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**EL SALVADOR: Status Report**

*The repercussions of the assassination of Archbishop Romero-- including cabinet resignations and strong international criticism-- is eroding the junta's legitimacy.*

Three cabinet officials--two of whom are prominent Christian Democrats--resigned Thursday and left the country because of the government's failure to curb rightwing violence. Their departure could prompt more defections from the government.

//Extremist violence continues, but increasingly aggressive search operations by security forces are taking a toll on the left. One leftist guerrilla group may have decided to suspend activities, and the propaganda campaign of the radical front organization has been seriously hampered.//

//The left also may be influenced by advice which sees Romero's killing as a rightwing ploy to draw the left into an armed showdown with the military. reportedly has counseled against street demonstrations for the time being.//

Nonetheless, some radical elements--which have already accused the US of complicity in Romero's murder--probably intend to turn the massive funeral procession planned for tomorrow into an antigovernment demonstration.

The assassination of Romero has hardened international opinion against the junta. At its meeting in Santo Domingo this week, the Socialist International formally condemned both the Salvadoran Government and US support for the junta. Nicaragua's withdrawal of its Ambassador may presage a formal diplomatic break--if major violence persists; Mexico apparently is contemplating a similar move. The possibility of significant aid to the junta from Latin American and European countries appears increasingly remote.

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