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El Salvador: Notes From Interview With Rightist Leader Orlando De Sola

by Deborah Tyroler

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[Appearing below are highlights from a recent interview by Lindsey Gruson of the New York Times (08/11/89) with Orlando de Sola, a founding financier of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). ARENA began as a paramilitary group. According to Gruson, de Sola wished to join the party and run as a legislative candidate in 1986, but was rejected as "too extreme."] * "I think moderation, tolerance, centrism can be extremism...Extreme moderation can be suicidal, which is what El Salvador is going through now." * "Exploitation is part of the human condition." De Sola said he would close the Tahitian-style restaurant he opened for his wife before allowing a union to organize its workers. * De Sola said he believes that all student leaders at the National University are "Soviet agents" and the school should be put under martial law. * According to de Sola, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's social programs "ruined the United States." He also attacked ARENA as "soft on communism." * "Politics is the art of war." De Sola added that tens of thousands of Salvadorans killed by the rightist death squads were "communist stooges" who deserved to die. * De Sola acknowledged that he has an "authoritarian" and "autocratic" vision for El Salvador: "That's the only way to get through this crisis. Democracy has too many limitations. The majority rules whether it's right or wrong." * Regarding President Alfredo Cristiani, de Sola said, "I've been one of the forces who, with others, have been trying to rescue ARENA from the socialists...I have a lot of respect for [Roberto] d'Aubuisson and because of that for Fredy he's been endorsed, christened, anointed by the boss, the real boss...But people didn't vote for his kind of moderation. Basically, people voted for d'Aubuisson, not for Fredy's kind of sissy policies."

-- End --