

contained in documents captured in April. The FDR has not denied the authenticity of these documents, which spell out the objectives of the left in negotiations as follows; first, to draw out the conflict, which is going badly for the revolutionary forces; second, to drive a wedge between the Christian Democratic Party of President Duarte and the armed forces; third, to enhance the image of the left as a peacemaker; and fourth, to seek to expose the Christian Democratic Party as a facade for a military controlled government.

However, Canada refuses to dismiss out of hand the feasibility of holding fair elections, as the leader of the NDP does. Elections were possible in Zimbabwe in similarly difficult circumstances. President Duarte is on public record as saying that the OAS would be welcome to monitor them. His words as quoted in the March 6 edition of the *New York Times* are:

We are going to request from the Organization of American States not only to send us a protocol mission, but to send us contingents from all of the Americas to come and inspect and to really make these free elections.

As I said recently before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, if requested, and if we believed we could be of assistance, we would certainly be prepared to consider participating in such a mission.

In our view, Duarte has earned the right to be given a chance to bring about a political solution in the most democratic of manners—through free elections. A founder of the Christian Democratic Party, he has fought all of his life for democracy. Together with the present leader of the FDR, Guillermo Ungo, he waged and won the 1972 election campaign in his country. This victory was blocked by the military and Duarte was jailed, beaten and tortured. Exiled to Venezuela, he was one of the leaders of the opposition movement whose efforts eventually led to the overthrow of President Romero in October, 1979. He returned to his native land only 13 days after the revolution and was appointed to government in March, 1980, becoming president in December, assuming the position he had rightfully won in 1972.

It is ironic that the FDR is pressing Duarte to negotiate with them, presumably to enter into a form of power sharing in advance of the people's support in the election, all in the name of democracy.

It is my belief that many men and women of good will made a tragic miscalculation in late 1979 and early 1980. They thought that the same circumstances prevailed in El Salvador as had prevailed in Nicaragua before the overthrow of Somoza. They gambled that the armed leftist groups would win, ignoring the fact that the repressive regime of General Romero had already been overthrown. These men and women of essentially moderate persuasion, many of whom are represented in the FDR—people who, as the leader of the NDP said earlier, who would be members of all political parties in Canada if they were here—are now stranded with their extremist bedfellows.

● (1630)

The FDR, if it is really interested in seeing democracy introduced into El Salvador and is not just a front for armed

Marxist revolutionary groups, has a responsibility to join with the Duarte government to ensure that the elections scheduled to be held in a scant nine months are a success.

The leader of the NDP (Mr. Broadbent) has also, I believe, a responsibility in this regard. Most of his proposed courses of action are based on a negotiated settlement, which is the cause of the revolutionaries. By supporting the revolutionary forces in their desire to share power before the holding of elections, he could contribute to the prolongation of the suffering in that country and thereby impede the political solution which all members in this House support. To use his own words, he adds a veneer of respectability to the rebel position.

Finally, what is our responsibility as the government? It is not to attempt to arrogate to ourselves, from the outside, the right to resolve El Salvador's problems and, even more, the form of their resolution. It is rather to be modest enough to allow the people of El Salvador to decide their own future through the processes of the ballot box. That may not lead to political power for the socialist opposition in El Salvador, to which the Socialist International and their distinguished investigator are committed, but regardless of the falling of political chips, I believe it is the right and certainly it is the democratic course.

El Salvador is a human tragedy. It is ours to express our fellow feeling, to offer aid, to encourage a solution which corresponds to the wishes and needs of the people and to rebuke perpetrators of acts of criminal terrorism. It is not ours to assume the principal role in solving the crisis. That way would lie another tragedy, our own. Third World governments are not prepared to admit without qualification that their tragedies are ours. Modesty, patience and a sense of our own limitations are sometimes the most difficult virtues to practise, but I commend them to the leader of the NDP and to my colleagues. Genuine independence for the Third World has to mean independence even from us. Our own independence is too precious for us to do violence to that of others. This is the course of action we intend to continue to urge upon all governments.

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I wish first of all to indicate my appreciation of the official opposition to the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Broadbent) for his comments and his sensitive observations about the situation in Latin America, and more particularly in El Salvador.

I wish as an introductory comment to a House and a nation which have become almost desensitized by the overkill that it is held across this country and across party lines to be one of the great tragedies of our time that with all of our resources and with all of our capacity in our world for communication we cannot bring the instruments we have for understanding and communicating into the forum where there are resources to bring this travesty, this great illustration of man's inhumanity to man, to an end.

We could debate whether or not this is our moral responsibility, or whether we let a cock fight go on or two people in a corner fight it out to the bitter end; but in other areas where