

3-17-1989

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Report On Salvadoran Rebel Activities On Eve Of Election

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, March 17, 1989

March 15: Elite units of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) attacked Chalatenango, the capital of Chalatenango department. Military sources reported the deaths of two soldiers, and at least six guerrillas. The rebels' Radio Venceremos broadcast a report stating they had killed or wounded 13 soldiers in an attack in the same department on Wednesday. In a communique, the FMLN asserted that the March 19 elections will take place under war conditions because that is the desire of the government and the armed forces. The rebel command added that the civil war will continue after the elections. March 16: On the first day of a nationwide transport strike called by the FMLN, travel throughout the country had been effectively paralyzed. As a result of the rebels' continued sabotage on the nation's electricity system, 70% of El Salvador was without power. The capital resembles a war zone, with soldiers marching up and down avenues almost constantly, most business activity shut down, and continual activity deactivating bombs placed in vehicles, gas stations, and electricity equipment. At about 6:30 p.m. local time, urban commandos attacked the army barracks and the seat of government. A total of eight explosions were heard in the vicinity. Early reports indicated damage to structures, but no casualties. Later, the military press office said seven persons were wounded in the attacks. (Basic data from AFP, 03/15/89; Xinhua, DPA, 03/16/89)

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