

6-1-1990

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Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "El Salvador: Popular Social Christian Movement Leader On Cristiani's First Year In Office." (1990).
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El Salvador: Popular Social Christian Movement Leader On Cristiani's First Year In Office

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, June 1, 1990

On May 30, Ruben Zamora, leader of the Popular Social Christian Movement (MPSC), described President Alfredo Cristiani's first 12 months in office as the "year of unfulfilled promises." At a press conference, Zamora said that when Cristiani was inaugurated June 1 last year he "offered peace and security." In contrast, he added, El Salvador has witnessed levels of violence higher than in several previous years. Zamora mentioned the assassinations of the six Jesuit priests and their two housekeepers in November; 11 labor union leaders in October; and Social Democrat leader Hector Oqueli in January during a brief visit in Guatemala City. The president promised checks and balances, said Zamora, and instead the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) has taken over all influential posts government and para-state agency posts. According to Zamora, only crumbs were left for non-party members which served to "buy" politicians. Next, Zamora denounced that under Cristiani the judiciary has demonstrated incompetence, and civilian powers have been subordinated by the military. The only campaign promise fulfilled by Cristiani, said Zamora, is "unfortunately" that of liberalizing and opening the national economy with the objective of giving returning it "the old oligarchical groups" who had controlled it for years. One of the first decisions adopted by Cristiani's economic team was reprivatization of foreign trade. Commercial banks are currently in the process of reprivatization. For the vast majority of Salvadorans, said Zamora, Cristiani's first year has been disastrous. (Basic data from Notimex, 05/30/90)

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