

8-28-1991

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## Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "Honduras: Secret Police Accused Of Using Torture To Obtain Confessions." (1991).  
<https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen/5980>

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## **Honduras: Secret Police Accused Of Using Torture To Obtain Confessions**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

*Category/Department: General*

*Published: Wednesday, August 28, 1991*

On Aug. 24, Elmer Aguilar, Roque Gonzalez, Victor Duron, Jose Lujan and Nelson Osorio told journalists they were tortured by secret police (Direccion Nacional de Investigaciones-DNI) during three days of detention at the San Pedro Sula prison. The five men's bodies showed evidence of beatings. Aguilar et al. said the police were attempting to force confessions for responsibility in the Aug. 18 murders of five men and women in El Progreso, Yoro deaprtment. Juan Rivera, attorney for Aguilar and associates, said police cannot legally detain a person for over 24 hours in the absence of formal charges brought before a judge. In an Aug. 26 communique, police spokespersons said DNI agent Elmer Burgos was arrested in connection with the beatings and would be tried in a military court. The statement said Burgos was intoxicated, and "beat the prisoners for no reason for an hour" in violation of orders issued by Public Security Forces commander Col. Guillermo Paredes. The colonel has "prohibited the use of physical or psychological attacks on detainees as an interrogation technique." On Aug. 27, DNI commander Col. Cesar Antunez Barahona told reporters that the five suspects were beaten but not tortured. (Basic data from AFP, 08/24/91, 08/26/91; ACAN-EFE, 08/27/91)

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