6-21-1989

El Salvador: Summary Of Recent Violence, Repression

Deborah Tyroletter
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by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 1989

On June 6, Humberto Centeno, leader of the National Union of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS), told journalists that UNTS leaders receive telephoned threats on a daily basis. He added that UNTS leaders and members are under almost continual surveillance with the intent of driving them to desperation. At a June 6 mass and subsequent rally, the Committee of Mothers of Prisoners, Disappeared and Victims of Political Assassination (COMADRES) denounced the capture and disappearance of 80 persons thus far in 1989. COMADRES said that in the course of the civil war over 7,000 Salvadorans have been abducted and disappeared (whereabouts unknown). Five union activists, including Jose Tomas Mazariego (see article above), who were tortured by Salvadoran security forces and released during the week of June 11-17, have said they plan to file suit against Treasury Police chief Col. Heriberto Hernandez. During the same week, the Union of Construction, Similar and Related Industries Workers (SOICSCES) reported that member Joel Beltran is missing, and another member, Amilcar Grande, had been tortured after being detained by security forces. Two students of the University of El Salvador (UES) were captured on June 12 by soldiers pertaining to the First Infantry Brigade. The Brigade continues to surround the university campus. On June 16, Gregorio Osorio, general secretary of the Federation of Independent Associations and Trade Unions of El Salvador (FEASIES) was brought before a judge on charges of belonging to the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). Osorio denied the charges. According to a report by the rebel Radio Farabundo Marti, in the 10 days following President Alfredo Cristiani’s inauguration on June 1, 35 people were kidnapped and four assassinated by death squads and/or government security agents. As of June 16, over 50 peasant families in western Ahuachapan reported they had received threats from landowners in an attempt to persuade them to abandon plots of land received under the previous (Christian Democrat) government's partial land reform program. The landowners are reportedly linked to the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). (Basic data from Radio Scan, 06/06/89; YSKL radio network, 06/06/89; Salpress-Notisal, 06/19/89; Philadelphia Inquirer, 06/14/89, 06/17/89; Radio Farabundo Marti weekly bulletin, 06/17/89)

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