

The Role of Popular Support and Legitimacy in the Determination of New War Groups:
A Case Study of the FMLN in El Salvador

Amanda Sewell
Honors Capstone: Fall 2009
Advisor: Carolyn Gallaher
General University Honors

Introduction

The civil conflict in El Salvador was waged between the Salvadoran government and their cohort of paramilitaries and death squads, and the FMLN, a coalition of five guerilla groups fighting for social justice. The war raged on for more than a decade, from 1980-1992. The goal of this paper is to state how the FMLN was able to garner popular support, namely the support of the campesino masses, over the years of the conflict. This is viewed through the lens of legitimacy, both in terms of legitimate guerilla movements under the conditions of Mao Zedong and Che Guevara (as opposed to New War guerilla movements) and in terms of political legitimacy. My thesis is that while the FMLN represents a classic guerilla group, their fight was modified by some “new war” tactics which contributed to a loss in legitimacy. However, these tactics are a direct result of the time and situational context, and the effect of U.S. involvement in the conflict, and do not reflect the inherent wishes of most members of the FMLN.

Historical Background

Throughout the 1980’s, the FMLN fought for social justice. They fluctuated in numbers, grew in weapon capabilities, increased their involvement in the urban sectors and often offered the Salvadoran government the options of cooperating, negotiating, and power sharing. This, however, was dependent upon a revision of the Salvadoran system that would provide human rights, freedom of expression, and fulfillment of basic needs to a majority of the population (Barry 202).

Like many countries in Latin America, one piece of understanding conflict in El Salvador traces back to land distribution (Barry 135). In much of Latin America, an economic system of producing raw products for industrialized nations and buying back their finished products had led to an economic deficit for the less developed nation, as

well as very unequal distribution of wealth within that country. A very small group of elite landowners had control over the few large landholdings from which they produced cash crops to export. The rest of the population was left without sufficient land, income, or even food (Barry 135).

Notoriously well known for unequal land distribution, in Central America circa 1986 less than 1% of farms comprised 40% of farmland and 25% of farmers were relegated to just 1% of the land (Barry 135). El Salvador is an even more dire case whose oligarchy was referred to as “Los Catorce,” in reference to the 14 families that comprised it (Barry 135). Because so few controlled almost all the land in the country, and there was little means to make an industrial living, it’s no wonder that aggravation with land distribution, and poverty in general, resulted in massive upheaval.

To emphasize what lack of land translated into for the Salvadoran people, most of the population lived without running water, doctors, electricity, meat, or drinking water. Salvadorans began working between age 6 and 10, and could not afford even a diet of rice and beans (Barry 140). In fact, “rural wages in El Salvador declined in real terms in the last half of the 1970s, the period during which peasant mobilization in the country was at a peak never before reached nor ever again after” (Brockett 53). Between 1975 and 1984, the cost of living increased by about 250% while wages only increased by 50% (Barry 140).

Brutal violence in El Salvador, especially over land issues, traces back many years. “La Matanza” occurred in 1932, when exploited Indian workers rose up against their employers in protest at the same time that Augustín Farabundo Martí, the Communist party leader, was arranging an uprising of workers in the urban areas. The

rebellions were exterminated, Martí was executed, and 30,000 Salvadorans were massacred (Barry 200). “The government-sponsored massacre of thousands of peasants and Indians (La Matanza) was one of the most egregious examples of state violence in Latin America and the beginning of the military regimes that dominated El Salvador for most of the rest of the twentieth century” (Lindo-Fuentes 141).

From 1961-1975 the number of peasants without land went from 11% to 40% of the population in rural areas (Barry 200). The first solution was mass immigration to Honduras. However, Honduras, reluctant to take responsibility for El Salvador’s poor peasants, began to deport illegal Salvadoran immigrants (Barry 201). With that method of recourse gone, the conflict was brought back home. Although the church itself was aligned with the military and ruling elite, church leaders on the local and grassroots level were against the state and called for reform (Barry 201). This became important throughout the conflict. Groups banded together, including students, workers, women, campesinos, and church leaders. Characteristically then, as these groups grew, the government responded with violent retaliation (Barry 201). These reform-minded popular organizations gained more momentum than political parties and through demonstrations the movement attempted to promote social justice (Barry 201).

At the same time, left-wing guerilla movements rose up as early as 1969 but didn’t gain much weight until the late 1970’s. There were several key guerilla movements in El Salvador that banded together in 1980 to form the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU). Later that year, the DRU became known as the FMLN or Farabundo Marti Liberation Front, named after the Salvadoran martyr, Martí (Barry 202). It consisted of five guerilla groups: The Workers Revolutionary Party

(PRTC), the Revolutionary Army of the People (ERP), the Popular Forces for Liberation (FPL), the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCS), and the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN). Interestingly enough, throughout the war “each group maintained its own leaders, internal practices, and ideological perspectives” and major decisions were reached through consensus by the five leaders (McClintock 48). Working in conjunction with the FMLN was the FDR, representing “disenfranchised left-center political parties, trade unions, and the four major mass civic organizations” who had to quit organizing due to government repression (Barry 203). The FDR was comprised of three social democratic political organizations and was, essentially, the political wing of the movement (Fishel 203).

Obviously, where there are left wing guerilla groups there are usually right-wing paramilitary or civilian groups to combat them. Beginning in the 1970s, El Salvador was home to many brutal death squads. In 1968, General José Alberto Medrano established ORDEN (the National Democratic Organization) through the Ministry of Defense. Its job was to monitor peasant organizations, or work as the army’s civil-defense patrol. However, since they could carry arms, they engaged in terror and elimination of peasants and leftist groups. Post-1975, major death squads included the White Warriors Union, the White Hand, Anticommunist Forces for Liberations (FALANGE), the Organization for the Liberation from Communism (OLC), the Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA), and the Maximiliano Martinez Brigade. Membership consisted mainly of members of the army, the police, the National Guard, and sons of the rich elite (Barry 203-205). The military and paramilitary violence targeted civilian groups that in other similar Latin

American conflicts had not been attacked. For example, they targeted the Christian Democratic activists and the Catholic Church (McClintock 103).

The Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua in July of 1979, in which the FSLN overthrew President Somoza, was a catalyst that helped further fuel the movement (Fishel 202). Politically, the first of many juntas took over in October of 1979, when young, radical officers who wanted reform ousted General Carlos Humberto Romero (Fishel 203). In El Salvador, a government's success was directly linked to the support they received from the U.S. The U.S. was fighting to eliminate any potential leftist influence in the government and wanted to put the moderate Christian Democrats into control. Even though this first junta was trying to prevent Marxist control, they were not U.S.-backed and, hence, failed, unable to stop right-wing terror and the military or control the chaos that the country was descending into (Barry 206). The next junta included Christian Democrats and military, but when some Christian Democrats began to support the military, this junta also fell apart (Barry 206). The last junta put Christian Democrat leader Napoleon Duarte into power as "the final hope for a centrist coalition (Fishel 203). He became president and spoke of reform but the military still exercised true control. The U.S did support Duarte, but the right-wing death squads and military violence continued to spiral out of control (Barry 206).

One of the most important figures in Salvadoran history is Archbishop Oscar Romero, an outspoken critic of the military's repression. El Salvador's far right party, the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), had key leaders who threatened Romero for speaking out, eventually, on March 24, 1980, silencing him forever through assassination (Barry 207). The death of Romero, and the violent attack on the mourners

at his funeral, led many major left-wing political leaders to start the FDR, in this way supporting the FMLN without fighting themselves (McClintock 108). Despite all of this, the next individual to take over the presidency was the brutal leader of ARENA, D'Aubisson's, appointee Álvaro Magaña (Barry 207).

The conflict between the FMLN and the state truly began in 1981. Peace and reconciliation efforts were carried on from the onset of FMLN organization. The government made attempts to negotiate with the FMLN as well as attempts to deprive them of their peasant base (Fishel 204). The U.S. spent obscene amounts to bring the weak Duarte back into power in the 1984 elections. He was moderate but totally controlled by the military and the elite and unable to effect change or fulfill the things he and the Christian Democrat Party had promised (Barry 208). Duarte was able to greatly improve the military's human rights record, however his idea for negotiation was not supported by the Salvadoran military or the American government. After the kidnapping of his daughter by the FMLN, Duarte was trapped into the military's decisions and became much more cautious (McClintock 153). Duarte held peace talks with both the FDR and the FMLN starting in 1984, but would not (or could not) make the constitutional changes that the groups called for. Namely, these were: sharing of power with the FMLN/FDR in a transition government not representative of only the oligarchy, remaking the army to include rebel soldiers, a mixed economy with dramatic agrarian reforms, foreign policy with the U.S. that would mandate respect for both countries, human rights and freedom of expression, assembly, and unions (Barry 212).

Throughout the early 1980s, the FMLN had about 10,000 full-time combatants and 50,000 committed supporters (McClintock 74). Following Duarte, Alfredo Cristiani

took power. Not very committed to human rights but interested in negotiating, two things changed the whole spectrum of the conflict during his presidency. First, after the murder of six Jesuit priests by U.S.-trained soldiers, U.S. military aid to El Salvador was reconsidered because of these blatant human rights violations (McClintock 154). Three of the priests were “accused of being intellectual mentors to the FLMN” (Baloyra-Herp 124). Actually, they were fighting against poverty and the brutal treatment of the people by the military right (Baloyra-Herp 124). Secondly, the 1989 FMLN offensive proved to the right, in both El Salvador and the United States, that it was not a certainty that the military was improving and would win the war (McClintock 154). The 1989 FMLN offensive was a massive 20-day combative attack that attempted to set off a popular insurrection. The air force bombed the urban working class neighborhoods, oblivious to civilians, and the guerillas held many citizens hostage (Baloyra-Herp 121). During this November 1989 offensive, the FMLN tried to negotiate a ceasefire in the midst of the huge fighting offensive that they themselves had launched. The government was wary of the situation and tried to invoke dialogue, but the FMLN broke up the talks (Fishel 204). After a few more years of negotiations and broken talks, a peace accord was formally signed in 1992 (UN Truth Commission 10). Two interesting points about the FMLN were the increased participation of rural peasants in leadership roles of the FMLN and the restructuring of their fighting method into a “prolonged war of attrition” against the government, army, and economy after the United States intervened and, essentially, prevented the FMLN from fighting effectively in any other way (Barry 202).

Theory: Guerilla Movements and Old versus New War

Much theory lies behind guerilla movements. In fact, guerilla movements are very interesting because, while they do not fit in with the concept of “old war”, many movements are also not defined by what are fought today, “new wars”. New wars occur due to the state’s loss of the monopoly on the means of violence. Fighters no longer have concrete goals and lack political ideology, the mode of war is through guerilla movements and counter-insurgencies, and decentralized fighting occurs through paramilitaries, criminal gangs, and mercenary groups. The war is also much more globalized. New War fighters employ “fear and hatred” tactics against all those who may oppose them (Kaldor *New and Old Wars* 6-10).

Some guerilla movements represent a transition between the two types of war. Other movements, the FARC in Colombia being a good example, have morphed from a type of transition group into clear new war actors. In order to better understand the conflict in El Salvador, it is important to understand the concept of a guerilla movement.

First, one must be clear on what a guerilla movement is not. War has changed substantially over the years. Since the early 1800’s, when Clausewitz wrote his famous work, On War, war has looked like what we know as traditional warfare. Clausewitz defines war as “a mere continuation of policy by other means” (Clausewitz 23). Leading up to Clausewitz, there were three stages of war: the religious wars of the Middle Ages, the cabinet wars of sovereigns, and the Napoleonic Wars that he had just witnessed himself. This is what we think of as old, traditional war. It is a patriotic war, fought for love of one’s country and involving the state, as agenda-setter, the military, to fight, and the people, to support (Clausewitz 26). The people, however, stay off of the battlefield.

There are clear rules, there are clear fighters, and there are clear goals, which are both rational and political (Clausewitz Book 1).

Guerilla movements moved away from traditional warfare. Mao Zedong and Che Guevara theorized on some of the earlier guerilla movements. The main goal of these two revolutionaries was to capture the hearts and minds of the people, form a legitimate armed struggle to topple the “illegitimate” government, and eventually gain political power in their country. Their justification for this was the inability to achieve social and political reform through any legal means. Che emphasizes that “People must see clearly the futility of maintaining the fight for social goals within the framework of civil debate. When the forces of oppression come to maintain themselves in power against established law, peace is considered already broken” (Guevara 48). If there is any way that a government was legitimately elected and hasn’t broken constitutional law then Che believes a revolution is unfounded and illegitimate (Guevara 48). Mao agrees, while speaking of guerilla actions he states that, “They are but one step in the total war, one aspect of the revolutionary struggle. They are the inevitable result of the clash between oppressor and oppressed when the latter reach the limits of their endurance” (Tse-tung 41). The three main points that Che took away from the Cuban revolution were, “1. Popular forces can win a war against the army, 2. It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for creating a revolution exist; the insurrection can create them 3. In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting (Guevara 47).

Guevara outlines many key rules for a guerilla movement to fight by. In the discussion of El Salvador, it is interesting to note which of these rules the groups have

adhered to. First, he calls it “indispensable” that a guerilla movement gets full support of the local people. The guerilla fighter devotes himself to the people and fighting their oppressors. He fights in the countryside, which he must know well, and struggles to achieve what he believes to be the people’s utmost goal: owning their own land, animals, and means of production (Guevara 51).

Mao agrees when listing the seven fundamental steps to guerilla mobilization. The very first is organizing the people. This is followed by the guerillas themselves achieving unity on political issues. Finally, Mao discusses military-related fundamentals in the next five steps. Obviously, legitimacy both politically and through the people is very important to their idea of a guerilla movement (Tse-tung 43-44). Guerilla fighters must be completely devoted to the cause. By the cause, Che means not just an effective offensive where the state is made to feel always surrounded, but also devotion towards spreading the word among the people of the motives of the movement (Guevara 56). Terrorism is only acceptable in the case that a high-ranking state individual, known for their brutality is the target. Sabotage is a highly effective guerilla method, but only if it is against something that affects normal daily life and makes the state look incompetent. For example, sabotage against a power plant is appropriate, while against a soft drink factory it is not (Guevara 62).

Mao, claiming to quote Lenin although he appears to be misquoting, writes, “‘...Evil does not exist in guerrilla warfare but only in the unorganized and undisciplined activities that are anarchism,’ said Lenin, in *On Guerrilla Warfare*” (Tse-tung 46). As Mao discusses, guerilla groups evolved far in the past and Che and Mao are by no means the first guerilla leaders. However, they help to institutionalize the method of fighting

through their writing. They are also examples of leaders of two successful guerilla movements, which is important to their legitimacy as writers on the subject.

The vast majority of wars fought today are characterized as new wars. Scholars debate over when new wars actually began. Mary Kaldor says that old war ended with World War II. The Iran-Iraq war was the only exception, resurrection of old war that proved disastrous (Kaldor, *New and Old Wars* 297). But, Mary Kaldor attributes the start of New War to the end of the Cold War. However, that leaves us, at least in her eyes, with a large period of time between old and new war. In this period, there were not only guerilla conflicts such as those led by Mao and Che, but countless other guerilla movements whose tactics and strategies seemed to be moving ever further from traditional guerilla warfare and towards that of new war.

Most scholars agree that new war is characterized by certain tendencies. Guerillas employ tactics of fear and hatred instead of trying, as Mao and Che, did, to win the hearts and minds of the people. In fact, the guerillas change their entire strategy of protection of the people as a primary goal. Instead they brutally murder, rape, exploit, steal from, and intimidate them. Kaldor writes that these are “wars where battles are rare and where most violence is directed against civilians...where taxation is falling and war finance consists of loot and pillage, illegal trading and other war-generated revenue; wars where the distinctions between combatant and non-combatant, legitimate violence and criminality are all breaking down; wars that exacerbate the disintegration of the state” (Kaldor, “Old Wars, Cold Wars...” 492-493). The political consensus, the other essential part of Mao and Che’s warfare, is pushed to the background or disintegrates entirely as other desires, including personal self-interest, become the reasons for fighting.

Scholar John Mueller describes new wars as small-scale conflicts led by opportunistic thugs who wreak havoc and engage in violence much like criminals, and view civilians as their prey. The second type of new wars is the policing wars carried out by developed nations against these types of groups (Mueller 1). As Mueller mentions, some people will engage in violence when they have to, but others “enjoy it and seek it out both for the thrill and for the profit it can bring” (Mueller 9).

Another prominent war scholar, Martin Van Creveld, agrees with the idea that war has degenerated into these low intensity conflicts. He makes the point that, “Though conventional war might be withering away, conventional forces and their weapons systems are alive and well” (Van Creveld 18). Hence, even if new war is the latest method, the same means of war are being used. This translates into very powerful machinery being utilized by irrational actors who are often not formally trained. Van Creveld essentially compares New War to a reversion back to medieval warfare with modern technology being used to achieve “primitive ends” (Kaplan 73). Van Creveld also notes that in most all of the countries where guerilla groups crop up, the government consisted of some type of oppressive totalitarian leader who would not have permitted more peaceful forms of protest (Van Creveld 29). At least in this sense, it seems that Mao and Che’s ideas are carried into a New World definition. However, Van Creveld then goes on to say that torture and terrorism highlighted by civilian deaths have been present from both sides in all of these conflicts (Van Creveld 29). This returns, again, to the idea of fear and hatred tactics, a break with Mao and Che.

Many scholars, Van Creveld and Kaplan included, claim that cultural and ethnic divides are the cause of these new wars. They inherit this thought line from Samuel

Huntington (Kaplan 62). Huntington is perhaps most well known for his piece “The Clash of Civilizations?” Huntington claims that new conflicts will not be economical or ideological, but rather, cultural. “The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future” (Huntington 22). Kaplan believes, however, that identity is a secondary cause of New War. The overarching cause is environmental scarcity. Through a long chain of events, Kaplan “proves” that overpopulation and not enough land is the root cause of decay of the state and anarchy, and therefore new war (Kaplan 58). Kaplan also attributes new war to the maps drawn up by colonial expansionists who didn’t bother to draw them following ethnic boundaries. Now, ethnicities and different religious groups forced together into the same political nation-state often evoke serious problems, leading to new war (Kaplan 69-70).

What is the importance of this theory in relation to the guerilla movement in El Salvador? First of all, it is important to study how closely this movement relates to those of Che and Mao and to what extent the FMLN utilizes characteristics of new war. Obviously, it is not simply a stereotypical new war movement. First of all, there is no civilizational divide. Most Salvadorans came from similar identity backgrounds, Spanish and Christian. Even though the FMLN tended to be more heavily supported by the campesinos and middle class, economic status was not the determining factor in joining the movement. Secondly, there is no problem with state boundaries in Latin America resulting from different ethnic groups. Some scholars may try and draw the conflict in El Salvador back to land scarcity, like Kaplan’s New War theory hypothesizes, but most don’t believe that this was the root cause of the conflict. Is the FMLN composed of common criminals inspiring fear and hatred? Are they more like Mao and Che’s guerilla

armies who, looking back, have certain legitimacy in their actions? This group is undoubtedly a product of a totalitarian regime. When we study their actions more closely, we will be able to determine which camp they fit closer into. They are certainly not examples of the once highly legitimate old war. However, they have more legitimacy the closer they fall in their actions to Mao or Che and the further they fall from today's institution of new war.

Theory: Legitimacy

What exactly constitutes political legitimacy and how do states lose or guerilla groups gain it? Max Weber describes three manners of gaining legitimacy. The first is traditional. This means that one has always possessed authority, as in the case of a monarch, and so it automatically is legitimately yours. The second is rational or legal legitimacy. This means that there is a popular acceptance of a set of rules in order to choose who will have legitimacy. Whoever is selected by these rules then gains that legitimacy. An example of this is a democratic election. Finally, there is charismatic legitimacy, achieved from the belief of the populace that their leader has "great personal worth," whether from God or because of great talent. A popular cult movement forms around them giving them authority and legitimacy (Lipset 8). It is charismatic legitimacy that is often used by communist governments, such as Mao's (Lipset 9-10).

Political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset describes legitimacy as, "best gained by prolonged effectiveness, effectiveness being the actual performance of the government and the extent to which it satisfies the basic needs of most of the population and key power groups (such as the military and economic leaders) (Lipset 8). Lipset makes the interesting point that governments can also gain negative legitimacy. This is a type of

counter legitimacy that actually discredits them from the start. For example, in Latin America, disenchantment with numerous brutal dictatorial regimes left the people at odds with authoritarianism (Lipset 8). Another point he makes is that if an autocracy fails economically or socially they lose legitimacy and will then break down (Lipset 9).

While Lipset speaks of how governments lose legitimacy, other scholars comment on how guerrilla groups claim legitimacy. Major H.F. Kuenning writes that guerrillas have a natural advantage because they appear to be fighting the morally correct war. He states, “all three requirements for a Just War lean to the position of the guerrilla: fighting as a last resort, acting from legitimate authority, and having a morally justified cause” (Kuenning 196). He compares the guerrilla groups to the “David” of “David and Goliath” and cites their lack of political and economic strength. Kuenning then writes that many guerrilla groups adopt idealistic ideology, about Marxist-Leninism, to gain legitimacy. As far as U.S. intervention in Latin American politics goes, and as we know it was crucial in El Salvador, there forms a general distrust of the American support of Latin American leaders who embody none of our supposed democratic values. The result is distrust of the U.S. matched by trust for guerrilla propaganda. This gives the guerrilla legitimacy and moral justification (Kuenning 196).

Another way guerrillas gain legitimacy is when the government, other governments, or international organizations, have talks with and recognize them. As Mary Kaldor mentions, talking to guerrilla groups raises their profile and helps give them public legitimacy, even though they may be criminals (Kaldor *New and Old Wars* 126). Legitimacy may also be gained through affiliation with influential people or sectors of the population. For example, in Zimbabwe, guerrilla groups worked with missions and

churches to gain legitimacy religiously, since Christianity was so strong there. By partnering with the Church, they gained valuable food, money, and medicine that helped further their cause (Maxwell 125). Again, as Che points out, legitimacy is gained by a guerrilla group when there is a flagrant abuse of power by the leader of a country and there is no other means to remove him but violently (Loveman 345). Engaging in sabotage and tactics to lessen government credibility strengthens a guerrilla group's legitimacy when done through "hearts and minds" strategies (Loveman 408). Engaging in tactics like terrorism, bombings, kidnappings, and murders, especially when civilians are harmed, damages moral credibility, which is key to legitimacy (Loveman 409).

Besides these more theoretical interpretations of legitimacy, one can also use inductive reasoning to determine what types of actions result in loss and gain of legitimacy in a guerrilla conflict. A sample of logical factors that can be looked at to gain a sense of legitimacy levels are corruption, in the guerrilla group and within the state, protest demonstrations against the government or the guerrilla group, effectiveness of the state to fulfill its' duties as well as effectiveness of a guerrilla group to protect its' civilian base, the amount of violence/crime occurring during a given period and statistics related to who is responsible, military recruitment levels and whether they are voluntary or forced, and levels of migration out of a country as well as levels of internal displacement.

Methodology

To develop my thesis I am looking at several different types of sources. Because I am unable to travel to Central America and gather data myself, I am using a great deal of data from other authors who have written on the conflict. However, I do try to incorporate first-hand data whenever possible. First of all, I am taking first-hand data

from international sources. This includes information from Amnesty International reports created during the years of the conflict. Amnesty International has emailed me some of these reports. I am also looking at U.N. accounts, for example the U.N. Truth Commission report on El Salvador. Additionally, Americas Watch, today a part of Human Rights Watch, provides excellent year-by-year reports charting human rights abuses throughout the conflict.

Secondly, I am utilizing many different sets of interviews conducted by different authors. These consist of interviews with people who lived in the country during the conflict, whether supporters or opponents of the movements, as well as interviews with guerrillas themselves.

Thirdly, I am relying on statistical data. I am using statistical data taken from other author's research. For example, statistics on death rates by repression in El Salvador over several different time frames or statistics on popular support for the FMLN at a given time. A Salvadoran humans rights group, Tutela Legal, recorded many of these statistics. However, I contacted them and never received a response as to how to access the original data from here in the U.S. Therefore, I am citing other authors who used Tutela Legal's statistics. I am also looking at more general statistics, such as those on education, healthcare, or land distribution in a particular time frame of the conflict.

The information that I gain from each of these sources will be useful in proving how much legitimacy the guerrilla groups had at different points in the conflict and the actions they took which made them lose or gain legitimacy. At the same time, we will see ways in which the government itself lost legitimacy, leading to the guerilla's increasing legitimacy. Have, as Weber suggests, the guerrilla groups created enough of a

cult movement and shown enough charisma to gain political legitimacy? Has, along the lines of Lipset's theory, the government become so unable to provide for the people's basic needs that they have lost the legitimacy? In this case, the guerrillas may be the ones providing for those needs, which would lead them to gain in legitimacy. The facts, statistics, and interviews I am using are what will answer these and other legitimacy questions that arise.

I am investigating several variables. First, I am investigating whether the FMLN has articulated political goals. Secondly, I am looking at whether or not they are able to remain faithful to their ideology. Then, I am looking at their approach to civilians. This includes in what ways that have used a "heart and minds" approach and in what ways they have used a "fear and hatred" strategy. Next, I am looking at the situational context. I want to explore whether violence was a last resort in effecting change and whether the FMLN was the legitimate group to fight for this. I am also considering the negative legitimacy of the Salvadoran government and whether or not they were able to adequately provide for their civilian constituents. Within this category, I am looking at land conditions, social/political conditions, education and healthcare. Following this, I discuss legitimacy through association. This includes government talks with the FMLN, international impact and recognition, and association with top figures in key organizations, in this case the church. Next, I discuss civilian life. This includes whether the civilians are in support of or against the FMLN, the ability of the FMLN to protect its civilian base, especially from violence, recruitment practices, and migration and internal displacement levels. Finally, I discuss the FMLN's thoughts on the necessity of justifying their actions.

Articulated Political Goals

One of the key aspects of being a legitimate guerilla group, according to Mao and Che, is the presence of clear and articulated political goals. The FMLN did have definite political goals. Since many of those fighting joined due to disillusionment with the authoritarian political regime, there was a strong push to fix political issues (McClintock 56). In 1980, the FMLN called for a “six-point platform of principles” for change (McClintock 57). These included a democratic government, the Revolutionary Democratic Government (GDR), which would guarantee national sovereignty, independence, and the right to self-determination, peace, liberty, well-being, progress, political, economic, and social reforms, and a just distribution of wealth, enjoyment of culture, and healthcare. They also called for acknowledging the democratic rights of majorities, peace and nonalignment in foreign policy, democratic representation of all sectors that helped to overthrow the military dictatorship, a new army made up of honest members of the present army as well as the FMLN, and pledged support to private businessmen who would work with the revolutionary government for economic development (McClintock 57). The fact that their government was not communist, by any means, was repeatedly emphasized. The overall call was for democracy, stability, international involvement, pluralism, and full participation (McClintock 58). While some FMLN leaders did believe this rhetoric, other leaders were indeed Marxist thinkers (McClintock 59).

The FMLN’s major 1989 offensive did not end with the FMLN gaining power. Most likely, this was because the movement did not have the power or legitimacy that it had had in the early years (1979-81). However, while there was no clear military

triumph, it was a victory for those FMLN leaders who were truly invested in the political realm of things and wanted the Salvadoran government to engage in negotiations (McClintock 85). The FDR, the leftist political coalition, was consistently aligned with the FMLN despite the two group's differences. One FMLN commander, Jesus Rojas, discussed the necessity of working together with the FDR since both groups ultimately wanted to open up the political system and affect change legally (Harnecker 59). The FMLN was not fighting for socialism, but for a transition society, where, at last, different classes would be able to express themselves under democratic conditions (Harnecker 91-92). However, FMLN commanders called for a socialist El Salvador as their eventual goal. This would include the elimination of structural practices of exploitation and oppression, increased economic development, and a voice for the common people (Harnecker 91).

Remaining Faithful to Ideology

Did the FMLN remain faithful to this ideology? As mentioned earlier, their ideology called for a democratic structure, international alliances, and a pragmatic and moderate attitude. Their goals were social democratic, not Marxist. Unlike the FSLN in Nicaragua, the FMLN "did not cloak their ideology with pragmatic rhetoric...and neither did they follow the FSLN lead and seek to forge an alliance with upper-class elements" (Brockett 249).

One problem the FMLN had with sticking to their ideology developed from internal divisions. The FMLN was formed from five different guerillas groups. None of the groups called for political violence, and terrorism was only permitted against military targets (McClintock 48). Nonetheless, each group had their own leader, internal

mannerisms, and original ideological beliefs (McClintock 48). Hence, there was no shortage of arguments over ideology (McClintock 49-53). Additionally, we see that at least some groups in the FMLN did depart from their principles on political violence and terrorism.

One of the reasons that the supposed “final offensive,” in 1981, failed, was due to a huge division between the FMLN commanders. The FPL and the RN didn’t want to launch the offensive, the RN didn’t even attack, and the ERP refused to share their arms with the other groups (McClintock 54). This early lack of unity may have cost the FMLN the revolution. Scholars note the lack of support that the U.S. and the upper class had for the Salvadoran government in the early period of the conflict and the massive popular support that backed the movement. However, the FMLN simply could not sort through their factional differences (McClintock 54). Some cite that the factional differences never entirely disappeared (McClintock 56). Commander Leonel Gonzalez, interviewed in the late 1980’s, said that the FMLN is composed of five organizations with different experiences, different work styles, and different opinions within issues, even if they share common views on the overall picture. However, he emphasizes that the organization is not a contradiction. It is not crucial to be identical since the FMLN is based on a central democracy and the center dictates the unified strategy (Harnecker 81-82). Other scholars say that the FMLN eventually overcame their divisions and “effectively formulated its revolutionary strategy” while being flexible and open to dialogue and negotiation (McClintock 285).

While the FMLN did have an integrated strategy towards achieving power, they often focused heavily on the military side of it in order to achieve their goals (Byrne 88).

The FMLN often spoke out against elections. For example, in 1981, the FMLN called elections meaningless since they were taking place in the midst of a civil war and tens of thousands of the military dictatorship's opponents had been murdered (Byrne 91). They continued to attempt to prevent elections. In 1983 they realized that it was not effective to focus so much on the military aspect and, in 1984, moved more into the political realm (Byrne 132).

Approach to Civilians:

Hearts and Minds:

Joaquín Villalobos, a top FMLN strategist and commander, stated, "And hence we can also comprehend why the FMLN resorts to guerrilla actions of attrition. It is not territory that is in dispute, but rather, two things: the incorporation of all people into the war and the capacity to profoundly weaken the other side" (Wood 134-135). Villalobos emphasized the necessity of competing for civilian loyalty, and, in many aspects, the FMLN did work to win the "hearts and minds" of the Salvadoran people. In fact, the FMLN was a movement dependent on the most disenfranchised Salvadoran-the campesino. However, throughout the conflict, the campesinos suffered as the Armed Forces and the FMLN engaged in a crucial dance. "Despite the constant accommodations they make to the war, they suffer grievously from each side's efforts to win over and control the civilian population, and the sometimes deadly response of the other side" (*The Civilian Toll*, 1). The Army would pressure civilians to inform, and then the FMLN would execute them. The Army would try to expand into FMLN zones and the FMLN would kidnap mayors. On the other hand, the FMLN would win over civilians and the Army would arrest and abuse these FMLN sympathizers (*The Civilian*

Toll, 1). Despite the military's attempts at a "hearts and minds" campaign at certain points in the conflict, the people remained deeply suspicious (*Nightmare Revisited* 70). None of the FMLN factions advocated political terror. In fact, FMLN civilian assassinations numbered around 40 per year from 1983-1990. This was always less than 10% of those killed by security forces. The FMLN, then, always at least attempted to justify these assassinations by stating that they were legitimate military targets (McClintock 59).

Beginning in the mid-1970's, the FPL began working to emphasize an alliance between workers and campesinos. They attempted to create mass organizations that would gather together citizens to fight for their rights and needs. Through this, the people would then realize the necessity of an armed struggle (Wood 92). The Popular Revolutionary Block (BPR) was closely aligned with the FPL and helped mobilize tens of thousands, and later hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans (Wood 93). The FMLN also created "Popular Local Power" organizations to provide healthcare and food to locals in a strategy to inspire political participation (Wood 126).

Within the guerilla forces themselves, significant mobility was available to campesinos (Wood 127). FMLN leaders were often peasants or teachers (McClintock 266). A campesino lured by the opportunity to be a *comandante* and delegate power is very likely to be persuaded. Other campesinos look back fondly on the services that the FMLN provided. One woman recalls that if the campesinos needed anything, for example, shoes, the FMLN would provide it (Vasquez 11). While some called the FMLN rapists and thieves, the interviewee remembers being treated with the utmost respect and being offered things that she needed, such as sugar (Vasquez 12).

Fear and Hatred

What about those who saw the FMLN as rapists and thieves? Do the tactics of fear and hatred apply to the FMLN? The answer is yes, however they seem to apply in a way that is different from that of many new war groups. When the FMLN committed these actions, they often expressed remorse, admitted an error, or felt the need to issue a justification. However, after the conflict, civilians believed that members of the FMLN (along with former military, government officials, judges, and death squad members) still had the ability to inflict serious physical and material injury on anyone who testified about the violence between 1980 and 1990. While these fears may be unfounded, it is important to note that people still perceived a real threat (UN Truth Commission 23). Local human rights groups and other individuals regularly accused the FMLN of abducting and/or killing civilians who they assumed were working for, or even just supporting, authorities (Amnesty International '89 122). The U.N. Commission on the Truth documented over 22, 000 cases of serious violence between January 1980 and July 1991. In 5% of complaints the FMLN was accused (UN Truth Commission 43).

From 1980-83, there was “systematic violence, terror and distrust among civilians.” The FMLN formed in 1980, at the same time that indiscriminate attacks on civilians who were not fighting and summary executions became more widespread (UN Truth Commission 27). In the first half of the 1980s, FMLN killings could be placed into three categories. These were targeted assassinations, killing civilian passengers at traffic stoppages (roadblocks), and executing soldiers they had captured (*Decade of Terror* 64). However, in Tutela Legal’s first reported data, from 1983, they report 5,142 civilian deaths with only 67 attributed to the guerillas. Abductions numbered 43 by guerrillas and

535 by armed forces/death squads. The FMLN also charged many landlords with war taxes, forced them to limit their employee's working hours, and prohibited them from selling land (Wood 88-89). Obviously, the state was much more violent than the insurgents. However, guerilla acts causing "fear and hatred" did exist.

As time passed, however, this gap grew increasingly smaller (*Decade of Terror* 64). Many people who lived in areas that suffered violence at the hands of the FMLN in the early/mid 1980s grew more and more visibly bitter. One campesino stated, "If the guerillas had not killed people, perhaps all of us would have gone over to them" (Wood 210). From 1983-87, "violations of life, physical integrity and security continued" (UN Truth Commission 31). Much of this violence can be attributed to harsh repression by the government army and death squads. However, again, the FMLN was not exempt from guilt. As the FMLN became stronger, both militarily and structurally, they began to gain territorial control and carry out larger operations. In 1984, the FMLN began to assassinate right-wing civilian leaders and execute captured civilians (*Decade of Terror* 65). In fact, in 1984 the FMLN committed their first reported mass civilian killing, which they admitted to over a year later, in late 1985, on the radio (*Decade of Terror* 65-66).

In 1985, the FMLN started to utilize mines indiscriminately. This resulted in numerous civilian deaths. Kidnapping and murdering town mayors and other government officials near conflict zones became routine. The guerrilla intent was to show "the existence of a 'duality of power' in El Salvador" (UN Truth Commission 32). However, the result was that the number one priority, the people, were often put on the back burner. In 1985, the violence and number of abductions and summary executions

escalated (UN Truth Commission 35). Kidnappings and the taking of hostages increased, with some victims being released while others were not (*Decade of Terror* 66). Americas Watch reports that, according to Tutela Legal, the FMLN killed 97 noncombatants in 1985 (*Decade of Terror* 66).

Some of the victims were killed in two major massacres, one of which involved FMLN guerillas entering a village disguised as soldiers to catch unarmed civil defense members unaware. In another village, a 67-year-old man, three women, and two children died when a rocket hit their house. A 9-year-old girl was shot running out of the same house (*Decade of Terror* 66). On June 19, the PRTC orchestrated an attack on a San Salvador restaurant that killed four U.S. marines and nine civilians (UN Truth Commission 35). By September of 1985, 20 local mayors had already been abducted by the FMLN since the start of the year (UN Truth Commission 35). Then, the FMLN kidnapped the daughter of President Duarte and used her as a bargaining chip (UN Truth Commission 35). The FMLN's increasing use of land mines led many civilians to be killed or maimed, according to the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador (UN Truth Commission 36). Here are the statistics for FMLN-caused deaths in 1985: FMLN summary executions: 66, FMLN indiscriminate killings (traffic stoppages): 31, civilian mining and explosives deaths: 31, FMLN captures of civilians (unreleased by year end): 45 (*The Civilian Toll* 7-8).

In 1986, 54 civilians were killed by mines, most caused by guerillas (*Decade of Terror* 67). The land mines were incredibly useful in aiding the guerillas to escape government patrols. However, they didn't take necessary precautions to ensure that there were no civilian casualties when they were planting them (*Decade of Terror* 66-67). In

1986, the guerillas also partook in 7 indiscriminate killings at traffic stoppages and 45 reported targeted assassinations of “orejás,” or campesinos believed to be giving information to the government Army (*Decade of Terror* 67). Here are the statistics for FMLN-caused deaths in 1986: FMLN summary executions: 45, FMLN indiscriminate killings (traffic stoppages): 7, civilian mining and explosives deaths: 54, FMLN captures of civilians (unreleased by year end): 27 (*The Civilian Toll* 7-8).

As the conflict carried on, FMLN leaders would force all residents into the town square for political meetings, blockade highways for hours, confiscate consumer goods from cars, and attack coffee mills (Wood 148). Campesinos were forced to provide water and food for insurgents, and residents had to view the FMLN as the local governing authority (Wood 155-156).

An Americas Watch report chronicled guerilla abuses in 1987. On 1/19 6 coffee pickers were killed by the FMLN, including three women, one of which was pregnant. In February, two former guerrillas, aged 15 and 19, were killed by the FMLN, a 13-year-old died from a mine, and a 51-year-old peasant/civil defense commander was executed. In April, a former soldier was killed publicly and guerillas announced that another of their captives had died. This resulted in hundreds of civilians fleeing, “terrorized” and in fear. In May, guerilla mortar killed an old woman and fatally wounded her granddaughter. In July, guerillas executed the town director responsible for handing out World Relief supplies around town (*The Civilian Toll* 6). This is just a random sampling of some of the ways that the guerillas inspired fear.

Also in 1987, land mines killed 29 and the FMLN engaged in 31 targeted killings, including killing coffee pickers (*Decade of Terror* 67-68). FMLN members wanted to

kill a mayor, but when they could not find him they killed his brother (*The Civilian Toll* 24). The FMLN, perhaps justifiably, captured soldiers, mayors, local officials, spies and suspected collaborators. However, they also captured people for the sole purpose of holding them for ransom (*The Civilian Toll* 25). The FMLN recruited children as young as 11 as full-time messengers and boys under 15 wielded arms and sported uniforms (*The Civilian Toll* 25).

Guerillas began to grow very suspicious, suspecting whole villagers of being Army collaborators and threatening them. One village woman, Berta Julia Hernandez, proclaimed, “We do not know if he was spying, but I do not think so,” about one man who was accused (*The Civilian Toll* 126). The man’s execution consisted of the guerillas taking him a few meters away, his feet bound and thumbs tied behind him, and blowing his brains out in front of his whole family, including his children (*The Civilian Toll* 126). A village pastor, Pastor Mijango said, “We are all going, the whole village, because we are afraid of the guerillas now.” A campesino, Santos Baltazar Serrano, agrees, “We are going because the guerillas are forcing us to leave” (*The Civilian Toll* 127). While it couldn’t be said for sure whether victims were tortured or raped, some recovered bodies had bruises and marks that appeared to be cigarette burns (*The Civilian Toll* 132).

An “increasing victimization of civilians” was noted. This was demonstrated through tactics used to inspire fear and push civilians to join or support the FMLN. Another major negative tactic, used temporarily by the FMLN, was forced recruiting. The result was that scores of Salvadorans fled their villages (*The Civilian Toll* 137). There came a point when civilians were informed that remaining neutral was no longer an option. The campesinos would be required to plant mines, hand out propaganda, and

transport the wounded guerillas and captured goods during attacks. If the male head of the household could not participate, they would have to send their son (anyone over seven). If they did not cooperate “they would have to abandon their homes with only the clothes on their back, leaving their belongings behind.” This was expressly declared as an order from the FMLN high command (*The Civilian Toll* 138). Short-term coerced recruitment, not as bad as long-term forced recruitment but still unpopular, consisted of kidnapping young men for a few days and requiring them to aid the FMLN (*The Civilian Toll* 140). In October of 1987, there was an amnesty for all those charged with crimes related to the civil conflict. This helped encourage more crime, since people felt that, at least legally, they would face no repercussions (*Nightmare Revisited* 6-7).

This was certainly apparent in 1988, when summary executions and civilian deaths by land mines became more frequent (*Nightmare Revisited* 2). In the first half of 1988, civilian deaths, in general, increased. If trends continued, Americas Watch predicted that civilian deaths from mines and explosives would almost double by the end of the year. Likewise, guerilla executions had risen by 74% from the past year. The FMLN was deemed culpable for the majority of land mine deaths. While some cases were accidental, the majority, “reflect a failure to provide adequate warnings, resulting in deaths and severe injuries to civilians” (*Nightmare Revisited* 5). There were 44 targeted killings in 1988. Beginning in 1988, the FMLN started to utilize car bombs in wealthy areas of San Salvador (*Nightmare Revisited* 5). Some repatriates, who returned to areas suddenly controlled by the guerillas, faced violent treatment. The FMLN executed various repatriates, identifying them as spies, or expelled them from the community (*Nightmare Revisited* 70). In 1988, more estimates predicted that mines had killed 150

people (UN Truth Commission 38). In 1988, ARENA got a majority of the vote in the National Assembly and municipal council elections. The FMLN tried to boycott the elections through transport stoppages, kidnappings, murders, car-bombings, and targeting municipal officials and suspected informers (UN Truth Commission 38). The policy of “ajusticiamientos,” or summary executions, as well as politically motivated murders increased (UN Truth Commission 40). The FMLN stated that it was common practice to execute informers or Army collaborators, as well as elected officials in combat zones (*Nightmare Revisited* 43). They tried to justify this by claiming that the government had stepped up the practice of getting information from informants. Although this very well may be considered true, they had no trials for the accused (*Nightmare Revisited* 44). Land mines became the FMLN’s most powerful weapons. On the other hand, they led to the most rapidly rising category of civilian deaths over the conflict (*Nightmare Revisited* 49). FMLN attempts to stop elections included kidnappings, killings, car bombs, and traffic stoppages across the country (*Nightmare Revisited* 50).

During the 1989 offensive, the FMLN committed summary executions, used civilians as shields, attacked Red cross vehicles, put the Red Cross emblem on non-medical vehicles, killed non-combatants in the National Center of Information, and killed 5 government journalists, not in combat, but after capture (*Decade of Terror* 70). Tutela Legal reports statistics for the FMLN in 1989. The FMLN inflicted 684 deaths that year, controlled 15% of the country and had the popular support of 25% of the civilians. However, both the FMLN and the Salvadoran government contested these numbers (McClintock 73-76).

Situational Context

Violence as a Last Resort?

Was fighting the last resort or was there another way for civilians to voice their opinions, and, perhaps more importantly, have them listened to? In fact, there is proof that it was nearly impossible for non-violent protest to create change in the years leading up to the conflict (Brockett 293). Perhaps most importantly, an electoral victory of a broad and widely supported coalition in 1972 was overturned by the military. The inability to achieve change through the electoral or legal system “convinced many would-be democrats that reforms could only be achieved through extralegal methods” (Byrne 25). When protestors tried to carry out a nonviolent march in May of 1977, the police responded with violence. They killed 8, wounded 16, and arrested 100 (Brockett 295). One can examine statistics on urban civilian deaths by repression matched to statistics of nonviolent contentious activities from Jan 1978-1979. The deaths correlate perfectly with the level of political activity. In fact, the highest death rates are from May-Sept 1979, right before the creation of the FMLN (Brockett 296). One of the reasons the FMLN was so successful is linked directly with the inability for civilians to effectively participate in politics, coupled with a very repressive regime in power (McClintock 11-12). The people chose the FMLN as a legitimate means of representing their frustration with the government. They would utilize violence, but only because it was a last resort.

Means of Gaining Authority

A second question, then, would be how the FMLN got authority. Throughout the 1970's, urban students became increasingly radical and engaged in violent and nonviolent protest activities. These students were crucial in peasant mobilization because they

brought their progressive and activist ideals to rural areas (Brockett 75). The FMLN derives power from a strong peasant base. The merging of five guerilla groups, banded together to create a stronger force against the Salvadoran army, represents the merging of the campesinos (for the most part), into one cohesive movement. The FMLN would represent all of the aspirations dreamt up in local peasant mobilization groups, and hopefully make them a reality.

Negative Legitimacy of the Salvadoran Government

One of the major ways that the FMLN first gained legitimacy was through the lack of any other cohesive group to fight the extremely repressive Salvadoran government. The incapacity of the Salvadoran government to meet the needs of their people, coupled with their brutal and violent tactics, led to their loss of legitimacy. However, for some people, they regained legitimacy after the U.S. provided government backing and they somewhat modified their political system. For example, one result of Duarte's election was serious changes in politics, and the opening of politics so that the FMLN-FDR, or other political groups, could participate to a greater degree (McClintock 84).

Originally, however, many people joined the FMLN after army violence against their family members or neighbors (Wood 115). There were 3,059 political murders from Jan-Aug. 1982, "nearly all of them a result of action by Government agents against civilians not involved in military combat" (UN Truth Commission 31). One scholar states that, "state violence deployed against unarmed civilians and sometimes against uninvolved family members or other residents legitimated the choice to rebel against the state, and to use arms in doing so" (Wood 116). Additionally, there was a lack of free

media. The FMLN's official radio station, Rebel Radio, was created because of the need for expression at a time when repression on print media was brutal and all the leftist newspapers were shut down (Lopez Vigil 3).

Land Conditions

At the brink of the conflict, living standards for most Salvadorans were not on the decline. However, for peasants it was a mixed bag. In some areas, living standards were lowering, while in others they were improving. It must be noted that most Salvadorans didn't say that they joined the FMLN for economical reasons, nor was there a correlation between areas in extreme poverty and membership in the FMLN (McClintock 159). However, campesinos were less than happy with their standard of living, which did increase the likelihood for revolution (McClintock 159). The biggest economic issue was landlessness, or not enough land. There was mobilization due to commercial agriculture's displacement of peasants and, because of that, lowered living standards (McClintock 25). Landlessness may not be the cause of the conflict, but it could be looked at as "a necessary condition for rebellion" (McClintock 32). In fact, the landless and land-poor peasants constituted a major part of the FMLN's recruits. One guerilla comments that in '81 and '82 there was a very good response and high participation from campesinos because they were so irritated with land issues (Wood 118). The FMLN worked to redistribute land and create land reform for campesinos. They also tried to get workers wages raised. While the FMLN did succeed in getting peasants shorter worker days, they were not able to guarantee better wages (Wood 119).

Social Conditions

What was the level of political rights and representation accessible to peasants at the start of the conflict? The reality was that, technically, they had the right to express themselves. Literally, however, there was no way to effectively create change. As mentioned earlier, the FMLN was built upon the early work of urban students in the 1970's who had created peasant movements in rural areas. Political mobilization, through marches and demonstrations, was very limited in the early '80's, during a very repressive period. In the mid-to-late 1980s, there was much more political opportunity, which resulted in a "vibrant rural civil society" (Woods 16). While some campesinos participated in this movement throughout the conflict, many didn't join in until the mid/late 1980s when the climate was more forgiving (Woods 18). This persistent nonviolent people's movement engaged in marches, strikes, factory and farm occupations, and sit-ins, even in the midst of the violence (Brockett 2).

Across El Salvador, there also existed a strong network of insurgent campesino groups who worked to build cooperatives. At times they collaborated with the FMLN, but at other times they did not. These organizations sprouted up across many different regions during the war. The result was to greatly increase peasant's political legitimacy and authority (Brockett 85-86). Many peasant movements did work with the FMLN. Interviews show that campesino support came out of years of 'clandestine political work,' a lot of which was done by the ERP, other guerrilla groups, and the locals (Brockett 117). They had worked hard to show peasants that, historically, the government had treated them unjustly in terms of land tenure, labor relations, and governance. They also talked about the benefits that would come out of the society they

would help create (Brockett 117). Not elitist in the least, the FMLN was strongly comprised of peasants, even at leadership levels. Therefore, involvement in the FMLN led to significant mobility within the guerilla forces for campesinos, and hence the opportunity to really make a difference (Brockett 127).

Education and Healthcare

In El Salvador, in 1971, the economic situation was not a good one. As far as health issues, the infant mortality rate, in the province of Chalatenango, was as high as 124 per 1,000 live births. 70% of the population in this province lived without safe drinking water. There were 34,164 inhabitants per 1 doctor (McClintock 171). The situation over the next few years did not improve dramatically. In El Salvador in 1975, only 9% of the relevant age group was enrolled in secondary school (McClintock 186). Obviously, social changes in both the education and health sectors were needed. In one interview, a campesino states, “Before the war we were despised by the rich. We were seen as animals, working all day and still without even enough to put the kids in school. This is the origin of the war: There was no alternative. The only alternative was the madness of desperation” (Wood 201). The negative legitimacy of the Salvadoran government opened up a path of legitimacy for the FMLN.

Legitimacy through Association

Government Talks

The FMLN was involved in government talks. Originally, El Salvador’s strong right wing, as well as the Reagan administration, was adamantly opposed to negotiations. The first headway came in 1983, when the U.S., El Salvador, and the FMLN-FDR discussed talk attempts. However, the U.S. believed the only item up for discussion

should be the ability for opposition parties to partake in elections. The FMLN-FDR wanted some political power (Byrne 93). In October of 1984, President Duarte, long considered a moderate reformer, invited the FMLN to talks (Byrne 94). The first meeting took place on October 15th in La Palma, Chalatenango. A second meeting occurred on November 30th in Ayagualo, La Libertad. Neither meeting proved successful due to the government's position on the conditions of a possible incorporation of the FMLN into the political sphere (UN Truth Commission 41). However, the sole act of the government sitting down and negotiating in talks with the FMLN, according to Mary Kaldor, legitimates the FMLN. On November 11, 1989, talks that had begun in September, under the 1987 Central American Peace agreement, broke down. This was followed by the FMLN's launching of their largest military offensive (Amnesty International '90 1).

Negotiations were not taken very seriously until 1989 because each side believed that, militarily, they could win. In 1989, there were several reasons that talks got off the ground. These included the 1989 offensive's impact, approval of the U.S. to go ahead with negotiations, the Salvadoran government's desire to end war and start economic recovery, internal pressure for peace, and international influence with the decline of the USSR and the resolution of many regional conflicts (Byrne 173).

International Impact

International workers often helped the early mobilization movements. For example, in San Salvador, one Belgian team worked in poor neighborhoods recruiting many activists for the movement in the 1970's and 80's, as well as providing activists for the 1989 FMLN offensive (Brockett 143). The U.S., on the other hand, was key in recruiting peasants for right wing, military-supporting organizations (Brockett 144).

Hence, each side was aided by international support. Not surprisingly, U.S. support had much more influence than that of other nations. The FMLN had ties with the East bloc, countries throughout Latin America, and solidarity groups in the U.S. and Britain (McClintock 60). Nicaragua and Cuba were their strongest allies, however all of these nations provided resources and advice (McClintock 60). Obviously, the FMLN had significant international legitimacy. However, the U.S. refused to view the FMLN as a legitimate political group and justified movement, and believed that they were Marxist. Lack of acceptance by the United States had a large impact on the movement. The FMLN was at its strongest in the very early 80's, when the Salvadoran regime was in its most repressive period. In these early years, the Salvadoran government was much less legitimate, U.S. backing was much less certain, and the guerillas had much more support (McClintock 82). This stems from the idea that people are willing to support a guerilla movement when they have a certain amount of faith that it will be successful, but not otherwise. The theory is that if citizens believe a government is ultimately stronger, they won't usually stand up for a guerilla movement. But, if the citizen believes that a guerilla organization is powerful, that makes it powerful, which then reinforces the citizen's belief in it (McClintock 46).

In 1983, the FMLN was believed to have the military advantage. The U.S., under George H.W. Bush, offered monetary incentives to the Salvadoran government if they would reform their brutal tactics. The condition was that the government would make reforms, win hearts and minds, and convince campesinos that they should no longer support the guerillas (Wood 132). The Salvadoran government agreed, becoming much less repressive than they had been from 1980-1983. Many consider this U.S. aid,

contingent on a less repressive government, one of the major reasons the FMLN failed to take power. The U.S. aid helped to improve life for the Salvadoran middle class and forced the Salvadoran government to make political reforms (McClintock 12). This removed much of what a large portion of FMLN supporters were fighting for. Both members of the guerilla force and FMLN leaders cited the abusive political regime as their main reason for joining the movement (McClintock 267). Also in 1983, around the same time, the FMLN was attempting to receive formal recognition from international entities so that they would be able to receive weapons openly without violating international war. They were unsuccessful (McClintock 83).

Because of these two issues, in 1984 the FMLN was forced to switch their tactics. They concluded that a conventional military approach (revolutionary army-style) would not work, especially with the increased funding to the Salvadoran Army. Instead, they were forced to switch to the “prolonged popular war” Vietnam-style strategy (McClintock 83). This was a necessary strategy change, and suddenly the FMLN moved to sabotage, which included land mines and removing mayors (Wood 134). Unfortunately, it was exactly these tactics that hurt civilians. U.S. aid resulted in a downward spiral for the FMLN in terms of popular support and legitimacy. U.S. support was so strong against the FMLN that it hurt their recruitment (McClintock 82). When the FMLN was forced to change strategy and struggle to regain support, even relying on forced recruitment at one point, they ended up alienating even more of their base.

Additionally, the FMLN consistently faced accusations of “breaching internationally accepted standards for conduct during armed conflict not of an international nature,” for using land mines to target and kill specific civilians, despite the

fact that international human rights monitoring groups could not explicitly prove this (Amnesty International '89 88). Whether this charge was valid or not, international human rights organizations, including Americas Watch, Amnesty International, and the U.N. Truth Commission, consistently badgered the FMLN for human rights violations. In mid-November of 1990, the FMLN stepped up military operations in order to force the negotiating process back into motion. The international community stepped in, demanding that the FMLN “desist from those operations” (UN Truth Commission 41). This loss of international legitimacy through various actions often correlated with the loss of legitimacy in the eyes of the civilian population. The actions that human rights groups denounced were the same ones that bothered civilians, namely, fear and hatred tactics.

Association with Top Figures-The Church

Commander Ricardo Gutierrez states, “90% of Salvadorans are, in one way or another, Christian. The guerilla is nothing more than a reflection of the people” (Harnecker 87). Church workers played a very significant role in mobilizing peasants throughout the 60-70’s to work actively for reform (Brockett 140). Obviously, a history of activism and culturally embedded reform culture, especially through the church, are very important to fomenting activism later on. In fact, the FMLN was more successful at gaining peasant mobilization and support in many Northern provinces where the church had established a base (Brockett 142). In the Northern provinces of Morazán and Chalatenango, subsistence peasants migrated seasonally and worked the land. The church organized base communities and encouraged peasant cooperatives. When the ERP arrived in the area, they were able to work with existing communities, cooperatives, and collectives to strengthen the movement, instead of starting from scratch. Hence,

there was a strong, militant, peasant base that facilitated that area becoming a guerilla stronghold (Brockett 142-143). Likewise, on the southern coast in Usulután, church workers and secular activists nurtured the peasant movement, which the FMLN then built upon (Brockett 143). Interestingly enough, the ability of the church to create even larger bases was hindered by the disapproval of high-ranking church leaders, who instead were aligned with the Salvadoran government (Brockett 143).

It seems that while campesinos cited different reasons for joining the movement, ranging from economic to political dissatisfaction, the most direct influence came from the Catholic priests (McClintock 267). In fact, it was the abuses against Catholic priests for their activist dealings that proved instrumental in involving otherwise apathetic midlevel leaders and urban professionals in the guerilla movement (McClintock 268). It is safe to say that the Catholic Church was a major contributor in sparking political unrest (Wood 94). Obviously, the importance of the Catholic Church as a core of Salvadoran society led an endorsement of activist movements by the Church to be perceived as a legitimate activity for the average campesino to participate and believe in. Hence, the endorsement of the cause by important figures in Salvadoran society increased legitimacy for the movement.

Civilian Life

The Guerilla Movement: In Protest or Support Of?

The U.N. Commission of the Truth investigated two types of cases. The first set was “individual cases or acts which, by their nature, outraged Salvadorian society and/or international opinion.” The second set consisted of “a series of individual cases with similar characteristics revealing a systematic pattern of violence or ill-treatment which,

taken together, equally outraged Salvadorian society, especially since their aim was to intimidate certain sectors of that society” (UN Truth Commission 19). The FMLN committed many of the latter, and the U.N. was able to state, through extensive case study and interviews, that civilians were indeed outraged by acts of intimidation.

Guerilla groups only grew slightly throughout the 1970s. It was the rapid wave of repression in late 1979 and throughout 1980 that translated into escalating recruitment numbers and the creation of the FMLN. Guerilla groups grew so quickly that many leaders and foreign support groups anticipated success in the 1981 “final offensive” (Brockett 304). The military, through their violent and brutal actions, managed to deter many peasants from joining or supporting the guerillas. But, especially in areas under guerilla control, they were much less successful at doing this (Brockett 305). The FMLN was a very strong guerilla movement (McClintock 46). They were adept at realizing how angry people were and successfully directing that anger to achieve their goals (McClintock 47). In 1989, the FMLN had about 8,000 full-time combatants. In the early 1980s they had about 10,000. During the 1980’s supporters averaged around 50,000 (McClintock 75).

1989 was the year when the FMLN posed the greatest military threat (McClintock 74). On November 11, 1989, the FMLN commenced the largest offensive of the conflict. The result was a government declaration of a state of emergency. Starting November 13, there was a curfew from 6 pm to 6 am. “The fighting that raged up to 12 December cost the lives of over 2,000 from both sides and caused material damage amounting to approximately 6 million colones” (UN Truth Commission 39). Unfortunately for the FMLN, their greatest political support had eroded in the early 1980s (McClintock 74). It

is hard to determine exact civilian support for the FMLN, mainly because in El Salvador it was very dangerous to express support for the FMLN and no organization took extensive opinion polls. Additionally, supporters tended to be located in areas where no pollsters went (McClintock 76). McClintock completed a survey where she did not directly ask a respondent whether they supported the FMLN but, rather, asked them how much support they thought the FMLN had (McClintock 76). 20-35% of respondents each said that FMLN support was 2%, 10%, or 20% of the population. The confusion was so great that in the same neighborhood one individual said that the FMLN had no support while others said that most people supported them (McClintock 76).

Before, 1989, when the FMLN was still not included in elections, over 20% of respondents in a Universidad Centroamerica (UCA) survey said that they had no preference of political party or candidate. 20% didn't know and 15% said the vote was secret. From these responses, one can infer that 20-25% of the population supported the FMLN, decisively lower than the number that would have supported them in the late 70's and early 1980's (McClintock 76-77). On January 22, 1980, 150,000 to 200,000 people participated in anti-government demonstrations and approved of the creation of the unified front of guerilla groups. At this point in time, analysts believe that the unified front had majority support among those Salvadorans who were following politics (McClintock 77).

One way the movement lost support was through the alienation of those Salvadorans who were better off. While the movement had never been one of the elite, there was strong middle class involvement at the beginning. As was already mentioned, government reforms started to make the Salvadoran government seem less terrible to the

middle class. As the FMLN engaged in kidnappings for ransom of rich Salvadorans, they hurt their ability to reach compromises later to settle the conflict, and further alienated this sector (*Decade of Terror* 64). As time went on, many recruits were migrant workers, who had less to lose and more to gain. About 80% of the FMLN was comprised of peasants in the early 1980s. By the end of the 1980s, it was 95%. 80% were 18 or younger and few were over 25 (McClintock 270). Obviously, the demographic of the movement changed a lot. The FMLN lost legitimacy with a large portion of the population and became much more centered on one demographic.

Another major reason that the movement lost support was the change in tactics, in 1984, to more traditional guerilla warfare laced with fear and hatred tactics. On one hand, changing strategy was demoralizing for many FMLN fighters who had believed that victory was near. The number of active guerillas fell from 10-12, 000 in 1984 to about half that in 1987 (Wood 135). The change in tactics also meant loss of civilian support because it developed into a type of “fear and hatred” strategy reminiscent of New War. Much of the “hearts and minds” strategy was lost, not necessarily because it was what the FMLN wanted, but because they had lost strength and didn’t not know how else to fight the army or gain back support.

The FMLN relied heavily on the voluntary support of campesinos (Wood 122). In fact, international support, infrastructure, and arms were important, but intelligence, logistical forces, and the physical guerilla forces were more important. Local political capacity groups formed by the campesinos greatly aided the permanent FMLN military (Wood 123-124). One woman remembers, “We provided two hundred or so tortillas at a

time to the Frente. The houses would take turns. Each house would send twenty-five tortillas, eight houses at a time. In this, *everyone* participated” (Wood 124).

There was a very high risk for campesinos getting involved in the movement (Wood 11). Anyway, even without supporting the FMLN you could gain many of the benefits through the “free-rider” idea (Wood 193). So, why did they join? The reasons run the gamut. Some believed in a struggle between classes, with poor, rural civilians fighting inequality (Wood 11). Others joined because of moral commitments, emotional engagements (since they had always been a part of a social movement for economic reform or political inclusion), in defiance of the violent Government army, or due to the pleasure inspired by occupying and claiming the land of others, which allowed them to assert a new identity of social equality through claiming land rights (Wood 18). Others looked to their roots in rural culture and their new views on analyzing the violent military situation and decided that they would continue to support the FMLN because it was “so clear on moral grounds that they did not entertain alternatives” (Wood 203). These individuals saw the FMLN as part of their identity (Wood 203). Many of the women involved came from urban backgrounds and dropped their studies to join the FMLN, facing harsh rural conditions they were not used to for the ideals of the movement (Vasquez).

Why did peasants choose not to participate? Many cited the “fear and hatred” methods that the FMLN had utilized so widely in the later years of the conflict. Others joined alternative networks, right-wing paramilitaries or other forms of protection. Some peasants, who had already experienced agrarian reform in West El Salvador, showed little interest (Wood 208). Some people joined evangelical groups, which urged no

involvement in politics. Other people had no organization in their neighborhood (Wood 209).

Protection

One important part of legitimacy is the safety of the common civilian. The FMLN was not adept at protecting its civilian base. “During the war the FMLN offered little protection from government forces” (Wood 13). Even in their strongholds, they could not protect the residents from aerial bombing, and in the late 1980s many Salvadorans were forced into refugee camps (Wood 13). The insurgents were too widely spread out, government attacks were too often, and there was no safe haven for the civilians to retreat to (Wood 116). Additionally, as has been repeatedly discussed, the guerillas themselves created situations, such as when they haphazardly placed mines, in which civilians could not feel safe in their own villages.

Violence/Crime

The FMLN was also not very successful at curbing violence from the other side, whether it was by the Army, death squads, or other paramilitary groups. The brutal and illegal nature of the government paramilitaries and death squads cannot be ignored. The UN Truth Commission describes “indiscriminate attacks on the non-combatant civilian population...collective summary executions, particularly against the rural population...appalling massacres...Organized terrorism, in the form of the so-called “death squads”...Civilian and military groups engaged in a systematic murder campaign with total impunity, while State institutions turned a blind eye” (UN Truth Commission 27).

Recruitment Practices

For a time, in April and May of 1984, the FMLN engaged in forced recruitment. The result was a wave of displaced persons, most stating that they were fleeing to avoid having to serve in the FMLN. In September 1984, due to mass protest, the FMLN said they would abandon forced recruitment (*Decade of Terror* 91). However, many people, including former guerilla commanders, believed that this practice had been a huge mistake. Perhaps more than anything else, it drove campesinos away from the movement, literally, as they fled to refugee camps. Commander Jesus Rojas stated, in an interview, that it was an error stemming from an incorrect perception on how to win the war. For a time, the FMLN believed that the most essential piece of winning the war was increasing the size of their army, and relying namely on military force (Harnecker 79). Rojas describes the actual effects of the policy: mass desertion and a decline of political quality. Additionally, it was the wrong route for the movement, since it was not the key to winning the conflict. Rojas commends the FMLN for quickly realizing their mistake and ending the practice (Harnecker 80).

Migration and Internal Displacement Levels

In 1981, there were 164,000 displaced persons and the number of those leaving the country for refuge was increasing (UN Truth Commission 30). In 1982, there were 226,744 internally displaced persons. Salvadoran refugees in other Latin American countries ranged from 175,000 to 295,000 (UN Truth Commission 31). In 1984, there were 500,000 internally displaced persons and 245,500 Salvadoran refugees outside the country, totaling 1.5 million displaced persons (UN Truth Commission 32). By 1984, 20% of the country's population was a refugee (UN Truth Commission 34). At first, relocation was sparked by the violence and brutality of the government army and death

squads, however, more and more, peasants left because of the FMLN's forced recruitment or the mines and summary execution tactics which left them terrorized.

When some repatriates were brought back to FMLN areas, the FMLN acted violently against them, partaking in executions, spy accusations, and expulsions from the community (*Nightmare Revisited* 70).

Justification of Actions

When FMLN members executed mayors, they attempted to justify it, arguing that the mayors had intercepted supplies being delivered to the FMLN, and this was an act of war (UN Truth Commission 13). They also said that "mayors and mayors offices had come to engage in what were clearly counter-insurgency activities...creating paramilitary forces (civil defense units) and direct repressive activity against the civilian population...developed spy networks" (UN Truth Commission 151). The FMLN always tried to justify civilian assassinations by labeling the individuals as legitimate military targets (McClintock 60). Consistently cited for human rights offenses by various organizations, Americas Watch noted that the FMLN spokesperson often got in touch with the representative from Americas Watch to justify some actions and deny others (*Decade of Terror* 64-65). Whether the FMLN is right or wrong, it is important that they attempted to justify their actions. A brutal and amoral criminal group, the portrait of a new war fighter, would not bother to seek justification for its actions. When asked if they regret how they treated their enemies, Commander Leonel Gonzalez identifies a few areas in which he believes the FMLN expresses remorse. For a time, the FMLN would kill civilians that they believed were supporting the other side in front of their families. This led many campesinos to turn against the FMLN. Related to this, they didn't look

closely enough at who actually was the enemy, and who was just a poor campesino who needed to eat or was terrorized into supporting the other side. Gonzalez regrets how “enemies” were treated so uniformly (Harnecker 136).

Summary and Conclusions

The FMLN, in ways, encompasses a new war group. In other manners, they exemplify classic Mao and Che guerilla fighters. There are many ways in which the FMLN represents a legitimate guerilla organization. First of all, they highlight specific political goals, which they consistently work to achieve in alliance with the FDR. Although, at times, they rely too strongly on the military aspect of their structure, they always have political goals driving them. In fact, at one point the FMLN is unwilling to negotiate because the U.S. thinks that opposition party participation in elections is the only thing that needs to be discussed and the FMLN wants a real share in political power. This episode also speaks volumes about the FMLN remaining true to their ideology. I believe that, for the most part, the FMLN does attempt to keep from straying too far from their ideology, even if this doesn’t always happen. They are a fractured organization, and certain groups, at times, carried out actions that were outside of the FMLN consensus.

They also, obviously, did not always follow their mandate against political violence. It is clear that in the political climate in El Salvador during the 70’s and early 80’s there was no legal way to achieve change against an oppressive military regime. In fact, nonviolent protests were violently repressed. Therefore, the FMLN had total legitimacy in resorting to armed struggle. Because the FMLN was highly composed of campesinos and represented their interests, it was a legitimate group to advocate change. The inability of the Salvadoran government to provide for the majority of the people, in

terms of land, healthcare, education, and economic resources, as well as its inability to provide acceptable human rights practices, free press, and outlets for political change, made it lose much of its legitimacy. The FMLN was able to gain legitimacy by providing some of these services to the people.

The FMLN also gained legitimacy through association. The Salvadoran government engaged in negotiation talks with them. International organizations and different countries both supported and opposed them. Either way, they legitimized them by giving them relevance in the political sphere. The FMLN also gained legitimacy through the support that lower-level members of the Catholic Church gave them. Finally, the FMLN displayed an early interest in a “heart and minds” campaign and winning civilian support, as well as a commitment to the wants and needs of the campesinos.

On the other hand, there are factors that led the FMLN to lose legitimacy. For example, they were unable to protect the common campesino from government attacks or prevent serious internal displacement. They also caused internal displacement and migration themselves and made errors such as relying on forced recruitment and utilizing “fear and hatred” tactics. These “fear and hatred tactics” mark the biggest departure of the FMLN from embodying a classic guerilla movement. In conclusion, legitimacy seems to work in direct correlation with “new war/classic guerilla” categorizations. The less legitimate an action, the more “new war” it is.

It can be concluded that popular support for the FMLN changed over the years of the conflict. There is a myriad of reasons why people did or did not join the FMLN. However, the most common reason for joining seemed to be disillusionment with the repressive Salvadoran government and the inability to legally and peacefully create

change. One of the most common reasons for Salvadoran campesinos leaving or not joining the movement was resentment of the FMLN's "fear and hatred" tactics. Both of these reasons reflect on how popular support and legitimacy go hand in hand. Popular support creates legitimacy. Simultaneously, popular support is gained based upon a group's actions and whether they are considered legitimate and able to hold power.

The pattern clearly demonstrates a turning point in guerilla tactics in 1984. The FMLN came into the 1980's with a very large level of support. The Salvadoran government was extremely repressive from 1980-83. The FMLN not only had a great deal of legitimacy, they were working through their factional differences and gaining more strength every day. At this point, the United States decided to intervene. This totally altered the dynamic of the conflict. The Salvadoran government wanted, and needed, U.S. aid. In order to get it, the U.S. forced them to make reforms. These reforms were in exactly those areas that had caused many to hate the Salvadoran government. As the government became less repressive and gave more freedoms, especially to the middle class, the FMLN lost crucial support. Forced to change their tactics because of the inevitability of failure if they continued along the same route with less support, the FMLN switched to classic guerilla tactics. However, they also tried to build back up the support they had lost. This is where they erred. Through practices like forced recruitment and "fear and hatred" tactics, they actually decreased their support even more.

The FMLN was caught, time-wise, between two different eras. The end of this war came at the end of the Cold War, right after the collapse of the Soviet Union. According to Mary Kaldor, that was the real start of new war, or chaotic violence

inspired by criminals. The FMLN leaders cannot be compared to the leaders of the 26th of July movement, who came riding into Havana to almost universal support. The FMLN leaders also cannot be compared to the brutal NPFL that ravaged Liberia. Instead, they are caught between these two time periods.

It appears that by all intent the FMLN wanted to be a guerilla force that spoke to the people. At its inception, they were a group of different guerilla organizations, banding together to fight for a common goal. The dramatic loss of support, due to U.S. intervention, left them no choice but to change their strategy, or accept very probable defeat. However, it doesn't appear that this strategy was used for entertainment purposes, but rather, it was used in situations seemingly crucial to the FMLN fight. For example, the three negative tactics that the FMLN engaged in most commonly were summary executions, planting land mines, and forcing civilians to join or help the FMLN. The FMLN forced civilians to join the FMLN, very simply, because they needed support. They forced women to make them tortillas or other civilians to carry bodies of the wounded because without those services they could no longer fight. They planted land mines because they were, above all, the most effective weapon they had against the army. They mainly executed civilians who were believed to be associated, spying for, or directly employed by the state. This was in protection of their secrets and their movements. Obviously, these tactics cannot be humanitarily justified. However, they are not tactics chosen on a whim. There was a specific purpose for each of them.

Secondly, FMLN leaders did not enjoy or want to rely on these types of tactics. This is apparent, first off, because when the FMLN had substantial support they did not bother to regularly use fear tactics against civilians, nor did they heavily disrupt civilian

life through land mines or forced recruitment (which led to internal displacement and migration). The amount of deaths by land mines and executions rose dramatically by the end of the conflict. It is also apparent that this was not a strategy of choice because of constant FMLN attempts to justify their actions to human rights organizations, media, and to themselves. In interviews with FMLN commanders, they express remorse at many of the actions that they committed that we would not describe as in the civilian's best interest. By all accounts, it appears that the movement of the FMLN to incorporate some of the tactics that are attributed to new war guerilla movements was less of a desire and more of a necessity.

American intervention in Latin America in general speaks volumes about the necessity of the FMLN's engagement in "fear and hatred" tactics. In successful guerilla movements in Latin America, including the Cuban and Sandinista revolutions, the U.S. pulled out backing from the respective country's leader shortly before the success of the movement. In both the case of Batista, as well as that of Somoza, the U.S. was no longer certain that they were the right dictator to run the country. U.S. backing in El Salvador was the watershed that altered the conflict. In the case of El Salvador, the U.S. forced the government to change, as well as made the government much stronger. American intervention made it nearly, if not impossible, for the guerillas to retain their original techniques. This also brings into question the viability, in guerilla conflicts, of a guerilla group to succeed against a more powerful third-party country. Once the Salvadoran government began to get increasing amounts of aid, the two sides slipped further and further into a standoff that neither one could win. In Cuba, the sheer numbers of Batista's forces should have been able to overtake the Cuban revolutionaries fighting in the

mountains. Castro's forces used excellent guerilla tactics. However, it has been stated that any aid from the U.S. would have been able to wipe out the Cuban revolutionaries almost instantly.

In these cases, the power lay with the United States. However, this question can be applied in other conflicts in which a strong third-party country influences the dynamic of a conflict based on their personal wants and interests. Mary Kaldor and other new war scholars do not always discuss the role of third-party states in determining the course of a conflict. In this way, the conflict in El Salvador also strays from new war theory. What remains clear is that if the U.S. had backed the FMLN, or even remained uninvolved, the trajectory of this conflict would have looked very different.

Works Cited

- Americas Watch. *El Salvador's Decade of Terror: Human Rights Since the Assassination of Archbishop Romero*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1991.
- Americas Watch. *Nightmare Revisited 1987-1988: 10th Supplement to the Report on Human Rights in El Salvador*. Rep. no. 10. New York: The Americas Watch Committee, 1988.
- Americas Watch. *The Civilian Toll 1986-1987: Ninth Supplement to the Report on Human Rights in El Salvador*. Rep. no. 9. New York: The Americas Watch Committee, 1987.
- Amnesty International. *Amnesty International Report: 1989 El Salvador*. Rep. London: Amnesty International Publications, 1989.
- Amnesty International. *Amnesty International Report: 1990 El Salvador*. Rep. London: Amnesty International Publications, 1990.
- Baloyra-Herp, Enrique. "The Persistent Conflict in El Salvador." *Current History* 90.554 (March 1991): 121-33.
- Barry, Tom, and Deb Preusch. *The Central America Fact Book*. New York: Grove, Inc., 1986.
- Brockett, Charles D. *Political Movements and Violence in Central America*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2005.
- Byrne, Hugh. *El Salvador's Civil War: A Study of Revolution*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996.
- Fishel, Kimbra L., and Edwin G. Corr. "The United Nations Involvement in the Salvadoran Peace Process." *World Affairs* 160.4 (Spring 1998): 202-11.
- Harnecker, Marta, and Iosu Perales. *Guerra en El Salvador: Entrevistas con comandantes del FMLN*. San Sebastian: Tercera Prensa, 1990.
- Huntington, Samuel P. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* Summer 1993: 22-50.
- Kaldor, Mary. *New & Old Wars*. 2nd ed. Stanford, California: Stanford UP, 2006.
- Kaldor, Mary. "Old Wars, Cold Wars, New Wars, and the War on Terror." *International Politics* 42.4 (December 2005): 491-98.
- Kaplan, Robert. "The Coming Anarchy." *Atlantic Monthly* Feb. 1994: 44-77.

- Kuenning, Major H.F. "Small Wars and Morally Sound Strategy." *Ethics and National Defense: The Timeless Issues*. Washington D.C.: National Defense UP. 186-222.
- Lindo-Fuentes, Hector. "To Rise in Darkness: Revolution, Repression and Memory in El Salvador, 1920-1932." *The Americas* 66.1 (Jul 2009): 141-42.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited." *American Sociological Review* 59.1 (February 1994): 1-21.
- Lopez Vigil, Jose Ignacio. *Rebel Radio: The Story of El Salvador's Radio Venceremos*. Trans. Mark Fried. Connecticut: Curbstone, 1991.
- Loveman, Brian, and Thomas M. Davies Jr. *Che Guevara Guerilla Warfare*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985.
- Maxwell, David James. *Christians and Chiefs in Zimbabwe: A Social History of the Hwesa People*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP Ltd, 1999.
- McClintock, Cynthia. *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN & Peru's Shining Path*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1998.
- Mueller, John. *The Remnants of War*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004.
- Tse-Tung, Mao. *On Guerilla Warfare*. Introduction by Samuel B Griffith. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961.
- The United Nations Security Council. *Report of the UN Truth Commission on El Salvador*. Rep. The United Nations/Equipo Nizkor, 1 Apr. 1993. Web. 10 Oct. 2009. <<http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/salvador/informes/truth.html>>.
- Van Creveld, Martin. *The Transformation of War*. New York: The Free, 1991.
- Vazquez, Norma. *Y La Montana Hablo*. Comp. Cristina Ibanez. San Salvador, El Salvador: Mujeres por la Dignidad y la Vida, 1997.
- Von Clausewitz, Carl. *On War*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1902.
- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2003.