Appendix A

CHRONOLOGY OF THE UCA ASSASSINATION CASE

October 1989

16  U.S. military advisor Major Buckland returns to El Salvador on permanent assignment at C-5 (Psychological Operations).

31  Colonel Avilés leaves for vacation in New Orleans, returning to El Salvador on Nov. 14.

November 1989

10  U.S. Special Forces from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina initiate a training course for elite Atlacatl troops at battalion headquarters at Sitio del Niño, La Libertad.

11  3:30 p.m. to 5:35 p.m., Vice President Merino visits Atlacatl headquarters.
8:00 p.m. FMLN offensive commences in San Salvador and other cities around the nation.
By 11:00 p.m., all radio stations are pressured into joining a nationwide hook-up, which broadcasts death threats against the Jesuits and members of the political opposition.

12  President Cristiani declares a State of Exception and 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. curfew. National Guard Director Colonel Carrillo Schlenker is named Jefe de Plaza during the State of Exception, with ultimate authority over the metropolitan area.
Threats against the Jesuits continue to be broadcast over the national radio network.
11:30 a.m. Weapons left by fleeing guerrillas found by Treasury Police at Loyola Center near the UCA.

13  U.S. training of Atlacatl commandos is suspended. Atlacatl troops are transferred to San Salvador, where they are billeted at the Military Academy near the UCA.
UCA rector, Father Ellacuría, arrives in San Salvador in the afternoon.
A Special Security Zone is created to defend joint Command headquarters and neighboring military installations. Placed in charge of the Army's most important zone is Colonel Benavides, commander of the Military Academy.
5:45 p.m. Father Ellacuría arrives at the UCA.
6:30 p.m. Within two hours of their arrival in San Salvador, Atlacatl units under the command of Lieutenant Espinoza search the Jesuit residence on the UCA campus. Lieutenant Cuenca Ocampo, who is attached to the military intelligence body, DNI, participates in the operation.

14  Atlacatl troops arrest a woman a few blocks from the UCA.

15  3:00 p.m. Over 100 Atlacatl troops occupy Loyola Center near the UCA.
Early evening. Lieutenant Espinoza meets with Ambassador Walker and top U.S. military advisor Colonel Menjivar at the ambassador's home.

Evening. Atlacatl patrols stationed on north, southeast, southwest and west sides of the UCA.

Ranking military officers hold several meetings throughout the day. Twenty-four top officers meet in closed door session from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

8:00 or 9:00 p.m. A National Guardsman is killed by "friendly fire" near Cine Colonial, four blocks from the UCA.

10:30 p.m. President Cristiani is summoned to Joint Command headquarters, where he meets with Chief-of-Staff Ponce, Defense Minister Larios, and Vice Ministers Zepeda and Montano. Colonel Benavides meets with Military Academy officers to report on the meeting at the Joint Command headquarters.

10:30 p.m. Lieutenant Espinoza of the Atlacatl is ordered by radio to gather his men.

11:30 p.m. Colonel Benavides gives Lieutenant Espinoza and Mendoza the order to kill the Jesuits.

December 1989

1 Colonel López y López, a former SIU chief, is temporarily reassigned to the SIU.

3 Mrs. Cerna and her family are turned over to U.S. military advisers.

6 The Speaker's Special Task Force on El Salvador is appointed, headed by Congressman Moakley.

8 Colonel Ponce, chief of the Joint Command, provides written testimony to the Judge. Fathers Ibíse and Estrada tell the court that the Atlacatl searched the Jesuit residence on November 13.

9 President Cristiani offers a $250,000 reward to anyone offering information leading to killers' identification.

10 Archbishop Rivera y Damas accuses U.S. authorities of mistreating witness Lucia Cerna while in FBI custody in Miami.

13 Lieutenant Espinoza is questioned by the SIU. In subsequent days, other Atlacatl commandos also give statements.

16 The SIU begins interviewing witnesses.

20 President Cristiani calls Cerna's testimony "inconclusive."

22-23 Before flying to Miami, Mrs. Cerna, a Jesuit housekeeper, testifies before Judge Zamora to the presence of armed men in military uniform on the campus while the murders took place.

24 The Attorney General dismisses the importance of Cerna's testimony.

28 Father Estrada is named UCA Rector.

Mrs. Cerna and her family begin a week of incommunicado pressure.

30 Tutela Legal, human rights office of the Catholic Archdiocese of San Salvador, publishes a report, concluding that the Salvadoran Armed Forces are responsible for the murders, and demonstrating the use of U.S.-supplied bullets in the crime.
18 Colonel Ponce sends the SIU a report of events in the UCA area on the night of November 15-16 which includes an entry indicating that "delinquent terrorists," the Army's appellation for the FMLN, assassinated the Jesuits at 12:30 a.m.

20 Major Buckland is told by Colonel Avilés of Colonel Benavides' role in the murders.

22 Fathers Tojeira and Estrada are given what the U.S. embassy calls a "full and detailed briefing" by Colonel López y López and Lieutenant Colonel Rivas of the SIU. Neither the Atlacatl Battalion nor Colonel Benavides is mentioned.

25 Major Buckland writes a letter to his sister, Carol Buckland, telling her of what he has been told of Colonel Benavides' role in the murders.

29 Ballistics tests begin on weapons assigned to those soldiers who encircled the UCA on November 15-16.

Late Dec. Over several days, the SIU stages reconstructions of the November 13 search of the Jesuit residence, using soldiers who conducted the operation. Numerous contradictions emerge.

January 1990

1 Colonel Guzmán Aguilar, head of the National Intelligence Directorate (DNI), is named military attaché in Costa Rica.

2 Colonel Menjivar informs Colonel Ponce that Major Buckland has implicated Colonel Benavides in the killings. Ponce summons Buckland and Avilés to Joint Command headquarters.

3 SIU says ballistics tests give first positive results, proving that shell casings found at the UCA were shot from weapons assigned to Atlacatl soldiers. Major Buckland prepares a written statement containing his account of what he learned from Colonel Avilés.

4 In response to an SIU inquiry, Colonel Benavides denies that his troops used flares known as Bengal lights.

5 General Larios appoints a military Honor Commission to examine the evidence. Future murder defendants Avalos Vargas, Zarate Castillo and Pérez Vásquez are detained at National Police headquarters; Guevara Cerros and Amaya Grimaldi at Treasury Police; and Espinoza Guerra at the National Guard.

6 Major Buckland leaves El Salvador.

7 President Cristiani announces that men of the Salvadoran Armed Forces are implicated in UCA killings and that a military Honor Commission will "deduce responsibility" and "clarify the truth in all its magnitude."

8 Future defendant Lieutenant Mendoza Vallecillos is detained at National Police headquarters and Colonel Benavides at the National Guard.

10-11 Major Buckland makes a sworn statement to the FBI in Washington revealing that there may have been prior knowledge that the murders would occur.

11 Ballistics tests indicate that an AK-47 rifle and an M-60 machine gun obtained from the Military Academy were used during the murder operation. The AK-47 was used to kill three priests.

12 The Honor Commission delivers its report to President Cristiani. The Commission names nine suspects and excludes the possibility that other military men are involved.

13 U.S. embassy legal officer Richard Chadester receives Major Buckland's additional statements and the videotape. U.S. officials do not share this evidence with Salvadoran judicial authorities. President Cristiani publicly names the nine defendants.

16 Eight defendants brought before San Salvador's Fourth Criminal Court Judge, Dr. Ricardo A. Zamora. A ninth suspect reportedly fled in late December.

17 The defendants begin to give statements to the court. The SIU provides the judge with six volumes on its investigation and considers its work on the case terminated.

18 In a new affidavit, Major Buckland recants his story about prior knowledge of the plot to the FBI. Judge Zamora orders the detention of the nine defendants.

20 Jesuit Provincial Tojeira says the investigation has not sufficiently examined the question of who ordered the killings.

22 President Cristiani admits that the investigation is incomplete. In late January or early February, Cristiani is privately shown the Buckland videotape at the home of U.S. Ambassador Walker.

February 1990

7 The Washington Post and other U.S. newspapers cite intelligence and military sources concerning meetings of ranking officers held before and after the assassination.

11 The Moakley task force arrives in El Salvador.

22 Judge Zamora decides to ask President Cristiani to provide the names of the officers who participated in the Honor Commission.

March 1990

5 Judge Zamora officially requests Honor Commission names from President Cristiani.
16 Judge Zamora requests the logbooks of entries and exits to the Military Academy during the month of November 1989 as well as the names of guards on duty on the night of November 15-16, 1989.

22 Defense attorneys petition to transfer the case to Santa Tecla.

23 Father Tojeira writes to the judge asking that members of the Honor Commission be cited to testify.

28 Court receives a letter from President Cristiani dated March 21 providing the names of Honor Commission members.

29 SIU provides the judge with names of cadets on Military Academy guard duty on November 15-16. The SIU informs the court that the logbook of entries and exits to the Military Academy has been "misplaced."

30 Judge Zamora has already questioned more than a hundred witnesses.

April 1990

10 Judge Zamora rejects the defense's petition to transfer the case to Santa Tecla. Four Military Academy cadets are cited to testify.

22 Retired Colonel Ochoa of the ruling ARENA party tells 60 Minutes that Colonel Benavides orchestrated the killings on orders from his superiors.

27 House Foreign Affairs Committee votes to cut U.S. military aid to El Salvador by 50%.

30 Moakley task force publishes its Interim Report. Defense attorneys again request that the case be transferred to Santa Tecla.

The judge begins to cite members of the Honor Commission to testify.

May 1990

1 Commanders from around the country publish a communiqué rejecting Colonel Ochoa's allegations.

An anonymous communiqué from "Young Officers" implicates high ranking officers in the crime and endorses the statements of Colonel Ochoa.

3 Colonel Casanova Sandoval, the new director of the Military Academy, informs the court that the four cadets cited to testify are outside the country.

7 Vice Minister of Defense Colonel Zepeda rejects suggestions that he was involved in the crime and asserts that Colonel Benavides reported that night to Colonel Ponce, head of the Joint Command.

June 1990

1 DNI's Lieutenant Cuenca Ocampo testifies that he participated in the November 13 UCA search on the orders of DNI Captain Herrera Carranza, who has since been transferred to Morazán.


6 Lieutenant Mendoza testifies, blaming Lieutenant Colonel Hernández for ordering burning of the logbooks.

Legislative Assembly names Dr. Roberto Mendoza as the new Attorney General, bypassing Dr. Colorado for reappointment.
Cadets on duty at the Military Academy on the murder night begin to testify. The SIU sends the court statements from 15 DNI officers who attended the early morning intelligence meeting on November 16, 1989; they provide no useful information.

Judge cites Lieutenant Colonel Hernández. He also asks the SIU's Lieutenant Colonel Rivas to clarify various points concerning the cadets and radio transmissions. Further, Zamora asks the Minister of Defense if there are standing orders to burn logbooks.

New Attorney General Mendoza announces that prosecutors from his office will play a more active role in the case.

Minister of Defense Larios informs the court that there are no standing orders to burn logbooks.

Lieutenant Colonel Hernández testifies before the court.

Colonel Casanova Sandoval, new director of the Military Academy, turns over a Book of Operations. Suspecting that it might be falsified, the judge sends it to the FBI in Washington for analysis.

Provisional detention is ordered for Lieutenant Colonel Hernández on charges of destruction of evidence.

Colonel Avilés denies in court that he told Major Buckland that Colonel Benavides ordered the killings.

U.S. Ambassador Walker tells the Salvadoran press that "in my country, destruction of evidence is also a crime."

**July 1990**

Colonel Benavides refuses to testify, citing illness.

Colonel Benavides testifies for eight hours.

President Cristiani admits publicly for the first time that he authorized the search of the UCA on November 13, 1989, and alleges erroneously that weapons were found in the Jesuit residence.

Former DNI Captain Herrera Carranza testifies, saying it is common for intelligence agents to participate in searches.

Father Tojeira says President Cristiani has been misled by the military about the search of the Jesuit residence and criticizes the authorities' attempt to disassociate the search from the assassination.

Lieutenant Colonel Hernández' defense attorney resigns, citing "threats."

Major Buckland is cited through Foreign Ministry channels to appear in court on July 30.

Defense attorneys again request that the case be transferred to Santa Tecla, this time relying on a provision which allows for appeal.

FMLN says President Cristiani bears "political responsibility" for the crime because he authorized the November 13 search, "providing a decisive step in the chain of decisions and orders" leading to the murders.

Lieutenant Colonel Hernández is brought before the judge.

**August 1990**

Father Tojeira states that several U.S. intelligence agencies have documents concerning the case and considers it "ridiculous" that they have been withheld "for reasons of national security."

In Washington, Congressman Moakley charges that he believes the High Command of the Salvadoran Armed Forces is blocking the investigation.

The court rules the petition filed by the defense to transfer the case to Santa Tecla "out of order."

It is reported that Lieutenant Colonel Hernández, out on bail, is wounded in Chalatenango.

President Cristiani; Defense Minister Larios; Vice-Ministers Zepeda and Montano; and Colonel Ponce, chief of the Joint Command, meet with Supreme Court President and Judge Zamora, reiterating their support for judicial investigation.

During a television interview, Father Tojeira suggests that other ranking officers should be questioned, and names Colonel Lain Linares, formerly of the Atlacatl Battalion; Colonel Cerna Flores, ex-chief of Operations; and Colonel Guzmán Aguilar, formerly of the DNI.

Atlacatl Sergeant Solórzano Esquivel testifies before the Judge, who orders his detention on perjury charges; Solórzano flees.

General Larios provides a list of officers who attended evening meeting on November 15 at Joint Command headquarters.

Sergeant Solórzano Esquivel is brought back to court to face perjury charges.

Colonel Ponce provides written testimony for the second time.

General Larios provides a written statement to the court.

**September 1990**

Colonel Ponce is named Minister of Defense.

In his acceptance speech, Colonel Ponce states his commitment to clear up the case. No members of the Salvadoran Armed Forces attend the ceremony.

Judge Zamora orders detention of two more military witnesses on perjury charges.
The Fourth Criminal Court issues an official communiqué reporting that Major Buckland's January 10 and 18 affidavits were delivered through private channels by two U.S. embassy officials. Embassy officials continue to withhold Buckland's videotape. Colonel Carrillo Schlenker submits second written statement.

Minister of Defense, Colonel Ponce, provides written testimony for the third time amplifying earlier statements.

Defense Minister Ponce writes to Congressman Moakley, asserting that Major Buckland's testimony is false.

Father Tejeira provides the court with 17 heavily censored documents from the U.S. Defense Agency, and suggests that the judge request the documents in their entirety from U.S. authorities.

Colonel Avilés testifies in court, saying officers in Joint Command headquarters were extremely concerned by the fierce attack nearby in the early morning hours of November 16, and that they feared the headquarters was under siege. He told reporters that Major Buckland is "unstable, unbalanced and deceitful."

Defense attorney Carlos Mendez Flores says "Buckland's falsehoods are clear."

President Cristiani appears personally to testify before the judge.

Lieutenant Colonel Velasco Alfaro testifies, stating that he was named in early December to replace Colonel Benavides as commander of the special Security Zone, contradicting earlier testimony by other officers.

Intelligence officer Lieutenant Colonel Equízalbal Figueroa testifies that two U.S. advisors -- Colonel Porter and Major Lewis -- were working with C-2 (Intelligence) in November 1989. The two are not fully identified until May 1991, when the judge orders witness statements under the Letters Rogatory process.

Treasury Police Director, Col. Héctor Henríquez Hernández, testifies.

Vice-Minister of Defense, Colonel Zepeda, testifies.

Colonel Cerna Flores, chief of C-3 (Operations) at Joint Command in November 1989, testifies.

Colonel León Linares, former Atlacatl commander, testifies.

Major Buckland testifies in San Salvador at the home of a U.S. diplomat, and flies out of the country before nightfall.

Colonel Carrillo Schlenker of the National Guard sends the judge an unsolicited written statement.

President Cristiani says at a press conference at United Nations headquarters that the Jesuit investigation is proceeding well. He announces that a group of prominent U.S. attorneys have been invited to El Salvador to monitor the case.

November 1990

Supreme Court asks the Foreign Ministry to request through diplomatic channels the Buckland videotape and other documents.

SIU ballistics expert González García tells the court that the SIU has not finished ballistics testing and therefore cannot submit a final report. Zamora orders the SIU to submit the results and conclusions of the ballistics tests done to date, and describe those still pending.

Attorney General rejects the suggestion of a judicial "confrontation" to resolve differences in the testimonies of Buckland and Salvadoran officers.

Zamora asks National Police for intelligence reports about the alleged presence of guerrillas in the UCA in November 1989.

Former DNI chief Colonel Guzmán Aguilar testifies.

Archbishop Rivera y Damas says he is convinced more intellectual authors remain to be identified.

SIU Lieutenant Preza Rivas testifies.

Congressman Moakley reveals existence of additional statements made in January 1990 by Major Buckland which U.S. officials have concealed from Salvadoran judicial authorities. Moakley receives State Department assurances that they have been delivered to Judge Zamora, who announces that he has not received the material.

SIU Lieutenant Colonel Rivas Mejía testifies and is unable to answer numerous basic questions concerning the work of the SIU.

U.S. Senate votes to cut military aid to El Salvador by 50%.

October 1990

SIU detectives Levato Ayala and Parada Cáceres testify, revealing several irregularities in the SIU investigation. Attorney General rejects the suggestion of a judicial "confrontation" to resolve differences in the testimonies of Buckland and Salvadoran officers.

Public prosecutors say the SIU and Army officers have shown a "lack of will" to facilitate and advance the investigation.

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First anniversary of the assassinations at the UCA. Judge Zamora files additional charges against the defendants for terrorism, the first time Salvadoran soldiers have been so charged. The European Economic Community expresses concern over the case's lack of real progress.

Former DNI intelligence officer Captain Herrera Carranza killed in Morazán while serving under former Atlacatl commander Colonel León Linares.

Attorney General's office asks the judge to raise the case to the trial stage. Defense moves to have terrorism charges dropped.

December 1990

Judge Zamora ends the investigative phase, elevating the case to plenary. All nine defendants are ordered to stand trial, but robbery charges are dismissed.

Judge Zamora, frustrated at the uncompleted ballistics tests, criticizes the SIU for having "little seriousness in its work." Moakley task force staff visits El Salvador.

Archbishop Rivera y Damas criticizes decision to raise case to plenary, saying the investigation should continue because there are more intellectual authors.

Central American Province of the Society of Jesus issues a communique, stating that while the Jesuits consider the investigation incomplete, there is sufficient evidence to try the case.

U.S. Ambassador Walker says "my government and I are doing everything possible to achieve justice in this case," explaining that some portions of documents given to the Jesuits under the Freedom of Information Act were blacked out, as U.S. law permits.

Defense attorneys challenge the decision to take the case to trial.


January 1991

Defense Minister Ponce, Vice-Minister Zepeda and Colonel Rubio Rubio, head of the Joint Command, are promoted to general. Lieutenant Colonel Rivas Mejía of the SIU is promoted to full colonel and named second-in-command of the National Police. Lieutenant Colonel Aguilar Alfaro later takes over the SIU.

Judge Zamora admits the defense's challenge to take the case to trial.

August 1991

Public prosecutors Campos and Blanco resign in protest from the Fiscalía. Attorney General Mendoza says "their resignation won't affect the case."

At a San Salvador press conference Blanco says they resigned because of the Attorney General office's "lack of seriousness and responsible intent."

Central American Province of the Society of Jesus says the "resignation under pressure...causes us to lose our relative confidence in the Attorney General's office." Jesuits say they are considering hiring Blanco and Campos as private prosecutors.

Judge Zamora admits the defense's challenge, referring the case to a San Salvador appeals court. President Bush says withheld U.S. military aid will be released, but waits 60 days, pending progress in the case, among other conditions.

An ARENA attorney attacks Blanco and Campos, calling them "mercenaries of justice." Others join the chorus of attacks.

U.S. embassy says a transcript of Buckland's videotape and a Spanish translation have been provided to the Foreign Ministry; Zamora receives the documents sometime in March 1991.

February 1991

The High Command sends a letter to Justice Minister Hernández Valiente rejecting any institutional responsibility for the crime, but suggests further interviews with 12 officers. The letter was first released in Washington prior to congressional consideration of the release of aid to El Salvador; the High Command does not send a copy to Judge Zamora.

March 1991

UN Human Rights Commission says some within the Armed Forces have "obstructed the complete clarification of the crime and application of the law for those responsible."

The U.S. State Department releases $21.5 million, 50% of the U.S. military aid for El Salvador in FY 1991.

Attorney General's office repeats its position to the appeals court, recommending that all nine defendants stand trial.

Supreme Court delivers Scotland Yard's report to the court.

April 1991

UCA Rector Father Estrada says U.S. is participating directly in a coverup of the crime and accuses the military of obstructing the judicial investigation. Father Tojeira says the State Department does not want to collaborate in identifying those who ordered the killings.

Appellate court upholds Zamora's decision to try the case.
Mrs. Benavides files a habeas corpus petition on behalf of her husband, Colonel Benavides.

Supreme Court names Dr. Urrutia López, head of the Salvadoran lawyers' association, to review the habeas petition.

Parents of Lieutenant Espinoza Guerra file a habeas petition in behalf of their son.

Dr. Urrutia upholds Zamora's decision to send the case to plenary. Supreme Court says it will examine the legality of detention of all nine defendants.

Relatives of the defendants criticize Urrutia's decision, attributing the detentions to "international pressure."

May 1991

Blanco and Campos enter an appearance in court as private prosecutors acting in behalf of the victims' families.

General Ponce threatens to initiate libel proceedings against Blanco and Campos, who suggested Benavides was acting on higher orders and that the investigation should continue.

Supreme Court upholds Urrutia's opinion and rules that the case against all nine murder defendants and that against Lieutenant Colonel Hernández should continue.

San Salvador Auxiliary Bishop Rosa Chávez "laments" General Ponce's statements and says they could cause "sick minds" to take action against the private prosecutors.

Relatives of three soldiers detained for perjury file habeas petitions in their behalf.

Private prosecutors file a 50-page brief requesting a series of investigatory steps.

The eight-day period for the introduction of new evidence opens in Fourth Criminal Court.

Judge Zamora asks Supreme Court to initiate diplomatic proceedings so that Major Buckland may again appear to testify in San Salvador.

Supreme Court asks the Foreign Ministry to process the judge's request for Major Buckland to appear in court to testify.

Argentine Colonel (ret.) García appears as an expert witness for the prosecution.

Former DNI Captain Parada Fuentes testifies in court that it was announced over a closed circuit military frequency early on the morning of November 16, 1989 that Father Ellacuria was "killed resisting arrest."

Judge Zamora asks Supreme Court to petition U.S. government to turn over Buckland videotape.

June 1991

The eight-day evidentiary period ends, but Judge Zamora allows a 90-day extension for the testimonies of 10 U.S. citizens to be recorded in the United States.

At request of the defense, Zamora adds to the court record the book, *Marxist Infiltration in the Church*, a right-wing diatribe attacking the Jesuits.

U.S. embassy announces that Major Buckland is "in a country near El Salvador" (later identified as Panama) so he can arrive quickly if asked to testify.

Father Tojeira appears at an UCA forum on the case with private prosecutors Henry Campos and Sidney Blanco.

Judge Zamora informs the Supreme Court that Buckland's testimony will be recorded through the Letters Rogatory process.

Judge Zamora adds the transcript of U.S. military advisor Major Ramírez to the court record, after Moakley learns of its existence.

U.S. embassy offers Zamora a "private showing" of the Buckland videotape at the embassy but declines to turn over the tape, out of "respect for Major Buckland's privacy." Embassy deems the judge's additional request for documents related to Buckland "imprecise or general," and states it therefore cannot comply.

General Ponce says Colonel López y López was COCFA head on the murder night. Bush administration announces the release of $21 million in withheld military aid.

Former Attorney General Colorado writes to the Archbishop, suggesting the Armed Forces had institutional responsibility for the crime.

Former Attorney General Colorado tells Notimex the assassination was "not an institutional crime, but was carried out by members of the Armed Forces who acted on their own."
9 The Armed Forces place a paid advertisement in the press strongly condemning Moakley's views. Defense attorney Dr. Méndez Flores says Congressman Moakley is "violating the country's sovereignty."

14 ARENA's Caldeón Sol says Moakley should "legislate in his own country, and not ours."

30 Father Tojeira says the State Department is obstructing the investigation by barring attorneys for the Jesuits from being present during the questioning of 10 U.S. citizens in the United States.

August 1991

5-14 Declarations are taken in Washington from 10 U.S. citizens. Jesuits' attorneys are banned from the sessions.

September 1991

3 Congressman Moakley writes to President Cristiani asking him to "make a clear statement at the earliest possible time" opposing amnesty for the defendants.

6 The private prosecutors file a civil action demanding indemnification for the son of victim Julia Ramos, damages to the UCA, and a symbolic one colón (12 cents) for each of the Jesuits.

10 Defense attorney Dr. Méndez Flores criticizes Moakley's opposition to amnesty, saying, "Who's Moakley, to be running around meddling in questions which are only the business of Salvadorans?"

26 The public trial begins at noon in the Supreme Court building.

28 10:30 a.m. During oral arguments by the defense, some 200 demonstrators outside the Supreme Court building chant slogans in favor of the defendants, interrupting the process inside. 4:45 p.m. Oral arguments end and jury begins deliberation. 10:30 p.m. Judge Zamora begins reading the verdict. Colonel Benavides and Lieutenant Mendoza are convicted of murder; the other defendants are acquitted on all charges.

October 1991

3 Those acquitted are released from custody and remain on active duty.

10 Judge Zamora blocks pretrial release on bail for three Atlacatl soldiers charged with perjury.

11 Lieutenants Espinoza Guerra and Guevara Cerritos are released on bond, pending the court's decision on a lesser charge.

14 Non-jury charges are heard by Judge Zamora.

16 Evidentiary period opens for civil action.

November 1991

1 Recusal petition filed by the defense is admitted to the appellate court. Defense argues that Judge Zamora should excuse himself from the case because he once taught at the UCA. Defense attorneys file habeas petitions in behalf of three soldiers held on perjury charges.

4 Eight prominent Republican Senators write to President Cristiani, opposing a pardon for Benavides and Mendoza.

7 Appellate court rejects recusal petition.

8 Judge appointed to consider habeas petitions.

13 Father Tojeira addresses the UCA community on the case, announcing that the Central American Province of the Society of Jesus will ask the Legislative Assembly to form a commission to identify who ordered the murders.

14 Second petition seeking the recusal of Judge Zamora is filed by the defense.

16 Second anniversary of the assassination is commemorated with a mass on the UCA grounds.

18 Congressman Moakley releases a statement outlining his hypothesis of how the murder was planned. Chief instigator, he says, is former Air Force chief General Bustillo. Defense Minister Ponce was also present at the meeting at which the murders were planned; Ponce promptly denies the charges. Bustillo says Moakley is a "liar."

19 Second recusal petition admitted to appeals court.

20 Appeals court again rejects recusal petition.

December 1991

10 Court agrees to end civil action at the request of the victims' relatives.

18 Fathers Tojeira and Estrada petition the Legislative Assembly to appoint a commission to investigate who ordered the murders.

January 1992

1 The Cristiani government and the FMLN sign peace accords in New York City under the auspices of the UN.

5 The court announces the end of the civil action, which concluded with an out of court settlement, providing compensation to Elba Ramos' son and to the UCA.
10 Legislative Assembly rejects the Jesuits’ petition. An ARENA deputy says it is “time to stop sowing hate.”

16 The peace accords are finalized in Mexico City at a ceremony attended by UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali and foreign diplomats and other guests. ARENA party president Calderón Sol says he supports a pardon for Benavides and Mendoza.

23 Amnesty decree approved by the Legislative Assembly. Those already convicted by a jury are not eligible.

Judge Zamora sentences Benavides and Mendoza to 30-year prison terms. Lieutenants Espinoza and Guevara Cerritos are sentenced to three years for proposition and conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism.

30 Defense attorneys appeal the sentences.

February 1992

1 A ceasefire begins and FMLN leaders return to San Salvador.

22 Retired General Bustillo, saying he was “falsely accused” by Congressman Moakley, “demands justice” because his “reputation has been impugned.” Writing in The Washington Post, Bustillo challenges Moakley to join me in El Salvador to publicly debate these charges.

May 1992

15 An “Ad-hoc Commission,” established under the terms of the peace accords, begins a review of the Armed Forces in order to purge those unfit for service.

July 1992

14 Three foreign notables forming a “Truth Commission” begin examining a decade of acts of violence by the FMLN and Armed Forces.

31 José Eduardo Pineda Valenzuela, chief public prosecutor on the case, is shot and wounded by two gunmen who forceably enter his home. The men steal nothing from the home, but take one of the family’s two cars.

August 1992

12 Jesuit Provincial Tojeira issues a communiqué indicating that the order is considering requesting a pardon for Colonel Benavides and Lieutenant Mendoza.

17 The same gunmen who shot public prosecutor Pineda Valenzuela on July 31 return to his home and threaten his wife, warning her against cooperating with the criminal investigation into the July 31 incident. Like the earlier attack, the men steal nothing from the home, but steal the second of the family’s two cars.

September 1992

23 Ad-hoc Commission delivers its findings to the UN Secretary-General and to President Cristiani. The names of those to be dismissed from the military are not made public, and the mid-November deadline for the dismissals passes without action.

November 1992

16 The third anniversary of the murders is commemorated with a mass at the UCA. Father Tojeira reiterates his call for identification of the officers who ordered the crime, and indicates his intention to officially ask for a pardon for the two officers convicted.

December 1992

9 Father Tojeira challenges General Ponce to a public debate on the question of the “intellectual authorship” of the UCA murders.

10 General Ponce calls Father Tojeira “cynical” and says he will not participate in a “propaganda show.”

16 Father Tojeira writes to Roberto Angulo, President of El Salvador’s Legislative Assembly, officially requesting a pardon. He also writes to President Cristiani, asking him to support the request.

January 1993

7 UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali informs the UN Security Council that the Cristiani government has refused to remove 15 officers from their commands, as called for by the Ad-Hoc Commission. Boutros-Ghali says he has asked Cristiani to “take early action to regularize the position of the 15 officers in respect of whom the Ad-Hoc Commission’s recommendations have not yet been fully implemented.”

11 U.S. Senators Christopher Dodd and Patrick Leahy call on the Bush administration to withhold U.S. military aid to El Salvador until the Cristiani government complies fully with the peace accords.