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## **SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE**

### **El Salvador's vice president slams U.S. order against generals**

**Wednesday, July 24, 2002**

(07-24) 15:00 PDT SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) --

El Salvador's vice president said Wednesday that a U.S. jury had no right to order two former Salvadoran generals to pay \$54.6 million in damages to torture victims of the country's 1980-1992 civil war.

Vice President Carlos Quintanilla said the federal jury in Florida was in no position to pass judgment on events during the war, which left 75,000 people dead.

"The landscape of Salvadoran history in the 1980s is something that only we Salvadorans know," Quintanilla told a radio station.

But government human rights prosecutor Beatrice de Carrillo applauded the settlement for three torture victims, all Salvadorans. The three -- a church worker, a doctor and a professor -- said that they fled their country after being tortured by Salvadoran soldiers.

De Carrillo said the settlement is significant because the two generals "represent the top of the pyramid." The generals, Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova and Jose Guillermo Garcia, now live in the United States.

Pedro Cruz, who heads a university human rights group, said the settlement sets "a new stage in human rights for El Salvador," and predicted other judgments against army officers will follow.

A succession of conservative governments fought a 12-year war against leftist guerrillas in which the army is blamed for massive human rights abuses against civilians. The two sides signed peace accords in 1992.

In Tuesday's decision, the federal jury awarded \$20 million, \$13.1 million and \$21.5 million, respectively, to the three Salvadorans who said they were tortured at military installations under the generals' command.

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