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El Salvador: The Insurgent Alliance

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This paper was prepared by [redacted], Office of
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El Salvador: The Insurgent Alliance

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Preface

*Information available as
of 15 August 1984
was used in this report.*

The Salvadoran insurgent alliance is a complex network of organizations, which in its present form dates from 1980 (see Figure 1). Its origins can be traced back to Communist activities in El Salvador in the early 1930s, but the alliance now encompasses organizations that cover the left end of the political spectrum from extreme Marxist-Leninist to democratic socialist. Although the roots of the alliance are mainly internal and grounded in the country's history, Soviet and Cuban officials have actively sought ways to exert their influence over groups in the alliance—especially to try to unify them as they had done with the factions of the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua before the Sandinista victory in July 1979. In the event of a guerrilla victory in El Salvador, a socialist (Communist) state could emerge, but it would evolve only after considerable accommodation among the various groups. The form and orientation of an insurgent government will depend on the evolution of events in the region and on whether or not orthodox Salvadoran Communists—who to the best of our knowledge are numerically in a minority—could manage to gain dominance in the government. ☐

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The groups in the alliance are beset by differences over strategies and tactics and are often factionalized by personal rivalries among leaders. Disputes about policy occur between the Marxist-Leninist guerrilla leaders, who see themselves as the leaders of the alliance and who make its key political decisions, and the non-Marxist overseas representatives, who claim to be the political spokesmen for the alliance. Moreover, several guerrilla chiefs show continued unwillingness to subordinate their personal quests for power to one of the overall goals of the insurgency—the creation of a truly unified organization. Nevertheless, all alliance members endorse the common goal of replacing the Salvadoran Government by conducting antigovernment insurgency within the country and propagandizing the alliance's cause abroad. At present, they are unified in their policy regarding negotiations with the government: they reject participation in elections and demand a power-sharing arrangement with the regime, although some democratic socialists in the alliance seem less hardline on this issue, according to recent US Embassy reporting. ☐

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At the head of the alliance is the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU). It appears, however, to be mainly a paper organization, and it exercises little authority. Two major umbrella organizations are subordinate to the DRU:

- The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), which consists of five Marxist-Leninist guerrilla groups.

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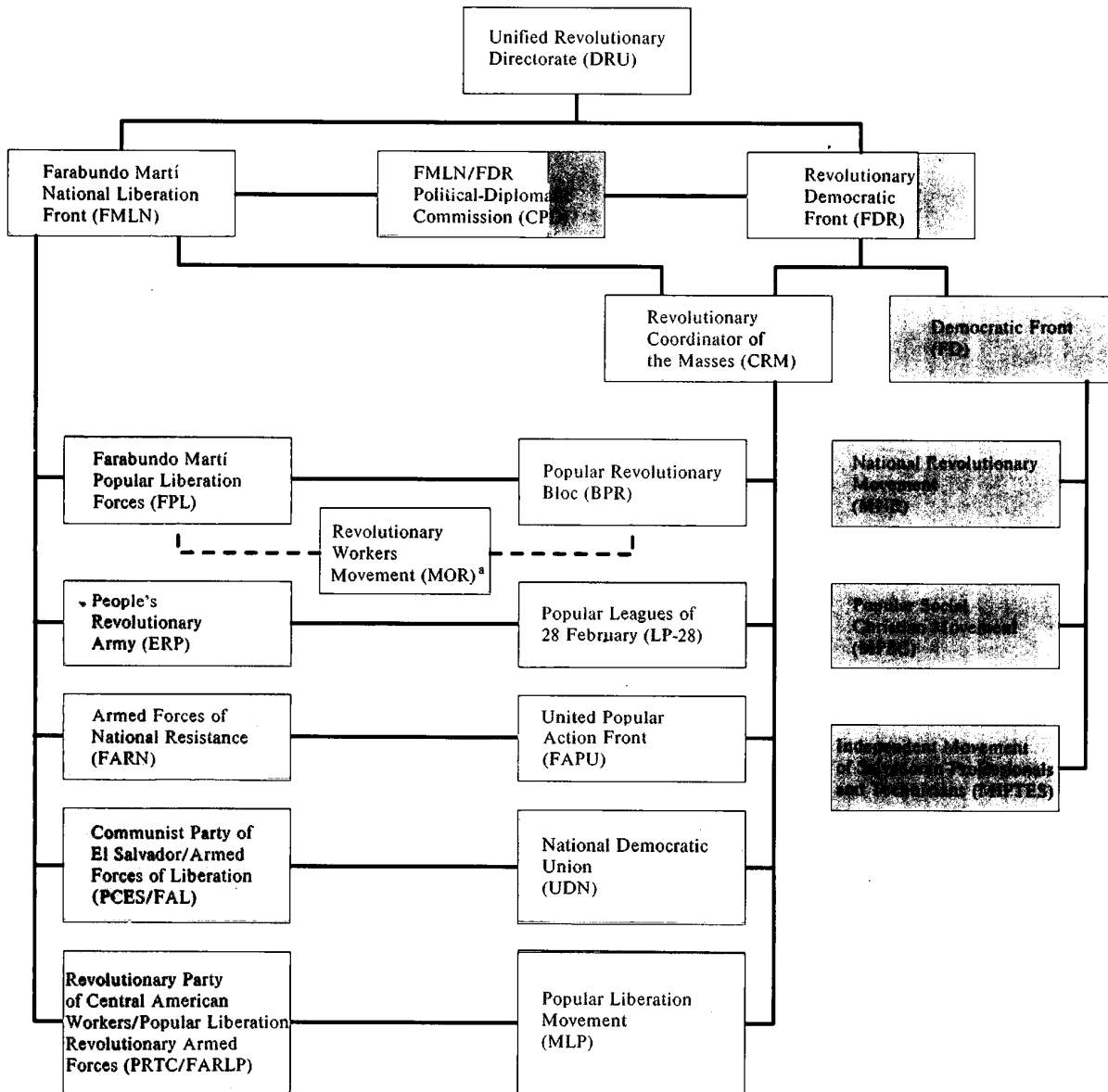
Figure 1
El Salvador: Organization of Insurgent Alliance



Marxist-Leninist



Socialist, non-Marxist-Leninist



^a In December 1983 the MOR broke away from the FPL and FMLN, carrying part of the BPR with it.

This chart does not delineate the actual power relationships between the organizations.

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- The Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), the overt political arm of the insurgency []

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We believe, on the basis of [] information appearing in the Salvadoran and foreign press, that the FMLN exercises far greater power in the alliance than the FDR:

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- Groups subordinate to the FMLN are the military decision makers in the alliance who conduct the actual insurgency.
- FMLN leaders have more input than FDR leaders into political decisions made by the alliance. Many FDR political pronouncements have been formulated in close collaboration with the FMLN. The FMLN has countermanded some political decisions announced by the FDR.
- FMLN members make up the top hierarchy of the DRU.
- FMLN leaders exercise considerable power over FDR Marxist front organizations. Until the formation of the FDR in 1980, the Marxist front groups were affiliated solely with the guerrilla organizations now subordinate to the FMLN. While Marxist front groups are now theoretically subordinate to the FDR, their individual members owe greater allegiance to the FMLN. Moreover, many Marxist front group members have joined their parent guerrilla organizations in the FMLN.
- Alliance representatives abroad whose political orientation is known are predominantly from the ranks of the FMLN. []

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The alliance is aided in carrying on its resistance to the government through the advice, arms, financing, training, and propaganda support it receives from Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Soviet Union. Because of their proximity to El Salvador, Cuba and Nicaragua are the insurgents' most important supporters. Cuba and Nicaragua are both used by the insurgents as meeting places, and Nicaragua has permitted alliance leaders from both the FMLN and the FDR to establish their headquarters and personal residences there. Cuban influence with the insurgents probably extends to some control over individual leaders who travel frequently to Havana, but no evidence exists to establish their subordination to the Cubans as contracted agents. Information on support from the Soviet Union, on the other hand, is not as considerable as the data available on Cuban and Nicaraguan assistance. This lack of information may, in part, reflect Moscow's effort to obscure their relationship with the insurgents. The alliance also has sought and received support from Third World countries and "liberation" groups, such as the Palestine Liberation Organization and

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Basque terrorists. In addition, the alliance has found a receptive audience in Western Europe, the United States, and Canada—mostly among private groups but also with some governments.¹ 

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Terms Related to the Salvadoran Insurgent Alliance

<i>BPR</i>	<i>Popular Revolutionary Bloc</i>
<i>CPD</i>	<i>Farabundo Martí Popular Liberation Front/Revolutionary Democratic Front Political-Diplomatic Commission</i>
<i>DRU</i>	<i>Unified Revolutionary Directorate</i>
<i>ERP</i>	<i>People's Revolutionary Army</i>
<i>FAL</i>	<i>Armed Forces of Liberation</i>
<i>FAPU</i>	<i>United Popular Action Front</i>
<i>FARLP</i>	<i>Popular Liberation Revolutionary Armed Forces</i>
<i>FARN</i>	<i>Armed Forces of National Resistance</i>
<i>FDR</i>	<i>Revolutionary Democratic Front</i>
<i>FMLN</i>	<i>Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front</i>
<i>FPL</i>	<i>Farabundo Martí Popular Liberation Forces</i>
<i>LP-28</i>	<i>Popular Leagues of 28 February</i>
<i>MIPTES</i>	<i>Independent Movement of Salvadoran Professionals and Technicians</i>
<i>MLP</i>	<i>Popular Liberation Movement</i>
<i>MNR</i>	<i>National Revolutionary Movement</i>
<i>MOR</i>	<i>Revolutionary Workers' Movement—Salvador Cayetano Carpio</i>
<i>MPSC</i>	<i>Popular Social Christian Movement</i>
<i>PCES</i>	<i>Communist Party of El Salvador</i>
<i>PRTC</i>	<i>Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers</i>
<i>UDN</i>	<i>National Democratic Union</i> 

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El Salvador: The Insurgent Alliance

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Introduction

The leftist opposition in El Salvador traces its beginnings to the founding of the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES) in the early 1930s and the 1932 Communist-inspired peasant uprising in the western part of the country. After the uprising and the government repression that followed, the proscribed Communist Party engaged for almost 40 years in organization building and political activism that excluded armed action. By the late 1960s, however, PCES radicals were demanding the establishment of a military infrastructure to engage in armed resistance to the government—demands opposed at that time by the majority of PCES leaders.

The 1970s, characterized by an increase in international terrorist acts, saw the emergence in El Salvador of many radical groups that are now part of the

insurgent alliance. All five guerrilla groups discussed in this paper and most of their associated front and party organizations were formed in that decade, during which they committed terrorist acts and instigated and directed civil disobedience.

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The Insurgent Alliance—Membership

The Unified Revolutionary Directorate

Salvadoran guerrilla leaders meeting in Havana in May 1980 formed the DRU (with the help of Cuban and Soviet party officials) because, they were convinced that the success of the Nicaraguan Sandinistas was primarily the result of a unification of the Nicaraguan insurgent factions. (The DRU was initially intended to be the functional equivalent of the Sandinista National

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Significant Events in the Alliance's History

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1970 | <i>Dissident Communist Party members founded the FPL, an action that signaled a clear break with the politically active but nonviolent PCES.</i> |
| 1972 | <i>A group of student terrorists formed the radical ERP.</i> |
| mid-1970s | <i>Radical leftist front organizations began mass demonstrations and civil disobedience. At peak strength in December 1979, the major fronts had 60,000-100,000 members.</i> |
| 1977 | <i>Violence and terrorism increased dramatically (following the presidential election), as front groups took to the streets, engaged in strikes, kidnaped foreign officials and Salvadoran nationals, and occupied foreign embassies.</i> |
| 1979 | <i>After years of rejecting violence, the PCES decided to form its own military wing, the FAL. In December 1979 guerrilla groups began in earnest to unify their insurgency efforts.</i> |
| 1980 | <i>The FDR, the DRU, and the FMLN were established.</i> |
| Jan 1981 | <i>The FMLN launched the "final offensive"—a major military offensive to bring down the government; it failed when an expected uprising by the populace did not follow. Insurgents have since concentrated their efforts in the countryside, actively engaging in Maoist-style guerrilla warfare.</i> |

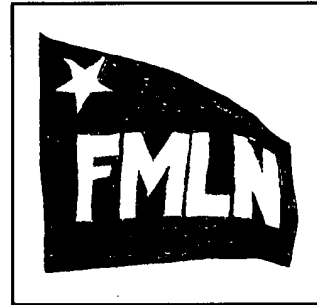
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Directorate. Although both the FMLN and the FDR are members of the DRU, its executive body has always been made up solely of FMLN members—three representatives from each of the five FMLN constituent guerrilla groups.) The insurgents said in an August 1981 news release that the DRU had several subordinate units, including a support staff and an international relations commission. ☐

In practice, the DRU has not really functioned as a viable control organization because of friction among the guerrilla factions. Its inability to implement directives by which all the insurgent groups would be bound was especially apparent at the time of the FMLN's "final offensive" in January 1981 and during the general offensive that took place in the midst of the March 1982 elections for the Constituent Assembly. Some factions gave only lukewarm support for those actions, and one FMLN group, the Farabundo Martí Popular Liberation Forces (FPL), decided not to participate in the 1982 offensive. Moreover, leaders of the various factions have seemed to be selective about attending DRU meetings, and the body has seldom met with representatives of all groups present. ☐

The DRU still exists on paper, and on 14 June 1984 the guerrillas celebrated the fourth anniversary of its official establishment, claiming that the insurgent "politicomilitary organizations took an important step in the formation of the revolutionary vanguard of the Salvadoran people with the creation of the DRU." During the last year and a half, however, decision-making for the alliance seems to have shifted to the FMLN five-member General Command, which is a less unwieldy body. The DRU is seldom mentioned in guerrilla communiques. Insurgent news releases indicate that the General Command signs off on guerrilla policy and propaganda statements. ☐



The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN)

At the May 1980 meeting in Havana the Salvadorans, Cubans, and Soviets also decided on the concept of a coordinating organization for the insurgency, although the FMLN was not formally established until the following November. Its five guerrilla groups, all of which have or have had their headquarters in Nicaragua, are the:

- Farabundo Martí Popular Liberation Forces (FPL).²
- People's Revolutionary Army (ERP).
- Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN).
- Communist Party of El Salvador/Armed Forces of Liberation (PCES/FAL).
- Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers/Popular Liberation Revolutionary Armed Forces (PRTC/FARLP). ☐

The General Command of the FMLN comprises the heads of the five guerrilla units: Leonel González (FPL), Joaquín Villalobos Hueso (ERP), Fermán Cienfuegos (FARN), Jorge Shafik Handal (PCES/FAL), and Roberto Roca (PRTC/FARLP).

² The FMLN and its subordinate FPL were both named after Agustín Farabundo Martí, who founded the PCES in 1930 and was executed by Salvadoran authorities shortly after the beginning of the 1932 peasant uprising. ☐

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Profile of the Insurgent Leaders

Throughout its history the insurgent movement has struggled against the problem of internal strife. Rivalries among the individual leaders of the five guerrilla groups and intense resentment of authority of any kind—a quality central to the rebel personality—have generated serious divisiveness in the movement; but common goals, common political beliefs, common friends, common enemies, and common personal backgrounds have helped hold them together. Joaquín Villalobos, the most powerful of the guerrilla leaders, has emphasized: "Today there aren't even any political differences among the revolutionary organizations, but subjective interest almost demands that differences exist because they are different organizations." []

For the most part, cohesion within the insurgency is obstructed by the personal ambition of the guerrilla leaders. In discussing their differences, these leaders talk of procedural disputes; the overt agenda of disagreements tends to focus on strategic issues concerning the conduct of the revolution. But the covert agenda of "who is going to be in charge" is always operative and always a major issue. We believe that each group leader—and many of their subordinates—considers himself uniquely qualified to control the movement and ultimately to control the destiny of El Salvador. We doubt that this sort of tension will be resolved by existing group processes. []

El Salvador's insurgent leaders are rebellious not only in their politics but in their personalities. They did not emerge full-blown from behind a corporate desk or even a highly disciplined political organization—with the exception of PCES leader Jorge Shafik Handal—to lead an insurrection against the government. Most of them probably rebelled against their parents' discipline and values, and most participated in organized rebellion as university students. They rebelled and continue to rebel against the established government of El Salvador, and many, despite their Marxist-Leninist convictions, have rebelled against the restraints imposed by the PCES. Because rebellion is an integral part of the insurgent

leaders' personal identities, they are unwilling to step aside and let others take charge. []

The leaders of the various groups—with the possible exception of Leonel González, [] [] have a common socioeconomic background. They are of middle- or upper-middle-class origin. All may have attended UES—three during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Characteristically, they were active in political movements during their student days, and their current political beliefs tend to coincide on most major points. All talk publicly and privately about a future socialist (Marxist-Leninist) government for El Salvador. Finally, all of them believe in the philosophical proposition that the end justifies the means, and this principle has been a dominant theme in their activities. For example, they have even executed comrades if they felt the overall goals of the revolution warranted such action. []

Military victory for the insurgents, resulting in the collapse of the government of El Salvador, would provide the most serious test of the ability of the insurgent leaders to function as a cohesive unit. Having devoted their lives to rebelling against the establishment, they—like all revolutionaries—would find it difficult to become the establishment—to become a positive rather than a negative force. In such circumstances, their personal differences would probably intensify, and it would not be surprising to see some of the charismatic guerrillas, such as FARN leader Fermán Cienfuegos, drop by the wayside over the long term, with the more disciplined professionals, such as Jorge Shafik Handal of the PCES and Leonel González of the FPL, dominate. The most likely immediate arrangement, however, would be a joint governing coalition such as currently exists in Nicaragua. Moreover, these new leaders of El Salvador, still oppositional by nature and having eliminated their current enemy, would probably direct most of their energies against an external focus—the United States—seeking to blame this country for El Salvador's problems and at the same time attempting to unify the population. []

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(All have maintained residences in Nicaragua. [redacted] however, [redacted] they are spending more time with their units in El Salvador than they have in the past.) [redacted] guerrilla press statements, indicates that decisionmaking authority for the insurgent alliance now seems to be in the hands of the General Command. Its ability to make and implement decisions has—like that of the DRU—often been hindered, however, by personality conflicts and policy differences among its members. This inability was especially evident before the death in April 1983 of FPL head Salvador Cayetano Carpio, who was the instigator of many disputes, according to a variety of press [redacted]

[redacted] sources. We believe [redacted] that since that time, although differences still remain, the five insurgent groups and their leaders have attempted to move toward greater cooperation; the FMLN General Command now appears to be speaking as the voice of authority for the insurgents. For example, all five of its members have publicly called for discussions with the government, bringing them in line with similar statements by FDR leaders. [redacted]

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Figure 2
Insurgent Fronts and Areas of Concentration



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The Farabundo Martí Popular Liberation Forces.³

The Marxist-Leninist FPL was the largest and most radical of the guerrilla groups until Carpio's death and the resulting schism in the organization. In terms of strength, it now appears to be the second largest (after the ERP); [] estimates in December 1983 put FPL strength at 2,800 to 3,500 members.⁴ We believe, on the basis of [] Embassy reports, that a group of former FPL adherents actually belong to the Revolutionary Workers' Movement-Salvador Cayetano Carpio (MOR), a splinter organization that operates outside the alliance. Available data on MOR strength is conflicting: [] the group comprises about 100 armed insurgents, but the US Embassy reports a Salvadoran leftist as saying that it has about 575 members and sympathizers. []

Since Carpio's death, the FPL's new, more flexible leaders have had some success in tempering the FPL's notorious reputation and its disruptive tactics within the alliance. The group has nonetheless maintained a ruthless urban terrorist network that uses assassination as a weapon in its attempt to gain power. For example, the organization claimed responsibility for the murder of US Navy Lt. Cmdr. Albert Schaufelberger in May 1983. FPL units in the countryside, moreover, have summarily executed military prisoners of war. []

³ Although FPL has been used alternately as the name for both the FPL's military and party arms, the organization often refers to its military wing as the Armed Forces of Popular Liberation (FAPL).

[]

[] the execution of captives is not general FPL policy and may be carried out by units ignoring organization orders. According to []

[] insurgent public statements, the more conciliatory FPL members who have assumed leadership roles in the group condemn the killing of prisoners, believing that such acts generate unfavorable publicity for the insurgent cause.⁵ []

History. The FPL was formed in 1970 by Carpio, who broke with the PCES after having served as its secretary general during 1964-69. []

[] Carpio tenaciously held the view that the FPL was the cutting edge of the revolution and that he was the natural leader of the FMLN—stances that alienated other insurgent leaders. Moreover, [] a variety of Salvadoran and foreign press reports indicate that he clashed over policy with younger fellow guerrilla leaders Joaquín Villalobos (ERP) and Fermán Cienfuegos (FARN). For example, the FPL had always called for a "prolonged popular war" that would concentrate on a gradual development of popular support and a long-term war of attrition. The ERP and FARN, however, argued that frequent insurrectional activity, as set forth by Che Guevara in his *foco* theory of revolution, was the key to achieving victory.⁶ In addition, [], the FPL rejected even the idea of negotiations that would lead to anything less than a complete turnover of power to the insurgent alliance. []

Not all FPL members, however, agreed with Carpio.

[] some

⁵ The FPL has publicly stated that some of these killings have been committed by the MOR or by dissident members of the FPL's urban terrorist command. []

⁶ Guevara stated that guerrilla war should be pursued with the Latin American experience in mind and that it was often unnecessary to wait until all the conditions for revolution were fulfilled. He theorized that dedicated professional revolutionaries could win power by establishing themselves in the most vulnerable zones of national territory—insurrectionary centers or *focos*. The revolution would then spread slowly throughout the country by concentrated actions while winning over the masses, who would eventually join the guerrillas in the final insurrection against the enemy. For a detailed discussion of the *foco* theory, see Régis Debray's *Strategy for Revolution*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1970. []

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young FPL leaders wanted to resolve the continual differences with other guerrilla leaders and pressed Carpio to give way to younger, more flexible individuals. [redacted]

in late 1982 then FPL deputy commander Melida Anaya Montes also agreed with the dissidents. The dispute between Carpio's supporters and his detractors surfaced openly in spring 1983, when Anaya Montes was murdered in Managua, by a group of Carpio's followers. Nicaraguan and Salvadoran insurgent news releases reported that Carpio, distraught at Anaya Montes's assassination by people close to him, committed suicide, also in Managua. [redacted]

[redacted] press reporting, however, indicates that some foreign observers and some members of the insurgent alliance have questioned this account. The new leaders of the FPL publicly say that Carpio actually ordered Anaya Montes's murder, and [redacted] has said that Carpio had her killed because she advocated greater unity within the FMLN and had become more popular than he was. Carpio loyalists claim that the deaths were the unplanned culmination of Cuban plans to disgrace Carpio because the Cubans viewed his activities as disruptive. [redacted]

Leadership. Factionalism between hardline Carpio followers and FPL members who wanted more cooperation with other guerrilla groups intensified after Carpio's death and the selection of more conciliatory leaders in September 1983. At that time Leonel González was elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the organization's party and commander in chief of its armed forces, and Dimas Rodríguez became party second secretary and deputy commander in chief, according to press accounts. Insurgent press releases indicate that the new leaders began taking steps to resolve differences with the leaders of the other FMLN guerrilla groups, an approach staunchly contested by Carpio loyalists. [redacted]

The dispute reached a critical stage in December, when a group of Carpio's followers left the FPL and formed the MOR. [redacted]

[redacted] (The MOR siphoned off

much of the FPL's labor following when a major labor affiliate associated with the FPL front organization—the Popular Revolutionary Bloc—joined the new splinter group.) The military force of the MOR may be composed entirely of former members of the FPL's urban terrorist network in San Salvador who are Carpio loyalists and have publicly rejected the current leadership. The MOR has criticized FMLN policies, and the FMLN, in turn, considers the MOR an outlaw organization. [redacted]

Western press accounts indicate that FPL leader González has experience as an educator and a political organizer. Before becoming the group's head, he spent much of his time at FPL headquarters in Nicaragua, where he dealt with other Salvadoran insurgent factions and was a logistics, political, and military coordinator for FPL activities in El Salvador. He now serves as a member of the Political Commission of the Central Command, the FPL's top body.

[redacted] he has visited Cuba and is pro-Cuban. [redacted]

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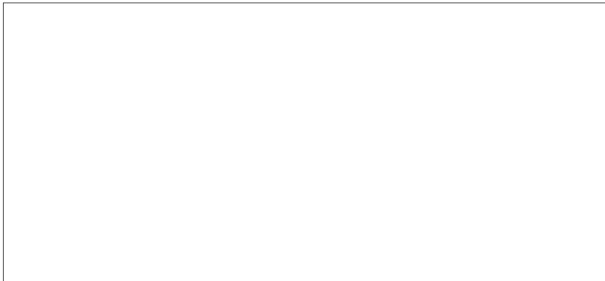
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organization is now the foremost in the insurgency and that other alliance groups should follow their lead. [redacted] both FMLN and 25X1

FDR leaders have complained about the ERP's tendency to act without considering the broader needs of the alliance. Although the ERP says it is a Marxist-Leninist organization, we believe—on the basis of [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] the ERP's history—that it is not strictly tied to orthodox Communist theory and is more flexible than other insurgent factions. ERP policies are more likely to be dictated by available opportunities or potential setbacks than by ideology. Over the years the ERP has emphasized military action and terrorism over political activism. Group members have engaged in assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, and the occupation of government buildings and foreign embassies. On the basis of its performance and its adherence to Che Guevara's *foco* theory, we surmise that the ERP believes that drastic armed attacks will eventually ignite a final insurrection and motivate the people to help overthrow the government. [redacted] 25X1



History. The ERP was founded in 1972 as an urban terrorist organization. In its formative years, it was an eclectic mixture of largely Marxist student radicals and some Christian-socialist militants bent on violence. Some of its members undoubtedly drew part of their early inspiration from Western anarchist terrorist groups, who had gained international attention from their numerous violent acts to disrupt the existing political systems in their countries during the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the early days of the organization, ERP leaders openly expressed ideological sympathy for China and its former ally, Albania. [redacted] 25X1



The People's Revolutionary Army. The ERP has been the most militarily active of the FMLN guerrilla groups, [redacted] 25X1

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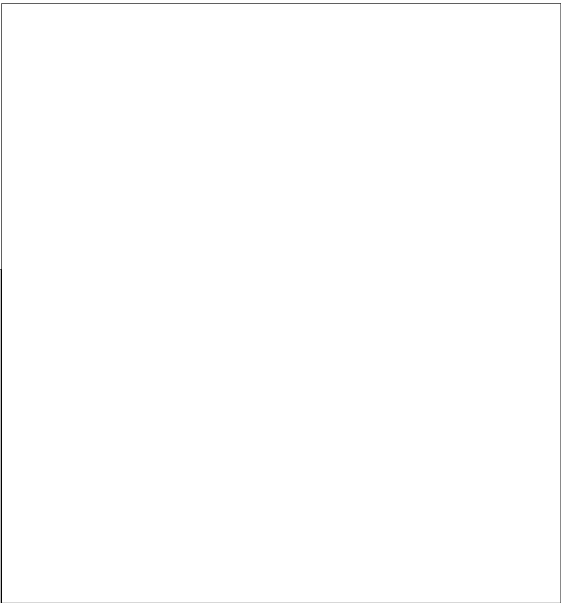
the past year the ERP has probably become the largest FMLN member with 3,000 to 3,500 armed combatants. With Carpio out of the way and the FPL's loss of strength, ERP chief Joaquín Villalobos and other leaders of the group may feel that their

Despite its longtime emphasis on military activism, the ERP has made some attempt at political organizing and propagandizing. In 1977 it created a party organization, the Salvadoran Revolutionary Party (PRS); and a front group, the Popular Leagues of 28 February, to look after these functions. Because of its maverick reputation, the ERP was late to join in plans to unify the insurgency, which began in earnest at the end of 1979. As a result, it had to agree to already 25X1

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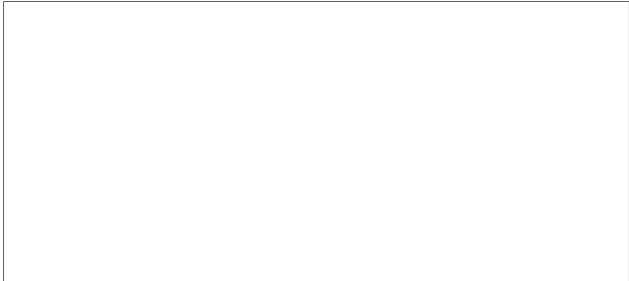
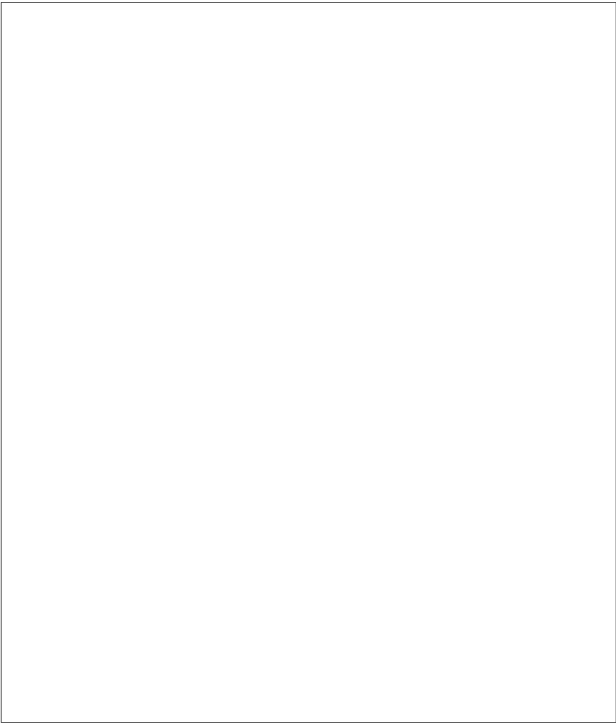
established general guidelines and agreements set down by its fellow organizations and their foreign supporters. In addition, to make the organization more acceptable to its partners in the FMLN, ERP leader Villalobos dissociated himself from the group's earlier excesses and past ideological isolation, ascribing both to early leaders of the organization.



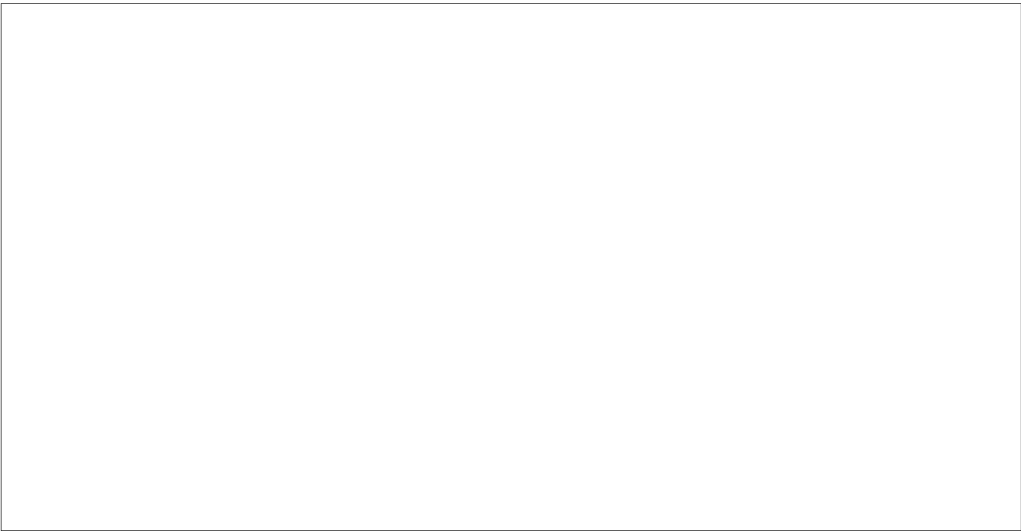
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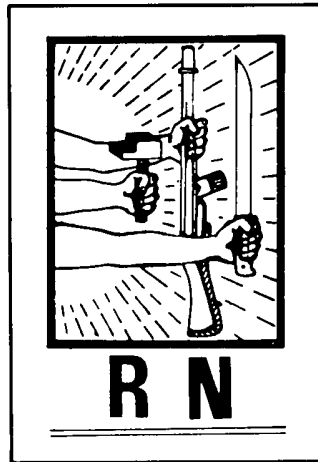
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The Armed Forces of National Resistance. The FARN has a reputation both in El Salvador and internationally as the least doctrinaire and most nationalistic of the five guerrilla factions. Its leader, Fermán Cienfuegos, publicly says that the organization's decisions are based on goals of the insurgency, not on revolutionary theories. For example, the FARN was the principal advocate of the "final offensive" insurrection strategy but now acknowledges the possibility that the war will be long term.

[redacted] Cienfuegos sees negotiations as a useful tactic for strengthening the insurgent position, while continuing the war. [redacted]

[redacted] the FARN has a strength of 1,400 to 1,500 members. [redacted]

History. Shortly before the FARN was established in 1975, a group within the ERP, led by noted poet and former PCES member Roque Dalton, publicly protested ERP emphasis on terrorism and the adverse effect of such actions on the Salvadoran people. The group urged instead a program of organizational work among the masses. Because of this policy dispute the

ERP leadership executed Dalton and possibly other dissidents, and some Western writers maintain that Villalobos himself was the triggerman. ERP members sympathetic to Dalton's policies broke away in protest and formed the FARN and its party organization, the National Resistance (RN).⁷ To pursue its goal of intensified political work among the masses, the FARN affiliated itself in 1975 with the already existing United Popular Action Front, which is now the FARN front organization. [redacted]

[redacted] disagreements with other guerrilla groups over issues such as the FARN's willingness to negotiate with the government and the animosity between FARN leaders and the heads of other insurgent factions have caused considerable friction in the alliance. For example, the FARN left the DRU in 1980 in the aftermath of one wide-ranging dispute—concerning the FARN's opposition to decisionmaking on the basis of the principle of democratic centralism, its advocacy of an early "final offensive," and its opposition to FPL attempts to dominate the insurgency. [redacted]

[redacted] the FARN returned to the DRU in October of that year after Cuba mediated the differences. [redacted]

The FARN has also had internal difficulties. [redacted]

[redacted] a serious dispute over leadership and policy, brewing since the failure of the January 1981 "final offensive," erupted the following June at a meeting of the organization in Havana. FARN dissidents claimed that the vote for a new central committee of the organization was illegal. They also reportedly argued against the FARN policy of giving military matters precedence over political matters, comparing that policy to one in the ERP that caused FARN members to break away. The dissidents lost the dispute, and their leader, José Alberto Ramos (an FMLN leader who may have once been a DRU member) was expelled from the organization.⁸ [redacted]

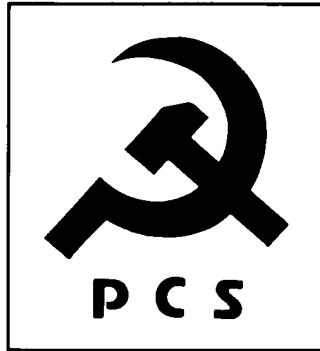
⁷ For a detailed discussion of this incident, see *Dissent*, Winter 1982. [redacted]

⁸ In March 1982 the US press reported that Ramos was living in Managua. [redacted]

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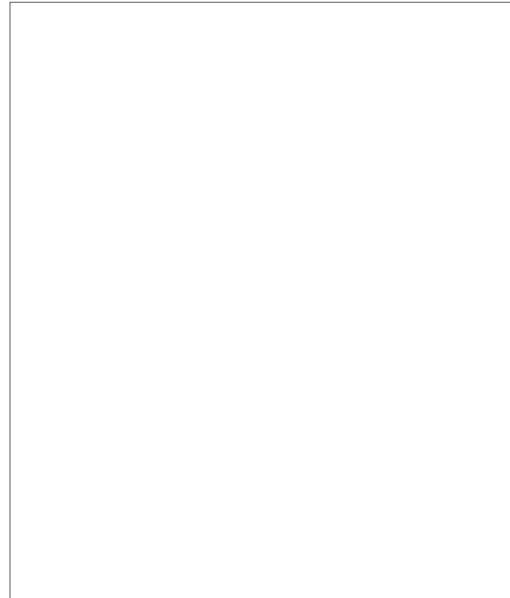


The Communist Party of El Salvador/Armed Forces of Liberation. The military arm of the Moscow-supported PCES, the FAL is the guerrilla group with the closest relationship to the Soviet Union. With an estimated armed strength of 1,100 to 1,300 members, the group is militarily one of the weakest in the alliance. Shafik Handal heads both the PCES and the FAL. []

the USSR and Cuba would like to see the PCES/FAL dominate any future government coalition established by the guerrillas, and much of Handal's and the PCES/FAL's prominence is due to continued Soviet and Cuban support. Moreover, in May 1983 the Soviet Union and Cuba urged the other FMLN insurgent factions to align themselves with PCES decisionmaking because the party had the strongest Marxist credentials of any of the groups, []

We believe, however, that the five insurgent factions still make their own decisions regarding their activities and that the PCES/FAL decides on overall FMLN policies jointly with the other groups. In the event of a guerrilla victory, the strongest military factions—the ERP and the FPL—would probably attempt to play the major role in a government the insurgents established despite the preferences of the Soviets and Cubans. The PCES undoubtedly would also have a significant role in a government coalition because of the active participation of its military elements in the insurgency. []

History. During the 1960s and most of the 1970s the PCES was reluctant to engage in military actions.



The party leadership reversed that policy, however, after a 1979 conference in Havana, at which the Cubans and the Soviets told Handal and the other party leaders to join the insurgency. Since then Handal has fully supported military action, publicly justifying the militant policy of the PCES by citing Lenin's dictum of shifting tactics to fit the circumstances. []

The PCES/FAL brought to the alliance political and organizational expertise and party contacts that it had developed over the years with a broad spectrum of Salvadoran society and Communist nations. For example, its front organization, the National Democratic Union, which was established in 1968, has had well-developed ties to many non-Marxist Salvadoran political organizations demanding social, political, and economic reform. In addition, the party's ties to foreign Communist parties have opened doors for FMLN leaders, allowing them to use the extensive propaganda machinery available to Moscow and its allies. Handal and the PCES/FAL also have had a major role in acquiring arms and aid for the guerrillas from abroad. For example, []

[] in mid-1980 Handal traveled to Cuba, the USSR, Vietnam, East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Ethiopia to successfully request aid, especially arms, for the "final offensive." []

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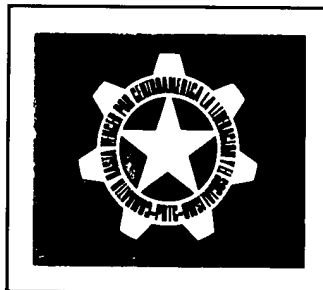
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The Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers/Popular Liberation Revolutionary Armed Forces. The military arm of the PRTC, the FARLP is the smallest and least known of the organizations that make up the FMLN. [redacted]

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[redacted] it has about 700 to 850 armed combatants.

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[redacted] the PRTC/FARLP maintains close ties to Cuba and Nicaragua. Cuba appears to be the organization's main foreign adviser. [redacted]

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[redacted] at one time it may have had links to the Soviet Union through one of its founders, Fabio Castillo, a former Salvadoran presidential candidate who has had considerable contact with the Soviets. On the basis of this contact [redacted]

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[redacted] we believe that Castillo is a Communist. [redacted]

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[redacted] the PRTC/FARLP suffers from organizational problems and an inability to decide on its overall political and military strategies. According to the US Embassy, the most recent disagreement has occurred over a program of political assassination—possibly not sanctioned by the PRTC/FARLP's top leadership—that is being carried out by the organization's terrorist unit in San Salvador. In early 1984 that unit publicly claimed responsibility for the murders of several far-right politicians and a labor leader in San Salvador. [redacted]

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History. The PRTC was founded as a regional party organization in Costa Rica in 1976 and has branches in all Central American countries. The most active branch is in El Salvador. Until early 1983 the party and its military forces in the FMLN were both called the PRTC. Since then, however, the military forces have been referred to as the FARLP. The front organization of the PRTC, the Popular Liberation Movement, was formed in 1979. [redacted]

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Because of the PRTC's relative obscurity in its formative years and Havana's lack of information about it, the group was not well known to Cuba when it first joined the insurgency. Moreover, we believe that the Cubans themselves may have avoided contact with the PRTC because of the group's Trotskyite bent. By 1982, however, Havana's ties to the PRTC appeared well established, and [redacted]

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[redacted] a meeting of the PRTC regional directorate (which would have included representatives from El Salvador) was held in Cuba in April 1982. [redacted]
[redacted]

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Leadership. Unlike the other FMLN groups, the PRTC/FARLP has had Nicaraguans in top leadership posts, [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted] The PRTC/FARLP may suffer internal problems similar to those of its fellow FMLN groups. [redacted]

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[redacted] the organization's onetime military chief and second in command, Jacinto Sánchez, deserted in mid-1983 and came to the United States with organization funds. [redacted]

Roberto Roca, whose true name is Francisco Jovel Urquilla, heads both the PRTC in El Salvador and the FARLP. [redacted]

[redacted]

The Revolutionary Democratic Front

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The FDR is a political and diplomatic organization and is not involved in military activities. It was established by Marxist guerrilla leaders and non-Marxist political leaders in early 1980 to bring together five Marxist front groups and three small non-Marxist political groupings. The Marxist groups had been operating under a loosely knit, now largely moribund unit called the Revolutionary Coordinator of the Masses, which the insurgents had created in February 1980 to provide central direction to the guerrilla front groups; at the same time, non-Marxist groups were under an organization called the Demo-

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cratic Front, which had been created only a few weeks earlier. []

The Marxist groups of the FDR consist of the following:

- The Popular Revolutionary Bloc, a militant front organization of the FPL, was founded in 1975. Before 1980 it had 50,000 to 70,000 members. Its largest labor organization has now joined the break-away MOR.
- The Popular Leagues of 28 February is a violent front group of the ERP, now largely integrated with it. It is a small coalition of about 1,000 students, teachers, and peasants.
- The United Popular Action Front, created in 1974, subsequently became the front group of the FARN. It had a membership of 12,000 to 20,000 before 1980.
- The National Democratic Union is the front group of the PCES. Formed in 1968, it has been recognized by the Salvadoran Government as the only legitimate Marxist party. Many of its leaders have joined the FAL or left El Salvador.
- The Popular Liberation Movement (MLP) was created in 1979 as the political front for the PRTC. Many of its small membership of students and teachers have been incorporated into the FARLP; others serve in diplomatic positions for the insurgent alliance. []

The non-Marxist groups in the FDR are:

- The National Revolutionary Movement, a small social democratic party founded in 1964 and a member of the Socialist International.
- The Popular Social Christian Movement, a group of former members of El Salvador's Christian Democratic Party who broke away from the party in early 1980.

- The Independent Movement of Salvadoran Professionals and Technicians, formed in early 1980 as a moderate socialist organization with an original membership of several hundred, including doctors, lawyers, engineers, and writers. []
[] in 1981, however, that the PCES had effective control of the group. []
[]

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Although the FDR appears to have a broader political base than the FMLN, it has lacked direction to carry out its internal political responsibilities almost from its inception. (Most domestic political activities are carried out by the FMLN.) Many FDR leaders, particularly non-Marxists, left the country in 1980 following a loss of popular support and the murder of FDR members and sympathizers by government security forces and extreme rightwing terrorists. Moreover, it has no representatives on the DRU. []

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Although its domestic political base is virtually nonexistent, the FDR retains some significance because of the international visibility enjoyed by its non-Marxist members. Even hardline, Marxist-Leninist FMLN leaders recognize the value of these individuals to the alliance—that is, their acceptance abroad as political spokesmen for the alliance and their ability to gain sympathy for the guerrilla cause among non-Communist groups in Western countries. []

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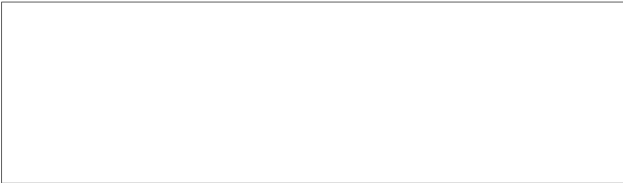
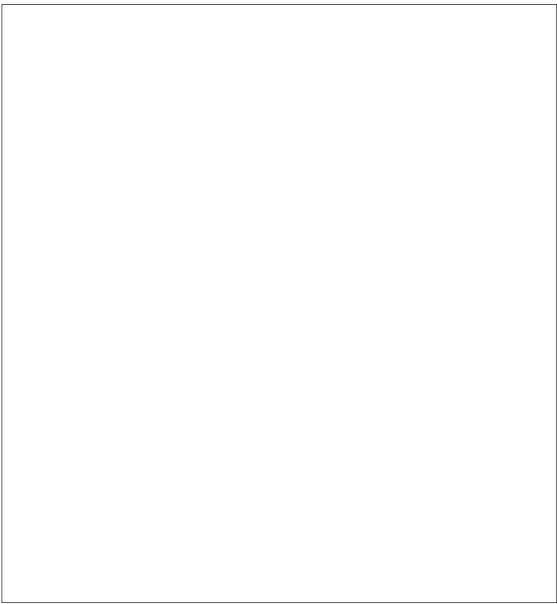
Leadership. Guillermo Manuel Ungo, president of the FDR since 1980, is a striking example of a non-Marxist who lends credibility to the guerrillas' cause in the international arena. His democratic leftist views are well known, and he has excellent contacts among international leftist organizations. Despite his FDR post, he has no real power in the insurgent alliance, but he continues to lend himself to the cause,

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International Activities

Foreign Support ⁹



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Cuba is the alliance's most important external supporter. It has provided political and military training and arms to the guerrillas. Leaders of the alliance often travel to Havana to consult with Cuban officials [redacted] and many have had personal contact with Fidel Castro. The insurgents also hold important organizational meetings in Cuba. Through these contacts they have the benefit of Cuban insight and guidance that sometimes takes the form of operational planning. [redacted]

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The Cubans have criticized significant failures of the insurgents, and [redacted] they sometimes have withheld support in an effort to bring about policy changes concerning unity and tactics. Although Havana's influence with the alliance may extend to control over individual leaders, little evidence is available to suggest that any of them are contracted agents of the Cubans. [redacted] [redacted] however, that even a reported non-Marxist like FDR President Ungo is heavily influenced by the Cubans. [redacted] the rumor is that "Havana doesn't own Ungo, but it can certainly rent him." [redacted]

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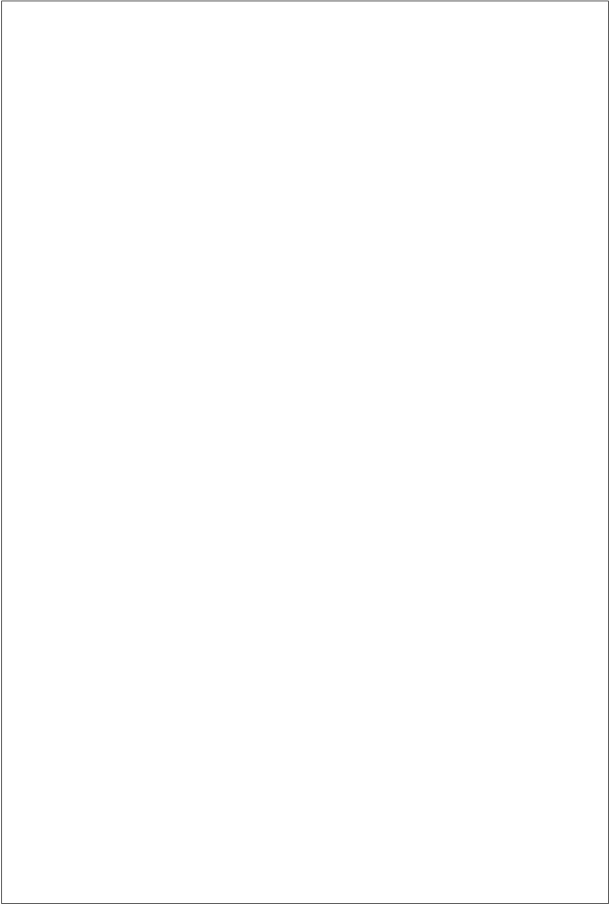
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Nicaragua's influence with the guerrillas is second to that of Cuba; its geographic location and the Marxist-Leninist orientation of its leaders are major reasons for its access to the insurgents. Besides providing the locale for the headquarters of FMLN groups and the



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residences of their top leaders, Nicaragua supplies the guerrillas with training, arms—mostly transshipped from other countries—and sites for meetings. Moreover, headquarters and offices of FDR officials have been located in Managua, although [redacted] since the beginning of 1984, many FDR representatives have left Nicaragua in order to decrease foreign criticism about their dependency on the Sandinistas. [redacted]

The Soviet role in support of the insurgency is not as direct as that of the Cubans and Nicaraguans, although Moscow's assistance to the guerrillas has been established [redacted]

[redacted]. The Soviet Union provides advice, training, and financial and propaganda assistance to the Salvadorans. Moscow has also been involved in the acquisition and shipment of arms to the guerrillas, but to obscure involvement, the Soviet role in arms support has been mostly indirect. Moscow has asked allies—including East European countries—to provide the guerrillas with arms. [redacted]

Although Soviet support for the alliance as a whole is difficult to document, the Soviets [redacted] train PCES members and give the organization financial support. [redacted]

[redacted] the Soviets also train FPL members. The PCES/FAL is the alliance member most responsive to Soviet dictates, but militarily it is one of the weakest groups in the insurgency. [redacted]

[redacted] the stronger military organizations—despite their Marxist-Leninist orientation—have shown some disinclination to receive guidance from the Soviets and the Cubans, although they readily accept and seek material support. All the guerrilla groups have or have had in the past leaders who were once official Communist Party members. We have no information, however, that identifies any of them—other than PCES leaders—as current party members or as being directly tied to Moscow. [redacted]

The insurgent alliance receives support from some Third World countries. For example, Vietnam has supplied the Salvadoran insurgents with US weapons captured after the fall of the Saigon government, and [redacted]

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FMLN/FDR Political-Diplomatic Commission (CPD)

In January 1981 the DRU established the CPD to serve as the basis for a future government of the guerrillas and to ensure that FMLN member groups had a voice in the alliance's diplomatic activities. (At that time diplomatic activities were being supervised primarily by FDR officials.) Since the failure of the "final offensive" in January 1981, the alliance has tabled the concept of the CPD as a future government and today is concerned mainly with making international diplomatic overtures. [redacted]

CPD membership is heavily weighted in favor of the extreme left, as evidenced by its top leadership. Five FMLN leaders and two FDR officials compose the commission's executive directorate: Marxist-Leninists Salvador Ricardo Samayoa Leiva (FPL), Ana María Guadalupe Martínez Menéndez (ERP), José Napoleón Rodríguez Ruíz (FARN), Mario Orlando Aguiñada Carranza (PCES), and Fabio Castillo Figueroa (PRTC) and democratic leftists Héctor Francisco Oqueli Colindres (FDR) and Rubén Ignacio Zamora Rivas (FDR). [redacted]

Hanoi also established training programs in Vietnam for all of the FMLN guerrilla groups. [redacted]

[redacted] the insurgents may also have obtained US weapons from Ethiopia. [redacted]

[redacted] the guerrillas have received arms from Libya and financial assistance from Iraq. [redacted]

The Salvadorans also receive support from and provide assistance to other insurgent groups in Guatemala and Honduras. In addition, the guerrillas maintain relations with "liberation" groups. [redacted]

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**International Spokesmen**

Because of the external support it receives, the alliance has been able to carry on a comprehensive international campaign, both through the constant travel of FMLN and FDR officials and through the assignment of representatives abroad—FMLN officials publicly claim that the alliance has assigned representatives to more countries than the Salvadoran

Government has. The insurgents maintain a presence in the capitals of most West European nations, selected Latin American countries, the United States, Canada, and several African countries (see figure 3). Moreover, about 75 local solidarity committees exist in more than 60 countries. Through its diplomatic initiatives, the alliance has gained worldwide attention for what is essentially an internal Salvadoran problem. 

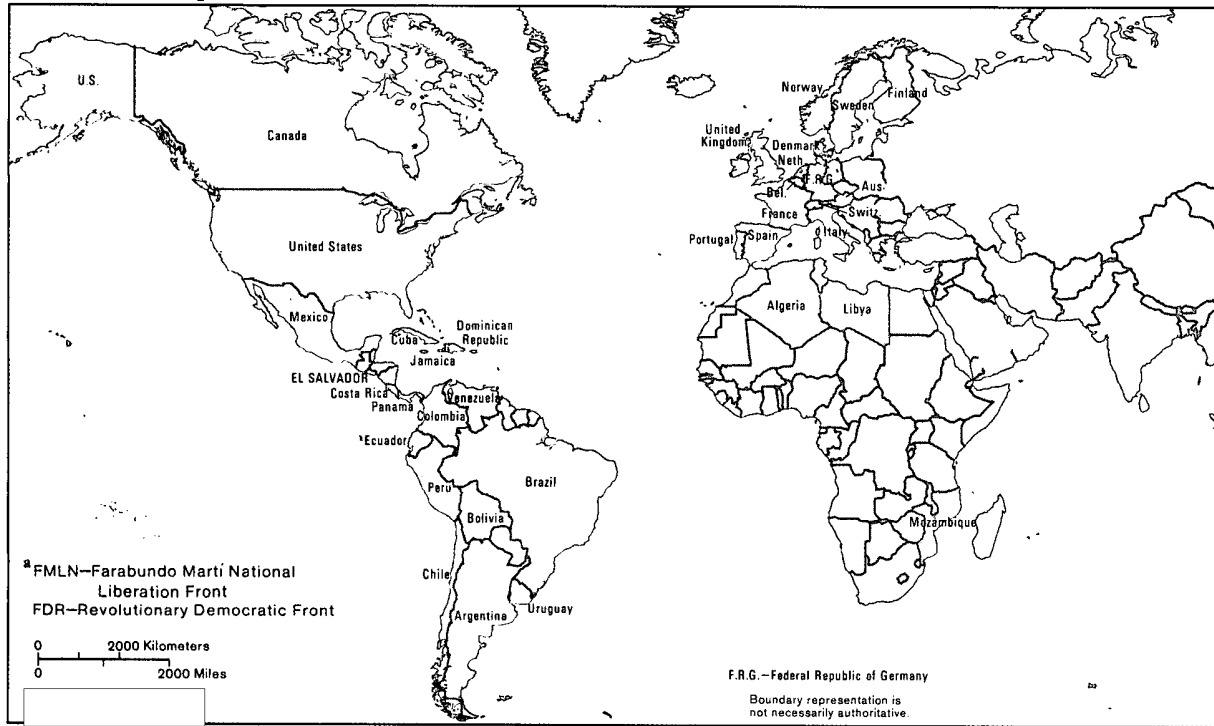
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Figure 3
FMLN/FDR^a Representatives Abroad



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FMLN/FDR Representatives Abroad^a

North America

Chief Representative
Héctor Oqueli Colindres, MNR
United States
Washington, D.C.
Francisco Altschul, MPSC
Alberto Arene, MPSC
Arnoldo Ramos
New York City
(Fr.) Rafael Moreno
Canada
Dina Mendoza, FARN

Western Europe

Chief Representative
(Fr.) Luis de Sebastián
Austria
Francisco Herrera
Belgium
Roberto Castro, FPL
Roberto Guillén
Federal Republic of Germany
Luis Leandro Uzquiano, MPSC
France
Ruth Argandona, ERP
Ana María Echeverría, ERP
Roberto López, ERP
César Martí, ERP
Antonio Martínez Uribe, PCES
Iberian Peninsula (Spain and
Portugal)
Enrique Rubio
Italy
Unknown
Netherlands
Unknown
Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden,
Denmark, Finland)
Gabriel Lara
Switzerland
Roberto Cordero, PCES
Francisco Galindo Vélez
United Kingdom
Unknown

**Mexico, Central America,
and Caribbean**

Chief Representatives
Eduardo Calles, MIPTES
Guillermo Manuel Ungo, MNR
Rubén Zamora, MPSC
Costa Rica
Carlos Alberto Molina, MIPTES
Rolando Elías Julián Belloso, ERP
Jorge Alberto Villacorta, MPSC
Cuba
Pedro Fuentes
Margarita González, ERP
Norma Guevara, PCES
Andrés Martínez, FPL
Silvia Martínez
Jorge Rodríguez
Dominican Republic
and Jamaica
Unknown
Eastern Caribbean
Juan Ramón Cardona
Mexico
José Salvador Arias Peñate, MPSC
Enrique Guatemala García, ERP
José Antonio Hernández, FARN
Benito Tovar, FPL
Aronetta Díaz de Zamora, MPSC
Panama
Freddy Guandique Rodríguez, PCES
José Francisco Marroquín, MNR
Alfredo del Tránsito Monge, PCES
Jaime Suárez, FARN

South America

Chief Representative
Fidelina Martínez, FARN
Argentina, Bolivia, Chile,
Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay
Francisco Díaz Rodríguez, MPSC
Brazil
René Moreno
Colombia
Carlos Calles
Venezuela
Gerardo Godoy, MNR
Calixto Zelaya

Africa

Chief Representative
Marisol Galindo Toledo, ERP
Algeria
Unknown
Libya
Nelson Arrietta, FPL
Mozambique
Jorge Arturo Palencia

^a Representatives to Nicaragua, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe are not listed. Many military and political representatives of the insurgent alliance are located in Nicaragua, however. Although no names of FMLN/FDR officials assigned in Bloc countries are currently available, the region is said to be the responsibility of the Communist Party of El Salvador.



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The FMLN/FDR Political-Diplomatic Commission (CPD) is the top diplomatic organization of the alliance. Its officials carry out key international diplomatic initiatives, especially regarding a negotiated solution to the war. No evidence exists, however, to indicate that the CPD or any other organization in the alliance is responsible for appointing overseas representatives. We surmise that each member group may assign its own representatives to specific countries and that member groups may have to reach joint decisions about critical posts or regions when questions of jurisdiction arise. ☐

Official representatives and traveling spokesmen aggressively seek out foreign government and party officials, legislators, members of the media, and private citizens who are, according to a variety of press and Embassy reports, often sympathetic to their cause and accept at face value the information they provide. On the other hand, reports from several US embassies in Western Europe indicate that many government officials there are well aware that the non-Marxist spokesmen of the FDR have little power in the alliance and that the Marxist-Leninist military leaders of the FMLN are its major decisionmakers. ☐

The alliance has proved adept at using both Salvadoran and non-Salvadoran Roman Catholic priests, attractive females, human rights activists, intellectuals, and sophisticated Salvadoran guerrilla commanders in both official and nonofficial capacities to project the image of an insurgency dedicated to achieving social justice. For example:

- The alliance's chief official in Western Europe, Luis de Sebastián, is a Jesuit priest.
- A known guerrilla and terrorist, the attractive Ana Guadalupe Martínez, figures prominently in alliance diplomatic overtures.
- Another female, Marianella García Villas, whose death in El Salvador in 1983 caused a great stir in Western European countries because of her reputation as a human rights activist, was a high-ranking official of the extreme left.

- Roberto Armijo Navarette, the alliance representative in Paris from 1980 until late 1983, is a noted Salvadoran writer and poet.

- Many Western officials and newsmen, after contacts with guerrilla commanders such as FARN leader Fermán Cienfuegos and PRTC/FARLP chief Roberto Roca, come away impressed with their moderation, social consciousness, and lack of ideological commitment. ☐

The international press often labels the overseas representatives of the alliance as moderates, and the presence of FDR leaders Guillermo Ungo and Rubén Zamora, once legitimate leaders of democratic opposition parties in El Salvador, lends credibility to that image. Both men are frequent spokesmen for the alliance because they are generally well received in forums such as the Socialist International. ☐

The insurgent alliance had considerable early success in its international campaign to gain legitimacy. For example, in June 1980 the Socialist International voted to support the FDR, and in August 1981 Mexico and France issued a joint statement recognizing the FMLN/FDR as a "representative political force" in El Salvador. Several other countries subsequently indicated support for the FDR. US diplomats have reported since 1982, however, that some foreign officials have questioned the information given to them by alliance representatives about internal Salvadoran events. Moreover, we believe that if the new administration of President Duarte is able to govern effectively and reduce substantially the human rights abuses, the perception of El Salvador will change in the West, taking away a major propaganda issue from the insurgent representatives. Thus, it will be more difficult for them to find receptive audiences in Western capitals. ☐

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