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Hunger Strikers Break Fast Vowing To Continue Fight Against U.S. Military Aid To El Salvador

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Oct. 6, two Catholic priests and two Vietnam veterans ended a 35-day hunger strike in protest of US military aid to El Salvador near the entrance to Fort Benning, Georgia. The Rev. Roy Bourgeois told reporters, "The bread we receive today is nourishment to reaffirm our commitment." He asserted that their struggle to stop military aid to El Salvador would continue. Nine persons commenced the hunger strike on Sept. 3. They chose Ft. Benning as the site in part because Salvadoran officers have been trained at the facility. Over the two weeks previous to Oct. 6, five of the original group dropped out of the strike for health reasons. Bourgeois, the Rev. Jim Barnett, and Vietnam veterans Charlie Liteky and David Scott participated in the strike to the end. The four men lost between 17 and 20 kg. US aid to El Salvador in FY1990 totaled over \$315 million, \$85 million of which was designated for weapons, munitions and military equipment. The Senate will vote this month on a bill to withhold half of the Bush administration's FY1991 \$85 million request for military aid to San Salvador. (Basic data from AFP, 10/07/90)

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