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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS
IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL
AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Situation of human rights in Guatemala

Note by the Secretary-General

The Commission on Human Rights in resolution 33 (XXXVII) of 11 March 1981 requested the Secretary-General to provide it with, inter alia, "all information collected on the human rights situation in that country".

The Secretary-General presented to the Commission the information collected in document E/CN.4/1501 and addendum 1; subsequent to the transmission of that information further information was received which is presented in this document.

Submission from a non-governmental organization

Information received from the Pax Romana: International Movement of Catholic Students/International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs.

I. THE CASES OF FATHERS LUIS E. PELLECEER AND CARLOS PEREZ ALONSO,
JESUITS OF GUATEMALA.

Submission prepared by the Jesuit Conference of the United States,
John J. O'Callaghan, S.J., President.

INTRODUCTION

The situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Guatemala has been a matter of concern to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for several years. Decision 12 (XXXV) of 1979, Resolution 32 (XXXVI) of 1980, and Resolution 33 (XXXVII) of 1981 showed the Commission's preoccupation. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to "continue his efforts to establish direct contacts with the Government of Guatemala on the human rights situation prevailing in that country" and "to present to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session an interim report of his contacts with the Government of Guatemala." These matters, with documentation of the attempts of the Secretary-General to implement the mandate entrusted to him by the Commission, are summarized in the General Assembly document A/36/705 of 23 November 1981.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States has, since October of 1973, attempted to make an on-site investigation of "the increasingly deteriorated situation of human rights in Guatemala." In its latest Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Republic of Guatemala (OEA/Ser. L/V/II.53, doc. 21 rev. 2, 13 October 1981), the Inter-American Commission documents its failed attempts to undertake on-site investigations in Guatemala, while demonstrating an alarming "climate of total alarm, and even terror" that is "instigated or tolerated by a Government unwilling or unable to contain it" (Conclusions).

Within the well-established pattern of gross violations of human rights in the Republic of Guatemala, the present submission offers the cases of the Jesuit priests Luis E. Pelleceer and Carlos Pérez Alonso, violently abducted on June 9, 1981 and August 2, 1981, respectively. The submission is made with the request that the Commission on Human Rights intervene in these cases, and insist on the free and objective examination of Fr. Pelleceer and on a full, free and objective investigation and clarification of the case of Fr. Pérez.

THE CASE OF LUIS E. PELLECEER, S.J.

Fr. Luis Pelleceer, a Guatemalan national and priest in good standing in the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), was since 1977 engaged in religious and humanitarian ministries to the urban poor, to young people, and to Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees, all in Guatemala City. In these activities, he enjoyed the knowledge and full support of his Jesuit superiors.

On June 9, 1981, Fr. Pelleceer was abducted by force, at approximately 2 p.m., at the intersection of 12th Ave. and 8th St., Zone 1, of Guatemala

City. The facts as here presented rely on the private testimony of eye-witnesses whose fears for their security prevent their making public depositions.

According to three eye-witnesses, Fr. Pellecer was forced to stop his car when intercepted by another car and a motorcycle, both without license plates. Five or six armed men surrounded him. These men, because of their size and clothing (bright clothes, neckties, oriental hats), were believed to be undercover members of the policía judicial, a detective branch of the Guatemalan National Police. Fr. Pellecer resisted the kidnapping, ducking his head and clinging to the steering wheel of his car. His attackers beat him unconscious and dragged him to their own car, leaving his car with motor running and doors open.

In the following weeks, all means of ascertaining what happened to Fr. Pellecer were diligently explored, with no results. Specifically, on more than one occasion, Col. (now Gen.) Germán Chupina, Chief of the National Police, and Lic. Donaldo Alvarez, Minister of Government, gave assurances that they had no information on what had happened to Fr. Pellecer. They promised to inform the local Jesuit superior, Fr. Jorge Toruño of La Merced Church, of any information they might receive in the case. In addition, other members of the Government of Guatemala and of the Guatemalan security forces were approached, with the same results.

On September 30, 1981, almost four months after his abduction, Fr. Pellecer reappeared in a press conference of more than two hours, called by the office of the President of Guatemala, Gen. Romeo Lucas García. At that time, Journalist Carlos Toledo Vielman, official presidential press secretary, and Fr. Pellecer himself, stated that he had been in the hands of the Guatemalan security forces since the moment of his disappearance on June 9. Although Fr. Pellecer, in his declarations, affirms that he was well treated by his "true brothers" of the security forces, reliable, confidential testimony of an eye-witness attests that during the period of his confinement, he was subjected to very severe torture to his testicles.

Fr. Pellecer's public appearances and statements are completely out of character with his life-long personality, habits and beliefs. Most people who see his televised appearances are convinced that his recitations are memorized. He speaks in a rapid-fire monotone, uses few gestures, has little change in his facial expressions, and manifests none of the spontaneity and quick wit for which he is so well known. In the few instances where he has been seen somewhat more privately (but never out of the presence of members of the security forces), he chain-smokes cigarettes and speaks in the same rapid-fire monotone. Persons who only know him a little, have no doubts that he is speaking under coercion of some sort. Those who know him well, state that his public persona is significantly altered from that of his entire past.

Supported by the opinions of knowledgeable psychiatrists who have examined the case, by the testimony of close friends and associates of Fr. Pellecer, by a close examination of internal inconsistencies in his declarations, and by statements of his own religious superiors and companions, the Jesuit Conference of the United States, backed by Jesuit superiors of other countries, has stated its conviction that Fr. Pellecer is the victim of psycho-physiologically induced ideological conversion ("brainwashing").

For the Guatemalan Government, or for Fr. Pellecer himself, to continue to insist that he is free to leave Guatemala, but desires to remain in the hands of

the Guatemalan security forces, avoids the principal point at issue. Are Fr. Pellecer's own statements in fact free and voluntary? Only independent examination under circumstances that guarantee objectivity can answer this question. Since no one who knows Fr. Pellecer well, including his own family, has been allowed private and free communication with him, the assertions of the Guatemalan Government are suspect.

Therefore, it is submitted that the Government of Guatemala, in its treatment of Fr. Pellecer, is in violation of the following articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3, the right to life, liberty, and security of one's person. This right perforce must include the right to one's own personality; the Guatemalan Government has violated this right.

Article 4, which forbids slavery or servitude. This right has been violated by reducing Fr. Pellecer to a thoughtless robot, to make statements and otherwise engage in activities to promote the ends of the Government of Guatemala.

Article 5, which forbids torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This right has been violated by the severe torture to Fr. Pellecer's testicles, and by his being kept incommunicado for eight months.

Article 9, which forbids arbitrary arrest, detention or exile. This right has been violated by his abduction and long confinement, from June 9, 1981, to the present.

Article 18, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right has been violated by the forced alteration of Fr. Pellecer's thoughts, conscience and beliefs, and by not allowing him the company of others of his religious order or Church.

In the case of Fr. Pellecer, it is respectfully requested that the Commission on Human Rights demand of the Government of Guatemala that he be turned over to an acceptable international organization which can guarantee his full, free and objective examination by acknowledged experts in medicine, psychiatry and psychology. If the conditions of the examinations are met, then the results and recommendations will be accepted by the Jesuits, and should also be accepted by the Government of Guatemala.

THE CASE OF CARLOS PEREZ ALONSO, S.J.

Fr. Carlos Pérez Alonso, born in Spain and a priest in good standing in the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus, was abducted on August 2, 1981, as he left the closely-guarded Military Hospital of Guatemala City, where he was chaplain. The facts as here presented rely on the private testimony of eye-witnesses whose fears for their security prevent their making public depositions.

This kidnapping took place in full view of some uniformed armed guards of the Hospital, who cooperated by warning off, at gun point, passers-by who protested to them the kidnapping of the priest.

Fr. Pérez vigorously resisted his kidnapping, struggling with his four armed captors, trying to throw himself and them to the ground beside his car, and shouting and struggling. The event required about ten minutes.

Since his kidnapping, four mutually independent sources have privately told the Jesuits of Guatemala that Fr. Pérez, approximately three days before his

capture, accidentally entered the room in the Military Hospital where Fr. Pellecer was recovering from the effects of torture. A nurse, according to these sources, reported Fr. Pérez' activity to the head of the Hospital.

Nothing more has been seen or heard of Fr. Pérez Alonso.

Since his disappearance, all means of ascertaining what happened to him have been diligently explored, with no results. Highest officials of the Guatemalan Government and security forces have denied all knowledge of what could have happened to him. These assurances have been made publicly, as well as privately, to concerned Jesuits, to his family, to ecclesiastical superiors, and to diplomatic representatives.

Since this abduction could only have been carried out with the complicity of members of the security forces of the Government of Guatemala, it is submitted that the Government of Guatemala is in violation of the following articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3, the right to life, liberty and security of one's person.

Article 9, the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention.

In the case of Fr. Pérez, it is respectfully requested that the Commission on Human Rights demand of the Government of Guatemala a full, free and objective investigation of his abduction. The facts surrounding this case should be clarified, and Fr. Pérez himself should be produced. Those responsible for his kidnapping and detention, and possibly his murder, should be apprehended and tried according to the laws of the Republic of Guatemala.

II. SUMMARY OF ANOMALIES IN THE DECLARATION OF JESUIT FATHER LUIS E. PELLEGER IN GUATEMALA

These pages offer a summary of anomalies in the case of Luis E. Pellecer, a Guatemalan Jesuit priest. These irregularities all raise serious doubts about whether Fr. Pellecer is in fact, as alleged, making his statements freely and voluntarily. In addition, these anomalies demonstrate the inaccuracy of major portions of his statements. As such, they form part of the basis of the belief of his friends and impartial judges that Fr. Pellecer is not voluntarily in the hands of the security forces of Guatemala, nor voluntarily choosing to remain in Guatemala.

Page references are to the accompanying English transcript of the declarations and press conference given by Fr. Pellecer on Sept. 30, 1981. The translation was made in the Department of State of the United States.

1. From his abduction on June 9, 1981, until his reappearance on Sept. 30, the Guatemalan Government, in the persons of the Chief of the National Police and the Minister of Government, and others, denied all knowledge of what had happened to Fr. Pellecer. At his reappearance on Sept. 30, the Government officially confirmed that Fr. Pellecer had been in its hands from the outset.

2. At no time has either the Government or Fr. Pellecer offered a detailed, plausible description of his supposed "self-kidnapping" (pg. 3), nor any compelling reasons why he should have taken this extraordinary, and personally injurious, step instead of merely turning himself in to the protection of the security forces by walking in the front door, if he so desired.

In his press conferences, Fr. Pellecer has not been asked to provide these explanations, nor has he been asked any questions with follow-up that might challenge his version of events.

3. Since before his abduction, Fr. Pellecer has had no contact with his family in Guatemala City. A high government official stated that Fr. Pellecer dined with his mother the night of Sept. 30, 1981, after his press conference. Fr. Pellecer stated, on Oct. 22, 1981, in San Salvador, that he had been in telephone contact with his family. His family, in mid-January 1982, affirmed that they have had no contact whatsoever with him.

Similarly, no one who knows Fr. Pellecer well has been allowed to see him, despite repeated requests. Fr. Pellecer has referred, on at least two occasions, to a "private conversation" with his Jesuit Provincial Superior. This conversation, in San Salvador on Oct. 22, was anything but private: in the presence of the bishops of El Salvador, the Papal Nuncio, and Guatemalan and Salvadoran military. His Provincial Superior has denied Fr. Pellecer's version of this supposed conversation. Other than this one occasion, no one who knows Fr. Pellecer has been allowed to see him, under any circumstances, and certainly not under circumstances that would minimally provide the possibility of free exchange.

4. Fr. Pellecer attributes to himself four university degrees (pg. 3), to establish his credentials as one who knows whereof he speaks. It can be verified by the universities in question that Fr. Pellecer has none of the degrees. One of them, civil engineering, is in a field of study in which Fr. Pellecer has never taken a course. (Cf. also pp. 7, 15.)

5. Fr. Pellecer affirms that he has gone over his declarations and ideas with the bishops of Guatemala before his meeting with the press (pp. 18, 27); for this reason, he says, he had a chance to order his thoughts before his press conference (pg. 27). In fact, according to bishops who were present, they were shown a videotape of his declarations, then met with him (in the presence of

Guatemalan military) for about 15 minutes. During this stormy meeting, several of the bishops challenged Fr. Pellecer and made various accusations against him. He was unable to respond to their charges, and showed himself very confused and disoriented.

6. In his discussions of contemporary Latin American theology, with which Fr. Pellecer is quite familiar, he always goes to extremes to which no theologian is inclined (pp. 5-8). His characterizations of Jesuit training, including his own, are highly distorted and inaccurate. His overall arguments about the work of the Jesuits and other sectors of the Catholic Church (pp. 5-12, 15, 22-23, 34-35) closely parallel those offered, on numerous occasions, in paid advertisements in Guatemala and in El Salvador, by conservative business groups, by some government agencies, and by various phantom groups normally believed to be government or military agencies.

7. Despite his denials (pg. 27), most who have seen the videotapes think Fr. Pellecer's declarations and answers to questions are memorized. His speech is mechanical, monotone, with few gestures, at a very fast clip. Those who know him well, insist that Fr. Pellecer, before his abduction, is very different from the "robot" now being offered to the public.

8. Were his supposed "self-kidnapping" and "conversion" in fact genuine, then his remaining totally incommunicado for 113 days is inexplicable. At most, a few days would have sufficed for him to order his thoughts and publicly renounce his former beliefs and activities.

Persons who undergo sudden processes of "conversion," generally speak compulsively and in detail about their new beliefs; Fr. Pellecer makes no attempt to elaborate his new beliefs.

9. In his press conferences, there seem to be no questions for foreign journalists. Among the questions asked him, some of the more obvious are not included: his present beliefs; how he has occupied the time from his disappearance to his reappearance; what he does to occupy his time day by day; where and with whom he is being kept. No subsequent interviews have addressed any of these questions.

10. Lesser points:

a. He mis-states the period of his confinement (122 days instead of 113 days) and the date of his disappearance (June 8 instead of June 9) (pp. 16, 20, 27).

b. He was ignorant of the abduction of Fr. Carlos Pérez Alonso, S.J., until Sept. 30, the day of his press conference (pg. 26). This matter was national news for several weeks after Fr. Pérez' abduction on Aug. 2. The question about Fr. Pérez, asked by the Spanish Consul, is the only one not asked by a Guatemalan journalist. It is also the only question that caused Fr. Pellecer to pause before answering, and to struggle a bit with the answer.

c. He mis-states the name of the CIAS (Centro de Investigación y Acción Social = Center for Investigation and Social Action), although he was associated with the Center for several years (pg. 11).

III. DETAILED SUMMARY AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE CASE OF
FATHER LUIS E. PELLECCER, JESUIT OF GUATEMALA.

Luis Eduardo Pelleccer Faena, born in 1946 in Guatemala, is a Jesuit priest in good standing in the Roman Catholic Church. Since 1977, with the knowledge and support of his Jesuit superiors, he has been engaged in pastoral and humanitarian ministries in the Republic of Guatemala. These ministries were in accord with Roman Catholic and Jesuit beliefs and practices. On June 9, 1981, he was violently abducted by members of the security forces of the Guatemalan Government. Since September 30, 1981, he has appeared several times making coerced declarations.

Fr. Pelleccer, until his kidnapping, had been working in activities that, given the climate of terror and repression in Guatemala, were dangerous. He was managing editor of the ecumenical monthly journal of Christian reflection, Diálogo. The foundress and editor of Diálogo, Señora Julia Esquivel, had been forced into exile from Guatemala after several failed attempts at kidnapping her. In connection with this work, Fr. Pelleccer maintained active contact with others in Latin America involved in publishing works on human rights, Christian reflection and social analysis.

In addition, Fr. Pelleccer was active in the Coordinadora de Pobladores of Guatemala City, working in marginal shanty-towns of the poor. In these activities, Fr. Pelleccer contributed Christian reflections on the situation of the poor, and helped with simple techniques of community organizing. He also regularly offered Mass in homes of the people with whom he worked.

Through these contacts, Fr. Pelleccer also became involved in work with young men and women of different social extractions. He held meetings and prayer sessions with them, and helped them to reflect on their Christian commitment in the circumstances of Guatemala.

Finally, Fr. Pelleccer's other chief area of pastoral activity was to provide humanitarian relief -- food, clothing, lodging -- to refugees fleeing from the widespread violence of Guatemala and of El Salvador.

This last area of activity, especially with Salvadoran refugees in Guatemala City, most caused Fr. Pelleccer to fear for his own security. In April and May of 1981, he was aware of several cases in which the security forces of Guatemala abducted or killed Salvadoran refugees, invading their residences and taking them away by force. But despite these fears, Fr. Pelleccer asked his Jesuit superiors to permit him to continue to work in Guatemala. He argued that too many priests and religious had been killed, abducted, or forced to leave the country. He also argued that his own work with the poor and the persecuted continued to clarify and deepen for him, personally, his own understanding of and commitment to what he saw as his vocation to be a Jesuit priest. His Jesuit superiors, although concerned for his security, confirmed his desire to remain in Guatemala.

Through April and May, Fr. Pelleccer's friends often urged him to take more precautions for his own safety. But he refused; he tended to drive along the same routes between home and office, at the same times each day, in the same car. He spent his nights either sleeping in his Jesuit community, La Merced, or in his office, a few blocks away. He almost always was present for the noon meal in his Jesuit community.

About 1:30 p.m. on June 9, Fr. Juan Hernández Pico, a good friend and close co-worker of Fr. Pelleccer for years, telephoned him from Managua, Nicaragua.

They spoke for perhaps seven minutes, talking about some business matters and joking as Fr. Pellecer always did. In this conversation, everything seemed perfectly normal about Fr. Pellecer.

Shortly before 2:00 p.m., Fr. Pellecer chatted for a few minutes with Fr. Jorge Toruño, his local Jesuit superior at La Merced Jesuit residence. Again, neither at this time nor at any moment previous to these conversations could either of these men note any indications that Fr. Pellecer was anything but completely convinced of the fundamental correctness of his life activities and beliefs. There were never any indications of any important questioning of himself, nor of any serious doubts about himself and his work.

Both of these priests have no doubts that Fr. Pellecer's high-strung personality would not have permitted him to keep totally to himself all external indications that he was in the throes of momentous personal crisis and decisions.

Fr. Pellecer left the Jesuit residence of La Merced a few minutes before 2 p.m., alone in a car belonging to the Jesuit community. A few blocks away, he was intercepted by a car and a motorcycle, both without license plates, at the intersection of 12th Ave. and 8th St., Zone 1, of Guatemala City, near the Parque Colón. Five or six armed men, wearing bright clothes, neckties, and oriental hats, forced him out of his car. Fr. Pellecer resisted, clinging to the steering wheel and ducking his head; but he was beaten unconscious and dragged from his car to the car of his abductors.

Taxi drivers at the Parque Colón began shouting when the kidnapping began, but were forced into silence through threats from the guns of the kidnappers. Fr. Pellecer's car was left with motor running and doors open, according to the eye-witnesses and later to the policía judicial of the National Police of Guatemala.

Three eye-witnesses to the kidnapping have provided the above information, privately, in Guatemala. Their only disagreement is whether there were five or six armed men, and the precise kind of car the kidnappers used. One of these witnesses was driving in his car behind that of Fr. Pellecer. Another, a Roman Catholic nun, was walking along the sidewalk. The third witness worked in a home or business nearby, and was watching from a store-front.

During the afternoon and evening of June 9, several friends of Fr. Pellecer began to inquire about his whereabouts, since he uncharacteristically failed to keep appointments and to return calls made through his portable telephone call-in unit. About 7:30 or 8:00 a.m. on June 10, a young man went to Fr. Pellecer's office to keep an appointment. He found the apartment open, a body inside, and the whole place ransacked. He ran to La Merced Jesuit residence and informed the superior. Guatemalan authorities could not identify the body.

On June 10 at 10 a.m., the policía judicial came to La Merced residence to inform that a Volkswagen registered to the residence had been found, abandoned, with motor running and doors open.

On June 11, Fr. Jorge Toruño spoke with the Chief of the policía judicial, to find out more about the car. The Chief said that they had no knowledge of any person associated with the car.

On the afternoon of June 12, Fr. Toruño met with the Chief of the National Police, Col. (now Gen.) Germán Chupina, who said he knew nothing about the case. Col. Chupina asked Fr. Toruño for any information available, and promised to telephone if he found out anything.

In the following days, Fr. Toruño spoke with other persons of the Government and the security forces, including with the Vice-President of the Republic, seeking help to find out what happened to Fr. Pellecer.

On June 18, Fr. Toruño, with a friend and a Government minister, called on the Minister of Government, Lic. Donaldo Alvarez. Lic. Alvarez said he knew nothing of what could have happened, and suggested that the Jesuits make official complaints to the police so that a full investigation could be launched.

Later the same day, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Vatican Nunciature also spoke with Lic. Alvarez, and later with the Foreign Minister. Both assured him they had no information regarding Fr. Pellecer's abduction or whereabouts.

A few days after the abduction, a man who was briefly held prisoner in the Government jail of the town of Puerto San José overheard some of the military talking about the fact that they were going to get rid of "el padrecito," the little priest. When this man was released, and found out about Fr. Pellecer's kidnapping, he deduced that Fr. Pellecer -- who is short and thin -- was the "padrecito," since no other priest was missing at the moment. He reported this to Fr. Toruño.

On June 22, official complaints were filed with the National Police in the case of the disappearance of Fr. Pellecer.

On June 23, the Guatemalan newspapers, on front pages with large headlines, carried the news that the Government had ordered an investigation concerning the disappearance of the Jesuit Luis Pellecer.

For Toruño went again to talk with Col. Chupina, who still insisted that he knew nothing of what had happened to Fr. Pellecer. He again promised to inform Fr. Toruño immediately of any developments in the case.

On June 29, two members of the policía judicial called on Fr. Toruño to tell him they had no clues about Fr. Pellecer. They asked if the Jesuits had any clues which could help their investigation. Fr. Toruño told them of an anonymous telephone call which said that Fr. Pellecer was a prisoner in the headquarters of the Guatemalan security forces' "Comando 6."

In late June, Fr. Toruño was confidentially informed of word from a colonel in the armed forces who said, at a party, that it was time to tell the Jesuits that Fr. Pellecer was already dead.

Towards the end of July, a policeman came confidentially to Fr. Toruño to inform him that Fr. Pellecer had been kept in a secret security house of the police, where he had been tortured. This policeman said that Col. Chupina had personally directed the torture. He also said it was his understanding that Fr. Pellecer was then killed, with Col. Chupina reserving to himself the honor of the coup de grace.

In addition, there were other instances of word getting to the Jesuits of Guatemala that Fr. Pellecer was already dead.

After Fr. Pellecer's reappearance at the end of September, confidential testimony was given to the Jesuits attesting that Fr. Pellecer, during the period of his confinement, had been subjected to severe torture to his testicles. According to this testimony, these tortures were of sufficient gravity to certainly require hospitalization, and to cause him to do anything his torturers required of him. The ultimate source of this testimony is an eye-witness.

On September 30, 1981, Fr. Pellecer was presented in a press conference, under the auspices of the President of Guatemala. Invited were the diplomatic corps, members of the Government, the press, and heads of private universities. In this press conference, Fr. Pellecer began with a lengthy statement, then responded for a long while to questions from the press. The whole program was more than two hours long.

At that time, both Journalist Carlos Toledo Vielman, presidential Press Secretary, and Fr. Pellecer himself, stated that Fr. Pellecer had been in the hands of the Guatemalan security forces since the moment of his disappearance on June 9, 1981. The claim was made that he voluntarily turned himself in, as the effect of a "conversion" away from a life of collaboration with the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres, EGP) and a rejection of Latin American theology of liberation and its Marxist-Leninist insistence of using the activities of the Catholic Church as a platform for subversion and the implantation of Communism.

Earlier the same afternoon, President Lucas García called the Guatemalan bishops to the Presidential offices for a meeting with him. There, after a brief introduction from Pres. Lucas, the bishops were shown a video-cassette of what turned out to be the long opening statement of Fr. Pellecer's later press conference. The bishops, upset about the contents of Fr. Pellecer's declarations and accusations, demanded to see him, and he was brought in for a meeting of perhaps fifteen minutes. He was accompanied by members of the Guatemalan security forces.

In this meeting, several of the bishops attacked him strongly, accusing him of being a liar, a traitor, a Judas. They demanded to know what he thought he was doing in those declarations. Fr. Pellecer, according to some of the bishops, was very non-plussed, and was unable to respond coherently. Once or twice, he began with the opening lines of his formal statement: "My name is Luis Eduardo Pellecer Faena. I am a Jesuit priest...". The meeting concluded as abruptly as it began.

The Government of Guatemala, from the first reappearance, has insisted that Fr. Pellecer is free to leave the country, to any destination he chooses. Fr. Pellecer, on his first reappearance, stated his intention to leave Guatemala for his own personal security. In subsequent days this intention was specified as the desire to go to Argentina.

In the week or so following Fr. Pellecer's initial conference, he was taken for more limited interviews with different newspapers and television and radio stations. These were of much shorter duration than the initial press conference. All the questions and answers followed the same lines as the initial conference.

On one of these occasions, about Oct. 8, Fr. Pellecer said that he had reconsidered his announced intention to leave Guatemala, and had decided to remain there, to make up for his past misdeeds by working in government-sponsored educational programs.

He also appeared in one televised press conference which seemed especially noteworthy, for the fact that no one but Fr. Pellecer ever appeared on the screen. He seemed to have difficulty locating the direction from which the questions came, off-camera. He was not as coherent and well-prepared as in his initial appearance. The point of this conference was to reject the statements made by the Jesuits of the Central American Province, to which Fr. Pellecer pertains.

The televised initial press conference was re-shown several times in Guate-

mala, and was also shown several times in El Salvador and in Honduras. On October 22, Fr. Pellecer was presented by the Armed Forces of El Salvador in a live press conference in the Military Academy of El Salvador, in the capital city of San Salvador. There, his declarations were essentially the same as in Guatemala, as were the questions and answers.

On the morning of Oct. 22, when informed that Fr. Pellecer was in El Salvador, his Jesuit Provincial superior asked to meet with Fr. Pellecer in the presence of the Papal Nuncio and the Apostolic Administrator of San Salvador, Bishop Rivera Damas. This request was turned down.

After the press conference, Fr. Pellecer met with the bishops of El Salvador, in a room of the Military Academy. Present were members of the security forces of El Salvador and of Guatemala. After the meeting began, the Papal Nuncio insisted that the Jesuit Provincial superior be invited. This meeting is the only occasion that any Jesuit has been allowed to see Fr. Pellecer since his abduction on June 9.

On November 27, Fr. Pellecer was presented in Honduras, under the sponsorship of the Honduran Junior Chamber of Commerce. This press conference was immediately reported in one newspaper and on the radio. After the Honduran presidential elections of Nov. 29, this press conference was carried on Honduran television and reported more widely in the Honduran press.

In the Honduran appearance, Fr. Pellecer was much less effective than in Guatemala or in El Salvador. He was much more vague and imprecise, and did not know of any concrete activities of the Catholic Church or the Jesuits that he could denounce by name.

Fr. Pellecer made another appearance on Guatemalan television around mid-November, following the official response of Government authorities to a private letter sent by the Jesuits of Puerto Rico and asking for Fr. Pellecer's release. Fr. Pellecer insisted once again that he was free, had been well treated, and did not want to leave Guatemala. He also said that he had privately conversed with his Provincial Superior while in El Salvador on Oct. 22, and had formally initiated the procedures to leave the Society of Jesus and the priesthood. This conversation never occurred.

From mid-December to late January 1982, Fr. Pellecer was seen on four occasions driving around Guatemala City in an automobile. He was never alone, and seemingly was accompanied by security people.

On Feb. 8, 1982, Fr. Pellecer again appeared on Guatemalan television to denounce the efforts of the United States Jesuits in their public campaign begun Feb. 5, to seek his release to the Papal Nuncio or to an international human rights organization.

Since Fr. Pellecer's reappearance in the hands of the Government of Guatemala, numerous attempts have been made to obtain clearance to converse with him privately and to have him examined by competent, independent medical and psychological experts. Meetings have been held with high officials of the Guatemalan Government, asking that they keep the promises made after Fr. Pellecer's abduction.

In addition, appropriate diplomatic efforts have been made, by the representatives of the Vatican, by private good offices channels of others. All of these efforts have failed to obtain even a private conversation with Fr. Pellecer.

A high official of the Government of Guatemala, in a private meeting, assured Jesuits in Washington, D.C., that Fr. Pellecer had dined with his mother

on the night of Sept. 30, after his press conference. Fr. Pellecer himself, in the meeting with Salvadoran bishops on Oct. 22, said that he had spoken by telephone with his family on several occasions. His family in Guatemala City, in early January 1982, said that no one of his family had received any communications of any sort from Fr. Pellecer since before his abduction in June of 1981.

In his February 1982 television appearance, Fr. Pellecer repeated, as in mid-November, that he had conversed privately with his Provincial Superior in San Salvador on Oct. 22, 1981, to begin formal proceedings for his leaving the Jesuits. He stated further that he had followed this conversation with a letter to the same effect. As previously noted, the conversation did not take place, and no letter has been received. His Provincial Superior, and indeed all Jesuits, continue to consider Fr. Pellecer a Jesuit priest, welcome in any Jesuit house.

IV.

DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE CASE OF
FATHER CARLOS PEREZ ALONSO, JESUIT IN GUATEMALA.

Carlos Pérez Alonso, born in Spain in 1936, was a Jesuit priest in good standing in the Roman Catholic Church. He was a member of the Castile Province of the Society of Jesus, and since 1971 had been working in Central America.

For the past ten years, he was working in Guatemala City, where he was chaplain of several hospitals, including the Military Hospital; director of numerous Cursillos of Christianity; adviser to the Christian Family Movement; chaplain to prisoners in the jail of the Second Police Corps; chaplain to the Mariscal Zavala military barracks; and helper in the parish of San Antonio in Zone 6 of Guatemala City, where he lived.

Fr. Pérez was always recognized for his devotion to the people he served, his generosity and good humor. He was an uncomplicated person, with a simple faith in the goodness of all people. He often demonstrated his incapacity to try to understand the situation of violence and repression that characterize Guatemala, and went about his work with individuals, without concerning himself directly for social questions and problems. He was totally a-political.

Among his friends were a number of officers of the Guatemalan military, with their wives and families.

On the morning of his abduction, Sunday, August 2, 1981, Fr. Pérez was making his usual rounds to say Masses. At some point he became aware that a car full of men was following him, and he was sufficiently alarmed to telephone a friend and report this fact.

While he was saying his usual Sunday Mass in the Military Hospital, a car with four armed men parked across the street from the entrance of the Hospital, and the men waited. When Fr. Pérez came out of the Hospital and began to get into his own car, these men approached him and tried to carry him away, to their car.

He vigorously resisted his kidnapping, struggling with his captors, trying to throw himself and them to the ground beside his car, shouting. Many passers-by saw what was happening, and tried to get the uniformed armed guards of the Military Hospital to intervene. These guards, watching the kidnapping, threatened the witnesses at gun-point, forcing them to move away and leave the kidnapers alone. The whole event took about ten minutes before the kidnapers drove off with Fr. Pérez.

Different sources have come forward, privately, both to describe the kidnapping and to offer two explanations of why Fr. Pérez was abducted.

Four mutually independent sources have stated that about three days before his abduction, Fr. Pérez, probably inadvertently, opened the door of the room in the Military Hospital where Fr. Pellecer was recovering from the effects of torture. These sources reported that a nurse saw Fr. Pérez, and reported the incident to the military officer who was head of the Hospital.

If these sources are correct, it might be asked why Fr. Pérez did not communicate his knowledge of Fr. Pellecer's presence to any of his Jesuit companions. One possible answer is that Fr. Pérez got only a momentary glance into

the room, and was not aware that he was seeing Fr. Pellecer. Alternatively, he might have suspected that this knowledge put him into grave danger, and might have been afraid to tell anyone else. Or, he may have been seeking, through his friends in the military, to find out what could be done for Fr. Pellecer.

The other explanation that some people have overheard and brought to the Jesuits in Guatemala is that Fr. Pérez might have been abducted because of his friendship with some military officers and their families. The concern would be that some officers or their wives, perhaps interiorly in anguish over some of the atrocities committed by the security forces, might have sought private counsel from Fr. Pérez. From this might follow the fear that Fr. Pérez would reveal some of this information publicly.

Since his abduction, everything possible has been done to try to find out where he is and what happened to him. There have been meetings with the Minister of Government, the Minister of the Armed Forces, the Minister of External Relations, with close friends of the President of the Republic, with several generals of the Armed Forces. All possible diplomatic efforts have also been undertaken.

All of these efforts have yielded no information at all about what has happened to Fr. Pérez, and it is feared that he has been murdered and his body hidden.