

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION



SECTION OF THE AMERICAS

1506 Race Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19102, U.S.A.

Telephone: (215) 563-0757

Cable: AMERFRIENDS

28 March, 1980

10 LA CA
El Salvador Proj
Romero, Archbishop
Oscar

Clerk
BARRETT HOLLISTER

Executive Secretary
HERBERT M. HADLEY

Treasurer
HOWARD W. BARTRAM

Assistant Clerks
DAVID BILLS
GORDON BROWNE
ANN COPE
MARGARET JUMP

Midwest Office
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P. O. Box 235
Plainfield, Ind. 46168

Latin American Office
LOIDA FERNANDEZ
Casa de los Amigos
Ignacio Mariscal 132
Mexico (1), D.F., Mexico

World Office
London, England

European Office
Edinburgh, Scotland

African Office
Nairobi, Kenya

Loida Fernandez
Associate Secretary, FWCC
Casa de los Amigos
Ignacio Mariscal 132
Mexico 1, D.F. MEXICO

cc: Barry Hollister (in Sweden)
William Barton, FWCC London
Robert Rumsey, FWCC Plainfield
Bain Davis, FWCC Philadelphia
Robert Lyon, Int'l Affairs C'ttee.
✓ Dick Erstad, AFSC Philadelphia
Ed Snyder, FCNL Washington

Dear Loida:

COMMUNICATIONS FOLLOWING THE ASSASSINATION OF ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO

Your phone call on March 25th was very timely, relevant to expression by FWCC on the untimely tragic death of Archbishop Romero in El Salvador. Bain Davis was in our office that day, and he was able to confer with AFSC Latin America staff here about their response to the loss of this brave champion of human rights and justice in that Central American country. For me, one who is not able to keep up with events in all parts of the world, this conferring brought a copy of the letter written by Archbishop Romero to President Carter in mid-February.

You were quite right in telling Friends in Mexico that you are not able to send messages on behalf of "Friends in Latin America" in situations like this, nor would it seem right from the FWCC Latin America Program office to send a message in the name of FWCC. But I'm glad that you have prompted us to do something in the name of FWCC Section of the Americas.

We had just come from a meeting of our Executive Committee, so there would be no opportunity for months to get action officially on a matter of this kind. In taking the limited action I'm about to describe I stand on the long-time concern within FWCC for abolition of torture, and the adoption by the Triennial Meeting in 1979 of (as one of two overall goals for the 1980s decade) intent "to facilitate full consideration of our Quaker witness in response to today's issues of peace and social justice." You may share the following information with Latin American Friends as fully as you wish.

The more I pondered on what might be right in this situation, and particularly with knowledge of the letter Archbishop Romero had written so recently to President Carter, I felt it was right to send a letter to President Carter. A copy of that letter is enclosed. You will see that I have sent a copy to the Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance. And I intend to send a copy also to my own Congressman, William Gray, with a letter of my own to him. (Know that Bill Gray would agree with the position I have expressed.)

I've been delayed until today in taking further action, but have just now sent a telegram to the Archbishop's Office in San Salvador: "We send condolences to the colleagues of Monsignor Oscar Romero whose tragic death we mourn, and encourage you to continue his work for justice and peace." (Signed) Herbert Hadley, Friends World Committee, Section of the Americas.

Meanwhile, I've attended a meeting of an interfaith group--World Conference on Religion and Peace--USA, which has acted to send messages similar to the above.

Herbert Hadley

QUAKER
MARCH 30
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Nairobi, Kenya

March 27, 1980

President Jimmy Carter
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Carter:

The death by violence of Monsignor Oscar A. Romero, Catholic Archbishop of San Salvador, is tragic reminder that repressive military rule in El Salvador brings pain and suffering to many people in that nation. And to some hundreds of citizens political violence and suppression have brought death.

We are aware that from the United States there have been shipments of arms and of instruments for "riot control." It is highly disturbing that such equipment has been used to increase the repressive control of the Salvadoran military group.

We are aware that Archbishop Romero had urged you, President Carter, to stop the providing of these instruments of repression and death to El Salvador's ruling group. We add our voice to his voice, now silenced by assassins' bullets. We plead that arms and riot control equipment not be supplied by the United States to governments where human rights are so flagrantly violated as at present the rights of the people are violated in El Salvador.

Sincerely,

Herbert M. Hadley
Executive Secretary

HMH/s

Cc: Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Bc: Barrett Hollister
Loida Fernandez
Robert Rumsey
William Barton
Bain Davis
FCNL
Bob Lyon, Dick Erstad (AFSC)

IB-LATIN AMERICA

MAR 31 1980

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**Comite de Servicio
de los Amigos**

**Centro de Información
Programa de la Frontera**

Dick Erstad
American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street Filadelfia
Pennsilvanya 19102
EEUU

RTE *File*
El Sal
ID LA CA
El Salvador Proj
Romero, Archbishop. Oscar

Estimado DICK:

Por este medio te saludo atentamente, y te molesto para solicitar-te un pequeño favor: Seguramente te habrás enterado de la muerte del arzobispo de San Salvador, Monseñor Oscar Romero. Esta noticia ha causado mucho revuelo en México, sobretodo entre personas y grupos que en alguna forma nos interesamos por lo que acontece en Centroamérica. El Comité de Servicio envió telegramas condenando la muerte de Mons. Romero a la Junta militar, a la Conferencia Episcopal Salvadoreña, y a Kurt Waldheim de la ONU. También suscribimos un comunicado que aparecerá en UnomásUno junto con otras organizaciones ecuménicas y políticas.

Lo que te quiero pedir es que me envíes en cuanto puedas una copia del informe sobre El Salvador que hizo una comisión ecuménica estadounidense entre la cual se encontraba alguien cuáquero (a). Te agradeceré mucho que lo hagas porque puede ayudar mucho a que grupos de acá vean que también es importante contar con el apoyo de grupos abiertos y comprometidos de EEUU.

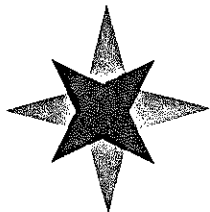
Sin más por hoy quedo a la espera de tur respuesta. Saludos a los conocidos:

Mario Loarca P.
Mario Loarca P.

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APR 09 1980

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American Friends Service Committee

1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102 • Phone (215) 241-7000

Stephen G. Cary
Chairman

Louis W. Schneider
Executive Secretary

Colin W. Bell
Executive Secretary Emeritus

10 LA CA
El Salvador Proj
Romero,

April 3, 1980

The Philadelphia Inquirer
400 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19101

To the Editor:

The world was shocked and saddened a week ago on learning of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, a compassionate prophet of justice and peace in El Salvador. People of conscience everywhere will be equally shocked to learn that the United States plans to send \$5.7 million in military aid to the Salvadorean Junta, aid which the Archbishop pleaded against because it "will without doubt sharpen the injustice and repression."

U.S. officials in favor of the aid assume that the governing Junta is caught in the middle between armed extremists of the right and left. An ecumenical delegation to El Salvador, in which I took part on March 22 to 25, concluded that, in fact, most of the 900 persons killed so far this year were victims of the army and other security forces often acting in concert with the supposedly proscribed right wing paramilitary group ORDEN.

In a letter to President Carter, a few weeks before his assassination, Archbishop Romero said "the present Junta government and above all the armed forces and security forces unfortunately have not demonstrated their capacity to resolve the grave national problems. In general they have only reverted to repressive violence producing a total of deaths and injuries much greater than in recent military regimes."

In the light of Archbishop Romero's plea to the contrary, the decision to provide military aid to the Junta makes a mockery of President Carter's statement of condolence and condemnation over the assassination of the Archbishop. If President Carter goes ahead with military aid to El Salvador, and a similar package to Honduras, the U.S. will be rightly condemned for persisting in a pattern of military intervention in Latin America in support of unpopular regimes.

Human rights for the people of El Salvador and other countries of Central America whose governments are backed by U.S. military aid may be postponed once again but, finally, they cannot be denied.

Editor, Philadelphia Inquirer
April 3, 1980
Page two

Popular movements for justice and liberty with increasing support from the church may for a time be brutally and bloodily repressed but will eventually triumph and new societies will emerge. Unless the people of our country can force a basic reappraisal and reorientation of the United States' policy toward Latin America, the United States is likely to reap the whirlwind it has sown by a long history of short-sighted and tragically inhumane policies. The Archbishop's appeal and the testimony of his life and death serve as clear reminders of the better policies the U.S. still might choose.

We who were on the ecumenical delegation to El Salvador met with Archbishop Romero just the day before he was killed. We were deeply impressed by his humane vision and depth of concern for the suffering people of El Salvador. His death was a tragedy. It must also be a turning point in the struggle for human rights in Latin America.

Ronald J. Young, Secretary
Peace Education Division
American Friends Service Committee

rjy/m

John A. Sullivan, Associate Executive Secretary, American Friends Service Committee

THE ARCHBISHOP AND THE PEOPLE

A religious ecumenical group visited El Salvador a few weeks ago. They were in the capital city of San Salvador on the very day that Archbishop Oscar Romero was cruelly murdered while celebrating the Catholic mass. The five persons on the ecumenical delegation had attended an earlier service on the previous day. At that time they had been personally introduced to the congregation and then personally and publicly hugged by the Archbishop when the Mass concluded.

The assassination of the Archbishop was shockingly sensational, and served to symbolize the cynicism and the brutality of the right wing paramilitary elements which have been accused of the crime. There have been many tributes to the archbishop.

But any tribute to the archbishop ought to focus not so much on him, heroic as he was, but on the people, for whom he worked and prayed and finally lost his life.

The visiting delegation, which included two representatives from the American Friends Service Committee, interviewed refugees, church and political authorities, popular leaders, social workers, and humble peasants.

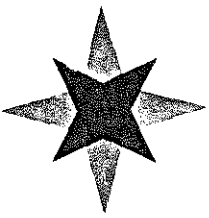
Here is what the delegation found: The official security forces and paramilitary groups have inflicted massive repression on the people. There is visible a pattern of premeditated violation of human rights. In the first three months of 1980 the victims of repression increased dramatically in their numbers. The repression seemed aimed at eliminating peasants who support the popular organizations.

The delegation was particularly shocked by the barbarity of the repression. They heard eyewitness testimony of rape, torture, mutilation, decapitation of unarmed, defenseless people. Security forces burned fields and forests to prevent people from escaping their cruelty.

The delegation was strong in recommending that the United States immediately halt all assistance to the military and the police of El Salvador. The group urged the U.S. to widen its contacts and relationships in El Salvador, get to know people and peasants and popular organizations, and not be confined to official channels. And it called on churches in America to help with humanitarian aid.

The archbishop who was assassinated certainly had the people and their suffering in mind. In his Lenten message spoken bravely to the soldiers of El Salvador, he said, "I implore you, I beg you, I order you, in God's name; stop the repression." Twenty four hours later he was dead. But the people, the people of El Salvador, are still there, and in God's name they need the repression to stop.

This is John A. Sullivan for the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia.



American Friends Service Committee

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Executive Secretary Emeritus

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E. G. ...
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April 3, 1980

The New York Times
229 W. 43rd Street
New York, N.Y. 10036

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Human rights for the people of El Salvador and other countries of Central America whose governments are backed by U.S. military aid may be postponed once again but, finally, they cannot be denied. Popular movements for justice and liberty with increasing support

Editor, The New York Times
March 24, 1980
Page Two

from the church may for a time be brutally and bloodily repressed but will eventually triumph and new societies will emerge. Unless the people of our country can force a basic reappraisal and reorientation of United States' policy toward Latin America, the United States is likely to reap the whirlwind it has sown by a long history of short-sighted and tragically inhumane policies. The Archbishop's appeal and the testimony of his life and death serve as clear reminders of the better policies the U.S. still might choose.

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