

# El Salvador PROCESO

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## *Historic vote in the Senate (editorial)*

After ten years of uninterrupted and unconditional military aid, the U.S. Senate has finally resolved to withhold and condition the funds which the administration has used to support the successive governments and, especially, armed forces of El Salvador. Although in the immediate run, the measure will not substantially alter the course of the conflict and the U.N.- sponsored negotiating process, and the withheld aid could also eventually be restored depending upon President Bush's evaluation of how the conditions placed upon it are being met, it certainly reflects important judgments--and carries serious repercussions--on the nature and achievements of U.S. policy toward El Salvador, as well as indicating a new policy direction.

Without a doubt, the posthumous work and service of the massacred Jesuits is behind this radical turn of events. It is not merely that their murders are the outcome and trademark of ten costly and tragic years of a U.S. policy aimed at "professionalizing" and "democratizing" the Armed Forces. What really stands out is what ten months of investigations have produced: the Armed Forces' shameful spectacle of complicity and coverup.

The fact that the shady network of military crime and coverup has been so completely revealed is also thanks to the fact that the UCA massacre incited the direct involvement of a special task force of the U.S. Congress to monitor the case, a development which was partially responsible for the Senate vote. Without the diligent and impartial work of the Moakley Task Force, the top military chiefs would not have been forced to testify and expose themselves before the public, an unprecedented step in and of itself. Even more importantly, it revealed how U.S. policy was behind their corrupt and criminal impunity. Convincing proof of this is the fact that even in such a public and

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