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Senate report says CIA created ties to Salvadoran death-squad figures

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WASHINGTON — The CIA, although not directly involved in the Salvadoran death-squad violence, did develop relationships with some military officers responsible for the violence, according to a Senate Intelligence Committee staff report.

Congressional sources said yesterday that the report — excerpts of which were obtained by The Inquirer's Washington bureau — names some of the senior Salvadoran officers who U.S. officials believe have directed the death squads and have close contacts with the CIA or have received payments from it.

The report's chief conclusion is that "there is no evidence to support the allegation that elements of the United States have deliberately supported, encouraged or acquiesced in acts of political violence in El Salvador, particularly extreme right-wing death squad activity."

It also says that all contacts between the CIA and Salvadorans involved in the violence "were managed satisfactorily," but it adds that there were "several instances of concern" regarding "particular relationships" the agency had with some of those responsible for the killings.

The report, more than five months in preparation, says that to obtain information, CIA agents paid thousands of dollars to some Salvadoran intelligence officers who had been responsible for creating and directing the death squads and for selecting victims.

The victims generally were Salvadorans suspected of being leftist rebels, their supporters or opponents of the right-wing regime. The Salvadoran and U.S. governments acknowledge that the squads killed thousands of people. The killings have subsided since President Napoleon Duarte took office and pledged to crack down on the assassinations.

The long and detailed report was commissioned by Sen. Barry Goldwater (R., Ariz.), the committee chairman, at the request of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D., Mass.), who opposes President Reagan's Central America policies. It was completed this week and is circulating among panel members and within the CIA for comment before a declassified version is made public, the congressional sources said.

The report is the result of the first substantive congressional investigation into the Salvadoran death squads and allegations of links between them and the CIA. It contains data from top-secret CIA files as well

as information developed by committee staff members who visited El Salvador, the sources said.

The congressional sources did not disclose those portions of the report that specifically cited the CIA contacts involved.

They said one of the most prominent names cited in the investigation is that of Col. Nicolas Carranza, former chief of the Salvadoran Treasury Police, who reportedly began receiving a CIA retainer of more than \$90,000 a year in the late 1970s.

The sources said the report indicated that, in return for the money, Carranza and other security officers provided the CIA with information about Salvadoran guerrillas, national political developments and squabbles within the Salvadoran military forces.

The report apparently indicates that the CIA's effort to obtain information from these sources about the right-wing death squads is a recent one and that it attempted little or nothing earlier.

Although portions of the report dealing with this problem were not revealed, the sources indicated the committee staff learned from U.S. intelligence officers that at first they did not consider the rightist violence as a target for intelligence

gathering.

One reason, the sources said, was that the CIA's priority in El Salvador was to develop data on the leftist insurgency, and it did not have enough personnel there to investigate thoroughly or infiltrate violent rightist groups. Moreover, the sources said, the report notes that "physical dangers" were involved in penetrating the death squads and that it was difficult to gather information on the killings through "open sources."

Nevertheless, the sources said, the report finds that after the death squads became an issue of U.S. "public concern" in 1983, the CIA devoted more resources to the issue and the Reagan administration began putting pressure on the Salvadoran government to stop the killers.

The report notes that as a result, rightist political violence has decreased considerably.

Among recommendations included in the report, the sources said, is one proposing a series of guidelines CIA officers should follow in the future when dealing with a similar situation in El Salvador or elsewhere.

These guidelines, the sources, are aimed at ensuring that the U.S. government does not become associated with any type of official violence or terrorist actions.