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Estimates Of Money Sent To El Salvador By Relatives In The U.S.

by Deborah Tyroler

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Estimates of money sent to relatives in El Salvador by Salvadorans working in the US range from at least \$350 million up to \$1.4 billion annually. According to a recent study by Salvadoran sociologist Segundo Montes, money sent to El Salvador by about 1 million expatriots in the US totals about \$1.4 billion per year. This figure represents almost double the government's 1987 operating budget. Montes, professor at the Jesuit-run Central American University in San Salvador, based his estimate on data obtained from detailed questionnaires given to 1,300 Salvadorans living in the United States and more than 2,000 Salvadoran residents. The study was completed in August and released late in 1987, and was partly funded by a grant from Georgetown University's Center for Immigration Policy and Refugee Assistance. Salvadoran officials say Montes' \$1.4 billion figure is exaggerated and that a more realistic amount is about \$350 million a year, or about \$1 million a day. At present, about 100,000 Salvadorans reside in the Washington area, the second-largest concentration after Los Angeles in the country. (Basic data from Washington Post, 02/20/88)

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