

# Decision to Back Former Leftist Salvadoran

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A furious, secret debate occurred in Washington in late 1989 over whether to allow a former leftist guerrilla in El Salvador to come to the United States after he was persuaded to snitch on his colleagues and help the government there seize a huge cache of arms stockpiled for use against the U.S.-backed regime.

On one side of the debate was the U.S. Embassy and the CIA's station in San Salvador, which wanted to reward Pedro Antonio Andrade for his collaboration. But there was a major problem: Senior Justice Department officials said Andrade had been implicated in the brutal 1985 murder of four U.S. Marines and two U.S. businessmen in that city—and they were adamantly opposed to his admission.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service nonetheless approved Andrade's entrance in 1990, after a further review in Washington that excluded top Justice Department officials. The CIA paid for his plane ticket and gave his family \$20,000 to help resettle in the United States. No public mention was made of the matter.

Six years later, however, due to an unpredictable twist of political fate on Capitol Hill, the CIA's support for Andrade is coming back to haunt the spy agency. One of the slain Marines was from Alabama, and one of that state's senators in Washington, Richard C. Shelby (R), is in line to be-

come chairman next month of the Senate panel overseeing the CIA.

At the behest of the Marine's family, Shelby has been conducting his own probe of the matter for the past 18 months, and it has made him hopping mad about the decision to admit Andrade. "My worst fears were well-grounded," Shelby wrote to President Clinton on Nov. 20 after receiving a classified summary of the case prepared for the White House.

Shelby said the government's action amounted to a "de facto ratification" of Andrade's involvement in the murders and represented an affront to "our soldiers as well as the families of the . . . Marines." As a result, he has vowed to organize hearings next year that will look at the "possi-

ble guilt of U.S. government officials" who participated in the decision and also explore the potentially embarrassing "lengths to which the government will go for information."

Conducting such a probe would force the CIA to confront again the dilemma of how much weight to attach to human rights concerns while engaged in the collection of vital intelligence. Earlier this year, the agency became embroiled in controversy when a congressman disclosed that the agency had paid an informant in Guatemala during the early 1990s who it then thought was linked to the murder of an American citizen.

That disclosure led CIA director John M. Deutch to order all clandes-

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## Guerrilla Returns to Haunt CIA

tine officers in the field to get Washington's approval before recruiting sources known to be involved in human rights abuses. The order failed to satisfy some independent human rights groups, who charged that it still allows too much leeway for such ties. But it also attracted criticism from Republicans on grounds that it was too strict and will inhibit vital intelligence-gathering from terrorists or narcotics traffickers.

In the Andrade case, the CIA feels its behavior was above board. "No laws, regulations or procedures were broken or broached," said spokesman Rick Oborn, citing the conclusions of a report prepared for Shelby by the CIA's inspector general. He acknowledged, however, that if Andrade's

immigration application been properly reviewed in Washington, he "wouldn't have" been allowed to enter.

An unclassified summary of the CIA report, as well as similar reports prepared by inspectors general at the Justice Department and State Department, makes clear that no official familiar with the 1985 decision is willing to accept responsibility for having shortened Washington's review: In releasing the summary yesterday, Shelby said it "raises more concerns than it answers as we try to determine our government's role in this despicable act."

An account of the summary appeared in yesterday's editions of The New York Times.

Andrade, who was jailed last year in New Jersey on charges of failing to renew his visa and who is fighting against his deportation, has repeatedly denied any connection to the slayings of the Marines.

But the summary document states that after Justice Department and senior CIA officials who reviewed the case in 1989 concluded he may have planned the attack, an agreement was reached that he could enter only if further evidence absolved him of responsibility.

No such evidence turned up, but U.S. Embassy officials requested his entrance anyway in March 1990, and their request was granted "without previously agreed-upon interagency coordination," the summary stated.

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