen, ac-

relled unsuccessfully on conventional military tactics, which they had learned as cadets. Now, threatened with clear if they can make the transition. Western official said that at first, the former officers broad popular support. the challenge of waging guerrilla war, the loss of American assistance, the Guard officers face