

HONDURAS: Former Battalion 3-16 Death Squad Member Sentenced to 12 Years in Prison June 15, 2005

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In a rare legal victory, the Appellate Court of San Pedro Sula overturned a March 2004 acquittal and sentenced retired Captain Marco Tulio Regalado to 12 years in prison for the murder of activist Herminio Deras. In 1983 Deras was shot in the head after being detained by soldiers. Regalado is a former member of the notorious Battalion 3-16 and is the brother of the former head of the Honduras Armed Forces, Humberto Regalado Hernandez.

Battalion 3-16 Death Squad

In 1994, the Honduran Rights Commission outlined the torture and disappearance of at least 184 political opponents. It also specifically accused John Negroponte* of a number of human rights violations. During Negroponte's tenure, U.S. military aid to Honduras grew from \$4 million to \$77.4 million; the U.S. launched a covert war against Nicaragua and mined its harbors, and the U.S. trained Honduran military to support the Contras. **Negroponte was instrumental in working with the Honduras Secret Police (the DNI) and the CIA to establish Battalion 3-16.** During the nomination process for Negroponte's appointment to the U.N., the U.S. suddenly deported several former Honduran members of Battalion 3-16 (reported 3/25/04 in the Los Angeles Times), including **General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, a graduate of the School of the Americas who was a founder and commander of Battalion 3-16.** These men could have provided shattering testimony against Negroponte in the Senate nomination hearings. Gen. Discua has since gone public with details of U.S. support of Battalion 3-16.

*John Negroponte served as US Ambassador to Honduras, to the United Nations and to Iraq. Since April 2005 he has functioned as the first U.S. Director of Intelligence ("Intelligence Czar").

August 6, 2004

HONDURAS: Death Squad Leader Sentence to US Federal Prison

Juan Angel Hernández Lara was sentenced to eight months in US federal prison for having illegally entered the US a third time after being deported. Hernández Lara was a member of the infamous Battalion 3-16, a death squad which disappeared or killed nearly 200 left-wing activists in Honduras in the 1980s.