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## **Violent Demonstration In San Salvador**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On July 21 in San Salvador, police dispersed a crowd of about 5,000 demonstrators with the use of tear gas and shooting into the air. The protesters had gathered in front of the Treasury Police headquarters to demand the release of Eliseo Cordova, a state employee labor union leader who was detained last week. Attending the demonstration called by the Salvadoran Workers National Unity (UNTS) were workers, students and peasants. Spokespersons said they had come together to demand Cordova's release; protest the implementation of a new bill before the National Assembly that would impose a state of emergency at workplaces, and to demand larger budgets for Salvadoran universities. The emergency law would authorize military surveillance of factories and other places of employment in the event of strikes or work stoppages. Moreover, under the new law, workers would become subject to prosecution in military courts. According to witnesses, dozens of people were injured in the course of the crowd's rush to escape the gunfire and tear gas. Shortly after the police action, some demonstrators regrouped and marched through the streets. They reportedly broke store windows, burned nine vehicles owned by the government and large companies, and damaged telephone booths, traffic light, stop signs, and the like. The incident marked the second time in 10 days that police dispersed large crowds of demonstrators. On July 12, thousands of protesters who gathered to show support for strikers at the state electricity company were dispersed with clubs and tear gas. (Basic data from AP, 07/21/88)

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