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## **El Salvador: Bus Company Owners Declare Indefinite Strike**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On Nov. 6, public transport was virtually paralyzed in San Salvador, result of a strike by bus company owners protesting the elimination of price controls, and demanding government subsidies. In other cities, bus transportation was partially affected. The Salvadoran Bus Owners Association (AEAS) announced that the strike would continue indefinitely, since officials ignored a series of petitions submitted Oct. 29. On that day, the association organized a five-hour strike. AEAS president Alberto Lemus said, "We do not wish to impact on Salvadorans' depleted pocketbooks. We want a subsidy to purchase replacement parts and absorb other operations costs." He was responding to official statements that the bus owners had demanded authorization for a fare hike. Lemus publicly requested that the government refrain from politicizing the problem by claiming links between the AEAS and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). He asserted that the strike is justified by the disproportionate increase in prices for parts and other operating costs, the result of government policies to "liberalize" the economy. The AEAS also denounced the arrest on Nov. 6 of two of its activists by the National Guard in La Libertad department. The Economy Ministry threatened that strike participants would see their licenses cancelled, and delivery of subsidized fuel cut off. (Basic data from AFP, 11/06/90)

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