

lar Liberation Forces, Popular Revolutionary Army, Communist Party of the Armed Forces of Liberation, National Resistance, and Workers Revolutionary Party. The FMLN began a prolonged campaign of terror and guerrilla warfare against the Salvadoran government and its civilian supporters.<sup>11</sup> Second, repression caused many people active in peasant or student organizations to support these previously inconsequential organizations. In interviews, several FMLN members stated that they had joined the guerrillas out of outrage at security forces' actions against family members or neighbors. Some joined the FMLN in response to the killing of priests, particularly the assassination of Archbishop Romero.<sup>12</sup> As one Salvadoran noted, "Before the war, we were despised by the rich. We were seen as animals, working all day and 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."<sup>13</sup>

The FMLN argued that the "transformation of our society, [which] to date [has been] subjected to injustice, [as well as] the pillaging and selling out of our country, is today a possible reality close at hand. Only through this transformation will our people prevail and ensure the democratic freedoms and rights that they have been denied."<sup>14</sup> The success of the Sandinistas in overthrowing the Nicaraguan government in 1979 provided inspiration to FMLN members. The FMLN's goals can be divided into three components:

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<sup>11</sup> The FMLN was named for the rebel leader Farabundo Martí, who led workers and peasants in an uprising to transform Salvadoran society after the eruption of the volcano Izalco in 1932. In response, the military regime led by General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, who had seized power in a 1931 coup, launched a brutal counterinsurgency campaign that killed 30,000 suspected guerrillas and Martí supporters.

<sup>12</sup> Carlos María Vilas, *Between Earthquakes and Volcanoes: Market, State, and the Revolutions in Central America*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995; Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> Torres-Rivas (1997, p. 220).