

Roberto D'AUBUISSON Arrieta
(Phonetic: dohbweeSOHN)

EL SALVADOR

President, Constituent Assembly
(since April 1982)

Addressed as:
Mr. President



A former Army and National Guard officer, Maj. (Ret.) Roberto (Major Bob) D'Aubuisson heads the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), which in the last election for the Constituent Assembly, in March 1982, polled more votes than any other rightist party. He was elected to his present position, the top post in the Assembly, by a loose coalition of its rightist members. According to press accounts, since the election D'Aubuisson has sought to form a united rightist front, including people in the private sector and the military. Press articles say that in the maneuvering that surrounded the selection of the country's provisional president in April 1982—a position that D'Aubuisson wanted himself—he and his followers tried unsuccessfully to block the election of the military's candidate. Alvaro Magaña.

After his election as Assembly President, D'Aubuisson announced that human rights in El Salvador would be guaranteed and that the social and economic reforms begun in October 1979 would be continued but would be promoted in the future with "technique, speed, and social dynamics." He has come out strongly against the efforts of Salvadoran guerrillas to eliminate the country's political leaders. In a July 1983 press conference, he particularly denounced the killing of labor leader René Barrios Amaya, a former pillar of ARENA.

D'Aubuisson was born into a middle-class family in Santa Tecla, a suburb of San Salvador. He entered military school at the age of 15 and was assigned to the National Guard after graduation. He has attended intelligence courses at private police academies in New York and Virginia. He has also trained with police forces in Uruguay and Taiwan. In the early 1970s he served briefly with the US Green Berets in Panama. In 1975 D'Aubuisson was transferred to the Armed Forces General Staff.

Following the overthrow of the rightwing government of President Carlos Humberto Romero in October 1979, D'Aubuisson was dismissed from the armed forces. He went into exile in Guatemala, but he returned to his country in 1970 to announce a new rightwing political party, the Broad National Front. Arrested in May of that year because of his involvement in a coup attempt, D'Aubuisson was held less than a week and then returned to Guatemala. His political comeback began in September 1981, when he formed ARENA and announced its entry in the March 1982 elections. D'Aubuisson, who will be 40 on 23 August, is married and has four children.

19 August 1983

Date

13. MAY 1983