

## Elections

The elections held last Sunday in El Salvador saw a very large voter turnout. It is clear that the people of that country above all wish peace, and saw the ballot box as the best hope in that regard. The election took place, notwithstanding the efforts of the guerilla forces to disrupt it and by all reports the balloting was honest. There undoubtedly were some flaws in the electoral process, but then the elections were not conducted under ideal circumstances. But, the elections will turn out to have little meaning unless the new government now places the needs of the people of El Salvador in the forefront of their programs.

However, it would be unrealistic to think that the Left will now automatically lay down their arms. For this reason, we are urging that there be contacts between the new government and the FMLN/FDR in order to try to arrive at a solution which takes into account the new circumstances flowing from the election itself.

It is clear that a solution to the El Salvador crisis does not lie in El Salvador alone. It is a regional crisis involving powers both within and outside the region. We are looking at social and humanitarian problems which have to be solved in the region, and we are looking at East-West rivalries which have to be removed from the region.

I referred earlier to the Lopez Portillo initiative. It has the merit — amongst other points — of recognizing the fact that the security concerns of a number of parties must be addressed. In other words that any agreement must recognize that the U.S.A. and the other countries of this hemisphere have legitimate security interests which must be protected.

Principles  
for solution

What, in Canada's view, would represent the principles which should govern a wider solution to the conflict in the region? These, in my view, should include:

*First*, recognition that the problems of the region are rooted in social and economic questions;

*Second*, the urgent need to foster economic growth and social reform, the benefits of which must be distributed more widely amongst the populations. This, as I have said, is the heart of the problem;

*Third*, the right of each country to enjoy genuine independence, non-alignment and stability without the threat of outside interference, and;

*Fourth*, a recognition of hemispheric security needs and, in this connection, agreement to exclude the introduction of expeditionary forces and offensive weapons.

The challenge is to produce the outlines of a solution in Central America which is acceptable to the countries of the region and to all those who share an interest in pluralism and human rights. To move from an agreement on these or other general