

State of siege in El Salvador

by Peter Rush

Belying Salvadoran government assurances that the vaunted “final offensive” of the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrillas was exhausted, FMLN rebels launched renewed fighting on Nov. 28 in many parts of El Salvador’s capital San Salvador. In contrast to the first phase of the offensive two weeks ago, this phase was especially directed against neighborhoods where El Salvador’s rich, as well as most foreign diplomatic personnel live. As of Nov. 30, despite more than 24 hours of government attempts to dislodge the guerrillas, the rebels were still holding many homes in the upper-class Escalon district, which they had turned into snipers’ nests. The U.S. announced it was evacuating at least 200 Americans residing there, mostly dependents of U.S. Embassy personnel, and the rebels ordered a six-hour cease-fire to permit a safe evacuation.

The renewed fighting in El Salvador coincides with a mobilization of the “hardline” current within the Communist and Communist-aligned world, signaling the end of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, moving toward the long-expected Tiananmen Square-type crackdowns in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Cuba’s Fidel Castro, who is the immediate “outside” agency dictating the FMLN offensive in El Salvador, is doing what he can to destabilize both Central and South America on behalf of this hardline grouping, which also includes China, Romania, North Korea, Syria, and most importantly, military and other “Great Russian” factions inside the Soviet Union.

Two years in the making

In a special Thanksgiving Day statement, Lyndon LaRouche, economist and candidate for U.S. Congress from the 10th Congressional District in Virginia, discussed this bloc, and the role of Castro’s Cuba in it. LaRouche pointed out that the present offensive, a “simulated Tet offensive against the urban centers” of El Salvador, launched by forces associated with Fidel Castro, “has been in preparation for a period of approximately two years. We have known it was prepared, and we wondered when it was coming. It has come,” the candidate said.

The notion that Castro is acting alone is not true, LaRouche said. “Castro is part of a bloc which includes the government of Communist China, particularly the hardliners, North Korea’s Kim Il-Sung, Romania’s President

Ceausescu, Syria’s President Hafez al-Assad, and very important forces high up in various parts of the Soviet command.” The offensive in El Salvador, and the assassination of the just-elected puppet President of Lebanon, René Moawad, are the actions of this hard line grouping, intended to signal that “a change must be made” in Gorbachov’s *perestroika* policy—with or without Gorbachov remaining in power, LaRouche pointed out.

Bearing out that warning, the FMLN launched its “second phase” only days later, and has since been followed by other actions of the criminal allies of the FMLN, including the assassination on Nov. 30 in Germany of Deutsche Bank chairman Alfred Herrhausen.

The FMLN’s terror spree also includes assassinating various personages associated with the government and the ruling Arena party. They carried out attacks on the homes and families of senior army officers and political leaders. The most prominent victim, killed on Nov. 28, was José Francisco Guerrero, the personal secretary of President Alfredo Cristiani—the second personal secretary of his to be hit in six months. Guerrero was a former foreign minister, a former president of the Supreme Court, a judge, and a former presidential candidate of the Arena party in 1985. He was gunned down by two FMLN assassins while his car was waiting at a stop light in downtown San Salvador.

In contrast to the outrage expressed in all the U.S. media at the killing of the six Jesuits by unknown assailants in late November, the FMLN assassination of Guerrero has provoked no similar outrage against the terrorists, continuing the extraordinary bias of the press in implicit support of the insurgents. The propaganda line being pushed in most quarters is that the strength of the guerrilla onslaught proves that the Army cannot win, and that therefore El Salvador has no alternative but to sit down and negotiate a peace settlement with the FMLN killers. This, despite the fact that it was the FMLN, not the government, that began the present offensive, and is responsible for every single life lost in the process.

In response, the Salvadoran government declared a state of siege, suspended normal civil liberties, and passed laws designed to prevent the FMLN from rebuilding its urban support infrastructure. A law voted up Nov. 25 makes it a crime, among other things, to advocate support for the FMLN.

At the same time, neighboring Nicaragua, acting as Cuba’s junior partner, has been only too willing to tear up the “peace process,” whose only concrete achievement to date has been to undermine the Nicaraguan Contras. Nicaragua’s President Daniel Ortega, in the wake of the crash in El Salvador of a Nicaraguan military plane carrying sophisticated weapons to the FMLN—the “smoking plane” proof of continuing Nicaraguan aid for the guerrillas—has not only refused to deny Nicaraguan involvement, but has attacked the El Salvador government as murderers and welcomed El Salvador’s suspension of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua.