

Wire #1
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
March 29, 1982

END U.S. MILITARY
INVOLVEMENT IN EL SALVADOR

Dear Colleague:

Last week the Washington Post published the results of a poll showing that 6 of 10 Americans (60%) feel that the United States has gone too far by sending 55 military advisors to El Salvador, and 7 of 10 Americans (70%) oppose President Reagan's plans to send more military equipment and weapons there. It is now time for Congress to respond to the public's call for a halt to the escalation of U.S. military involvement in El Salvador.

On March 8, we sponsored H.J.Res. 426 to end military assistance for El Salvador. To date, 25 more Members have voiced their support for this resolution which prohibits arms, military advisors, and military training for El Salvador unless expressly authorized by Congress.

The Administration has refused to eliminate U.S. military involvement as an option. We believe, however, that a political settlement to the conflict in El Salvador will not be achieved through the use of arms. The only way to promote a political settlement is by eliminating military assistance as an option left to the sole discretion of the Administration. All other avenues have either failed or are doomed to failure unless Congress acts swiftly.

Those Members who have already cosponsored the resolution are listed on the reverse side. Please join us in this effort by calling extension 52601 to add your name as a cosponsor.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BROWN

PHILLIP BURTON

JOHN CONYERS

DON EDWARDS

ROBERT KASTENMEIER

BENJAMIN S. ROSENTHAL

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

April 1, 1982

Dear Colleague:

We all anxiously watched as the election in El Salvador unfolded on March 28. First reports of the huge voter turnout were encouraging, but the results of those elections are cause for great concern.

The attached article from the New York Times, Wednesday March 31, 1982, points out the implications of the outcome of Sunday's elections in El Salvador. Congress must come to terms with the fact that the fighting will not stop; that it may escalate. Mr. d'Aubission has promised to rid the countryside of opposition within three months using every tool at his disposal. The United States cannot participate in the wholesale bloodshed that Mr. d'Aubission's coalition intends to pursue.

Two weeks ago the Washington Post published the results of a poll showing that 6 of 10 Americans (60%) feel that the United States has gone too far by sending 55 military advisors to El Salvador, and 7 of 10 Americans (70%) oppose President Reagan's plans to send more military equipment and weapons there. It is now time for Congress to respond to the public's call for a halt to the escalation of U.S. military involvement in El Salvador.

On March 8, we sponsored H.J.Res. 426 to end military assistance for El Salvador. To date, 26 more Members have voiced their support for this resolution which prohibits arms, military advisors, and military training for El Salvador unless expressly authorized by Congress. We urge you to consider carefully the attached article and join us as a co-sponsor of H.J.Res. 426.

Those Members who have already cosponsored the resolution are listed on the reverse side. Please join us in this effort by calling extension 52601 to add your name as cosponsor.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BROWN

PHILLIP BURTON

JOHN CONYERS

DON EDWARDS

ROBERT KASTENMEIER

BENJAMIN S. ROSENTHAL

1. Joe Moakley
2. James Oberstar
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Next, in El Salvador

By Tommie Sue Montgomery

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The Reagan Administration endorsed El Salvador's elections for a constituent assembly in order to legitimate President José Napoleón Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party. The elections, however, ended up legitimating Roberto d'Aubuisson and his extreme right-wing Arena Party. However pleased the Administration may be by the voter turnout, the success of four right-wing parties and the possibility that the Christian Democrats may be completely excluded from the new government reduces to shambles the rationale behind Mr. Reagan's policy in El Salvador.

The strong showing of Mr. d'Aubuisson's Arena Party, which came out of nowhere to run a strong second and challenge the Christian Democrats for control of the assembly, guarantees the death of the social and economic reforms supported by the Christian Democratic Party — once the centerpiece of the United States' hopes for resolving the social and economic problems that gave rise to the civil war. By strengthening Mr. d'Aubuisson, who headed the National Guard's intelligence service during the 1970's, it will also embolden the army's most repressive officers.

With no one party gaining a clear majority, the balance of power is now in the hands of two small right-wing parties — the National Conciliation Party or the Democratic Action Party, or both. They already have said that if the Christian Democratic Party wishes to be included in a coalition, it must back off from its professed commitment to the economic and agrarian reforms already on the books and forego any extension of those

reforms. No matter what happens to Mr. Duarte, the more conservative National Conciliation Party already has indicated that it is more ideologically comfortable with Arena than with the Christian Democrats.

Should that alignment change — that is, should there be a coalition between the National Conciliation Party and the Christian Democrats — it must be assumed that the United States Embassy is moving behind the scenes to try to guarantee that the Christian Democrats and Mr. Duarte will continue to provide a facade for the military dictatorship.

A coalition between Arena and the National Conciliation Party would immediately complicate life for the White House because the continued presence of the Christian Democrats in the Government is crucial to maintaining some support for the Salvadoran regime in Congress, among such countries as Venezuela and Costa Rica, and with an increasingly skeptical public at home.

The possibility of Mr. Duarte's departure and the subsequent emergence of an extremist government would make it very difficult for Mr. Reagan to secure Congressional approval for his proposed \$225 million in additional economic and military assistance to the regime.

Whatever the shape of the final coal-

ition, El Salvador may eventually have what United States officials have called a "legitimate government," but it will hardly be "moderate and reformist."

Ambassador Deane R. Hinton's fanciful hope that power would make Mr. d'Aubuisson more flexible and pragmatic is about as realistic as the hope that the guerrillas will lay down their arms. Mr. d'Aubuisson founded the White Warriors Union, a death squad, twice attempted in 1980 (with the blessing of Minister of Defense Jose Guillermo Garcia) to carry out a coup that would have deposed Mr. Duarte, and has been accused of masterminding the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. He now appears to be the latest recipient of the benediction bestowed on Anastasio Somoza Garcia, President of Nicaragua from 1936 to 1956, by Franklin D. Roosevelt: "He may be a bastard, but he's our bastard."

A coalition between Arena and the National Conciliation Party, however, could lead to one of several other developments. One is that a compromise with the Christian Democrats would be reached whereby Mr. Duarte and Christian Democratic officials such as Foreign Minister Fidel Chávez Mena would go, but other, more conservative Christian Democrats would be brought into the government.

Another possibility is a Guatemalan-

style coup d'etat, possibly led by an officer or junta member who has no love for either Mr. Garcia or Mr. d'Aubuisson, that would keep Mr. Duarte and company in the Government.

However the current turmoil settles, three facts will not go away:

- The Christian Democrats have been seriously, perhaps fatally, weakened.
- The same army that has been running the country for the last half century is still in control.
- There is still a civil war going on.

In recent weeks, and again since the election, we have heard rumblings from various Reagan Administration officials concerning the possibility of negotiations. But if the extreme right comes to power, who will conduct negotiations? Mr. d'Aubuisson has pledged to eliminate the guerrillas within three months, using all available means, including napalm.

Meanwhile, the security forces, who have long considered Mr. d'Aubuisson their man, may not wait for the constituent assembly to convene but simply unleash their own blood bath, massacring anyone, Christian Democrats included, suspected of harboring left-of-center political sympathies.

Sometime after the euphoria is gone, the Reagan Administration, if it is determined to help resolve the civil war, will still have to come to terms, one way or the other, with the leftist opposition forces. The elections have not changed that.

Tommie Sue Montgomery, a political scientist, is author of the forthcoming book, "Revolution in El Salvador."