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## **Salvadoran Rebel Offensive & Related Developments: Summary Of Events & Statements, Sunday, Nov. 19**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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[See CAU 11/15/89 and 11/17/89 for details on earlier events mentioned below.] According to AP, rebels had withdrawn from the Zacamil, Metropolis, Mejicanos and Soyapango neighborhoods of San Salvador by Sunday. In a Radio Venceremos broadcast, the FMLN claimed that rebels had shot down 12 government helicopters and fighter planes and to have put 27 military vehicles out of action. The FMLN also reported that rebels had forced government troops to take defensive positions in Usulután department. Heavy fighting was reported on the periphery of the department capital of the same name. In the city of Zacatecoluca, the rebels said government troops had suffered 285 casualties since the offensive began. Next, the FMLN reportedly "annihilated" two units of the 5th Infantry Brigade, called "The Peace Commandos," and "The Caimanes." Also in Zacatecoluca, a seriously wounded soldier, Lt. Antonio Perez Aguirre, was turned over to the International Red Cross. Perez had been taken prisoner by the rebels on Nov. 14. A military news release gave a tentative count of nearly 1,000 soldiers and guerrillas killed since the rebels launched the offensive. About 800 attended the burial of the six Jesuit priests and two women murdered Thursday at their residence on the grounds of the Jose Simeon Canas Central American University. Participants included President Cristiani, government officials, religious, university staff and faculty, foreign diplomats, and Ruben Zamora, a leftist politician who heads the Popular Social Christian Movement. At a mass preceding the burial service, Jesuit Provincial for Central America, Jose Maria Tojeira, said that the priests "were assassinated for supporting a truth favoring the poor...They struggled for a better future, different from the present in which a few have too much, and the vast majority have nothing." Archbishop Rivera y Damas said the "blind hate of egoists who want everything for themselves is what took [the priests'] lives." He added that Ellacuria and Martin-Baro were "sharp analysts of the country's situation that made clear the social sin of injustice." Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez, who has also received death threats, said the murder of the six priests "cannot be pardoned by God." The six caskets were placed in a wall of the chapel in the priests' residence. A large poster of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero was placed over the the improvised tombs. Romero was assassinated in March 1980 while celebrating mass. Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas said that with the guerrilla withdrawal "a dreadful wave of revenge, repression and witch hunting may follow." In his regular Sunday homily, Rivera y Damas called the rebel offensive "useless and unjustifiable" and said the military response was "excessive." Salvadoran ambassador in Peru, Roberto Linares Nunez, said that presumed rebels attacked the Salvadoran embassy in Lima with firebombs on Saturday night. Two of the firebombs exploded, damaging the embassy doors, windows and items inside. Police said nobody was injured in the attack, but the bombs caused considerable material damage. The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) claimed responsibility for the attack, police said. An organization called the Peruvian Committee of Solidarity with the People of Latin America and the Caribbean said political, cultural and labor organizations would hold a demonstration in Lima on Nov. 23 to urge Peruvian President Alan Garcia to help find a peaceful settlement to the Salvadoran civil war. Committee president Lucia Pavletich said her group sent Linares Nunez a letter Saturday urging Salvadoran

President Cristiani to end the bombing of civilian neighborhoods in El Salvador. The letter also asked Cristiani to permit International Red Cross workers to evacuate the wounded from the war zones. DPA cited Salvadoran Vice President Francisco Merino as saying that negotiations with the rebels "make no sense." At a press conference, Salvadoran Attorney General Colorado told reporters of a "guerrilla plan" to assassinate the Catholic archbishop and auxiliary archbishop with the objective of destabilizing the government of President Alfredo Cristiani. He reiterated his request to the Vatican and the Episcopal Conference to withdraw certain religious from El Salvador. Colorado said that some Catholic clergy "have persisted in keeping alive the questionable ideology of the church of the poor, outside the policy context of the Episcopal Conference." Next, the official said that auxiliary archbishop Rosa Chavez's brother, Salomon Enrique Rosa Chavez, was captured by the army on July 20 in San Salvador. Salomon Enrique, he said, was accused of membership in FMLN urban commando units. In the eastern sector of San Salvador, the army raided and partially destroyed a clinic, laboratory, and storage area and the home of Spanish Jesuit priest Daniel Lopez Sanchez. Lopez Sanchez supervised a Catholic relief effort for Salvadorans displaced by the war, known as the La Chacra community. The priest returned to his home after three days in hiding from soldiers seeking guerrillas and "collaborators." A resident of the community told Notimex that civilians fled the premises on the morning of Nov. 15 when Salvadoran troops raided the area. The soldiers, he said, surrounded the community, and have remained in place since Wednesday. Lopez Sanchez returned to the community in the company of three journalists and several residents of La Chacra. After entering his partially destroyed home, he said that some documents and a few personal effects had been taken. Microscopes were missing from the laboratory, and medicines from the clinic. Part of the roof to the clinic had been destroyed. The priest said furniture in the storage area had been destroyed, all supplies and equipment were lying in heaps on the floor, and a cache of 6,000 colones (\$1,000) he had kept to purchase foodstuffs for the children was missing. The priest has been publicly accused of "collaborating" with the guerrillas and "playing the game of international communism." Spain's ambassador in El Salvador has suggested that Lopez Sanchez return to Spain with the Spanish mission visiting the country headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Inocencio Arias. In a communique released to the press in Guatemala City, Guatemala's Catholic Episcopal Conference president Msgr. Rodolfo Quezada Toruno, Archbishop Prospero Penados del Barrio, and representatives of several religious organizations urged the Guatemalan government to stay out of the Salvadoran military conflict. The government was requested to refuse to send troops or weapons to El Salvador, as well as the use of Guatemalan military installations in any capacity to assist the Salvadoran military. The communique also condemned the assassination of the six Jesuit priests, and called for an immediate end to aerial bombardment of civilian residential areas, and resumption of dialogue between the government and the guerrillas. (Basic data from reports by AP, AFP, Notimex, DPA, Radio Venceremos, 11/19/89; Xinhua, 11/20/89)

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