

# SKIRMISHING RAGES IN SALVADOR STRIKE

## 54 Reported Slain in First Two Days of Leftist-Supported Walkout — Junta Calls It a Failure

SAN SALVADOR, Aug. 14 (AP) — Helicopter gunships and truckloads of soldiers fought street battles with guerrillas today on the second day of a three-day strike called by El Salvador's main opposition bloc. The authorities put the death toll at 20.

The Government said that 34 people were slain in gunbattles yesterday and at least 17 were arrested for firearms violations.

[The United States Ambassador, Robert White, said that an American diplomat was wounded last night by Salvadoran Army troops who opened fire on a supposedly bulletproof truck carrying four embassy staff members, United Press International reported.

[Mr. White identified the diplomat as Brian Woo and said that he had been hit in the heel by one of the nine bullets that perforated the truck. Mr. Woo's injury was minor, U.P.I. quoted Mr. White as saying.]

### Convoys Chase Guerrillas

Yesterday, convoys of soldiers and national police officers moved around the city chasing groups of guerrillas.

The opposition bloc, a coalition of Marxist organizations and more moderate groups called the Democratic Revolutionary Front, said the strike would amount to a show of support for the left's drive to topple the Government and take power. The Government replied that the strike was a failure and, as such, was a sign of support for the five-member civilian-military junta.

Most businesses were open yesterday and more were open today, apparently because additional Government and police units were providing protection from possible leftist reprisals.

The left promised to fight Government attempts to foil the strike. Besides attacks on soldiers, leftist groups have bombed electrical and water stations, knocking out service in several parts of this capital of 800,000.

Explosions and gunfire were heard around the city last night, but the violence apparently failed to keep most workers away from their jobs. The Government had guaranteed that buses would run and, despite the burning of at least six buses yesterday, service was said to be normal today.

### Leftist Barricades Are Opened

Authorities said barricades were thrown up by leftists on several key roads in the capital, but work crews protected by soldiers quickly opened them to traffic again yesterday.

Leftists staged a similar strike June 24-25 and, while the first day of that strike was effective, workers and the Government said that fear, rather than support for the left, was the reason.

The junta was established by leaders of the coup of Oct. 15, 1979, that ousted President Carlos Humberto Romero. While the current Government is more moderate than previous ones here, both the left and the right say they cannot support it.

Banking and changes in Government land policy begun by the junta do not go far enough, the leftists say; the extreme rightists say the changes are Communist-inspired. Human rights officials say that more than 4,000 people have been killed in political fighting this year.

*The New York Times*

Published: August 15, 1980

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