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by Deborah Tyroler
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Early Tuesday morning: Heavily armed men hurled bombs at the downtown office of the Committee of Mothers of Prisoners, Assassination Victims and Missing Persons (COMADRES), injuring six Salvadorans and one US citizen. A COMADRES member told a local radio station the attackers were "men dressed in olive green, most likely army troops or security forces, who were seen in the area minutes before the bombing." The attack was the third this year against the organization. According to an AP report, the injuries were minor. Military spokespersons have frequently asserted that COMADRES is a rebel "front." Since its founding in 1977, the COMADRES office has been the target of dynamite bombs on four occasions. Sofia Escamilla, a member of the organization, told Notimex: "They will not silence us because our voice is a denunciation. I refer to those who rule...the military high command which directs the death squads who are given the nod by President [Alfredo] Cristiani. We have no doubts regarding who was responsible for the attack: the same ones who threaten us constantly ready with their bombs... "This is the democracy President Cristiani offers, to see the people destroyed, dead. The great democracy consists of thousands of disappeared, assassinated, captured, and tortured who die at the hands of the National Guard and the Treasury Police." The bomb blast destroyed a portion of the building's structure and its facade, office equipment and all surgical equipment COMADRES was collecting for donations to local hospitals. Shock waves caused damage to at least eight residences located nearby. Col. Ernesto Vargas, commander of the 3rd Infantry Brigade, said the armed forces were not responsible for the bombing of the COMADRES office. He blamed the rebels for provoking violence, including the Tuesday morning attack. 12:35 p.m., Tuesday: A car bomb exploded outside the headquarters of the Federation of Salvadoran Workers (FENASTRAS) in San Salvador, killing at least seven people and severely injuring about 35 others. The blast destroyed the union office, located behind a crafts market, and about 10 cars. FENASTRAS is allied with the Salvadoran Workers National Union (UNTS), the country's largest union confederation. The blast toppled concrete pillars, twisted girders and destroyed almost the entire roof of the building, located two blocks from the National Police headquarters and four blocks from the Metropolitan Cathedral. FENASTRAS secretary general Gerardo Diaz was among the wounded. A US citizen was also injured in the FENASTRAS bombing. Rosales Hospital spokespersons identified one of the victims who died at the hospital as Febe Elizabeth Velasquez, a well-known FENASTRAS leader. Union official Julia Mendoza, 21, was also killed. Mendoza reported she had been tortured and raped during detention at National Police headquarters in September. Hospital authorities cited by AP said admittance forms were filled out for 27 people but that several seriously wounded persons were admitted without forms. Hector Recinos, a member of the FENASTRAS directorate, blamed the army: "This is a response to the attack on the Joint Chiefs," referring to the Oct. 30 rebel assault on the Defense Ministry. At a news conference amid the rubble of the FENASTRAS headquarters, UNTS directorate member Humberto Centeno said, "We the workers see more clearly than ever that we are at war against ARENA (Nationalist Republican Alliance)." Centeno and other union leaders called for a 24-hour general strike beginning at 6 a.m. Nov. 1 to protest the FENASTRAS bombing. They asked workers
to join in a funeral march for the Velasquez and other slain union activists on Wednesday afternoon. Guillermo Ungo, secretary general of the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), blamed the government and military for the bombing. He said the attack was "without a doubt perpetrated by soldiers who want to make any kind of political solution fail." Recent attacks against the popular movement, said Ungo, demonstrate that the government and the armed forces "do not want peace, but rather prolongation of the war, terror and repression." Salvadoran military officers have asserted that FENASTRAS is also a front for the Farabundo Martí National Liberation (FMLN). Since Jan. 1 this year, the FENASTRAS office had been targeted by violent attacks on three occasions, the most recent occurring on Sept. 5. On that occasion, an anti-tank rocket damaged the building's facade, but caused no casualties. * A government communique condemned both attacks, asserting that "it is evident these events are part of a conspiracy aimed at sabotaging the dialogue process between the government and the guerrillas." The communiqué said the government has ordered a detailed investigation to determine the identity of responsible parties. ARENA president and mayor of San Salvador, Armando Calderón Sol, said the attacks "are typical of the FMLN." (Basic data from Notimex, AP, AFP, 10/31/89)

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