

ARIZONA SANCTUARY DEFENSE FUND

UPDATE FOR THE SANCTUARY TRIAL FOR THE WEEK OF DEC. 3 - 6, 1985

Tuesday

Sanctuary trial proceedings resumed Tuesday in Tucson, Arizona with continued testimony by government informant Jesus Cruz. The 11 defendants and Sanctuary supporters in the audience dressed in black and donned black armbands in observance of the anniversary of the Dec. 3, 1980 murder of three North American nuns and one lay missionary in El Salvador by members of the Salvadoran armed forces.

Cruz gave the jury an almost mechanical account of the defendants' efforts to aid Central American refugees, focusing on his experiences with Maria de Socorro Aguilar and Father Ramon Dagoberto Quinones, both of Nogales, Sonora, MEXICO. Cruz related how Aguilar and Quinones received refugees from Sanctuary workers in Hermosillo and farther south, and then helped them cross the border into Nogales, Arizona. Cruz also testified that, once in the United States, Aguilar and Quinones also helped refugees reach Sanctuary churches or other places of safety in Tucson, Phoenix, and Nogales Arizona, and in Los Angeles, California.

Though the Sanctuary defendants generally do not contest the fact that they help refugees, during a noon press conference Father Quinones did take exception to Cruz' version of their ministry. During his testimony, Cruz once again made special note of money that had changed hands between Sanctuary workers. Father Quinones poked fun at Cruz' allegations saying, "My friends tell me that if I were trying to make my living as a 'coyote' (professional smuggler), I would die of hunger."

Quinones went on to comment more seriously on Cruz' statements Tuesday adding, "I believe that even a child could see the lies that were floating around the atmosphere of the courtroom this morning during the testimony of Mr. Cruz."

At several points during Cruz' time on the stand, Mrs. Aguilar shook her head in disagreement, once even speaking aloud in protest of Cruz' version of her activities. After that incident, District Judge Earl H. Carroll warned her against similar "demonstrations" in the future.

Tucson Media Office
120 West Broadway, Suite 050
Tucson, Arizona 85701
(602) 624-8887

Phoenix Media Office
650 North Second Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85003
(602) 256-0089