Salvadoran Archbishop: Cristiani's Concern For Poor & Economic Policies Not Compatible

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Category/Department: General
Published: Wednesday, June 7, 1989

On June 4, during his homily at the metropolitan cathedral in San Salvador, Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas praised President Alfredo Cristiani's professed "concern for the poor, human rights, and peace through dialogue." He then criticized the president's economic policy plans. On June 1, after being sworn in as president, Cristiani said, "The only privileged people in our society will be the very poor." He also declared his intentions to re-privatize the nation's banks and external trade, and to maintain agrarian reform efforts rather than expand on implementation of existing legislation. Rivera y Damas said, "We wish with all our hearts...that the president will obtain happy results. But we think that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to conciliate such a generous declaration in favor of the poor with the economic model outlined in his message." He added that economic policies which "strike at the roots of marginalization" are necessary, instead of privatization and other neo-liberal orthodoxies. (Basic data from Notimex, 06/04/89)

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