

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. list	re: Chronology of Events Related to the Case of Sister Dianna Ortiz [partial] (2 pages)	00/00/0000	b(7)(C), b(6)
002. paper	re: Sister Dianna Ortiz (1 page)	00/00/0000	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
 First Lady's Office
 Melanne Vermeer
 OA/Box Number: 20048

FOLDER TITLE:

Sister Ortiz: [Guatemala - Human Rights]

2013-0534-S

rc1822

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



*Kathy - these are materials
Sister Ortiz left for
Ms. Clutter - Thanks!*

Leslie A. Bassett
Director for Inter-American Affairs
National Security Council

Room 361 OEOB
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20504

*File
Sister Ortiz*
Tel: (202) 456-9136
Fax: (202) 456-9130

~~Press~~

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

COALITION "MISSING"

U.S. CITIZENS MURDERED, TORTURED, ASSAULTED OR MISSING IN GUATEMALA

ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY

Coalition "Missing" is an association of United States citizens who have been directly affected by state-sponsored violence in Guatemala. The Coalition works to increase awareness about human rights violations in Guatemala and supports efforts to improve the situation. Coalition members either have lost family members or have themselves been physically assaulted as a direct result of the repression in Guatemala. Coalition "Missing" was formed in December 1993.

The Coalition disseminates information to the US public, media, and Congress about human rights abuses in Guatemala; supports human rights activists and organizations in Guatemala; and provides mutual support and advice for all Coalition members.

COALITION MEMBERS:

- Trish Ahern, of Washington, DC, and Peter Kerndt, MD, of California, the sister and brother of Ann Kerndt, who was killed in 1976 with Father William Woods when their small plane crashed mysteriously in the Ixcán jungle. Ann Kerndt worked for the Direct Relief Foundation at the time. The Guatemalan government report stated that poor weather was the cause of the crash, but family members consulted weather records and found that conditions were perfect for flying. Later, engine failure was cited as the cause, but the engines were found to be in working order. Witnesses reported seeing soldiers shoot down the plane. Father William Woods had received death threats prior to the crash (see entry on the Williams Woods case).
- Sam Blake, of New York, the brother of Nick Blake, a journalist executed by the Guatemalan civil patrollers in 1985. For years, Guatemalan officials obstructed investigation of the case, and Blake's remains were not located until 1992. Blake's two brothers have filed suit against the Guatemalan government through the Inter-American Court on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS). The Court agreed to hear the petition in August 1995. The Court, which is the highest enforcement mechanism of the OAS, is authorized to issue a binding judgment against Guatemala.
- Sky Callahan, of Texas, a documentary filmmaker who was abducted at gunpoint in Guatemala City and beaten unconscious. Callahan was part of a delegation organized by two Texas human rights groups to document the human rights situation in Guatemala. On July 4, 1995, after interviewing campesinos who were protesting in the Central Plaza, Callahan was approached by soldiers, who asked him to leave. As he was trying to pack up his camera gear, one hit him in the shin with his rifle butt. On July 7, after leaving a restaurant in Guatemala City, he was forced into a car by unidentified men. The men drove Callahan around the city, removed him from the car, and beat him badly.

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A PROJECT OF THE GUATEMALA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/USA

● Jennifer Harbury, of Washington, DC, the widow of Efraín Bámaca Velásquez, a Mayan leader of the Guatemalan resistance captured by the Guatemalan army in 1992. Harbury undertook a series of actions, including two hunger strikes in Guatemala and one in front of the White House, to learn the fate of her husband. In March 1995, she learned that a Guatemalan army colonel who was a paid informant for the CIA had ordered Bámaca's torture and execution. Harbury filed suit against the CIA in July 1995 to force the agency to declassify documents related to her case. CIA documents which finally were declassified revealed that the CIA, State Department, and White House were informed of her husband's capture within a week of its occurrence and did nothing to prevent his secret detention, interrogation, torture, and execution. In fact, they told her they had absolutely no information on his fate. Moreover, in July 1992--the same month a witness saw the colonel engaged in Bámaca's brutal torture--the CIA paid the colonel \$44,000.

● Lisel Holdenried, of California, daughter of Frank Holdenried, a Catholic layman working with street youth in Guatemala. Holdenried was bludgeoned to death on April 2, 1983. Although nothing was stolen from him, the State Department classified the attack as common crime. Holdenried had criticized the military repression against Christian communities and the widespread human rights abuses in Guatemala. Prior to his death, he had feared for his safety because of his human rights advocacy.

● Brother Paul Joslin, of New Jersey, a Christian Brother who served with Brother James "Santiago" Miller. In 1982, Miller was shot to death in front of the Huehuetenango School for Indigenous Boys. Workers at the school, which was run by the Christian Brothers, had received death threats before the murder. Brother Miller's assassins left the scene of the attack, heading in the direction of the police department.

● Meredith Larson, of North Carolina, who worked as an international human rights observer in Guatemala in 1989. While returning to her office, she was attacked by unidentified assailants, who stabbed her several times in the chest and upper body. Two co-workers accompanying her also were injured. The attackers made no attempt to steal Larson's belongings. In the months prior to the attack, her organization had received threats and had been bombed.

● Kimi Okada, of California, and Mari Okada, of Colorado, the sister and daughter of Michael Okada, MD. Okada was killed in 1976 in a mysterious plane crash, along with Father William Woods, Ann Kerndt, and two other passengers. Okada had been working as a medical volunteer in the earthquake zone when he was killed (see entries on the Ann Kerndt and William Woods cases, p. 1, 3).

● Sister Dianna Ortiz, of Washington, DC, who served as an Ursuline sister teaching Mayan children in San Miguel Acatán from 1987 to 1989. In January 1989 Sister Ortiz began to receive threats, and in November 1989, she was violently abducted and taken to a clandestine prison where she was tortured and gang raped by members of the Guatemalan security forces. An American was present during her torture; her torturers called him "Alejandro" and referred to him as their boss. U.S. Embassy officials accused Sister Ortiz of lying, saying she was never abducted but sneaked out for lesbian sex. Sister Ortiz has traveled to Guatemala four times since November 1989 to assist with the investigation of her case. In the past five years, she has provided the Guatemalan government with detailed descriptions of three of the four men involved and has identified the military installation where she and others were tortured. The U.S. Embassy and Guatemalan government repeatedly obstructed the investigation of her case. In May 1995, a US Federal Court recently ordered former defense minister General Hector Gramajo to pay Sister Ortiz \$5 million in damages. Her case is pending in the Guatemalan courts and in the OAS.

- Claudia Stoscheck, Chris Stoscheck, and Candy Mingins, of New York, the sister, brother, and sister-in-law of Kai Yutah Clouds (born Nikolaus Stoscheck). Thirty-two year-old Kai had performed earthquake relief services and had worked with the Mayan people in agricultural cooperatives. On October 10, 1980, he was abducted by five heavily armed men. His body was found the next day with signs of torture. Several Guatemalans with whom he had worked were forced to flee the country after his death.
- John Wolfe, of California, the brother of Peter Wolfe, a Peace Corps Volunteer in Guatemala. On October 28, 1984, Peter was murdered on a street corner in Guatemala City. His murderers have been clearly identified; however, they were well-connected to the ruling military of the country and were never brought to justice. The gunman was defended in Guatemalan Court by Lic. Fernando Linares, the same prominent attorney who later argued that Sister Dianna Ortiz's case should be dismissed, although he was working as the prosecutor on her case. The Peace Corps' vigorous pursuit of the case was discouraged by the U.S. State Department.
- James Woods, of Texas, the brother of Father William Woods, and Maryknoll priests Father Leo Shea and Father Stephen Judd, of New York. Father Woods had served for many years in the Ixcán jungle of northern Guatemala, where he was instrumental in obtaining land for campesinos and developing cooperatives. Before his death, he had received death threats related to his work. In 1976, his small plane crashed, killing everyone aboard. Witnesses reported seeing soldiers shoot down the plane. Two other U.S. citizens, Selwyn Puig and John Gauker, were also killed in the crash with Woods, Kerndt, and Okada.
- Josh Zinner, of New York, who was a volunteer with street children in Guatemala City in 1990. During outreach efforts, he was assaulted, threatened, and dragged towards a car by unidentified men who held a gun to his head. When police intervened, one of the assailants produced military identification and was immediately released. The police then assaulted Zinner's co-worker and harassed Zinner.

For more information on Coalition "Missing," please call 202-529-6599.

Updated March 30, 1996

COALITION "MISSING"

U.S. CITIZENS MURDERED, TORTURED, ASSAULTED OR MISSING IN GUATEMALA

Statement by Coalition "Missing"

March 31, 1996

We, as members of Coalition "Missing," stand firmly behind Sister Dianna Ortiz in her untiring efforts to learn the truth. With her we call for the declassification of all information pertaining to Sister Dianna's case, the release of the full text of the Intelligence Oversight Board's investigation, and the declassification of all U.S. government information related to human rights abuses in Guatemala from 1954 to the present.

We too seek the truth. Although most of us have filed our Freedom of Information Act requests, we have yet to receive substantive information regarding our cases. We have the right to know why our loved ones were brutally murdered. We have the right to know who was responsible for the attacks, torture, and violations we ourselves suffered. Guatemala is a country known to have been controlled by an inhumane military, but still the State Department would have us believe that the crimes against us and our loved ones were not politically motivated. The effects of former U.S. policy are clear: 150,000 dead, more than 40,000 disappeared, including dozens of U.S. citizens. Is the Clinton Administration different?

We commend the efforts of the Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) to uncover the U.S. intelligence relationship with Guatemala. This report must be full, forthright, and timely. Declassification is a critical step in the long struggle for justice and human rights in Guatemala, as well as justice in our own country. The release of all information concerning human rights abuses in Guatemala would aid the Guatemalan people by allowing them access to the evidence they need to present their cases in local courts. It would also give Guatemalan and U.S. survivors some closure to the tragedies that have burdened our lives, even though the deep pain and impact of our losses can never be forgotten.

The IOB report investigates cases of human rights violations against U.S. citizens since 1984; however, this report does not address U.S. cases prior to 1984 or the cases of thousands of Guatemalans. All survivors of the violence--of torture, murder, disappearance--deserve to know the truth. Declassification should go back as far as 1954, when the U.S. government sponsored the overthrow of Guatemala's civilian democracy.

The knowledge gained by this investigation must be shared with the public or it will not be beneficial to anyone. Our haunting questions must be answered; the questions of the Guatemalan men, women, and children who have suffered tremendously at the hands of their own military must be answered.

Robert Frost once wrote, "Most of the change we think we see in life is due to truth's being in and out of favor." Truth has been out of favor for decades. The Clinton Administration has the opportunity to create new and positive standards in U.S. foreign policy. Our "national security" cannot be built on human rights violations. We support Sister Dianna Ortiz as she bravely stands for all the survivors and nonsurvivors of murder and torture, and we share the hope that our government will confront the past and embrace the future by ending this legacy of bloodshed and secrecy.

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A PROJECT OF THE GUATEMALA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/USA

FOR DELIVERY ON SUNDAY, 31 MARCH 1996

Amnesty International USA statement on behalf of the Vigil for Truth

Amnesty International USA is proud to stand in solidarity with Sister Dianna Ortiz, the members of Coalition Missing, and all of those struggling for truth and justice in Guatemala. We are here to join their outcry on behalf of the hundreds of thousands who have suffered human rights violations in Guatemala. As human rights activists ourselves who have long chronicled the suffering in Guatemala, we stand here to reaffirm our conviction that a better tomorrow is possible in Guatemala, that the day will come to Guatemala when joining a trade union or working with street children or working with the poor or simply being indigenous will not mean a possible encounter with humanity's cruel and cowardly underbelly.

We are here because we recognize that human rights violations are human creations since human rights violations result from the choices people make. We recognize that torture or "disappearances," that ill-treatment or killings don't just happen- they are ordered, they are carried out, they are covered-up. It takes a system to carry out human rights violations. These violations and the system that permits them to occur represent choices that ignore the inherent dignity of the human family. These choices reject the equal and inalienable rights of the human family, and speak volumes about the depth to which some sick individuals have sunk to inflict gratuitous suffering on fellow people. Because make no mistake about it, those who participate in these killings and "disappearances" and torture sessions are sick. And the system that protects them, that fosters them, that directs them, is also sick and needs immediate changing. We are here as societal healers and our remedy is to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to proclaim to the world that the people of Guatemala are entitled, indeed have the right, to live a life of dignity free of the horror that has afflicted them so often.

A key step to ending the horror is to ensure that those who have violated rights are held accountable for their actions, so that everyone understands that what they have done is wrong and that those who are continuing to visit horror on the heroic are stopped and prevented from carrying out further sick and cowardly deeds. We cannot expect Guatemala to be free from the horror and have a brighter tomorrow if we do not confront the nightmares of the past and the present. We must learn from the past and take the steps necessary to ensure that past horrors are not repeated again. We have to silence the dungeons and torture chambers in Guatemala by closing them down. But the only way to close these places down is to stop those who use them. Those who torture and maim and rape and "disappear" and kill must be stopped. We can stop them with justice. We can send them to jail. But for that, we have to break the wall of impunity.

Not only is it true that without justice, there is no peace; but without truth, there is no justice. We support the struggle to obtain the truth, whether this truth be found in the archives of the Guatemalan Government or those of the US Government, and we will continue to press the US Government for the declassification of all pertinent files. This is something we can all do here. We were initially encouraged when President Clinton appointed the Intelligence Oversight Board or IOB to look at some recent cases of US nationals or their loved ones who had suffered human rights violations in Guatemala. The IOB was appointed to determine if the US

Government was implicated in any wrongdoing. We were also encouraged when we met with National Security Adviser Anthony Lake and other members of the National Security Council, who assured us that the IOB was doing a thorough job and saw the investigation as a case study of possible US wrongdoing for all of Guatemala as well as the rest of the world. We were also encouraged when we met with Assistant Secretary John Shattuck and sought information about the case of Sister Dianna and that of others including Efraín Bámaca, and he assured us that they would come up with a proposal to share information.

The bottom line remains the same: until all the pertinent information is released about these cases, we will continue pressing the US Government for this information. The US Government simply cannot hold back on information that would permit people like Sister Dianna and families who have loved and lost, from finding out not only what happened but who was responsible, and thus being able to prosecute those implicated. The US Government must ensure that it is a willing and positive participant in this quest for truth, and not one of the principal stumbling blocks. This is important to break the wall of impunity and thus for the future of Guatemala but also for the future of the United States. The Clinton Administration must ensure that there is no torture no "disappearance" and no killing taking place anywhere in the world in our name.

So we stand here on behalf of the voiceless and the suffering, the struggling and the heroic of Guatemala, and we salute Sister Dianna and Coalition Missing, pledging our continuing support to find the truth, pledging our strength and our voices, until all the suffering ceases, in Guatemala and in the rest of the world.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 13, 1996

The Honorable William Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On April 7, 1995, we wrote to you to request that you secure and review for declassification, on an expedited basis, all United States Government records pertaining to a number of notorious human rights cases in Guatemala.

We appreciate that you directed the Intelligence Oversight Board to conduct a full review of this matter. While we understand that reviewing this amount of documents takes time, we want to reiterate that we attach the highest importance to assisting the victims or their surviving relatives, to the maximum extent possible, to learn the truth about these crimes. We would appreciate knowing the status of the review and declassification of these records.

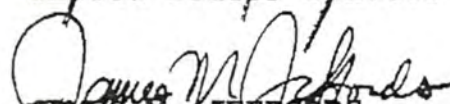
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator

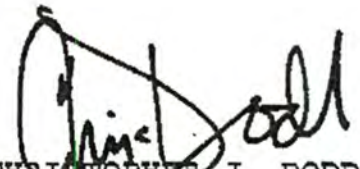

PAUL S. SARBANES
United States Senator



JOHN F. KERRY
United States Senator

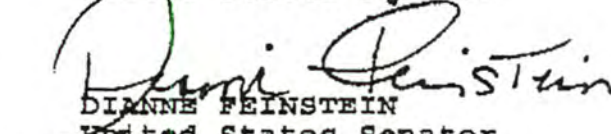

JAMES M. JEFFORDS
United States Senator

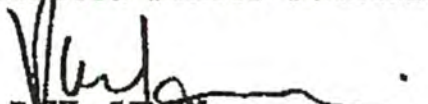

TOM HARKIN
United States Senator

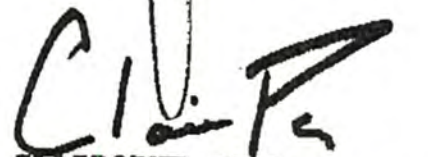

EDWARD M. KENNEDY
United States Senator



CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
United States Senator


CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN
United States Senator


DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator


PAUL SIMON
United States Senator


CLAIBORNE PELL
United States Senator


RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD
United States Senator

U.S. Judge Orders Ex-Guatemala General to Pay \$47.5 Million

By TIM WEINER

WASHINGTON, April 12 — A Federal judge in Boston ordered an ex-Guatemala general today to pay \$47.5 million to an American nun who was tortured and eight Guatemalans who were terrorized by the Guatemalan military in the 1980's.

The retired general, Héctor Gramajo, is a conservative candidate for president who says he had close contacts with the Central Intelligence Agency when he was Defense Minister from 1986 to 1990.

Mr. Gramajo led a scorched-earth military campaign in the 1980's in

which tens of thousands of Guatemalan villagers were killed. As Defense Minister, human rights groups say, he presided over a system of military repression that included political killings, illegal detentions and domestic spying by military intelligence officers.

"Forty-seven million dollars?" Mr. Gramajo said in a telephone interview from Guatemala City. "I don't have 47 million centavos!" Calling the case "a remnant of the cold war," he said: "I was a public servant. I defended my country. I did nothing wrong."

But Federal District Judge Doug-

las P. Woodlock ruled that "Gramajo was aware of and supported widespread acts of brutality committed under his command resulting in thousands of civilian deaths."

"The evidence suggests that Gramajo devised and directed the implementation of an indiscriminate campaign of terror against civilians," including the nine plaintiffs, said the judge. He ordered the former general to pay damages ranging from \$1 million to \$9 million to each of the eight Guatemalans and \$5 million to the American nun, Sister Dianna Ortiz.

Beth Stephens of the Center for

Constitutional Rights, a public-interest law group that represented the plaintiffs, said the case was about "accountability — holding human-rights abusers accountable."

She said she planned "to go to Guatemala and ask the court there to enforce the judgment, but that is more of a political issue in Guatemala than a matter of law."

Sister Ortiz, a member of the Ursuline order, went to work as a missionary in Guatemala in 1987. She said she was kidnapped, raped, beaten and burned 111 times with cigarettes during an interrogation in 1989. Her torturers accused her of

working with peasants and teachers who opposed military repression.

General Gramajo's only response to the torture that Sister Ortiz says she endured was to assert that her burns and wounds were the result of a sadomasochistic relationship. He later said he had no basis for saying that.

The eight other Guatemalan plaintiffs live in and around Davis, Calif., and are now seeking political asylum. All are Canjobal Indians whose highland villages were razed and their families and friends slain by soldiers under General Gramajo.

Mr. Gramajo was served with the suit in 1991 as he stood in his academic robes waiting to be awarded a master's degree in public adminis-

tration from the Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, Mass. He was sued under the Alien Tort Claims Act, which allows Americans and foreigners to file suit for violations of international law while the defendant is in the United States.

Sister Ortiz's case is one of several of Americans killed or abused by the Guatemalan military that are part of a sweeping review of American foreign policy and covert action in Guatemala in the Reagan, Bush and Clinton Administrations. The review was provoked by revelations of the C.I.A.'s relationship with a Guatemalan colonel who was linked to killings of an American innkeeper and a Guatemala guerrilla married to an American lawyer.

COPY

SENT DIRECTLY
to President Clinton
& First Lady Hillary

1117 El Capitan Loop
Grants, New Mexico 87020
April 4, 1996

President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary,

We the family of Sister Dianna are writing to you on her behalf. As you know Sister Dianna is the American Nun who was kidnapped and tortured in Guatemala.

However, we write this letter as a family who loves and deeply care for Dianna. Yes, it is very hard to cope with Dianna's ordeal and it has affected her family emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Many times the tears of her parents, brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces are so uncontrolled because we feel so helpless. So helpless in a sense that we don't know what to do.

You see, in our hearts we know that the Dianna we grew up with died on November 2, 1989. Why this happened to her, we don't know, but then again we ask WHY nothing has been done to those who hurt her so. Since 1989 we have kept silence in hope that our country would support Sister Dianna (an American), but the silence cannot go on much longer. Something needs to be done with this injustice.

However, the Dianna we now know is the Dianna who continually fights for those who have been treated so unjustly and for those who are continually being abused and tortured.

On behalf of Sister Dianna, we ask that you PLEASE declassify all U.S. government information related to human rights abuses in Guatemala from 1954 to present, along with FULL text of the IOB'S investigation (not just a summary of the report), also ALL U.S. information of Sister Dianna's case.

Again, please help us to see the peace and justice that comes from Christ Jesus, the peace that should grow in our world.

John A. Ortiz - Pilar Ortiz Jr. Sincerely,
Hon. Order. Jr.
San City

The Ortiz Family
Pilar + Andrew (Parents)
Abel + Barbara + Murrietta
J.R. Murrietta
Nicholas R. Murrietta
Ambrosia Murrietta
Benny Murrietta
Geary Murrietta

Richard + Michelle Salazar
Ricky Salazar
Stephanie Salazar
Ron Ortiz
Melanie Ortiz
Ceronica Ortiz
John Ortiz

*Torture victims often seem nameless and faceless.
But behind every victim, there is an individual, a family,
a community and a world being affected by torture.*



Statement by Sister Dianna Ortiz
March 31, 1996

Today, on Palm Sunday, I begin my silent vigil for TRUTH in front of the White House--the truth about my own case, and the truth about all those Guatemalans who have suffered and died at the hands of the officially sponsored death squads. For those of us who know and love Guatemala, it is painfully clear that our own United States government has been closely linked to these death squads, and has a great amount of detailed information about those of us who have survived as well as those of us who have perished. We need and demand this information so that we can heal our wounds, bury our dead, and carry on with our lives. We need and demand this information so that we can insist on change, insist that these terrible realities never be repeated.

People ask how long I will be in front of the White House. I can only respond with a question: How long will the U.S. government keep the TRUTH from me? Who is *Alejandro*, the U.S. citizen present at my torture? He is a pivotal piece of my past and a symbol of the very real and daily fact of my continuing torture--the torture of silence and secrecy. On behalf of all of us I demand that President Clinton declassify all U.S. government information related to human rights abuses in Guatemala, from 1954 to the present, and that the IOB release the full text of its report, not just a summary. I want the **full** truth about Guatemala.

I will now maintain my silence, not a silence of complicity or coverup, but a silence of commemoration for the thousands of known and unknown victims and survivors who have been abducted, tortured, assassinated and disappeared in Guatemala in the past three decades. I will not be alone on this vigil, for I know that those who have lost their lives or their beloved family members and the thousands who have been tortured will be with me in spirit. A candle will burn day and night as a reminder to President Clinton and his administration that there is a *presence* in the park--a *presence* that represents those victims and survivors whose flame will never die. As President Clinton and his administration sleep peacefully, many of us fight to stay awake--to protect ourselves from the recurring visits from our torturers.

Many of you know my story. What is often overlooked is that my experience is a daily occurrence in Guatemala. More than six people a week, on average, are killed for political reasons. More than two a week are tortured. The total death toll may never be known. The army's counter-insurgency campaign has left an estimated 150,000 dead and another 45,000 disappeared, victims of the dreaded official death squads. This staggering death toll is far higher than that of the dirty wars in Argentina, Chile, and El Salvador. Most of these violations were visited upon the Mayan population. Some 440 Mayan villages were wiped off the map. Hundreds of people vanished. Their mutilated, charred remains are only now beginning to emerge from secret mass graves. The truth, in Guatemala, is beginning to be unearthed. What about in the United States? When will the truth be exhumed?

My own experience is just a reflection of the suffering of so many others. I was teaching young children in Guatemala to read and write and to understand the Bible in respect to their culture. For a long time I received death threats, then was abducted from the backyard of a church retreat by members of the Guatemala security forces. They took me to a clandestine prison where other Guatemalans were being horribly tortured. I was tortured and raped repeatedly. My back and my chest were burned more than 111 times with cigarettes. I was lowered into an open pit packed with human bodies--bodies of children, women and men, some decapitated, some lying face up and caked with blood, some dead, some alive--and all swarming with rats.

After hours of torture, I was returned to the room where the interrogation initially occurred. It was in this room that I met *Alejandro*, a tall man with a light complexion. As my torturers began to rape me again, my torturers said to him in Spanish, "Hey *Alejandro*, come and have some fun." The man they referred to as "*Alejandro*" cursed in unmistakable American English and ordered them to stop the torture, since I was a North American nun and my disappearance had become public. In an earlier torture session, the men had said that if I didn't cooperate, they would have to turn over a videotape and photographs they had made of me to *Alejandro*, their boss.

Like a knight in shining armor, *Alejandro* seemingly came to my rescue. He helped me on with my clothes. As he did, I asked him if he were an North American. He refused to answer, but asked why I wanted to know. He then escorted me into a gray Suzuki jeep, and in poor, heavily accented Spanish, he told me that he was going to take me to a safe haven, the US Embassy, to talk to a friend who would help me leave the country. For the duration of the trip, I spoke to him in English, which he understood perfectly. *Alejandro* professed that he was concerned about the people of Guatemala and consequently was working to liberate them from Communism. He kept telling me in his broken Spanish that he was sorry about what had happened to me. He claimed it was an honest mistake.

Alejandro told me to forgive my torturers because they had confused me with Verónica Ortiz Hernández, the woman in the photos I was shown during my interrogation. He claimed it was a case of mistaken identity. I asked him how they could have mistaken me for a woman who did not resemble me in any way. Why were the threatening letters I had received addressed to Madre Diana and not to Verónica Ortiz Hernández? He avoided my questions. He kept telling me to forgive my torturers, insinuating that I was to blame for my torture because I had not paid heed to the threats that were sent to me.

After *Alejandro* spoke to me of forgiving my torturers, I asked him what would happen to the other people I heard screaming and saw tortured before my eyes. At this point, he switched to English, which he spoke with a distinct, completely American accent. He told me not to concern myself with them and to forget what had happened. He made it very clear that he had been given a videotape and photographs that would incriminate me of crimes that I was forced to participate in. He also made it a point to tell me that he could release the footage to the public and to the press. I believe this was an obvious threat.

I cannot forget those who suffered with me and died in that clandestine prison. The memories of what I witnessed and experienced that November day haunt me day and night. Even to this day, I can smell the decomposing of bodies, disposed of in an open pit. I can hear the piercing screams of other people being tortured. I can see the blood gushing out of the woman's body as I thrust a small machete into her body. For you see, I was handed a machete. Thinking it would be used against me, and at that point in my torture, wanting to die, I did not resist. But my torturers put their hands onto the handle, on top of mine. And I had no choice. I was forced to use it against another human being. What I remember is blood gushing--sputing like a water fountain--droplets of blood splattering everywhere--and my screams lost in the cries of the woman.

Like the people of Guatemala, I want to be free of these memories. I want out of this nightmare, out of this past, out of this room with *Alejandro* and my torturers. The key is the truth. I want to know who *Alejandro* was. Was he a CIA agent? Why is the U.S. government protecting him? How many other *Alejandro*'s are there out there, supervising the torture of innocent people?

I have struggled with so many others, for so very long, to bring the truth to light, but this blanket of lies remains, thick and heavy, nailed down by the U.S. government, stamped "classified."

Like so many Guatemalan victims I have lived through the agony of not being believed, of being branded a crazy person or even a liar. Guatemalan army officials accused me of staging my own abduction, said that my torture was a hoax and that I burned my own back during a lesbian love affair. Former Defense Minister General Hector Gramajo said that these remarks originated in the U.S. Embassy. Gramajo told *La Republica* on April 17 that Ambassador Stroock himself had "assured" him that Ortiz was "well" and that she had not been abducted and tortured but simply "had problems with her nerves." Likewise, Lew Anselem, the human rights officer at the Embassy, told a congressional aide at a cocktail party at the American Embassy in December 1990 that my abduction and torture were the result of a lesbian love affair gone bad. I have been asked to tell my story again and again by those who fail to understand that for a torture survivor, to speak of the past is to relive it in all of its horror.

Some steps have been taken. A judgment for damages was entered against General Gramajo, a former Minister of Defense, in the U.S. courts. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS has my case and many others under their consideration. A year ago, President Clinton issued a government-wide investigation of cases of U.S. citizens abused, killed, or disappeared in Guatemala since 1984. The scope of this investigation included my case and that of other Coalition "Missing" members. A short time later I learned the U.S. District Attorney's Office (Department of Justice) had also launched an investigation, six years too late. I appreciate the efforts of some government officials who are spending long hours making sure this investigation is thorough. I understand that these types of investigations cannot be concluded overnight, but what I do not understand is this attitude of secrecy. A year has gone by and I am not any closer to learning the truth behind the nightmare of November 2, 1989. How much more must I wait?

Last April, I filed a Freedom of Information Act request, and as of today, I have not received one shred of paper pertaining to my case, nor have I been given anything that I consider of any value. On February 7, I wrote to President Clinton, outlining how the experience of torture continues to affect me, even now. I pleaded with him for declassification. I received an answer almost two months later, and it was the same as all the other "answers" have been in the past six years: We sympathize with your suffering. We're investigating. And so the torture of silence continues.

The torture continues on a more active level, as well. Two days ago, a white envelope was left at my home. The contents of the envelope--which had no return address, an old address for me glued to the front, and a green stamp that said "CAREMAIL"--were something unexpected: either dog or human waste.

In spite of the memories of humiliation, of the pit, that this form of psychological torture recalled, I stand with the Guatemalan people. I demand the right to heal. I demand the right to know. I demand the right to a RESURRECTION, a future built on truth and justice.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS RELATED TO THE CASE OF SISTER DIANNA ORTIZ

- September 19, 1987 I arrive in San Miguel Acatán.
- October–December 1987 I attend language school in Antigua.
- September 1988 Sister Mary Elizabeth Ballard meets with Bishop of the Diocese of Huehuetenango, Monsignor Julio Bethancourt. He shares with her that he has received a communication saying that we are working with the guerrillas and that we have meetings planned with them during the month of September.
- January 1989 I receive my first threatening letter. It is addressed to Madre Diana and states, "Be careful, people want to hurt you."
- February 1989 I receive a second death threat. This threat states, "Someone wants to kill you. Don't go around alone. Leave the country."
- March 1989 I receive a third letter, which says, "It is dangerous for you. Leave the country."
- Mid–July 1989 I attend language school in Guatemala City. Teachers are on strike and there is a great deal of upheaval in the city.
- Mid–July 1989 I am approached by a man on my way to class. He informs me that "they" know I am living in Huehuetenango. He urges me to leave the country (same man who abducts, interrogates, rapes and tortures me later).
- July 15, 1989 I leave Guatemala for an unscheduled vacation.
- September 18, 1989 I return to Guatemala to continue my ministry with the people of San Miguel Acatán.
- October 13, 1989 I receive another threatening letter, this time in Guatemala City. This threat is not handwritten and is more disturbing than the others. The words are made up of words cut out from the newspaper: "Eliminate Diana, assassinate, decapitate, and rape."

- October 17, 1989 I return to San Miguel Acatán and receive another threatening letter stating, "It is dangerous for you here, the army knows you are here. Leave the country."
- October 21, 1989 Sister Darlin and I arrive at the Posada de Belén Retreat Center.
- November 2, 1989 Around 8:00 A.M., I am abducted from the Posada de Belén (Religious Retreat Center) in Antigua, Guatemala.
- November 3, 1989 After being interrogated, repeatedly raped and brutally tortured and witnessing the torture of other people, I am returned to the same room where the interrogation initially occurred. It is this room that I encounter face to face Alejandro, the U.S. citizen who gives direct orders to my torturers. Alejandro, whom the torturers have referred to as their "boss," escorts me out of the clandestine cell and puts me into a grey jeep. He informs me that he will take me to a safe haven, the U.S. Embassy, where his friend will help me leave the country.
- While in the jeep, I converse with Alejandro in English. He responds in poor, heavily accented Spanish, until at one point, he answers me in unmistakable, American English, primarily to threaten me not to pursue any action against my torturers. I am aware that we are in Zone 10. When he stops the jeep in heavy traffic, I manage to jump out of the jeep and run. A kind woman takes me in and gives me directions to get to Zone 1.
- Early November 1989 My back is examined by Guatemalan doctors at the Papal Nuncio. Others people, such as Monsignor Penados del Barrio, witness the burns on my back.
- I'm told that I met with Ambassador Thomas Stroock very briefly.
- November 5, 1989 With the assistance of the Papal Nuncio and the U.S. Embassy, I leave the country.
- November 8, 1989 I am examined by my family physician, Dr. Gutierrez, in Grants, New Mexico.

December 6, 1989

I provide a preliminary statement to Guatemalan and U.S. officials describing the basic details of my abduction and torture. Soon thereafter, a smear campaign is initiated against me by both the Guatemalan and the U.S. governments. General Hector Gramajo, Guatemala's Minister of the Defense, accuses me of having been involved in a lesbian love affair and having staged my own disappearance.

January 1990

President Cerezo makes statements to Americas Watch indicating that my story was a fabrication intended to embarrass the government at the February 1990 meeting of United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

January 6, 1990

I provide a complete affidavit on my case to Guatemalan and U.S. officials.

January 19, 1990

Judge Antonio Mosquera Estrada, Judge of the First Instance of the Department of Sacatepéquez, in Antigua, Guatemala, prepares a "Letter Rogatory" (supplicatorio) requesting that I present my testimony to the Guatemalan court through the U.S. Federal District Court in Kentucky. (Due to diplomatic delays, the documents are not formally presented to the U.S. Federal District Court in Kentucky for my response until over a year later, in March 1991.)

March 1990

General Morales Villatoro, Guatemala's Minister of the Interior (in charge of the National Police), declares the case a "self-kidnapping" and officially closes the investigation into the case.

March 19, 1990

In spite of being given doctors' reports showing that I have been tortured, the U.S. Embassy issues a press guidance saying it had "not formed any conclusions" as to whether I have "staged [my] own kidnapping."

April 1990

The Ursuline Order sends first delegation to Guatemala to demand that my case be investigated. Father Joseph Nangle is among a delegation to the Embassy that hears Human Rights Officer Lewis Anselem say, in Ambassador Stroock's presence, that he is "tired of these lesbian nuns coming down" to Guatemala. Anselem tells a U.S. congressional aide and Guatemala's Interior Minister that I was not really kidnapped but instead sneaked out for lesbian sex. The Minister of the Interior subsequently tells ABC News that he got this story from the "American Embassy."

April 17, 1990

General Hector Gramajo Morales tells *La Republica*, a Guatemalan daily, that Stroock himself has "assured" him that Ortiz is "well" and that she was not abducted and tortured but simply "had problems with her nerves."

April 1990

General Hector Gramajo admits that he has no evidence to substantiate his accusations against me.

President Cerezo orders that the investigation into my case be re-opened.

June 1990

President Cerezo names a Special Presidential Commission to oversee the investigation into the my case, including Monsignor Penados, the Archbishop of Guatemala; a deputy minister of the Interior; a delegate from the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office; and my legal representative.

December 1990

The Ursuline Order sends a second delegation to Guatemala to inquire as to the status of the Special Presidential Commission and the investigation into the my case. Judge Mosquera declares that the case is a hoax which I invented and states that if I have scars on my back from cigarette burns, I put them there myself after I left Guatemala. The head of the National Police, Gen. Caballeros, meets with the delegation and claims that the National Police have "lost the file" on my case, apologizing that the department has been in a sorry state due to mismanagement by his predecessor at the time of my abduction. He provides the delegation with a four-page summary of the National Police file.

Two members of the delegation meet briefly with then-presidential candidate Jorge Serrano, who promises that, if elected, he will convene the Special Commission named to investigate my case.

- January 1991 Jorge Serrano wins the run-off election and takes over the presidency. I am interviewed by representatives of the U.S. State Department.
- April 1991 Jorge Serrano disbands the Special Commission established by President Cerezo to investigate my case.
- July 1991 The Ursulins send a third delegation to Guatemala. Serrano's Attorney General, Asiselo Valladares, names Guatemala's first "Special Prosecutor" Fernando Linares to investigate my case and push for a resolution through the courts.
- The case is transferred from the court in Antigua to the Fifth Criminal Court of the First Instance in Guatemala City after another judge has replaced Mosquera. The Antigua judge responsible for the case at the time of the transfer to Guatemala City states that he has not investigated the case because he does not believe my testimony, since "she claimed that the men torturing her had drunk wine and everyone knows we Guatemalans only drink beer or rum."
- August 1991 Special Prosecutor Fernando Linares and representatives of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman are invited to interview me in Kentucky.
- September 1991 The Special Prosecutor refuses and the Ombudsman's office accepts.
- October 1991 I am interviewed in Kentucky by investigator María Eugenia de Sierra, Assistant Human Rights Ombudsman.
- November 1991 The Special Prosecutor and/or an investigator from his office are again invited to interview me in the United States [no response is received, despite repeated letters and phone calls].
- February 1992 The Ursulines send a fourth delegation to Guatemala. Arrangements are made with Linares and Ambassador Stroock for me to return to Guatemala to testify before the court in Guatemala City.
- Fernando Linares finally receives legal authorization from the Attorney General's office required for him to pursue my case before the court.

March 1992

Formal statements published by Linares in the Guatemalan newspapers threaten to close the case and demand that I appear in the Guatemalan courts (although such an appearance had already been scheduled and confirmed).

April 1992

I testify in the Guatemalan court for more than eighteen hours. I do a judicial reconstruction of my abduction (i.e., reenactment) and offer to submit to additional medical examinations; the judge states that the U.S. Federal District Court in Kentucky was "not competent" to provide the Guatemalan court with my sworn testimony which had been requested (and provided) through Letter Rogatory, yet says she will use the same "letters rogatory" procedure in the future to request information from me in the United States.

March 1993

I return to Guatemala to continue pursuing my case. I participate in a judicial reconstruction and identify the Old Politecnica School in Zone 10 as the place where I and a number of Guatemalans were detained and tortured.

I also view files of photos of potential suspects. I work with a sketch artist from the National Police and complete the composite drawings of three or the four men involved in my abduction and torture. One of the composite drawings is of Alejandro, the U.S. citizen who gave explicit orders to my torturers.

I meet with then-Human Rights Ombudsman Ramiro de León Carpio. I describe the clandestine prison where myself and others were held and tortured and provide a detailed description of the men who were involved. Carpio indicates that he knows of the clandestine prison that I am referring to. He also suggests that he has significant information on the case and the possible involvement of members of the G-2.

January 1994

I return to Guatemala a third time and participate in yet another judicial reconstruction, actually walking into the Old Politecnica, where I and other Guatemalans were detained and tortured.

I also meet with Jorge Laguardia, the newly appointed Ombudsman for Human Rights. He informs me that he is unfamiliar with my case and that my file is no longer in their office. According to Mr. Laguardia, Ramiro de León removed my file from the office after assuming the presidency.

In a later meeting with President Carpio, he denies removing my files and retracts his earlier statements condemning the G-2 involvement in my abduction and torture.

June 1994

I receive information from a number of sources that former Special Prosecutor in charge of my case in Guatemala, Fernando Linares, has recommended to the Guatemalan Fifth Court of First Instance that my case be dismissed for lack of evidence. Upon receiving this news, I write to a number of Guatemalan and U.S. officials--including Ambassador to Guatemala, Marilyn McAfee--to protest this action. Marilyn McAfee writes back informing me that she has made contact with the new chief prosecutor of the Public Ministry of Guatemala, Ramses Cuestas, and he has told her the investigation into my case would continue.

Early November 1994

I return to Guatemala for the fourth time. On November 3, I meet with Chief Prosecutor Ramses Cuestas to discuss the investigation of my abduction and torture. He informs me that my case has not been closed; instead, it has been returned to the Public Ministry, since this office has the responsibility for judicial investigations under the recently enacted Criminal Procedure Code. Cuestas promises to provide me with periodic status reports on the investigation. These reports are to be forwarded to me by the Embassy. A year and a half has passed, and I'm still waiting for the first report.

Mr. Cuestas also informs me that the evidence of my abduction and torture is very strong and he finds it unbelievable that the case has not moved more quickly in the past five years. He states that the problem is that there has not been the political will on the part of the military to conduct a thorough investigation, and that there has been a problem getting access to military installations and investigating the actions of the military. (I recorded this conversation with Cuestas.)

Guatemalan authorities continue to make defamatory statements about me. Maurice de León, a spokesperson for the Guatemalan military, makes statements on Guatemalan television and to the foreign press accusing me of being the chief spokesperson for the rebel forces in Guatemala and asserting that, for that reason, I lack credibility.

February 1995

I file a complaint against the government of Guatemala before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States. On February 3, I provide oral testimony to the Commission. A decision is pending.

April 12, 1995

A federal court in Boston holds General Hector Gramajo responsible for the commission of gross human rights abuses and orders him to pay \$47.5 million in damages to the plaintiffs, who include myself and eleven Guatemalans. I am awarded \$5 million. Gramajo is found responsible for my abduction, secret detention, and torture. Months later, the U.S. State Department revokes his visa.

March 30, 1995

President Clinton directs the Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) to conduct a government-wide review of the disappearance of Efraín Bámaca and the death of Michael DeVine. The scope of this inquiry also covers any intelligence bearing on the deaths, disappearances or abuses of U.S. citizens in Guatemala since 1984. My case is included in this investigation.

Early April

I file a Freedom of Information Act request to obtain my documents from the following government agencies: Army Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense, Department of State, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Security Agency.

May 10, 1995

My legal representatives and I attend a meeting with Ed Levine, Senator Specter's aide, and the Senate Intelligence Committee. During this meeting, I give my testimony.

August 14, 1995

My legal representatives and I meet with the members of the Intelligence Oversight Board. I provide the IOB with an oral testimony. A more detailed affidavit with highly sensitive material is given to members of the IOB, who agree to keep it confidential.

September 15, 1995

My legal representatives, Anna Gallagher and Michelle Arington, as well as Ted Keating and myself meet with Dan Seikaly and Bob Chaney from the U.S. District Attorney's office. In this meeting Mr. Seikaly explains how a criminal investigation proceeds in a typical case involving crimes outside of the U.S. Mr. Seikaly states that my case is not a typical case. In my case, he says, the FBI had difficulty obtaining information from me during the initial investigation stage. Apparently, my lawyer had informed the FBI that I was not interested in meeting with government officials. After my return to the States, I'm told that the FBI requested to meet and that I denied their request. The torture experience left me in a very

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. list	re: Chronology of Events Related to the Case of Sister Dianna Ortiz [partial] (2 pages)	00/00/0000	b(7)(C), b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Vermeer
OA/Box Number: 20048

FOLDER TITLE:

Sister Ortiz: [Guatemala - Human Rights]

2013-0534-S

rc1822

RESTRICTION CODES**Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]**

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

traumatized state. Since there was an American in the clandestine prison, giving orders to my torturers, I did not trust anyone affiliated with the U.S. government. Even though the FBI did not have access to me, they could have interviewed witnesses both in Guatemala and the United States, and they did have my affidavit. Instead, it was said that the reason my case was not investigated was because I did not cooperate with U.S. officials. The blame fell on me. Now that the case has been "re-opened," it, like that of Michael DeVine, is proceeding under the Anti-Terrorist Act.

During the meeting, Seikaly indicates that he will not proceed with his investigation until he receives my amended affidavit. He states that he will keep it locked in his files and only he, Bob Chaney, and (b)(6), (b)(7)c (the FBI investigator) will be allowed to see it. If my case ever goes to trial, the amended affidavit will have to be produced for the defense, he says. However, I could always decide not to proceed with a trial, thereby keeping the affidavit from being disclosed. Later, I learn that a Grand Jury has been convened on my case without my knowledge. The District Attorney's Office will not tell me whether the Grand Jury has had access to my affidavit.

[001]

In this meeting, Mr. Seikaly states that the criminal investigation of my case has not put a hold on my FOIA requests. In spite of this information, when I have brought up the fact that I have received no information pertaining to my case in response to the FOIA, I am told that the information cannot be released to me because an investigation is underway.

February 22, 1996

Joe Nangle, Marie Dennis, Anna Gallagher, and I meet with Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Tubach, George Calhoun, of the Department of Justice, and FBI agents (b)(6), (b)(7)c

(b)(7)c, (b)(6) Dan Seikaly and Dan Chaney are present for the first five minutes and then leave. Mr. Tubach confirms that a Grand Jury has been convened but states that under the law, he could not inform me of this. In an earlier conversation, Mr. Tubach had explained to my attorney that he was afraid to tell us about the Grand Jury because we would go to the press. In the course of this meeting, I learn that the U.S. Attorney's Office wants to request that an expert physician examine my back. My attorney and I are given no substantive information.

March 1, 1996

Anna Gallagher, Dr. Mary Fabri, and I meet with (b)(6), (b)(7)c
(b)(7)c, (b)(6) and Michael Tubach. The purpose of the meeting is to have Dr. Fabri interviewed by the FBI and U.S. attorneys, and she is interviewed privately after the meeting; but during the meeting, in my presence, she explains to the investigators the effects of torture on those who survive it and the difficulty involved in repeating the sequence of brutalities over and over. I had requested that she impart this information because I felt that the U.S. Attorney's Office and I were speaking different languages, that the attitude of the investigators was hostile, that they didn't believe what I was saying, didn't think I was cooperating, and expected me to trust the U.S. government immediately and implicitly. Dr. Fabri explained that, as the result of the U.S. government's smear campaign against me, I have felt that my government will never help me. The presence of the American as I was being tortured also has made trust in the U.S. government difficult for me; I can't imagine that my government doesn't know who he is.

March 7, 1996

I formulate a letter to Mr. Clinton that outlines my case and the effects of torture on myself and others. A legislative aide agrees to get it to Mr. Clinton. Copies of the letter are given to Frank Fountain, John Shattuck, Representative Smith, Senator Leahy, Senator Ford, and Representative Morella.

In summary, over the past twelve months I have met time and again with members of the IOB, the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, and the U.S. District Attorney's Office, and I know no more now about my abduction and torture than I did six years ago.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002. paper	re: Sister Dianna Ortiz (1 page)	00/00/0000	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Vermeer
OA/Box Number: 20048

FOLDER TITLE:

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*Torture victims often seem nameless and faceless.
But behind every victim, there is an individual, a family,
a community and a world being affected by torture.*



President Bill Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

February 7, 1996

Dear President Clinton:

I am writing to implore your assistance in an urgent matter. It's my understanding that you've been briefed on my case and for that reason I will not bombard you with specifics.

For more than six years I have battled tirelessly to learn the truth of why I and innocent Guatemalans fell victim to inhuman acts committed both by Guatemalans and US citizens. After my release, US officials opted to ignore what had happened to me; instead, in concert with the Guatemalan government, they concealed the truth by orchestrating a smear campaign against me with the intent of ruining my credibility. It was not until last spring's scandal that a sudden interest was awakened in my case and those of countless Guatemalans. But even with all of this, I still, to this day, more than six years later, do not know the truth.

In April of last year, I filed my Freedom of Information Act request to obtain access to US government documents on my case. I find it very disturbing to know that various entities that are conducting an investigation of Guatemala cases--the IOB, the Senate Intelligence Committee, the Justice Department, etc.--all have access to my documents. I, on the other hand, have not received one shred of paper, nor have I been given any substantial information on my case. I am the only one who has nightmares about what happened. Yet I am the only one, it seems, who is not allowed to know.

I would like to share with you how the experience of torture continues to torment me. Like many torture survivors, I dread the arrival of night. The stillness of the darkness pounds on the locked doors of my mind. I know that if I close my eyes the torturers will return. Awake I fight them; asleep I am powerless. Recently, unable to fight my body's need for sleep, I closed my eyes. I dreamed my torturers escorted me into a room that screamed of hell. The walls were splattered with dried blood and the floor was carpeted with mounds of human waste. In the middle of the room was a cot-like bed with a blood-stained sheet. My torturers ordered me to peel the sheet back. On the cot lay the unblemished body of a woman. I watched as they marred her body, severed her

breasts, charred her skin into round holes with the tips of their cigarettes. The once unblemished face was black and blue, covered with blood, and distorted beyond recognition. The woman cried out for help. I tried to protect her from these monsters. The room became an arena and Alejandro sat in the seat of "honor." Behind him sat an entourage of US officials. With a pipe in his mouth, he watched nonchalantly as a human life was destroyed. I awakened--with a bloody nose and bruises where my flailing hands had pounded against the wall.

You see, Mr. Clinton, I always want out. Out of this nightmare. Out of this past. Out of this room with Alejandro and my Guatemalan torturers. But the nightmare doesn't end when I awake because Alejandro is not just a dream image. He is a pivotal piece of my past and a symbol of the very real and daily fact: He represents six years of US officials that have lied to me, concealed truth, denied me basic information, and tried to keep me in the darkness.

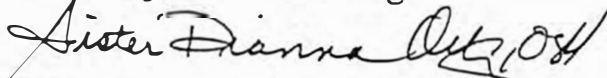
Why is my government concealing the truth from me, from the Guatemalan people, and from the American public? Who is this American, Alejandro, who not only was present in the torture chamber but had the authority to give orders to my torturers? Why is my government protecting him? Is national security a higher priority than human life?

Like the Guatemalan people, I want desperately to put the past behind me. I have been very patient for six years. What would you do? God forbid, but what if it had been your daughter, your wife? What would you tell her? Forget?

Mr. Clinton, you can put these ghosts to rest by ordering a comprehensive and rapid declassification of US government documents pertaining to my case and to all human rights violations in Guatemala. Give us the truth and let us rest.

Time is running out for me. If the IOB report does not reveal answers to my search for the truth, then I have no other choice than to take strong action. Perhaps hunger strikes or other actions are the only means of obtaining truth in this country. I don't want attention. All I want is peace...for myself and for the Guatemalan people. I don't think that's too much to ask.

Thank you for listening.



Sister Dianna Ortiz, OSU

cc: Frank Fountain, counsel for the IOB
Anthony Harrington, Chairman of the IOB,
Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security
John Shattuck, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights
Selected Congressional offices

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 29, 1996

Dear Sister Ortiz:

Thank you for your letter bringing your concerns directly to my attention. I deeply regret the suffering you so movingly describe and offer you my sincere sympathy.

I believe you are aware that I have directed the Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) to conduct a complete review of all intelligence information that may bear on the facts of your case. In parallel with the IOB's review, the Justice Department is also currently investigating your case. The IOB is working as quickly as possible to complete its challenging work while ensuring its review is thorough. The IOB hopes to finish its review in the first half of this year.

Once I have reviewed the IOB's report, I intend to make all appropriate information available to you, the other victims or their families and the public. The IOB will contact you directly to share this information with you.

The experiences you recount are terrible and clearly haunt you still. The IOB's unprecedented review is nearing completion, and I hope its report may help you gain some measure of peace. In the meantime, I know the IOB will continue its dialogue with you on the status of its review.

Sincerely,

Ries Clinton

Sister Dianna Ortiz, OSU
708 Rock Creek Church Road, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20010