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More Details On Cia Activities In El Salvador

by Deborah Tyroler

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Names of CIA agents serving as advisers to the Salvadoran military, and of US firms providing a front for CIA activities in Central America were published by journalist Rafael Del Naranco in the Nov. 24 edition of daily newspaper EL MUNDO (Caracas). According to Del Naranco, a CIA document (No. R3-SAL 1150) contains the names of the following operatives assigned to missions in El Salvador: Robert Brown, Alex McCall, Jim Graves, Harry Claflin, Paul Fanshaw, John Doe, Dana Drenkowski, Pale Daye, Peter Kokalis, Ralph Edens, Bill Books, Sam Allen and John Donovan. The 13 operatives, said the reporter, have been training Salvadoran troops and accompanying the same in battles with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) since 1984. Former Col. Harry Claflin, and Col. Reynaldo Garcia are described as "key" persons in directing CIA operations. Claflin served with the US Marines for seven years, and carried out three special operations in Asia for the CIA in 1960. After a period during which he worked as a private security consultant and under CIA contract, he is currently managing the Starlight Training Center. This company was created in 1976 in southern Missouri, and specializes in training mercenary commandos. Garcia is a Cuban exile, and a 1955 graduate of Fulgencio Batista's military academy. He participated in the 1960 Bay of Pigs invasion as a member of the "2506 Brigade." In 1962, Garcia joined the US Marine Infantry Corps; from 1968 to 1971 he served with the Special Forces in Vietnam. Garcia was appointed commander of a military training center in Trujillo, Honduras, in 1983. Del Naranco reported that since 1984 Garcia has been coordinating CIA special operations against the Salvadoran guerrillas, and supply operations for the Nicaraguan contras. His principal deputy is Max Gomez. The EL MUNDO article said CIA secret operations are carried out via 35 "well-known" US companies. Included in this list were the Omega Group Ltd. (Col. Robert Brown, president), Refugee Relief International, a firm based in Colorado (Thomas Reisinger, president), and the Miami-based Southern Air Transport. The C-123 cargo plane shot down by Sandinista soldiers in early October was registered under Southern Air ownership. Citing an Reagan Administration source, the WASHINGTON POST (11/23/86), reported that the same company also provided planes for the White House Iranian operation. The source said former security adviser Robert McFarlane was aboard a Southern Air-provided plane, which also carried weapons, when he flew to Tehran.

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