

On Salvadoran instability Experts' outlooks disagree

By STEWART WRIGHT
Of the Emerald

Two contradictory views of violence and instability in El Salvador were presented during a conference on Latin American human rights Friday.

John Blacken, director of the state department's Office of Central American Affairs, and Ruben Zamora of the Salvadoran leftist organization, Frente Democracia Revolucionario, discussed government reforms in El Salvador, American intervention and the country's right-wing government.

Blacken said during the country's agrarian reform program, all plots of land of more than 500 hectares were claimed by the government and returned to peasants in smaller allotments.

While Blacken admitted the plan hasn't been a complete success, he maintained it had taken the land out of the hands of the oligarchs and returned it to the people. The leftists believed the plan probably would increase the power of the government, he added.

And if the government falls, violence would increase because the country would be

taken over by right-wing extremists, he said.

But Zamora disagreed. "From our perspective the question is why the American government is imposing its will on the Salvadoran people. What he (Blacken) is implying is if the American government withdraws, the junta will fall."

Zamora said it's difficult to accurately count the number of leftists in the country because they meet only in small groups for no more than 10 or 15 minutes out of fear of security forces.

Blacken claimed that during a leftist strike in August of 1979, about 85 percent of the workers showed up on the job.

Zamora said, however, that the government told factory workers they would lose their jobs if they struck, and told drivers they would lose their licenses if they didn't drive.

Asked why members of security forces who commit atrocities aren't prosecuted, Blacken said the government lacks an effective court system.

"If a judge hands down an indictment, the person concerned is out within three days," he said.

Blacken also said land reform

is "a political as well as an economic effort."

"It's representative of the government's efforts to regain support."

State Department information obtained from sources such as satellite surveillance and guerilla documents indicates other countries — with the help of the

Soviet Union — have shipped 600 tons of military equipment to leftist groups in El Salvador, Blacken said.

But Zamora said if the guerilla documents existed, they undoubtedly came from government security forces and were probably confessions extracted through torture.

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Contaminated laboratory cleaned; reopens today

A University science laboratory contaminated last week with radioactive material reopens today after being decontaminated, health physicist Edward Baily says.

The radioactive spill Tuesday shut the lab down and exposed four graduate students to radiation. After the room was moni-

tored for radiation, the spill area was cleaned with soap and water, a decontamination agent and a diluted acid solution, Bailey says.

Friday a few spots of "fixed radiation," residue from the spill that can't be removed through decontamination, were covered by a protective seal.

Rights—

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crowd against a one-sided view of human rights that doesn't consider the United States' national interest as well as basic human rights.

"The pursuit of human rights is in our interest," Blacken said. "The question is where to strike the balance."

And unless a balance is struck, "it will be impossible to influence U.S. foreign policy," Rofe said.

The panel ended with a small speech by moderator William Wipfler, director of the National Council of Churches' human rights office.

"The human rights movement was not started by Carter, and I don't think Reagan will suppress it," Wipfler said. "I am convinced that we're in the midst of a human rights revival. That movement is a universal reality of our time."

"You have to decide whether you will become part of it or be overtaken by the movement."



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