

@CHAPTER = VI. THE CLOSURE OF POLITICAL SPACE: VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIAN OPPOSITION

@BODYTEXTBIG = The final years of President Duarte's Christian Democratic government were marked by gradually, if precariously, expanding opportunities for political expression. Observers hailed as signs of progressive democratization the return from exile of opposition politicians Guillermo Ungo, Hector Oqueli, Ruben Zamora, Hector Silva and others, and their participation, through the newly-formed Democratic Convergence, in the March 1989 presidential elections.<\$F The Democratic Convergence is composed of the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) (Guillermo Ungo, and Hector Oqueli, before his assassination), the Popular Social Christian Movement (MPSC) (Ruben Zamora, Hector Silva), and the Social Democratic Party (PSD) (Reni Roldan). Ungo was the presidential candidate, and Roldan the vice-presidential candidate.> In the Duarte years labor unions, cooperative associations, and community organizations fought persistently and with some success for the ability to operate openly.

@BODYTEXTBIG = By the end of 1989, however, a dramatic change had been wrought. Pursuant to the state of siege put into effect when the FMLN offensive started, constitutional freedoms of speech, association, press and communication through the mails and telephones, as well as procedural due process rights, were suspended. Opposition politicians once again left the country in fear for their lives. Prominent labor and human rights activists went into hiding, and the offices of most popular organizations were closed. The assassination of six Jesuit priests by the military, the issuance of hostile threats against other church leaders, and the arrest and deportation of numerous international humanitarian and religious workers sent a chill through the religious communities. For all intents and purposes, independent political activity came to a halt for at least two months.

@BODYTEXTBIG = With notable exceptions, including the spate of assassinations of conservative figures, the April mass arrests and searches of popular organizations following the assassination of Attorney General Garcia Alvarado and the shooting of four members of the press on election eve and election day, the political climate remained relatively stable through the first half of 1989.

Although the Legislative Assembly in June began consideration of a proposed "anti-terrorist" law that threatened to criminalize human rights reporting and much peaceful opposition activity, the legislation was scuttled following energetic protests within El Salvador and abroad.<\$F On June 23, 1989, three weeks after President Cristiani's inauguration, the ARENA Party introduced into the Legislative Assembly legislation entitled the "Bill for the Protection of Democracy," which contained 26 reforms to the criminal code and four reforms to the criminal procedure code.

The proposed reforms would have criminalized an impressive range of peaceful opposition activities. Among them were promoting, by "any" means, the "intervention" of "international organisms" in "the internal affairs of El Salvador"; organizing or directing "associations that have as their objective the teaching . . . of doctrines that subvert the public order"; organizing or

directing "sections or branches of foreign organizations . . . that subvert the public order"; spreading or promulgating "propaganda that subverts the public order"; to "knowingly rent or lend houses or locations destined to assist in the spreading or propagation" of doctrines to "subvert the public order"; peaceful occupation of work places, churches or universities, where -- as will be presumed absent indications to the contrary -- such actions are intended to provoke terror in the population; and painting "public or private goods" in order to provoke disorder.

In the face of substantial protest in El Salvador and the United States, the proposal was not acted upon. In late November, however, following the FMLN offensive, the Assembly approved virtually identical reform legislation and submitted it for President Cristiani's signature. The President returned the legislation to the Assembly, indicating that he considered portions to be unconstitutional. The proposal seems to be dead, for the time being.> All in all, the first few months of ARENA government failed to fulfill the most dire predictions of worsening political violence and repression of dissent. Indeed, overall levels of human rights deaths continued on a course of moderate decline through October

@NOINDENT PG = 1989.<\$F According to Tutela Legal investigations, there were 34 deaths resulting from government forces (excluding acts of drunken soldiers) from January through May 1989 and 10 such deaths from June through October. These figures were about half the nearly eight civilian deaths per month attributed to government forces by Tutela Legal throughout 1988. Similarly, death squad killings as recorded by Tutela Legal declined progressively from five per month throughout 1988 to 3.8 per month from January to October, 1989; excluding the FENASTRAS bombing that killed 10, that total would have been only 2.8 per month. See Appendix C.

Over the same period, FMLN killings declined somewhat. According to Tutela Legal, FMLN assassinations averaged almost four per month in 1988 (44 for the year), and were near that level in January to May (23 assassinations, or 4.6 per month), decreasing in June to October (11 killings or 2.2 per month).

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Nonetheless, even during the earliest months of the new government there were troubling indications of a growing intolerance of independent political expression and activity. The rate of arrests by government forces through October 1989 for "subversive" crimes -- i.e. political crimes -- increased 12.5% over the 1988 rate.<\$F Statistics published in the monthly bulletin of the governmental Human Rights Commission show an average of 321 arrests per month in all of 1988, increasing to 363 per month from January through May 1989, and holding at 360 per month from June

through October 1989. This represents an increase of 12.5%.> By mid-year, Americas Watch and other monitoring organizations noted a substantial increase in reports of severe torture by the Army and security forces, as reported above. A shooting incident at the National University in July reflected the long-simmering tensions between students and soldiers on that campus. On July 22, bombs seriously damaged the printing press of the Central American University, a favorite target of right-wing and military violence and threats.

At the same time, a string of FMLN assassinations of prominent government and right-wing figures in the first half of the year certainly discouraged professionals from accepting government positions in the new ARENA administration and others from becoming involved in politics. In March, Dr. Francisco Peccorini, a prominent conservative theorist affiliated with the National University, was killed. His killing was followed by the assassinations of Attorney General Garcia Alvarado in April, Minister of the Presidency Rodriguez Porth in June, and the anticommunist civilian organizers of a new paramilitary group Edgar Chacon and Gabriel Payes in June and July. The FMLN was responsible for the killings of Peccorini and the Attorney General and probably for the others as well.

The situation worsened markedly in September and October, when the government and the FMLN held their first two meetings --in Mexico City and San Jose, Costa Rica -- to begin a process of negotiation. Arrests of union members and bombs thrown at union headquarters alternated with attacks on military targets and relatives of the military. By the end of October, tensions were running high, culminating in the October 31 bombs that destroyed the offices of COMADRES and FENASTRAS, killing ten and wounding more than 30, one day after an FMLN attack on the headquarters of the Army General Staff. Despite government promises to investigate the FENASTRAS bombing, the FMLN announced on November 2 that it would not attend the next scheduled negotiation session in Caracas.

Throughout the pre-offensive period a disturbing pattern emerged in which FMLN attacks against civilians and on military targets were followed by arrests, searches or bombings of civilian opposition groups or members. On April 19, 1989, following the assassination of the Attorney General, 75 persons were arrested when Treasury Police agents raided and searched the offices of CRIPDES/CNR (Christian Committee for Displaced Persons of El Salvador and National Coordinator for Repopulation), the trade union federation FUSS, a coalition of unemployed and laid off workers (CODYDES), and a women's organization (ADEMUSA).

Following an FMLN attack on the First Brigade and other targets the evening of May 25, 1989, several offices -- the Confederation of Cooperative Associations of El Salvador (COACES), the Federation of Independent Unions of El Salvador (FEASIES), CRIPDES, FENASTRAS, and the non-governmental Human Rights Commission -- were searched for arms of war on May 26. The searches were undertaken purportedly to discover links between the popular movement and the FMLN. No weapons or other evidence of urban commando activities was found.

On October 19, the houses of Ruben Zamora, former Vice-Presidential candidate of the Democratic Convergence, and Aronette Diaz, his sister-in-law and leader of the opposition Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN) party, were bombed. The bombings followed by two days the killing of Ana Maria Casanova, daughter of an army colonel. The October 30 FMLN mortar attack on the headquarters of the armed forces high command was followed on October 31 by the bombings of the FENASTRAS and COMADRES offices.

If a sense of fear and intimidation among opposition leaders and popular organizations increased in September and October, it was little compared to what followed in the wake of the November offensive. The Salvadoran government and military responded to the offensive -- the most serious military threat in years -- by slamming shut what political space had been opened since the mid-1980's. The list of humanitarian, religious, and social service organizations whose officers were arrested or deported or whose offices were searched in the weeks of and following the offensive includes the United Nations, Medical Aid for El Salvador, Doctors Without Borders, the Lutheran Church, the Episcopal Church, the Mennonite Central Committee, Catholic Relief Services, the Popular Social Christian Movement, the National Revolutionary Movement, the Council of Marginal Communities, COMADRES, the Confederation of Cooperative Associations of El Salvador (COACES), the National Coordinator of Repopulation (CNR), the National Coordination of Women of El Salvador (CONAMUS), and the Foundation for Community Organization Development (PADECOES).

Between November 11 and December 15, 1989, Army or security force soldiers entered and searched more than 50 churches, refugee centers or homes of religious workers.

The death squad-style January 12, 1990 killing in Guatemala of Hector Oqueli Colindres, deputy secretary-general of Guillermo Ungo's National Revolutionary Movement, which followed the December 6 capture and beating of MPSC leader Jorge Villacorta by Treasury Police, have put all opposition activists on notice that their lives are still very much at risk. Opposition political leaders Reni Roldan, of the Social Democratic Party, and Hector Silva, of the Popular Social Christian Movement, are still outside of El Salvador, for security reasons.

Human rights documentation by Salvadoran organizations slowed considerably in the weeks after the offensive. Tutela Legal and Socorro Juridico remained open, but their activities were greatly constricted. The non-governmental Human Rights Commission closed entirely for several weeks, as did the Human Rights Institute of the Central American University, following the murder of its director, Father Segundo Montes, along with five other Jesuits, on November 16.

It appears that about 1,000 persons were arrested in the month after the offensive began. The majority were released, but at least 130 were consigned to the judge and sent to prison to await trial, most charged with crimes such as subversive association and acts of terrorism. As of February, there were 370 persons in jail for such crimes. Following the arrest and imprisonment of Jennifer Casolo, a U.S. church worker, <\$F    See Update on El Salvador at

32-35.> foreigners have been barred from visiting the jails without express permission from the prison system administrator. There appears to be no rational relationship between this regulation and the welfare of the prisoner or the security of the state. Rather, this change from a more open policy allowing visits twice a week seems intended to prevent foreigners from making humanitarian gestures and investigating allegations of mistreatment.

A state of siege declared November 12 suspended freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of association and the inviolability of correspondence and telephonic communications. Certain due process guarantees for detainees were suspended, and the security forces were authorized to hold prisoners <MI>incomunicado<D> for 15 days before charging them with a crime. The state of siege was renewed every month through early February, when several constitutional guarantees were reinstated, but the suspensions of freedom of association and due process guarantees were continued.

In March, the 72-hour limit on administrative detention regained legal force, although the constitutional provision guaranteeing free association remained suspended.

By early 1990 many unions, cooperatives, human rights and community organizations were beginning to test the political waters, as some returned to their old offices and others rented new ones. President Cristiani promised members of Congress in February that religious workers who had been deported could return freely to El Salvador and that damaged offices would receive compensation.

For the first time ever the head of the General Staff, Colonel Ponce, granted the long-standing request of the nongovernment Human Rights Commission (CDHES) for a meeting, and promised to investigate the cases it brought to him. While Colonel Ponce has met with literally hundreds of foreigners concerned about human rights in an effort to improve the image of the army, which we as foreigners appreciate, he still had never met with this legitimate Salvadoran human rights organization. Unlike the foreign visitors, several of the CDHES representatives at the meeting had been arrested and tortured by the security forces. Colonel Ponce promised to investigate the cases of human rights violations presented by the Commission and to respond to them at another meeting. We will be watching this development with interest.

The understanding and acceptance by the military of the watchdog role of human rights organizations is not complete, however. After the Air Force rocketed a house in Corral de Piedra, Chalatenango, on February 11, 1990, killing five and wounding 16 civilian repatriates, the Army prevented Tutela Legal from reaching the scene of the incident for several days. Although the Army finally admitted its responsibility, when Tutela Legal director Maria Julia Hernandez urged that those individual soldiers and pilots responsible be criminally tried for the indiscriminate attack on a civilian village, the Army press office reacted angrily, characterizing Tutela's attitude as "confrontative insensitivity."<\$F Diario Latino, February 21, 1990; Diario de Hoy, February 21, 1990.>

In addition, in early 1990, the General Staff of the Army promulgated new guidelines, more stringent than ever, regarding access by human rights, humanitarian, and press organizations to "the interior of the country" as well as to "zones of conflict." Human rights organizations would be required to have two interviews with the General Staff before being issued a safe conduct pass, and would be required to return to the General Staff afterwards for a third interview, presumably to debrief the army on their investigations! These guidelines constituted nothing less than unconstitutional legislation by the military, unconstitutional because the Assembly reinstituted the constitutional right to freedom of movement in February.

@SUBCHAPTERPAG = A. Bombing of FENASTRAS Office, October 31, 1990:  
10 Dead

@BODYTEXTSHRNK = At 12:30 p.m. on October 31, 1989, a powerful bomb destroyed the FENASTRAS headquarters, killing 10 persons and wounding more than 30. The explosion killed eight people affiliated with FENASTRAS, including Febe Elizabeth Velasquez, a member of the executive committees of both FENASTRAS and the UNTS and a leading spokesperson for the most militant sector of the Salvadoran labor movement.<\$F Those who died were Luis Edgardo Vasquez Marquez, 26, leader of the bank workers union SIGEBAN; Vicente Salvador Melgar, 42, Secretary of Social Assistance for the SETA water workers union; Ricardo Humberto Bestoni, 35, SETA Secretary of Acts; Rosa Hilda Saravia de Elias, 30, a FENASTRAS employee, formerly of the STITAS textile workers union; Jose Daniel Lopez Melendez, 42, a leader of the SOICSCES construction union and FENASTRAS Secretary of Conflicts; and Julia Tatiana Mendoza Aguirre, 22, FENASTRAS press secretary, who was raped in National Police custody in September; Carmen Catalina Araujo de Hernandez, 24, a FENASTRAS employee; Maria Magdalena Rosales, 9; Ana Patricia Chacon, 13; and Velasquez. Among the injured was Gerardo Diaz, Secretary General of FENASTRAS.> Clearly intended to kill, the bomb exploded as many of the Federation members were having lunch inside the offices. Much of the office was turned to rubble.

The bombing marked a qualitative escalation in the use of political violence in the urban war, and served as the catalyst for the FMLN offensive launched 11 days later.<\$F The FMLN underlined this link by calling the offensive, "Out With the Fascists! Febe Elizabeth Lives!"> Shortly after the bombing, President Cristiani announced the appointment of a high-level investigative commission to identify those responsible for the bombing. In addition to representatives of the government and international organizations, the commission was to include Jesuit Father Ignacio Ellacuria, killed with five other priests November 16 by Army soldiers, and representatives from FENASTRAS. FENASTRAS declined to participate in the proposed commission, as did opposition political leaders, absent certain guarantees.<\$F In a November 6 meeting with Bernard Aronson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, opposition political and union leaders said they would not participate in any commission unless, among other things, the Armed Forces were made subject to civilian

authority and the investigation be thorough and complete enough to find and punish all responsible parties. "We are not going to play the game of the government," declared Ruben Zamora upon leaving the meeting. Diario Latino, November 7, 1989.>

@BODY TEXT PG = On November 8, FENASTRAS officials permitted the judge in the case, Nelson Ulises Umana Bojorquez, visiting FBI agents and members of the Special Investigative Unit<\$F This investigative unit is funded by U.S. AID under the Administration of Justice Act.> to examine the premises and collect evidence. Following the FMLN offensive launched November 11, attention was diverted to the investigation of the Jesuit killings, among other things.

Interviewed in early November, First Brigade commander Colonel Elena Fuentes, echoing the line of other military and ARENA party officials,<\$F "At a peasant meeting, Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, deputy and leader of the ARENA party, declared yesterday that `there are strong suspicions that the bombing was produced by the manipulation of explosive artifacts that the unionists were making." Diario de Hoy, November 7, 1989.> suggested that the bombing of FENASTRAS was undertaken by the FMLN and FENASTRAS itself to galvanize the population in preparation for a planned military offensive. Noting that the bomb had been placed in between the outer office entryway and the inner one, the colonel told Americas Watch that the unionists themselves were responsible for the bombing, because "no authority could enter into that union without permission."

In fact, the outer door at the FENASTRAS headquarters was frequently left open during the day, and only the inner door was secured. Thus, it would have been possible for anyone to enter as far as the inner door -- into the area where the bomb detonated -- without the permission of persons inside the office. One witness told Americas Watch that, shortly before the explosion, he was standing in the corridor which runs between the inner and outer doors, when he saw a man in plainclothes enter the outer door and quickly place a smoking burlap bag on the floor of the corridor before leaving. The witness said he walked to within a few feet of the bag before he realized the danger. He returned to the inner door and rushed inside the office to give a warning. Seconds later, the bomb exploded.

Other witnesses reported seeing a vehicle drop two men off at one corner of the block on which the FENASTRAS headquarters was located. The men ran to the entrance, and one of them, carrying something, briefly went inside. The two then ran to the far corner of the block, where the vehicle had driven and was waiting for them.

Visiting El Salvador in early November, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson surmised that "violence by the extreme right is a credible idea" in seeking a suspect for the bombing.<\$F Douglas Farah, "3 Salvadoran Politicians Found Dead," The Washington Post, November 8, 1989.> Indeed, suspicion of FENASTRAS is long-standing among government and military figures who have consistently characterized the federation as nothing more than a "guerrilla front."<\$F The U.S.

Embassy has, shamefully, endorsed these life-threatening characterizations. > Since October 1988, FENASTRAS has experienced four bomb or grenade attacks, the August disappearance of two members, and the arrest and mistreatment of dozens of members in September by the National Police and National Guard. This recent history of official and quasi-official violence against FENASTRAS raises a presumption of military or death squad responsibility for the October bombing which only a thorough and satisfactory investigation might rebut. To date no such investigation is in evidence.

In January 1989, a member of President Cristiani's staff said that the investigation was going nowhere because of FENASTRAS's refusal to cooperate. On January 10, the Treasury Police reported that a detainee, Pablo Salvador Carcamo Centeno, had implicated the FMLN in the FENASTRAS bombing, as well as in numerous other murders in 1989.<\$F Diario de Hoy, January 11, 1990.>

On January 23, 1989, FENASTRAS Secretary General Gerardo Diaz wrote to President Cristiani that FENASTRAS sought an independent investigation conducted under the auspices of international observers from the U.S. Congress, American or European labor unions, the Organization of American States or the United Nations.

FENASTRAS also sought protection outside El Salvador for all witnesses to the massacre, and the release of all imprisoned unionists, among whom, it contended, were witnesses.

Currently, there are complaints on the bombing pending before the human rights commissions of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the International Labor Organization. The National Police and the U.S. FBI are said to be investigating the case.

@SUBCHAPTER = **B. Bombing of COMADRES Office, October 31, 1989**

On the night of October 30-31, 1989, several hours before the FENASTRAS bombing, four persons were injured when a bomb exploded in the San Salvador office of COMADRES, a human rights organization of relatives of the disappeared, assassinated and political prisoners. Thirteen people were sleeping in the office that night. Two of them were members of COMADRES. A U.S. citizen working with the organization, Brenda Hubbard, 41, was sleeping near the front door when, at about 2:40 a.m., she was awakened by what she believed to be an explosion. Other persons there described the sound as a gunshot. Hubbard crawled toward the back of the room away from the door. She stood up, saw a burst of light, and then heard a loud explosion as the quarter-inch interior steel door flew toward the back of the room and crashed into a wooden desk, splitting it in half.

Hubbard was slashed by flying glass. Her head was cut in a line from her forehead down over her nose to her left cheek and ear. She received more than twenty stitches for her ear, which was sliced in half.

Pablo Mejia, 25, the office caretaker, was lying in between two desks at the time of the big explosion. He was cut by flying glass, and received three stitches in his knee. Mejia's life was apparently saved by the protection one of the desks offered against the flying door. Julia Leiva, 44, who was a visitor in the



office that night, was injured when an object fell on her chest. A 3-month-old child was also slightly injured.

The explosion produced substantial damage to the office, damaging the outer brick wall, the garage door, and the doorbell apparatus, as well as several inner doors. Most windows were shattered, and several interior objects -- including an incubator, a photocopy machine, a sewing machine, two file cabinets, and a desk -- were damaged.

@SUBCHAPTER = **C. Other Attacks on Union Offices and September 1989  
Mass Arrest of FENASTRAS Marchers**

On the night of February 8, 1989, several armed men in a vehicle shot at the headquarters of the National Unity of Salvadoran Workers (the UNTS, the principal opposition labor coalition) and damaged the front of the building without harming any persons.

At 3:50 a.m. on February 15, 1989, a high-powered bomb exploded in the door of the UNTS, destroying part of the office and damaging some nearby houses. In a communique left at the site, the "Comandos Urbanos Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez," an anti-communist organization, took responsibility for the explosion and said it would not rest until it had exterminated the communists.

During the evening of September 4, about 25 union members were in the FENASTRAS offices in downtown San Salvador. At about 12:30 a.m., September 5, several armed persons walked by and threw stones at the office for about five minutes. They returned at about 1 a.m., calling those inside guerrillas and screaming at them to leave. About 1:20 a.m., a large explosion was heard, and it is thought that a grenade was thrown over the outer office wall, damaging the upper part of the main entrance door and the wall dividing the office from the house next door.

On the night of September 17 and early morning of September 18, National Guardsmen raided four houses and the Santa Mercedes textile factory in Ilopango and arrested ten persons associated with FENASTRAS. The Santa Mercedes factory had been occupied by workers following an employer shutdown in December 1988.

On September 18, FENASTRAS held a march to protest the arrests of the previous night. During the march, participants obstructed traffic, and two buses were burned. National Policemen chased the marchers into the Central American Mission Church and then forced them out by throwing tear gas through the windows. Sixty-four persons were arrested by the National Police. Many of them alleged that they were kicked and struck as they were forced from the church into a bus which took them to the National Police headquarters.

At the National Police, many of the detainees were hit and forced to stand or do exercises. Of 37 persons examined by the forensic physician of the First Criminal Court of San Salvador on September 21, 19 exhibited marks or bruises indicating they had been beaten.

Several alleged that they had been severely beaten, and at least four contended they had been raped during interrogation. Tatiana Mendoza's rape was confirmed by a court physician. She died in the October 31 bombing of the FENASTRAS headquarters.

Of the 74 persons arrested in the two sweeps, the majority -- not

charged at all or charged with belonging to a union, which is not a crime -- were released within 72 hours. By March 1990, three FENASTRAS leaders arrested on September 17, Juan Jose Huezo, Francisco Javier Martinez, and Susana Dolores Rodriguez, remain in prison, charged with subversion or engaging in terrorist acts.

**@SUBCHAPTER = D. January 1990 Killing of Opposition Politician in Guatemala**

Hector Oqueli Colindres, 45, the deputy secretary-general of the National Revolutionary Movement and Adjunct Secretary General of the Socialist International for Latin America and the Caribbean, was abducted by heavily armed men in civilian dress as he headed for the airport in Guatemala City between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. on January 12, 1990. He was kidnapped along with Gilda Amparo Flores Arevalo, an attorney and member of the Socialist Democratic Party of Guatemala, who was driving Oqueli to the airport. Several witnesses reportedly saw the abduction, which occurred within one block of the Air Force Tactical Unit, which normally has soldiers posted in front.

@BODYTEXTBIG = Both of their bodies were reportedly found by late that afternoon in a pickup truck parked on the Pan American Highway near the Salvadoran border. Oqueli and Flores were both shot in the head.<\$F "Two Activists Killed in Guatemala," The Washington Post, January 14, 1990.> Oqueli's passport was found in his shirt pocket, according to an MNR source interviewed by Americas Watch.

@BODYTEXTSHRINK = Oqueli had arrived from Mexico the day before his kidnapping. Upon arrival at the Aurora airport in Guatemala City, Oqueli was detained by immigration and his passport taken away for 15 or 20 minutes, according to a western diplomat. This, combined with the fact that Oqueli's colleagues in the Social Democratic Party in Guatemala (with the exception of Gilda Flores) did not know he was visiting the country, raises suspicions of involvement of immigration officials in the crime.<\$F See Americas Watch, Messengers of Death: Human Rights in Guatemala, November 1988 - March 1990, March 1990, at 41-44.> Oqueli, who was to leave Guatemala the same afternoon of his arrival, reportedly changed plans at the last minute and decided to stay overnight. He was on his way to catch the early morning COPA flight to Managua when he was abducted.

It has been reported that Oqueli's murder may have been related to a secret meeting between U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd and two representatives of the FMLN, Ana Guadalupe Martinez and Roberto Canas, held in Guatemala City January 10. The meeting was apparently undertaken to discuss prospects for ending the civil war in El Salvador. Some observers have suggested that the murder of Oqueli was intended as a signal to the FMLN that Guatemala is not safe territory for them.<\$F "Meeting Is Linked to Murder," The Miami Herald, January 26, 1990.>

Following a meeting in a private room at Guatemala City's airport, Senator Dodd reportedly left the country and the two FMLN leaders were taken to a West European Embassy. Martinez reported that the Embassy began receiving threatening phone calls from self-proclaimed "Salvadoran commandos" within two hours. She told

The Los Angeles Times:

@QUOTE = We think it was the Salvadoran right operating with its network in Guatemala. . . . It was a warning from the right and the Salvadoran army that we were in their rear guard, in forbidden territory.<\$F Marjorie Miller, "Rebels See Leftist's Murder as Warning," The Los Angeles Times, January 25, 1990.>

After seven years in exile, Oqueli had returned to El Salvador in 1987 to help reactivate the leftist political party founded by his mentor, Guillermo Ungo. Oqueli left El Salvador for security reasons after the FMLN's November offensive started, imagining that he would be safe from right-wing reprisals abroad. On January 29, 1990, the Bush Administration sent an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigations to lend technical help in the investigation.

@SUBCHAPTER = **E. October Bombing of Homes of Opposition Leaders**

In the early morning hours of October 19, 1989, a powerful bomb damaged the home of Ruben Zamora, leader of the opposition Popular Social Christian Movement (MPSC). Two of Zamora's personal security guards were injured in the attack on his home. However, Zamora, his wife, and their five children escaped injury. Seconds earlier, three grenades were thrown into the house of Zamora's sister-in-law, Aronette Diaz, leader of the opposition National Democratic Union. She and her two children were unharmed. Shortly afterward, another bomb was placed in a building belonging to the Lutheran Church, causing damage but no injuries.<\$F The Washington Post, October 20, 1989.>

@SUBCHAPTER = **F. Shooting and Other Incidents at the National University, April 1989-March 1990**

@BODYTEXTBIG = On April 23, 1989, soldiers entered and searched the private San Salvador homes of the vice-rector Dr. Wilfredo Barillas Acosta, and another staff member, Flor Canales, of the University of El Salvador in San Salvador, the country's principal public university. No search warrant was presented.

@BODYTEXTBIG = On May 2, 1989, an unidentified gunman fired at Dr. Barillas's car near the Basilica Guadalupe in San Salvador. A bullet destroyed the windshield, but did not hit him.

@BODYTEXTBIG = A soldier beat a university watchman near the main entrance gate on May 15, 1989. On May 23, soldiers at the entrance to the dental school detained a youth around 8:00 p.m. and cut his hair off. Two other students received the same treatment at another campus entrance.

@BODYTEXTBIG = On May 16, 1989, there was a dispute at the University entrance. Colonel Juan Orlando Zepeda, then commander of the First Brigade (currently Vice Minister of Defense), claimed that "terrorist groups in the National University threw Molotov cocktails at the soldiers."<\$FEl Diario de Hoy, May 18, 1989.>

At about 6:00 p.m. on July 17, 1989, First Brigade soldiers shot at a group of protesting university teachers, students and employees at the university, wounding eight students, including a North American. Colonel Elena Fuentes, commander of the First Brigade, said students had provoked the troops by tossing Molotov cocktails and fragmentation grenades at them from within the campus. Student leaders denied there was any provocation.

President Cristiani and Minister of Defense General Rafael Humberto Larios Lopez said that this incident typified the provocations against the Armed Forces at the campus, but affirmed that the army would not intervene in campus activity. University officials denounced this and other incidents of violence at the university as "part of a plan of intervention. . . . The new government wants students and university authorities to abandon the campus."<\$FAdvertisement, El Mundo, July 19, 1989.>

This incident reflected the heightened tensions between soldiers and students throughout the year.<\$FThere were also tensions within the University. In 1988, the Committee to Rescue the University was formed by conservatives to regain control of the University from alleged communist dominance. In March, one of the members of the committee was executed by the FMLN and the car of another attacked, as described above. > These are not new. The Army has long accused the FMLN of using the university as a recruiting ground, a training center and weapons depot, and has a long history of having shut and opened the university during the 1970s and from 1980 to 1984, seriously disrupting higher education for students who cannot afford to attend the private institutions that cropped up in the wake of its closure.

Many students contend they have been harassed by soldiers who maintained a constant cordon around the university entrance in December 1988 and then again from March 1989 on. In early November 1989, Colonel Elena Fuentes told Americas Watch that between 30 and 50 soldiers were around the university on a daily basis, checking the bags of persons as they enter.

Following the November offensive, First Brigade soldiers took over the campus, and all academic activities ceased. Classes of the various faculties have been held in other buildings throughout the city ("in exile").

On March 13, 1990, an inventory was commenced as a step toward turning the university campus back over to the university administration. The purpose of the inventory was to establish the damage done after the military occupation of the campus. In attendance the first day of the inventory were about 100 persons, including representatives of the Court of Claims, Ministry of Education, administration of the university, and the First Brigade.<\$F Diario Latino, March 13, 1990.>

@SUBCHAPTER = **G. July Bombing of UCA Printing Press**

About 1:50 a.m. on July 22, 1989, four bombs exploded in the Central American University (UCA) -- two in the computer and photocopier area of the printing press, one in the transformer just outside the printing press, and one under a nearby bus. Three other bombs were deactivated by the National Police. Computers, photocopy machines, office equipment, transformers and printing machines were destroyed. Damages was estimated at between 400,000 and 500,000 <MI>colones<D> (roughly \$62,500 to \$77,500). No one was injured.

@SUBCHAPTER = **H. April Mass Arrests at CRIPDES**

At 7:30 a.m. on April 19, 1989, Attorney General Jose Roberto Garcia Alvarado was assassinated. That day Treasury Police agents raided and searched the offices of the Christian Committee for

Displaced Persons of El Salvador and National Coordinator for Repopulation (CRIPDES/CNR) and a house shared by the trade union federation FUSS, a coalition of unemployed and laid off workers (CODYDES), and a women's organization (ADEMUSA). By midnight 75 persons -- the overwhelming majority from CRIPDES/CNR -- had been arrested and taken to Treasury Police headquarters.

Treasury Police agents surrounded the CRIPDES/CNR office at about 3:15 p.m., but CRIPDES members would not let them enter. Sixty persons were inside, including 20 children, and several elderly or handicapped persons. By 5:30 p.m., a riot squad arrived at the scene. By 9:30 p.m., the police claimed they had obtained a judicial search warrant but refused to show it to CRIPDES members. They were not accompanied by a justice of the peace. At 11:00 p.m., the police forcibly entered the building, searched the office, and arrested its occupants, who were brought to Treasury Police headquarters in a military truck. Police agents stayed behind and continued their search of the office. CRIPDES members later contended the police took Salvadoran and U.S. currency totalling more than \$10,000, two radio-tape recorders, a megaphone, a video camera, a photographic camera and eight albums of photographs. Police said that from the various offices they seized sticks used at demonstrations, metal spikes used to flatten tires, and one pistol.

That morning, Treasury Police also arrested fifteen others, members of COMADRES, FUSS, ADEMUSA, and CODYDES. Most of the detainees were released within two days. Some of them reported being beaten, kicked, thrown to the ground, and threatened with a knife placed at the throat. Ten were consigned to the Second Criminal Court and sent to prison. CRIPDES members were charged with possession of arms of war, but released on August 8 for lack of evidence.<\$F The "arms" found at the CRIPDES office were home-made devices used to commit acts of petty sabotage during street demonstrations, called "miguelitos" (for flattening tires) and "mechugas" (pipes). They were not arms of war nor did they contain explosives or projectiles.> as were two ADEMUSA members. Several of the detained were tortured while in Treasury Police custody.<\$F See Human Rights Watch, The Persecution of Human Rights Monitors, December 1988 to December 1989: A Worldwide Survey, December 1989.>

While the six CRIPDES/CNR members were still in prison, the Army took out unsigned paid advertisements in the local press asserting that each of the six belonged to FMLN organizations. Under the title, "S/He is a Terrorist," appeared a purported guerrilla biography of each and the slogan, "FMLN = CRIPDES."

@BODYTEXTSHRNK = The absence of any evidence to support the charges of "terrorism" or "possession of arms of war" against those detained, as well as the mass nature of the arrests, raises the strong suspicion that these actions were intended to intimidate members of mass-based organizations opposed to government policies and to lash out at alleged FMLN "sympathizers" for the assassination of the Attorney General.

@SUBCHAPTER = **I. Recent Bombings and Other Threats to Religious Workers**

@BODYTEXTSHRNK = At 9:00 p.m. on December 27, 1989, a bomb exploded in front of the garage of the San Salvador home of Hazel Browning, an evangelical lay church worker from New Zealand living in El Salvador for the past 15 years. Nobody was injured, but the explosion seriously damaged the home.<\$F El Rescate, El Salvador Chronology, December 1989.>

@BODYTEXTSHRNK = In December, Americas Watch reported the November 20, 1989 arrest of Father Luis Serrano Lorente and seven other members of the Episcopal Church of El Salvador for allegedly covering up the possibility that a catapult bomb used in an earlier FMLN attack on the headquarters of the Army General Staff had been assembled in the church yard. On January 5, 1990, all but one of eight persons arrested were released from prison; the last detainee was released February 26 by the court.

@BODY TEXT PG = Father Serrano left El Salvador on January 6. On January 10, armed, uniformed soldiers entered and searched the residence of Father Serrano.<\$F Churchworker Report, "Attacks on the Churches in El Salvador," December 16, 1989 - February 10, 1990.>

In December, Americas Watch reported that on November 21, the National Guard emptied the contents from the residence and office of representatives of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). On December 8, the Guard returned some, but not all, of the property taken.

On January 23, 1990, two Salvadoran lawyers and a member of the MCC went to National Guard headquarters in San Salvador to retrieve still more, though still not all, of the items confiscated. In December 1989, photographs of two MCC workers which had been taken were seen on the National Guard bulletin board with a caption reading, "Terrorists infiltrated in the Mennonite Church."<\$F Church Worker Report, "Attacks on the Churches in El Salvador," December 16, 1989 - February 10, 1990.>

In the December 16, 1989 Update, Americas Watch reported that on November 22, a woman in Teotepeque, La Libertad, saw a uniformed soldier or civil defense member drop a flyer in front of her house. The flyer, and others found the next morning around the town, charged that six local church workers were "enemies of the people" and urged residents to "reject them."

On December 17, 1989, and again on February 3-4, 1990, new anti-church flyers were found on the streets of Teotepeque. The February leaflet was the eighth anti-church leaflet circulated in the area since August 1989.<\$F Churchworker Report, "Attacks on the Churches in El Salvador," December 16, 1989 - February 10, 1990.>