

Seemingly dressed in his Sunday best—a still-clean white Guayabera shirt, dark slacks—the man lies flat on his back on the gravel shoulder of the two-lane black top from San Salvador, 60 miles southwest of here.

The dead man's shoes are missing and his stocking feet look somehow incongruous. Someone has placed a small tree branch on his face to keep the buzzing flies at bay but it does not hide the ugly black bullet hole in his forehead.

He goes on to say:

A little farther into town, there is the sound of scraping in a cemetery of shoulder-high white tombs. Three men are wordlessly digging a grave.

In El Salvador, where death has become a way of life—That is a splendid phrase. A fine reporter this man must be. He continues:

—it is a scene that with only slight variations of setting is seen every day, everywhere.

No one really knows just how many people have been killed or have disappeared since the old military government of General Carlos Humberto Romero was overthrown 18 months ago by a group of colonels promising reform. The conservative count is 10,000 dead; that of the now underground human rights commission, 16,000.

So we are not sure whether it is 10,000 or 16,000, but we know there are thousands. The article continues:

Whatever the precise numbers, they are almost beyond belief, certainly beyond comprehension.

Then he writes about how they go into that unhappy state, and he says:

Some no doubt were killed by rightist death squads that roam the streets after dark seeking out suspected leftists. Others no doubt were themselves rightists, or *orejas* (ears), the name given to collaborators of the army, who had been slain by leftists. Others might be women raped by soldiers, then disposed of by a bullet to the head, or simply the victims of personal feuds.

That is not a horror story, but careful reporting of what is far, far too prevalent.

The danger of further breakdown in a social situation like that is clear, present and cannot be overemphasized. There are ingredients that make it as nasty and evil as it is dangerous.

A Toronto newsman said that the Salvadorean military makes the Shah's Savak look like a ballet troupe, and they move, apparently, unchecked by the civilian government, because the civilian government does not have the power to check them. The political structure, which never functioned well—no one ever looked to El Salvador as a great, functioning democracy—is more precarious than ever before. Naturally, against such a social background, the economy is in an intolerable state. An American scholar has described five serious socio-economic factors that made this country a likely field for the kind of extreme degradation and deprivation which we see. Little El Salvador has one of the highest population increases

in the world and a very high population density. It is a country which has absolutely no frontiers—no more room for further expansion.

This next point frightens me, coming from Prince Edward Island, because it has replaced individual agriculture by commercial agriculture. The independent farmer, on the way out in many places, is out in that country. He also talks about the emphasis upon capital-intensive rather than labour-intensive industries which, in his opinion, is a combination of five bad socio-economic ingredients. Whether he is right or not, what was brewed out of those ingredients certainly is bad enough.

You could not look at an institution in that little country which is not under enormous strain. One of the strongest is the church, and it is obvious it is under great strain, although it is probably, in my judgment, giving the best leadership in these troubled times of any institution there.

● (1510)

If we were talking about the north-south dialogue today, I could say everything that I have said about this country in Central America, because here is a prime example of the sort of social problems with which the north-south dialogue must deal. These are the kinds of social problems which could be the forerunners of a terrible breakdown in our world. One of the unfortunate things is that we cannot finish our discussion and invoke only the north-south axis. All of the ingredients are there: the grinding poverty; the illiteracy; the exploitation of limited resources by a tiny group of people; the military control; the blighting of opportunity. It is the sad, old, familiar tale. What has happened is that, instead of this being dealt with in north-south terms, there has been a superimposition of the east-west. As if this little polity could stand any more, it has come into the forefront of conflict and competition between the east and the west.

We look at the United States today with all of the understanding that we try to bring to the country which is our closest ally and our closest neighbour. As one of my friends in the House of Commons said years ago, the United States is our best friend, whether we like it or not. However, we see things that should make thoughtful people sad. I am convinced that the domino theory has been restored. The flavour of the fifties is being tasted again, and that is not a very good thing. It is sad if one remembers the domino theory of the fifties but forgets what came out of it in the sixties; that is, the tragedy of Vietnam which arose because not everything could be related to east-west terms, everything could not be reduced to simple black and white—or perhaps, one might say, red and white.

The Green Berets are there; the helicopters are there; \$25 million in military expenditure is on tap and ready. One reads the headlines which say, "We will not become militarily involved in El Salvador." If one kept a scrapbook, one could find 100 quotations from President Johnson and others to the effect that "We will not be militarily involved in Vietnam."

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): From whom and others?

Senator Macquarrie: From President Johnson.