

El Salvador Human Rights Oral History

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Oral history is the collection of historical data especially with the interviewing of people with knowledge of the past effect. The genre of study functions to preserve the history of what happened when many of us never existed. A collection of the oral narratives, evidence, and testimonials that the historical literature we learn really happened. Of these stories is about the reign of imperialism. An empire is a political unit of supreme authority controlling extensive territories or nations and having sovereign powers over the lands. (Byrne, 1996; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012)

Empires were usually involved with great influence on the political, military, economic or religious impact in historic Central America. I gained interest in this one regime, the Revolutionary Government Junta of El Salvador. A junta terror of military dictatorship that reigned in the small county of Salvador, Central America. A reign of a military group that forcefully came into power in the year 1979. How the regime came to power and what followed from the sad story of the Salvadoran Civil War. What it entailed was perhaps the country's dimmest and bloodiest period. The civil war was between the oppressive Salvadoran military and the Opposition, which was composed of five major guerilla revolutionary groups termly known as "The Umbrella ."The union formed the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front to rebel (FMLN) to rebel and fight against the brutal government.

The details of the regime were sympathetic. I conducted an interview with one of the victims of the imperial rule. I was determined, focused, and resolute to scope the real experience straight and undiluted from the horse's mouth. I interviewed this resident of San Vicente, El Salvador, Pablo. He was lucky to be one of the survivors who survived the hell on earth that invaded Salvador in 1980. This made him a great resourceful interviewee for my interview, and he prepared a brief, open-ended questionnaire that perfectly guided him in telling the bitter story at his own pace. The time and venue for the interview were perfectly chosen, keeping it quiet and administering the interview in the most professional way. The interviewee was more than willing to unfold to me what really happened.

Pablo's story was a perfect match with the sad truth of my discoveries. Warm-up questions rejuvenated his mind, making him remember his childhood years. Pablo narrated how he used to wake up every morning and go with his parents to the fields and help them with any job that needed to be done. However, one day, things were never the same again. He vividly recalls what happened on that fateful day. A day that was different from the rest. On this particular day, Pablo was allowed by his parents to go and play soccer with his friends in the in the fields. The joyful childhood fun could not let them notice a troop of soldiers who matched in their direction. Before they could notice this, the battalion had already surrounded them, and with no escape, they were all captured. The empty field was left to tell the tall of what happened.

Pablo was taken to the barracks, where he later learned that the abductors were Salvadoran Agents who Recruited civilians into the Salvadoran Government military. The government needed to recruit

new soldiers to fight in the ongoing battle against the five Guarella aimed who had joined hands to rebel against the oppressive Salvadoran government. Larry Rohta reported to BCC the recount of people reported missing during the error. Among them were women and children. Both boys and girls were kidnapped by the Salvadoran military during their attacks on peasant settlements. Salvadoran regime was characterized by cases of Human rights violations; women were raped. Throughout the 1980s, there were devastating cases of human rights violations. The government mercilessly subjected its citizens to torture, forced abduction and unexplained disappearance, mutilation, massive extrajudicial killings, indiscriminative landmines and bombings and rape cases. At the end of the war, over 750,000 had lost their lives.

Pablo continued narrating how they were taken into a caged cell. With no restrooms and they were only provided with bread and water. After two days, the actual training began. They were forced to run for miles and climb a 100-foot rope, among other harsh physical drills. They were served with half-cooked dogmeat as meals and given with only one uniform. A serious punishment was administered to those who failed to do what was required. Pablo remembers one day, he was made to roll nude in the dirt, turning his skin into burns and bruises. The suffering turned him from an innocent boy into a ruthless Salvadoran soldier. Furious, full of hate and anger.

Pablo, together with a platoon of thirty soldiers, was sent to fight in the bloody war. They were only given one can of food per day. This forced them to feed on wild routes and animals. The death squad was ending the lives of tens of people daily. FMLN had thousands of active guerillas fighting the battle and thousands of supporters and sympathizers who greatly aided in the battles. Backed by the Cuban Government, military soldiers were periodically ambushed and thousands murdered. Others were poisoned. Pablo was lucky to have survived this save and sound. Most of the government help came from the USA, which heavily aided the 'ally' country with weapons, guns, ammunition, and fighting tactics and also provided its own soldiers to fight alongside the Salvadoran military.

The experience shaped Pablo's life. He admitted loving the military life despite the havoc they caused. The suffering he had received shaped his life greatly. Started viewing life from another perspective. Salvadoran rule was one of the worst and most brutal imperial rule in Salvadore history. It came with various devastating effects. The regime resulted in migration patterns. Millions of refugees fled to neighboring countries such as Mexico and USA. Human rights violations. Salvador is the most densely populated country in Central America and is also ranked as one of the poorest. Over 90% of this population are in the poverty bracket. The gap between the rich and the poor is incredibly huge. All these trends of human inequalities stretch their roots to the brutal regime. Salvador depended highly on coffee, contributing to over 95 % of countries income. However, this wealth was distributed only to 2%of the population composed of the tycoons and agencies in the brutal government. Peasant farmer were denied the benefits of their hard labor, the regime also characterized to a violation of democratic rights of the citizens. The elections were full of fraud and irregularities.

After 12 years of struggle, the terror ended with a conflict resolution agreement called the

Chapultepec Peace Accord that was signed on 16th January 1992. Mexico City. Salvador's president, by then, met with the general from the five guerrillas for peace talks. Regardless of the talks, the greater damage had already been caused. The government had destroyed its economy and most of its resources, fighting its own people. Terminating the story, there is always a better way to end conflict other than war. Countries should not fall to be puppets to be controlled by other governments but instead exercise their full sovereignty, respect the rule of law and, above all, respect their citizen.

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