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Billy Joe MacBride had just written his last paper. Who was Jane Austen? And why?

He had a few days before it was time to start preparing for finals. He was just getting into the theory of relativity, and boggling at how it takes light 200 million years to travel the universe when he made a quantum leap... he would get away for a few parsecs.

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Mulroney asked to aid peace in El Salvador

This open letter to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney about the current situation in El Salvador was written by Liisa North, interim director of the executive committee of the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) at York.

Dear Prime Minister:

Appalled by the gruesome assassination of our colleagues at the Central American University (UCA) in San Salvador, we send you this open letter.

UCA President Ignacio Ellacuria and his five associates were peace makers and voices of moderation in a country torn by a decade of civil war. Internationally recognized scholars, they were the leaders of one of the most highly regarded of Central American universities.

Ignacio Martin-Baro, Academic Vice-President of UCA was the country's foremost expert on polling and public opinion as well as editor of *Estudios Centroamericanos*, an outstanding regional scholarly journal. Segundo Montes Mozo was Director of UCA's Human Rights Institute and a prominent expert on refugee issues. All six were recognized for their commitment to a negotiated solution to the war. This was why they were killed.

We cannot accept the ARENA government's disclaimers of responsibility in this crime. The murder and disfigurement of these colleagues took place during curfew hours in a district controlled by the armed forces. The University and all entrances to it were guarded by the armed forces. Uniformed men had entered the campus and threatened the priests prior to the heinous events of Thursday, November 16. Archbishop Rivera y Damas is a man the international community and we have come to trust; he has affirmed that the military is responsible for this crime against humanity.

We also know that armed forces personnel and ARENA party leaders have repeatedly accused the clergy in general and UCA in particular of subversive activity. They have clearly stated their intention to physically eliminate all opposition.

As a consequence, intellectuals, religious workers, labour and peasant leaders, opposition politicians, and ordinary citizens who have voiced their desire for a negotiated solution to the civil war are all in mortal danger from death squads associated with the armed forces and the ruling party. Church offices are being systematically raided; the military has destroyed clinics providing assistance to refugees and confiscated their medical supplies; hundreds have been arrested and murdered.

We therefore appeal to the Canadian government to do everything in its power to bring a genuine cease fire and a negotiated peace by:

(1) Demanding a full and candid investigation of this crime and the punishment of those responsible. The declarations of the ARENA government and of U.S. president George Bush, to date, unfortunately suggest another procedural whitewash similar to the one that followed the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero in March 1980 and of the three American nuns and a religious volunteer in December 1980.

(2) Initiating a full review of the human rights situation in El Salvador at the United Nations and in the Organization of American States. El Salvador's non-governmental human rights commission has recorded 317 assassinations, 447 arbitrary detentions, and 62 cases of forced disappearances since the inauguration of the ARENA government on June 1 of this year. These events must be thoroughly investigated and denounced.

(3) Interceding with the U.S. government to suspend military assistance to El Salvador. It is by now clear that the more than \$4 billion provided by the United States during the past decade has only wrought destruction in that poverty-stricken country and encouraged the most violence-prone elements within its military organizations and civilian ruling group.

(4) Providing international leadership — in the United Nations, the Organizations of American States and other multilateral institutions — in working toward a negotiated solution to the civil war. We are aware that the Canadian government has supported negotiations in the past, but we are convinced that a more energetic and vocal policy is urgently required and could have great impact.

We welcome the suspension of Canada's government-to-government development assistance programme to El Salvador. But the deportation of refugee claimants must also cease. It is clear that development, in any reasonable sense of that word, cannot take place until a negotiated settlement allows the full participation of all, including the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, in a democratic political process. It is also clear that no person who has asked for refugee status in Canada can return safely to El Salvador.

Elections are not a substitute for negotiations in the conditions that now prevail in El Salvador. The effective incorporation of all political forces into an electoral process cannot take place without a cease-fire, negotiations witnessed by international observers, and the detention of known death squad operatives and military officers who collaborate with them.

An Ecumenical Memorial Service will be held for the six Jesuits and the victims of the civil war at the Religious Centre of York University at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6. We invite you or your representatives to attend it.

Respectfully yours,
Liisa North,

Interim Director,
on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Centre for on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC)

On December 6 at 3 p.m., an Ecumenical Memorial Service will be held for the Victims of the Civil War in El Salvador and the Six Jesuits Assassinated at the Central American University in San Salvador at the Scott Religious Centre. A collection will be taken for the reconstruction of the Central American University with the funds collected to be administered by Toronto's Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice.